



KING COUNTY SOUTH VOTER

October 2010

LWV Mission: The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



WHAT'S HAPPENING THIS MONTH?

BALLOT ISSUES

INITIATIVES, REFERENDAS --- YOU HAVE A NEED TO KNOW!

OCTOBER 13, 2010

BURIEN CITY LIBRARY 1ST FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
400 SW 152ND ST, BURIEN, WA

DOORS OPEN AT 6:30 P.M.

PRESENTATIONS: 7-9 P.M.

PRO AND CON PRESENTATIONS

Co-Sponsored with Southeast King County AAUW

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President's Message for October 2010

It's election time and there are several opportunities in our area to learn about the issues first hand.

- The Federal Way unit is hosting a Ballot Issues meeting for their area on October 12th at the Federal Way Regional library starting at 6:30pm
- We are teaming with AAUW to host the Ballot Issues General Meeting on October 13th at the Burien Library Community Room starting at 6:30pm
- King County Library is hosting "Taking the Initiative: Ballot Measures and Civic Involvement in Washington State" October 14th at the Renton Branch of the King County Library starting at 7pm.

The general election is November 2 and we, the LWV's are all about encouraging folks to get out and VOTE. Voting is such a basic right in our society that there is ambivalence about it. Yes, the King County elections certified the 2010 primary of September 1, with 39% of King County voters participating. Thirty nine per cent is nothing to be proud of, BUT it is the highest voter turnout for a primary since 2004, according to County officials. We need to do our part to encourage still better participation. Our way of life will be changed by this election, so vote for how you want it to change.

In addition to senate, congressional and judicial races, there are nine state measures on this November's ballot that will determine, among other things, how we pay taxes, where we will be able to buy liquor and how much it will cost, and whether we will continue to pay taxes on candy, soda, and bottled water. I encourage you to learn the pros and cons of the initiatives at <http://www.Vote.WA.gov> Also, check out the League's position on these initiatives at <http://www.lwvwa.org/> (for those of you without internet connections the League is for R-52 and I-1098; they are against I-1053, I-1100, I-1105 and I-1107). Let's get out, participate, and encourage our neighbors and friends to get informed and VOTE.

Have you read The Nine, by Toobin yet? I am looking forward to a different type of league unit meeting in November when we review this informative and slightly gossipy book. It is a long book, so you may want to get started.

I heard only excellent reviews of our training session on how to hold conversation cafes, provided by Mary Moore and Cynthia Stewart from the Thurston County League in August. I see conversation cafes as a new tool the League can use to engage the public in discussions that affect the way we live. Our league is planning on using this approach to find out what the public thinks about violence in South King County as we kick off our two year study on violence. You will see much more on this in the months to come.

Finally, thank you for your continuing involvement in the League and think about someone you know who might be interested in coming to one of our upcoming events or unit meetings. We all need to help encourage new membership.

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Mary Ehlers, Management Team (President for this month)

The League extends condolences to Mary Ehlers and her family for the loss of her father in a serious auto accident in August. Her mother was injured but is recovering. Our best to Mary as she lends support to her mother and family.

WANT ADS

- ❖ Friends of the League (and prospective members.) Bring them to our Ballot Issues Meeting and our Book Club in November.
- ❖ Leaguers needed to call your local officials regarding storm water runoff policies and practices. Call Pat McCann, 206-878-2799. Gathering information can be done at home and can be a lot of fun, not to mention interesting.
- ❖ HOT Public Relations person! Our events, no matter how fantastic, need publicity so the public is aware of what we are doing. Call the office, 206-243-7161.

HEALTH CARE CHANGES

There will be three local presentations on healthcare changes –
Renton Senior Center October 14 at 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM

Valley Medical center November 3 and again on November 10, 10:00 to 11:30 PM

Presentations will be on 2010 thru 2014 changes to ALL health insurance, including Medicare.

Plenty of time for questions afterward. No reservations necessary.

Regards, Dave Lilly, scoredave@juno.com

A Conversation Cafe: *What is that!?*

Ten LWVKCS members recently were introduced to this innovative discussion process and would encourage you to try it when you have a topic to explore.

Simply put, it is

- Structured discussion within a process that involves both feelings and thoughts.
- An opportunity to share expertise without an authority figure present.
- A process that creates respectful, meaningful dialogue where everyone has a time to speak and a time to listen. A process that welcomes all ideas.

Ask Becky Cox, Betty Colasurdo, Irene Peyton, Cindy Piennett, Jan Lightner, Ellen Kritzman, Cathy Dormaier, Dave Lilly, Miriam Helgeland and/or Sande Nelson for more information.

Submitted by Sande Nelson

Nov 8th, at the state Capital --the Day of Jubilation Celebration Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of Women Achieving the Right to Vote.

A myriad of activities will be held on the capital campus in Olympia and LVWWA is a sponsor of the "Valiant Women for Votes" Vintage Fashion Show and Bellingham-based Linda Allen's "Here's to the Women", a mixture of traditional, contemporary and original songs celebrating women's stories and contributions. "The State We're In" will be on display in the State Reception Room, and myriad other activities including a parade, activities designed for children and parents and more. Plan to come to Olympia to participate!!

More specifics later.

Pat Dickason, State Voter Service Chair
360.753.7647

p.dickason@comcast.net

"Do we dare to hope and articulate the ideal and not just the possible?"

Donna Schaper

----- Original Message -----

MESSAGE FROM PRESERVE OUR ISLANDS

In September, Preserve Our Islands, the Vashon-Maury community, and the statewide environmental community suffered a great loss with the death of fellow islander and environmental attorney, John Arum.

John died while working to meet a personal goal of reaching the summit of the 100 highest peaks in the state - passing from this world while doing something he loved passionately.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his family. With heavy hearts, we share in their loss and give thanks for the contributions John made in the fight to protect Maury Island.

John was the first attorney hired by POI. Working in partnership with the board, he was an early architect in the legal strategy of our first forays into the courtroom. Most significantly, he represented us before the Shorelines Hearings Board and the King County Superior Court, ultimately winning a stay to stop dock construction while our first legal appeals went forward.

Without the stay, it is likely we may have lost Maury forever. John gave us a fighting chance and for that we will always be grateful.

League of Women Voters of Washington's

Positions on the Statewide Ballot Measures for the November 2, 2010 General Election

The League of Women Voters of Washington Board of Directors has voted to support the following:

Referendum Bill 52: Engrossed House Bill 2561 passed the 2010 legislature and was signed by Governor Gregoire. The bill was named the Jobs Act. The bill provides for state general obligation bonds of up to \$505 million to fund energy efficiency projects in the state's K-12 schools and higher education facilities. The bonds would be funded by extending the current state tax on bottled water beyond its current expiration date of 2013. Because this bonding amount exceeds the state's current debt limit, the bill must be submitted to the state's voters.

The national League's positions on Natural Resources, particularly those related to global climate change, together with the extensive work the national League has done in support of national climate change legislation, are the basis for League to support Referendum 52. LWVWA supported EHB 2561 in the 2010 legislative session.

Initiative 1098: concerns establishing a state income tax and reducing other taxes. This measure would tax "adjusted gross income" above \$200,000 (individuals) and \$400,000 (joint-filers), reduce state property tax levies, reduce certain business and occupation taxes, and direct any increased revenues to education and health.

League of Women Voters of Washington position on tax structure states: Inequities in the distribution of the tax burden should be removed. Ability to pay is an important criterion. Flexibility and recognition of changing times and needs is important

in tax policy. Income should be part of the tax base preferably through a graduated net income tax.

The League of Women Voters of Washington Board of Directors has voted to oppose the following:

Initiative 1053: concerns tax and fee increases imposed by state government. This measure would restate existing statutory requirements that legislative actions raising taxes must be approved by two-thirds legislative majorities or receive voter approval, and that new or increased fees require majority legislative approval.

National League position includes that government must have the knowledge, resources and power to make decisions that meet citizens needs and reconcile conflicting interests and priorities, and it must be able to function in an efficient manner with a minimum of conflict, wasted time and duplication of effort.

Initiative Measure No. 1100 concerns liquor (beer, wine and spirits). This measure would close state liquor stores; authorize sale, distribution, and importation of spirits by private parties; and repeal certain requirements that govern the business operations of beer and wine distributors and producers.

According to the Office of Financial Management, I-1100 would lower state revenue approximately \$25 million per year through the privatization of liquor.

Initiative Measure No. 1105 concerns liquor (beer, wine and spirits). This measure would close all state liquor stores and license private parties to sell or distribute spirits. It would revise laws concerning regulation, taxation and government revenues from distribution and sale of spirits.

According to the Office of Financial Management, I-1105 would lower state revenue approximately \$100 million per year through the privatization of liquor.

Initiative 1107 concerns reversing certain 2010 amendments to state tax laws. This measure would end sales tax on candy; end temporary sales tax on some bottled water; end temporary excise taxes on carbonated beverages; and reduce tax rates for certain food processors.

According to the Office of Financial Management, I-1107 would lower state tax revenue by \$55 million in the current fiscal year and \$218 million in the upcoming biennium by removing the tax on candy & gum, bottled water, soda and reinstating tax loopholes.

League believes all initiatives proposed should “require how revenue losses or budget increases might be covered, either through program cuts or increases in revenue sources.” (League position on Initiatives, IR-4)

The League of Women Voters of Washington Board of Directors has voted to take no position on the following:

Initiative 1082 concerns industrial insurance. This measure would authorize employers to purchase private industrial insurance beginning July 1, 2012; direct the legislature to enact conforming legislation by March 1, 2012; and eliminate the worker-paid share of medical-benefit premiums.

Engrossed Substitute House Joint Resolution 4220. The legislature has proposed a constitutional amendment on denying bail for persons charged with certain criminal offenses. This amendment would authorize courts to deny bail for offenses punishable by the possibility of life in prison, on clear and convincing evidence of a propensity for violence that would likely endanger persons.

On I-1082, if the federal government does not provide sufficient resources, then the state government must assume that responsibility. There is a question as to whether the state would have the resources if private insurance chose not to cover, and the federal government didn't sufficiently cover.

On ESHJR 4220, we are concerned about modifying constitutional protection to bail without full vetting. This constitutional amendment came about because of a very tragic incident rather than because over time, the legislature considered a problem and sought a solution.

November Book Club: More Books on the Supreme Court

Don't forget our discussion of the book, "The Nine," in November. The discussions will be at our November units. For more, Susan Sanders recommends the following:

The Supreme Court: The Personalities and Rivalries That Defined America By: Thirteen/WNET, Jeffrey Rosen, Library call no. 347.732634 ROS, ISBN-13: 978-0805081824

Supreme Conflict: The Inside Story of the Struggle for Control of the United States Supreme Court By: Jan Crawford Greenburg, Library call no. 347.732634 GRE, ISBN-13: 978-1594201011

Two books on the temperaments and effectiveness of Supreme Court Justices: Mr. Rosen juxtaposes two important figures from each of four historic time periods, and provides a look at what we might expect from Chief Justice Roberts. Mr. Rosen specifies the effective justice is the one who builds coalitions, promotes the institution of the Court, and has the highest "Emotional Intelligence" quotient, although he doesn't use that term. This book is the companion to a program aired by PBS in February

Ms Greenburg focuses on the Rehnquist court to the present, and provides insights into the selection, opinion-writing, conferences, and personalities of the justices.

Submitted by Susan Sanders

congratulations to Yvonne Kuperberg who was appointed by the King County Council to the King County Vashon-Maury Island groundwater protection committee, as the Vashon-Maury Island UAC representative. (Now- read the article below!!!!)

Crisis of Governance on Vashon Island, part I

The Vashon-Maury Island Community Council (VMICC) registered as a non-profit corporation with Washington State in 1933 (501(c)(6) since 1935). Only since 1996 has it been one of the Unincorporated Area Councils (UACs). There is a yearly contract signed with the County and \$10,000 receivable on a reimbursement basis -- but it would still be a UAC without the contract or the money. All residents are considered members of the VMICC, with voting rights for all 18 years and older.

It's not as if all was well with the VMICC till August of this year. Its volunteer Board plans meetings, presentations and forums, is the venue for submission of motions and resolutions, and tries to be an effective advocate, but without any authority. There is no central governmental organization able to actually take action for the good of the Island. As a courtesy, off-Island presenters come first on the meetings agendas, even though few attending may be interested in that topic. Only a handful attend the meetings regularly, and a quorum may be lacking, but, conversely, an organized group can pack a meeting and dictate the agenda. Motions made are held over till the next month for a vote. Hard working committees get little time to report, and seem to be attracting fewer and fewer members.

In 2008 a disgruntled Islander, his emergency motion denied by one vote, sued the County, the VMICC, and several other entities for failure to follow due process in the rezone of the K2 property. The dismissal of his case made him more tenacious than ever. The Council sought to clarify its position with King County -- as a non-profit, not a government agency, was it subject to the State's Public Records Act (PRA)? Finally came the County (not court) legal opinion that it was. Just a few days prior, the same Islander who had sued filed a sweeping public disclosure request for "copies of all VMICC correspondence and any legal documents between VMICC, King County and/or any other King Co. UAC related to any VMICC requirements, formation, contracts, King County budgets and/or governance issues This request covers the past two years ... "

At the Council meeting on Monday, August 23, this Islander tried to argue his case in the opening few minutes, during the announcements section of the agenda. He was ruled out of order by the chair and told to sit down but refused to do so. The chair then adjourned the meeting. By the following Sunday all nine Board members had resigned, not in objection to open meetings, or the PRA in general, but with an unwillingness, as volunteers, to spend huge amounts of time in required research, and to not be adequately protected against financial penalties and/or law suits.

King County is paying attention. Dow Constantine has stated that "while the legal interpretation may be correct, I believe the full application of the state public records act to all-volunteer advisory groups is beyond the spirit of the state law and an issue the Legislature may have to

address". Meanwhile, however, County officials have been of little help, evading questions, claiming to not know the answers. One was quoted in the weekly newspaper, The Beachcomber, saying "there's not a lot of case law to instruct us, we're in a gray area here". The Island feels it's hanging out there in the wind.

August 30 the VMICC Governance and Policy Committee met, with a much larger audience than usual. Did we still have a Community Council? Yes, just not a Board. We still have committees (perhaps without chairs), we still are a UAC. The next scheduled meetings should take place on Monday, Sept. 20. But who will set the agenda, who will chair the meeting, how will a nominating committee be chosen? A brave Islander agreed to open the meeting, after which a temporary chair, and perhaps minimum quorum Board (5) will be voted on among those who put themselves forward that evening (and the instigator of the crisis will be among them).

Meanwhile the Island is abuzz on how to turn disaster into opportunity. Return to the old days before UAC status? Negotiate some decision making authority with the County? Have a paid administrator? How can we embody in governance our foremost values; keeping Vashon rural, having local control, having participatory government?

Meeting are scheduled; stay tuned for the continuing saga .

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Ellen Kritzman

PRELIMINARY 2010-2011 CALENDAR

November 2010

- Nov 3: Board Meeting
- Nov 6: State LWV Action Workshop, St. Andrews, Bellevue
- Nov 8: Day of Jubilation, Olympia
- Units: Book Club Format. Book: "The Nine"

December 2010

- Dec 1: Board Meeting
- Dec 4: Holiday Party. [SAVE THE DATE!](#) Our speaker will be State Supreme Court Justice, Barbara Madsen.

January 2011

- Jan 5: Board Meeting
- Units: Next year's subject for state LWV and local LWV

February 2011

- Feb 2: Board Meeting
- Feb 24: State LWV Lobby Day, Columbia Room, Capitol, Olympia
- Units: Local study: Storm Water Management in KCS

March 2011

- Mar 2: Board Meeting
- Units: Conversation Café: Violence in our Communities. Public is invited.

- Oct 6: Board Meeting, 9:45-12 noon, 616 SW 152nd, Burien, WA.
Contact Co-president, Mary Ehlers, with agenda concerns.
- Oct 11: Columbus Day. Highline Unit will attend the Ballot Issues Meeting on the 13th..
- Oct 12: Enumclaw Unit will attend the Federal Way Ballot Issues Meeting: **Call the Chair: Cathy Dormaier, 360-802-6799, for more information and plans to carpool.**
- Oct 12: Ballot Issues Meeting: Time 6:30-9. Location: Federal Way Library (was the regional), 34200 1st Way So., Federal Way.
- Oct 13: Ballot Issues General Meeting. Time: 6:30-9. Location: Burien Library, 400 SW 152nd St, Burien, WA. Pro and Con on the issues. Invite your neighbors! It is co-sponsored by the Southeast King County AAUW.
- Oct 14: Public Meeting "Impacts of Initiative in Washington State." Time: 7-9, Renton Library, 100 Mill Ave So., Renton, WA. Sponsored by Humanities Washington.
- Oct 21 (Tent): Vashon Unit, 2:00-4:00, Vashon Library. **Contact: Ellen Kritzman, 206-567-4837, to confirm if there is a meeting.**
- Oct 31: **Trick or Treat**

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