



WASHINGTON STATE VOTER

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The League of Women Voters of Washington, 4710 University Way NE, #214, Seattle, WA 98105
Tel: 206-622-8961 FAX: 206-622-4908 (outside toll area 1-800-419-2596) email: lwwa@lwwa.org

Barbara Seitle, President
Betsy Greene, Editor

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Lobby Day is always a wonderful event, but it was extra special this year because we were back in the Capital building. Not only is it a lovely place to meet, but its closeness to all the governmental offices facilitated visits by legislators and made it convenient for the Governor to come. Thurston County League did a superb job organizing the event. The speakers were inspiring, twenty two legislators dropped in for lunch, we had wonderful participation from the 83 members who attended from all over the state, and, in anticipation of the 2010 centennial

celebration of women's suffrage in Washington, our hostesses from Thurston County League came dressed in period costume! What a kick!

We are looking forward to the same high spirits for Convention in June. We will be traveling to Vancouver, a city rich in history beginning with the visit of the Lewis and Clark expedition on their way to and from the Pacific Ocean. We will be staying at the Heathman Lodge, known for its 19th Century charm. Sue Lean will set up the same display she did for Lobby Day to remind us of the importance of the celebration in 2010.

We may even see a vintage costume or two. Although the setting and the entertainment may recall an earlier time, the program will be strictly 21st century in scope. The theme for Convention 2007 is "Setting Priorities". But it isn't all about setting priorities for state League. It is about board and leadership training. It is about communication – with each other and with our communities. What things can the state organization do to help strengthen local Leagues? How do we work together to make the League of Women Voters the

organization to belong to today, tomorrow, and into the future and continue to be the organization that communities turn to for non-partisan leadership? How do we set personal priorities to do all these things and avoid burn-out? We will certainly not have all the answers, but we can definitely put it all on the table and set our priorities. I hope to see the leadership and the future leadership of every local League at Convention in June. Be there!

In League
Barbara



President Barbara Seitle introducing Washington State Governor Christine Gregoire at Lobby Day 2007

**League of Women Voters of Washington
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2005-2007**

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Barbara Seitle, President, South Whidbey Island
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Staff

Claudia Downing, Administrative Director
Lonnie Johns-Brown, Lobbyist

Calendar of Events

**June 6 – 8, LWVUS Council
June 21 – 24, LWVWA Convention
November 10, Action Workshop
February 1, 2008, Lobby Day**

Board Splinters for March, 2007

- Announced that LWVUS had approved Mason County UAL as a local League of Women Voters
- Approved participation in “Step it up – a call for solutions” regarding climate change, April 21, 2007.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

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Send address changes to the League of Women Voters of Washington, 4710 University Way NE, Suite #214, Seattle, WA 98105.

Action Donors 2007... Many thanks to all of you for your generous support, helping to partially defray the cost of a professional lobbyist and the Lobby Team.
It's not too late to make your contribution!

Ann Aagaard
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PRIORITIES - PRIORITIES - PRIORITIES Setting Goals

**LWVWA 2007 Convention
June 21-24
Heathman Lodge, Vancouver, WA**

Whether it's prioritizing one's personal life with League or prioritizing League with one's personal life, this convention is for you! Inspirational motivators, speakers and guests will make you want to jump up and shout! Election of officers, directors and nominating committee, program selection, Bylaws amendments, budget, workshops, caucuses and more will be on the Agenda! Attend State Convention and participate in the future of your organization.

Plan on starting the weekend with a pre-convention "Walking Tour of Historic Officers' Row and the Vancouver National Historic Reserve Site" starting at 9:30am June 22. Billed as "One Place Across Time", this geographic area of the county enjoys many layers of historical significance. This is a FREE event!

And you will certainly enjoy the 19th century charm and character of the Heathman Lodge with beautifully designed rooms, while offering every modern convenience, including high-speed Internet. Locals will tell you that the food at the Heathman Lodge is some of the very best in the county. All attendees will make their own reservations directly with the Lodge being sure to note that they are with the LWVWA convention .

**Join us for the opening Plenary session,
Friday June 22 at 1:00pm.**

Bylaws guide our organization:

Section 2. Composition. The convention shall consist of:

- a. delegates chosen by the members of local Leagues and MAL units in the number provided in Section 4 of this Article;
- b. the president of each local League or an alternate in the event that the president is unable to attend;
- c. one delegate for each recognized ILO within the state of Washington; and
- d. the members of the state board.

Section 4. Representation. Each local League and MAL unit shall be entitled to voting representation in the convention as follows: one delegate for its first 15 voting members and one delegate for every 25 additional voting members or major fraction thereof. The official membership count shall be determined by state office records of voting members as of February 1 of the year in which the convention is held.

Section 5. Powers. The convention shall adopt program; elect officers and directors, the chair and two members of the nominating committee; adopt a budget for the ensuing two years; and transact such other business as may properly come before it.

Article XIV: Bylaws may be amended at any convention by a two-thirds vote provided that the proposed amendment was submitted to the state board or proposed by the board.

The official Call to Convention will be mailed by the first week in May. It will also be posted to the Members Only section at www.lwvwa.org

Spotlight on Local Leagues

Police Accountability Forums – Spokane Area

Three forums addressing Police Accountability in the City of Spokane were co-sponsored by the ACLU, JPALS and the Spokane Area League. The first, in December 2006, provided background. In January, 2007, Police Chief Anne Kirkpatrick, Tim Conner (investigative reporter), and Rick Mendoza, (outgoing chair of the Spokane Citizens Police Advisory Committee) spoke to “What’s Happening in the City of Spokane”. February’s forum was concerned with “Police Accountability: Next Steps in the City of Spokane”. Panel members were Breean Beggs (Center of Justice), Mary Verner (City of Spokane Council Member, and Sgt. Reisenauer (Police Guild President).

Health Care Reform Forum – Clallam County

Background: The Health Care Access Study of the LWV Clallam County began five years ago by looking at local health care access. The degradation of health care services in Clallam County and the failing system nationwide motivated the study group to broaden its study. In the intervening years, health care access has worsened in Clallam County. Retirees have difficulty finding a doctor willing to accept Medicare. Seattle-based Virginia Mason, a group practice, pulled out of the county a year ago. The community-owned Olympic Medical Center stepped up to keep doctors and services available for the stranded patients. The final details are still pending. At the same time, information about the nation’s failing health care system abounds. Candace Pratt, President League of Women Voters Clallam County

On February 27 in Sequim, a forum billed *Rx for Healthcare*, covered views of a panel made-up of representatives from the insurance industry, the public health system, medical providers, and healthcare consumers. Discussion topics included the present healthcare system, changes needed, and the likelihood of change. Each speaker responded to the same questions.

Speakers were Bob Murphy, retired Blue Cross/Blue Shield executive; Dr. Tom Locke, medical officer of the Department of Health Clallam and Jefferson Counties; Dr. Scott Kennedy, chief medical officer of Olympic Medical Center; and Larry Howard, advocate with Health Care That Works.

Needed changes to the system brought a wide spectrum of response from the panel. More emphasis on prevention, a simplified method of administration, transparency in cost of healthcare, addressing “over-treatment” issues, and portability of insurance coverage were discussed. As might be expected, the panel member representing consumers specifically spoke to an affordable system for all. He mentioned a legislative proposal, The Washington Health Security Trust, currently stalled in committee. A Medicare for all system received favorable comments from the public health officer.

Educating the public and countering old ideas about healthcare are formidable but essential. Overheard in the Ladies Room after the forum, “Well, it sounds like socialized medicine to me.”

Lounette Templeton
Chair, Healthcare Access Study

LWVWA Forum - Highway 99 - Viaduct elevated vs. tunnel

The viaduct replacement issue was a Seattle ballot issue. It is a state route, Highway 99, of significance both to people of the region and to freight, and is under some level of control by State legislators and Governor Gregoire. Therefore, the state League made the decision to help set up a forum to educate both Seattle voters and the statewide public on the issues.

Thus: the public forum on Alaskan Way Viaduct, held February 22, 2007 at Town Hall in downtown Seattle, co-sponsored by LWVWA and the Seattle Times. The forum included not only the usual pro and con arguments and questions from the audience, but also a detailed description of the two options on the Seattle ballot.

It was filmed for broadcast by Seattle Channel, taped for broadcast by KUOW, and also filmed by the Lehrer News Hour.

Voters rejected both options in March 13 vote. Now the issue is in front of city, regional and state officials.

Judicial Selection Reform

The same group that brought you the wonderful web site on judicial candidates last year (the Judicial Selection Coalition, working under the auspices of the King County Bar Association) has been developing proposals to the legislature. The proposals fall into two distinct categories aimed at fostering judicial independence and correcting the excesses of the last supreme court elections:

First, public financing of elections, and second, appointment of judges by a commission. Several bills were introduced, and at this writing one bill in each category survives.

Public Financing -- HB1186 provides for a six-year pilot program financing candidates for the supreme court and court of appeals from state general funds to be administered by the Public Disclosure Commission. To qualify for the program, a candidate must agree to the following:

- Accept contributions only from individuals;
- Expend only \$1,000 of the candidates personal money and only during the qualifying period;
- Accept and expend seed money in accordance with the act (\$100 from individuals only, \$25,000 total for supreme court candidates--\$10,000 for court of appeals);
- Collect a minimum number of qualifying contributions (at least 500 contributions of exactly \$10.00 each for supreme court candidates—100 contributions for court of appeals);
- After certification, expend only funds received from the Judicial Election Reform Act, and
- Sign a joint statement with the candidate's committee treasurer promising to comply with the provisions of the act.

In return for complying with these rules, a candidate for supreme court will receive an amount equal to 50 times the filing fee for the primary and 100 times the filing fee for the general (court of appeals receives 20 times for both). A "fair fight fund" attempts to equalize the battle field by permitting a publicly funded candidate to receive up to 480 times the filing fee when he or she is being outspent by a nonparticipating opponent.

Judicial Appointment—HB 2150 would create a commission of eleven members to nominate persons for appointment to the Washington supreme court and court of appeals. The commission would be made up of four lawyer members selected by the Washington State bar Association, three nonlawyer

members appointed by the governor, one member from each major caucus of the senate appointed by the president of the senate, and one member from each major caucus of the house selected by the speaker. Efforts will be made to achieve geographic representation and reflect gender, ethnic and racial diversity in appointments.

The commission is charged with submitting to the governor a list of three to five qualified persons from whom she will fill judicial vacancies. Current judges and those subsequently appointed will continue in office for their full terms. If a judge wishes to continue in office, his/her name will appear on the ballot for a vote as to whether he/she will be retained. Before this bill can take effect, a constitutional amendment must be passed. This amendment is embodied in HJR 4223, which would require approval by the voters.

The **League supported** both proposals outlined above. Barbara Seitle testified for the League at a hearing on it, March 3rd.

Cheryl Bleakney
LWVWA representative to Coalition

Webmaster Needed

Small stipend. Must be familiar with web design and functionality.

**Send resume to Claudia Downing
4710 University Way NE, #214, Seattle,
WA 98105 or email lwwa@lwwa.org.**

WASHINGTON NEWS SERVICE (WNS)

One day a relatively-new member of my LWV unit exclaimed to me: "Wow, this organization does so many good things; it's too bad that people aren't more aware of what the League accomplishes!" I'm willing to bet that most of us have had the same thought at one time or another. But it's also true that most of us are so focused on our own League projects and responsibilities, we seldom feel that we have time to take on the extra task of bringing the League's work to the attention of the wider community – even though the vitality of our organization depends on our sharing our stories with others.

Enter the Washington News Service!

WNS is a nonprofit service concerned with getting "progressive" stories aired by radio stations throughout the state. WNS produces real news stories, as opposed to advocacy pieces, and strives for balance in its reporting. Media professionals who work for WNS write the stories.

Membership contributions from a variety of nonprofit organizations support the service. Organizations join because they see a benefit in getting issues of concern to them aired and in getting their organization's name before radio audiences.

The LWVWA Education Fund has a membership in WNS, which it shares with LWVWA and with participating local Leagues. Local Leagues participate in two ways: they send an annual monetary contribution and they are encouraged to propose story ideas.

A contribution of \$50 is typical for an average-sized League, although larger and more affluent Leagues contribute more. The contribution can be paid directly out of local funds on deposit with the LWVWA Education Fund. This year, local Leagues will be solicited in late summer, in advance of the October 1 WNS membership renewal date. Local Leagues may want to budget now for their fall contribution.

Any participating League can suggest a story idea. Often the WNS producer suggests a story to us. Next, WNS interviews a League leader with expertise on the story topic. Stories can spring from any activity in which your League is engaged. It's essential, however, that they have an angle that makes them of interest to a statewide audience. It's also helpful if your subject is timely -- meaning that it can be linked to news that is breaking on the state or national scene. Whenever your League has a story idea that seems to meet these criteria, LWVWA community relations chair Lucy Copass can help bring it to the attention of WNS (see contact information below).

Examples of recent League-related stories produced by WNS include a story about the Instant Runoff Voting ballot issue in Pierce County, for which Susan Eidenschink, vice-president of LWV Tacoma/Pierce County, was interviewed; and the January kick-off to the 2007 state legislative session, with comments from LWVWA president Barbara Seitle.

WNS produces, on average, 9 or 10 League-related stories every year, each aired by approximately 40 radio stations throughout the state. Some stations broadcast a story several times, meaning that the stories, collectively, get aired hundreds of times. Now that's an easy and effective way to get our message out!

Lucy Copass
LWVWA Community Relations
lucyco@speakeasy.org
206-232-7687

**Congratulations
to Donna Ewing, LWV/Thurston
County, who has been appointed to
the newly formed LWVUS EF
Climate Control Task Force**

Lobby Day in Review January 2007

From all accounts Lobby Day as planned and carried out by the LWV Thurston County was a great success. Not only did we have the best attendance ever (85) but we also enjoyed the company of many legislators during lunch.

Things we have been complimented on include the speakers (especially the governor), the venue, exhibits by Sue Lean, the variety of publications, gifts for the speakers, the tight schedule and the beautiful and tasty lunch. Barbara Seitle, our League President, handled all the introductions and covered the glitches with grace and good humor

We believe that being able to hold this meeting in the Capitol building and the honor of having Governor Gregoire present an inspirational speech led to the highest number of registrations ever and to increased access to the legislators. The energy in the room was amazing and many people were reluctant to leave when our time was up –certainly an indicator of a successful event.

Education Collection for State Archives

** Are you a keeper of important files on issues related to study and action by the League of Women Voters in Washington State?*

We invite you to consider donating your collected materials to the **new LWVWA Education Collection** at the Washington State Archives.

This collecting effort is in response to the Washington Women's History Consortium's mission to collect recent history of women in the state of Washington. The five collecting areas include Women's Suffrage in Washington;

Elected Washington Women; The Women's Rights Movement of the Late 20th Century; Women's Clubs and Organizations; Expanding the Role of Women in Modern Society

Collections from League members donated to the LWVWA Education Fund Education Collection will be given directly to the Washington State Archives where they will be inventoried, stored, and made available to the public. This repository was chosen because many people seek background information at the Washington State Archives about legislation in this state and on legislative intent for proposed laws whether they pass or not. The objective of combining collections into one Collection is to have an educational interpretive context for the many valuable collections assembled by members of the League of Women Voters. League materials need not be limited to women's history.

If you are interested in donating materials to the League of Women Voters of Washington Education Fund with the understanding that they would become part of a Media Collection *owned by and made available to the public* by the Washington State Archives, please be in touch. It is the policy of the Washington State Archives to return to the donor materials that cannot be used. Credit for use in the media will be given to the League of Women Voters of Washington Education Fund Media Collection and may, by the donor's choice, be given also to the donor.

If you are not a member of the League of Women Voters and have collections of interest on women's history, more information is available from Shanna Stevenson, coordinator for the Women's History Consortium. The Consortium created in 2005 includes as Partners the Washington State Archives, the Washington State Library and the archives of major state universities that may also be contacted.

For more information: call or email the state office, 206-622-8961, lwwva@lwwva.org

Web sites of Interest:
LWVWA Ed Fund www.lwwva.org
Washington State Archives secstate.ws.gov/archives
Women's History Consortium ashingtonhistoryonline.org

LWVWA GOOD IN GOVERNMENT BRUNCH

Sunday, April 22, 2007

Bell Harbor Conference Center, Seattle

11:00am – 1:00pm

We will be honoring William Ruckelshaus, who served as the first Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and held several other federal government positions. Now living in Washington State, Mr. Ruckelshaus is currently chair of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, co-chair of the Puget Sound Partnership, and chair of the Ruckelshaus Policy Consensus Center, co-managed by the University of Washington and Washington State University.

Tickets are \$50. If you haven't made your reservation yet, call the State League office right away. 206-622-8971, 1-800-419-2596.



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