



VOTER

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE SAN JUANS
P. O. Box 784, Friday Harbor, WA 98250-0784**

October 2011

Calendar

**October 3, 5, and 6, 2011
Candidate Forums**

There will be no general membership meeting in October because of the forums. The San Juan Island Candidate Forum will be held on October 3rd at the Friday Harbor Middle School, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm. On Orcas Island, it will take place on October 5th, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm, at the Orcas Community Center. The Lopez forum will be at the Grace Lutheran Church in Lopez Village, on October 6th, from 5:30 to 7:30 pm.

Please volunteer to help with the forums by contacting Jill Johnson at jilljohnson888@hotmail.com.

**October 10, 2011 - Monday, 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm at the
San Juan Island Library: Board Meeting**

All members are encouraged to attend.

**November 7, 2011 - Monday, 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm at the
San Juan Island Library: Board Meeting**

**November 10, 2011 - Monday, 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm at the San Juan Island
Library: Membership Meeting**

The November Membership Meeting will be the opportunity for the LWV SJ to participate in the study of "The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education" which was proposed and passed at the 2010 Biennial Convention in Atlanta.

Board meetings are generally on the 1st Monday of each month and Membership Meetings are usually on the 2nd Monday. Annual Membership meetings are usually in May of each year. If you are coming from another island, call any board member and we'll arrange a ride from the ferry.

A description of the League's study process from the *Leaders Guide for the Education Study Consensus* follows.

Studies are part of League Program which includes all of the positions the League uses to affect public policy as well as the procedure for adopting these programs. Program is such an integral part of the League that, according to *League Basics*, "Program is the League's reason for being."

Program has three parts: 1) selection of an issue; 2) study of that issue, consensus and formulating a position; and 3) use of that position to influence public policy. All LWVUS positions are included in the League publication, *Impact on Issues, 2010-2012: A Guide to Public Policy Positions* (PDF file available at

http://www.lwv.org/Content/ContentGroups/Membership/BNewWebsite/TheBasics/ImpactonIssues_2010-2012.pdf.

This guide briefly covers how we got here, and, secondly, the perspective of participating in a national study at the local level. The purpose of a study, at any level, is to educate members so that they can be informed participants in consensus and provide the necessary data for formulating the ultimate position. Additional information about conducting a national study is on the LWVUS website with a power point entitled, *The ABCs of a National Study*.

Selection of an issue begins with the Program Planning each League is asked to do. This is where the local Leagues identify issues that deserve a study at the national level or updates of existing positions. These are issues where the LWVUS has no position, and, therefore, cannot act. Remember, Leagues cannot take action without a position.

In Program Planning before the 2010 Convention, the largest number of Leagues expressed an interest in the "Federal Role in Public Education." This interest was duly noted; the LWVUS Program Planning Committee recommended and the LWVUS Board approved this Education Study at the 2010 Convention, where it was adopted. Step one completed.

Study and consensus begins right after Convention when the LWVUS Board appoints a study committee chair, sets up the process for selecting the committee, and approves the scope and timeline for the study. This sets the parameters for the study committee's work. The scope is distributed to the local Leagues to give general direction to their preliminary work.

The study committee begins its work of refining the areas to be studied, researching and writing background information about the different areas contained in the scope, and preparing consensus questions and other materials to help direct local League discussion to consensus. All of these materials are posted at www.lwv.org.

As each local League reports its consensus (or lack thereof) the reports are consolidated, and, based on this information, the committee formulates the position which, when approved by the Board, can be used for action.

The study scope is broad and includes the following areas (pre-K through grade 12): the history, funding and equity issues which are addressed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the common core standards/assessments which are required for many federal grant programs but are national, not federal. The culminating position will address only those issues delineated in the scope. Although the study focuses on the federal government, the original intent of the study included the Common Core Standards. These were written and funded by the National Governors' Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).

Before the meeting, all LWVSJ members will receive the study material and the consensus questions. They will be asked to review the materials and be prepared to make decisions on those questions. The results of the consensus discussion will be forwarded to the board for approval and submission to LWVUS.

LWVSJ Happenings

September 6, 2011 – Board Meeting

The following is a summary of the minutes from the September Board Meeting.

Ann Jarrell reported on the Orcas unit's issues and news:

- Margie Doyle has set up teleconferencing for board meetings from the Orcas fire house.
- Marian O'Brien is working on a civics curriculum in the Orcas schools using "The State We're In."
- Guide and books: State League is funding one set and our chapter will give \$180 toward another set.
- The "Empty Chair" problem was brought up concerning the forum on Orcas on Oct. 5th. One candidate cannot attend. Our chapter policy has been to allow that candidate to send someone to read a statement, and the other candidate can read a statement as well, but no questions may be taken from the floor. We will try for a date change as a first choice.

Susan Dehlendorf announced that Catherine Deitzman, a Friday Harbor High School student wants to volunteer for our League chapter. Susan is sending her a list of suggestions for what she might do to help the League. Susan will follow through as her mentor.

The Board discussed e-voting, and a Policy and Procedures Committee has been established to work on this. The members are Ann, Susan, and Sarah Crosby.

Sarah gave the final details about the next general meeting on Monday, September 12th.

- The Truth About Taxes: What Choices Do We Have?
- Speaker: Ed Dolan from Lopez
- Noon at the library

Dates for Forums:

Oct 3rd at Friday Harbor Middle School

Oct 5th on Orcas (possible date change; see above)

Oct 6th on Lopez at the church

The November meeting will be the Consensus Study: Role of Federal Government in Public Education. Marty Huleatte, Barbara Kline, and Joyce Sobel will instruct us in this.

The December meeting is our holiday luncheon. We need a chair for this event. Guest speakers will be women in local government.

September 12, 2011 - Membership Meeting

September's membership meeting was in keeping with the state League's Civic Engagement Project, the purpose of which is to stimulate discussion of important policy issues and ballot measures as they arise. The talk was entitled "The Truth about Taxes: What Choices do We Have?" Our speaker was Ed Dolan, an economist and educator who happens to live on Lopez. Suggested to us by Beverly Zapalac, League member and Lopez resident, we struck gold. Dr. Dolan spoke to us in laymen's terms and gave us a graphic (literally!) picture of the fiscal direction in which we are headed in in this country. Starting out with the statement that taxes are both "too high" and "too low", Ed explained how both of these statements can be true.

We learned about "cyclically adjusted primary balance" and that ours (the U.S.) is 6.8% when ideally we should be near zero or in slight surplus. He then went on to give us tools with which to think about how we might like to see this discouraging state remedied. There are different kinds of taxes, different ways of using them and different sources for gathering statistics to increase one's understanding of this large subject. Ultimately, Dr. Dolan suggested that what we need is tax reform. To view a film of the meeting, local libraries will have a DVD in their collections shortly. To view a power point presentation of the talk, go to <http://dolanecon.blogspot.com>. To get information on the LWVWA's Civic Engagement Project's information on taxes in general and WA state taxes more specifically, go to www.lwvwa.org. Tax information is about two-thirds of the way down the first page of the site.

Sarah Crosby, Program Chair

LWV of Washington

The following is taken from the second half of the *LWVWA Legislative Newsletter*, issued in June. The first portion was published in the summer issue of the *LWVSJ Voter*.

Energy & Climate Change

Two very important pieces of environmental legislation managed to pass this year: SB 5769 **Coal-Free Future for Washington** became law and will phase out our state's last coal-fired electricity plant in Centralia. It was a win-win situation for all concerned, including the employees of Trans-Alta who work at the plant. There are those who would have liked to see a more aggressive piece of legislation that would have moved this action more quickly. However, the only way that it passed was to make sure that all concerned agreed with the plan.

HB 1489 **Clean Fertilizers, Healthier Lakes and Rivers** will limit the sale of phosphorus in lawn fertilizers. Phosphorus-loading, which occurs when too much fertilizer is applied to lawns and then gets into our water supply, is responsible for pollution and dangerous algae.

As far as the budget is concerned, it could have been worse. Working proactively, the legislature managed to offset serious deficits for our state parks by enacting user fees to maintain a degree of care. Furthermore, something that had occurred in the last two budgets and which many were concerned would happen again was the "robbing" of the Clean Air Act funds. This did not happen

Reproductive Rights

There were two issues that occupied most of the session: First, HB 1336 **Limited Pregnancy Service Centers** was reported out of Committee with a do pass recommendation, cleared the Rules Committee and was placed on the House Calendar. However it did not come to a vote. It will still be alive for the next session. Second, in **Funding for Family Planning**, there was a lot of give and take. The final result was a \$2 million cut in family planning but then the SB 5912 expanded family planning services to 250% of the federal poverty level. This will require additional state funding but comes with federal matching funds.

Other bills that we followed that received no action are: HB 1442 a parental notification effort, HB 1604 a requirement that parents opt-in for AIDS and sex education, and HB 5336 limiting funding for abortions.

Families & Children

SB 5921 **Working Connections Childcare**. The Governor vetoed bill language requiring eligibility for families receiving WCCC subsidies to be maintained at 175% of the Federal Poverty Level. In her veto message, the Governor wrote that this limitation would infringe on her authority to manage the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) WorkFirst program. The Department of Early Learning (DEL) must reconsider the current cap of 35,200 families receiving WCCC if there

are administrative savings in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/ Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) expenditures. In other changes, parents' volunteer work at their child care or preschool would count toward approved TANF work activities. Anyone applying for subsidies is required to also seek state child support enforcement services unless there is good cause not to. Further, DEL and DSHS are required to assess recommendations for electronic attendance records for child care subsidies.

HB 1965 Adverse Childhood Experiences. The DSHS and the DEL will work together to develop a transition plan for a non-governmental public-private partnership to prevent and reduce Adverse Childhood Experiences throughout childhood.

SB 5091 Family Leave Insurance. Delays implementation of the paid family leave insurance program.

HB 1087 Makes 2011-2013 Operating Budget Appropriations. This bill includes:

\$110 Million for over 8,000 at-risk three and four year olds in Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and 165 additional ECEAP slots, using federal Child Care and Development Fund dollars.

\$1.276 Million for the Child Care Resource & Referral Networks to maintain core services such as connecting parents with licensed child care, community supports and working with providers to improve the quality of their care. Funds cut this year are not backfilled.

\$900 Million for Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WAKIDS). Along with these dollars, private funding will help implement WAKIDS in state-funded full-day kindergarten at no cost to families. This kindergarten assessment will help teachers learn how kids are learning so that they do not miss out on needed intervention services.

\$300,000 for Reach Out and Read to maintain its evidence-based early literacy work that helps medical professionals get books and developmentally literacy information to parents of children ages 6 months to 5 years of age.

\$500,000 One-time funding provided to develop a non-governmental public-private initiative to help address the needs of high-risk children and families. The department is authorized to develop partnerships and a new model for financing network community capacity to build and reduce adverse childhood experiences.

\$1.4 Million funding is provided for DSHS to secure private matching funds to allocate to community networks to provide training and services related to adverse childhood experiences.

\$3 Million for the Career and Wage Ladder program is eliminated. Contracts with at least 55 child care centers will be eliminated.

Toxics & Medicines Disposal

This was not a good year for toxics legislation. **Safe Medicine Return** did not pass. This bill (SB 5234, HB 1370) would have established locations - in every county and in every city over 10,000 population in the state - where unused, expired and unwanted medications could be taken for disposal. The program would be established and funded by the pharmaceutical companies doing business in the state, and regulated by Departments of Ecology and Health.

Children's Safe Products Act II did not pass. This bill (SB 5231, HB 1319) would have built upon the Children's Safe Products Act that passed in 2008. That earlier bill gave Ecology authority to identify and prioritize toxic chemicals in children's products. Ecology has completed those steps and, when the current draft rules are completed, manufacturers of these products will have to report to Ecology on the presence and amount of these chemicals that are in their products. This year's legislation would have given Ecology the authority to require manufacturers of products containing the chemicals on the priority list to assess alternatives to the chemicals and to find ways of making the product more safely.

Campaign Finance & Government

Those we supported and which passed: HB 1031 **Requiring a Secrecy Envelope for All Ballots**. This bill made a small change in the law so all voters would receive a secrecy envelope.

HB 1324/SB 5119 **Cancellation of the Presidential Primary**. League position is that a Presidential primary only makes sense if the results are used by the parties to make their choice of candidates. The primary would cost \$10 million to conduct and, for the 2012 election, we agreed with the Secretary of State's office that this was an expense which could be foregone.

SB5021 **Enhancing Election Campaign Disclosure Requirements to Promote Greater Transparency for the Public**. This was a big win for voters and for bipartisanship. During the 2011 elections, some campaigns were fraught with tactics which hid the identity of the funder of the election advertising. This bill lowers the reporting requirements, changes how political committees can be named to identify the sponsor, and adds increased criminal penalties for violations.

Those we supported and which did not pass: SB 5010 **Concerning Public Financing for Supreme Court Campaigns**. This was one of our top legislative priorities. Sadly with a tight budget, this bill made no headway. It did keep the issue before the Legislature and will be offered again next session.

SB5297 **Concerning Initiatives and Signature Gathering**. The League has long championed increased filing fee costs to limit frivolous filings. This bill as finally amended would have allowed the Secretary of State's office to set the filing fee. As originally intended, it was crafted to require signature gathering organizations to file paperwork with the Secretary of State, but that was scrapped and instead a requirement that the signature gatherer must sign a declaration on the front side (as opposed to the back side) of the initiative or referendum and to identify the company

who employed them in the same place. This bill failed to move out of the Senate Rules Committee. Many of the changes over the course of this bill's "life" occurred because of 1st Amendment concerns.

Those we opposed and which did not pass: SB 5125/HB1185 **Concerning Absentee Ballots**. This short title hides a big concern for the League's position. It changed the ballot due date to the Auditor's office to election day. Luckily it went nowhere, but was supported by the Secretary of State's office. The League believes that those who listen and learn right up to election day and then mail their ballots on election day should not be disenfranchised.

Those we opposed and which passed: HB1080/SB5171 **Service & Overseas Electronic Balloting**. The League has worked to make sure that voters have secure, accessible, re-countable, accurate and transparent access to the polls. This bill was to allow overseas voters to send their ballots by email, fax or electronic means. While this type of voting is easy and convenient, it is *not* secure. There are no protections against vote tampering. In fact, sending voted ballots back by these means requires that they will travel over the Internet and phone lines and become vulnerable to interception, manipulation or deletion. Our arguments did not win the day and we intend to watch this process closely as it develops.

National LWV

League Expresses Concern with Delay of Pollution Regulation

The League and coalition groups sent a letter to the White House expressing deep concern that the Environmental Protection Agency will not meet its commitment to propose long- overdue Clean Air Act standards limiting dangerous carbon pollution from new and existing power plants. The groups also asked the President to reaffirm the administration's commitment to issue strong standards that significantly reduce carbon emissions from both new and existing power plants as the Clean Air Act requires.

September 20, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

On behalf of our millions of members, our organizations are deeply concerned to learn that your Environmental Protection Agency will not meet its commitment to propose long-overdue Clean Air Act standards limiting dangerous carbon pollution from new and existing power plants by September 30th. This marks the second delay in fulfilling your administration's promise, made in settlement of litigation and

in representations to the Supreme Court, to address power plants' enormous contribution to the air pollution that drives climate change.

Power plants are the nation's largest source of dangerous carbon pollution. Today, 40 years after passage of the Clean Air Act, they are still free to dump unlimited amounts of that pollution into the air. Americans are already suffering from the impacts of climate change. More extreme weather – like the recent floods and storms in the Northeast and extreme drought and wildfires in Texas – is expected from a continually warming world. Many lives have been lost, dozens of communities flooded or burned, thousands of people have lost homes or other property, and damages have totaled in the tens of billions of dollars.

Limiting the carbon pollution from power plants will protect our children's health, our coastlines, rivers, forests, wildlife, and our economy. Moving forward to modernize our aging energy infrastructure will protect our health and well-being, save families and small businesses money through more efficient generation and use of electricity, and contribute to our economic recovery and create thousands of new jobs.

Clean Air Act standards for power plant carbon pollution are years overdue. Earlier this year, your administration assured the Supreme Court that EPA was committed to issue them on a specific schedule. On the strength of those assurances, in June the Court unanimously reaffirmed that it is EPA's job to protect Americans from climate-changing pollution. EPA, however, has acknowledged that the promised schedule will not be met.

Accordingly, we ask that you reaffirm the administration's commitment to issue strong standards that significantly reduce carbon emissions from both new and existing power plants as the Clean Air Act requires. We ask that the administration announce and stick to a remedial schedule requiring proposal of these standards without further delay and completion of them as soon as possible in 2012.

Your administration's leadership in carrying out the law, without delay, is essential to securing a stronger, safer and more prosperous America.

Sincerely,

Wm. Robert Irvin, President
American Rivers

Robert Wendelgass, President and CEO
Clean Water Action

Carroll Muffett, President
Center for International Environmental
Law

Trip Van Noppen, President
Earthjustice

Armond Cohen, Executive Director
Clean Air Task Force

Margie Alt, Executive Director
Environment America

Fred Krupp, President
Environmental Defense Fund

Erich Pica, President
Friends of the Earth

Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins
Chief Executive Officer
Green For All

Philip D. Radford, Executive Director
Greenpeace USA

Gene Karpinski, President
League of Conservation Voters

**Elisabeth MacNamara, President
League of Women Voters**

David Yarnold, President and CEO
National Audubon Society

Thomas C. Kiernan, President
National Parks Conservation
Association

Larry Schweiger
President and CEO
National Wildlife Federation

Frances Beinecke, President
Natural Resources Defense Council

Peter Wilk, Executive Director
Physicians for Social Responsibility

Michael Brune, Executive Director
Sierra Club

Kevin Knobloch, President
Union of Concerned Scientists

Mission of the League of Women Voters

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

Goal of the League of Women Voters

To empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide. Membership is open to any citizen over the age of 18 who subscribes to the League’s purposes and policies. All LWVSJ meetings are nonpartisan and open to the public.

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JOIN US TODAY!

YES! I want to become a member of the League of Women Voters of the San Juans.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Circle one: (Individual Membership-renewal: \$50) (Two members at same address \$75)
(Student Membership \$25)

I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the League of Women Voters of WA Education Fund and have enclosed a separate check (to LWVWA-EF) in the amount of \$_____.

PLEASE RETURN TO:

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