



VOTER

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

May 2009

Calendar

May 11 — Annual Membership Meeting — Monday, 12 noon to 2:00 pm

This year's annual membership meeting will be held at Vinny's Restaurant in Friday Harbor. The cost is \$20, payable at the door.

See pages 6 and 7 for the agenda and the proposed budget.

**June 1, 2009 — Monday, 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm at the San Juan Island Library
Monthly Board Meeting**

All members are encouraged to attend.

LWVSJ Happenings

April 20, 2009 — Monthly Membership Meeting

Water Matters!

Ann Jarrell arranged for the April League of Women Voters program. Speakers were Mike Kaill, marine zoologist, Russell Barsh of the conservation laboratory Kwiaht and Brian Rader, San Juan County Pollution Prevention Specialist.

Board meetings are on the 1st Monday of each month and Membership Meetings are usually on the 2nd Monday. Annual Membership meetings are 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.

The aquarium at the Port of Friday Harbor has proved to be a microcosm of our harbor waters. Water is pumped into the aquarium continuously from the harbor. Mike Kaill volunteered to look after the aquarium. He supplied the aquarium with various kinds of sea life from anemones to various kinds to shellfish and other varieties. Things were going well until 2007 when he noticed some invertebrates were diminishing in size and eventually died.. Since the water was coming from the harbor, he tested that water and found, at various times, high levels of detergents. He met with the town, county and environmental agencies and they worked together to find that some sewer lines were not properly hooked up. The town has been very cooperative and has since rectified this problem but there is more that needs to be done.

Russell Barsh talked about the fresh water and surface water on the islands and what he has found. Fresh water testing on the islands shows the presence of the toxic chemicals arsenic, cadmium and lead. The EPA standard does not allow arsenic at any level in drinking water but these chemicals are of a geological nature and we can't manage this except by filtering our drinking water. Testing for pesticides and detergents, he found detergents at levels that were a thousand times greater than the pesticides. He claims that the levels in our water are in the threshold range and if we cut back on detergents it might make a difference. If we don't do something, the levels will continue to go up and as more people move here, the quality of our water could be further impacted.

Brian Rader is working with the business community in educating them about how their particular businesses might be polluting our waters. He meets with dentists to see how they dispose of chemicals, car repair shops that deal in oils and detergents and a whole plethora of businesses dealing with a wide variety of contaminants.

How can we help? Use less detergent in dishwashers, washing machines and in the shower. Hand-made soap made in the islands is preferable to commercial varieties.

Nancy Wight

May 3, 2009 - Board of Directors Meeting, San Juan Island Library, Friday Harbor, WA

Information on the actions taken at the board meeting will be included in the June edition of the Voter.

LWV of Washington

The Washington state legislature adjourned on April 26. Governor Gregoire has announced her intention to call the legislature into special session to complete business that she felt was unfinished. Negotiations are ongoing between the governor's office and legislative leaders to determine the length and scope of the special session.

Action Items: The following items are tentatively scheduled to be included in a special session.

[HB 1517](#) - Restoration of voting rights

[2SSB 5945](#) – Washington Health Partnership plan – relating to health care reform.

[SSB 5891](#) – Establishing a forum for testing primary care medical home reimbursements pilot programs.

Issue Items: The following items are related to positions taken by the League of Women voters of Washington.

GOVERNMENT

[HB 2377](#) – This bill would have increased the sales tax by 0.3 percent (3 cents on \$10) from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2012. It would have provided funding for the Basic Health Plan, public health services, health care, mental health care, hospitals, and long-term care nursing homes. It would also have made funds available for the Working Families' Tax Exemption to offset some of the regressivity of the sales tax. Finally, the sales tax provision would have been sent to the voters as a referendum in November.

Status – HB 2377 was heard in the House Health & Human Services Appropriations Committee on Friday, April 17. LWVWA testified in favor. The bill was reported out of committee, but was never brought to a vote of the House.

The 2009-11 Operating Budget was adopted as an all cuts budget.

HEALTH CARE

Health Care Budget Items in 2009-11 Operating Budget Bills – [HB 1244](#)/ [SB 5600](#) - As you well know there are many health care programs that may be cut in the 2009-2011 budget.

League Position – Ensure universal access for all residents to a comprehensive, uniform, and affordable set of health services...regardless of one's health status or financial status.

Status – The budget was reconciled by both the House and Senate and passed on April 25. There are a few bills that support the budget that were not passed by the end of the legislative session, which may need to be considered in a special session. In the budget General Assistance – Unemployable (GA-U) was not eliminated, but was reduced by about 18%. The Basic Health Plan was reduced by 42%, or 40,000 slots, without a way to raise revenue to fill this void in our health safety net. Family planning received a 10% cut, and there were also cuts in public health, long term care and mental health.

EDUCATION

Two of LWVWA's priorities for this legislative session involved education:

Inclusion of a civics class in the Core 24 Graduation Requirements. This was accomplished through [HB 2132](#) which passed unanimously in both houses and was signed by the governor on April 25.

A new K-12 Basic Education funding structure. This was accomplished with passage of [ESHB 2261](#) after a contentious debate in both houses, partly because any discussion of revenues was removed from the bill and the full implementation of the new provisions was delayed until September 2018. The expanded program of Basic Education that the state will fund includes increased instructional hours, 24 credits required for graduation, a new transportation funding formula, all-day kindergarten, early learning for at-risk students, and a highly-capable program. A Quality Education Council and a K-12 Data Governance Group will be formed as well as four Working Groups to develop details of the funding formulas, early learning, employee compensation, and levies and levy equalization.

The 2009-11 budget passed by the legislature cut \$1.5B from education. The programs, grants, and pilot projects funded in the 2007-09 budget are either eliminated or drastically cut. I-728 is reduced by 75%. Class sizes will be increased and 3000-5000 teachers may lose their jobs. So, while we celebrate a new funding structure for basic education that may be fully implemented by 2018, we will continue to worry about our children's education during the next nine years.

EARLY LEARNING

Many thanks to all LWVWA members who contacted their legislators on behalf of early learning issues this session, your voices helped legislators hear that early learning is important to a wide-ranging group of citizens.

Budget impacts that you helped support:

The budget looks to be fairly livable for Early Learning, although cuts were made to the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) which means 166 children will not be enrolled for next year.

Funding of \$1.35M and \$850K stimulus was restored for Child Care Resource and Referral services that link parents with child care providers, support childcare providers, and offer provider training. This funding was originally omitted in the Governor's budget, as well as House and Senate budgets.

Bills with deferred funding that passed, with your help, include:

ESHB 2261 (Basic Ed) passed the House and Senate and is expected to be signed by the Governor. This bill includes early learning in the definition of basic education, and is an important acknowledgement that learning occurs well before a child enters kindergarten.

SHB 1943 passed the House and Senate and will be sent to the Governor for signature. This bill will help the early learning community develop a systemic approach to professional development/education for childcare providers.

[SB 6158](#) passed by delaying implementation for three more years, until October 2012. This historic legislation was approved in 2007 to grant workers up to five weeks of partial wage replacement of up to \$250 per week for the birth or adoption of a child. It was scheduled to begin in October this year but legislators couldn't find a way to pay for it.

REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

[SB 5629](#) - Pregnancy Prevention Programs

The bill passed both Houses and was signed by the Governor on the 29th of April. In its final form, the bill amended the current law. The Department of Health is allowed to apply for comprehensive sex education funds. All mention of abstinence was dropped. There is no title.

Family Planning is funded for the first year at a 90% level. While there is no funding for the second year, it is expected that federal funds will be available.

For further information on any of these topics or others included in the League's positions, click on <http://www.lwvwa.org/positions.html> for access to the legislative newsletters.

LWVWA Good In Government Awards Gala

The LWVWA Good in Government Awards Gala will be held Saturday, May 30 at 6:30 PM during convention in Tacoma. It will be a grand evening of celebration with three honorees (Senator Rosa Franklin, the Korean Women's Association, and The News Tribune). Included in the wine and dessert reception will be an opportunity to tour the "Women's Votes, Women's Voices" exhibit at the WA State History Museum. A raffle drawing will be at the close of the program. Both the gala and the raffle serve as wonderful opportunities to support the LWVWA Ed Fund. Tickets are \$40 and can be purchased by sending a check or credit card number to: The League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce County, 702 Broadway, Suite 105, Tacoma, WA 98402.

National LWV

Health Care Reform

The League believes that quality, affordable health care should be available to all U.S. residents. Other U.S. health care policy goals should include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable total national expenditure level for health care. Furthermore, the League believes that all Americans should have access to a basic level of care that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary care (including prenatal and reproductive health), acute care, long-term care and mental health care.

Through decades of work in their communities, League members have learned that Americans believe that fairness and responsibility, as well as access, are important values for any health care system. We believe that health care reform can only succeed if it takes all these values into account. Following are some of the recent actions of the League on this issue.

[League Urges Representatives to Support Strong Health Care Legislation](#) - Apr 17, 2009

The League sent a letter to Representatives urging them to support strong and effective health care legislation.

[League Sends Comments to HHS on Refusal of Care Issues - Apr 16, 2009](#)

The League and coalition partners submitted comments to the Department of Health and Human Services supporting rescission of the HHS regulation that would have a negative impact on patient access to health care services and information.

ANNUAL MEETING LWVSJ

MONDAY MAY 11, 2009, 12 NOON

VINNY'S RESTAURANT

FRIDAY HARBOR

\$20, payable at the door

LUNCH AND SOCIAL HOUR

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER - Nancy Wight

INTRODUCTIONS AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION - Carol Baylis

BUSINESS MEETING

President's Report and Membership Issues - Nancy Wight

Report of the Nominating Committee - Sandy Harold, Chair, speaking for members Carol Baylis and Marjory Stanley:

The nominees for officers for 2009-2010 are as follows:

President:	Ann Jarrell
Vice President:	Susan Dehlendorf
Secretary:	Janna Gingras
Treasurer:	Pat Curtin

The nominees for the 2009-2010 Nominating Committee are:

Joyce Sobel
Doris Van Alen
Nancy Wight

Call for nominations from the floor

Election of officers

Call for Member-at-Large nominees and election

Call for Program Suggestions from the Membership for 2009-2010

Budget - Pat Curtin

Treasurer's Report 2008-2009

Proposed Budget 2009-2010 presentation and approval

PROGRAM WITH GUEST SPEAKER – Kevin Ranker

CLOSING - Nancy Wight

Proposed Budget 2009-2010 Fiscal Year, June 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010

INCOME		EXPENSES	
Dues	2250.00	Nat'l PMP*	1314.00
Interest	20.00	State PMP	821.50
Donations	165.50	Administration	300.00
TOTAL	2435.50		2435.50

*Per Member Payment

A detailed Financial Statement will be available at the annual meeting. If you wish to have it mailed to you, please contact Pat Curtin (360-5531).

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.

The goal of the League of Women Voters

Is 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 LWVWSJ meetings are nonpartisan and open to the public.

Board Members of the League of Women Voters of the San Juans

President, Nancy Wight	378-3810	nancywight@centurytel.net
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Member-At-Large, Joyce Lewin	378-2076	
Member-At-Large, Beverley Zapalac	468-9040	beverlykz@centurytel.net

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 \$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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