



# Spokane Area VOTER

Ann Murphy & Sandy Paine,  
Co-Presidents

November 2006  
VOLUME LXII/ NO.8

VOTER Editor, CJ Tyler-Watson  
VOTER Publisher, Betty Banks

*“The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences the public policy through education and advocacy.”*

## Election Reform...Again

November Unit Meetings will consider the **LWVWA** Study on Election Reform. Please be sure to review the current study (see side bar to get your copy!)

**LWVWA** has studied election methods and voting procedures since 2000 and those studies are available at [www.lwvwa.org](http://www.lwvwa.org) - under “Election Reform Study” (or you can check your files for the previous studies – see list on page 3. There are however, other issues that need to be better understood because so much has changed since then. The Washington State gubernatorial election of 2004 awoke the state to concerns about vote counts and votes denied. In a *Spokesman Review* editorial on October 24, 2006, “Fraudulent Fears”, the US Election Assistance Commission, established by Congress, did not find widespread fraud at the polling place. The fear of fraud, however, has led 98% of congressional Republicans to support a bill on photo ID’s for voters, 98% of Democrats opposing.

Spokane County has moved to all mail-in ballots, which can be more susceptible to voter fraud (via coercion or forgery) but there is little discussion of this issue. And that is where our current study, “Election Reform in Washington State,” may shed some light. It is a bit of a dry read because it lists the bills that have recently passed in the Legislature and recommendations of various committees to improve elections. The most controversial recommendation has been the “Voter Registration Database” – VRD or VRDB.

Do you know what is required to register to vote? What about a proof of citizenship requirement? Answers to these and other questions will require careful consideration AND a reading of the document.

Discussion questions during Unit Meetings will deal with the Voter Registration Database, current laws on random audits of ballots, proof of citizenship for registration and requirement that mail-in ballots be received by Election Day. Come join a lively discussion!

**Pam Behring**

## Studies Available

Reminder that there are two **LWVWA** studies – *Growth Management* and *Election Reform* – available on-line at [www.lwvwa.org](http://www.lwvwa.org). But, if the computer is not your thing, and you would still like a copy of either or both studies, please call **Ann Murphy** at 838-4549 to order your printed copy. To be assured of getting your Election Reform study prior to your unit meeting, please call by November 6.

## Unit Meetings

*Remember, any member / potential member may attend any Unit*

Nov. 8 (Wed) - Unit 4 – 6:00 p.m.

Europa, 125 S. Wall

**Ann Murphy** 838-4549

Nov. 9 (Thurs) -Unit 5 – 9:30 a.m.

**LWV** Office, 2404 N. Howard

**Martha Preecs** 325-4725

Nov. 9 (Thurs) -Unit 3 – 7:00 p.m.

Spokane Valley Library, 12004 E. Main

**RJ Clemmons** 924-8997

Nov. 13 (Mon) -Unit 7/9 – 12:30 p.m.

Rockwood Lane Retirement Community

221 E. Rockwood Blvd.

**Sibyl Disch** 747-4008

## Looking ahead...

There are no unit meetings scheduled for December - if your unit would like to meet, please feel free to schedule - The next unit meetings will be in January. Topics in the New Year will include:

January – Program Planning (unit)

February – **LWV** Birthday party – February 8 (evening general meeting – viewing of “Iron Jawed Angels” and great conversation – details TBA)

## President's Perspective...

Committee Assembly

On September 25th **Ann Murphy** and I attended the luncheon for the visiting State Senators and their staffers at the Davenport Hotel. Senators were seated at each table, and this provided an opportunity to visit with senators from other parts of the state. They were happy to be here and very interested in knowing how things were going in Spokane.

On Tuesday, **Suzi Hokonson** and I attended a full day of hearings. Hearings were packed with lobbyists and people waiting to testify, however members from the general public were absent. **Suzi** and I were both disappointed that students and others missed this prime opportunity to see our senate in action and hear the worthwhile and often touching testimony from the citizens of this state. We especially enjoyed hearing from minority business owners who have been given a chance to participate in the low interest loan program funded by current legislation. These people were able to start businesses at a reasonable cost and now employ others in the community. Many are looking at expanding to second stores or operations. They were grateful for the funds provided, along with classes and help in developing a workable business plan. What a wonderful success story and an example of how government can truly help those in need.

On the way to lunch, **Suzi** and I visited with Neil Beaver who works for our own Senator Brown. He was delighted to see us and appreciated our participation. He was also disappointed that more of the public were not in attendance. Please remember the next time the Senate visits, to take a moment and attend a hearing. You will learn a lot and come away with the feeling that yes, state government can and does work. And as Senator Jean Berkey remarked at lunch, the Davenport Hotel isn't a bad place for long meetings.

**Sandy Paine**

### Tax Facts:



Washington State's budget for 2003-2005 was \$52.2 billion or \$32 million a day. The State's operating budget includes federal funds as well as dedicated funds. The major dedicated funds are Higher Education (tuition and fees accounts) and the University of Washington Hospital account - \$4.9 billion; bonds for capital purposes - \$2.6 billion; and gas taxes for transportation - \$1.8 billion. The Operating budget of \$20 billion includes federal grants and dedicated (service) funds which leaves \$22.8 billion for the general fund, or "everything else". In this category is K-12 education (\$10.1 billion), Human Services (\$7.9 billion), Higher Education (\$2.7 billion), Government operations (\$0.6 billion), Natural Resources (\$0.3 billion) and Debt Service (\$1.5 billion).

**Pam Behring**

## Splinters from the Board

- + **Treasurer's Report:**  
Checking \$504.29 Savings \$5,662.75
- + 22 members and 9 guests attended Oct. unit meetings.  
27 dues remain unpaid - Please pay dues now.
- + **Ann Murphy** will attend the action workshop on Nov.18.
- + **Ann Murphy** will present a ballot issues forum on Oct. 24th for the "Need to Know" group.

### Quotable Quote

"Individual rights are not subject to a public vote; a majority has no right to vote away the rights of a minority; the political function of rights is precisely to protect minorities from oppression by majorities (and the smallest minority on earth is the individual)."

Ayn Rand

### Water Drops

Spokane River Clean Water Workshop: Saturday, Nov. 4, 2006, 9 AM - 3 PM, at Gonzaga Law School, 721 N. Cincinnati St. Learn about water issues and how to be an advocate for the River. The workshop and lunch are free, but you are asked to register by Nov. 2 if you want lunch. Call 328-8144. [www.info@spokaneriver.net](http://www.info@spokaneriver.net)

City of Spokane Master Shorelines Program: Information on issues and opportunities for restoration, preservation, economic development, recreation, shoreline access, and other shoreline-related activities will be available at an Open House, which has been rescheduled to: Thursday, November 9, 2006, West Central Community Center, 1603 N. Belt, Newton Room, 5:30 - 7:30 PM, 326-9540.

**Alice Stolz**

*The LWV VOTER is published monthly except in the summer by the League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area, 2404 N. Howard St. Spokane WA 99205. Members of the League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area subscribe through their annual dues. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any citizen, 18 or older, may join the League of Women Voters.*

## Forums and Voter Service

League Members have been busy this past month with a variety of **Voter Service Activities**.

- League sponsored forums were taped at Spokane City Council Chambers on October 11 & 12. Four separate forums were recorded with different moderators: Washington State Legislative and US Congressional races (**Martha Lou Wheatley Billeter**), Spokane County Commissioner and Executive Offices (**Pam Behring**), State and Local Ballot Issues (**Pam Behring**) and Spokane District Court Judicial Races (**Ann Murphy**). Thanks to this team of moderators as well **Ann Bailor** (timer), Sandy Paine, and audience support of Jenny Willardson and Suzi Hokonson. **Alice Stolz** again provided many of the questions. Both evenings were long, but we do know that the voting public appreciates these forums and watches the rebroadcasts numerous times. As a bonus, on October 12, KHQ did a live feed to their internet side of the entire forum.

### November Rebroadcasts:

- 11/1 12:30 p.m. Ballot Issues
- 11/4 12:30 State Leg/US Rep
- 11/6 9:30 a.m. Ballot Issues
- 11:00 a.m. County Offices
- 1:00 p.m. State Leg/US Rep
- 2:00 p.m. District Court Judges

- League assisted the Spokane Library Foundation with their first town hall forum on October 18. **Ann Murphy** moderated a session with the nine legislative candidates from Districts 3 & 6 plus the two county commissioner candidates. It was lively conversation with the questions coming from the 61 audience members. Questions were great! Thanks to **Jean Wells** for timing and to **Sandy Paine** for logistics. League enjoyed working with Sandy Kernerman from the library on this event, and she hopeful that this becomes an annual partnership.
- Ballot Issues talks around the area –
  - o *Need to Know* group – **Ann Murphy** presented on all ballot issues
  - o Emily Court – **Alice Stolz** presented on all ballot issues

- o **Ann Murphy** participated in the No on 933 meeting with the Spokesman Review Editorial Board – and great editorial support for the No Campaign on Oct 22.
- o **Ann Murphy** presented ballot issues information at two neighborhood council meetings.

## Requiring Mail Ballots to be received by Election Day

“Candidates and reporters are always eager for final election results. When elections results are not known until 10 days after the primary or 15 days after the general election, there are frequently calls to change election law by requiring all mail ballots to be received by election night. But it is easy to forget overseas voters, especially the military, whose ballots may not be able to arrive by Election Day. According to the Associated Press, some states that currently require Election Day arrival are warning that thousands of votes from the overseas military may go uncounted in the November 2004 election unless emergency legislation is passed. They are urging an extension to 14 days after the election.

“Although HAVA had provided funding to conduct a pilot program involving computerized voting for overseas voters, that program was cancelled because of potential security problems.”

(excerpted from “Voting Inside and Outside the Box -Part II, 2004)

## Previous League Studies on Election Reform

- **Voting Inside and Outside the Box — Part II, 2004**
- **Voting Equipment and Procedures on Trial, 2003**  
A two-year study looks at voting with absentee/vote-by-mail ballots, reviews the security checks, evaluates the role voting equipment plays, and includes a definition of terms.
- **Direct Democracy: The Initiative and Referendum Process in Washington, 2002**  
A review of initiative and referendum history and study of requirements and regulations adopted by other states.
- **An Evaluation of Major Election Methods, 2000**  
An examination of the goals of representative democracy, the voting systems used in Western Democracies.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

YES, I want to join The League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area

Please make check payable to & mail to:  
LWVSA 2404 N. Howard St. Spokane, WA 99205

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone-- Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ 65. Individual	distribution
	Local \$21.70
	State \$18
	Nat'l \$26.30
\$100. Household	
\$100. Sustaining Member	
\$150. Benefactor	
\$ 45. Student Rate	



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF THE SPOKANE AREA**

2404 N. Howard  
Spokane, WA 99205  
(509) 326-8026

[WWW.LWVWA.ORG/SPOKANE](http://WWW.LWVWA.ORG/SPOKANE)

**LWV/Spokane Area**

Co-Presidents:

**Ann Murphy & Sandy Paine**

Secretary:

**Sandy Haupt**

Treasurer:

**Betty Banks**

Directors:

**Pam Behring, Nancy O’Keeffe**

Nominating Committee:

**Chris Clark, Chair, & Suzi Hokonson**

**TO:**

## *Calendar*

- Nov. 7           **Election Day** – Ballots must be mailed by this date!
- Nov. 8, 9 & 13   Unit Meetings – Election Reform
- Nov.16           **LWVSA** Board Meeting, 5:30 pm at LWV office 2404 N. Howard
- Nov. 18           **LWVWA** Action Workshop, Bellevue
- Nov. 21           Last day to RSVP for Nov. 28 Luncheon – call 467-9524 or 326-2216
- Nov. 28           Legislative Luncheon-see box to right →
- Dec. 14           **LWVSA** Board Meeting  
(to be held if needed)
- 2007**
- Jan. 8            Washington Legislative Session starts
- Jan. 8, 10, 11   Unit Meetings – Program Planning
- Jan. 18           **LWVSA** Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m. at **LWV** office

### **Legislative Luncheon**

**LWV** members will be treated to a special luncheon on Nov. 28 – 11:30 a.m. at the Steamplant Grill, 159 S. Lincoln St., Spokane. Area elected officials – legislators, county commissioners and city council members will be invited. The luncheon is a member event underwritten by Avista. Non members are welcome – Cost is \$15 (non-members who join League on or before Nov. 28 may attend at no charge. Basic annual dues are \$65)

RSVP is required by Nov. 21 for members and non-members to have your ticket waiting for you at the door. Various parking is available around Steamplant Grill. The lot to the north of the adjacent railroad viaduct offers free parking to Steamplant customers. This event is the League December program event.

### *New this Month...*

**Unit 4** is moving to a new time and place -Please join us at 6 pm at Europa, 125 S. Wall, for some dinner and conversation.

**Member Handbooks** – will be available at November unit meetings – after that they will be mailed to members who were not in attendance at fall meetings.