



VOTER

Winter 2011-12 The League of Women Voters of Washington, 4730 University Way NE, #720, Seattle, WA 98105 Linnea Hirst & Kim Abel : Co-Presidents
Vol. 53, No. 4 Tel: 206-622-8961 FAX: 206-622-4908 (outside toll area: 1-800-419-2596) email: lwwa@lwwa.org Myra Howrey, Editor

LWVWA League Day

Early Notice!! LWV League Day--- It's Happening on February 17, 2012

Everywhere League members go in Olympia, we hear "Oh, the League of Women Voters---I love the League!" Our yearly League Day (formerly known as League Lobby Day) at the State Capitol is fast approaching! So, we can capitalize on our excellent, well-earned reputation by coming to Olympia in force. This is an intense year for legislative action, with much early attention focused on the state budget and revenue options. At this writing, other policy issues are not well known, but may include:

- * expanding voting registration options,
- * action on health care matters, children and family
- * attention paid to education issues, climate change and energy.....
- * and much more of interest to League members!

We anticipate that Nancy Amidei will join us for her ever-energizing take on advocacy and legislative matters. The Lobby Team is working to develop the rest of the program along with ways to simplify your in-person advocacy.

We hope many of you will register for this event----this is, even more than usual, a critical time for League members to be in touch with our legislators about our concerns and positions. The Lobby Team appreciates your steadfast support, and we hope to see many of you in Olympia on February 17th. And, let us know of your concerns, interests, and questions.

Pat Dickason, Action Chair p.dickason@comcast.net 360-753-7647

League of Women Voters of Washington

LEAGUE DAY—REGISTRATION

February 17, 2012; Columbia Room, State Capitol, Olympia

Registration 8:30am; Program begins 9:00am Cost: \$25 per person/Lunch Provided

Name _____

Tel/email _____

Billing Address _____

Visa/MC # _____ exp. Date _____ Check enclosed _____

Register with the LWVWA state office by phone, e-mail, or mail:

(206) 622-8961 | lwwa@lwwa.org

4730 University Way N.E., Suite #720, Seattle, WA 98105

President's Message *by Linnea Hirst*

Presidents' Column

By Linnea Hirst

Somewhere in this Voter are the following quotes. See if you can find them.

Many hands make light warke*

*If a window of opportunity appears, don't pull down the shade.*** and

*What you do today can improve all your tomorrows.****

There's excitement brewing for the League of Women Voters of Washington! When you find those quotes, you'll find information about two of the very big deal projects many of us are going to be working on by January 1st.

Besides those two big projects, we've begun planning a third, a League History Project of which Flashback Fridays is Phase I. See page 4 for more information and our request.

So I'll let you get on with finding the quotes, reading about the projects and reading about many other things of importance and interest. I hope you'll be as excited and ready to be involved as I am.

- * John Heywood, 16th Century
- ** Tom Peters, BrainyQuote.com
- *** Ralph Marston, BrainyQuote.com



Gail Hiestand, Lou Templeton and Linnea Hirst in front of the Big Egg in Winlock WA on their way to the Vote411 Workshop in Eugene OR.

November Action Workshop
A Personal Perspective
By Erin Gray, LWVWA Social Media &
Communications Intern

On November 19, League members throughout Western Washington learned about the art of advocacy and lobbying at the annual Action Workshop. The day started off with a bang provided by LWV Mason County member and former legislative assistant Greg Williamson. Greg's rousing speech was followed with an update by LWVWA lobbyist Lonnie Johns-Brown and Action Chair Pat Dickason. Each shared some priorities and strategies for making League's voice heard in Olympia this year.

As an aspiring lobbyist, I was slightly star-struck by Ms. Johns-Brown, and appreciated her taking the time to chat briefly with me. The Lobby Team presentations were also truly inspiring; it was intriguing to hear about what each advocate does in Olympia. I was thrilled at the opportunity to meet such dedicated advocates, and hope to take up the invitation to drop in on one of their meetings.

For the technologically curious among us there was a brief presentation on how to navigate the Washington Legislative website. I expect that in addition to the oft-visited Secretary of State's website my browser will soon be making regular stops here as well; talk about great resources!

I would argue that part of what makes League unique is the careful research that is put into decision making. I was reminded of this during the updates on LWV studies that followed the website demonstration. After perusing the finished studies that are in the LWVWA office it was a joy to learn about the ones that are currently in the works. The closing instruction on how a bill becomes a law and what an individual can do at each step was an invaluable tool that I will certainly utilize. Finally, a recap of Action Workshop 2011 would be severely lacking without a mention of the wonderful salads that were provided for lunch by the Issaquah unit; thank you to everyone who brought one – they were delicious!

I was honored to be at the workshop and have the opportunity to meet more League members. I couldn't find a more inspiring group to intern with if I tried.

Spotlight on Local Leagues

The **San Juan County League** had a very productive and informative Consensus Meeting on November 14th. The discussion was led by three of our members with extensive experience. Marty Huleatte, PhD, has extensive experience with state level education administration, Barbara Kline, is the current superintendent of Orcas School district and Joyce Sobel, is a local and highly respected early childhood educator and recipient of the LWVSJ annual "Woman Who Made a Difference" award, 2011. The meeting was well attended and the discussions, brought out varied points of view, ultimately resulting in consensus.

For the holiday season, the San Juan League will honor local "Women in Government" at their annual Christmas luncheon on December 12. Our 40 LD representative, Kris Lytton, the Mayor of Friday Harbor, Carrie Lacher, and two County Councilmembers, Lovel Pratt and Patty Miller will attend and will speak about their journey to achieving elective office, and about the view from within government from a woman's point of view. We look forward to hearing what they have to say.

Is your functional typewriter looking for a new home? If so, the LWWA state office would be pleased to welcome it. Please contact the state office to inquire about making a possible donation.

This fall the **Pullman League** has seen that our many efforts really do bear fruit. Not only did we receive several thank you's for sponsoring October Forums on Open Government (With WCOG), candidates and Ballot Issues, our Wind Farm meeting in February on how the public could respond to this proposal led to some rethinking and a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is now a requirement for the permit.

Several years ago we held a meeting on drug courts—how they work and whether such a court could be started in very rural Whitman County. In early November we received a letter from Dennis Tracy, Whitman County prosecuting attorney, who spoke at the meeting. It reads in part: "During the course of the evening, I was able to speak to a number of your members and came away with a desire to establish a drug court here. It has taken some time, but I am glad to share with you that I and Judge Frazier have put together a drug court for Whitman County that is now up and running. ...I just wanted to thank you and the members of the League for your engagement in these issues."

Real change takes time, but it does happen with hard work and the League's educated advocacy.

"The League's forums were the best--professional and well done." "We had to go to 11 forums this year--yours was the best by far--your questions were substantive." "I can't tell you how many people told me they saw the forum telecast--it was really helpful."

These were the comments we heard again and again last night when the **LWV Bellingham/Whatcom County** held their 4th annual wine and cheese event. "Conversations with Elected Officials" Our casual meet and greet event is very popular with members, guests, and elected officials--giving all of us a chance to chat and get to know one another now that the elections are over and the work of governance begins again.

The forums are a huge amount of work and coordination. Hearing the candidate's high praise renews our commitment to keep providing high quality information to the voters.

Seeking your League Memorabilia!

We at the LWVWA state office have been brainstorming Facebook outreach strategies over the last couple months and recently we developed something we like to call "Flashback Fridays." On certain Fridays, we would post a picture, brochure, or newspaper article from our archives to LWVWA's Facebook page, giving people a chance to take a peek into League's amazing past.

We would like to include all Washington Leagues in our "Flashback Fridays" adventure and for this we ask your help. We're sure that you have some favorite photos of some amazing people doing amazing things, and we would be honored if you would share them with us! We currently have photos dating as far back as the 1950s and would welcome anything from League's history to add to our collection. Photos can be shared via e-mail, fax, post, or dropping them off at the state office.

Please feel free to call, e-mail, or drop in with any questions and/or suggestions for how we can make Flashback Fridays a success!

Thanks in advance,
Erin Gray
LWVWA Social Media &
Communications Intern

Update on Energy Study

Members of the Committee have spent the last three months developing their research strategies and soliciting information from experts. The focus of the study is on alternative energy sources with an emphasis on biomass. The energy sources being studied aside from biomass include: tidal/wave, wind, hydro, solar, and geothermal.

One member of the committee has unfortunately had to step down due to a family emergency. However, the Committee does have another who is willing to work on the project. It is possible that we will require an additional member to assist this person. Their study is solar energy. If anyone is interested in taking this on, they should contact Mary Moore at mymtrain@comcast.net.

The State Department of Commerce, Energy Division, has been apprised of the study and they have expressed their interest in helping us as much as possible. This will be an enormous assistance to us as we seek input from experts.

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Update: Citizens United vs FEC

By Linnea Hirst

A League committee is paying attention to what's going on across the country, and particularly watching a movement called Move to Amend. Some items of interest:

There was an event in Friday Harbor in which 45 enthusiastic people showed up for a 3-hour workshop. They want to push locally for resolutions, then to move to state level and on to all 50 states.

Boulder Colorado has passed a ballot measure calling for an amendment to the US Constitution

Voters in Madison and Dane County, Wisconsin approved measures calling for an end to corporate personhood and the legal status of money as speech.

Some Occupy Wall Street groups are working to amend.

Nine U.S. senators introduced a resolution in November that would amend the Constitution to overturn the Supreme Court's decisions in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* and in *Buckley v. Valeo.*, two cases that restrict the power of Congress to limit contributions. (See New York Times, November 16, 2011 "More Money Can Beat Big Money" by Lawrence Lessig.)

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
Membership and Leadership
Development Program
by Penney Van Vleet,
Clallam County LWV and national coach**

Get ready!

LWVWA and up to six of our local Leagues are about to be introduced to a new approach to membership and leadership development program (MLD) to ensure the sustainability of our League as we work diligently to sustain and strengthen our democracy and increase the effectiveness of the League in our communities.

The Membership and Leadership Development Program grew out of the Membership Recruitment Initiative which was implemented by the national League in several states 5 years ago. It was a successful program by the numbers and enthusiasm; and the voices from the state and local Leagues let it be known that they needed more. The Leadership Development component was added and continues to be tweaked with the aid of the state and national coaches as they work with their local Leagues.

The Program is being gradually introduced to more states, and Washington and several other states have been invited to join in 2012. The LWVWA board is already at work on the list of required tasks to get ready for this first year of the program.

As one of the national coaches, I've been working with this program for nearly one year, and am delighted with the resources that have and continue to be developed, as well as the personal commitment of the coaches, national staff and the board members at all levels of the League. Membership is growing and we are incorporating the best practices for developing a strong cohort from which we can draw for our boards and community leadership.

This is a different way of doing things and will not happen overnight. It is not easy, but you will not be alone and the results can be phenomenal. The national League provides training for you and your state and national coaches and everyone is there for you as we create a more efficient and effective organization.

Join us for an exciting and rewarding journey.

**MLD Program, Continued
By Linnea Hirst**

As we develop this new and exciting program, we'll be looking both for coaches and for local Leagues who want to take part this first year.

The coaches and their state board coordinator will go for training in mid-April (at LWVUS expense), and the local Leagues will join together for a two-day training session with the coaches and with national staff somewhere in the state this summer or fall.

Each coach will then work with two local Leagues, mostly by telephone once they've met the local League members. They'll also be in monthly contact with their assigned national coach.

The kind of coaches we'll be looking for are those who:

- Are open to new ideas
- Can soak up ideas and apply to new problems
- Enjoy people and
- Love the League
- Have a sense of humor

The kind of local Leagues we're looking for? Well, how about Leagues that believe that if a window of opportunity appears, don't pull down the shade, and what you do today can improve all your tomorrows? That probably includes all local Leagues in the state—but unfortunately, we'll have to choose between you this first year.

So—tell us if you're interested, and why. We'll be in touch!



Robin Wisdom, LWVOR President at the microphone at the Vote411 Workshop.

Vote411

By Linnea Hirst

You probably remember that you could dial 411 for phone numbers. Now there's Vote411, a national League website. Various local and state Leagues throughout the country are now using it to give voters an online voters' pamphlet.

Lou Templeton, state board member, didn't think we needed Vote411 because our Secretary of State puts out one for every household, covering at least most of the races. But when Lou checked five or six county websites, she found accessing voter information frustrating and even sometimes impossible. So she called LWVUS to get more information about Vote411, including how many Leagues use it and what they think. She then called a few users and got enthusiastic replies. The Leagues like it, the candidates like it, the public likes it. And the younger generations especially like it.

Here are a few of the replies:

Andrea Murline, Lackawanna, PA, is president of their 30 member League. Getting the information to put on the program took the most time. She set up the program one Sunday afternoon for the county. She loves it.

Aya Johnson, Part-time Program Assistant, LWV Minnesota, did the work with volunteer help. They covered all 87 counties. The candidates liked it. The public liked the printed copy that was distributed at the forums. Getting the information for the program was most time consuming. Marketing is important.

In 2012, we're going to make it happen so that Washington voters will be able to go to Vote411 for voter information. Thanks to the Ed Fund Board, LWVWA has been awarded a grant to fund the use of the LWVUS software to cover all parts of Washington state with an online voters guide this coming year.

We're in the planning stage while we wait to get the software. When we get it and become sufficiently familiar with it, we'll be looking for a bunch of you to help.

- Early on we'll need help finding voting district information throughout the state.
- Later, we'll need people to decide good questions to ask every candidate for every office that we are able to cover.
- And then we'll need people to gather contact information for candidates once they've filed and ballot initiative information.

Time and fingers is what the Oregon League says is what we'll need. Or, as my mother used to say: Many hands make light work. We'll be in touch—but you don't need to wait—you can call us!

The Conservation District Study has now been distributed to local Leagues who requested copies. Consensus replies are due October 12, 2012. For those Leagues who did not request the printed materials, the report is available on the LWVWA website.

http://www.lwvwa.org/pdfs/studies/LeagueOfWomenVotersofWashington_WashingtonStateConservationDistricts_2011.pdf

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 League of Women Voters of Washington, 4730 University Way NE, #720, Seattle, WA 98105. *Please contact the state office if you would like to receive your VOTER electronically.*

Lobby Team Meets Early

With the advent of a special session, the Lobby Team got into the spirit of the season. With much construction at the Capitol, the Team under Pat Dickason, LWVWA State Board 1st VP and Lobby Team Leader, is convening on Thursdays at 11:30 in the Secretary of State's Conference Room on the second floor of the Legislative Building. At the first meeting, new and long-time team members (12 in person, 1 by Skype) shared what is on their radar including:

Concerns about Funding for programs important to the League

Early Learning Programs
K - 12 monies
Family Planning

Transportation (welcome to new team members, Janet Winans & Ilene Le Vee)

Balancing the Budget with a mix of cuts and revenue

LWVWA Lobbyist Lonnie Johns-Brown joined us at noon to and share ideas about budget solutions that are being considered. She encouraged all League members to reinforce a message regarding keeping all options on the table and not limiting solutions to only program cuts (she seemed more hopeful than in the past two years).

Help make the LWVWA Lobby Team Season bright by making these your New Year's resolutions for 2012!

Contact Your State Legislator. Find your Legislator by clicking [here](#), or type this into your browser
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder/default.aspx>.

Keep up with the Lobby Team. Sign up for the LWVWA Legislative Newsletter, click [here](#) or use this address:
http://lwwwa.org/join_ews.html.

**LWVWA WEBSITE
LOOK FOR IT
www.lwwwa.org**

State Membership Committee By Karen Kiessling

The state membership committee is excited about the support the State League Board has given to Washington joining the Membership Leadership Development team. We look forward with great anticipation to this dynamic program moving into our state and all Leagues taking part. We urge League Presidents and local boards to plan now to send members to the State League Council taking place in Pullman on June 2, 2012. The state League will be presenting the MLD program then. This program should be looked at as a vital first step in increasing membership for the next decade and beyond.

The work of the League of Women Voters is more critical right now than it has been at any time in the past 45 years. We need to grow as an organization, we need to train the men and women who join to work on the study of public policy issues in a non-partisan way before the word 'non-partisan' disappears from the English language. Get excited about what the League offers to citizens! We can make our case in our communities, we can provide the outreach that citizens are hungry for. League is incredibly important, vital and fair.

Potential Membership Ads

The League of Women Voters of Greater Cincinnati in their current effort to use Facebook to seek out new members made digital videos on Facebook of their members telling why they joined the League and why they were active in it. This is just one possible membership idea that might be used by any League in Washington state to meet potential members through technology.

You may view all the LWV Cincinnati Area membership videos online by visiting their Youtube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/user/league1234561>

Visitors to that link will see all of the available recordings.



League of Women Voters of Washington
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Joan Thomas, past state president, past Seattle president and long time League member, died on November 29 of metastatic melanoma. She had been ill for a little more than a year, but continued to be active until a few weeks before her death at the age of 80.

A long and active member of the League of Women Voters of Seattle, Joan attended her first League meeting in 1958, and in 1966 she became the youngest president of the League of Women Voters of Washington. Prior to that, she'd been president of the Seattle League.

The League sparked Joan's interest in water quality and quantity. She represented the state League on the Western States Water Group from New Mexico and Arizona to Montana. In 1965, 1972 and 1980, Joan served as co-chair of successful Clean Water Bond issues in King County.

Joan helped to establish the Washington Environmental Council and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Commission. In 2008 those organizations recognized her lifetime of environmental activism with awards.

Washington's parks were a passion of Joan's. Governor Mike Lowry appointed her to the Washington Parks and Recreation Commission in 1997, where she served until 2009, chairing the group twice. Seattle's Discovery Park was one of her favorite places, and she served on the board of Friends of Discovery Park.

Joan represented the Seattle League on the King County Election Oversight Committee from 2003-2006. During that period she provided valuable observations to the state League's Election Laws study.

Joan Thomas was a woman of many accomplishments and interests who always brought great energy into any cause she supported. She was generous with her time and money, whether it was the League, environmental causes, political campaigns or anything else she believed in. She will be greatly missed.