



VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF PULLMAN WASHINGTON

www.lwvpullman.org

December 2013

The League of Women Voters of Pullman is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Officers

President: Shared by the Board; **Vice President:** Karen Kiessling, 332-4755; **Secretary:** Paul Spencer, 332-6699, Backup: Anne Lewis, 334-1075; **Treasurer:** Joan Folwell, 332-3946; **Voter Service Chair:** Deb Olson, 332-2114; **Voter Editor:** Susan Daniels, 332-6699; **Budget Chair:** Shelley Jones, 509-432-3428; **Finance Drive Chair:** Lenna Harding, 332-7749; **Membership Chair:** Janet Kendall, 432-3368; **Scheduling Chair:** Barbara Hammond, 332-4104; **Observer Corps Chair:** Deb Olson, 332-2114; **TRY Editor:** Lucy Linden, 332-2755; **Webmaster:** Paul Spencer: 332-6699.

Meetings and Events

Please check the date and place when you get the meeting notice a week before the meeting.

Alternative Justice Programs

Date: Monday December 2, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Program: Holiday Cookies followed at 7:00 by a panel discussion of Whitman County's program to keep minors out of jail

Place: Neill Public Library, Hecht Room

Contact: Alice Schroeder, 334-2470

LWVUS Program Planning

Date: Monday January 13, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Program: Snacks followed by LWVUS Program Planning and a Pullman School Building Update at 7:00 p.m.

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Place: Neill Public Library, Hecht Room
Contacts: Shelley Jones, 509-432-3428 and Anne Lewis, 334-1075

Brown Bag Meetings

Date: Third Thursdays, Noon – 1:00 p.m.
Program: December 19th Brad Jaekel, WSU Organic Farm; January 16th TBD
Place: Congregational Church, Opal and Campus, Pullman
Contact: Deb Olson, 332-2114

Board Meeting

Date: Wednesday January 22th
Time: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Place: Daily Grind, back room
Chairs: Shelley Jones, 509-432-3428 and Anne Lewis, 334-1075

Other Meetings of Interest

Social Event

Date: Wednesday January 8, 10:00-11:30 a.m.
Program: Games and Conversation
Place: Anne Lewis' House, 915 SE Skylark St.
Contact: Anne Lewis, 509-334-1075, anneglewis2@yahoo.com

LWVUS Convention 2014

Date: June 6-10, 2014
Program: See article on page 8
Place: Dallas, TX
Contact: Shelley Jones, 509-432-3428, shelley.jones@gmail.com.

Alternative Justice Programs in Whitman County **Alice Schroeder**

Are you interested in keeping people, especially minors, who make one non-violent mistake from having a permanent criminal record that impedes their ability to find work? Would you like to see fewer people incarcerated in Washington State and fewer repeat offenders? Alternative justice programs, including pre-charge diversion and problem solving courts are trying to make this happen. Do they work? Are they cost effective compared to prison? What is happening in Whitman County?

Our Dec. 2 program, *Alternative Justice Programs in Whitman County*, will help answer some of these questions. This panel discussion followed by audience questions will be held in the Hecht Room of Neill Public Library. At 6:30 p.m. there will be homemade holiday cookies, coffee, tea and conversation. The program will be from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Bill Druffel, Whitman County Chief Deputy Prosecutor, Dr. Faith Lutze, Associate Professor, WSU Dept. of Criminal Justice and Criminology, and Sgt. Dan Hargraves of the Pullman Police Dept. will discuss current and pending

alternative justice programs in Whitman County, including drug courts and minor in possession pre-charge diversion. The discussion will also include the effectiveness and cost of such programs and their effect on police work in Pullman.

If you can, come at 6:20 and help set up chairs etc.

LWVUS Planning Meeting and School Building Update

Shelley Ann Jones

On Monday, January 13th at 7:00 p.m. we will be participating in LWVUS Program Planning. As stated from National, “the Program Planning process is an important League tool for identifying issues for study, review and update, and/or concurrence. It gives members and Leagues the opportunity to balance the pros and cons, assess possible support, and consider the viability of issues.” In advance of the meeting, please review the LWVUS *Impact on Issues*, which can be found here – <http://www.lwv.org/content/impact-issues> – and is available for download. If you have an idea for a study, review and update, or concurrence, contact Shelley Jones at shelley.jones@gmail.com.

There will also be an update on the building plans for Pullman Schools given by Anne Lewis.

If you come at 6:30 there will be snacks and some time to visit before the meeting.

Schedule Change

The Agricultural consensus meeting originally scheduled for February has been moved to March as the study materials from National are not yet ready. The February meeting will be on Citizens United.

Report on the Initiatives Forum, Colfax, October 15th

Karen Kiessling

The League held a ballot issues debate in the Norma McGregor Room of the Whitman County Library in Colfax on Tuesday, October 15th. There was excellent coverage by area newspapers, the Whitman County Gazette, The Lewiston Tribune, KLEW TV, and the Inland Broadcasting network fed a live report to its county radio stations. Paul Spencer videotaped the forum for League and placed it on the League website.

Zuma Lee Staba handled the stopwatch and Mary Collins showed speakers the time cards. June Crawford made attention grabbing initiative number cards and pro and con table tents for speakers. Questions were sorted by Barbara Hammond and Anne Lewis. On Initiative 517, the initiative on initiatives, Robert Rembert, a local attorney, spoke in opposition and Ted Weatherly spoke to supporting the proposition. I was able to find no one to take that position and after many many calls I asked Ted if he would do the job so we could debate. He agreed and did a fine job of playing devil's advocate. In his closing statement he revealed that he did not support a yes vote on this initiative but had agreed to help out by speaking for the support side. League greatly appreciates his generosity in doing so. Initiative 522, the GMO, issue had Ron Cully speaking in favor of it and Jill Fagan speaking against it.

Theirs was a confusing discussion because both of them believe passionately in their side of the issue and tend to repeat phrases over and over rather than addressing points raised.

The forum was civil, orderly, moved well and earned praise for League's efforts to bring light, not heat to the ballot issues. Thank you to all who helped. You made the evening very pleasant indeed and the process of civil discourse got a thorough airing.

Report on the Candidates Forum, Pullman, October 16th **Deb Olsen**

The election seems to have taken place a long, long time ago and the Voter Service Committee and its chair are on hiatus until June (be warned you will be called for duty again). Here is a brief report on the Candidate forum held in Pullman on October 16 for those who couldn't attend (I hope you watched the forum on our website). The forum was well attended but not a capacity crowd and we got some good questions from the audience. I think all six of the candidates were pleased with the forum and they got an opportunity to make their case to the voters.

Thank you to all the League members who helped at the forum and before the forum. It is a lot of work to line up speakers, venues and many other tasks. The League could not continue to provide information to the voters without your help and I look forward to working with you again.

Report on Whitman County Public Health Meeting **Paul Spencer**

On Monday, November 4th, Troy Henderson gave a very interesting and informative talk on his work with the Whitman County Health Department. Mr. Henderson has been director of that department since June. He is a health physicist and worked as a Navy public health officer until his recent retirement from the Navy.

He reported that his department has the third largest budget (after Public Works and the Sheriff's department) in the county. The Health Department deals with:

- Vaccines and communicable diseases
- Environmental health – water quality, mosquitoes, ticks
- Nursing services – Whitman County jail and all the public schools in the county except Pullman
- WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Program – This program has a high payback to long term health care costs and is a significant funding source for the department.
- Public Health – food poisoning, restaurant inspections, water quality, septic systems, etc.

Funding for the department comes ¼ from Washington state, ¼ from the Federal government, ¼ fee for service, and ¼ from Whitman County and totals about \$1,000,000 a year.

Mr. Henderson reported that he is still working his way into the position. He is hoping to have the department be more involved in educating families in poverty about nutrition and health and in grade school student education about issues such as obesity. He feels that these efforts will have excellent

long term effects on public health.

The most significant challenge for his department is funding (as with all other Whitman County departments). A Washington state initiative limits county revenues to less than 1% increase per year, and cost increases for almost everything are significantly more than this. This systemic problem will force significant decreases in all county services starting in the near future.

Brown Bag Meetings Continued

Deb Olsen

October Brown Bag

Our guest for the October Brown Bag Meeting was Jeff Guyett from the Community Action Center in Pullman. Jeff came to one of our annual meetings last year but ran out of time, so we wanted to invite him back for more discussion, including how the League and our members can get more involved in volunteer activities. Jeff provided us with a spread sheet to sign up for volunteer activities (food bank, garden plot, children's garden and other) and he talked about the greatest needs at the food bank at this time of year – fresh produce. Jeff also discussed what the CAC provides in terms of housing relief which was an eye-opener for me. On the whole it was an excellent meeting that unfortunately only six people attended, three League members and three members of the public.

November Brown Bag

Nancy Chaney, Jennifer O'Laughlin, Louise Davidson, and Nancy Lyle of the Moscow League came to share their insights on the poverty study. They provided a brief history on how the study came into existence, the process involved and some of the results of the study. The process took just about two years and got lots of community involvement. Three positive outcomes and solid results can be traced to this study: the Community Hospitals of Spokane opened a clinic, Family Promise is now active in Moscow and Pullman, and the summer feeding program that is free for children under 18 (adults pay) through the USDA. The biggest need still out there is better coordination and communication between groups providing resources and the need for a single entry point. My biggest surprise was to learn that 75% of single mothers with preschool children are in poverty.

This meeting was very well attended (21) by the Pullman League and the general public. We had to use the Big Room. Several people signed to participate and/or be kept in the loop. If you are interested in participating in Pullman League's poverty study contact Mary Collins (she has agreed to chair our efforts) marycollins1104@gmail.com.

Upcoming Brown Bags

The next two noon meetings will deal with issues covered in the forthcoming League Agricultural Study. **Mark Your Calendars.** Come and be educated and prepared for the coming consensus questions.

Wednesday December 19, Noon – 1:00 p.m. at the Congregational Church. Brad Jaeckel from the WSU Organic Farm will give us an update on the Organic farm and help us understand some of the issues in the Agricultural Study.

January 19 as yet not planned.

Look for the rest of the noon Meeting Schedule in the February Voter.

More on Food Drive

Liz Wilmerding

Safeway is currently sponsoring food for the Food Bank. Grocery bags of Food Bank requested items are being sold for \$10 each. You just pick one up and add it to your bill at the check out line. Also, the Food Bank was very much in need of sanitary items (tooth paste, soap, shampoo, feminine products, etc.). When your favorite grocery store has a sale (2 for 1, buy 2 get 2 free, reduced prices, etc.) think about how awful it is to be hungry and buy a couple of extra items for someone else in Pullman. You can take your donation to the Food Bank yourself, bring it to a LWV meeting, or donate through your church. It doesn't matter how it gets there, the Food Bank needs everything it can get!

Thank you for your generosity.

Report on Action Workshop

Karen Kiessling

The East Side Action Workshop was held at the Visitors Center at the Wild Horse Wind Farm outside Ellensburg, WA, on Saturday, October 26, 2013. Kim Abel, State League President, and Pat Dickason, Vice President and Action Chair for the state League, were present as well as members of the lobby team and Leaguers from the area. I was the single Pullman member and there was no one from the Spokane League.

We were given cards with the League 2014 Legislative Priorities listed under the headings Democracy; Agriculture; Budget; Education, Early Learning, Families and Children; Gun Responsibility; Health Care; Natural Resources; and Transportation. On the back of the card are listed the names and contact information of the people on the lobby team who are in charge of 14 different areas.

We were introduced to our new lobbyist and heard her perspectives on the upcoming session. In a word it is grim. There is an election contest in one district that if the Republican candidate wins the feeling is that all Democrat chairs will be replaced. This is a short session, one which does not enact a budget but there will be the same gridlock that existed last session. Still, all lobby team members as well as our lobbyist, believe firmly that League members need to contact our delegation members and keep sending them messages. Apparently staff members keep a tally by week of the comments that arrive. So we must be speaking out on legislative issues we support and that we oppose with clear and civil reasons for that.

If I had to choose one presentation over all the others it would have to be the short summary Susan Eidenschink gave of the Affordable Care Act and Washington State. Here are some highlights:

To date 35,000 people in Washington State have signed up for health care that did not have any

coverage before. 11,000 of those 35,000 were discovered to qualify for Medicaid who did not know that before -- and they were signed up. 20,000 will be eligible under Medicaid expansion.

Susan said that over one million people in Washington State are uninsured. The Affordable Care Act will improve access to health insurance coverage and slow down the rising cost of health care.

Current Changes for Individuals and Families

- >Children cannot be denied health coverage if they are sick
- >No out-of-pocket costs for preventive services
- >No cap on lifetime benefits
- >Young adults can stay on their parents' plan up to age 26
- >Seniors' prescription drug "doughnut hole" is closing
- >No out-of-pocket costs for seniors' preventive Medicare services
- >Expanded coverage for early retirees

Coming January 1, 2014

- >Most people must have health insurance by 2014 or pay an annual fine
- >Providers cannot deny health coverage to people if they are sick
- >You shop for health plans through Washington's Healthplanfinder
- >All individuals and small employer health plans will cover ten essential health benefits
- >Subsidies for individuals earning up to \$45,000 and up to \$94,200 for family of four
- >Medicaid expansion for childless adults who earn less than 138% of Federal Poverty Level

Ten Essential Health Benefits

- >Ambulatory patient services
- >Emergency services
- >Hospitalization
- >Maternity and new-born care
- >Mental health and substance use disorder services, including behavioral health treatment
- >Prescription drugs
- >Rehabilitative and habilitative services and devices
- >Laboratory services
- >Preventative and wellness services and chronic disease management
- >Pediatric services, including oral and vision care

Medicaid Expansion

Medicaid, now called Washington Apple Health, will cover individuals (including childless adults) that earn less than \$15,856 (138% of FPL)

This means that approximately 328,000 additional people in Washington State will have health insurance starting 1 January 2014.

Community Partner Network: In-Person Assister Organizations

In-Person Assisters will have training to help consumers determine eligibility, navigate enrollment, and provide ongoing support:

WHITMAN COUNTY is served by Better Health Together which also handles Adams, Asotin, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Orielle, Spokane and Stevens counties.

Washington Health Benefit Exchange

- >Online marketplace where consumers can compare and select Qualified Health Plans (QHPs)
- >One stop shop: single application for health care coverage (Medicaid and QHPs)
- >Tax credits for individuals and families 138% to 400% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- >Cost sharing reduction for <250% of Federal Poverty Level
- >Navigator-Assistor Program will assist individuals who may experience barriers to enrollment
- >Call Center for assistance and questions - 1-855-923-4633, TTY/TTD 1-855-627-9604

More Information: Washington Health Benefits Exchange: <http://wahbexchange.org>

Learn about the Exchange and its committee activities. All committee meetings are open to the public.

There are a number of additional websites: Washington Healthplanfinder, Washington State Health Care Authority, Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner and Healthcare.gov, the last being a national website.

This is the most complete description I have seen about what will be happening for everyone in the new year.

Action workshop is inexpensive, educational, interesting and fun. Plan to attend the next one. You will not be sorry.

First Game Day

Anne Lewis

The First Social Event was a success! On November 6th, 6 League Members (June, Susan, Paul, Deb, Shelley, and Anne) and 1 chicken gathered for a few hours of socializing and game playing. June dominated the dice game “You Blew It!” Those in attendance decided – by an unofficial and unanimous vote – to continue game days on a monthly or bimonthly (“every two months” definition) basis. One group game will be pre-selected and other “side options” available depending on number and inclination of those in attendance. Check your calendars to see if you can join in on Wednesday, January 8, 10-11:30. If someone volunteers to host, we could also plan for Wed, December 11. Stay tuned to announcements at the December meeting and feel free to contact Anne at anneglewis2@yahoo.com with questions or suggestions.

Consider attending LWVUS Convention 2014 in Dallas!

Shelley Jones

LWVUS Convention is in Dallas, Texas on June 6 – 10, 2014. Consider joining other national, state, and local League leaders from around the country! This is a great opportunity to hear from great speakers – past speakers have included Attorney General Eric Holder and Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius. You will also have an opportunity to learn about issues important to League, participate in training sessions and network with other Leagues. The Pullman League

budgets to send one individual to LWVUS Convention. The budgeted amount usually pays for a majority of expenses - generally airfare, hotel and convention fees. If you have interest in going, contact Shelley Jones at shelley.jones@gmail.com

What Does the V.P. of LWV of Pullman Do?

Karen Kiessling, Vice President

(It was suggested that if the VOTER ran a series of articles describing the various offices in League, it might encourage more members to be interested and willing to take an office. We're continuing in this issue with a description of the office of Vice President.)

The job of the Vice President of the League of Women Voters of Pullman is:

- 1) to always use the name *The League of Women Voters of Pullman* because that is our name, not Pullman League of Women Voters. Whew! One job done.
- 2) Everything else that the President needs your help with or that the President asks you to take on, if possible. This year the League of Women Voters of Pullman (hurrah, a second correct usage!) is operating without a President so the entire board is, theoretically, vice presidents for each other. We are all pitching in to make the League function smoothly, helping each other when needed.
- 3) When the President is not able to do so the Vice President chairs meetings of the membership or the board and signs letters, gives testimony and in any other way represents the League in formal and informal settings, or delegates that duty to another board member.
- 4) This year, with no President, the Vice President is the automatic "go-to" person for questions, suggestions, complaints and congratulations. And, finally,
- 5) This year, with no President, the Vice President stores the filing cabinet and boxes that are the regular property of the President and will transfer those when a new President is in place.

Meet our New Members

Welcome to three new members. Janet sent them some questions which they have graciously answered so we can get to know them a little better.

Austin and Elizabeth Wilmerding

We came to Pullman in 1990 so that Liz could pursue a graduate degree in Anthropology/Archaeology at WSU. We stayed because we fell in love with the area and the community. Austin has worked for IST as a programmer, H&R Block as a tax preparer, and as a freelance computer consultant among other things. We have two children both born on the Palouse. Our oldest just started college in the Midwest and our youngest is a junior taking classes at both Pullman High School and as a WSU Running Start student.

Currently we are landlords on College Hill and live outside of town on a small farm. We rent our land to Omache Farm to pasture their sheep, goats and alpaca during the warm weather.

We have lived a gypsy life bouncing back and forth between New York and Pullman so our kids could get the education that best suited their needs. In that time, we have lost contact with many of the

community members we started to connect with when our children were little. We see the LWV as a way to meet new people, get reconnected with the Pullman-Moscow communities and become involved with local, state and national issues in hopes of having a positive effect on the world or at least here at home.

Libby Walker

I moved to Pullman in the fall of 1976 with the intention of attending Law School at the University of Idaho. When I discovered that only a full time program was available, I switched gears and began pursuing a Ph.D. in Political Science instead. Through careful advising, I was able to enroll in two courses at a time, raise two children, and graduate with my student cohort. I began teaching in the Political Science Department before I finished my degree and did so until 1992 when I ran for 9th District State Representative. Following an unsuccessful campaign, I returned to teaching but moved to the Honors College in 1996. Over a period of 13 years, I gradually progressed from a part time administrative position to becoming the Dean. I retired in August of 2013. I have two grown daughters who live in Sandpoint and Denver and four beautiful grandchildren, who are the light of my life!



Because of my background in political science and in the political arena, I know the importance of being an educated voter. It's true that every vote counts! I joined the League of Women Voters to assist in providing accurate and relevant information to the voters of the Pullman area.

I am in the process of learning about the various programs and issues that involve the League of Women Voters. I don't have a particular agenda or list of issues that I would like to pursue. For the first time in my life, I have the freedom to explore countless new interests, and I'm very pleased to do that within the framework of the League.

Website News

Paul Spencer

The Pullman League website, lwvpullman.org is now disconnected from lighthouse.com and a google search for "Pullman League of Women Voters" gives our website as the top response. [Lighthouse.com](http://lighthouse.com) is listed lower on the page, but is no longer given as the "Official website of the Pullman League of Women Voters". This lighthouse listing will eventually go away once the Google crawler passes over that site again.

When anyone notices errors or has suggestions to improve the website please send them to paul-spencer@pullman.com.

Board Member in Charge

This year the office of president of the LWV of Pullman is being shared among the board members with each board member taking one month to organize and run the board meeting for that month. The

list of months and the board member(s) responsible is:

December: June Crawford
January: Shelley Jones/Anne Lewis
February: Joan Folwell

March: Paul Spencer
April: Barbara Hammond
May: TBD

Read your VOTER with your calendar next to you so you write in the meetings immediately. You are what makes the League a success.