



# VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF PULLMAN WASHINGTON

[www.lwvpullman.org](http://www.lwvpullman.org)

December 2014

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

**Executive Committee:** Chairman – Paul Spencer, 332-6699; League Voice – Karen Kiessling, 332-4755; Information Coordinator – Anne Lewis, 334-1075; **Secretary:** Libby Walker, 509-432-4756, Backup: Jackie Miyasaka, 332-1248; **Treasurer:** Joan Folwell, 332-3946; **Voter Service Chair:** Deb Olson, 332-2114; **Voter Editor:** Susan Daniels, 332-6699; **Budget Chair:** Pat Ager, 334-3374; **Finance Drive Chair:** Lenna Harding, 332-7749; **Membership Chair:** Janet Kendall, 432-3368; **Scheduling Chair:** Barbara Hammond, 332-4104; **Observer Corps Chair:** Anne Lewis, 334-1075; **TRY Editor:** Lucy Linden, 332-2755; **Webmaster:** Paul Spencer: 332-6699; **Community Update Editor:** Diane Smerdon, 334-5413; **Poverty Study Chair:** Mary Collins, 509-592-6929; **Nominating Chair:** Deb Olson, 332-2114.

## Meetings and Events

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

### Update on Schools and Holiday Party

Date: Monday December 1, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Program: Holiday treats followed at 7 p.m. by a panel on Pullman school construction and issues

Place: Umpqua Bank, 225 N. Grand Ave, Pullman

Contact: Anne Lewis, 334-1075

### Planning Meeting

Date: Monday January 12, 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Program: Plan the coming year's programs and action for Pullman League and LWVWA

Place: Umpqua Bank, 225 N. Grand Ave, Pullman

Contact: Paul Spencer, 332-6699

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## **Brown Bags**

Dates: Third Thursdays, Noon – 1:00 p.m.

Programs: December 11 – Tony Bean, Airport Manager, update on airport  
January 15 – Annie Pillars, Friends of Hospice, will talk about Hospice

Place: Congregational Church, Opal and Campus, Pullman

Contact: Deb Olson, 332-2114

## **Poverty Study Meetings**

Date: Second Tuesdays: January 13, February 10, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Program: Presentations 5:30 – 6:00 p.m. followed by a working meeting until 7:00 p.m.

Place: The Community Action Center classroom, 350 SE Fairmont, Pullman

Contact: Mary Collins, 509-592-6929

## **Board Meetings**

Date: Wednesdays January 21, February 25, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Place: Daily Grind, back room

Chair: Paul Spencer, 332-6699

## **December Meeting: Public School Updates and Issues** **Anne Lewis**

December's monthly League meeting – as well as the scrumptious holiday cookie bonanza – will be held Monday, December 1 at the Umpqua Bank.

Speakers will be: Paul Sturm, Superintendent of Pullman Public Schools; Robert Maxwell, Assistant Superintendent of Pullman Public Schools, Joseph Thornton, Principal of Pullman High School.

Discussion topics will include: an update of PHS Construction, implementation of the Civics Requirement, and "Making sense of Federal and State Educational Requirements."

You are encouraged to arrive early – i.e. 6:30 p.m. – and bring cookies or other holiday treats to share. See you there!

## **January Planning Meeting** **Paul Spencer**

The January League planning meeting will be held on Jan. 1 with a social time at 6:30 p.m. Followed by the planning meeting at 7:00.

The program of the January planning meeting is to re-examine the Pullman League and Washington State League positions with the following possible results:

1. Make minor revisions for incorrect grammar or confusing wording.
2. Decide if a position is ripe for action such as lobbying, writing an initiative, a citizen education

program, etc.

3. Consider whether an update to the position is needed. (This is a serious undertaking since it requires a committee to gather information, talk to experts, have group discussions, write a document, educate for consensus and so on.)
4. Decide if there is some area which is not included in the current positions for which a new study should be done. (As for 3 above this requires a serious effort.)

To do this we will divide the positions into 3 parts, two for the State positions and one for the Local Positions. Each group will discuss its positions for about 45 minutes and then summarize its recommendations for about 10 minutes. We will then discuss the results as a whole for about 30 minutes. There should also be time to look at the rest of our 2014-15 local League schedule and decide if revisions are necessary and to make suggestions for topics of future interest (which will be useful for the July annual program Planning meeting).

**In addition to providing feedback to the Washington State League organization this meeting is very useful as a reminder for us of all that the League does and how the League works.**

## **Report on 2014 Election Forums**

### **Deb Olson**

October was Election Forum time. This year the League put on two forums, one in Colfax at the Whitman County Library on October 21 and one in Pullman in the Umpqua Bank Conference Room on October 22. We presented the candidates for the two contested county races (Assessor and Sheriff) and the three ballot initiatives at both forums. The Forums were about equally well attended, about 40 people in Pullman and slightly more in Colfax. We got some good questions from the audience. As usual League members turned out to work both Forums and I wish to Thank All who Participated.

## **Nov. 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting: City and County Planning**

### **Alice Schroeder and Mary Collins**

About 30 League and community members attended the Nov. 3rd general meeting in the Umpqua Bank's meeting room. There were a few minutes of conversation over cookies, pound cake and tea and coffee thanks to Mary Collins, Karen Kiessling and Deb Olson. The meeting began at 7:00 p.m. with the presentation to mayor Glenn Johnson of the 7th edition of the League of Women Voters of Washington's civics textbook, *The State We Are In*. Mayor Johnson is featured in the discussion of small community governments as an example of the many hats these officials often wear. Our three speakers then presented 10-20 minute summaries of their work in planning, followed by questions from the audience.

City Planning Director, Pete Dickinson, summarized current work revising the City's comprehensive plan. A new Urban Growth area has already been approved by the City Council. This area surrounding Pullman is one where landowners can petition to have their land annexed to the city for development. Neighborhood meetings have been held to ask citizens what they like about Pullman, the problems they see and where they would like Pullman to change or improve in the next 35 years. Both students and

non-students rate Pullman's quality of life as high, 7.6 – 8.0 on a scale of 10. They particularly like the presence of WSU, city services and small town atmosphere. The major problems they see are traffic and the lack of retail businesses. An environmentally friendly city with more retail, better traffic flow and more transportation options is their hope for the future. The Updated Comprehensive Plan should be finished in 2016 and put into effect shortly after that as the Planning Department brings the necessary zoning changes to the City Council.

Alan Thomson, Whitman County Planning Director, noted the large differences in city and county planning. At this time there are no plans to update the 1978 County Comprehensive Plan. But this is not a major concern since the county has seen little growth outside of Pullman. Much of the work for the county is in working on shoreline management and agricultural issues. Another major area is zoning for those wishing to live in the county near Pullman in such a way to minimize agricultural/housing conflict. Because the County needs income, encouraging development in the Moscow Pullman corridor is a major county initiative. However, little is happening at this time.

Kevin Gardes, Pullman Public Works Director updated us on water issues. Our water source, the Grande Ronde Aquifer is slowly declining. Recent conservation efforts have considerably decreased the decline, but as Pullman continues to grow, other water sources must be found. A large help will be recycling waste water for irrigation of city parks and WSU lands. However, the initial cost is great and building such a facility will require help from the state and national governments.

The Pullman League greatly appreciates the willingness of our panelists to take precious time away from their lives outside of work to speak to us. Thank you, Pete, Alan and Kevin.

## **Eastside Action Workshop A Great Experience**

### **Karen Kiessling and Deb Olson**

Five Pullman Leaguers drove to Spokane to attend the Eastside Action Workshop hosted by the Spokane League. We assembled at the Waste to Energy facility which has a nice office complex that worked well for our session. Members attending were Deb Olson, Joan Folwell, Zuma Lee Staba, Paul Spencer and Karen Kiessling.

League State President Kim Abel, First Vice President and State Action Chair Pat Dickason, members of the State League Board of Directors Kathy Sakahara, Sherry Gasparino, and Ann Murphy were also present. After being greeted with coffee, fruit and pastries, we were welcomed by Ann Murphy, President of the Spokane Area League, Kim Abel State President and Spokane County Commissioner Shelly O'Quinn. Via Skype we met our new LWAWA lobbyist Amber Ulvenes.

Senator Andy Billig from Spokane gave a presentation on Legislative Perspectives, particularly the state budget and implications for the upcoming session. One of the most uplifting things he said was that at the state level the legislators regardless of party can work together on non-controversial bills. Again he mentioned how each League member could be a vital link in the communication necessary with elected officials to try to underline the critical need for additional revenue to solve the problem of the state in the coming biennium.

During lunch Dr. Shelley Redinger, Superintendent of Spokane District schools, talked about how Spokane schools are handling the issue of Charter schools and the overall plan for the Spokane school district. Spokane petitioned the state to control who, where and how many charter schools can be established within the Spokane School District. Her talk was very interesting.

After a box lunch provided by the Spokane League, we got to the meat of the workshop with several members of our lobby team covering issue papers on a wide variety of topics including health care, agriculture, government, protecting democracy and voter rights. If anyone is interested in seeing these papers contact Deb Olson. As usual our lobby team members did a Great job.

Our League Members had a fun day, got a chance to meet with members from other Leagues, took a tour of the Waste to Energy Plant – WOW, and enjoyed the opportunity to visit and get better acquainted as we drove to Spokane and home again.

Leaguers, remember this for next fall. It is educational and great fun.

## **October Brown Bag Report**

### **Deb Olson**

October – on October 21 Dr Virginia Lohr made a presentation on the Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) efforts to pass a national market-driven, revenue-neutral carbon tax and dividend.. This proposal would tax at production, e.g. coal mines, oil and gas extraction. The revenue from this tax would be returned to the taxpayer as monthly dividends. The tax and dividend would increase yearly. Independent economic research shows that this would lead to a reduction in the amount of carbon extracted and would lead to increased jobs, as well as put more money in our pockets.

Upcoming Brown Bag Meetings:

Dec 11 - Tony Bean, Airport Manager will fill us in on the most up to date airport news

Jan 15 – Annie Pillars, Chair of Friends of Hospice, will talk about the great work their organization does

## **November Brown Bag Report**

### **Karen Kiessling**

Whitman County Commissioner Michael Largent spoke to 15 members of the League and the community on the subject of Legislative Advocacy. Commissioner Largent spent 1999-2000 as the legislative assistant to Representative Larry Sheahan in the Washington State Legislature.

He began by saying that the people who show up get heard. That was also his summary of the hour conversation. Show up he said at the end of the hour. Just show up. So many people do not. League does it and does it consistently at the state level but needs to do it at the county level too.

Other comments centered on being sure you communicate with your delegation. They know they are there to represent you but if there is no conversation they will represent the people who do talk to them. Be part of that conversation.

The session is not the best time to lobby. Out of session is the best time to invite them, to talk with them about the issues that matter to you most, and to be sure they have a conversation with you because they will remember you.

How we present ourselves to legislators matters. Always with sincere courtesy and appreciation for their time. Be organized, be clear, be polite and build a friendship if possible.

Coalitions matter because they create numbers and are a show of interest in the same solutions. Be prepared to show how your solution fits into the larger picture. Just do not ask for money or services. Be ready to make the case that is compelling and long term.

Be careful of the arguments you use because they may be discounted. Always, always tell the truth or say you do not know.

So few people take part in decision making. Be there. Be part of the group that seeks solutions for serious problems. Show up.

We had a valuable hour of conversation about the issues facing the legislature this session. Dealing with the McCleary decision and figuring out how to work with Initiative 1351 (on class size) that barely won the election are the very major issues with which the legislature must deal. The seriousness of these issues may actually work to create a coalition that can make decisions in Olympia.

## **Observer Corps Is Up and Running**

### **Anne Lewis**

I am pleased and proud to report that Observer Corps is up and running!

The following entities are being covered by many dedicated and appreciated League members: Airport Board (June Crawford), Pullman City Planning Commission (Dean Glawe, Ginger Glawe), Pullman Hospital Board (Judy Stone), Pullman Library Board (Francy Bose, Mary Shirazi), Pullman School District (Dawn Baerlocher), and Whitman County Commissioners (Mary Collins, Paul Spencer). In addition, Jackie Miyasaka and Alice Schroeder have volunteered to be Observers for Pullman City Council. Fantastic!

Future editions of The Voter will likely include some detail re: reported items that potentially relate to League positions as well as observations of the running of the board meetings. I may also highlight a specific entity. This is still a work in progress.

For any of you breathlessly wondering, “Have I missed my chance to participate in this fun, informative, and not time overwhelming activity?” the answer is “No!” There is still a spot for you (and you, and you, and you). I am most interested in locating a second observer for the Pullman School District and in finding observers for Pullman Parks & Recreation and The Port of Whitman County. Please contact Anne Lewis at [anneglewis2@yahoo.com](mailto:anneglewis2@yahoo.com) if interested in these, or any other city or county public entity.

## **Poverty Study Progress**

### **Karen Kiessling**

The poverty study committee of League members and others continues to meet on the second Tuesday night of each month from 5:30 - 7 pm in the Community Action Center conference room. League members are welcome to attend any of these meetings to see how the work is done. It is a fascinating education. New terms and definitions emerge. Questions abound. Discussion is insightful as members with different experience bring perspective and offer explanations for apparent contradictions. Here is what we are doing now:

~ Each of the sub-committees is reporting on what they have learned about the various agencies, organizations and additional generally available information about their topic so that we can ask informed questions when we begin interviews.

~ The background work has already informed us of the complexity of the systems of services. Some are established to specifically serve the poor, such as food and housing programs, others are imbedded in wider services, such as health care, and therefore harder to isolate information pertinent to our study.

~ Services are spread throughout local and state offices with little centralized information.

~ There already appear to be geographical differences in needs and services in the county.

~ There is some suggestion that poverty may not be as profoundly drastic as the number of households with low income figures suggest in that there may be factors biasing the numbers, or people in Whitman County choose to live simpler/less expensive life styles. This is not to say that poverty is not real and needs to be addressed, it just means we need to understand what is going on better.

Chuckle of the November meeting: Judy Stone and Ginger Glawe reported on healthcare. Judy, a retired nurse, commented that she was a nurse and that once a nurse always a nurse. When asked if nurses had a slogan, like *semper fi* for Marines, she smiled and replied, "Nurses, we call the shots!"

## **LWV of Pullman Anniversary Plans**

### **Karen Kiessling**

February 14, 2015 is the 65th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters of Pullman!

We look forward to the exhibition of our League history in the case that will be up in Neill Public Library in the month of February. Diane Gillespie and Diane Smerdon have generously agreed to create and set up this display.

A public showing of *Iron Jawed Angels* during the month of February for free public viewing is being pursued by Karen Kiessling, Anne Lewis and Libby Walker. We are working with the Cordova Theater to use that venue for an afternoon viewing of the film and plan to invite the public to attend free of charge. We hope that all League members will save the date when it is firmly set and will bring

friends and family to this Emmy-award winning movie.

Other events and ideas suggested in a brainstorming session include: publishing a timeline of LWV work and achievements of our local and state League, planning a campus event with Center for Civic Engagement, Foley, or other campus groups; engaging a statewide history speaker; or creating presentations or games based on government/election trivia to use with students.

**If any of the suggestions listed throughout this article are of interest to you and you would like to work on it, please contact Anne or Libby or any member of the board. We would like to have a variety of special events throughout the year to celebrate turning 65.**

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