

VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF PULLMAN

June 2011

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: Alice Schroeder, 334-2470; **Vice President:** Shelley Jones, 432-3428, ; **Secretary:** Deb Olson, 332-2114, Backup: Francly Bose, 332-5114; **Treasurer:** Joan Folwell, 332-3946; **Voter Service Chair:** Diane Smerdon, 334-5413; **Voter Editor:** Susan Daniels, 332-6699; **Finance Drive Chair:** Lenna Harding, 332-7749; **Membership Chair:** Janet Kendall, 332-4268; **Publicity Chair:** Sharon Walbridge, 332-8555; **Hospitality Chair:** Barbara Hammond, 332-4104; **Observer Corps Chair and TRY Editor:** Lucy Linden, 332-2755; **Webmaster:** Paul Spencer: 332-6699; **Member at Large:** Karen Kiessling, 332-4755.

Meetings

Planning Meeting

Date: Monday July 11, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Program: Plan League activities for the coming year followed by a salad potluck.

Place: Home of Ruth Brown; see directions in Planning Meeting article below.

Chair: Shelley Jones, 432-3428

Back to League Meeting

Date: Monday September 12, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

Program: Potluck dinner, followed by a program yet to be decided. This is an ideal time to bring guests and potential members to a League meeting.

Place: To be decided

Chair: Alice Schroeder, 334-2470

Board Meeting

Monday August 22,

Time: 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Place: Daily Grind

Another Event of Interest

National Lentil Festival Parade

Date: Saturday August 20, Parade starts at 11:00 a.m. Plan to walk with the League.
Contact: Diane Smerdon, 334-5413

July Planning Meeting

Here is our annual chance to enjoy a lazy summer morning in Ruth Brown's sunny rural backyard (hats provided!) and feel constructive at the same time. It's time to plan our activities for the coming year.

At this July meeting we decide our priorities for the coming year. Join us for discussion in the sun and then share a delicious potluck salad lunch. Please bring your favorite salad to share.

If you can't come, we'll miss you. If you have issues you'd like us to consider, contact Shelley Jones (432-3428) and get your item on the agenda.

Directions to Ruth's farm:

- From the Pullman-Moscow Highway turn south on Bishop Blvd.
- Go 0.3 miles and turn left on Johnson Road (just past Quality Inn and the old Pete's Restaurant).
- Go 3.3 miles on Johnson Road (WITHOUT turn-offs; do NOT turn onto the Old Moscow Road or Sand Road).
- You will now find yourself between 2 big white barns on either side of the road. Ours is the one on the left with the blue metal roof.
- The driveway is long and narrow, so stay in the middle. Phone 332-8038 if you get lost.

WELCOME!

Save the Date for the Lentil Festival Parade

Pullman League will be walking in the Lentil Festival Parade again on Saturday, August 20. Joining the parade is lots of fun, and great visibility for League, so put it on your calendar and contact Diane Smerdon, 334-5413 to let her know you'll join the parade, and to get the time and place to meet.

Back to League Potluck

Save the date, September 12, for our Back to League potluck, and bring a friend to introduce to League. More details will be in the August VOTER.

LWVWA Convention Report

Shelley Jones

The LWVWA Convention 2011 in the Tri-Cities was filled with great speakers, workshops, and, of course, the plenary session where we voted on items debated earlier. Deb Olson, Janet Miller, and I attended as delegates and Karen Kiessling also attended as an incoming State Board Member. We went over on Thursday and attended both the wine tour and the State Board Meeting that day.

Aside from usual State Convention business on Friday and Saturday, we also attended numerous workshops on topics ranging from *Moderator Training* to *Membership*. We also were in attendance for a wonderful range of speakers that spoke on topics from *Science and Public Policy: Why They are Inseparable* to *Washington State Redistricting*.

On Sunday, we really got down to business passing concurrences, resolutions, and the budget. Information on each follows.

The following concurrence on Privatization passed:

Core services, functions and assets critical to the well-being of the people, should remain with government and not be transferred to the private sector. The following criteria should be the basis for decisions regarding whether government services, functions and assets should be transferred to the private for-profit sector:

Criteria: Does the proposed transfer:

1. Serve the public interest today as well as for future generations;
2. Align with public health and safety concerns;
3. Assure quality of life for residents in the region;
4. Ensure adequate government control and oversight including performance audits;
5. Include provisions for transparency, public involvement and competitive bidding; and
6. Protect individuals from abuse.

Public agencies are required to make a documented finding of adequate return on investment for the public for any government contribution of funds or assets to the private sector. Periodic performance audits should be required and made public regarding whether stated public benefits were met.

Government employees and elected officials after leaving government service should be prohibited for two years from working for any private company for which they had oversight responsibilities or authority over awarding contracts.

The following two resolutions were passed:

1. The first resolution concerns the television ads that were run by LWVUS in Massachusetts and Missouri.

WHEREAS, ARTICLE II, SECTION 1 OF THE LWV BYLAWS STATES: "The purposes of the LWV are to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues," and

WHEREAS, ARTICLE II, SECTION 2 OF THE LWV BYLAWS STATES: "The League shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate," and state and local leagues use this to establish our credibility in sponsoring candidate forums; and

WHEREAS, The LWV has long championed Campaign Finance Reform and deplored the recent Citizens United decision by the Supreme Court, and yet LWVUS did not promptly divulge the true source of over a million dollars in funding to pay for these ads, thus opening up the League to criticism; and

WHEREAS, delegates to the 2010 national LWV convention did not change the long-standing tradition of the League of Women Voters to take action on our positions not personalities, and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, BY THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WASHINGTON AS FOLLOWS: We request that the LWVUS adhere to the high principles of our 91-year history, to continue to be strong and visible in advocating for our positions, but to refrain from running negative public ads targeting individuals.

2. The next resolution is about the Citizen's United decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2010.

WHEREAS, Our democracy is in peril. The Citizen's United decision of the US Supreme Court said that corporations have the same rights as natural persons to free speech, including political speech. This allows corporate entities to spend unlimited amounts to influence election outcome and lawmaking.

WHEREAS, The LVW of US has made it clear that the League's position is to change this.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, The President of the LWV of Washington appoint a committee to gather supplemental material particularly as it applies to WA State to send to all local Leagues along with suggestions about how to disseminate this information beyond League members to the general public.

Also, on Sunday, we adopted the study to "update a portion of the 1977 Energy Position, EN-6, which says in part "...The use of alternative energy systems such as on-site solar heating and recovery of energy from wastes should be actively encouraged." The title of the study is "Update of Energy Positions with an emphasis on Biomass." The recommended study passed.

The Budget was also adopted and delegates passed "an increase in PMP by \$1 in the second year if the state board deems it necessary."

Karen Kiessling was introduced as a State Board Member for the coming term. Lastly, Deb, Janet and I gave the invitation to come to Pullman for Council in 2012.

Karen Kiessling joins League State Board

Pullman League Board Member at Large Karen Kiessling was elected to the League of Women Voters of Washington Board of Directors. She has accepted the Membership Portfolio as a Director and will work in that area for the next two years. The state board meets every other month throughout the year in Seattle. Karen will provide a summary of board meeting decisions to the VOTER for the information of members here.

Pullman League to Host Council May 25-27, 2012

Karen Kiessling and Lucy Linden

At the end of the State Convention of the Washington League that took place in May in Richland, Pullman League members there invited the delegates and the state board to come to Pullman for the May 2012 State League Council. The group applauded with pleasure in accepting our invitation. State Council is held in the even numbered years when the National Convention is hosted in a major city around the country. The Council meeting has traditionally been the meeting where local League Presidents talk with the State Board of Directors about what is needed at the local level from the State Officers.

Those always invited to attend the council meeting are the Presidents of each League in the state, now numbering 19, and at least one other member from each League. All League members are also invited, Council is open to any League member who wishes to attend, so the state office asks the hosting League to plan for as many as 60 people.

The State League Board will meet Friday afternoon (or Saturday morning) at the Holiday Inn Express with a Friday night “dine around town” led by local members. Council officially begins Saturday after lunch in the Stirling Room, followed by a catered dinner. Sunday morning sessions last until noon when Council adjourns.

We will need all our members to be involved because there is a lot of planning and carry through that is required for an educational and fun event. The Palouse is at its most gorgeous so it is a splendid time for us to show our visitors the character and charm of small town Washington.

Murial Oaks Receives WSU Award

Congratulations to Pullman League member Murial Oaks who received the President’s Distinguished Lifetime Service Award at the WSU Showcase banquet in March. Murial was instrumental in launching the Distance Degree Program at WSU and it “is now recognized as one of the most innovative and respected distance degree programs in the nations. Nearly 70% of the program’s 1800 graduates are women.”

Murial has retired from WSU and moved away from Pullman. She will be missed by all of us in League where she worked so successfully on the finance drive and, together with League member Janet Kendall, planned a terrific social media night for businesses and non-profits in the Pullman area. This was a first for our League. Thanks, Murial, we wish you all the best in retirement.

Pullman League Welcomes Two New Members!

Lucy Linden

Keiko Tuttle came to Pullman when she was accepted into the Molecular Plant Sciences Ph.D. program at WSU. Her current academic focus is studying and researching DNA repair in plants.

She was also awarded a graduate assistantship with University Recreation where she is responsible for Safety Education, Aquatic Fitness and Well-being. Before coming to Pullman she worked as a medical assistant for an OB/GYN, an ophthalmology technician and a research assistant.

Keiko graduated from California State University, Fullerton with a B.S. in Molecular Biology and Biotechnology. She grew up in the high desert of California, in a little town called Ridgecrest, and during her college years lived mostly in Orange County. Keiko calls herself a "Navy brat" who grew up learning to appreciate different cultures, languages and travel, especially travel! While in Southern California she used the League of Women Voters' website often during presidential and gubernatorial election years, and now she's looking forward to participating in our local League, and to helping us reach a younger demographic of members and citizens by increasing their awareness of the easily accessible information about local, state and national candidates, political issues and elections. She's looking forward to the July planning meeting.

Amy Cole came to Pullman to pursue a master's degree in Sport Management which was granted in June. Many of you met her at our Annual Meeting. As a graduate assistant with University Recreation she worked training sports officials and creating sport leagues. Then she took a position as a teaching assistant with Sport Management, teaching sport programming. Now she is beginning a Ph.D. in Interdisciplinary Studies (Criminal Justice, Sport Management and Sociology). Amy is from San Jose, California and has a B.A. in History from the University of California, Davis; while there she worked as a football official.

Amy is interested in fitness instruction, reading, swimming and exploring the Palouse. She joined League to be active in local community issues, promote campaign finance reform and increase her knowledge of national issues that affect women in particular, such as family health and women's reproductive rights. She'll be looking for opportunities to practice and apply the theories and research she learns in her studies of gender.

Observer Reports

Pullman Regional Hospital - April 14, 2011

Observer: Helen Stiller

Two physicians will be leaving Pullman: Dr Perino and Dr. Ulrich
The general surgeons will take over the colonoscopies.

In the fall of 2010 a wound care service was established as part of the Speciality Clinics at PRH. In conjunction with Tri-State Hospital in Clarkston, a good effort has been made to meet the wound care needs on the Palouse. This service has been well received by physicians and patients as a convenient approach to wound care needs for a variety of conditions. The expectation is that the utilization of this service will increase as communities become more aware of it.

The Pullman Regional Ethics Committee reviewed the summary of the utilization of Washington's Death with Dignity from the Department of Health. In 2010, 87 individuals were dispensed the medication, 51 of these individuals died after ingesting the medication and 15

individuals died without taking the medication. The age range was from 52 to 99 years of age, 94% lived west of the Cascades, 78% had cancer, and 10 % had a neuro-degenerative disease. 2% of the patients were known to have no insurance, 84% were enrolled in Hospice and 90% of these patients died at home. The number of participants increased from 65 in 2009 to 87 in 2010.

Pullman Regional Hospital - June 16, 2011

Observer: Helen Stiller

On June 16th I attended a public meeting of the Pullman Regional Hospital's Board where they discussed some of the information that had been obtained from a strategic planning session for the Board and the medical staff. During that session the hospital had hired a professional facilitator, Marc Haley, MBA.

Twenty physicians attended the planning session. This number was larger than usual. As the Board and administrative staff (led by Scott Adams) discussed the issues addressed at the meeting it became obvious to me that the large number of physicians present was due to some dissatisfaction with the Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system that has been installed in the hospital. All in house departments are now required to utilize this system. (The departments in the Summit Building have not yet been included.)

When the pharmacy went over to computerized bar code scanning their record system showed considerable improvement even though there was some dissatisfaction with the hardware.

During the initial planning session several imperatives were discussed. They are as follows:

- Physician recruitment and retention
- Quality: Sustain and improve service quality
- Primary care - Market share strategy: Include a position on "domestic referral".
Concern was voiced about patients being referred to a specialist who then admits the patient to a hospital in another city,
- Collaboration: This also involves staying local with services that PRH can provide.
- Capital generation: Creating our own brand of excellence. Enhance what we do well; strengthen and innovate service lines, etc.
- Electronic Medical Records: Responds to provider demands, interfaces with other systems in the region, is intuitive, decreases productivity least, is easily accessible, allows meaningful documentation, is financially realistic, etc.

The EMR system seems to be a major problem at this point in time.

The other major issue is that of patients being referred by a primary care physician to a specialist who then sends the patient to another hospital for necessary procedures. This does not help the bottom line of PRH.

The following is reprinted from the Seattle VOTER of February 2011 and seems particularly timely in view of the ads LWVUS ran in MA and MI.

Action and Advocacy

Susan Gilbert, Newsletter Editor and 40-Year League Member

It is not uncommon for outsiders, and even some members to question how the League can be nonpartisan yet advocate on positions that, in the slice of time that is now, appear to be partisan. In the highly partisan climate that has developed in recent years, the League is one of the very few political organizations that is not in either the liberal/Democratic camp or the conservative/Republican camp. And we have members of all political persuasions and encourage them to get involved in politics. So members may be partisan but the organization is not. All this is hard for many to wrap their minds around.

The League is nonpartisan in that we do not endorse or support any political party or candidate for office. We don't rate legislators, we don't track their votes and we don't threaten them if they don't vote our way. Voter service is one of our main missions and we publish nonpartisan voter guides and hold candidate forums to help voters educate themselves beyond TV ads.

Education is an important League function, and we try in our meetings and in this newsletter to inform our attendees/readers and stimulate them to think about issues in our world.

However, the league is also an advocacy group, and we have positions on issues that have been developed over the years since our founding in 1920 and are the result of study and consensus of the local Leagues nationwide. These positions are updated from time to time, but are basically consistent. The positions and platforms of the political parties, on the other hand, do change and at times they resemble our League position, or not. but the League doesn't change or drop its positions because they are currently those of one party or the other, and we do speak out!

An example is health care. The League has a position on comprehensive health care for all Americans. President Truman liked that idea too and President Eisenhower delivered a special message to Congress on January 31, 1955 recommending a comprehensive health program for Americans. Lyndon Johnson got Medicare passed and that took the pressure off for awhile. But President Nixon encouraged HMOs as a way to rein in costs and provide health care for more people. Then President Reagan came along and decided the free market was the best way to manage health care and the Republicans have basically supported this idea since. But clearly both parties have been on both sides of the issue.

The key is not to confuse politics with position advocacy.

Useful Pullman League Numbers

Contact Us: lwvpull@yahoo.com

Online VOTER: www.lwvwa.org/Pullman

Web Page: www.lwvpullman.org