

# VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF PULLMAN

July 2008

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

**Chair of the Board:** Sue Armitage, 332-4279; **Vice President:** Alice Schroeder, 334-2470; **Secretary:** June Crawford, 332-7186; **Treasurer:** Joan Folwell, 332-3946; **Voter Service:** Karen Kiessling, 332-4755; **Voter Editor:** Susan Daniels, 332-6699; **Finance Drive Chair:** Lenna Harding, 332-7749; **Membership/Hospitality:** Judy Krueger, 332-8208; **Observer Corps Chair,** Lucy Linden: 332-2755; **TRY Editor,** Lucy Linden, 332-2755.

## Meetings

### July Planning Meeting

Date: Monday July 21, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Program: Plan the 2007-2008 meetings and enjoy a salad potluck.

Place: Ruth Brown's home -- directions are given below

Chairs: Sue Armitage and Alice Schroeder

## Board Meetings

### Monday July 28

Time: 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Hostess: Natalie Clark, 220 SW Mountain View Dr.

## Other Dates To Note

**Thursday August 7: Vote Smart Bus In Pullman.** Vote Smart is based in Phillipsburg, Montana and is planning a nationwide bus tour. The bus will be in Pullman on Thursday, August 7th. Lance Le Loup of WSU is the lead on this visit. League will co-host. The Chair of the *Vote Smart Bus Committee* is Bob Grunewald; committee members are June Crawford, Alice Schroeder, Lorena O'English, and Karen Kiessling.

**Tuesday August 19: Top-Two Primary Election.** Ballots in Whitman County are mailed out starting 20 days prior to the election date and must be postmarked by election day.

**Friday August 22 and Saturday August 23: Lentil Festival booth Friday night, and Lentil**

**Festival Parade walkers Saturday morning.** Volunteers are needed to staff the booth and walk in the parade. Volunteers get to wear the beautiful sashes that Karen Kiessling got with a grant. (See the picture below of the Johnson Parade walkers wearing the sashes.) Volunteers in the Friday night booth will hand out voter registration forms and information about the November election. Parade walkers will walk from Grand Avenue to Reaney Park starting at 11 a.m. and hand out information sheets about voting in the General Election November 4th. Contact Susan Daniels to volunteer for the booth, and Dorothy Swanson to volunteer for the parade.

**Week of October 13th: Election Forums.** Co-hosted with Pullman Chamber, Whitman Co. Library, and the Daily News. They will be video taped at City Hall and rebroadcast. The Committee of the Whole to share the work: Joan Folwell, Elinor Mc Closkey, Bev Webster, Sue Armitage, June Crawford, and Karen Kiessling.

**Monday September 8: LWVWA State President visits Pullman.** State President Barbara Seitle of Whidbey Island, WA, will present the basics of League membership. This is the PERFECT time to recruit new members. Joan Folwell will host a potluck supper.

**Saturday November 8: Action Workshop for the Eastside.** Richland, WA. Pullman League has been asking to have a workshop on the Eastside, and now we have one. Action Workshops are interesting and invigorating events and holding it in the Tri-Cities makes it possible for us to form car pools and do it in one day.

## **Directions to the Planning Meeting, Monday July 21**

Here are the directions to Ruth Brown's for the Monday, July 21 planning meeting. The meeting will be from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and includes a salad potluck. It is a bit earlier than usual because it will be in the Brown's back yard and the shade lasts until about 1:00. Those of you who were there at the planning meeting last year know what a lovely place it is to have our meeting. This is the meeting where we decide the activities and meetings we are going to pursue in the coming year.

### **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 beautiful blue roof.
- The driveway is long and narrow, so stay in the middle.

**WELCOME!**

**LWVWA New Address** -- The office for LWVWA has moved next door. The telephone and email are unchanged, only the address has changed to: LWVWA, 4730 University Way NE #720, Seattle, WA 98105

## **President's Review of 2007-2008 LWV Pullman Activities**

The 2007-2008 League year saw increased membership and activity by the Pullman League. In the Feb. 2007 planning meeting four positions were chosen for further action. In September the League heard from Annie Pillars and Oralene Ronjue of the Council on Aging on health care access including transportation in Whitman county (Local Positions 1 & 3) and in May from Scott Adams on the proposed hospital owned nursing home. In December Andriette Pieron, director of Neill Public Library, and Jim Belcher, Adult Services Librarian, gave a library update (Local Position 8). In both cases our positions appear adequate but ongoing monitoring and support are needed.

There was considerable action on our planning position (position 4). A pre-development public meeting ordinance was crafted using monies contributed in memory of Janice Miller and the ordinance was presented to the City Council on Oct. 23 and the Planning Commission on Oct. 24. The city attorney, Laura McLoon, states that it meets all legal requirements. However, despite it being the League's only city goal suggestion and the number one suggestion from the College Hill Association the city has not discussed it. A committee headed by Helen Stiller will continue to work on getting a hearing. Sentence 3 of the planning position was revised to better reflect the intention of the original study. It now reads "Support the principle of making land use decisions through a process that requires review by both the Planning Commission and City Council, or County Commissioners.

Action on Environmental Quality (position 2), especially recycling, remains for the 2008-9 League year.

Several meetings were devoted to the Washington State Ferry Study and the LWVUS Immigration Study. The renewed observer program continued with observer training and observers at the Hospital Board, Library Board, Planning Commission and County Commissioners meetings.

Voter service was a large part of League action. In October the League joined the Chamber of Commerce in sponsoring an election forum. Following up on suggestions by the League, the Moscow-Pullman Daily news published three stories on election issues, including the need for more space for the elections division, accessibility issues and how to vote a provisional ballot. Leaguers also observed part of the ballot count.

We invited the Foley Institute and Neill Public Library to join us in sponsoring a visit by Secretary of State Sam Reed to talk about the duties of his office, particularly with reference to

supervising elections and aiding libraries, at a public lecture on March 3. The public also was invited to an open house at the library on March 4, and he met with representatives of the schools; Whitman County, Pullman, and WSU libraries; city and WSU officials; WSU students and visited the County Auditor.

Pullman faces many issues in meeting state and national mandates to control storm water. On April 28, at the League's suggestion, we put on a public meeting about these issues with the city and chamber of commerce. The meeting was video taped. In an effort to reach out more to the county we provided copies of the League's Washington State Civics book, *The State We're In*, to all the libraries of schools that teach 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade in Whitman County. We are very grateful to the Bank of Whitman which agreed to sponsor our annual "They Represent You" (TRY) publication which lists how to reach elected and appointed officials. This allowed us to include city offices in the four other Whitman County towns where the bank has branches. The TRY was also distributed through the bank branches.

Several programs recognized the importance of membership. On Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> Karen Kiessling organized a luncheon honoring our four 50-year members, Kay Buss, Natalie Clark, Betty Nyman and Dorothy Swanson. Our September back to League pot luck had members bringing potential new members and several joined. A new members soup supper and orientation in November was well attended.

Work on our Finance Drive letter and list, including writing personal notes to recipients paid off in a very successful fund drive that has put us in the position to increase our activities as we can now keep a year's finances in reserve as well as meet our budget. We also were able to send three delegates to the LWVWA council and a delegate, Susan Daniels, to the 48<sup>th</sup> LWVUS National Convention.

Finally, we continued to write letters to the editor and testify at government meetings in support of our positions. Letters to the editor were sent supporting the 4 year Pullman School District maintenance levy and opposing Initiative 960 which requires a public vote on almost every financial decision made by the state legislature. We testified and wrote letters on supporting the College Hill Study, Downtown parking requirements, especially for new residences in the C2 zone, supporting business registration and licensing, goals for our legislators at the December Town Hall meeting, city goals and opposing the county proposal to approve bonds to build the Hawkins development infrastructure at the state line.

Our May meeting was well attended with 21 members present and Sue Armitage was elected to chair the board. Thank you, Sue, for agreeing to do this. It has been a great three years as your president and I want to thank all the members who made the many activities we participated in during this time possible.

Alice L. Schroeder, President 2007-2008.

## **Voters Have Summer Homework**

Voters will need to do their own evaluating of candidates in this summer's primary, August 19th. The top-two primary will allow candidates to use any party's designation after their name on the ballot. The two top vote getting candidates will appear on the general election ballot. It will be possible for two candidates from one party to be the top two.

Voters need to read their Voter's Pamphlet and follow campaigns to assure that the candidate for whom they vote represents their views. Voters will not be able to rely solely on a party label to determine a candidate's positions on various issues.

## **Online Voter Information Resources**

Be sure to check out the article in the June 2008 National Voter on [www.VOTE411](http://www.VOTE411) and *Elections 101* on the website [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

## **LWVWA State Council Report**

**Yakima WA, May 31 - June 1, 2008.**

June Crawford, Pullman Delegate

*Who's Talking, Who's listening, Who Cares?* A program title that gives an idea of what may lie ahead.

Barbara Seitle, LWVWA President welcomed all participants and reviewed the League year from June 2007- June 2008. She felt that the League had met challenges and done a "superb job". Next year the focus will be on enhancing the partnership between local and State Leagues with better communication about membership growth, voter service and civic education. Taking an excerpt from the LWVWA Bylaws, Article IX, she explained one purpose of the Council: "The Council shall give guidance to the state board on program and methods of work."

Barbara Bush, Action Chair, addressed this in her presentation: *A Conversation at Council*, in which she listed ideas and questions for discussion under the categories: action; program development; local league support and member services; funding the LWVWA education fund; and State League services. The goal of this session was to improve and strengthen the organization. A lively discussion followed during which a variety of ideas were offered. Barbara Bush noted that she has a "blog" and urged members to check it regularly.

During the morning a representative from each local League spoke briefly on its recent activities. I spoke for Pullman and mentioned the two-day visit from Secretary of State, Sam Reed, which afforded several opportunities for public meetings; Forums on the Pullman Storm Water run-off requirements; and Immigration. It was also noted that the Council Handbook contained a

statewide membership count showing that Pullman had increased its membership from 38 in 2003 to 53 in 2007. A higher ratio than many other Leagues.

A clear and concise overview of Parliamentary procedure was the next presentation. Excellent! I will make copies of the handout "A Quick Guide" available at the next general meeting on July 21, 2008.

*League 101*, the title of a talk from Barbara Seitle, with sub-heading: "Everything you always wanted to know about League but were afraid to ask". Starting with a synopsis of League history she brought us up to date with a screen showing the League website and a step by step guide to many links for accessing desired information.

The final panel discussion on Saturday evening concerned Immigration, with an emphasis on Eastern Washington. The speakers were an attorney, specializing in Immigration law; a health worker from the farm workers' clinic; and a young wife and mother whose husband had been deported to Mexico a month ago, a situation that could mean a separation of years while he attempts to return to USA legally. All speakers expressed dismay and frustration over the harsh, increasingly complicated and expensive immigration laws and the lack of avenues to help immigrants with this problem.

On Sunday morning Karen Kiessling led a discussion on statewide committees. Do we want them? What issues require them? What topics would make my League members join them? Karen Kiessling is resigning from the State Board and will be replaced by Judy Ostrow of Seattle. It will be the Board's loss.

After some debate the delegates voted on two new position statements as follows:

Ferry position as adopted by LWVWA Board of Directors on January 11, 2008.

"The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that: Ferries in Washington State are part of the highway system and should be funded as such. Passenger-Only ferries should be funded as are other modes of public transportation. The fare box should not be expected to totally fund ferry operations in Washington State."

MSP unchanged.

Election Methods position as adopted by LWVWA Board of Directors on January 11, 2008.

"The League of Women Voters believes that: The Voter Registration State Database (VRSD) should not be used to deny people the right to vote. No proof of citizenship other than the sworn signature on the registration form should be required for Voter Registration. *There should be* random audits of all ballots, with the percentage of ballots audited to be determined by a statistician. The mail-in ballot postmark deadline should be Election Day.

(Italics denote the change voted in at Council). MSP as amended.

## **Report on the 2008 LWV National Convention**

**Portland, OR, June 14 - 16, 2008**

Susan Daniels, Pullman Delegate

Attending the LWV National Convention was an interesting, exciting, and encouraging experience. It was a busy few days as there were more interesting caucuses and workshops to attend than one person could manage. I wish there had been a couple more representatives from Pullman so we could have covered more than Alice and I could. It was very helpful having Alice there with her experience to discuss events and issues with.

It was interesting to see how such a large gathering with several contentious issues to resolve was managed. I now appreciate how Robert's Rules of Order keep a discussion moving, and how the League members keep it civil.

There were several minor changes to the by-laws that were approved. The change that was contentious was one regarding how resolutions are presented to the Convention. A compromise was worked out and passed -- any League wishing to submit a resolution for consideration at the convention has to send it with background information and pros and cons to all Leagues at least 4 weeks before the convention.

Two resolutions for program passed: to Take Action on Global Climate Change, and to Study the NPV Compact. The Global Climate Task Force made the resolution for action and it passed resoundingly.

The National Public Vote Compact is an interesting idea. Each state that passes it promises that when enough states have passed it so that their total of electoral college votes is enough to determine the President of the U.S., each of them will give all their electoral college votes to the winner of the popular vote, thus insuring that the candidate winning the popular vote becomes president. It has passed in several states already and is coming up in others. It was passed in the House in Washington State this year and will surely come up again. Thus, state Leagues need to know the national position.

The LWVWA resolution for a task force on nuclear arms did not pass. There was concern that it would stretch resources too thin, and a feeling that the current position was adequate.

A resolution for National to be more careful with the wording of their fund raising requests also passed. Some local Leagues are finding that people are confused about whether they have paid dues or joined and at what level when they answer a membership recruitment letter, and just who gets the funds when they donate.

I attended several caucuses. The first was *Massachusetts Health Care -- Reform or Mirage* by the MA League. They regard it as a mirage, and recommend a single payer universal plan.

The caucus on *Election Integrity* was pushing for the League to change its position to one that requires paper ballots in response to all the problems that have arisen with electronic voting systems. (This did not pass as the majority of delegates felt that the current position was adequate.)

The caucus on *Public Financing Campaign Reform* was especially interesting. There are seven states that now have some level of public financing of elections, including Portland, OR. This is particularly relevant to us, since we now can have public financing of local elections. The main points made were: The name of the movement is important; How the elections will be financed is important; Having partners is important. And, opposition does not stop after public financing passes.

The workshop on *Strong Courts* stressed that we need to educate the public on appropriate checks and balances and educate for an appreciation of the role of the judiciary in our system. There are numerous attacks made on the courts in the name of “increased accountability” that are damaging to the independence of the courts.

The workshop on *Managing League Programs* pretty much described what we do here in Pullman.

One interesting development was a movement to have LWV moderate a presidential debate. The organizers generated petitions and collected signatures which were presented at the end of the convention when Leagues gave Guidance to the Board. There was a lot of support for League moderating a debate.

At Alice’s request, I gave the following Guidance to the Board:

“Direct marketing is very expensive, many League members do not respond, and some in our League find the appeals such a misuse of League monies they are considering dropping membership. We urge the board to have faith that members will give what they can and to limit direct marketing appeals to members to one per year for LWVUS and one for LWVUS/EF.

We urge the LWVUS board to formulate an appropriate formal process for obtaining grassroots input on action priorities.”

Alice writes that she found the volunteer experience lots of fun, with the opportunity to meet many volunteers and to still listen in to the debates. Listening to the *Voter Service Workshop* made her very thankful for mail-in voting. In the *Advocacy Workshop* she was impressed that our League’s approach is highly appropriate. She was also reminded that even if we don’t succeed we create visibility for the League whenever we advocate on the basis of a well studied and thought out position.



This is a brief summary of my experience at the National Convention. I want to thank Pullman League for the opportunity to go and encourage you all to consider attending the WA State Convention next year.

## **Observer Report Briefs**

**Neill Public Library Board meeting, April 30, 2008**

**Observer: Diane Gillespie**

Items of interest to the LWV:

- 1) Andriette Pieron has resigned as Director of Libraries. Kathleen Ahern, Youth Services Librarian, is serving as Interim Director but has no long-term interest in the Director's position. Since personnel reviews and decisions are confidential and made in executive session, I have my own speculations but no authoritative information about the resignation. Appropriate list-serve and journal ads have been placed inviting applications for the position (cut-off date is June 2<sup>nd</sup>).
- 2) June 2<sup>nd</sup> is also the extended cut-off date for applications to replace Wendy Bates, who is moving to the west side, on the NPL Board.
- 3) Since more research must be done on types of furniture for the new NPL addition and three bids must be secured, the full request to the Pullman Community Foundation for use of the Shirrod Endowment Funds will not be made until fall.
- 4) Groundwork on the patio remodel (Agnes McQuarrie gift fund) will be done for summer use; additional features will be completed in the fall.
- 5) Among the activities Jim Belcher (Adult Services Librarian) reported were a foreign film series, art displays, patron book donations for libraries at correctional facilities, outreach visits to three residential facilities, a classical guitar concert (May 4), and a presentation by Ann Birney as Amelia Earhart (May 11).

**Parks & Recreation Commission, May 14, 2008**

**Observer: Mary C. Shirazi**

The meeting was very pleasant. It took about one hour. They reported about improvements being made at Pullman City parks, as follows:

Sunnyside: restrooms open & working, light construction to begin, pump at lower falls being rebuilt.

Softball fields: being repaired.

Lawson Gardens: pavers installed, 85% of terrace done, a path down to the terrace to be started, path parallel to parking lot done.

Itani Park: pathway to Sunnyside not yet paved—coordinating with the Sewer Dept., To be seeded & finished by early 2009, drainage to be determined by June 2008, trees & shrubs already begun planting.

Summer P&R brochure is already out, heavy registration reported. Any "Senior" programs are open for all over the age of 18.

**Pullman School Board, April 9, 2008**

**Observer: Susan Daniels**

Pullman School District has implemented the use of Procurement Cards to expedite and simplify the procurement of supplies. They have procedures for oversight in place to prevent misuse.

The calendar for the next school year was presented and approved. They hope to start setting the calendar earlier for subsequent years to make it easier for families to plan. The PSD spring break will never coincide with WSU's due to the WASSL test schedule, except occasionally by chance.

**Pullman Regional Hospital Board, June 4, 2008**

**Observer: Helen Stiller**

The Board will have a planning session later in the month to discuss the following items: Strategic Objectives, Physician Recruitment, Hospital Expansion, Financial Planning, Succession Plan, Land Purchase, Organizational Objectives. An open invitation will be provided to all physicians regarding the recruitment issue.

Finance Report: Bottom line better than anticipated. Hospital is strong. Long term debt higher than many other facilities due to new building. Board accepted the Auditors report.

The Board members and staff have good rapport.

**Pullman Regional Hospital Special Board Meeting, June 27, 2008**

**Observer: Helen Stiller**

The special (Strategic Planning) session included two parts. The first was Financial Planning which involved various potential projects and prioritizing them in terms of necessity, cost, etc. The second part was far more interesting to me. The need to inform the community of some problems with physician recruitment and the current shortage of physicians in our community were discussed. The meeting was led by Scott Adams and attended by the hospital board, some of the leadership staff of the hospital and many of the local physicians.

The medical community here has reached a crisis stage which will become more apparent when the students arrive back in town. Palouse Medical is no longer accepting new patients. Patients have use of the Ready Care but will not be allowed to transfer onto the schedules of the regular staff. Pullman Family Medical is still accepting patients, however, I know that Vicki Short, MD is not taking new patients. We currently have only one General Surgeon available.

The major part of the discussion revolved around many options for recruiting and retaining physicians in our community and in what ways the hospital might be involved in the process. The discussion was very lively at times. The Board will meet again tomorrow morning to continue discussion of these topics and the establishment of Departmental Strategic Objectives. I do not intend to go to this session but hope that the information that I have provided is informative to all League members.

## Johnson Parade

Dorothy Swanson, Alice Schroeder, Karen Barron, Janet Kendall, Karen Kiessling, and Lianne Schroeder participated in the Johnson Fourth of July Parade wearing handsome new sashes Karen Kiessling bought with a State Ed Fund Civic Education/Voter Service grant. They passed out information sheets on Washington's Top-Two Primary and had a great time.



## Usefull Pullman League Numbers

Yahoo Mailbox: [lwvpull@yahoo.com](mailto:lwvpull@yahoo.com), password palouse

Online VOTER: [www.lwvwa.org](http://www.lwvwa.org), Local Leagues, Pullman

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 366, Pullman, WA 99163