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Help! Get Big Money Out of Politics

by Susan Eidenschink

The Supreme Court decision in Citizens United has opened the floodgates to unlimited and anonymous money in the American electoral process. A constitutional amendment is the only avenue to overturn this disastrous ruling. WAmend is a coalition formed to put the State of Washington on record as calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. A ballot initiative for November 2014 is planned to achieve this goal.

No paid signature gatherers will be used in this campaign. The Pierce County Chapter of Washington Public Campaigns (WPC) has agreed to do its share in signature gathering. Even though 240,000 legal signatures are necessary for an initiative to be placed on the ballot, initiative campaigns set a goal of collecting 360,000 signatures to make sure they meet the requirement. Pierce County has 12% of the population of Washington State, so the Pierce County Chapter of WPC has a goal of collecting 43,200 signatures for this initiative between mid-January 2014 and July 1, 2014. That may mean

432 people agreeing to collect 100 signatures, 2160 people agreeing to collect 20 signatures, or combinations of these or other options. Can you help with this effort?



Speaker Alice Woldt from Washington Public Campaigns

Even though there will be no paid signature gatherers, there will be a need for about \$75,000 for this campaign. If you want to help, but are unable to collect signatures, you can help by donating money on the WAmend website, www.wamend.org.

Money in politics affects all issues – health care, climate change, transportation, gun safety, education, and more. The mission of this coalition is to put the State of Washington on record as calling for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. See www.wamend.org for more information. Check out the Pierce County website at www.piercecountytoamend.org.

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The League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce County is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Immigration Reform, Early Childhood Education, Citizens United?

by Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow

These are three of the ideas which came up at the December LWVT-PC Board Meeting when we were talking about Program Planning. In January, it's your turn. For newer members and non members, "Program" refers to the issues League studies, reviews, takes positions and acts on. "Program Planning" is the term League uses for the process of making recommendations for the issues to address in the coming year or two. In 2014 (Happy New Year), there will be a National League Convention, and this is when we get to give OUR input on what national issues to focus on in the coming two years. In addition, EVERY YEAR, at this time, you also get to give your input on what issues our LOCAL League should be doing.

Making Recommendations for National Program

This year for National Program, we are asked to recommend only one thing -- a new study, or a review of an existing position, a concurrence with a position developed through a study at another level of League, or a special action focus. If we insist, we can recommend two things.

At the Units, we will do a quick review of the main areas of National League positions (Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, Social Policy.) If you look in your Handbook, you will see every area in which National League has a position and the short form of that position. If you want to read the whole thing, you can find Impact on Issues online at www.lwv.org. (To find it on the website, select Members Section [at the top red line]. Then in the search box, enter Impact on Issues, and select the online edition. It includes the official statements of position for each program area, briefly traces significant past actions and achievements, and indicates links among positions).

We will discuss what each Unit thinks are areas which might need updating. The Board will then take what each Unit has recommended and see where the greatest passions lie. (Suggestion: If you have a great idea for a study or update, contact me [lyzkurnitz@harbornet.com] before we have any of the meetings, so that I can make sure your idea is discussed at all of them. Or come to ALL of the meetings.)

Making Recommendations for Local Program

Then there's LOCAL. Every year, at the Annual Meeting,

we re-affirm all of our local positions AND vote on whether or not we want to do a new study or an update. So far this year, we had those great meetings on Mental Health Treatment in Pierce County – great background for a study leading to consensus and action. Do we want to study this further? Coming up this spring, we will be discussing Food Insecurity (the month after the National Agriculture update – great timing), and Gun Safety, and then Undocumented. Our speaker at the Holiday Party talked about WAMEND and Citizens United and campaign finance reform. Are these items we want to study further – either nationally or locally?????

The answer to why we are not discussing STATE League program is that they will not have a Convention in 2014. NEXT YEAR, we do State.

Here's How It Works

First, you go to one or more of the Unit meetings. (See Calendar for January Unit Meetings) You bring your passions, your suggestions, your League Handbook, this VOTER, information you've gotten from Impact on Issues and anything else which will help you make your point, educate, and convince us.

Please bring your local passions and ideas to these January meetings. The complete text of all our local positions is in the Handbook. If you want to do a study or an update, you must come up with – or help us come up with – a Title, a SCOPE for the study, an idea of a timeframe and what work will be involved, and suggestions of who will work on this (starting with yourself). (For National recommendations we also need to be as specific as possible, but for National it is not ONLY us who will be doing the work).

The Board will take what each Unit has recommended and see where the greatest passions lie.

Non League members are Invited

Non members who are interested in League and governmental issues are invited to attend. These meetings offer a good way to understand more about important issues and what League has been doing on many of them.

What Local or National Studies do I Want to See?

More on January Program Planning Meetings

by Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow

Jackie Jones-Hook passed on to me a survey she got from I-don't-know-what-organization. It asked that people rank issues in order of priority (something at which I am terrible, but it is what deciding on what to study or act on is all about...)

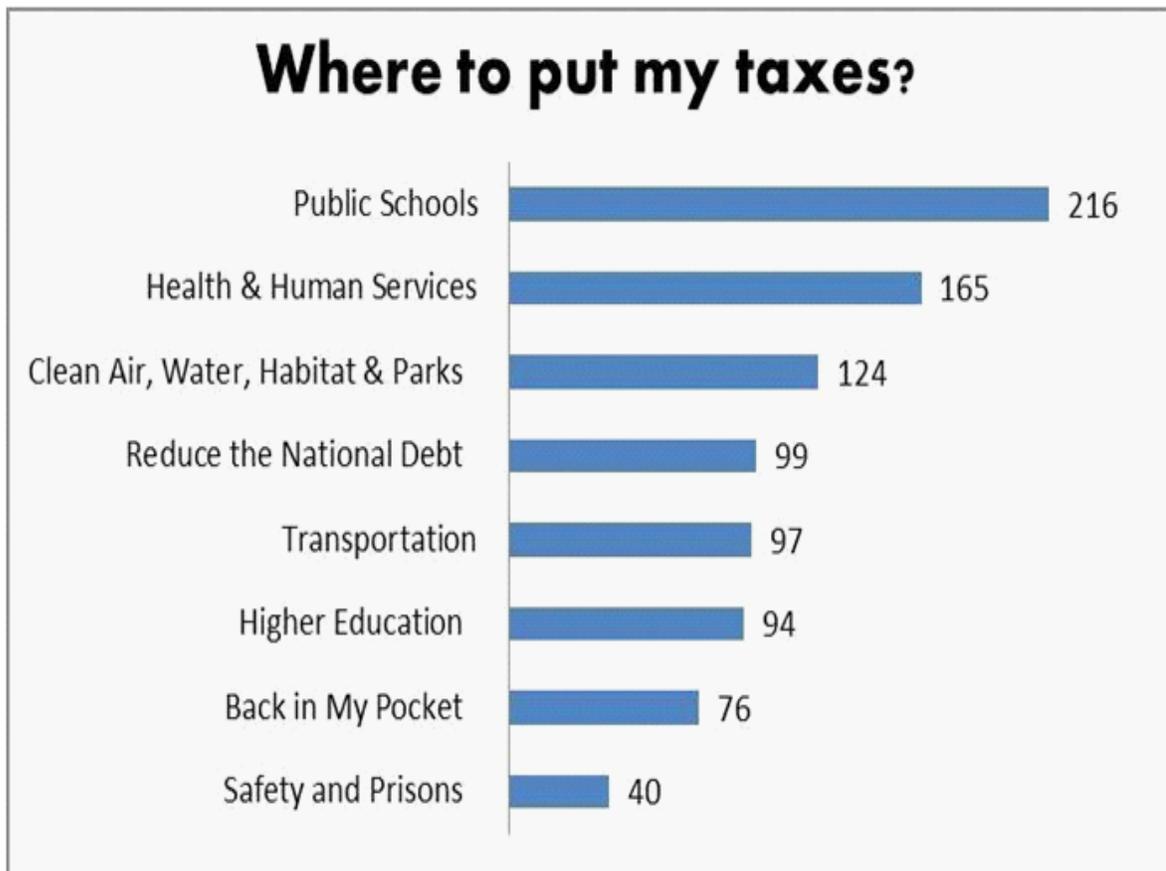
These are the issues it asked people to rank. I'm not asking you to rank them, but see if something jumps out at you as YES! WE NEED TO DO THAT!

Raising wages and protecting American jobs; holding oil companies accountable; protecting women's access to birth control and reproductive rights; holding Wall Street and big money interests accountable, and protecting financial reform; helping families avoid home foreclosure; gun violence prevention; immigration reform; protecting health care reform; protecting America against terrorism; guaranteeing retirement security; middle-class tax relief; undoing Citizens

United; restoring civility and mutual respect to our political discourse; improving educational opportunities; prohibiting discrimination based on race, religion, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation; taking swift action to stop climate change; restoring fiscal responsibility in government.

No, we can't do them all. What are you willing to recommend, push for, work for, and help us achieve?

In September, we registered voters at the Puyallup Fair. We also had a chart of Where to Put My Taxes. Visitors could vote for up to three which they thought were important. Over 300 people participated. These are the results. Do any of these give YOU ideas for Local or National Studies or Priorities? Let us know at the January unit meetings!



From the Co-President

by Ruth Ann Hatchett

Happy New Year to everyone!! As we conclude this busiest time of year, we look forward to new endeavors for League. But, just a moment to look back on a busy December. We had great participation in the Action Workshop we hosted on December 7. There were 50 participants; five of them were students from Pierce College Political Science classes. The student senator for government concerns, gave a brief overview of the work community college students advocating for issues facing students. We received kudos from the state office for our hosting.

December 14 was our general meeting at Merrill Gardens with 32 attending. The raffle, silent auction and live auction were very successful raising almost \$600. Thanks to everyone who donated items and those who purchased them.

Everyone also enjoyed a brunch and time to

visit with other members we don't see often. Although our fundraising effort was a good start in covering our annual operational expenses, we are still looking for a fund-raiser chair and committee. Please contact Paula Eismann, Ruth Ann Hatchett or John Thurlow for information.

Our speaker, Alice Wold of WAmend, gave a informative and motivating presentation. The board agreed to invite WAmend to partner to host a forum on March 20 for Sunshine Week.

We have interesting unit programs planned for the rest of the year. Looking forward to working with you in 2014.

Get the latest information about League by visiting our facebook page:



In Memoriam: Phyllis Erickson

Phyllis Erickson died at age 90 in late November 2013. Phyllis was active in the League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce County, and served on the League of Women Voters WA State board during the 1960s. She was also a trailblazer for women in politics. The first public office she held was in 1962 when she was the first woman elected to the Franklin Pierce School Board. A decade later she was elected to the WA State Legislature from District 2. After serving five terms in the state legislature, she ran for the Pierce County Council in 1981. Phyllis had worked with the League to change the charter for Pierce County government. This became a ballot measure and voters changed the charter for the county, making it a home-rule charter, which increased the number of council members from three to seven. She represented east Pierce County for six years.

Phyllis had a passion for education, and worked with in the League and in the community for expansion of the Community College System.

A memorial service will be held on May 1, 2014 at the Mountain View Funeral Home in Tacoma. Memorial contributions in her name can be made to KPLU or the Tacoma Musical Playhouse.

See more at: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tribnet/obituary.aspx?pid=168574677>.

Also: <http://www.thenewstribune.com/2013/12/22/2960719/she-was-a-strong-woman-in-public.html>.

Get Involved!!!

Attend a Unit Meeting (To resume in January)

TACOMA

Day/Time: Second Thursdays / 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Place: N. Tacoma Police Substation, 5140 N. 26th St.

Unit leader: Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow, lyzkurnitz@harbornet.com

LAKEWOOD AND NEIGHBORS

Day/Time: Second Fridays / 10:00 a.m. - noon

Place: Steilacoom Community Center 2301 Worthington St., Steilacoom

Unit leader: Ann Elliston, 253-564-4102

EAST PIERCE

Day/Time: Second Saturdays / 10:00 a.m. - noon

Place: Puyallup Library, 324 S. Meridian, Puy.

Unit leader: Ellen Zulauf, See Membership Directory

GIG HARBOR-KEY PENINSULA

Day/Time: Second Saturdays / 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Place: Harbor History Museum, 4121 Harborview Dr., GH

Unit leader: Sharon Peace-Doane, 253-265-0841

*The heart of a
volunteer is not
measured in size,
but by the depth
of the commit-
ment to make a
difference in the
lives of others.*

~ DeAnn Hollis

~ Warmest thoughts and Best wishes for a Wonderful Holiday Season ~

Volunteer Your Time

TRY Researchers and Proof-Readers

New Data for the TRY "They Represent You" – a directory of contact information for elected officials, must be researched and a draft of the TRY must have several eyes checking for errors. If you are good at detail work that can be done on your own schedule, contact Ann Williams at willar12000@yahoo.com or (253) 759-3355, or contact Jackie Jones-Hook at jjoneshook@aol.com.

Voter Printing and Mailing

Each month the Voter is printed and prepared for mailing. This happens at the end of each month. If you like a little physical work once in awhile, contact Susan Eidenschink.

The Voter Needs Photographs

The Voter needs your photos! Take your camera along to League meetings and events and e-mail your photographs to Voter Editor, Connie Ozmer at cozmer@comcast.net. Please include in your submission names of people in the photo and name and date of the event. Thanks!

LWVUS Agriculture Update Study Materials

by Susan Eidenschink

Our February Unit Meetings will consider discussion and consensus questions dealing with an update to the LWVUS Agriculture Position, which was written in 1988. Many changes and advancements have been made in agriculture since that time, so an update is important. The discussion and consensus questions will be included in the February Voter, and our responses are due to National April 4, 2014. Those serving on the LWVT-PC Agriculture Update Study Committee are Susan Eidenschink, Mary Kohli, Liz Lathrop, Nancy Pearson, and Ann Williams.

The scope of this update study includes 1) current technology issues in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and 2) current agriculture finance issues including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process. The consensus questions deal with the following topics: animal management, economic health of the agricultural sector, food labeling, food safety, and research and development. The consensus questions are now available at www.lwv.org/content/agriculture-study-questions.

To help you prepare for this study the planning committee working on the agriculture update study

has prepared several pieces of information that are found at www.lwv.org/member-resources/advocacy-projects-and-studies-our-work. The documents and websites present information consistent with the mission of the authors and/or sponsoring organizations, so League members must be willing to read widely to get a balanced understanding of the agricultural policy challenges facing the U.S and the world in general. The topic headings from the [lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) website are listed below.

- About the Agriculture Update and Committee
- Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO)
- Interaction of Federal Agencies with Food Safety Missions
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health
- Food Labeling: FDA and USDA
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- USDA's Role in American Nutrition
- United States Department of Agriculture
- Overview of Key Agencies Supporting Regulating Food and Agriculture
- Agricultural Update: Multimedia Resources for Background Information
- Agriculture Update: Suggested Readings

Welcome New Members!

Catherine Gleva
Virginia Peterson

Thank you Donors for the Finance Drive!

Lucinda Wingard, Ann Williams, Barbara Wiekert, Dorothy Spadoni, Clare Petrich, Nancy Pearson, Shera & Zoeb Mogri, Patricia Mail, Patricia Morse, Cecile Montgomery, Janet Monroe, Margaret Michaud, Dorothy McBride, Mary Ann Leskie, Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow & John Thurlow, Karen Forchione, Bobbie Fletcher, Bea Elder, Paula & Donald Eismann, Susan Eidenschink, Jean Buhaly



Paula Eismann and Jack Cameron
with Donations

Correction from the December Voter

In the 5 page report on the December Mental Health meetings sent with the December Voter, please make the following correction on page 3, 2nd problem—THERE CAN ONLY BE 16 BEDS IN AN EVALUATION CENTER because Medicaid won't pay if there are more beds. (Mistakenly wrote "Medicare").

LWVT-PC Calendar 2013 - 2014

January 7 - 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm - No Coal Trains - South Tacoma Library, 3411 S 56th St
 January 9 - 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm - Tacoma Unit Meeting (Subject: Program Planning)
 January 10 - 10:00 am - noon - Lakewood & Neighbors Unit Meeting (Subject: Program Planning)
 January 11 - 10:00 am - noon - East Pierce Unit Meeting (Subject: Program Planning)
 January 11 - 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm - Gig Harbor Unit Meeting (Subject: Program Planning)
 January 21 - 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm - LWVT-PC Board Meeting
 January 25 - 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Project Homeless Connect - Spanaway Middle School, 15701 B St E

February 8 - 10:00 pm - noon - East Pierce Unit Meeting (Subject: LWVUS Agriculture Study Consensus)
 February 8 - 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm - Gig Harbor Unit Meeting (Subject: LWVUS Agriculture Study Consensus)
 February 11 Election for new and renewal levies in the School Districts of Auburn, Bethel, Fife, Franklin Pierce, Orting, Puyallup, Steilacoom, Sumner, Tacoma, University Place
 February 13 - 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm - Tacoma Unit Meeting (Subject: LWVUS Agriculture Study Consensus)
 February 14 - 10:00 pm - noon - Lakewood & Neighbors Unit Meeting (Subject: LWVUS Agriculture Study Consensus)
 February 18 - 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm - LWVT-PC Board Meeting

March 8 - 10:00 am - noon - East Pierce Unit Meeting (Subject: Food Insecurity)
 March 8 - 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm - Gig Harbor Unit Meeting (Subject: Food Insecurity)

March 13 - 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm - Tacoma Unit Meeting (Subject: Food Insecurity)
 March 14 - 10:00 am - noon - Lakewood & Neighbors Unit Meeting (Subject: Food Insecurity)
 March 18 - 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm - LWVT-PC Board Meeting
 March 20 - General Meeting - Sunshine Forum

April 10 - 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm - Tacoma Unit Meeting (Subject: Gun Safety and Responsibility)
 April 11 - 10:00 am - noon - Lakewood & Neighbors Unit Meeting (Subject: Gun Safety and Responsibility)
 April 12 - 10:00 am - noon - East Pierce Unit Meeting (Subject: Gun Safety and Responsibility)
 April 12 - 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm - Gig Harbor Unit Meeting (Subject: Gun Safety and Responsibility)
 April 15 - 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm - LWVT-PC Board Meeting

May 8 - 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm - Tacoma Unit Meeting (Subject: Undocumented - Economic Impact & Proposed Solutions)
 May 9 - 10:00 am - noon - Lakewood & Neighbors Unit Meeting (Subject: Undocumented - Economic Impact & Proposed Solutions)
 May 10 - 10:00 am - noon - East Pierce Unit Meeting (Subject: Undocumented - Economic Impact & Proposed Solutions)
 May 10 - 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm - Gig Harbor Unit Meeting (Subject: Undocumented - Economic Impact & Proposed Solutions)
 May 20 - 4:30 pm - 6:00 pm - LWVT-PC Board Meeting

June 14 - Annual Meeting

Project Homeless Connect

by Susan Eidschink

On Saturday, January 25, the second Project Homeless Connect of 2013-2014 will be held at Spanaway Middle School, 15701 B St E, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. If you want to help register voters and help inform felons of their right to register to vote for one or two hours at this important event, please contact Susan Eidschink, susaneiden@harbornet.com.

The first event of the 2013-14 Project Homeless Connect season was held on October 23rd, at the Tacoma Dome. At this event hundreds of homeless people received medical, dental, and vision care, help with chemical dependency, flu shots, haircuts, clothes, housing information, pet care, and more. One hundred forty people were helped to enroll in Medicaid and Medicaid Expansion with the help of Assistors designated by the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department. See the website for more information, www.pchomelessconnect.com.

Potluck fun



Bobbie Fletcher and her handmade quilt top

LWVT-PC Board Meeting Summary: December 17, 2013

by John Thurlow

A quorum of the Board discussed the following topics:

- Fundraising: The next step in the Community Fundraising Program is sharing a list of potential donors with the membership to look for members with contacts in those organizations. Overall fundraising needs a Chair.
- Web presence: We will pursue the re-implementation of LWVT-PC's web pages in the context of the LWVWA's new site. Board minutes will be posted when approved (the month following the meeting).
- Results of the State Action Workshop: about 50 people participated and appreciated the program.
- December general meeting: about 32 people participated, and participated enthusiastically in the WA Amend program led by Alice Wold.
- The Board endorsed Tacoma Schools' Propositions 1 and 2: continuing the levies for the operations and technology programs.
- Unit meetings: the Board reviewed plans for the January planning meetings (member input is desired ahead of time to help spark discussion), and the February LWVUS Agriculture study consensus discussions and March Food Insecurity in Pierce County. Copies of "Politics of the Possible" will be on sale at the Unit meetings (besides the value of the stories in the book, LWVT-PC benefits from the book sales).
- TRY publication: content update is well underway. The target for publication is the end of January. There will be fewer printed copies than previous, and distribution will be focused on recipients who need paper (vs. web access). The TRY will be "webified" to make it easier to use on-line.
- Sunshine Week: the Board discussed a program topic for a public meeting in the March 16th-22nd window – WA Amend and Washington Public Campaigns were discussed.
- The Annual Meeting is scheduled for June 14th – set the Saturday aside in your calendar now.

Board of Directors

Voter Volunteers:

Connie Ozmer
Marie Cameron
Susan Eidenschink

Please send comments or suggestions for The Voter to lwvtacomapierce@gmail.com

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Director	Ingrid Curtis	253-862-7865 LtcoLrwc@comcast.net
Director	Ann Williams	253-759-3355 willar12000@yahoo.com
Director	Connie Ozmer	cozmer@comcast.net

Join the Tacoma – Pierce County League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters of Tacoma – Pierce County invites you to join us!
Any citizen of voting age, male or female, may become a Member.

Yes, I'd like to become a Member of the League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce County.

This application ALSO entitles me to full membership in and mailings of the Washington State and National League of Women Voters (LWVWA and LWVUS)!

Membership for one year is \$60 (for two Members of a household - \$90). Student membership is \$30 but we are currently offering it at half-price, and even have scholarships available at this time! Membership dues are NOT tax deductible. Contributions to the Education Fund (by separate check, and they are tax deductible) and/or the General Fund are welcome.

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Comments: _____

Mail to: League of Women Voters of Tacoma-Pierce County
702 Broadway, Suite #105 / Tacoma, WA 98402-3710

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*Best Wishes for
a Happy New Year
and a fantastic 2014!!!*