



The Voter

June/July 2014
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The League of Women Voters of Tacoma - Pierce County

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Co President's Message

by Paula Eismann

Our first year has breezed by - summer officially starts in a few days, and we are already planning for next year. The work of the League never stops! While we have begun to collect topics for next year's unit meetings, please send your suggestions to us as we will be making decisions at our Board retreat in August.

At the recent annual meeting we elected Julie Offner, new to the Board and our 2nd Vice President and look forward to working with her. We wish Lucinda Wingard and Connie Ozmer well as they leave the Board. Thank you Lucinda, for your leadership with the two unit topics "Food Inequality in America" and "Immigration Reform," both well done and very informative, and for your excellent work in publicity and on Facebook. Connie, your excellent leadership and suggestions in making the Voter more readable are greatly appreciated. You both will be missed.

Congratulations went out to Doris Carlisle, Marie Cameron, and Elizabeth McKercher for 50 years membership in the League as they became Honorary Members. Besides the vigorous discussions at the annual meeting, we also enjoyed an excellent potluck lunch and a very informative talk by

LWVWA president, Kim Abel, on how the State League provides help and guidance to the local leagues. Our beautiful raffle baskets brought in \$287.00. Well received, they brought smiles to the winners and to our budget committee!

Looking towards the fall, you'll have an opportunity to volunteer for voter registration, starting on August 22 at Project Homeless Connect at the Gig

Harbor LDS church, September 7-9 at the Washington State Fair in Puyallup, and September 23, National Voter Registration Day at Pierce College. See the calendar on page 6 for information on dates, times, places and who to contact to volunteer for these. The Mental Health Issues Study Committee

welcomes additional members as well. Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow's article about the study and who to contact if you'd like to help is on page 2.

Ruth Ann and I thank you all for your support this year, by volunteering, attending unit meetings, getting involved with League issues, and asking people to join League. It makes a difference. Have a good summer.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has. Margaret Mead



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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.

LWVT-PC 2014 Annual Meeting Summary for Voter

by *John Thurlow*

- On June 14, 2014 LWVT-PC held its Annual Meeting from 10am to 12:20pm at Merrill Gardens in Tacoma. There were 33 signed-in members present out of 131 eligible to participate: a quorum. Ruth Ann Hatchett chaired the business part of the meeting – key points:
- Reports were given on Vote411, the LWVWA Council, and LWVUS Convention.
- Books of account for 2013-14 were audited by Cynthia Stewart and found sound, with a minor correction. Cynthia will audit the 2014-15 books.
- Proposed changes to the Bylaws were passed; one restores the provision to update the Bylaws at Annual Meetings, and the other clarifies grounds for removing a member from LWVT-PC (misrepresenting the League or its positions). LWVT-PC's policies were affirmed. The texts of both of these are in the Annual Meeting book and your Handbook.
- The Nominating Committee's slate of officers and directors was accepted. Officers elected: Julie Offner, 2nd Vice-President (new); Ingrid Curtis, Secretary (new); and Susan Eidenschink, Treasurer. Directors are Jackie Jones-Hook, Sharon Peace-Doane, John Thurlow, and Ann Williams. All are two-year terms. [Lucinda Wingard will continue in her Publicity role.]
- The proposed budget for 2014-15 was approved.

There are no major changes from last year's budget. It is likely that the leased printer/copier will be replaced by a small-office quality laser all-in-one machine to save money in the following year.

- Dues were discussed at length. Action taken was a direction to the Board to prepare a structure for 2015-16 dues for approval at the 2015 Annual Meeting to take effect then.
- A local study on mental health issues in Pierce County was approved with an amendment to include studying a "court-appointed mental health administrator" as well as a mental health court.
- Direction to the Board:
 1. Prepare a recommended dues structure, with up to a \$10 raise, for 2015-16 for approval at the 2015 Annual Meeting.
 2. Include consideration of "Associate Memberships" for non-citizens, individuals under 18 years, and others.
 3. Consider withdrawing only PMP amounts from the scholarship fund.
 4. Consider human trafficking for a Unit meeting topic.
 5. Set up the bank account to receive automatic payments.
 6. Grow the diversity of the membership.

New Local Study - Mental Health Issues In Pierce County

by *Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow*

At the Annual Meeting, on 14 June, we adopted the following new study. Yay!

Study of Mental Health Issues in Pierce County, to include financing, privatization, sales tax, the relationship to homelessness and housing, the effect of returning war veterans, and the need for a mental health court and/or court-appointed mental health administrator, leading to consensus and action.

SCOPE – Research:

- Funding and distribution of mental health diagnosis and treatment services in Washington State and the relationship of Pierce County services to statewide funding and service delivery.
- Purposes and implementation requirements of the .1% sales tax allowed for mental health services, which Pierce County does not currently collect.
- Trends in and effects of privatization of mental health services in Pierce County.
- How mental health conditions and services (or lack thereof) affect homelessness and housing of Pierce County residents.
- How returning war veterans with P.T.S.D. or other issues, who remain in Pierce County, may affect the delivery of services in Pierce County.
- Whether or not a mental health court, and/or a court-appointed mental health administrator in Pierce County would be helpful in addressing mental health needs in the County, using evidence from the successes and failures of such courts in nearby counties.

Study these issues, leading to consensus and action. Now, we need people to help work on this. Contact the League office, or me (lyzkurnitz@harboret.com), or Sharon Peace Doane or Bobbie Fletcher to let us know of your interest.

Tacoma Charter Review

by Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow

On Tuesday, 17 June, the Tacoma City Council voted on what to move forward to their 15 July Council Meeting. At that time, they will make their final decisions as to what to send on to voters for the November election. Anything that did not get moved ahead today will NOT be on the ballot in November as a Charter Amendment.

The good news, as far as the League is concerned, is that the proposed change in government, from Council-Manager to a strong Mayor, with Council and a Chief Administrative Officer, will NOT be on the ballot. We have been present, as individuals, as League representatives, and on the Charter Review Committee (Terri Baker), speaking against this throughout the process.

Items going forward for consideration again on 15 July include: changing all the language in the City Charter to be gender-neutral; making emergency ordinances effective immediately; establishing a Salary Commission to determine Mayor and Council salaries; and giving the Council the power to confirm the appointment of the Director of Public Utilities. The rest of the proposed changes to the Public Utility Board have not been sent forward.

Also being sent forward: changing term limits so that Council members could serve up to ten years (two, if appointed, plus two elected terms), and two full

terms as Mayor; adding the Landmarks Commission to the Charter; allowing public employee participation in residential conservation, infrastructure and environmental programs; expanding the City Council's authority to confirm department directors. As well, several amendments to get us to comply with State requirements, or just to make sense, will be sent forward.

The City will be advertising for people to serve on the Committees to write the Pro and Con statements for each of these. If you don't see such an ad, and want to serve on a committee, I suggest contacting Doris Sorum, Tacoma City Clerk.

An almost last-minute proposal to adopt Public Financing of Campaigns for Tacoma elections has great support, which is terrific. This also has League backing. It is NOT being sent forward because there really hasn't been time to establish exactly how they would design it, and that has to be done before we vote on it! It is possible that they will get a program designed and it will appear on the ballot as a resolution. It is possible that there will be an advisory question on the ballot, asking if citizens want publicly-financed campaigns. It is possible that this will be passed by ordinance when they get a program designed. I believe that this will be adopted in the not-too-far-distant future by some method. Stay tuned.

2014 LWVWA Council, May 30-June 1

by Susan Eidenschink

Every year LWVWA has either a Convention or a Council gathering. Paula Eismann, Susan Eidenschink, Nancy Pearson, Cynthia Stewart, Mary Moore, and Judy Wood from LWVT-PC attended the 2014 LWVWA Council. In 2013 several members of our League attended the LWVWA Convention in Shelton, WA. At Conventions, studies, action items, resolutions, and directions to the Board are presented and voted upon.

Progress Report on Convention decisions: At the 2013 Convention a study was proposed and accepted by attendees on Citizens United and

how it affects Washington State. A Gun Safety Toolkit was proposed and accepted and has been completed. This toolkit is already being used by League members and by gun responsibility campaigns. Resolutions dealing with gun responsibility, hospital mergers, transportation of coal through WA, and presidential debates were proposed and accepted. Direction to the board included a request for an umbrella liability policy that could be used by local Leagues, but we have received no notice on this yet, though we are aware the State Board is working on it.

Workshops: There were several workshops,

which included topics of Growing Your League, Candidate Forums, Innovations in Fundraising, Educational Forums, and How Can We Improve? Suggestions for Growing Your League centered around publicity – fostering good relationships with the media and maintaining flexibility in attracting younger members. Ideas for Candidate Forums included partnering with other organizations to increase exposure for the League, and using social networks like Facebook, Twitter, and You Tube to publicize forums.

Fundraising: Several Local Leagues gave information on their successes in fundraising, such as the Thurston County League’s annual fundraising luncheon at which they invite a speaker and give a lifetime citizenship award. This year they netted about \$4000 by charging \$55 per person. The Kitsap League has a silent auction at their Annual Meeting and charges \$20 per member for a catered lunch. They have netted up to \$800. The San Juan Island League has a live auction and luncheon at their Annual Meeting at which they have boat rides, hotel reservations in Seattle, and house tours for some of their auction items. Other ideas were wine tasting and art parties.

Educational Forums: Suggestions for Educational Forums included being timely by choosing topics being discussed in the community and inviting stake-holders to participate in these forums, which we have done very well during this past year.

Speakers: Tim O’Brien, LWVUS Director and Project Manager for the Public Advocacy for Voter Protection Project, spoke to us at lunch on Saturday, May 31, concerning essential elements in protecting the votes of all citizens and improving election administration overall. Tim lives in Wisconsin, so we know he has had many opportunities to work for voters’ rights. On Saturday evening, WA State Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles gave us information on “Human Trafficking in Washington: From the Historic Mercer Maids to Sexual Exploitation in Internet Ads.” Senator Kohl-Welles has sponsored many anti-trafficking bills in the Washington State Legislature and most of them have had wide support and been passed into law. She emphasized that all cities and communities have elements of human trafficking, which is a billion dollar global industry. We can all help by being alert to and aware of these possibilities.

2014 National Convention

by Ruth Ann Hatchett

There were 17 Washington League members attending the convention in Dallas June 6-10. Our days were full of training sessions, speakers, business and a little excitement. For me, a highlight was the play Red Hot Patriot: The Kick Ass Wit of Molly Ivins. She was my favorite political writer in Texas – I even got to meet her when she came to Pierce College. It was made even better because my Texas niece attended with me.

There was a lot of focus in the training sessions on recruiting more diverse members; age, ethnicity, gender, and economic status. The national league formed a task force of young women who are leading the effort. Miami League, which is doing a good job of recruiting younger members, shared

their experiences.

National Program adopted (in brief):

- Concurrence with the LWV New Jersey Human Trafficking position.
- Comprehensive three-part program combining study and review of key specific structures of American Democracy consisting of:
 - Process for amending the US constitution
 - Review and update of League’s position on campaign finance
 - Review of redistricting process for U.S.

Congress

- Support a price on carbon emissions that will increase in stages, as part of an overall program to improve energy efficiency and

replace fossil fuels with renewable energy.

- Retain all current LWVUS Positions in areas of representative government, international relations, natural resources and social policy.

We “wordsmithed” a few things to death and disappointingly, the resolution written by Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow was not heard by the Resolutions Committee. Even though Lyz had been told a Resolution was the correct avenue, the committee said it had to come as program planning. Thanks anyway, Lyz.

Money in Politics was a major topic in several

sessions as it is a topic of concern and work throughout the country.

Fundraising was also a topic for training sessions. Everyone is working to find ways to fund our important work. The convention voted to raise national Per Member Payment by \$1.00 in the 2015-16 year to \$31 and passed a \$1 million budget.

All in all, a great learning experience and some fun, too. Thank you for the privilege of representing you. It is an experience I recommend to all.

Welcome New Members and Thank You to our Donors!

New Members

Akna Asare-Konadu
Russell Batten
Robert Edington
Carolyn Edmonds

Honorary Members

Dorothy Bremner
Marie Cameron
Doris Carlisle
Evelyn Kelly
Laura Johnson
Elizabeth McKercher
Helen Sohlberg
Kathy Sommers
Jo Weiss

Annual Appeal Donors

Donations through 6/19/14 total

\$2520.00

Terri Baker
Dorothy Bremner
Jean Buhaly
Marie & Jack Cameron
Doris Carlisle

Susan Eidenschink

Paula & Donald Eismann

Bobbie Fletcher

Laura Gardner

Jean Gillmer

Catherine Gleva

Ruth Ann Hatchett

Paul Jacobson

Diane Kerlin

Mary Kohli

Lyz Kurnitz-Thurlow & John Thurlow

Liz Lathrop

Mary Ann Leskie

Cynthia Lorch

Patricia Mail

Mary Mazur

Margaret Michaud

Patricia Morse

Nancy Pearson

Ginny Peterson

Kathy Sommers

Dorothy Spadoni

Mary Watson

Ann Williams

LWVT-PC Calendar 2013 – 2014

Including Opportunities to Register Voters

AUGUST

August 16 – 10:00 am – 4:00 pm – LWVT-PC Board Retreat – Harbor History Museum, 4121 Harborview Drive, Gig Harbor

August 20 – Deadline for August/September Voter articles

August 22 – 11:00 am – 4:00 pm – Project Homeless Connect, Gig Harbor LDS Church, 12002 Peacock Hill Ave NW, Gig Harbor Register Voters – 1 or 2 hour shifts. Contact Susan Eidschink to volunteer, susaneiden@harbournet.com.

SEPTEMBER

September 7-9 – League registers voters at the WA State Fair in Puyallup in 3 hour shifts, 10:00 am to 10:00 pm. Contact Ruth Ann Hatchett, 253-961-3649 to volunteer.

Unit Meetings:

- September 11 – 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm – Tacoma Unit Meeting
- September 12 – 10:00 am – noon – Lakewood & Neighbors Unit Meeting
- September 13 – 10:00 am – noon – East Pierce Unit Meeting
- September 13 – 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm – Gig Harbor Unit Meeting

September 23 – National Voter Registration Day—League registers voters at Pierce College Fort Steilacoom in Lakewood 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. Contact Ruth Ann Hatchett, 253-961-3649 to volunteer.

Attend a Unit Meeting

TACOMA

Day/Time: 2nd Thursdays, 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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

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

LAKWOOD AND NEIGHBORS

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

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

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

Board of Directors

Voter Volunteers:

Connie Ozmer
Marie Cameron
Susan Eidenschink

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

Co-President	Ruth Ann Hatchett	253-864-7556 rhatchett@pierce.ctc.edu
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Treasurer	Susan Eidenschink	253-365-4005 susaneiden@harbornet.com
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Director	Jackie Jones-Hook	jjoneshook@aol.com
Director	Sharon Peace-Doane	253-265-0841 hrdoanes@comcast.net
Director	John Thurlow	253-219-1617 johnthurlow@harbornet.com
Director	Ann Williams	253-759-3355 willar12000@yahoo.com

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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GETTING TO KNOW PAULA EISMANN, current Co-President of Tacoma-Pierce County LWV.

Paula tells us she:



- Grew up in Eastern Washington on an orchard farm.
- Became educated in social justice upon moving to the East Coast, working as a middle school counselor in an inner city school, spending summers working as recreational director in inner city Washington DC, and in a Yakima migrant labor camp.
- Learned to appreciate other cultures by working in DODS schools in Germany and England before returning to spend the rest of my career in public schools in the Northwest.
- Joined League because it met my needs of working with people who are determined to educate the public in a non-partisan way on issues that need improvement for the betterment of society.
- The best thing I like about League is that if you make the effort to get involved with issues or activities, you benefit greatly by the education you gain in your involvement and you've also educated others.
- I've been inspired by life-long League members who stay active and knowledgeable about many topics, demonstrating one can make an impact regardless of one's age.