



Spokane Area VOTER

Ann Murphy
President

March 2010
VOLUME LXVI/ NO 3

VOTER Team: Pam Behring, Mary Hughes,
Joyce Jones, Kim Kreber,
Ann Murphy, Alice Stolz

"The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences the public policy through education and advocacy."

Here Come the Judges! Meet Members of the Third Branch of Government



New Date!!

March 31, 2010 - 5:30PM – 7:30PM

**Moot Court, Gonzaga University Law School
721 N. Cincinnati**

Public Forum to Learn about the third branch of government and meet the people who run it.

Moderator: George Critchlow, Acting Dean of Gonzaga School
Panel: Invited judges from Superior, District and Municipal courts

5:30 – 6:00 Greetings and Light Refreshments

6:00 – 7:00 Program

sponsored by League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area with a LWV Education Fund grant

Civic Engagement Project

DATE: Saturday, March 13, 2010 (11:00-2:00pm)
LOCATION: St. Andrews Church, 2404 North Howard

- *You want to engage other groups, friends, or neighbors in the discussion you experienced at the Unit meetings.
- *You don't know what CEP is about and want to learn more.
- * Light Refreshments will be provided, but you will need to bring your own sack lunch.

**PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED BY
MARCH 9th**

If you are interested, please contact **Diane Knutson** at:
elkwomancatlover@yahoo.com or call 590-8881.

Looking for a Few Good Women and a Few Good Men

Could one of them be you?

Call us with your willingness to serve on the LWVSA board for the next year or two. **OR** call us with suggestions for nominees. We may be calling you.

Nominating Committee: Alice Stolz, Chair 455-8944,
Martha Pomerleau 838-2860, Pam Behring 534-2223

No Unit Meetings in March!

President's Perspective...

Whew! We slide right through that short month of February with a busy calendar and have landed in March with spring on our doorstep.

My brain has been packed with much to do with Initiative & Referendum. I have learned so much as part of the League's facilitating team.

It is also exciting to look forward to the new activities coming our way... they are explained in other parts of the VOTER. Be sure to participate in Here Come the Judges on March 24 and plan to attend LWV's Annual Meeting on May 20, 2010.

While celebrating International Women's Day (March 8, with festivities on March 7 at The Women's Club), look ahead to getting involved with the Women's History plans for next fall. You too could attend the next meeting on March 25 to be involved in exciting events.

Sometimes the level of activity with League, jobs and families causes us to need to regroup personally and as a group. This past month the Board regretfully accepted resignations from Kathy Kalich and Loni Peters. With Kathy's resignation, we no longer had the leadership to complete the plans for the April forum on Education. Kim Kreber will pick up the interest in Education and work with others to provide content on education matters. **So, you all will have April unit meetings to learn and ask questions about the education system.**

Thank you to all of you for all of the pieces you work on for League.

Ann Murphy

Program Planning Report

Twenty-two members participated in the Program Planning units in January. From those reports the Board has approved submittals to both National and Local adoption processes.

National: Recommend a new study –The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education. This item is being advanced by other Leagues, and LWVSA is supporting that effort.

continued next column...

Splinters From the Board 2/18/10

Treasurer's Report – \$7,146.59 - General Fund
Membership: 80

* The Board accepted the resignations of Kathy Kahlich and Loni Peters.

* TRYS are printed & enclosed with this mailing.

* Currently planning committees are meeting for the Annual Meeting. TBA

* The Early Learning Coalition of North Spokane County will sponsor a workshop on May 1, Riverside, WA.

* *Women's Voices, Women's Votes* exhibit at the MAC from 10/30/2010 – 6/25/2011. There has been an announcement for presentations and papers for the Pacific Northwest conference to be held in Spokane from 11/3-11/5/2010. MAC is facilitating a community group to plan women's history events next fall and winter. Next meeting at the MAC on Thursday, March 25, 2010 from 3:30-5:00pm.

* Approved a "Members Only" section on the LWVSA website. Check it out: www.lwvspokane.org

* The Education Forum for April 2010 has been canceled. Education will be the topic at April units.

Program Planning continued...

Local: Interest in updates on Police Ombudsman, Health Care, Juvenile Court, effect of state budget cuts, long range plan for transportation, City of Spokane Park Department transparency. The Growth Management priority topic is Housing with an emphasis on low-income housing, including rural areas. Anyone with interest in pursuing any of these topics, please contact Ann Murphy, 838-4549, ann_murphy@juno.com

The LWV VOTER is published monthly except in the summer by the League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area, 2404 N. Howard St. Spokane WA 99205. Members of the League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area subscribe through their annual dues. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any citizen, 18 or older, may join the League of Women Voters.

Dues Payment -- -- Clip this form and place with your bills for payment

YES, I want to join or renew my membership in The League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area

Name: _____	\$ 65. Individual	<u>Distribution</u>
Address: _____		Local \$15.80
City: _____ Zip: _____		State \$20
Phone-- Home: _____ Work: _____	\$100. Household	Nat'l \$29.20
Fax: _____ e-mail: _____	\$100. Sustaining Member	
	\$150. Benefactor	
	\$ 35. Scholarship(call for application)	
	\$ 32.50 Student	

Please make check payable to & mail to: LWVSA 2404 N. Howard St. Spokane, WA 99205

LWVWA LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Public Financing of Judicial Campaigns

HB 1738 did not pass out of House Ways and Means Committee. But the language of the House bill is contained in SB 5912, improved slightly, which is still alive in the Senate by being attached to the Senate's budget bill. Now that the legislature has passed revisions to I-960 allowing tax increases to pass with a simple majority rather than 2/3rds, it is expected that the contents of SB 5912 to be voted on again in the Senate. If it passes the Senate, then it will go on to the House for further consideration.

We need League members to continue pressing their lawmakers to approve the option of public financing of the State Supreme Court judicial campaigns. Don't delay. Do it today. This Legislative Session ends March 11th.

Written By: Ginger Kelsh

Public Financing of State Supreme Court Campaigns

SB 5912 was set for a vote on the Senate floor on Feb. 16th, but an issue was raised about whether the funding source would require a 2/3 vote because of I-960 implications. This effectively brought SB 5912 to a standstill for now, but it is not dead yet! We are waiting to see what the Senate's budget looks like on Monday 2/22 and if we can find a plausible funding source. ACTION: If you haven't already, contact your Senators and let them know that you support public financing for state supreme court campaigns.

Written By: Ginger Kelsh

Court ruling affirms the Constitution

On Feb. 4, Superior Court Judge John Erlick ruled that the State is in violation of Article IX, Section 1 of the State Constitution, "It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders..." The lawsuit, brought by the McCleary and Venema families and the Network for Excellence in Washington Schools (NEWS), a coalition of which LWVWA is a member, asked the court to define paramount, ample, all and education.

Judge Erlick reaffirmed the Supreme Court's 1978 ruling that paramount means "preeminent, supreme and more important than all others" and that funding education is "the State's first and highest priority before any other State programs or operations." Ample means "considerably more than adequate or sufficient" - "to be ample so no public school has to rely upon local levies, PTA fundraisers, private donations, or other non-State sources." All means "each and every child... not just those children who enjoy the advantage of being born... more privileged, more politically popular, or more easy to teach." Education means "the basic knowledge and skills needed to compete in today's economy and meaningfully participate in this State's democracy."

As the plaintiffs asked, the Judge ordered the State to determine the actual costs of providing all children with an education and to fully fund that actual cost with stable and dependable State sources - and to proceed with real and measurable progress. It was a total victory for Washington's school children.

Written By: Catherine Ahl, Education Chair, LWVWA



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE SPOKANE AREA
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LWV/Spokane Area

President: **Ann Murphy**
 Vice President: **Pam Behring**
 Secretary: **Ginger Kelsh**
 Treasurer: **Mary Hughes**
 Directors: **Suzi Hokonson**
 Joyce Jones
 Diane Knutson
 Kim Kreber

Nominating Committee:
Alice Stolz, Chair
Martha Pomerleau
Pam Behring

Calendar

March

- 1 LWVUS Program Planning Due
- 7 International Women’s Day, Women’s Club
- 13 CEP Speakers Bureau training, 11a.m.-2 p.m.
@ LWV office
- 18 LWVSA Board Meeting @ 5pm **Note new time**
- 25 Women’s History Committee Meeting, MAC,
3:30 to 5 p.m.
- 31 ******Please Note the New Date******
“The Third Branch” Judicial Forum @
Gonzaga Law School, 5:30-7:30pm.

April

- 8, 12, 13 Unit Meetings**
- 15 LWVSA Board Meeting - 5 p.m.

May

- 20 LWVSA Annual Meeting, TBA
- 22-23 LWVWA Council, Bellingham

June

- 11-15 LWVUS Convention, Atlanta

League Leads Initiative & Referendum Task Force

The League-led Initiative and Referendum Task Force held its final meeting on February 24, with Ann Murphy making the report to City Council on March 1. The group of 10 citizens was indeed diverse and wrangled with a multitude of issues. The key issues centered on:

- Who should write the ballot title and summary – the sponsor or the City Attorney?
- Whether or not to have a Direct Petition method.
- Where the City Council needed to be involved in the process?
- What appeal process should be in place, and where in the process it should occur?
- Whether or not to include a Fiscal Impact Statement.

Thank you to the 10 citizens involved as well as the League Facilitating team: **Lunell Haught, Alice Stolz, Ann Murphy and Lisa Rosier.**

Stay tuned for more on citizens in action!

Ann Murphy