



# Voter

League of  
Women Voters of  
Bellingham/  
Whatcom County

December 2010

## From Co-President Kay Ingram

2010 was a busy year for the League of Women Voters of Bellingham and Whatcom County. We hope that the collection of pictures in this edition of the Voter will bring back some pleasant memories of those activities. This year we explored the art of civil conversation, the budget challenges that face our state, the world water crisis and the Supreme Court decision on campaign financing. In addition, we hosted our state council meeting. This fall we held forums during the election season presenting our local candidates and several of the ballot issues.

As we look ahead to 2011 the landscape may change, emphasis on different topics may take center stage, but it is also true that the issues of 2010 will still be with us. It is often said that those who forget history are doomed to repeat it. While, 2010 will certainly be 'recent' history as we enter 2011, it will still have some important lessons to carry forward.

Our agendas as cities, county, state and nation are very full. The challenges facing us are many and complex. It is critical that we come together as a community, a nation to find ways to address those challenges. It is important that we as citizens look at the big picture, not just for 2011 but for the future as well. We must find it in ourselves and challenge our leaders to make decisions that will be for the good of our community and country, not just decisions that address our/their personal interests.

*(cont'd on page 2)*

## Why Deliberation Matters?

Our political life today is dominated by well-funded interest groups who seek to pursue their ideas at any expense. However our founding fathers had a different idea of how politics should function in our democracy.

At our next general meeting in January, we will explore this ideal, and the challenges that exist in implementing their vision today. Helping us to understand these concepts we will welcome as speakers:

Johann Neem, WWU Department of History: "Democratic Deliberation from James Madison to Today".and Brad Howard, WWU Department of Journalism: "An Idea without a Home: Democratic Deliberation and American Journalism".

**January 15, 2011**  
**9:30-noon**  
**Bellingham Public Library**

## KUDOS

We now have two members observing Port Commission meetings -- **Mary Ellen Woods** and **Martha Mills**. Thank you for putting in the time to keep us posted on this influential governmental body. More members are urged to join the Observer Corps. We thank **Jo Anne Feringer** who has been a long term faithful observer of County Council meetings and would like some help and we would welcome observers for the City Council meetings.

## From Kay, cont'd

So the work of the League has never been more important. Whatever we as a League can do, to continue to stimulate civil conversation, discussion and dialog, and thoughtful analysis, is an important contribution to this time in our history.

In response to this challenge, our Board has reviewed the proposed program calendar for 2011 and will be making some changes. As you will see, we are building on the work we began last year, as well as exploring new issues. We will begin in January by discussing "Why Deliberation Matters: Politics Past and Present in our Democracy." We are working to finalize topics for additional meetings while staying flexible in order to respond to issues on both the local and national agenda.

Your support of the League helps support these programs but your participation in planning and organizing them is equally important. If you would like to work on any of our committees please let us now. We also hope to see you at many of our meetings in the New Year. Best wishes for 2011.

## Lively Conversations with Elected Officials

All who came to the League's third annual Conversations with Elected Officials on December 1, 2010 seemed to enjoy the wine & cheese and lively conversations. This year the event also featured the presentation of 21st Century Suffragist awards to four individuals in Whatcom County who work to promote democracy and inform and empower citizens.

**Lyn McClure**, volunteer director of Tax Aide, **Shirley Forslof**, Whatcom County Auditor, **Craig Hersman**, owner of Print Stop, and **Mary Dumas** mediator & facilitator with Dumas & Associates were honored with a handsome 21st Century Suffragist award, Suffrage booklet and a sash commemorating the 100th year anniversary of women's suffrage in Washington State.

We were pleased to have over twenty elected officials come to the event and the conversations never lagged! The ballroom at the YWCA looked festive and cozy.

Thanks to Program Chairs, **Annette Holcomb** and **Lynne Rein** and their committee members **Kathy Gablehouse**, **Lorene Lewis**, **Margot Larrabee**, **Elsie Heinrick**, **Tanya Baumgart**,

**Kay Ingram** and **Jayne Freudenburger**, for planning and coordinating this event. A very special Thank You to each of the members who donated time, energy and delicious hors d'oeuvres to make this event successful.



Mary Dumas award



Sheriff Elfo and David McEachran chatting

"Suffragist" Shirley Forslof enjoying the awards presentation



## The Gift That Keeps On Giving

After the cookies are consumed, the tree is down, the holiday gifts fading memories, there is one gift that keeps on giving all year round. Consider gifting a friend, daughter, neighbor with a membership to the LWV. Your gift will support the League’s advocacy for citizens as well as open your friend’s world to the many wonderful programs we will have in the spring.

First up in January is a talk on Deliberative Conversations—the difference between citizen and corporate input in the wake of the Citizens United decision. Other great programs will be on Sustainability, Who are We Incarcerating and Why, and What Role Should Government Play in Education?

Just below is a handy dues form—fill it out and gift a friend today. Support the League while giving your friend a lasting gift, Thank you.

P.S. If you would just like to support your local league a gift to the education fund is tax deductible.

## A Warm Welcome

We’re pleased to welcome **Jillian Gallery** as a new member to our local league .



## On These Wintry Days...

We continue to meet at the **top of Taylor Street Dock, at 2 p.m., on Fridays**, where we decide what route to take for walking .

We end up at 3:00 p.m. at Book Fare (upstairs at Village Books in Fairhaven) for refreshments and further chit chat.. So if you can’t make the walking portion, please feel free to join us at Book Fare.

### BELLINGHAM/WHATCOM COUNTY LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

2010 – 2011 INDIVIDUAL - \$60 \_\_\_\_\_

2010 – 2011 FAMILY - \$90 \_\_\_\_\_

Please make above checks to LWV Bellingham/Whatcom County

Donation to the League Education Fund \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks to LWVBellingham/Whatcom Education Fund (Tax deductible)

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

# A Year in Retrospect

## Our first Civil Discussions Workshop—January 16th



Mary Dumas starts us off



Small groups discuss



Moonwater winds it up

## Feb 20th –Dollars & Cents in Our Local Economy



Moderator Annette Holcomb



Panelists David Webster, Kelli Linville, Dewey Desler



Audience interaction



**March 8 Our display at International Women’s Day in City Hall.**

**Annual Meeting—May 15th**



Judge Mary Kay Becker’s topic was “Citizens United—First Amendment Blockbuster or Giveaway to Corporations”



Celebrating Women’s Suffrage and League’s Formation



Our great display featuring pictures for each decade

**May 21, 22—  
State Council**



Bellingham leaguers are acknowledged at State Council for receiving one of four awards from LWVUS for their work on Civic Engagement

## A Year in Retrospect, cont'd



The June 10 issue of the national publication, League E-Voice featured our civil discussion workshop in their “League in the Spotlight” column.

### October 16th—Pros and Cons of Ballot Issues Co-sponsored with AAUW



AAUW Pres. Carol Simmers and LWV Treas. Elsie Heinrich share the spotlight



Timekeepers & moderators prepare for the forum



Mayor Pike and Joan Casey discuss the issues



**To End Our Year, a few more pictures from Conversations with Local Officials held at the YWCA on December 1st.**





**League of Women Voters of  
Bellingham/ Whatcom County**

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## Calendar

### **January 15th 9:30 am -noon**

Bellingham Public Library— 'Why Deliberation Matters: Politics Past & Present in our Democracy