



# Voter

League of  
Women Voters of  
Bellingham/  
Whatcom County

August 2009

## From Co-President Jayne Freudenberger



Welcome to the beginning of a new year with the LWV of Bellingham / WhatcomCounty.

As I join with Elsie Heinrick as your new co-president, I am struck once again by the dedication and hard work of so many of our long-term leaders.

While most of us wanted to bask in the summer sunshine one of those leaders, **Georgia MacGregor**, our voter service chair, put together a successful primary forum in July. She had a big group of volunteers to help, including our great moderator **Tanya Baumgart, and Elsie Heinrick, Judy Corliss, Margaret and John Woll, Kay Ingram, Lorene Hofstrand, Annette Holcomb, Martha Burns, Ingeborg Paulus, Roy Potter, Phyllis Haberstroh, Lynne Rein, Mary LaDonne, Michael Jay, Jo Collinge and Jayne Freudenberger.** We hope if you weren't able to attend you caught the broadcast on Channel 10. Georgia is already working on plans for candidates' and issues' forums in October. **Thank you, Georgia, for your excellent work.**

Two of the volunteers at the forum were our new board members **Kay Ingram and Lynne Rein. Pat Madden and Robbi Ferron** have also joined us this year. We are pleased to welcome them to the board along with returning members—**Margaret Woll, Tanya Baumgart, Georgia MacGregor, Ingeborg Paulus, Phyllis Haberstroh, and Sherry Kew.** Thank you for agreeing to serve.

**Elsie Heinrick, Sherry Kew and I** were privileged to attend the state convention this year in Tacoma. It was inspiring to listen to the work the other leagues in the state are doing. We also at-

## JOIN US FOR LUNCH! AND BRING A FRIEND!

### Lunch with the League \*

September 9, 2009—12 noon to 1:30 p.m.

**YWCA Ballroom, 1026 Forest St., Bellingham**

We will discuss health care reform, get an update on the latest developments and learn how we can participate in determining the outcome of reform efforts.

We need to know how many people to expect for lunch so **reservations are required.** Call Phyllis Haberstroh (360) 734-5595 or e-mail her at [PLHaberstroh@juno.com](mailto:PLHaberstroh@juno.com) **by Friday, September 4th** if you plan to attend. If you would like to volunteer to help with this event, let us know when you make your reservations. See you for lunch!

**\*Members Only—If your last name begins with A through L, please bring cookies to be served for dessert.**

tended workshops on health care, lobbying, and using the new social networks to reach more people. Posted on our website are the resolutions passed at state.

The LWVWA has forgone studies this year to work on a major **Civic Engagement Project.** The purpose of the project is to prepare Washingtonians to take action for budget and tax reform:

1. by engaging the public in an exploration of the programs /services provided by state and local government and by challenging the "anti tax, anti government" mindset and
2. by engaging the public in an evaluation of Washington's budget and tax structure and generating understanding of the need for a change.

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## From Co-President Jayne Freudenberger, cont'd

We will be participating in a study group that was formed to start working on the project using conference calls. After hearing of the state's budget woes from Rep. Kelli Linville at our annual meeting in May, this seems like a timely endeavor.

Our own league voted at the annual meeting to study **water rights and supply**. **Lynne Rein** and **Marion Beddill** expressed interest and we hope to get a committee formed. Please call Lynne at 393-3209 if you would be interested in this study.

We began our own planning for the 2009-2010 League year at a board orientation in June and a retreat in July. We plan to address tax reform as it relates to economic development, international water shortages, the national popular vote compact, campaign finance reform and, of course, the issue that is uppermost in all our minds now--health care reform.

We are kicking off our new season with a fun and informative event--**Lunch with the League**. On Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> we hope to welcome back our mem-

bers from the summer recess with lunch at the YWCA ballroom. And we want you to **bring a friend**. Invite two or three. We would like to tell them about the League--what we are doing locally and nationally to support the cause of democracy.

Also planned is an informative update on the local and national League's work toward **health care and insurance reform**. This issue was listed as number one on your member interest surveys. The battle for health care reform continues as Congress reconvenes in September to bring the plans out of committee for a vote. **This will be an action meeting to help you and your friends make their voices heard**. The more voices the better. We are hoping for a large turnout of our tried and true members who will bring lots of new faces to learn about the LWV's work.

Keep December 2<sup>nd</sup> free for the second annual **Wine and Cheese with your Elected Officials**. This was such a worthwhile event last year we decided to make it an annual event.

Meanwhile I hope to see you all at **lunch on September 9th**.

- Jayne

### Are Your Dues Paid?

If you have not paid your dues for 2009-2010, please do so now. Mail them to Dr. Ingeborg Paulus, 285 Morey Drive, Bellingham, WA 98225, or pay her at the September lunch meeting. Dues are **STILL** \$55 for an individual, and \$74 for a family membership. Remember, spouses are welcome in LWV!

### Walk and Talk

For scintillating conversation, join the weekly "Walk and Talk" group every Friday at 2 PM. We meet just south of the Chrysalis at the top of Taylor Street Pier. After the walk, we go to the Book Fare, upstairs in Village Books for coffee and more conversation.

### Welcome New Members

Bill Freudenberger, Carolyn Gibbons, J.I. Kleinberg, Michael Jay, Mary Le Donne, Robbin Naylor.



Thank you **Jo Anne Feringer** and **Arlene Beacon** for your many years of County Council observing for Whatcom Watch and the League. **Robbin Naylor** and **Jo An and Bill Agnew** have volunteered to join this effort.

**Robbi Ferron** is chairing our Citizens Election Advisory Committee. She and **Rosemary Hostetler**, **Lynne Rein**, and **Robin Holcomb** trained as election observers on Aug. 5<sup>th</sup>.

Kudos to **Ingeborg Paulus** and **Phyllis Haberstroh**, long time Literacy Council volunteers. Their tutoring efforts are helping people not only to read, but to gain their citizenship.

*Please let us know of other Leaguers we can salute in this column.*

## Women's Equality Day—Are we there yet?

August 26 of each year is designated in the United States as Women's Equality Day. Instituted by U.S. Representative Bella Abzug and first established in 1971, the date commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment, the Woman Suffrage Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which gave American women full voting rights in 1920.<sup>i</sup> Each president since 1971 has re-established the recognition of Women's Equality with this commemorative day, but have American women truly achieved full equality?

In 1848, a handful of disgruntled women met to discuss the lot of women in American society. Shortly afterward, they posted an announcement in a local paper for "a convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious conditions and rights of woman." Over 300 women and men attended this convention in Seneca Falls, NY. With that, the Women's Rights Movement was born!

At this convention, Elizabeth Cady Stanton<sup>ii</sup>, read a Declaration of Sentiments which began, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal..." One of the resolutions of the declaration called for universal women's suffrage.

Many strong minded women worked diligently for the next 72 years toward changing the United States Constitution with an amendment giving women the right to vote. Women like Carrie Chapman Catt<sup>iii</sup>, founder of the League of Women Voters laid the groundwork for the vision and determination of Alice Stokes Paul<sup>iv</sup> and her close friend Lucy Burns whose activism included parades, picketing the Whitehouse, jail time, and hunger strikes. Their visionary campaign for women's suffrage resulted in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1920.

Of course, the struggle for women's rights didn't end in 1920.

Although the Nineteenth Amendment had prohibited the denial of the right to vote because of a person's sex, Alice Stokes Paul argued that this right alone would not end legal discrimination based on sex. In 1923, Paul drafted the Equal Rights Amendment and presented it as the "Lucretia Mott Amendment"<sup>v</sup> at the celebration of the 75th anniversary of the 1848 Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments.

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex."

The ERA was finally voted on and approved by the Senate in 1972, then it was submitted to the state legislatures for ratification. Approval by 38 states was required to ensure adoption of the amendment. To date only 35 states have ratified the ERA, and women are not afforded equal rights by our constitution. The 15 not-yet-ratified states are Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Utah, and Virginia.

Today the goal of ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment is still sought. A network of organizations, groups, and individuals, all around the United States, are working to achieve the addition of the ERA to the US Constitution – a matter of simple justice for all United States citizens. To learn more, check out [www.eracampaign.net](http://www.eracampaign.net).

So this Women's Equality Day, celebrate the hard work of the suffragettes and make sure that you are registered to vote, and do so on election day with pride. And keep in mind that the right to vote is a piece of equality, but the vision of our foremothers, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal..." is still a work in progress.

<sup>i</sup> Women's Equality Day description as portrayed at: [http://womenshistory.about.com/od/wed/Womens\\_Equality\\_Day\\_August\\_26.htm](http://womenshistory.about.com/od/wed/Womens_Equality_Day_August_26.htm)

<sup>ii</sup> Elizabeth Cady Stanton (November 12, 1815 – October 26, 1902), one of the first American Suffragettes, helped organize this convention and authored the Declaration of Sentiments.

<sup>iii</sup> Carrie Chapman Catt (January 9, 1859 – March 9, 1947) was a women's suffrage leader and founder of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA) (the predecessor of the League of Women Voters), and founder of the League of Women Voters as well.

<sup>iv</sup> Alice Stokes Paul (January 11, 1885 – July 9, 1977) an American suffragist leader that founded the Congressional Union for Woman Suffrage and the National Woman's Party (in a formal break from NAWSA)

<sup>v</sup> Lucretia Coffin Mott (3 January 1793 – 11 November 1880) was, abolitionist, social reformer, and proponent of women's rights and another of the first Women's Movement Convention organizers.



## League of Women Voters of Bellingham/ Whatcom County

LWV of Bellingham/Whatcom County  
P.O. Box 4041  
Bellingham, WA 98227-4041

Phone: 360-734-2366

Fax: 360-734-2366

Website: [www.LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org](http://www.LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org)

### We're on Facebook!

The League of Women Voters of Bellingham/Whatcom County is now on Facebook! We have 50 fans already and have only been up and running for a week. We received a compliment on our page from the League of Women Voters of the United States which also is on Facebook. Become fans of both and keep up-to-date with the latest!

## FALL CALENDAR— Meetings of Interest for League Members

### September

- 9<sup>th</sup> Lunch with the League – YWCA Ballroom 12 noon to 1:30 pm.
- 12<sup>th</sup> AAUW Bellingham Branch - Solo Travel – Annaliese Volpe speaker. YWCA Ballroom 10 am to noon.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> City Club – Port Candidate Forum—Northwood Hall noon to 1:30 p.m.
- 30<sup>th</sup> LWV Candidate Forum-- Bellingham City Council Chambers, 6:30 p.m.

### October

- 17<sup>th</sup> LWV Issues Forum—Bellingham Public Library Lecture Room 9:30-noon (co-sponsored by AAUW)
- 24<sup>th</sup> Whatcom Fair Voting (co-sponsored by LWV) National Popular Vote Compact
- 28<sup>th</sup> City Club “Honey They Shrunk the Kids” How local governments must downsize whether it is a good idea or not—Northwood Hall –noon-1:30

### November

- 14<sup>th</sup> AAUW Bellingham Branch – Becky Pillai – Academy for Lifelong Learning. YWCA Ballroom 10 am to noon.
- 19<sup>th</sup> Leadership Whatcom – Productive Public Conversation on “Regional Economic Development” 6 pm to 9 pm. (Tentative)
- 18<sup>th</sup> City Club “Is it Time to Legalize Marijuana?” Northwood Hall noon -1:30

### December

- 2nd. LWV Wine and Cheese with Your Elected Officials – YWCA Ballroom 6 pm to 8pm