



# Voter

League of  
Women Voters of  
Bellingham/  
Whatcom County

October 2007

## From Co-President Tanya Baumgart



Greetings Leaguers!

Your League is off to a dynamic start this year! Following a terrific primary forum in July, we provided an excellent informative meeting on Clean Elections. If you missed this one, please see Roni Beall's article (page 6 ) in this newsletter – you'll want to know about it.

Forums are happening with great frequency this election season. Our League hosted the City and County Candidates on October 3<sup>rd</sup>. A huge thank you to **Georgia MacGregor**, our Voter Service Chair, who coordinated this forum, and the ones for the primary, and has been juggling duties with several other forums on our behalf. **You are amazing, Georgia!** A big thank you as well to all of the volunteers that made this all possible, many hands make light work. You are all a tribute to this organization.

Many thanks to BTV10 for taping the forum and to the Bellingham Herald who gave us front page coverage.

- To watch it again tune in to Channel 10 on
- Sundays at 6:30 AM and 7:30 PM
  - Mondays and Wednesdays at noon
  - And Saturdays at 1 PM
  - Or you can view online at [www.cob.org](http://www.cob.org)

Thank you to League member **Judith Wiseman** for moderating the School Board Forum held October 8<sup>th</sup> at Squalicum High School. You represent us so well!

The Whatcom Independent – KGMI – League of Women Voters of Bellingham/Whatcom Forum will be held **October 16<sup>th</sup>** at the **Whatcom County Courthouse from 6:30 – 9PM.**

## LWV General Meeting

**Saturday, October 20, 2007**

**9:30 a.m. Social Time**

(Refreshments will be served)\*

**10:00 a.m. Forum**

### Bellingham School Board Candidates:

Michael Jay & statement for Ann Whitmyer

Ken Gass

Kelly Bashaw, Emily Barnett Highleyman

### 10:30 a.m. Ballot Issues—EHJR#4204

Pro-Ken Gass, Bellingham School Board

Con- Charles Crabtree, Meridian School Board

### 11:00 a.m. Referendum #67

Pro—Carrie M. Coppinger Carter; Con—TBA

### 11:30 a.m. Initiative #960

Pro—TBA; Con—Barbara Cory

### Downtown Public Library

(Lecture Room in Basement)

**\*For Members Only—If your last name begins with A through M, please bring cookies or sweet breads to be served at this meeting.**



**Check it out!** We are so excited to bring to you our newly revised website at [www.LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org](http://www.LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org)!! It's your resource on the League, Current Issues, Elections, Your Representatives, and so much more.

## From Tanya, cont'd

Immigration is a hot topic these days, and the League is at the forefront in studying and coming to consensus on our new position. ***We will need your help!*** Our consensus meeting is Saturday, January 20, 2008. As we move toward that date please read the informative immigration articles in each of our Voters (our newsletters). If you miss one, they are available on our website. In addition, we'll also be posting articles on our website under Current Studies, Immigration. Since the topic is large and rich, our goal is to provide you in a systematic way, a broad overview to help equip us with the tools to make great decisions when we work towards a consensus in January.

We are looking for advertisers for the TRY – They Represent You! This brochure is a complete listing of our local, state, and federal representatives with all contact information. It is a service we offer free to the public. It is completely non-partisan. 6000 brochures are distributed. To have your logo listed on the back costs \$100, and it's first come, first serve – limited space is available. Please contact **Margaret Woll** for more information @ Editor@LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org or by phone: 734-8427.

Do you have interests that you'd like covered by the League? Would you like to receive your newsletter via email & save trees? Would you like to be more involved and to learn about how you can plug in? Are your dues current? Please expect a phone call soon from one of your board members asking these questions...we want to know more about our membership, and you will learn more about us! If you do not receive a call in the next month, please call us. Our membership Chair is **Dorothy Davis**, and she'd love to hear from you... at Membership@LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org or 647-0959.

**Dues are DUE!!** To stay an active member of the League, receive our newsletters and be informed about our great programs, please make sure you are current! To confirm that you are up to date, please contact **Inge Paulus**, our Treasurer. She can be reached at Treasurer@LWVbellinghamwhatcom.org, or 676-0456. Thank you for your support!

I look forward to see you all at our next General Meeting on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

Warm regards,  
**Tanya Baumgart**

## Synopses of Modern Immigration Laws

### The Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1965 (called "The INA" or the 1965 Act)

- Abolished the national origins quota system (from Immigration Act of 1924), eliminating national origin, race, and ancestry as bases for immigration to the United States.
- Established allocation of immigrant visas on a first-come, first-served basis, under a seven-category preference system for relatives of U.S. citizens and permanent resident aliens and for persons with special occupational skills needed in the U.S.
- Established a category of immigrants not subject to numerical restrictions: immediate relatives (parents, spouses, children) of U.S. citizens.
- Limited Eastern Hemisphere immigration to 170,000 and placed a ceiling for the first time on Western Hemisphere immigration (120,000). However, neither the preference categories nor per-country limit were applied to the Western Hemisphere.

**Background** -The 1965 amendments to the INA were passed in the shadow of the civil rights movement, when an admission system based on national origins seemed out of step with national values. The 1965 Act took one of the elements of the previous system, the admission of nuclear family members, and made it the centerpiece of a new system whose goal was the reunification of extended family members.

## Synopses, cont'd

Previous law confined admissions to the nuclear family (spouses and minor children of U.S. citizens); the new system of “family reunification” made other relatives (such as siblings and adult sons and daughters) eligible as well.

The change to family reunification shifted the source of the immigration flow away from the developed, western countries toward the closer and more overpopulated developing countries.

### **The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (called "IRCA" or the 1986 Act)**

- Created sanctions prohibiting employers from knowingly hiring, recruiting, or referring for a fee illegal alien workers.
- Authorized the legalization of non-excludable illegal aliens who had resided in the U.S. since January 1, 1982.
- Created a new classification of seasonal agricultural worker.

**Background** - As legal immigration from developing countries rose, so did the opportunities and motivation for illegal immigration. To deal with the growing population of resident illegal aliens, Congress gave an amnesty to those illegal aliens who could show that they had been resident for some time (over three million of them) and created “employer sanctions” making it illegal to knowingly hire illegal aliens.

### **1990 Act “ImmAct90” The Immigration Act of November 29, 1990**

- Increased total immigration under an overall “flexible cap” of 675,000, to consist of 480,000 family-sponsored, 140,000 employment-based, and 55,000 “diversity lottery” immigrants. Categories such as immediate relatives remained unlimited by the cap.
- Revised all grounds for exclusion and deportation, significantly rewriting the political and ideological grounds.
- Revised the nonimmigrant temporary worker categories.

**Background** -A compilation of rather technical changes to existing laws, the 1990 Act increased the level of legal immigration by roughly 40 percent. One obvious change made by the 1990 Act was the addition of a “visa lottery.” Because of the dynamics of family reunification, a few developing countries tend to squeeze most other countries out of the immigration flow. To compensate, the 55,000 admissions in the visa lottery were slated for applicants from the “squeezed out” countries.

Congress passed this bill to deter illegal immigration by better protecting the borders and by better detecting and removing illegal aliens from the U.S.

### **1996 Immigration Act “IIRAIRA” The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act**

- Established measures to control U.S. borders, protect legal workers through worksite enforcement, and remove criminal and other deportable aliens.
- Placed added restrictions on benefits for aliens.

### **Background**

IIRAIRA was originally part of a larger bill (the unpassed Immigration Reform Act of 1995) that would have reformed the legal immigration system as well by eliminating certain visa categories. Congress has so far declined to return to the issue of reforming the legal immigration system.

Updated 10/02

## Notes from the Immigration Study Group

We hope you will all read the background material for our immigration study (LWVUS.org Members' Site). Here is a sample of some of the interesting information you will find in the Study Briefs on line.

After Sept. 11, 2001, immigration functions became a key element of national security in the U.S.A. Patriot Act.

In 2003, the Immigration and Naturalization Service was abolished; its functions were transferred to the Department of Homeland Security.

In 2006, Congress authorized 700 miles of fencing along the U.S. Mexico boarder at an estimated cost of \$9 billion.

Employer sanctions have been an important but not very effective element of border enforcement. Unless employee documents are obvious forgeries, they must be accepted by employers who must also verify Social Security numbers, a process that can take months. Employers can find themselves in a "catch 22" risking suit by the Justice Dept. for discrimination if they inquire too deeply into job applicants' paper work.

It is estimated that 10.3 million unauthorized immigrants now live in the U.S., with inflows well over half a million per year.

Fencing and increased Border Patrol activity may be keeping more unauthorized immigrants inside the U.S. than outside it.

Family Reunification Policies.—The current policy originated with the Immigration Act of 1965. It created a system favoring diversity of country of birth. It also provided a "family preference" quota. For spouses and minor children of U.S. citizens, the wait to reunite is often less than a year. However, many legal permanent residents are not so fortunate. Backlogs can delay the legal reunification for many years. The spouse or minor child of a legal permanent resident from Mexico can expect to wait more than a decade to receive a visa to enter the U. S.

## Visa Descriptions: Travel Documents to Enter the Country

Lawful Permanent Resident (LPR's) obtains a **Green Card** thru 3 paths:

1. Family Sponsored Immigration: Immediate relatives (spouses, unmarried minor children and parents) and/or extended family members (adult children and brothers and sisters).
2. Employment-Based Immigration: A US employer can sponsor an individual for a specific position where there is a demonstrated absence of US workers
3. Diversity Visa Lottery: Immigrant wins one of a limited number of visas available that are open to immigrants from certain countries.

Non-Immigrant Legal Residents: (list includes only those most discussed) issued to fill temporary needs of US employers. Each of these categories have a cap; some caps being used up the first day they become available.

1. H-1B highly skilled individuals for a renewable period of three years or graduates of US universities who have earned a Masters Degree.
2. H-2A temporary or seasonal agricultural workers
3. H-2B temporary or seasonal workers other than agriculture (hospitality, construction, health care, landscaping etc)
4. F-1 Student visas for foreign nationals studying in the US

## Visa Descriptions,...cont'd

### **Insufficient Number of Visas Available**

The number of visas available for workers able to meet the needs of American employers is insufficient in several visa categories. This is most notable in the category reserved for workers coming to fill jobs that don't require high skills. Only 5,000 visas are available per year for permanent workers and this has created a demand for the labor of undocumented immigrants. (Source: National Immigration Forum, Immigration Basic Facts 2005)

## Historical Facts and Definitions—Immigration

### **HISTORICAL FACTS**

#### **Four Peak Periods of Immigration:**

- 1700-1800: Colonization
- Early 1800's First Western Expansion
- 1880's—1920's: Industrialization—factories, mines, mills, movement from farms to cities
- 1980's—present: Deindustrialization—service jobs.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Migration vs. Immigration:** Migration can be people moving within the borders of a country ( i.e. workers moving from Florida following the crops to the North and back). Immigration is people moving from one country to another.

**Refugees/Asylees:** Refugees are persons outside the US and asylees are persons already in the US, both seeking protection based on fear of persecution in homeland.

**Alien:** A non-citizen

**Undocumented/Unauthorized/Illegal:** Persons in the US without permission of the US Government. They enter illegally by using false documents or by remaining beyond the expiration date of their temporary visa. 40% of undocumented people fall into the latter category.

**LPR (Lawful Permanent Resident):** a foreign born individual who has been admitted to reside permanently in the US and is eligible to apply for US citizenship through a process called naturalization.

**Visa:** A travel document to enter a country

**Non-immigrant:** Persons permitted to enter the US for a period of limited duration including students, tourists, temporary workers, business executives, diplomats, artist, entertainers, reporters

**Guest Workers:** Non-immigrants who enter the US under contract to a specific employer to perform a specific job for a specific period of time in such industries as service, farming, and construction.

## ~ Clean Elections ~ Can Your Government Really Work For You? YES! Find Out How!

The Bellingham Whatcom League of Women Voters held its September General Meeting on Saturday, September 22 at the Bellingham Library. The topic was public campaign financing: what it is, how it works elsewhere, and how it might work in Washington State.

The speakers included Dr. Todd Donovan, WWU political science professor who specializes in elections representation. He provided the historical perspective on this vital topic: why Public Financing is seen as a solution to too much money in politics and too little representation of "We the People".

Washington Public Campaigns (WPCs) statewide Executive Coordinator, Craig Salins spoke eloquently on the topic after the audience viewed the "Votes for Sale," which shows how publicly funded (aka:"clean") elections work in Maine and Arizona. Salins then made a compelling case for implementing similar legislation in Washington State.

Salins also told the audience about three pieces of "clean campaign legislation" which were on the table in the '07 legislative session. Each piece was designed to bring clean campaigns to Washington State in a different arena. One was a local "enabling statute" which, if passed, would allow local jurisdictions such as the city of Bellingham, or Whatcom County to fund selected local elections if they so chose. The second was a judicial bill designed to allow Supreme Court judges in our state to run using public funds. This was originally proposed by Governor Gregoire when it became clear that outside money was flooding into the '06 supreme court races, essentially un-leveling the playing field between the judicial races. The third bill, which the legislature considered, would have allowed candidates for statewide races to campaign using public funds (estimated to cost less than \$4 per resident per year). In Maine and Arizona, this type of funding has actually discouraged expenditures by 529 organizations. It has reduced the number of incumbents running unopposed. It has increased diversity in gender and ethnicity in elected offices, and it gives minor political parties a better chance at being elected.

The way candidates qualify to get on the ballot (and therefore get public funds to run) is determined by their

ability to gather a defined number of signatures, each with a small donation (not to exceed a stated amount) of usually \$5 to \$10. This "threshold" mechanism keeps out candidates who are not serious and/or who don't really have broad support in their communities, and yet allows people such as social workers and teachers to run for office who otherwise could never compete with well-heeled or well-connected candidates.

But most importantly, money is taken out of the equation. Candidates and elected officials no longer fear voting against corporate agendas designed to enrich corporations at the expense of the people in their districts or states. Candidates can still choose to run a traditional campaign, though if the Maine and Arizona model hold true, more and more candidates opt to "run clean" each election cycle such that in Maine, fully 80% of candidates (incumbents and challengers of both major parties) are now choosing to "run clean". This allows them to be unfettered by special interests, allows them to spend more time talking to their constituents (and legislating), and far less time "dialing for dollars."

The audience was clearly impressed by the concept of clean campaigns and what it could do for our state, and several officeholders and candidates spoke on the topic after hearing the presenters. Harriet Spanel and numerous other officeholders and candidates spoke in favor of implementing clean campaign financing, not only at the state level, but also at the federal level. Those wishing to learn more about this can contact [whatcom@washclean.org](mailto:whatcom@washclean.org), or may visit [washclean.org](http://washclean.org).

**- By Roni Beall, defacto Washington Public Campaigns Chair, League of Women Voters of Bellingham, Whatcom County Board Member**

## Report on Southside Civic Activities

### *Coalition of Southside Neighborhoods:*

This past month the CSN Steering Committee focused on preparation for its candidate forum which was held October 4<sup>th</sup> at the Fire House Performing Arts Center. Candidates for Mayor, City Council and County Council District 1 answered questions from CSN, from one another and from the audience. Candidates for County Executive, Treasurer and School Board had an opportunity to introduce themselves to those present.

### *Chuckanut Mountains Park District:*

Advisory Committee members continue to meet, hold informational meetings in both counties and answer questions correcting misleading and inaccurate messages, as the process continues to unfold. The State Department of Ecology has named the Whatcom County Boundary Review Board as the Lead Agency for the SEPA. Due to staff limitations, the BRB will contract out this service.

### *Fairhaven*

Many shops in Fairhaven now have loaner umbrellas in cute umbrella stands. They say "I belong in Fairhaven" and are for use while shopping from store to store in the district! The store owners have made this investment for the comfort and convenience of their customers and they hope it will be appreciated and honored.

### *Buzz (for those who enjoy the Fairhaven Urban Village):*

The shop called Paperdoll is moving from Sycamore Square into the spot vacated by Southside News, near the Fairhaven Inn. A luxurious bedding store called Two Turtle Doves, owned by the same folks as Three French Hens, has opened across Harris Street from Chispa and Southside Trends. Can A Partridge in a Pear Tree be Far behind?

- Pam Went

**The LWVWA's Action Workshop is a great place to find out about the League's priorities for this legislative session. If you are interested in going and car pooling with other local leaguers, call the office at 360-734-2366.**

## **EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION FOR League of Women Voters of Washington's**

### **ACTION WORKSHOP**

Saturday, November 10, 2007

Registration (\$20) begins at 9:30 a.m. with coffee and rolls  
Program 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**\*\*\*Always great speakers and timely topics\*\*\***

St. Andrews Lutheran Church, 2650 – 148<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Bellevue

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone/email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Send a check to LWVWA, 4710 University Way NE, #214, Seattle, WA 98105**



**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: <http://lwvwa.org/bellingham/>

*Inside :*

- *General Meeting, October 20, 2007*
- Ballot Issues and School Board Candidates*
- *Immigration Study Report*
- *Clean Elections Report*
- *LWVWA Action Workshop*

## Events of Interest

**FORUM: Tuesday, October 16, 2007**  
**6:30—9:00 p.m. –Whatcom County Courthouse**

The League is partnering with Whatcom Independent and KGMI to present this General Election Forum.

**AAUW Branch Meeting,**  
Saturday, Oct. 13th, 10 am.  
YWCA.

Speaker: Dr. Kenneth D. Vedra,  
Superintendent of Schools, Bellingham School District

### **Mathei Place Open House**

**Saturday, November 10, 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.**

Community members are invited to meet at Hillcrest Preschool, 1500 McKenzie Street, where tours will begin and end. This is Kulshan CLT's first new construction project utilizing the City of Bellingham's *Demonstration Program for Innovative Permanently Affordable Homeownership*. The two & three-bedroom homes will serve as a pilot project to establish LEED certification for the single-family residential market.

### **LWV Friday Walking Group - Change of Location**

Our group has decided to change our Friday walk from Taylor St. Dock to Boulevard Park and back. **We will reverse it!!** So, beginning Friday, November 2nd, we will park in Boulevard Park, walk to Taylor St. Dock and back, and then have coffee at the new Woods Cafe there. It all begins at 2 p.m. Hope you can join us. **- Phyllis Haberstroh**

