



# VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF PULLMAN WASHINGTON

[www.lwvpullman.org](http://www.lwvpullman.org)

June 2014

The League of Women Voters of Pullman is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

## Officers

**Executive Committee:** Chairman – Paul Spencer, 332-6699; League Voice – Karen Kiessling, 332-4755; Information Coordinator – Anne Lewis, 334-1075; **Secretary:** Libby Walker, 509-432-4756, Backup: Jackie Miyasaka, 332-1248; **Treasurer:** Joan Folwell, 332-3946; **Voter Service Chair:** Deb Olson, 332-2114; **Voter Editor:** Susan Daniels, 332-6699; **Budget Chair:** Pat Ager, 334-3374; **Finance Drive Chair:** Lenna Harding, 332-7749; **Membership Chair:** Janet Kendall, 432-3368; **Scheduling Chair:** Barbara Hammond, 332-4104; **Observer Corps Chair:** Anne Lewis, 334-1075; **TRY Editor:** Lucy Linden, 332-2755; **Webmaster:** Paul Spencer: 332-6699; **Community Update Editor:** Diane Smerdon, 334-5413; **Poverty Study Chair:** Mary Collins, 509-592-6929; **Nominating Chair:** Deb Olson, 332-2114.

## Meetings and Events

Please check the date and place when you get the meeting notice a week before the meeting.

### Annual Planning Meeting

Date: Monday July 14, 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Program: Annual planning meeting followed at noon by a salad potluck lunch.

Place: Susan and Paul's home, 1745 SW Baldwin Dr. ([directions pg. 3](#))

Contact: Alice Schroeder, 334-2470 or Shelley Jones, 509-432-3428

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## **Primary Forum – TBD**

Date: Monday July 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:00 p.m.

Program: Forum with candidates for 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District if at least 3 of the 4 candidates commit.

Place: Pullman City Hall

Contact: Deb Olson, 332-2114

## **Johnson 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade**

Date: Friday July 4, Meet at 8:45 a.m.

Program: March in the Johnson Parade

Place: Meet in the Professional Mall parking lot at 8:45 a.m. and car pool to Johnson for the 10 a.m. Parade.

Contact: Deb Olson, 332-2114

## **Meeting for Poverty Study**

Date: Second Tuesday of the month: July 8th, 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Program: Presentations 5:30 – 6:00 p.m. Followed by a working meeting until 7:00 p.m.

Place: The Community Action Center classroom, 350 SE Fairmont, Pullman

Contact: Mary Collins, 509-592-6929

## **Coming Up Board Meeting**

Date: Wednesday August 27, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Place: Daily Grind, back room

Chair: Paul Spencer, 332-6699

## **Back to League Meeting**

Date: September 8, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Place: TBD

Chair: Paul Spencer, 332-6699

## **Other Meetings of Interest Game Day**

Date: Tuesday June 24, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Program: Games, conversation, caffeine, and light snacks

Place: Anne Lewis' home, 915 SE Skylark Ct.

Contact: Anne Lewis, 334-1075; [anneglewis2@yahoo.com](mailto:anneglewis2@yahoo.com) . Questions, suggestions, ideas, etc. re: possible League social events welcomed and encouraged

## **Primary Forum Deb Olson**

The Washington State Primary is August 5<sup>th</sup> with ballots starting to arrive July 18<sup>th</sup>. Sixteen positions

will appear on the ballot. Ten are Whitman County offices but only two positions are contested. The two 9<sup>th</sup> District legislature positions are uncontested. Also on the ballot are four State Supreme Court Judge positions. These four races will be determined by the Primary, so it is important that you Vote.

The only contested race with more than two candidates is the 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District (currently held by Cathy McMorris-Rogers). The four candidates are Cathy McMorris-Rogers, Dave Wilson, Joe Pakootas, and Tom Horne. The Pullman League will hold a Primary Forum for this race on July 21<sup>st</sup>, if at least three candidates commit.

If the forum takes place, we will need your assistance at the forum to keep time, pickup question cards, and sort cards for the moderator. There are lots of small but important jobs at forums so we need lots of League attendance. Contact Deb Olson 332-2114 or 595-0333 or [olsonbones@aol.com](mailto:olsonbones@aol.com)

## **Call For Parade Participants**

### **Deb Olson**

#### **July 4<sup>th</sup> Johnson Parade**

This is a general call for members to participate in a fun, healthy (you will be walking) League activity. The Pullman League participates in the July 4<sup>th</sup> Johnson Parade every year. The parade begins at 10 a.m. This year we will be giving out pencils printed with our website. For marchers we have a very snazzy sash and/or hats to wear. We try to dress in red white and blue, but not required. Parking is limited so we try to carpool. Plan to meet at Professional Mall Parking Lot at 8:45 a.m. This really is a fun activity that still leaves the rest of the day for other activities.

If you are interested contact Deb Olson 332-2114 or 595-0333 or [olsonbones@aol.com](mailto:olsonbones@aol.com)

#### **Lentil Festival**

We also march in the Lentil Festival Parade, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11 a.m. In 2015, the Pullman League celebrates its 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Let's kick off the celebration with a good showing at the parade, especially since we had to cancel last year. This parade is longer and more structured than the Johnson Parade. This year we plan to celebrate women's history and achievements. We already have signs about women's history that we are planning to carry. It's easier to carry a sign and walk than walk and hand out things. Last time we carried the signs we won an award! For marchers we have a very snazzy sash and or hats to wear. We try to dress in red white and blue, but not required. This is a great opportunity to publicize the LWV of Pullman.

If you are interested contact Deb Olson 332-2114 or 595-0333 or [olsonbones@aol.com](mailto:olsonbones@aol.com)

## **July Planning Meeting**

### **Shelley Jones**

Whip up your favorite salad recipe - It is time for our summer planning meeting and salad potluck for the Pullman League! We will meet on Monday, July 14, at 10 a.m. at Paul Spencer and Susan Daniel's Neighborhood Park. Each year we gather to discuss the meetings we wish to hold for the new League year. We meet and discuss ideas and timing from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., usually breaking for lunch around

noon or 12:30. A lot gets done in listing the programs we want while we sip lemonade and iced tea.

*This is a great time for members of the League to join in with ideas and suggestions.* We will probably have a focus this coming year on our Poverty Study, but we need more ideas too! So bring your ideas, your interests and your questions to the summer planning session. If you currently have ideas for next year, let me know at [shelley.jones@gmail.com](mailto:shelley.jones@gmail.com).

Bring a salad, pick up a League member who lives in your neighborhood and join in. Please let Susan know if you are planning to come (332-6699 or [susahdaniels@gmail.com](mailto:susahdaniels@gmail.com)) so she can have enough tables and chairs for everyone.

Directions to Susan and Paul's home: Go south on Grand about ½ mile past Bishop Blvd. Turn right onto Baldwin Dr. (in Evergreen Community). We are the second house on the left. A few cars can park in the driveway; the rest can park along the edge of the road.

## Coming Up – Back To League in September

In September we have a potluck dinner at the home of one of our members to start off the year's activities. Is there anyone who would like to host the meeting this September 8<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.? If you would like to do this, contact Barbara Hammond, 332-4104 or [barbalexh@gmail.com](mailto:barbalexh@gmail.com).

## Update on the Poverty Study Shelley Jones

We have made much progress since our Annual Meeting! Thank you to all League members that are currently involved in this project! But, we need more help! In the coming months, you will learn more specifics about tasks we need assistance with – the jobs are small and can work around your schedule. This is a great way to volunteer within the League. Please let me know if you are interested in assisting with the Poverty Study at [shelley.jones@gmail.com](mailto:shelley.jones@gmail.com).

I have a couple exciting updates to share with you:

1. We are in the process of setting up a Google Documents account! This is great because all Pullman League members will be able to look at documents and follow the Poverty Study. It doesn't matter if you have volunteered to work on the study or not, you will be able to view working documents as we move through the process of collecting and processing data.
2. We have a monthly meeting set! We will meet every Second Tuesday of the month from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the Classroom in the Community Action Center, 350 SE Fairmont, Pullman, regarding this study. The current set-up for the meetings is presentations from 5:30-6:00 p.m. and working meeting from 6:00-7:00 p.m. The Community Action Center ( or CAC) is located up the hill behind Ace Hardware on Fairmont in Pullman.

These meetings are great fun and a great way to share ideas. We hope to see you at our next meeting on July 8th!

## 2014 LWV-US Ag Study Consensus Report

### Joan Folwell, Ag Committee Chair

Many thanks to all of you who attended meetings, studied resource materials, and showed a genuine interest in answering the national LWV ag consensus questions. For me, it was a humbling experience to recognize just how complicated and far-reaching our national agricultural policy is. We just scratched the surface to try to understand all the ramifications, but I hope that we all have a greater awareness of the issues. Because the subject was so huge we decided to focus on the questions relating to the Farm Bill. Our responses have been sent to both the national and state offices. The national office has already compiled its consensus report and it is included below on [page 13](#). The state Ag Committee will summarize all of the local Leagues' reports; this will be used by the state Lobby Team to support or oppose future state agricultural legislation. That report will appear in a future Voter when it comes out. Our local consensus report and the LWV-US consensus report are included below on [page 11](#).

## Report on Meeting on Healthcare in Whitman County

### Barbara Hammond

Our April 7<sup>th</sup> public meeting featured Scott Adams, Chief Executive Officer of Pullman Regional Hospital, and Mike Berney, Executive Director of Palouse River Counseling Center, who presented on **Healthcare in Whitman County: Implementation and Effects of the Affordable Care Act and Other Medical Community Issues**. Adams and Berney began with a broad overview of the major provisions of the Affordable Care Act, including new emphases for provision of care, which include parity for mental and physical health issues (this has been the case in the state of Washington for over three years) and collaborative service provision by medical and behavioral health (i.e. mental health and chemical dependency) providers. With regard to this latter emphasis, Berney discussed Whitman County's participation in the federal pilot program "Accountable Communities of Care," which provides a case manager for persons with chronic illness to facilitate coordination of care and efficiency and comprehensiveness of service provision.

They also provided an overview of Washington State's Health Benefit Exchange, including formulas by which qualification for Medicaid and stipend assistance for individuals purchasing insurance are determined. Reportedly since the inception of the ACA, Washington residents eligible for Medicaid have increased by 66%, with the result that both Palouse River Counseling and Pullman Regional Hospital have seen increased utilization by previously unserved residents. Berney and Adams each provided summaries of their facility's current range of services and of their vision for growth and enhanced service provision, and both expressed appreciation for the enhanced health care coverage that has come about as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

## Results of Health Care Survey

Many League members participated in the Health Care Survey that was conducted by Community Forums Network. \$1000 went to support the state League operation because League members took the survey and designated the League as their group of choice. The results of the survey are available on their website, [www.communityforumsnetwork.org](http://www.communityforumsnetwork.org), or click on this link: [Survey Results](#).

## **Annual Meeting- May 12 Report**

**Anne Lewis**

We had 31—yes, you are reading that correctly!—31 members in attendance at the Annual Meeting. We gathered in Libby Walker's lovely home and enjoyed a Swilly's catered dinner on the beautiful, formal dinnerware of Libby's mom and grandmother. League member Keiko Tuttle gave an interesting and informative talk on her research of dormancy in wheat and described her recent experience at the USDA's Agricultural Outlook Forum.

With some much appreciated assistance by more experienced members, Anne Lewis led the group through the Agenda. This included: approval of the budget, election of the board committee and State Council & National Convention delegates, approval of the Poverty Study, reports on the past year's activities, and successful (although there is always room for more participants!) appeals for volunteers for groups and upcoming activities.

A sincere and enthusiastic thank you to all of those in attendance. Let's maintain and build on this high participation, energy, and volunteer willingness in the upcoming year.

See you at the July Planning meeting!

## **Report on BB Presentation on the Palouse Land Trust**

**Libby Walker**

Amy Trujillo, Executive Director of the Palouse Land Trust, gave a Brown Bag presentation to 25-30 people on April 26, 2014 at the Congregational United Church of Christ. Amy briefly explained the scope and mission of the Land Trust and emphasized that the geographic area includes Whitman County. The organization works with private land owners to protect working lands, open space, and wildlife habitat. Amy also explained the concept of a land easement and how it works.

She provided case studies of families the Land Trust has worked with to protect local farms, rare prairie habitat, and fish and wildlife habitat. Examples include Idler's Rest, a 33 acre nature preserve north of Moscow. Also, Maynard and Margaret Fosberg have an easement on 20 acres of their land in the middle of a residential area in Moscow. Gail and Mark DeSantis have similarly protected an open space in the middle of a residential area. Judy LaLonde created an easement at Big Meadow Creek near Troy to protect natural habitat on her property.

Amy also explained the Conservation Easement Program in the Farm Bill and graciously answered many questions from the audience. She was impressed by the knowledge and interest of League members and others in the audience.

## Report on May Brown Bag: Circles of Caring

### Deb Olson

The May 15<sup>th</sup> Brown Bag was presented by Sarah Rial from the Circles of Caring. Sarah is a geriatric social worker with 18 years of experience. Circles of Caring (formerly part of Gritman) Adult Day Health is a day-use program serving Palouse area residents with dementia and chronic illness and their families. The goal is to improve and maintain health, and slow the progress of disease by providing social activities, nursing care, rehabilitative therapy and social work services. Circles of Caring provides a balanced physical and cognitive care program. By monitoring health of participants, problems can be caught early. If additional services such as occupational therapy are needed, they are provided. This differs from other adult day services which offer less health monitoring. The ratio of patients to caregiver is 6:1. Currently there are between 18 to 23 clients with a capacity of 30. This service provides important support and respite for the family members of the clients. Some transportation services are available.

As you can see from the above quick summary, the presentation was very interesting and informative. Unfortunately only five League members were there, but Bill from the *Daily News* wrote up a nice article.

## Upcoming Brown Bags

### Brown Bag/Noon Meetings Schedule

Our informal noon meetings will be starting up in September. They will be the third Thursday of the month from noon to one p.m. The first four meetings are set.

**September 18<sup>th</sup>** – The County Commissioners (all three) have agreed to come and give us a report on the state of the county. Come with questions.

**October 16<sup>th</sup>** – Brett Haverstick from *Friends of the Clearwater* will do a presentation about the Wilderness Act (50<sup>th</sup> anniversary). The Wilderness Act has been described as Nature's Bill of Rights. There are numerous Wilderness areas in Washington and Idaho. In the changing political climate there are constant threats to the wilderness.

**November 20<sup>th</sup>** – Michael Largent (who was once a legislative aid) will come and talk to us about effective communication with our legislators.

**December 11<sup>th</sup>** - The *Citizens Climate Lobby*, a grass roots organization concerned with climate change, will talk about a proposed carbon fee (at national level) and other issues about climate, and what we as citizens can do about it. This is tentative and may be moved to January.

If there is a subject you are passionate about or even just mildly interested that you think would be good for a noon meeting contact Deb Olson 332-2114 or 595-0333 or [olsonbones@aol.com](mailto:olsonbones@aol.com)

## The 2014 National LWV Convention: Dallas, Texas

### Libby Walker & Anne Lewis

The 2014 National League of Women Voters Convention was certainly educational and exciting, especially given the fact that we are relatively new League members. We were fascinated by the contested election for President and gratified that our candidate, Elisabeth MacNamara, was re-elected to a third term. She is a gracious and approachable woman and an extremely talented leader. We had two quick interactions with



her - at the Banquet (see photo) and in the coffee shop the morning after her re-election.

The national organization is working hard to recruit younger members and offered a special caucus on this topic. Alice Giles, a dynamic younger member of the “Young People’s Task Force” that was formed after the 2012 National Convention, was elected to the Nominating Committee - a very powerful position in the national organization. The Board is now being encouraged to create a Diversity Task Force. The absence of young and minority women in the League became a campaign issue in the presidential election and will certainly receive very serious consideration by President MacNamara and the newly elected Board of Directors.

The Membership and Leadership Development Program (MLD) is now being offered in all 50 states. Over 170 state coaches are working with 27 national coaches (also known as the Ruth S. Shur Fellows) to provide guidance, mentoring, and support to local Leagues across the country. For the first time in decades, nationwide membership is growing - in some states by more than 20%!

One of the most inspirational workshops included the showing of a documentary on the brutalities endured by so many suffragists in 1917 after the “Silent Sentinels” started picketing the White House. Work is now underway to create a national memorial 20 miles south of Washington, D.C. near the Occoquan Workhouse in Virginia where many endured harsh imprisonment. The goal is to open the Memorial before the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment in 2020. The land has been donated and architectural drawings developed which include a replica of the White House gates. For a donation of \$1,000, Washington State League can be listed as a donor. We also returned with a copy of “The Iron Jawed Angels” starring Hilary Swank as Alice Paul. It would be fun to organize a public showing of this 2004 video.

The League recognizes that it faces significant challenges - member recruitment, visibility, public perception, and a number of national political issues that are troubling-- such as campaign finance, global warming, and voter suppression. In spite of all this, we came away from Dallas with the sense that our League in Pullman as well as Washington State and National League are on the right track in terms of building a more vibrant, visible, and diverse organization while maintaining the commitment to the organization’s core values and causes.

To that end, we encourage each person to take a look at her or his involvement in our amazing group. There is so much we can give - and get - from the Pullman League. What is important to you? What do you like to do? What do you want to do better? What don’t you understand? Find a way to address your questions or concerns via the League. Participate by volunteering in an activity, voice your ideas, ask questions, or talk to a friend about the League and how it benefits us all. Consider attending a State or National Convention. (The 2016 National Convention is in Washington, D.C.!) Convention experience gave us a fuller and clearer picture of League, how the various levels interact, knowledge and cumulative impacts of our work, and an increased sense of excitement and energy.

Thank you for this opportunity to attend the National Convention and represent the Pullman League of Women Voters. We are anxious to share many ideas regarding chapter growth, voter registration, and the platform of the National League at our July planning meeting.



## LWVWA Council Report -- May 31 to June 2, 2014

### Paul Spencer and Susan Daniels

The 2014 Council was held in a luxurious hotel in Lynnwood with about 90 members attending. It was energizing to be in such a group of smart, dedicated Leaguers. (It was also very obvious that the average age was on the high side of 60.)

We got compliments on the Pullman Council of 2012 from people when they saw our name tags with "Pullman" on them. Those of you who organized it did a wonderful job

Council started off with a roll call of Leagues, with each League giving a 3 minute description of their activities during the past year. Paul gave Pullman's report, and a long list it was as we had a busy year. There was quite a range of activity levels from Leagues that only did Voter Forums to those that had multiple forums and/or town hall meetings, and a wide range of topics that were covered. One League did a lot of education on human trafficking, and another did a lot on the issue of coal/rail transport.

Tim O'Brian, a LWVUS director, spoke at lunch on League advocacy and education. Unfortunately the sound system was very poor so it was difficult to hear and understand. There was a handout that gave some information though.

The dinner speaker was Senator Jeanne Kohl Welles whose topic was Human Trafficking in Washington. Her talk was interesting, but contained no hard data, i.e. How many cases do they see in WA in a year? What effect has the legislation on trafficking had? We were left believing that human trafficking is a problem and one case is one too many, but wondering just how big the problem is.

Since there were two of us we could cover all the workshops and most of the caucuses. Susan went to the Workshops on *Candidates Forums that Really Work* and *Small but Boldly Growing*. The take-away from the *Candidates Forums* workshop was that we do a good job. There were some ideas on getting candidates to participate. One League with a cooperating local TV station does studio debates which simplifies the set-up and the tapes get lots of replay. There is no audience and the League thinks up all the questions.

The take-away from *Small but Boldly Growing* was that Pullman **isn't** small. There are some Leagues with a board of only three or four members who are doing it all. There weren't any new ideas on increasing membership, but for increasing participation there was the suggestion of having a survey of members to ascertain areas of interest and assets. When an opportunity to participate occurs, those who indicated an interest or skill in that area can be called.

Paul went to the Workshops on *Boldly Growing your League*, *Innovations for Fundraising*, and *Innovations in Educational Forums*. The former was a lively presentation of ideas for attracting and keeping new members. Our Pullman League has considered many of these through participation in the MLD (Membership Leadership Development) program. There was a handout document with a list of ideas from around the state which will be worth discussing as possibilities for Pullman.

Many of the suggestions made in the workshop on Fundraising were creative and interesting. Paul will make a list of them for possible use for our League. One presenter mentioned that 50% of the per

member payments to the National LWV can be from the Education fund if that is advantageous for the local League. Another idea we should consider is that the Washington State LWV has a "left-over" education account, and the local Leagues can make a grant application to obtain funds from this account. My impression is that the Pullman League fundraising is very effective and efficient.

The afternoon workshop on Educational Forums also presented a lot of good information. One League gave a step-by-step template for planning a program with limited resources. One idea that might be applicable for Pullman was suggested by the Spokane League. They found that the voter registration at public places was having little success, so they changed their efforts to making a presentation about voting and voting rights in the high schools for Senior students and helped register 18 year olds at the end of the presentation.

The caucus on Initiative 594 (requiring background checks for all gun purchases) – was a request for Leagues to actively support the initiative by educating the public in forums, town hall meetings, letters to the editor, etc. The Gun Safety Toolkit is available as a source of information.

Council ended with updates on the two action items from the 2013 LWVWA Convention:

- Citizens United Study – This is organized; as yet there are no volunteers to work on a toolkit.
- Gun Safety – The Gun Safety Toolkit is done and available. Initiative 594 is using it.

## **News Flash!!**

### **Karen Kiessling**

Janet Roberts, the League member whose name was drawn first in the raffle for the baskets at Council, had the choice of ten exquisite and bounteous baskets of treats from which to choose. With everything available to her she chose the Pullman basket and carried it beaming back to the table at the banquet. She thought it just looked wonderful -- and who could doubt it.

Well done Susan, indeed. That colorful plate really stood out and what a stroke of genius. I was delighted that Janet walked right by the baskets bulging with bottles of wine to choose yours. Thanks for doing it.

I overheard Kim reporting that they raised more than \$813 from the sale of raffle tickets!

## **Meet our New Members**

Welcome to three new members. Janet sent them some questions which they have graciously answered so we can get to know them a little better. More new member profiles will be in the next VOTER.

### **Jackie Miyasaka**

I came here in 2002 when my husband accepted an assistant professor position to teach architecture design in the WSU School of Design and Construction. I own a home-based Japanese-English translation business. We have a 7-year old son.

Anne Lewis introduced me to the League. I enjoyed some informational meetings and a candidates' forum, so I decided to join. The League interests me, because it enables me to learn about a variety of

perspectives on issues so that I can make educated choices.

I need to learn more about League before I can know where I might like to be involved. Commitments to my family and career make it difficult to be heavily involved at this point in my life, but I hope to participate whenever I can.

### **Nick Lovrich**

Katherine and I came to Pullman in 1977. We have one child, daughter Nichole (born in Pullman 1985) who graduated from Pullman HS in 2003, went to Univ. Oregon for her BA in political science (*Summa Cum Laude*), and graduated from Gonzaga University Law School in 2009. She is a member of the Washington Bar and Montana Bar, and serves as a public defender in Great Falls, MT. I was a faculty member at WSU for 35 years (Political Science) and retired from WSU in 2011 as a regents professor emeritus and Claudius O. and Mary W. Johnson Distinguished Professor of Political Science. Katherine continues to work at WSU in the Center for Advising and Career Development.



I have long respected the history and mission of the League of Women Voters, and enjoyed taking part in several of the local chapter's events in recent years. I spent more than a decade serving as the Faculty Legislative Representative from the WSU faculty senate and learned well the value of open and honest sharing of views and the subsequent discovery of some common nonpartisan/bipartisan understanding and agreed-upon need for action which often follow. I would like to contribute to that process if I can.

I am particularly interested in the state voting rights act which was considered in the last legislative session. Other states such as California have found such legislation to be beneficial to promoting greater diversity among elected officials. This is particularly important for Washington state as we experience a dramatic growth in the latino population. I don't know enough yet about the potential channels of involvement possible to indicate how I would like to be involved in League activities.

## **Community Update Page**

The June issue of the Community Update was another eye-catching and informative page edited by Diane Smerdon. Again she crafted an excellent presentation of meeting schedules, information about past and future meetings, noon Brown Bag lunch sessions, with a spotlight on Paul Spencer and his reasons for joining and participating in the League.

The Board voted to make a one year trial with pages in the March, June, September and December issues. Many thanks to Diane for the suggestion and volunteering to design the Community Update page.

## **Read Up On Ocean Acidification**

In the November 2013 VOTER for Seattle-King County there is an article on Ocean Acidification and the Salish Sea. Those interested can read the article on page 17 by clicking on this link: [Read Article](#).

# Agriculture Update Consensus Questions and How We Answered Them

## Economic Health of the Agricultural Sector

1. *Should government financial support for agriculture be directed to:*

- a) Subsidized agricultural credit (loans) (Yes)
- c) Disaster assistance (Yes)
- d) Crop insurance (Yes)
- e) Farms that supply local and regional markets (Yes)
- f) Subsidized implementation of best management practices (Yes)
- g) Commodity crop programs, e.g., corn, soybeans, sugar, cotton, wheat (No)
- h) Commodity livestock program (Yes)
- i) Commodity dairy program (Yes)
- j) Specialty crops, e.g. fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc. (Yes)
- k) Other production methods, e.g. organic, hydroponic, urban, etc. farms (Yes)

Comments: We support loans, disaster assistance, crop insurance, subsidies to farms that supply of local and regional markets, and best management practices for ALL crops. Crop insurance should be the primary tool used before disaster insurance is; disaster insurance could be a subsidiary of crop insurance. We support expansion of the list of crops in the commodity crop program to eliminate advantageous or disadvantageous distortions caused by any crop's current commodity status. We support becoming more aligned with the WTO requirements and becoming more free market oriented.

2. *What changes should government make regarding direct payment programs to farm operators?* Note: Farm operators can be anything between family farms to huge corporations.

- a) Eliminate direct payments to farm operators (No)
- b) Update the rules for direct payments to farm operators to support sustainability (Yes)
- c) Broaden the types of farms that are eligible (Yes)
- d) Broaden the types of crops that are eligible (Yes)
- e) Effectively *enforce* existing rules (Yes)

Comments: Guidelines for sustainability should be developed locally. All policies should be grounded in research. If program categories are broadened, funding should be increased accordingly.

3. *What changes to current crop insurance programs should government make?*

- a) Extend to more types of crops (Yes)
- b) Link to the use of conservation practices (Yes)
- c) Limit insurance for the cultivation of marginal and environmentally sensitive land (Yes)
- d) Cap amount of premium subsidy to a single farm operator (see note in question 2) (No)

Comments: 3-d: The premium subsidy should be acreage-based and based on a five-year average yield.

## Animal Management

5. *Which of the following approaches to animal management should government achieve?*

- a) Transparently collect and disclose data about regulated animal feeding operations (AFOs) or aquaculture operations and about the health of animals in such regulated operations (Yes)
- b) Apply and enforce existing clean air and clean water regulations to animal or seafood management facilities (Yes)

Comments: Contamination not only of surface water but ground water needs to be managed in these facilities (AFOs).

6. *Which of the following approaches to animal waste management should government require or bring about?*

- a) Treat animal waste with environmentally sound technologies for all regulated AFOs (Yes)
- b) Prioritize federal funds to mitigate existing environmental challenges (such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program, cost share, loans, etc.) rather than construction of new facilities (Yes)

Comments: None

## Research and Development

7. *Which of the following approaches to research and development (R&D) should government fund or accomplish?* Note: For the purpose of these questions and some questions below, “**developed using any new technology**” or “**new technologies**” refer to any of many scientific processes for developing new crops or animals with genetic engineering, nanotechnology or other new techniques, which are not the traditional breeding or hybridization techniques.

- a) Basic research (Yes)
- b) Independent third-party (such as an academic institution) risk assessment of products developed using any new technology (Yes)
- c) Research to assess the impacts of new technologies on human health and the environment, prior to their widespread adoption (Yes)
- d) Research that advances the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems (Yes)
- e) Seed banking, research, and other means that promote and preserve genetic diversity (Yes)
- f) Both transparency in the reporting of research studies related to approval of new products and respect for intellectual property rights of private enterprises engaged in research (Yes)
- g) Research on long-term effects of new crops, products and processes (Yes)
- h) Development of new practices and technologies to promote conservation for all types of farms (Yes)

Comments: None

## Food Safety

8. *Which of the following approaches to food safety should government perform or fund?*

- d) Require post-market monitoring of approved pharmaceutical applications in animal production for human health and environmental impacts (No Consensus)
- f) Limit use of antibiotics in animal production to treat and control disease (Yes)

Comments: We recommend the reduction of the demand for antibiotics be accompanied by the

development of vaccines, use of probiotics, improvements in animal husbandry and waste management, attention to biosecurity, and development of bacteriocins. We reached no consensus on question 8 part d because the question was too vague, e.g., what is meant by “monitoring” and “impacts.”

## **Results of National Consensus on Agricultural Policies**

On May 15, 2014, the LWVUS Board approved the new Position on Federal Agriculture Policies. The position is based on responses from 243 state and local Leagues. Thanks to Committee Chair Norman Turrill, LWVUS Board and Update Committee members Sheri Latash, Illinois, Jessica Trites Rolle, Kansas, Valerie Kelly, Maine, Margaret Chasson, Maryland, Linda Hoff, Michigan, Marnie Lonsdale, Oregon and Carol Kuniholm, Pennsylvania as well as Member Study Committee Chair Janis McMillen and LWVUS Education Chair Karen Nicholson.

### **Statement of Position on Federal Agriculture Policies**

#### **As Announced by the National Board May 2014**

The League believes that government should provide financial support for agriculture that includes disaster assistance, crop insurance, need-based loans and incentives to adopt best management practices. Support should be extended to specialty crops, such as fruits, vegetables and nuts, to new production methods, such as organic, hydroponic, and urban practices, and to farms that supply local and regional markets. Subsidized crop yield insurance should be linked to implementation of best management practices with the subsidy denied for marginal or environmentally sensitive land. The premium subsidy for crop insurance should be available for a wide range of crops, such as fruits, vegetables and specialty crops. Government should limit the amount of the premium subsidy received by larger farms.

The League supports policies that increase competition in agricultural markets. Antitrust laws should be enforced to ensure competitive agricultural markets. Alternative marketing systems such as regional hub markets, farmers' markets and farmer cooperatives should be promoted.

Clean air and water regulations should apply to all animal and aquaculture production and processing facilities, and not just to the very large confined animal feeding operations (CAFOs). Such regulations should be designed in a manner that takes into account environmentally sound technologies and the scale of the operation being regulated. Small size operations should not be granted automatic exemption from regulation. The League believes that government regulatory agencies dealing with animal and aquaculture production should have adequate authority and funding to 1) enforce regulations and 2) gather information that supports monitoring the impacts of all animal feeding and aquaculture operations on human and animal health and the environment.

Government should fund basic research related to agriculture. Government funded research should also address the impact of new technologies on human health and the environment prior to widespread adoption of products developed with such technologies. Assessment of products developed with new technologies should be conducted as transparently as possible, while respecting intellectual property rights. Research should be funded to support the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems, such as seed banking and promoting and preserving genetic diversity.

To provide adequate safety of our food supply, government should:

- Clarify and enforce pre-market testing requirements for foods and food additives developed using any new chemical technology, such as genetic engineering or nanotechnology;

- Require developers to monitor all such new food products developed after releasing to the market;
- Require developers of such new food products to provide data and other materials to independent third parties for pre- and post-marketing safety assessment;
- Fund independent third party risk assessment examining how long term and multiple exposures to such new foods affect human health and the environment;
- Withdraw marketing approval and require recall if such products are shown to be unsafe;
- Require post-market monitoring of human health and environmental impacts for pharmaceutical applications used in animal and aquaculture production;
- Limit use of antibiotics in animal production to the treatment of disease;
- Promote crop management practices that decrease dependency on added chemicals; and
- Fund, employ and train sufficient personnel for assessment and compliance functions of regulatory agencies.

The League supports government developing and requiring more informative and standardized definitions on product labeling. Food labeling and advertising should display only approved health and safety claims and an accurate representation of the required ingredient and nutrition lists. The League supports consumer education about labeling of foods developed using any new technology.

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