

LWVTC Annual Report for 2019-2020

This report consists of individual reports from officers, committee chairs (both on and off the board), program coordinators, appointed liaisons, and various *ad hoc* positions. (See Bylaws for elected and appointed position descriptions.) Submitted, by Sandra Herndon, President 2018-2020

Officers

President Sandra Herndon

- Presided at meetings of the League and board.
- Managed the work of the League.
- Represented the League at public functions and to other organizations.
- Developed letters to the editor identifying League positions where appropriate.

Vice-President Mary Moore

- Ensured development of member and community meetings approved by the board.
- Conducted board meetings when the president was unable to attend.
- Organized the 2019 summer picnic where League members who had a sustained membership for over forty years were honored.

Secretary Peggy Smith

- Kept and posted minutes of membership and board meetings.
- Signed (with the president) contracts and other instruments as needed, when authorized by the board.

Treasurer Leslie Williamson

- Prepared monthly financial reports that were reviewed at the Board meetings that included a narrative of the month's financial activities, budget vs. actual presentations for both the Operating Fund and Education Fund, and a statement of our cash position in both funds.
- Assisted with the Education Fund luncheon in October, processing the registrations and proceeds of the silent auction, and paying the bills.
- Participated in the Budget Committee's process to prepare for the upcoming year's activities.

Voter Services Committee, Gail Gosney-Wrede, Committee Chair

The focus of LWVTC Voter Services this year has been: building a strong Voter Services team, developing a Get Out the Vote campaign, expanding our virtual messaging (in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, developing new messaging and videos for various audiences and planning for media-based and in-person candidate forums for local, state-wide and national races. We worked closely with the first LWVTC Intern, Gracie Anderson. Specifically, LWVTC Voter Services accomplished the following:

--Participated in several "tabling" events to register new voters, including tabling at the Thurston County foodbank, at the Wooden Boat Festival, Olympia Community Court, Olympia Farmer's Market and at libraries throughout the county on "National Voter Registration Day". We registered about 50 voters combined through these efforts.

--Edited and revised the "They Represent You" (TRY) brochure for Thurston County. Added some language in Spanish. Ordered 5500 printed brochures (double the order from past years) and to date have distributed about 4300 brochures to schools, libraries, civic groups, local events and local governments.

--Made Power Point presentations to groups at Work Source, GRUB, and STEP about the importance of voting and how to go about doing it. We have made commitments for additional future presentations to other groups.

--Developed and distributed a video called "How to Vote" in collaboration with Jenna Mason Productions and LWVWA. This video was distributed to all the local LWV chapters in Washington and to most of the high schools in Thurston County.

--Conducted video-taped candidate forums for local city council races and an in-person candidate forum for the Port of Olympia Commissioner race.

--Developed a "Be a Voter" campaign for virtual messaging on the importance of voting in the 2020 elections.

--Worked closely with the Thurston County Auditor's office for voter registration efforts

--Networked with other LWV Voter Services committees in Washington to share ideas and strategies.

LWVWA Civics Textbook, Karen Verrill, Project Manager

The State We're In: WA. Your guide to state, tribal and local government

This Civics textbook, is designed for 6th grade and up, is produced by the League of Women Voters of WA Education Fund and is widely used in schools across the state. Two years ago, the Thurston League purchased 90 copies to give to our members at meetings, forums, etc. We also sell a few to non-members for \$20. And, we bought 30 more in March 2020.

Recently the Voter Service Committee was planning to go into county schools to teach about the importance of being registered to vote and to actually vote. They purchased 30 books to distribute in the schools. Due to the spread of the Covid-19 virus schools were closed. As a result, these books were donated to the Nisqually Tribal School in Lacey.

Membership Committee, Carol Goss, Committee Chair

--Coordinated Member Engagement Workshop for all members

--Increased membership to 191 by April 2020

--Initiated a Renewal Campaign online

--Sponsored six new members via a scholarship rate

--Initiated a Partial-Year Membership (for new members only who join after Feb. 1) for 2020-2021 (with regular rate at new Membership Year)

--Secured budget approval for up to 10 new/renewing members for those with fixed or low income.

--Secured budget approval to continue to offer reduced student scholarship fees as long as state and national dues are waived.

DEI Coordinator—Shelley Ferer (LWVWA -Diversity, Engagement, and Inclusion)

--Participated in monthly MELD (Membership-Engagement-Leadership-Diversity) conference call through September 2019.

--Submitted report to the Board

--Wrote an article for The Voter containing the Guidance from MELD program

--Co-facilitated "Let's Talk About Race" book discussion group (with Peggy Smith). We met in March 2019 but canceled further meetings due to Covid-19 risks and will resume when possible.

LWVUS Roster Manager, Sue Bredensteiner

The Roster Manager enters local members (new members or member renewals) into the LWVUS Salesforce Database. Due to LWVUS strictures, it cannot be accomplished by uploading files.

Information about new and renewing members is retrieved from both the website (online joins/renewals) and the Treasurer records (who receives some membership applications and payment via USPS mail). The LWVUS Roster is updated by January 31 each year to conform to LWVUS membership year. The local rosters then are the basis for documenting voting rights at conventions (state and national), ensuring members get LWVUS e-newsletters/updates, and assessing Per Member Payment (PMP) obligations. Most managers update the files monthly or quarterly.

Advocacy Liaison to LWVWA—Paula Holroyde

Lobby Team Liaison

I am happy to say our skills have improved through working with the Legislative Information Center. I look forward to having more group classes. Working with the Advocacy Chairs of other Local Leagues, we can focus on demand, state-wide communications so we speak with one voice on issues important to all members of the LWVWA.

Coffee with the League, Paula Holroyde and Laurie Craig

Coffee with the League celebrated 3 years of weekly meetings in March, on hiatus since March 19 because of Covid-19 safety concerns.

--Weekly meetings until 3/17/2020, between 20 and 30 attending.

--Postcards were written each meeting as we discussed how to testify and register our political will with our Legislators. We had training at the Capitol on usage of the wa.gov system and several guest speakers, including Mary Hall, Thurston County Auditor. The group generated hundreds of postcards to our legislators both in Washington State and the Federal Government.

--CWTL helped keep members informed about important League events and helped generate volunteers for those events.

Communication Functions

Website, Peggy Smith, Webmaster

Routine and Special Event notices and information were entered into the LWVTC website: www.lwvthurston.org throughout the year. Much of this activity was directed at providing the membership with up-to-date news about what their local League was doing and involved in. At the same time, it was important to understand that the website is the “face of the League.” This is where people surfing the web, or looking for specifics about Leagues in general or our League in particular, will first encounter LWVTC. In response to this function of our website, we do our best to provide informative history, current, and upcoming content.

Voter Newsletter, Sue Bredensteiner, Editor

This is a monthly task—June through May—that requires pre-planning and needs access to other board members in order to supply current content to the membership. Photographs make the publication more interesting. It takes the better part of two days to produce in the current Mail Chimp format. In addition, the editor sends several Mail Chimp Updates, Calendars, of Action Alerts each month, which are not posted on the website but are positively received by the membership and sometimes get more “opens” than the VOTER itself.

LWVTC Facebook, Annie Cubberly, Pat Dickason, and Sandra Herndon, administrators

The League Facebook team posts helpful information for members and friends, emphasizing get-out-the-vote and voting messages, climate change, League history that might be unfamiliar or that we want to emphasize. We try to maintain the non-partisan stance that League is respected for promoting.

Development, Julie Frick, Committee Chair

Education Fund Luncheon, October 26, 2019

--Coordinated the Education Fund Luncheon committee to organize the annual luncheon in order to 1) raise the League's profile & encourage League members to be active, 2) make a commitment for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and 3) raise funds for the 501c3 Education Fund.

--The 2019 Citizenship Awards went to 1) CIELO, an organization focused on helping our immigrant community and 2) Cascadia Research, an organization working to advance pure science --in a time when both these endeavors are under attack. Also by reaching out to the community we were able to include participants who normally would not attend to be included in this event, one of whom, Gracie Anderson, became the intern for the League in 2020.

Grants

--LWVTC was one of more than 170 area organizations to be awarded a competitive grant by the Nisqually Indian Tribe in their 2019 Charitable and Local Government Program. This grant of \$2500 was used to help fund our ongoing Water Study Update.

Volunteer Coordinator, Shelley Ferer

- Monitored LWV-TC Gmail account and routed messages as appropriate
- Responded to messages sent to LWV-TC through the League web site, including offers to volunteer or for information about the League
- Maintained a list of members and others that want to volunteer
- Canvassed volunteer list for people to fulfill tasks, such as newsletter editor, and other tasks
- Compiled a list of nominees for 1 year appointments to the 2020-2021 Board of Directors
- Attended Coffee With the League, Community Conversation, Program of Work, International Women's Day, Where's the Water presentations, Democracy Lobby Day. Introduced myself as volunteer coordinator and greeted newcomers. Asked new people if they would volunteer and about what special skills they might have, especially in social media, writing and editing, and public speaking. Introduced members to one another, encouraged members to reach out to other members.
- Gave short presentation at Getting Engaged member orientation workshop in March
- Co-coordinated September 28 televised general candidate forum. Developed schedule, recruited and trained volunteers.
- Recruited volunteers for Harbor Days volunteer registration drive, National Voter Registration Day voter registration drive on September 24. Filled the schedule and submitted to Voter Services Chair.

Programs, Events, and Planning

Sue Bredensteiner, Coordinator, LWVWA Action Workshop, November 9, 2019

Eighty-eight people from across the state attended the LWVWA Lobby Team Action Workshop at the Lacey Campus of South Puget Sound Community College. Attendees included Leaguers and supporters from across the state and two International Fellows from Myanmar, **Lwin Mi Mi Ko** and **Zin**

Thu Aung. The event included speakers and workshops on protecting and enriching democracy, as well as healthcare, clean water, equity, social justice, a warming world, homelessness, gun safety, education, census and redistricting, transportation, revenue, elections.

Thurston League President **Sandra Herndon** and Washington League President **Lunell Haught** welcomed the group, and LWVWA Lobby Team Chair **Ann Murphy** and Contract Lobbyist **Nancy Sapiro** outlined the schedule. Nine of the Lobby Team Issue Chairs led breakout sessions: **Kim Abbey**, Healthcare; **Catherine Ahl**, Education; **Amy Davis**, Social Justice; **Phyllis Farrell**, Climate Change; **Marty Gibbins**, Water; **Pat Griffith**, Gun Safety; **Alison McCaffree**, Census and Redistricting; **Kathy Sakahara**, Elections; and **Cynthia Stewart**, Housing, Homelessness, Transportation, and Revenue.

Additional breakout sessions were led by: **Tom Crawford**, founder and Board chair of Thurston Climate Action Team (TCAT); **Paula Holroyde**, Coordinator of the Thurston Coffee with the League program; and **Ava McGee** and **Linda Malanchuk-Finnan** with a presentation on “Building Alliances through the Lens of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion.” **Paula Holroyde** and **Karen Fraser** led the introduction to leg.wa.gov. And **Karen Verrill** shared information about and copies for sale of the LWVWA highly acclaimed civics textbook, ***The State We're In: Washington—Your Guide to State, Tribal and Local Government.***

Keynote speaker was Washington State Senator **Jeannie Darneille**, representing Washington Legislative District 27, Tacoma: “**The Nuts and Bolts of Achieving Action through Legislation.**” Former Senator **Karen Fraser** concluded the event with the “**Importance of Understanding Your Power for Action.**”

Peggy Smith--Census and Redistricting Forum and Follow-Up

On **January 15, 2020** Thurston League members and members of the public gathered at the Olympia Center for a three-hour **Census and Redistricting Forum**. The aim of this forum was to help people learn what they need to know about these two vital, but infrequent, aspects of our democracy. The presenters focused on how the census works, how the census affects all of us, and what citizens can do to help, as well as the nuts and bolts of redistricting, and why it all matters.

As follow-up to this informative forum, LWVTC established a 2020 Census page on our website. And, three of our members were part of the Thurston County Complete Count Committee. Members and friends were urged to complete their census forms and to reach out to friends, neighbors, and passing acquaintances to do the same.

Mary Moore and Cathy Turk—“The Vote: Past, Present, and Future—a Community Conversation

Mary and Cathy coordinated the **February 29, 2020**, Community Conversation as part of the 2020 Centennial Celebration. Keynote speaker Thurston County Auditor Mary Hall focused on the suffrage movement and current efforts to encourage people to vote. Attendees were engaged in responding to questions about the future of the vote, gathering at tables of eight with facilitator and scribe and reporting out for large group discussion. Board Member Melissa Denton gave the final presentation, emphasizing the importance of each individual vote.

Paula Holroyde, Karen Fraser, and Water Study group—Sea Level Rising in Thurston County

On March 4th we were alerted that our presenters from the Squaxin Tribe would not be allowed to leave the reservation. Thanks to the members from Coffee with the League and LWVTC members we made a combination electronic and live forum. Presenters: Candace Penn and Brian Teague on Sea Level Rise in Thurston County, and Andrea McNamara Doyle and Lee First on the Chehalis River and Watershed.

Program planned for March 26--**Update on Water Quality and Quantity in Thurston County** with Kevin Hansen, Art Starry, and Julie Rector—was postponed due to risks related to Covid-19.

Karen Tvedt--General Meeting and Forum on Immigration: Postponed to Fall 2020

While it was postponed due to risks related to Covid-19, planning was completed for a forum on immigration and sanctuary, *“Who is Allowed to Be an American? Supporting justice and fairness for our immigrant and refugee neighbors.”* Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Mason County, the Strengthening Sanctuary Alliance and other organizations focused on protecting the rights of immigrants and refugees, this forum was intended to support the League’s positions on immigration addressing the latest threats faced by our immigrant and refugee neighbors, steps being taken locally and statewide to mitigate these threats, and actions we can take to support these efforts.

Confirmed speakers included: **Rabbi Seth Goldstein** from Temple Beth Hatfiloh in Olympia; **Steffani Powell**, an attorney practicing US Immigration Law in Olympia and member of Strengthening Sanctuary Alliance; **Ximena Velazquez-Arenas**, an attorney drafting rules to implement *Keep Washington Working* legislation (SB 5497); and **Montserrat Padilla**, director of the 180 member Washington Immigration Support Network (WAISN).

Carol Goss and Peggy Smith—January Program Planning Meeting for 2020-2021

League members met in January to consider program ideas for the national League and also for our local League. The group endorsed support for the continuing national Campaign for Making Democracy Work.

Two issues emerged for our local League emphasis: 1) encouraging young people to be lifelong voters, and 2) working in coalition with other groups on homelessness. These are both actions which received board approval and will become areas of focus for 2020-2021.

In addition, the Water Study Update will be continuing, with Recommendations being presented at the 2021 Annual Meeting.

Update of Thurston County Water Realities in Relation to Planned Development 2008—Paula Holroyde

Over the past 18 months we have been collecting information and making contacts with very knowledgeable community members. We are now ready to start sorting this information to clarify where we were, where we are, and what choices needs to be made to make sure Thurston County will be the best it can be for the next 7 generations.

Centennial Coordinator, Sue Lean

Anticipating the Women's Vote 2020 Centennial with the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution and the 100th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters, in January of 2019 the Centennial group organized a women's suffrage pageant to be given first at the Salvation Army Silver Tea on May 11, 2019. Teaming with historian Shanna Stevenson and with Sharyl Solberg, a retired teacher and dance costume organizer for a performance troupe, Melodies in Motion, a PowerPoint overview was presented followed by costumed portrayals of well-known suffrage leaders. The Pageant Players which included women from several organizations presented "A Bee in Her Bonnet" relating just what set them off on what was often a lifelong quest for women's rights.

On May 17, 2019, a short skit "From Bloomers to Short Shorts: A Brief History of the Right to Wear Pants" was presented at a Capital City Marathon "Right to Run / Right to Vote" luncheon celebrating the 35th anniversary of the first women's Olympic Marathon Trials held in Olympia in 1984. Winner Joan Benoit Samuelson was honored with many runners returning to Olympia for the occasion. This skit was performed again in San Diego, CA in January 2020 for the National Women's History Alliance conference.

In November 2019 the full Pageant was presented to the American Association of University Women (AAUW). On March 5, 2020, the PowerPoint was presented to the Capital City Newcomers Club luncheon with costumed figures "speaking historically" at the tables. 2020 plans sidetracked by the coronavirus pandemic include performances at the Capitol for Her Flag in July when the 35th stripe for Washington being the 35th state to ratify the 19th Amendment would have been sewn onto this national art project. Another performance was planned for the Women's Vote Centennial Festival sponsored by the Washington State Historical Society on August 22, 2020. We were offered the use of a flatbed trailer for a parade float and had hoped to participate in several parades as well.

In January 2020 several of us appeared in costume at the Legislature as Resolutions for the Centennial of the 19th Amendment and the founding of the League of Women Voters were read. On February 15, 2020, for the LWV Centennial and the 200th Birthday of Susan B. Anthony, a colorful event was held at the Bigelow House in Olympia which Miss Anthony visited in 1871. Exhibits and a suffrage sing-a-long were featured. Approximately 100 people attended at this small venue, including elected and appointed officials, fathers with their young children, League members, and interested community members.

League members participating include Karen Fraser, Carol Goss, Shirley Stirling, Carolyn Woodling, Bonnie Jacobs, Anne Holm, Margaret Knudson, Rita Robison, Charlotte Persons, Cynthia Pratt, Kat Ransom, Sharonda Amamilo, Fran Beard and Bronwyn Vincent. Sponsorship by the League of Women Voters of Thurston County is greatly appreciated.

LWVTC Liaisons and Collaborations

Liaisons with LWVWA

Advocacy—Paula Holroyde

Voter Services—Gail Gosney-Wrede

Candidate Forums—Karen Tvedt

Civics Education—Karen Verrill

Diversity, Engagement, Inclusion (DEI)—Peggy Smith

Membership, Engagement, Leadership, Diversity (MELD)—Tony Wilson

Informal liaisons with local organizations and in the community

Environmental Community Stakeholder Group (5 Groups), led by Anne Van Sweringen
Shelley Kneip

Sierra Club, for various environmental issues
Phyllis Farrell

Women's March 2016-2019 (inactive now)
Previously Pat Dickason first, then Sandra Herndon

Community Outreach for Membership
Carol Goss and others