



# VOTER

Volume 1, Issue 6

APRIL 2007

## CALENDAR

### April 26

Early Learning Forum  
219 "B" Street  
Tumwater  
6:30 pm

### May 24

Annual Meeting  
Coach House  
211-21st  
Ave. SW  
Olympia  
5:30 pm

### June 21-24

LWV State Convention at  
Heathman Lodge

### July 28-29

Treasure Sale  
Fran Williams  
wil@comcast.net  
357-3334

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## SENATOR KAREN FRASER TO BE GUEST AT ANNUAL MEETING

Senator Karen Fraser will be our guest at the Annual Meeting of LWVTC on May 24. The event will begin with Senator Fraser telling us about her recent visit to New York City. Every member is welcome to this special event and you may bring guests to Meet Senator Fraser.

"Last December, I was privileged to participate with a group of women legislators from around the country in visiting the United Nations," Fraser said. The delegation had the opportunity to discuss with many key leaders the horrible problems facing women in too many countries. "Sex trafficking and pervasive violence against women are not uncommon." She also

mentioned "lack of health care, lack of legal rights, lack of educational opportunities, lack of economic opportunities,

Senator Fraser and the other legislators met with many officials, including the new President of the General Assembly, who is the third woman to hold that position. "We met with US Ambassador Bolton's deputy and with Kofi Annan's deputy." She was pleased to have the opportunity to meet with heads of programs designed to help advance the status of women. "We met with women journalists who cover the UN," Senator Fraser said.

The visit was sponsored by the Center for Women Policy Studies, in Washington DC. "I am a graduate of their Institute on Foreign Policy for Women Legislators," said the Senator.

"an exceptionally educational and conscientiousness raising experience." Senator Fraser will be attending a follow-up conference this coming May. "I'm looking forward to letting you know about it!" she said.

The LWVTC Annual Meeting will begin at 5:30 at the Coach House at 211-21<sup>st</sup> Avenue SW in Olympia. A potluck dinner will follow Senator Fraser's talk. The business meeting will end the program. Members are urged to make this once-a-year membership meeting to help decide on budget, elect officers, consider program and add to the viability of the LWVTC.

4/26/07  
Early Learning Forum  
219 "B" Street  
Tumwater  
6:30 pm

# GMA Discussion Highlights

The following is a brief summary of the discussion on the Growth Management Act that took place on March 21, 2007. Approximately twenty people were in attendance. By a show of hands, most people lived in urban areas, but there were five who lived in rural areas and three who lived in multiple family dwellings. This report was limited by space, but the minutes submitted to the State League will be more complete.

## 1. Process in Thurston

**County.** Changes to city, urban growth area and county plans are not well publicized, and we need to do more to encourage citizen participation, because the process is more effective when citizens are involved. Despite the different dwelling densities set forth in such plans, counties should be required to meet the same level of services as the cities. However, there is an incomplete inventory of our resources and this constrains adequate plan-

ning under the GMA. Further, circumstances drive the planning standards more than standards drive the planning process.

**2. State Role.** The state is not really involved. If it were, there could be more uniformity in standards, but less accountability at the local level. If the state would distribute funds for public participation, this might provide needed balance between uniformity and diversity in planning for our communities.

**3. Hearing Boards.** Hearing board decisions have affected Thurston County by determining GMA compliance (such as the decision requiring rural rezoning), but they don't take a role unless there is a dispute and they have no real authority to enforce their decisions.

**4. Affordable Housing.** The definition of affordable housing is tied to median income in the jurisdiction planning for such

housing. "Infilling" has encouraged affordable housing on the Eastside and Westside of Olympia, but unexpected quality of life issues have arisen due to increased density. Smaller houses should be encouraged, but it is difficult to finance them. There is an imbalance between jobs and housing units that increases pressure to commute.

**5. Concurrence.** Developers are required to pay impact fees for roads, but other impact fees are voluntary, such as fees for schools and parks. There should be more cooperation between cities, urban growth areas and counties when planning for infrastructure needed to support their regional population.

**6. League Position.** Those in attendance thought the LWVTC should study two issues further – water and impact fees.

*Clydia Cuykendall*

A proposed Local Study will examine the availability of water in Thurston County in relation to information on the projected level and distribution of development.

This topic follows the year-long water study we have been reading about in the State VOTER. And, it is a natural follow-up to the Growth Management Act study that we discussed at the March meeting.

## WATER STUDY

Land use plans and regulations assume availability of water. Information regarding ground water resources and the limited ability of the state to regulate ground water use, is not widely known. Assumptions of availability of water for current and projected population in the County are risky as population increases.

The public is generally not aware of the poor information regarding the groundwater resources of the County. Consequently, the public is not aware of possible implications for both current and future residents of Thurston County as land use plans and development are approved.

Anyone who is interested in this study may contact Eve Johnson at 754-1455.

# EARTH DAY ACTIVITIES



Spring is here, which offers us an opportunity for renewal, reflection, and making changes in our lives. If you're looking for any of these things, you've got many chances to find them. Mark your calendars!

## April 14

**Step It Up for Earth Day: A Call For Global Warming Solutions** March and Rally; volunteer at restoration work parties; attend screenings of faith and social justice themed films; show your support at various hearings in Olympia; be in touch with your elected officials to share your opinions with them; be a part of spiritual retreats; take part in meetings,

readings, and dialogue with others; and get out and enjoy nature!

## April 15 – 22

### **National Environmental Education Week**

Coordinated by The National Environmental Education & Training Foundation, is designed to increase the educational preparation, learning, and activities in K-12 classrooms, nature centers, zoos, museums, and aquariums. Becoming a formal NEEW partner by going to [www.eeweek.org](http://www.eeweek.org) and click on Register today (home page). For those who have participated in the past, we ask that you sign-up once again so we can count you as a 2007 partner. If you have any questions, please contact

Karen Schultz at [ee-week@neetf.org](mailto:ee-week@neetf.org).

## April 17 at 8:00 pm

**Evergreen's Unsoeld Seminar Series: Frances Moore Lappé** Evergreen State College, Longhouse building, 2700 Evergreen Parkway NW, Olympia  
Frances Moore Lappé is the author of fifteen books, including the 1971 three-million-copy bestseller, *Diet for a Small Planet*. This presentation of her most recent work, *Democracy's Edge -- How to take back the America we love*, completes a trilogy which began in 2002 with *Hope's Edge*. This event is free and open to the public.

*Donna Ewing*

A beautiful reception was held at the Governor's Mansion on March 15, 2007. This delightful event was presented by the WA Women's History Consortium to raise money for the Centennial celebration of Washington women winning the right to vote in 1910. We were the 5<sup>th</sup> state in the union to accomplish this goal—a full ten years ahead of the national law. Emma Smith Devoe, of

## *SOWING GOOD SEEDS*

Tacoma and Margaret Akright-Hutton of Spokane were celebrated in song and speeches for their long and passionate work in the suffrage movement

Our own Sue Lean's exhibits of women's historical events were on prominent display with able assis-

Sue Lean's exhibits of women's historical events were on prominent display

tance from Rita Robison and Margaret Knutson. Governor Gregoire and her husband, along with Senator Fraser, greeted everyone and the Governor gave a very inspiring speech about the leadership role women have played in our state. She wrapped up her remarks by saying that the League not only encourages everyone to vote but to be an informed voter.

*Karen Verrill*

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!  
CHILDCARE & EARLY LEARNING  
FORUM  
4/26/07  
219 "B" STREET  
TUMWATER  
6:30 PM**

*President's Column* **Port/Court Update**

The final judgement on the League of Women Voters Thurston County vs. Port of Olympia may be years away. There is plenty of time to explore all aspects of the Public Records Act.

There seems to be a misunderstanding in regard to the nature of the penalty requested by LWVTC in this lawsuit. Apparently, some members fear that the amount under discussion may generate negative publicity for the League statewide.

The League motion requesting penalties specifically states: "The penalties imposed *must* be sufficient to deter future violations not just by the offending agency, but by other agencies as well...noting the purpose of a penalty is to punish current misconduct sufficiently to deter future misconduct...Minimum penalties pose little risk for agencies of any size."

The trial court has already determined that the Port of Olympia has wrongfully withheld re-

ords, which the public has every right to obtain. Even so, the Port continues to refuse access to some documents. Without being forced to pay a penalty sufficient in size to constitute a "deterrent" there is nothing - not even the judgment of the law - that will prevent the Port of Olympia's continuing misconduct. And, by extension, to prevent every other agency in the State from ignoring the law.

Furthermore, imposition of a penalty is *mandatory* under the law. The amount of the penalty, however, is discretionary, depending upon the seriousness of the violation. Determining the actual penalty is quite complicated and is often shifted up or down from the starting point during the process. In this matter, the Plaintiff's (Mr. Jorgensen and LWVTC) rely upon our Counsel to professionally and ethically represent the interests of the public.

It is in the interest of the citizens that the Court obey the law and not consider the public relations concerns of the litigants. The League must not interfere with the legal process to eliminate or even reduce

the penalty. The League would not be well served if the Court modified, in any way, the intent of the law because of a request or preference on the part of the League of Women Voters.

Once a penalty is awarded, the Port might ignore it just as it has ignored the judgment that it must turn over requested records. Judgments and penalties are one thing, enforcement is something else entirely.

Until a penalty is actually received by the Plaintiffs, the named dollar figure is merely a point of discussion.

Once we give away our negotiating position, we are powerless. Ensuring the future of a free and open government is the basis upon which the League of Women Voters is founded. Our organization has a long proud history of taking action to enforce justice. Representing the public, doing what is right--in spite of possible negative publicity--is the very reason the League of Women Voters has become a respected force in local and national political life.

*Eve Johnson*



**FLEXIBLE OPPORTUNITIES**



There are many flexible opportunities for you to make an impact through your local League. You have choices that fit your busy life and schedule, whether it's...

⇒ Taking ten minutes from the convenience of your home to send an email "Action Alert" to your member of Congress,

- ⇒ Spending a couple of hours at a community forum on a topic of interest to you, or
- ⇒ Participating once a month in meetings with community leaders on neighborhood issues.

When you act with others as a member of the League of Women Voters...your voice is magnified.

Our Membership Committee will be sending out a Membership Profile very soon. This profile will let the LWVTC know where their members' interests lie.

Please fill out and return that document when you receive it. It is very important.

CHILD CARE AND EARLY LEARNING

Early Learning was a topic this year in the legislature. But what happened with all this rhetoric? What kinds of changes can we look forward to? Does education really begin at birth? Are young children ready for full day kindergarten?

Come hear a panel of legislators, and early childhood specialists discuss what happened in the past legislative session on these current issues and more. Join us in the discussion of how we will move forward on changes made.

Come join us on April 26<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 for light refreshments provided by A Child's Place Preschool on 219 "B" Street. (Corner of B Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave). in the Olympia Friend's Meeting House, Tumwater, WA. The panel begins at 6:30.

For more information Contact Fran Williams 360-357-3334, Margie Reeves 360-866-7507, or Pat Dickason 360-753-7647. We look forward to seeing you in Tumwater on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

Co-sponsors with the LWVTC are the Child Care Action Council, South Sound Association for the Education of Young Children and the Family Child Care Association.



Margie Reeves

MEMBERSHIP

One of the ongoing questions we've faced in the Membership committee is how to attract new members and, once they are signed on, how to keep them. The "keep them" turns out to be the difficult part. We struggle with how to introduce new members to other members, how to get them involved in an interesting committee and maybe find them a mentor. Sadly, we regularly have new members join, pay their dues for one year and then, feeling discouraged with us, leave.

Long term members tell us stories of how, when they joined the League, someone called them immediately, picked them up for a meeting, or met them for coffee. We need to be reminded that the League is made up of volunteers who join us to do important work but who continue with us because of the great people they get to work with.

Our latest effort to introduce our new members to our group was a party at my house held on March 8, 2007. I invited everyone who had joined in the last year and then called and invited several long term members to round out the group. It was potluck, which made it a very easy affair. We talked about the problems of entering our League and then, each person talked about their own ideas, interests, and hopes for the LWVTC. We had a great time. We're going to do it again.

If you'd like to join us for the next new/old member party, contact me at [bfmz@comcast.net](mailto:bfmz@comcast.net).

Marilyn Funk

Clean Elections

Clean Elections bills did not survive the mid-session cutoff dates. The hope for publicly funded elections in Washington State will have to wait another year.

However, without a guarantee of passage, the Governor asked that the judicial proposal be converted into a budget Bill. Governor Gregoire has requested a study to keep public campaign financing alive. \$150,000 would be provided Washington State Institute for Public Policy to study expenditures between public financing and traditional financing of campaigns.

This study would include, but not be limited to: 1) the amount of independent expenditures and public communications; 2) the rate of increase or decrease of independent expenditures and election communications; 3) the amounts of money expended within 14 days of an election; 4) the number of candidates that file for office; and 5) the rate of incumbency. In addition, the study will assess the cost to adequately fund public financing for appellate judicial positions.

The proposed study, together with further deliberation and vocal support from citizens, may convince some legislators that our courts should not be for sale.

\* \* \* \*

The League of Women Voters US is more hopeful and asks members to **support** the effort now in Congress to provide full public funding for qualified congressional candidates.

Each of us can help in this much needed reform by urging our Congressmen to co-sponsor and support public financing of campaigns. Public campaign financing is based solidly on National Positions, and is a National Action item.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THURSTON COUNTY**  
**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

For more information about the League's activities or membership call Marilyn Funk, 360-491-3376, or mail in the membership form below.

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

◇       **\$60 for my membership**

◇       **\$\_\_\_\_\_ for an Educational Fund Donation**

*For Lifetime Membership and Scholarships contact Membership Chair.*

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ WORK PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_ FAX NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

***LWVTC Newsletter, the VOTER will be distributed by e-mail unless you specifically request a hard copy (check one) in regular mail.***

◇       Please send my copy of the VOTER by postal mail to the above noted address.

◇       Please send my copy of the VOTER to \_\_\_\_\_

***Remember Our Purpose***

***The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan, nonprofit political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government. The League influences public policy through education and advocacy. Anyone of voting age may become a League member.***

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS THURSTON COUNTY**

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