



**Action Workshop**

**January 7,  
9:30AM to 3PM  
2404 N. Howard**



**GENERAL MEETING**

**Program Planning  
January 10, 11:30 AM  
2404 N. Howard**

# VOTER

## Program Planning Party

### Welcome New Members, Sustain the Old

The January General Meeting will focus on Program Planning from the perspective of a new member. We have a growing number of new members who have joined League in the last few years and now seems the perfect time to reflect on what the membership would like to focus on at the local level and how they would like to respond to it. Washington State League Convention is this year as well, the perfect opportunity to recommend what issues the State should study or act upon. Two documents to review in preparation for the discussion are **Program In Action 2015-17**, State League's positions, available by email along with Spokane League's positions in the **Member Handbook**.

Please join us for a discussion of ideas for local League to study, take action or educate for the greater good of our community. It is also an opportunity to give direction to State League for Convention in June. (See pg. 3 for the work sheet.)

*Please bring your own lunch because this is a working party!*

**Culled from a report sent Nov. 2016 by Bev Austin to LWVUS.** The League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area participated in 21 events this election year.

- 3 televised candidate forums.
- 1 candidate forum held at Newport High School.
- 1 participation in National Voter Registration Day partnering with Spokane City Library and Lewis and Clark High School.
- 1 voter registration at the student government fair, Spokane Falls Community College.
- 15 voter registration of new citizens at Naturalization Ceremonies.

### Ballot Return Statistics

**Washington State**  
4,268,904 Voters  
3,359,921 Returned Ballots  
78.7%

**Spokane County**  
306,261 Voters  
238,766 Returned Ballots  
78%

Spokane County breaks down the numerical vote by age groups in each Congressional and Legislative District.

**Action Workshop**  
Saturday, January 7  
9:30 am - 3 pm  
St. Andrew's

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

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

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

In all, we registered approximately 250 new voters. Thirty (30) League volunteers provided 319 hours of service to cover all of the election work by LWV of the Spokane Area.

*"I know League members across the state worked hard this election year. Our members in Spokane gave a tremendous effort to help voters in our state participate in American democracy."*  
Bev Austin

### General Meeting on County Budget Report

Spokane County's Chief Budget Officer, Bob Wrigley presented an informative and enlightening perspective on the Spokane County budget at the November General Meeting. He introduced the subject with a list of the twenty-departments of the County and the seven funds that are coordinated to operate them.

*"The General Fund is the largest of Spokane County's funds. The General Fund accounts for all financial resources except those required to be accounted for in a separate fund. The General Fund consists of departments such as the Auditor, Parks, Prosecutor, Sheriff and Treasurer. The General Fund is primarily supported by property tax and sales tax."*

The other funds are: Special Revenue, Debt Service, Construction, Enterprise, Internal Service and Fiduciary. Due to the incorporation of Spokane Valley and Liberty Lake and annexations by Air Way Heights and Spokane, property and sales tax revenue has shifted from the County to the cities of the County. In 2007, the economic recession caused a loss in investments that has not been recovered. County Commissioners recently proposed a utility tax to fill the General Fund but there was strong community push back. It has since been tabled. In the 6 October 2016 edition of the **Spokesman Review**, Mr. Wrigley is quoted explaining the financial option the Commissioners have chosen, a tax increase. Spokane County is allowed to collect an annual 1% property tax increase for the road fund that Commissioners have not taken for years. That taxing capacity has been "banked," so to speak, and will be use to raise \$5 million in 2017 and shifted to the General Fund where the need for more revenue is greater.

Questions drove the discussion and Mr. Wrigley was more than able to respond. It was a good learning experience for all.



Pam Behring

## Program Planning: How We Decide What to Study

**Deciding what are important issues usually seems pretty easy to us. However, then we have to decide if WE are the right people to study it, and how we would do it. Please consider the questions below to help you decide what our active issues should be and what we are able to do about them.**

1. **STUDY:** to reach member agreement on an issue so that the League can take action.

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELVES:

- Does the League already have a position?
- Is there a government solution to the problem?
- Is there enough time to do a study and then act to influence the resolution of the problem?

2. **UPDATE:** to review an issue. QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELVES:

- Is the League position still useful?
- Is the position sufficiently general?
- Are there significant developments in the issues area that are not reflected in the position?
- What is the proper scope of effort to update the position?

3. **ACTION:** always the goal of the League's study process. Member understanding and strong support are essential for successful action. QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELVES:

- Are the timing and the political realities right for success?
- Does the community expect or need the League to be a player on this issue?
- Will League action on this issue make a significant difference?
- Could a focused, targeted action campaign enhance LWV visibility and stature?
- Do our members understand our position and our action goals?

4. **CITIZEN EDUCATION:** to help citizens understand the complexities of an issue and encourage people to participate in reaching a solution; can also lay the groundwork for successful advocacy. QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELVES:

- Does our community need help in understanding this issue and its possible solutions?
- Is there enough time to develop and implement our project before citizens must make a decision?

- ❑ Is it more important to help citizens understand this issue than to advocate our League position at this time?

5. **CONCURRENCE:** to agree with a position already held by another LWV. **QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELVES:**

- ❑ Is their study available to us?
- ❑ Is their resulting consensus of sufficient use to us?
- ❑ How can we be sufficiently well informed on the issues?
- ❑ How do we obtain the statement, background materials including pros and cons?
- ❑ How do we comply with their requirements not to amplify, make subject to conditions, or alter the statement of position reached by the other League.



*Joyce Jones*



*A long time member and past president of LWV Spokane, Joyce Jones, passed away at Hospice of Spokane on November 15, 2016, from a stroke at the age of 85. She was born in Alma, Nebraska on August 26, 1931. She was dedicated to her community, working over the last forty years in PTA, KSPS, Northeast Community Center, the Spokane Library as well as League. "Her desire to serve the community and educate others regarding political issues will be greatly missed."*

**HOLIDAY LUNCHEON for ELECTED OFFICIALS**

The League had a good turnout for our annual luncheon honoring local elected officials on Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>. A tasty salad bar buffet was served to our guests and members at The Spokane Club. Each of four Spokane City Council members talked about what the Council has accomplished this year and what directions they hope to make progress in next year. Unfortunately the legislature's committee meetings were held that week so we missed hearing from our state level representatives. Vicki Dalton, county auditor, and Vicky Horton, county assessor, talked about the complexities of their arenas and their hopes of streamlining and encouraging voter participation in the future.



Once again Avista came forward with major underwriting for this event, so remember them fondly when you pay your next energy bill.

*Molly Hannan*

<b>Calendar</b>		
<b>December</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>Merry Christmas!</b>
<b>January</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Action Work Shop, 9:30 AM - 3 PM @ St. Andrew's, 2404 N. Howard, Spokane.</b>
	<b>10</b>	<b>General Mtg., 11:30 AM @ office. Program Planning Party, Welcome new members.</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>96th Birthday Party of Women's Vote.</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>To be determined. Judicial Panel</b>	
<b>April</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>General Meeting</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>Annual Meeting</b>
<b>June</b>	<b>1-4</b>	<b>LWVWA Convention in downtown Seattle @ the Best Western Executive Inn.</b>

**Action Workshop in Spokane: January 7 at St. Andrew's from 9:30am - 3pm.**

For more information on the Action Workshop in Spokane, go to the link:

<http://lwvwa.org/actionworkshop.html>

**Request for Endorsement of Responsible Representation Act**

In the 2016 legislative session the LWVSA and the LWVWA endorsed HB 2610 sponsored by Marcus Riccelli to change the way County Commissioners were elected in large counties. The legislation would have required 5 county commissioners be elected from districts in the general election (as opposed to the whole county) and that the district lines would be drawn by a bipartisan committee. The bill passed the house but was not brought to a vote in the Senate Govt Ops Committee.

Marcus Riccelli will be submitting a similar bill – the Responsible Representation Act, in the 2017 session with two significant differences. The bill will not require the election of 5 commissioners and the population threshold will be set so that it only applies to Spokane County. The major provisions are that 1) counties as large as Spokane must elect their commissioners by district to improve representation and 2) that the district lines must be drawn by a bipartisan committee with the assistance of a districting master.

I request that the LWVSA endorse the Responsible Representation Act.

Mary Lou Johnson

**\$75 Individual Dues: Local \$24 - State \$19 - Nat'l \$32**  
**\$105 Household; \$110 Sustaining Member; \$150 Benefactor**

Yes, I want to join/renew membership in LWV/ Spokane Area

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: H \_\_\_\_\_ W \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive the newsletter by \_\_\_ mail or \_\_\_ email (please check one)

Please indicate amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to & mail to: LWVSA 2404 N. Howard St., Spokane WA 99205

**Pay by Credit Card through Pay Pal at [www.lwvspokane.org/join.html](http://www.lwvspokane.org/join.html)**

**Thank you, AVISTA, for printing the LWV Spokane “TRY’s” and for supporting our Elected Officials Luncheon.**

**LWV Spokane Board of Directors:**

**Pres., Pam Behring; Vice-Pres., Linda Milsow; Sec., Sally Phillips; Treas., Jan Carrington; MLD Director, Lin McGinn; WEB page, Mary Hughes; Voter Service, Bev Austin; Forums, Susan Gray.**



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF THE SPOKANE AREA  
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[WWW.LWVSPOKANE.ORG](http://WWW.LWVSPOKANE.ORG)**

**TO:**

*“The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences the public policy through education and advocacy.”*