



General Meeting

"HOUSING FIRST"
April 12 @ St.
Andrew's



JUDICIAL FORUM

March 22

5:30 pm

Moot Court Room
Gonzaga School of
Law

VOTER

LWV of the Spokane Area - Judicial Forum

Tuesday, March 22 at 5:30 pm

Gonzaga University Law School Moot Courtroom

Getting to Know Your Local Courts

Many community members have no contact with the court system until "something happens": a summons for jury duty arrives in the mail, a family member is arrested, a divorce proceeding is filed, or they are called as witnesses in a court case. Much of what we know about court we've learned - or think we've learned - by watching television. The courthouse can be an intimidating place we try to and steer clear of, yet the work of the courts can impact our lives greatly. In this forum we will attempt to break down some of the barriers that exist between the courts and the community by hearing from some of our local judges and the exciting work the courts are doing to better serve the community. The following topics will be covered by each level of court:

1. Overview of the Court
 - General court functions
 - Therapeutic courts
 - Other specialized courts e.g. juvenile, probate, etc.
2. Emerging Issues in Each Court or the Court System Generally
3. Community Involvement
 - Most court proceedings are public and can be observed - what are the most interesting calendars and what restrictions exist?
 - Are there volunteer opportunities with the court?

Please join us in getting to know your local courts and judges. After the presentation, the panelists will take questions from the audience.

Moderator - Bev Austin

Panel Members -
Spokane County Superior Court

Patricia Connelly (Patti) Wallker, Presiding Judge, Spokane County District Court
Michelle D. (Shelley) Szambelan, Presiding Judge, Spokane Municipal Court

Judicial Panel in 2013, “Mental Health and the Courts” with Judge Harold Clarke, Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich, Judge Debra Hayes, Judge Mary Logan and Police Chief Frank Straub.



Update on HB 2610

Just a quick update with some good news. HB 2610 passed out of the House last week on a party line vote of 50 yea, 43 nay. Would have been nice if it could have been supported in a bipartisan manner. From what we hear an amendment to make it applicable to Thurston County as well (may) lead to Republican opposition.

The bill is now in the Senate. The other piece of good news is that it has been set for a hearing before the Government Operations and Security Committee for next Thursday, 2/25 at 10 am. Information about the bill is at <http://app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/summary.aspx?bill=2610&year=2015> As you see there the hearing is "subject to change."

No action is requested at this time, but stay tuned!

Mary Lou Johnson

Calendar	
March	16 Board Meeting, 9 AM @ Office
	22 Judicial Panel, 5:30 @ GU's School of Law Moot Court Rm
April	12 General Meeting, 11:30 AM, "Housing First" @ Office
	26 City of Spokane; Emergency Medical Services Levy
	20 Board Meeting, 9 AM @ Office

League of Women Voters Court-Related Positions

LWV of the United States Sentencing Policy

The League's Position Statement of Position on Sentencing Policy, as Adopted by the 2012 Convention. The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

LWV of Washington Court System (1968 - 1977)

The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:

CS-1: The judicial article of the State Constitution should establish a system of courts with specific details to be determined by the legislature. (Judicial Article 1968)

CS-2: There should be a two-level trial court composed of a Superior Court and a District Court. Both should be courts of record. (Trial Courts 1977)

CS-3: The essential functions of an appellate court are to maintain uniform administration of the law, eliminate undue delay in processing appeals and to provide guidance and assistance to the lower courts. Review of Intermediate Appellate Court decisions should be at the discretion of the Supreme Court. Cases involving death penalty, life imprisonment and constitutional questions should be appealed directly from the Superior Court to the Supreme Court. Location and operation of the Intermediate Appellate Court should be flexible enough to respond to changing population and caseloads. Panels should have an uneven number of judges, preferably three but no more than five judges. Provision should be made for the rotation of judges and for the addition of new judges and panels when and where needed. (Appellate Court 1968, 1969)

CS-4: The reception and processing of cases should be simple and orderly. All cases should be determined promptly. Fair consideration should be given to each type of case. Policies, procedures and rules should be uniform throughout the state. The court systems should be designed to attract the best judicial and non-judicial officers and they should be paid accordingly. The courts should have competent supporting staff and appropriate facilities. Our court system should be flexible in order to respond to changing needs and demands of the times. (Standards 1977)

CS-5: A non-partisan nominating commission composed of both lawyers and laymen should present names of judicial candidates to the Governor for appointment. Voters should have the opportunity for periodic review of judges appointed through the nomination process. Until Washington has a merit system for selecting judges, midterm vacancies in judicial positions should be filled by Governor's appointment from a list proposed by an impartial group of lawyers and laymen. A judicial qualifications commission should be comprised of members of the judiciary, bar and non-attorney citizens and should be broad-based in representation. (Selection of Judges 1977)

Juvenile Justice (1976)

The League of Women Voters of Washington believes that:

JJ-1: Youth should be entitled to basic legal rights (notice of charges, right to confront and cross examine witnesses, privilege against self-incrimination, right to an attorney) as set down by the U.S. Supreme Court. These rights should not include the right to jury trial or to bail.

JJ-2: Basic human rights for youth should include education, health care, a stable home environment, counseling, protection from abuse and neglect and rehabilitation.

JJ-3: Society is entitled to protection of life, property and other rights as guaranteed by law, regardless of the age of the offender.

JJ-4: Juveniles should not be incarcerated for status offenses. Delinquent children may have to be incarcerated in certain cases but this should occur only when all other resources have been exhausted or when the crime is so serious that there is no other way to protect society.

JJ-5: Youth must accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions. At the same time, however, age, intellect and mental capabilities of the child must be considered. Home, school and community must share in the guidance and teaching responsibility.

JJ-6: Juveniles should not be kept in the same facilities as adults. Dependent children should not be kept in the same facilities as delinquents. (1981)

JJ-7: There should be some authority in the Juvenile Justice Law to oversee its implementation. Certain first and minor offenders should be diverted from the court system and their problems handled by the community.

JJ-8: The law should provide facilities and personnel for mentally and emotionally disturbed juveniles as well as for problems arising from alcohol and drug abuse.

LWV of the Spokane Area Administration of Justice (2000)

- A. The League of Women Voters of the Spokane Area believes that effective rehabilitation is society's best protection.
- B. We support the Spokane County Drug Court as an effective alternative to incarceration. The Drug Court has proven to be preventative, rehabilitative, and cost effective.
- C. We encourage increased financial support for drug courts from all levels of government. Funding for alternatives to incarceration should be a Legislative priority. Local government should provide funding to ensure adequate financial support for drug courts.
- D. We support the establishment of a Juvenile Drug Court as an alternative to incarceration for juvenile drug offenders.

Police Leadership Committee, Community Forum by Lin McGinn

Ann Murphy and myself, as well as one other LWVSA member, attended the "Community Forum on Police Leadership," Thursday, Jan 21, 6:30 - 8:00, at the Community Building Lobby, 35 W. Main.

The Police Citizen Leadership Commission is tasked with leading a conversation about what the community is looking for in its next police chief. The members of the Commission are: Mary Ann Murphy, Chair (Former Executive Director of Partners with Families and Children), Toni Lodge (Executive Director of The NATIVE Project), Naima Quarles-Burnley (President of the NAACP Spokane Branch #1137), Jim McDevitt (Member of the Spokane Regional Criminal Justice Commission, and General Counsel for the Spokane Airport Board), Ken Hohenberg (Kennewick (WA) Police Chief), Susan Hammond (Member of the Use of Force Commission, retired public mental health psychiatric nurse administrator and consultant), and Jon Snyder (City Council Member). *[UPDATE: McDevitt, Hohenberg and Snyder have resigned.]*

After introductions of the panel were made, there were three minute statements by the panel members and then for about 45 minutes, we broke into small groups with each forum member. They

recorded the small group member's testimony of "what we personally want in a new police chief." This input will be shared with the commission.

The committee will be tasked with three primary objectives related to the police chief search:

1. Review and make suggestions to the current police chief job description
2. Identify the attributes the community is seeking in the next police chief
3. Recommend the hiring and selection process that should be used

Separately, the committee will also provide guidance on the development of a culture audit, a recommendation of both the Use of Force Commission and the U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services. The committee will make recommendations about factors to be considered, approach, reporting and expected outcomes.

Report on Feb. General Mtg. by Sally Phillips

At the League's February general meeting, Kathy Armstrong, from Spokane Police's Office of Professional Accountability, and Internal Affairs Lieutenant Steve Braun discussed implementation of the Spokane Police Dept.'s 'collaborative' reform efforts. Unfortunately, due to a couple of mix-ups, representatives of the Police Oversight Commission did not make it to our meeting.

Points made by our Spokane Police representatives:

- Police have put in place programs to strengthen connections with the community, especially among kids who might be at risk for conflict with police. The Dept. developed an outreach program, Youth & Police Initiative, with students drawn from all area high schools. Students for the program are recommended by their school counselors. There have been 220 graduates from the program, with reunions at intervals. The program is intended to foster a good relationship between young people and the Police Dept.
- Per a reform recommendation, staff go through refresher training on how to deal with mental health and substance abusing citizens. In a partnership with Frontier Health, each officer gets four hours of in-field training, paired with a mental health professional.
- Officers must try non-lethal force on each other, so they know what it's like for citizens they are arresting.
- Officers must get training on de-escalation practices yearly.
- There is a new requirement for officers to re-certify on their weapons twice a year.
- Steve Braun talked about the disposition of complaints against officers. Contrary to appearances from newspaper reports, a very small number of officers are involved in internal affairs complaints. Currently, that is 4 officers, from a commissioned officer base of 310. Most complaints are disposed of before being investigated by Internal Affairs. Of the IA complaints, 95% are found to be without merit. Serious complaints involving criminal activity or blatant lying lead to the guilty party being separated from the force. For minor issues, an officer might be admonished with progressive discipline. This means that repeat offenses would lead to greater punishments and consistent minor infractions could lead eventually to separation from the force.
- Both Armstrong and Braun emphasized that there has been considerable turnover in the department. Last year saw the hiring of 75 officers. There is new Police Dept leadership, also a new City Attorney since the Otto Zehm incident occurred.
- If an officer has been charged with a serious infraction, he may decide to resign or retire rather than go through termination proceedings. The Police Dept can yank the former officer's certification, to prevent the separated officer from working in law enforcement elsewhere.
- Braun mentioned some elements of a discipline investigation. An accused officer gets to present his side of the story to the Chief. If an officer is charged, he is put on administrative leave, without pay.

Internal Affairs can compel statements from an accused officer, something the Ombudsman does not have the authority to do. However, 'compelled statements' can't be used in a criminal trial.

- Armstrong is working on what elements to include in a cultural audit. She has interviewed extensively to get ideas on specifics.
- Officers are 90% male, 10% female. Racial mix is 2% black, 10% hispanic, 1% Asian, 2.5% Native American.

Our group suggested making efforts to make the public aware of the disposition of officer cases that had been publicized. Also, since reports can be lengthy, it is a good idea to provide 'executive summary' information on case dispositions. The goal is to effectively inform the public on how cases are being handled, and to counteract the impression that IA will always exonerate officers.

The most controversial statement by Braun was that he was a first officer on the scene after Otto Zehm was attacked by Officer Karl Thompson. Braun indicated that he perceived Zehm to be unusually combative and uncooperative. One of our members wondered if that statement meant that the Police Dept was still not accepting wrongdoing in the arrest. Both Braun and Armstrong acknowledged that there were mistakes made and lack of transparency in the investigation of Otto Zehm's death. Note that the Dept mental health training requirement came from tragic lessons learned from Zehm's death.



Kathy Armstrong and Steve Braun at the General Meeting in February.

[Book review by Susan Gray](#)

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Ron Chernow

This book is the basis for *HAMILTON*, the hip-hop musical currently on Broadway about the life of Alexander Hamilton. Though hip-hop may seem a curious genre for a musical about the life of one of the Founding Fathers, after reading this book, I think it was a good choice. Hip-hop allows for far more words per minute than ordinary speech and Hamilton was well known in his day for the prodigious number of wordy, detailed and brilliantly-reasoned texts he frequently cranked out at short notice or under tight deadlines. In fact, today he might well be diagnosed as bi-polar, all the words pouring from his pen when under pressure; his stunningly imprudent adulterous love affair; and the many near-duels and final duel with Aaron Burr representing his manic side while his periods of gloom show the depressive side. A man of great charm with many powerful friends, among them George Washington, Hamilton also had powerful enemies in men such as Thomas Jefferson, the Virginia planter whose vision of a nation of yeoman farmers untainted by manufacture was very different from the manufacturing economy that Hamilton, with his urban perspective, was convinced was essential to making a great nation.

This story of Hamilton's improbable life and career reads like a novel, starting with his illegitimate birth into a dysfunctional family and his early years in Nevis in the West Indies, where his first job at age 15 in the office of a shipping firm of slave traders gave him a life-long aversion to slavery but also taught him about maritime issues (knowledge of which enabled him years later to establish the U.S. Coast Guard as a means to curtail smuggling), as well as introducing him to the international trade and financial accounting that showed him the way business actually "worked," shaped his own understanding of how wealth was created, and planted the seeds for his future establishment of a single national currency and a national bank.

He left Nevis for New York a few years later to study at Kings College (now Columbia University), but before he graduated the Revolutionary War broke out and he became the trusted aide and almost alter ego of George Washington. Hamilton may best be remembered as one of the Colonies' leading intellectuals primarily responsible for the replacement of the Articles of Confederation and its problematic, decentralized federation of states with the Constitution that still governs us today. Later, as the first Secretary of the Treasury under George Washington, he insisted that the national government repay its international creditors for debts incurred during the war, ensuring our future economic relationships with these countries. And by persuading the national government to absorb the war debt of the individual states, he did much to encourage the novel view that these individual states were part of a unified nation.

And yet, Hamilton is far less well-known than many of the other Founding Fathers. Reading the descriptions of all of his accomplishments and his wide-ranging genius, one thinks "He really should have been president." But that never happened. His human flaws led to the self-inflicted wounds to his reputation and political career that ended his presidential hopes, and ultimately to his untimely death in a foolish duel that need not have happened. And though we can only imagine what more he could have accomplished if only he'd been able to control some of his impulsiveness, or if only he'd been more tactful, or less human, what he did accomplish was astounding, almost single-handedly creating the political and economic systems that catapulted our country into the position of prominence we have enjoyed over the last century, and leading ultimately to the nation and the people we are today.

<p>\$70 Individual Dues: Local \$19 - State \$19 - Nat'l \$32 \$105 Household \$110 Sustaining Member \$150 Benefactor \$ 35 Scholarship (call for application) \$ 35 Student</p>

Thank You to all of the members who have renewed their League membership. We appreciate your continued support of League!

___ 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

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



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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.”