



The Kitsap

Voter

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF KITSAP

JANUARY 2022

LWVUS Mission and Vision Statements

Mission Statement:
Empowering voters.
Defending democracy.

Vision Statement:
We envision a
democracy where every
person has the desire,
the right, the
knowledge and the
confidence
to participate.

Mark Your Calendar

JANUARY

Jan. 24: Climate Solutions Committee Business meeting, 7 p.m. Zoom; Marty Bishop

Jan. 26: Bainbridge Island Unit meets, 10 a.m. Zoom; guest speaker DeWayne Pitts; Colette Crosby/Delight Willing

Jan. 26: North Kitsap Unit meets, 10 a.m. Zoom. Guest Dr. Laurynn Evens, North Kitsap School District Superintendent; Pam Hamon

FEBRUARY

Feb 1: Climate Solutions Book Club, 7 p.m. via Zoom; Kathy Campbell

Feb 2: LWVK Program Planning Day via Zoom; Maurie Louis

Feb 2: Housing Committee meets, 5 p.m. via Zoom; Rochelle Karlsen

Feb 5: LWVK Board meets, 10 a.m.
See CALENDAR on Page 6

Special Election: Feb. 8

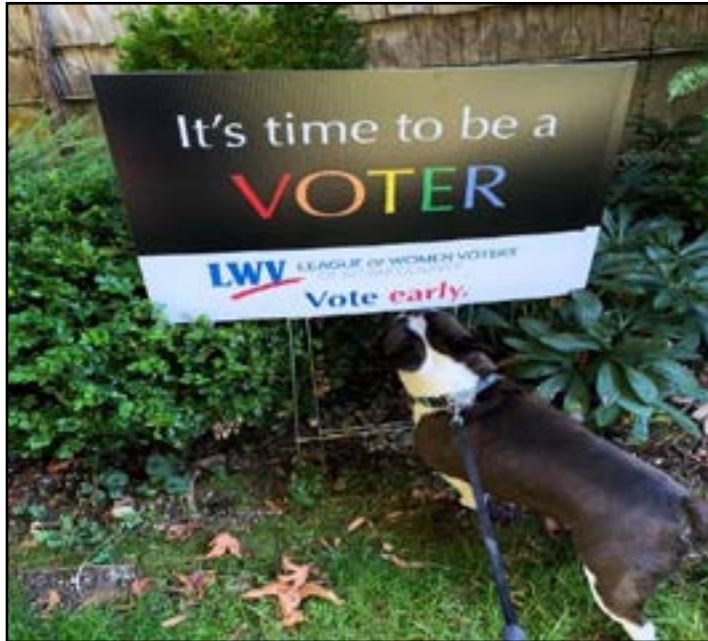


Photo by Alicia Vause

Yes, there is another election sitting on our doorstep. Every February there is a special election here in Kitsap County but this year there is an interesting twist. The race for Bremerton Council District 6 must be re-run. The results of the Nov. 2 election showed Mike Simpson won over Anna Mockler by just THREE VOTES. But this isn't the reason these two candidates are running again. Four hundred of the Nov. 2 ballots were mailed to voters who do not live in District 6. These 400 voters could very well change the outcome so the race must be run again.

In addition to this candidate race, there are four measures on the ballot. These are the Bremerton School District's "Capital Projects Replacement Levy"; the North Kitsap School District's "Education-

al Program & Operations Funding Levy" and their "Facilities and Technology Capital Projects Levy"; and the Central Kitsap School District's "Replacement School Support
See SPECIAL ELECTION on Page 3



Protect Our Right to Vote

Redistricting Form of Voter Suppression

While we live in a state where there have been no statutes passed that could suppress the vote, we have had legislative and congressional districts drawn that essentially suppress the vote for some citizens. For example, when a district is drawn so that a minority community has interests and issues that are not pertinent to the rest of the district, the individuals in the minority community may correctly find their legislators do not try to represent them, thus believe there is no reason to vote. Redistricting so that a legislator is more likely to have voters in his/her district with views similar to the legislator, and spreading out the voters who don't share these views, brings about the same result in suppressing voting as do laws that overtly suppress voting.

We can fight voter suppression by not becoming complacent about redistricting and help out where suppression exists at a profound level. If you browse some of the state and local Leagues, I think you'll be able to find places where you can help.

States' Election Laws

A strong area of focus when talking of supporting Voting Rights is the fight against Voter Suppression. Voter suppression is sometimes hard to see even though it is in plain sight. Here are just a few areas where voter suppression has and is happening. Recognizing it is the first step in fighting it. I have listed

where I got my information if you'd like to learn more.

Shelby County v. Holder (2013): Section 4 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act originally required that areas with a history of voter discrimination must get pre-approval from the Attorney General before changing any voting laws. In *Shelby v. Holder*, the Supreme Court held that Section 4 is unconstitutional. This decision has enabled these areas to change their election laws without that preapproval. "Details on *Shelby County v. Holder*: In Plain English": **SCOTUSBlog**.

New Laws in 2021: Between January 1 and September 27, 2021, at least 19 states enacted 33 laws that make it harder for Americans to vote. Restrictive laws in four states — Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, and Texas — impose new or more stringent criminal penalties on election officials or other individuals. More than 425 bills with provisions that restrict voting access were introduced in 49 states in the 2021 legislative sessions. "Voting Laws Roundup: October 2021" Brennan Center for Justice.

Changes in Election Administration: Many introduced bills would give state legislatures significant control over election administration while reducing the administrative authorities of the governor and the election boards. Georgia's "Election Integrity Act of 2021," included provisions that replaced the secretary of state as chair of the State Election Board with an appointee chosen by the legislature. The law also

See RIGHTS on Page 3

A Passion for Social Justice Drives Susan Griggs

Many know Susan Griggs from her work as Chair on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee and extensive work and reporting on redistricting. Anyone who has had the opportunity to speak with her also knows how passionate she is about social justice. Life experiences, education and training (school psychologist and pastor) equipped Susan with a desire and ability to advocate and provide support to others.

Susan's family originally from Connecticut, moved to Puerto Rico when her father accepted a position with a law firm there; and, years later, she would settle in Danbury, CT with her husband where they raised two children. Susan's siblings continue to reside in the east and Puerto Rico. While living in Connecticut, she became involved with the League of Women Voters, serving as the Membership Chair and then president.

After residing in Connecticut for 30 years, a major life event brought change. When Susan lost her husband, Ken Bailin, in a tragic accident, her son was in the process of relocating to Hawaii, and her daughter was applying to medical residency programs, moving a few months later to Seattle for the University of Washington program. Susan decided shortly thereafter to relocate out west to be closer to her children. She started a Spanish speaking congregation and served as a pastor in Wenatchee, and later went to Olympia and Winlock until eventually moving to Kitsap County.

When Susan retired in 2019, she decided to join the League of Women Voters Kitsap and continue her work in social justice. In her work with LWVK DEI, she has established relationships and been able to collaborate with many local organizations. Some of the organizations that Susan works with are Kitsap Equity, Race, And Community Engagement Coalition, Kitsap Strong, Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Cen-

ter (KIAC) and local tribes Suquamish and S'Klallam. By building relationships with these organizations and marginalized communities, DEI hopes to attract a diverse membership to the League.

Susan had just arrived in Kitsap County, joining others in the community in Poulsbo to celebrate the Fourth of July, when an altercation occurred and Native American Stonechild Chiefstick was shot and killed. This event followed by other deaths of black and brown people at the hands of police was the impetus for getting more knowledgeable about and more informed in racial equity, social justice, and criminal justice issues. This led to joining organizations that provided support to Chiefstick's family and advocated for marginalized communities.

Another of Susan's focus areas has been the redistricting process, specifically helping to educate communities, particularly those that often lack representation, to participate and give testimony to ensure their voices were heard during the redistricting efforts. More work needs to be done with the redistricting process, such as suggested by the LWVWA Census/Redistricting Issue Chair to expand the commission to 11 Commissioners, to include nonpartisan Commissioners, to improve this process. Susan felt that not all communities are equally represented in the way the legislative districts are currently drawn and would like to see that improved.

Even though Susan is busy, she finds time to read, watch a good movie and go for strolls with her beloved dog, Lockett. Lockett is an English Setter/Labrador cross that is a bit of a Houdini, which keeps Susan on her toes. When asked her favorite genres, she said she enjoyed romance, mysteries and a good biography. Susan's children now both reside in Kitsap County and she is the proud grandmother of five grandchildren.

— Catherine Freudenberg



Susab Griggs

SPECIAL ELECTION

From Page 1

for Educational Enrichment Programs and Operations.”

Those of you within the Bremerton City Council District 6, and the Bremerton, Central Kitsap and North Kitsap school districts, will vote in this election.

You should have received your Voters' Pamphlet that was mailed Jan. 10. This pamphlet includes information about the election, the candidates and the measures. If you have not yet received it, contact the Kitsap County Auditor's Office at kitsapgov.com/auditor or call 360-337-7129. Ballots will be mailed by Jan. 21.

— Maurie Louis

RIGHTS

From Page 2

empowered the state board to investigate and temporarily replace local election superintendents with appointees of its choosing, Encyclopedia Britannica.

Voter Suppression in Social Media: On social media, the most obvious forms of voter suppression include posting false information about dates, locations, and voting procedures, and those are relatively easy to combat with the proper mix of machine learning and human review. The relentless online messaging about voter fraud, mail-in ballots, and election rigging undermine trust in the electoral process or confuse voters about registration and voting procedures. “How to Combat Online Voter Suppression,” Brookings Institute.

— Maurie Louis, President LWVK

ON THE WEB

Find our local League news, meeting notices, publications, and reminders on our Facebook page or website, www.lwv-kitsap.org. Be sure to 'like' us on Facebook.

Unit News

■ **Bremerton/CK:** The Bremerton/CK Unit meets at 10 a.m. on the third Saturday of the month. The meetings are hybrid. In-person meetings are at 645 Fourth Street in Bremerton. Those wanting to join in remotely may do so via a Zoom invitation. The February

meeting will be Saturday, Feb. 19. Contact Maureen Cervinsky.

■ **South Kitsap:** The SK Unit has a new Zoom link for its monthly meetings. Contact Janet Stegemeyer for information about the new link. Unit Meeting are at 10 a.m. on the second Monday of the month via Zoom.

Help Wanted

Zoom Recordings Editing Assistance

Our League has a very simple and easy to use tool to add a short beginning and ending to the recordings of our Zoom events. Maurie Louis and Maureen Cervinsky have been doing this and would greatly appreciate help. Please consider volunteering to learn how to use the tool or to help by using a tool with which you are already familiar. Estimated commitment time — 3 hours per month. Contact Maurie Louis, maurie.louis@comcast.net.

Committee News

Climate Solutions

On Jan. 10, Martin Gibbins, LWVWA Climate Advocacy chair, talked about climate change in Washington and current climate and energy legislation. He went over several bills in the 60-minute session that will help mitigate and adapt to climate change. You can view the recording of the session on our website at lww-kitsap.org/video-recording.

The book club continues to meet on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. We are reading “How to Avoid a Climate Disaster” by Bill Gates. For information, contact Marty Bishop.

— Marty Bishop,
Co-Chair

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

DEI has held four “Voices of Kitsap County” webinars and has one more which we are planning to hold with the Indigenous Tribes in Kitsap. If there are persons who would like to help with this webinar, we welcome additional voices and assistance.

As a result of our planning for the Redistricting Public Hearings, the committee is planning to fine tune PowerPoints that were used for the Speak Up School and present a “Giving Public Testimony

101” pilot public education program to help residents testify at local City Council, County Commissioners, School Boards, and other local governmental meetings. Again, we are interested in organizing this event with help from other League members.

In addition, the DEI committee plans to invite someone from the Attorney General’s office to inform Leaguers and interested residents on the Open Meetings Act. It is important that residents hold our government officials accountable and help them follow the state laws.

The DEI Committee also plans to invite individuals from some of the organizations that are active in equity in the county to its meetings to share what they are working on and to determine how the committee can advocate for equity in the county and state. We are planning to invite individuals from the Educational Task Force of the Kitsap Equity, Race, and Community Engagement Coalition to our February meeting.

Since the regular time for our February meeting is at the same time as our LWVK Program Planning Day, we hope to have our next meeting the following Wednesday, Feb. 9. As we plan to have guests, we will coordinate with those guests as to when they could join us before we settle on the firm

time and date. Contact Susan Griggs, susan.griggs0803@gmail.com for information.

— Susan Griggs, Chair

Early Childhood

The committee has continued its work on the power point presentation. We also are continuing to distribute our bookmarks and to research new ways to reach out to the population most in need of parenting help. During this new legislative session, we will keep an eye on legislation that might benefit or conversely be harmful to new parents and the agencies that seek to support them. We would appreciate help from League members in distributing bookmarks. (Thank you to Sue Hughes for including them in packets for Pendleton Place residents.) And if League members have an interest in helping to promote early learning, we would welcome them to our committee.

— Rosalind Renouard,
Co-Chair

Housing Committee

The Kitsap County Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the 1/10th of 1% sales and use tax increase for affordable housing and related services on Jan. 10. This tax increase supported by the LWVK amounts to \$17.00 annually per resident and will be leveraged to increase overall

revenues. The Commissioners are heavily leaning toward establishing a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) similar to the behavioral tax CAC to review proposals submitted by the community and make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners for funding. The Commissioners will grant monies strategically and carefully monitor funded projects to ensure promised outcomes are achieved.

— Sue Hughes

Planning Committee

The Planning Committee hosted Kitsap County Treasurer Meredith Green to discuss her opposition to SB 5188 (Public Banking). Ms. Green has twenty-five years of accounting experience having worked for Ernst & Young, before being elected to public office. During our discussion, Ms. Green expressed her opinion that a public bank is a risky use of taxpayer funds and finding competent staff to manage this program is very expensive. She also stated that, as of her last reading of the proposed legislation, the state contribution to the funding has been eliminated. The discussion was recorded and can be found on our website-, lww-kitsap.org. Contact Robin Muir for information, sumuirhom@gmail.com.

— Robin Muir, Chair

President's Corner

Food for Inspiration

As we all know, we are a volunteer organization made up of members who don't get paid for the work we do. This means we (thankfully) don't have a boss that can threaten to give us a poor performance evaluation followed by a pay cut if we don't perform. We don't have a salary to use as a leverage to get membership engagement. But that's OK. For more than 100 years, the League has accomplished an enormous amount without being an organization that has money to use as either a carrot or a stick. How was that possible? As far as I can guess it was done primarily using words.

Words have been used to inspire for centuries. But, you know, I think the words are getting old. I don't think they are actually being heard any more. Perhaps



Maurie Louis

we can think of some other tools to use to inspire.

How about food? I can get very inspired if offered ice cream. I remember baking chocolate chip cookies at 7:00 in the morning to bring to work meetings. It became known that freshly baked cookies were served at all of my meetings. It worked. It inspired those who needed to be there to be there and contribute. We know words can be used to inspire and cookies can be used to inspire. How about fun? Can fun be used to inspire? I think it could be said that anticipating fun can inspire one to go to where the fun is happening. So, ways to inspire include money, which we don't have, words which are getting old, food which works for me, and fun which I think works. How about we each think about what inspires us and how can we use that, along with food or fun, to inspire member engagement. For me, it's ice cream and M&Ms. What is it for you?

— Maurie Louis, LWVK President

Honor MLK With Action to Protect Voting Rights

It's traditional at this time of year to honor the work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. We celebrate his birthday with a national holiday on the third Monday of January. But this year, the League of Women Voters joins with Dr. King's family to focus on action on voting rights with the call, "No celebration without legislation."

Dr. King worked tirelessly for the right of all citizens to vote. In his time, prospective Black voters had to face onerous poll taxes, literacy tests and intimidation just to cast a ballot in some locales. In our time, just last year, 19 states passed 34 laws restricting voting access. These laws make voting by mail more difficult, reduce the number of ballot drop boxes, shorten early voting times and reduce the number of polling places. More restrictive laws are expected this year as state legislatures convene.



Ann Strosnider

Even after the horrifying Jan. 6 attack on the US Capitol in a failed attempt to disrupt the peaceful transfer of power, we continue to see efforts to sabotage our elections with fear, disinformation and threats of violence. Elected officials and citizen volunteers have endured death threats simply for trying to carry out safe and secure elections.

We urge the Senate to change its rules if necessary to pass the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Both pieces of legislation are vital to ensuring that all eligible citizens have the right to vote in the United States. Both have already been passed by the US House of Representatives.

The Freedom to Vote Act would make Election Day a federal holiday, ban partisan congressional maps, reduce waiting lines at polls, expand mail-in voting and prevent partisan

officials from interfering in election administration. The John Lewis VRAA would restore the voting rights act of 1965, address modern discrimination tactics like poll closures and ensure that all voters — regardless of where they live, what they look like or what language they speak — have equal access to the ballot.

As President Biden said during his speech urging the Senate to pass the voting rights bills, "Jim Crow 2.0 is about two insidious things: voter suppression and election subversion. It's no longer about who gets to vote; it's about making it harder to vote. It's about who gets to count the vote and whether your vote counts at all."

To combat such totalitarian tactics, the Senate needs to get its act together and pass the voting rights bills.

— Ann Strosnider

past co-president, LWVK

Note: This op-ed piece was published in the Jan. 16 edition of the Kitsap Sun.

League of Women Voters
of Kitsap County, WA
P.O. Box 1524
Poulsbo, WA 98370



JANUARY 2022 Voter

In this issue:

- ▶ Special Election in February
- ▶ Protecting Our Right to Vote
- ▶ Introducing League Member
- ▶ President's Corner
- ▶ Voters' Rights Op-Ed
- ▶ Committee News

CALENDAR

From Page 1

via Zoom; Susan Griggs (Tentative Scheduled)

Feb 12: Healthcare Committee meets, 12:30 p.m. via Zoom; Leni Skarin/Jessica Guidry

Feb 14: SK Unit meets, 10 a.m. via Zoom; Janet Stegemeyer

Feb 14: Voter Services committee meets, 2 p.m. via Zoom; Alicia Vause/Colette Crosby

Feb 14: Climate Solutions Committee meets, 7 p.m. via Zoom; Marty Bishop

Feb 15: "0 to 3" Committee meets, 10 a.m. via Zoom; Rosalind Renouard

Feb 15: Climate Solutions Book Club, 7 p.m. via Zoom; Kathy Campbell

Missed a Program? Find It on Our Website

Sometimes we want to participate in a LWVK presentation or other event but have a conflict. Here's the answer to that dilemma! Click on our website, lwv-kitsap.org, for a list of recorded meetings, speaker events and more. For example, our County Treasurer and League member, Meredith Green, recently spoke with the Central Kitsap/Bremerton unit on the controversial issue of creating a public bank. This talk was taped and is on our website. Additionally, you can read Observer Corp submissions online. Be in the know and take advantage of this website feature.

— Carol Larsen

LWV Kitsap Committees and Current Chairs

Climate Change Solutions — Anita Rose and Marty Bishop;
ineedarose2@gmail.com; martyl.bishop@gmail.com

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion — Susan Griggs; susan.griggs0803@gmail.com

Early Childhood Education (0-3) — Rosalind Renouard; rrenouard@msn.com

Healthcare — Leni Skarin and Jessica Guidry; leniskarin@gmail.com;
jessicafguidry@hotmail.com

Housing — Rochelle Karlsen; sailorrochelle@gmail.com

Legislative Issue Liaison — Martha Burke; mburke2007@aol.com

Membership — Carol Larsen; clarsen88@gmail.com

Nominating — Sue Hughes; suhughes111@comcast.net

Program Planning — Robin Muir; sumuirhom@gmail.com

Publicity — Rochelle Karlsen; sailorrochelle@gmail.com

Voter Services — Colette Crosby and Alicia Vause; colettecrosby@gmail.com;
aliciavotes@gmail.com

Voter Editor — Sue Hughes; suhughes111@comcast.net