

# League of Women Voters/Mason County Annual Retreat

## Submitted by Linda Steffen

League of Women Voters of Mason County via Zoom

August 7, 2020 11:30 am - 2:15 pm

Annual Retreat

Presidents Amy Davis and Karen Herr

Hosted by Lynn Busacca

Attending: Amy Davis, Karen Herr, Lynn Busacca, Deanne Kline, Pat Carpenter, Lynda Lynks, Linda Steffen, Sherry Dysart, Michelle Bell, Carol Butkus, Polly Hankin, Cindy Shotts, Cheryl Williams, Jonnel Anderson, Linda Woytowich

Amy Davis reported on her work over the last two months collecting signatures in support of the Home Rule Charter Initiative to significantly change our county's governmental authority and management. If the Initiative receives sufficient valid signature it will be included on the November ballot. She thanks all who helped her. She reported that many people who signed spoke of their support for giving people in Mason County a greater say in how their government is run and financed. Young people, age 16+ were very interested. And Amy was able to share with registered voters who asked that those with felonies on record could vote.

Cheryl Williams reported on the 2020 Candidate Forums and provided information on outcome of the August primary election. In October, 2020 the League may co-host a second forum for the candidates in the 6th and 10th Congressional Districts. It was also suggested that LWVMC sponsor a forum for candidates for the 35th State Legislative House of Representatives elected positions on TV Mason County in October, 2020.

Michelle Bell reported on Voter Services. Registering voters is difficult and complex to do following Public Health Standards aimed at stemming the virus during the COVI-19 Pandemic. She reported successful ideas, such as using school parking lots, assuring the homeless and those with unstable housing that they can register to vote using any location in the county and a General Delivery Post Office Box at the USPS Shelton Post Office. Brainstorming continued on ways to access data for registered voters who had not voted in the last election and sending those specific voters reminder cards.

Sherri Dysart reported on some of the work of the Climate Change Committee. She recommended that the Mission Statement be changed to recognize the connection between racism and environmental justice. She defined environmental justice as the involvement of all people with regard to environmental laws and regulations pointing out that the Congressional House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis said that environmental justice must be at the center of any policy developed. The Climate Change Committee also sees a connection between racism, poverty, climate change and inequality. Reducing poverty by addressing climate change can have measurable positive impact. The WA State Poverty Reduction Plan was published 1/20/2020 and is an interagency collaboration between the State's Department of Commerce, Social and Health Services and Employment Security. Sherri highlighted the work of Dr. Ayana Johnson's Ocean Collective, the Climate Checklist, and the Urban Ocean Lab. She also reported that she has found direct connections between Adverse Childhood Events (ACES), Immigration/Immigrants and refugee needs, racism and anti-racist activities and climate change. The October, 2020 Program Meeting will address this issue as it relates to ACE's scores. She will also contact Ellen Shortt Sanchez from Elevate Mission.

The Climate Change Committee has identified eight areas that could be topics for climate change and environmental justice. They feel that carbon usage and output are the most important. Local Commissioner Shutty is in support of the Goldsborough Creek Restoration Project and Sherri asked whether he would work with the LWVMC on how the League could become a major player. Hillary Franz will be the guest speaker at our September 15, 2020 General Membership Meeting. It was suggested that Sherri talk to the Commissioners about the Gravel Pit Mine in Allyn and also Mohegan Renewable - a pellet producing company expressing interest in location to Shelton - two separate issues relating to environmental health. Sherri would like questions to have when she talks to the Commissioners. The October General membership meeting will be on ACE's and the effects of COVID-19 on school children - speaker TBA.

Amy Davis mentioned that the Letters to the Editor are a good non-partisan response to environmental issues and concerns. She suggested that with the advent of Black Lives Matter in the news and the League's interest in racial justice, along with the effect of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations, we should reach out to black women candidates as possible speakers via Zoom. We should use this alternate medium in these challenging times to expand our outreach, especially when speakers are no longer required to travel.

Cindy Shotts reported on the Centennial Committee. She said the

Committee is working hard to complete their Centennial Project honoring seven women of Mason County. The Committee has selected Ethel Dalby, Georgiana Miller and Anne Pavel - together a mother and daughter, and Clara Eastwood as the final 3. The project consists of 14 posters, a Power Point presentation which includes the 8 women, and a digital handout. They plan to display the posters at the Mason County Historical Museum; present the Power Point; and share the Power Point and digital booklet on our web page, and at least one other local organization's web page.

They have requested a six-month extension for the grant from the Mason County Historical Preservation Commission because the Museum and library have been closed. The final grant report will be done in February 2021, so that they can present the final 3 women at the December meeting.

Additional funds were requested for the project to compensate Linda Woytowich for her many extra hours of work to design the Power Point presentation and the booklet. The grant will provide \$500 and the League is matching that; but they requested an additional \$500. Cindy Shotts moved that we add \$500 to the 2020-21 budget in the "Special Events Initiatives" line which brings the total to \$1000. The motion was seconded and carried.

Lynn Busacca wants to strengthen our existing membership by getting people more involved and taking on leadership roles. We discussed the reason we initially connected with the LWVMC and how we became more active and involved. It was suggested we look at ways to diversify our membership more and take advantage of people who are already actively involved within our community. Amy suggested that we do a Leauie 101 Power Point to reach new people. Also, by sending advocacy items to many community groups we can expand our impact.

#### Calendar

August 13, Climate Change Committee Meeting  
September 4, 2020 Executive Board Meeting  
September 15, 2020 General Membership Meeting Program, Hillary Franz, Washington Commissioner of Public Lands  
September 22, 2020 National Voter Registration Day  
October 2, 2020 Executive Board Meeting  
October, 2020 Candidate Forums, both Congressional Districts 6 and 10. and 35th District State House of Representative Offices  
October 20, 2020 General Membership Meeting, Environmental Health  
November 3, 2020 Presidential Election

