



VOLUME LXXXVII ISSUE 8, August 1, 2023

*A printable version of The Voter will be available at [LWVSpokane.org](http://LWVSpokane.org)*

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## **From the President**

**Jean Richardson**

### **Democracy from the Ground Up**

As you will read elsewhere in this issue of The Voter, we are starting our series of general membership meetings in September with a conversation a popular discussion protocol that helps us consider the many things our mission means to each of us and the many ways of looking at that mission: *Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.*

Considering this democracy we defend, you may well be familiar with the quote attributed to Winston Churchill that democracy is the worst form of government — except for all the others. As Barack Obama said as he was leaving office, "...citizen is the most important role in government." Odds are, he wasn't the first to observe this.

**The problems of modern life perennially make it difficult to be an engaged citizen.** And, no matter how much we might want to make a difference or prevent what we might see as one impending social or political disaster or another, the house must be cleaned, the car must be taken to the mechanic, the old, the young, and the sick must be cared for — and the thousand other little tasks that seem to make up our lives simply must be done. Civic engagement seems to be one of those things that we put off until retirement — like reading Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past* — in French, of course — writing a novel, learning to weave, or travelling to far-flung museums we've always meant to see.

I have spent much of my life as a consultant. I've worked in a field that values deep democracy, self-governance, and freedom and accountability in the workplace. I remember teaching a short class to a work team at a client's offices about how the team could manage its own work and make more of its own decisions thereby having a greater influence on its own future when one very disgruntled employee spoke up and said, "I don't know why we're wasting our time on this. I could be working! We have people for this, and those people are called managers." After 9-11 many of my colleagues had a similar kind of feeling. Many of us felt we'd elected people to run the world for us while we ran our lives and pursued our careers. We were stunned to discover that they weren't necessarily running it as we had thought they were.

**Given a huge complex problem to grapple with, generally speaking, it doesn't make sense to go it alone if you have the choice.** There's a saying attributed to an African tribe — perhaps someone will know the source for this — "If you want to go fast, travel alone. If you want to go far, travel together." A country has a need to go far.

Your local League presents an opportunity to build a network of other civically engaged persons so you have companions on the road. You don't have to know everything about all the things because,

while you have deep knowledge in city planning and the social effects of the built environment, you also care about affordable housing. You don't have to know all about affordable housing because when you need to vote or advocate in that space, you can catch up over coffee with Jill who knows more about affordable housing than anyone in town.

You care about reproductive rights, but the issues are proliferating so fast there — and maybe your thinking has evolved with the living of your life, but you know Amelia has a deep background in those issues so you and Jill meet her for brunch after church because Jill needs to catch up on those issues as well. Over brunch, Jill and Amelia get into a deep discussion about how housing for immigrant families impacts teenage pregnancy rates among second-generation immigrants, and you all share articles about a couple of local officials' public actions related to housing for recent immigrants. I think you get my drift.

Clearly, you are too busy to do much, but you decide to include yourself in a League tabling event at a local festival for a couple of hours or help out with a voter registration event. There you meet a new friend and catch with an old friend who just moved back to Spokane and dropped by the table to find out about how to update her voter registration before the next election.

The funny thing about democracy is that **the only thing that really drives true democracy is constituent participation**. Otherwise, you end up with something more like a corporation where a management class forms and directs the lives of the non-management class. That tends to evolve into an autocracy or sometimes an oligarchy — which is different than a democracy, of course.

My work requires me to be autodidactic. I have spent over 30 years learning for a living. And there is no way I can keep up on all the issues. It's hard enough to sort the real information from the mere tripe. But when I need to understand something so I can make a decision about it, I generally know a person or two I can talk it over with. I consider myself impoverished if I don't.

A good conversation is a developmental process engaged in by two or more people. My father saw people as living books and was uncommon among men in his generation in my experience in that he enjoyed conversation with people of all ages, cultures, and classes. Conversation was meat

and drink to him. Through something as simple as dinner table conversation, we can understand a new idea or issue or evolve our own thinking — and thereby enrich our lives. We build bridges through such conversations and go places we'd never thought we'd go.

Because my father had a tremendous curiosity about the world, and he could not read, conversation was his primary doorway to new ideas. I remember watching him talking with people to understand how they lived and how they saw the world. I remember him (a tall man of 6'5") sitting on the kitchen counter next to the radio where he had turned down the volume because he had called in and was talking to the talk show host expounding on how he saw things. When driving with the radio on, we all had to hush up when Paul Harvey was on to tell us *That's the Way It Is* !

**Over the remainder of the year, you'll see opportunities to learn and try new skills in dialogue and exploration of ideas and issues. The next general membership meeting will be one of those times.** Include yourself for an evening or a couple of hours. Meet some people. Share some ideas, and continue on as a volunteer in some capacity if it suits you. Or just take up the treasures you gather that evening and head on home: You'll have something different to think about while you clean the kitchen.

*I'll see you around! - Jean*

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## General Membership Meeting

### **What Does Our Mission Mean to You?**

***Discussion facilitated by Jean Richardson, President***

In our September meeting we will use a new facilitation model known as **1-2-4-All** to think and talk together about what our mission means to us.

**Please feel free to do a little writing or thinking about our mission (*Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.*) in advance.** There will be some time for writing at the meeting if you don't have time before.

After writing, we will talk together in pairs about what we each think and feel about the mission. Next, the groups of pairs will form groups of four to share ideas. Each group will choose a speaker to share that group's best ideas with the whole room. This format allows all the great ideas you bring to come into the room.

**Please include yourself on September 12 th.**

NOTE: We hope to have a special guest at the beginning of the meeting to talk about a nonprofit she formed to help Spokane solve its most challenging social problems. Her story is a great example of how 1, 2, 4, or a larger group can come together to make a difference.

**September 12, 2023**

**5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.**

Shadle Park Library  
2111 W Wellesley Avenue  
Spokane, WA 99205  
509 444 5300

To attend via Zoom please R.S.V.P. to Jean Richardson at [LWVSALeadership@gmail.com](mailto:LWVSALeadership@gmail.com)

***LWV Spokane Area Luncheon!***

Friday, August 11, 2023

12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Perkins Restaurant & Bakery**

12 E Olive Avenue, Spokane, WA 99202

Just south of the Division Street Bridge

509 747 9111

**R.S.V.P. to Jean Richardson**

Text: 503-788-8998

Email: [jean@azuregate.net](mailto:jean@azuregate.net)

**Interested in Volunteering?**

**WHO DO YOU CALL?**

**Contact the individuals below to participate in events and on Committees:**

**Affordable Housing**

**Sherri Gangitano**

**[LWVSAAHHS@gmail.com](mailto:LWVSAAHHS@gmail.com)**

**Communications**

**Jean Richardson**

**[LWVSALeadership@gmail.com](mailto:LWVSALeadership@gmail.com)**

**Environmental Issues   Amy Compestine   [acomp4274@gmail.com](mailto:acomp4274@gmail.com)**

**Voter Services   Elaine Harger   [eharger@drizzle.com](mailto:eharger@drizzle.com)**

## **Interested in Leadership ?**

**Not sure what is a good fit for your skills and schedule?**

**Contact Jean Richardson and get your questions answered.  
503 788 8998   [LWSAleadership@gmail.com](mailto:LWSAleadership@gmail.com)**

### **Board of Directors**

**President:   Jean Richardson**  
**Vice President:   Pamela Joyner**  
**Treasurer:   Mike Bell**  
**Secretary:   Carol Lander-McVicker**  
**Director:   Lin McGinn**  
**Director:   Elaine Harger**

### **July Board Meeting**

**Wednesday, July 19, 2023    4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. on Zoom**

The meeting was called to order on Zoom by President Jean Richardson. Board members present were Jean Richarson, President; Pamela Joyner, Vice President; Carol Landa-Mcvicker, Secretary; Elaine Harger, Voter Services and Lin McGinn, Director.

**1. Board Staffing**

- Lori Ritchie has resigned as Communications Chair.
- We are in need of a Communications Chair, Membership Chair, Action Chair and Criminal Justice Chair. Please contact Jean Richardson if interested.**

2. Mike Bell, Treasurer, was on vacation, but reported there are not changes to the budget. The decision on whether to continue banking with STCU was tabled to the next meeting.
3. It was decided that the **75 th Anniversary Celebration will be held in 2025** in accordance with the certificate that is on the wall in the office indicating that the LWV of Spokane Area was formed on February 28, 1950.
4. It was decided not to renew membership in NAWSA.

**Other Business**

1. **Beth Pellicciotti, LWV of Washington**, was interviewed by the Spokesman Review for an article on youth voting. *(Click here to read the [article.](#))*
2. Several organizations have approached us on Candidate Forums to be held in conjunction with the General Election. **Elaine Harger** will coordinate these.
3. Locations for future General meetings are still being explored including The Women’s Club, the Community Colleges, and City Libraries.



4. Our participation in **Vote411** was briefly discussed and **Elaine Harger** will report back at the next Board meeting.

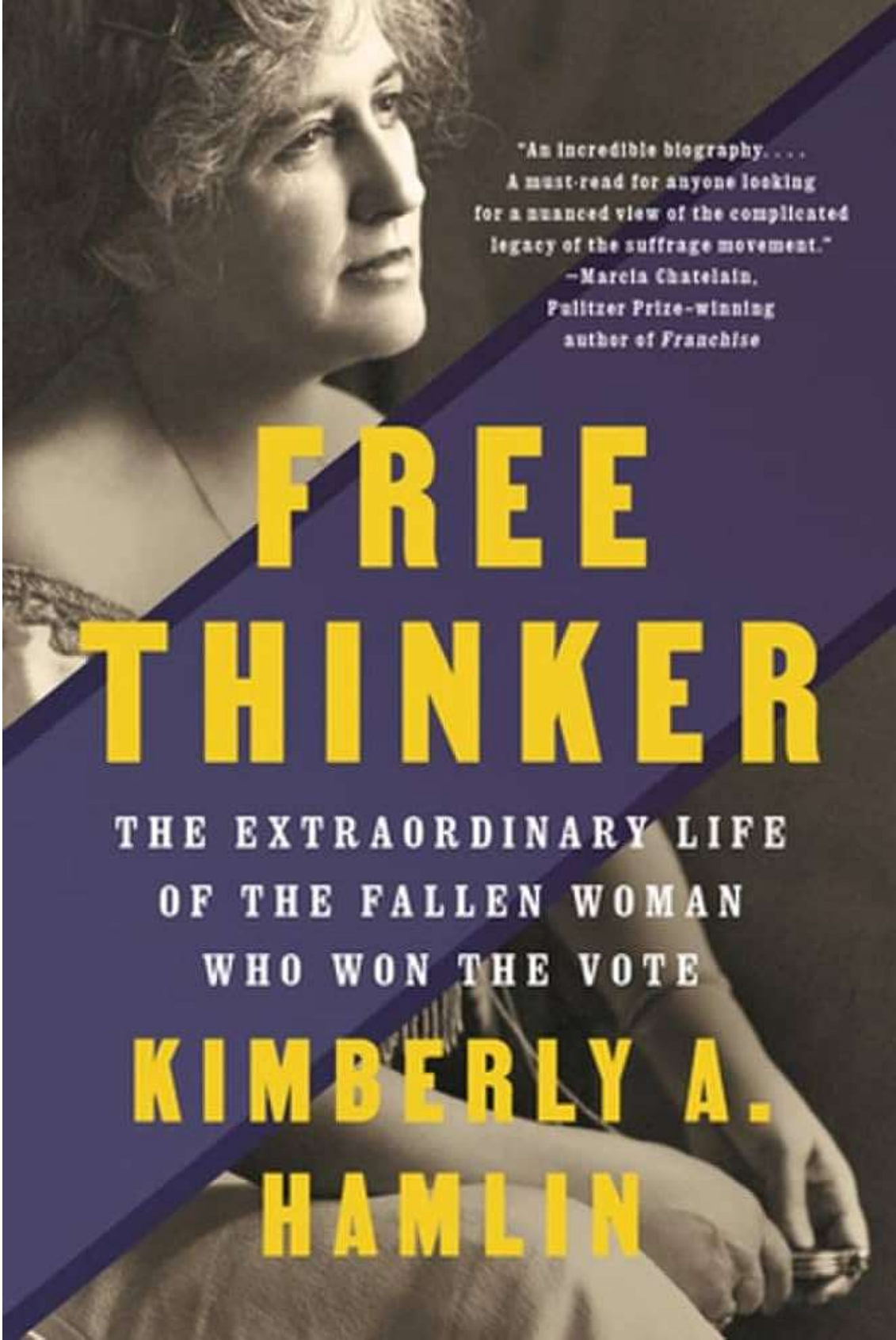
5. It was decided that the **September General Membership meeting, will be held on September 12, 2023, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Shadle Park Library.** The topic for discussion will be ***What Does Our Mission Mean to You?*** facilitated by Jean Richardson.

**For more details regarding the July Board meeting, please contact Carol Landa-McVicker at [cj\\_99224@yahoo.com](mailto:cj_99224@yahoo.com).**

As always, LWV Spokane Area members are welcome and encouraged to attend Board meetings held every third Wednesday from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm. These meetings are virtual on Zoom.

**Next Board meeting will be a Zoom meeting at 4 p.m. on August 16, 2023 .** Please R.S.V.P. to [LWVSALeadership@gmail.com](mailto:LWVSALeadership@gmail.com) if you'd like to attend a BOD meeting and we will send you the Zoom link.

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"An incredible biography. . . .  
A must-read for anyone looking  
for a nuanced view of the complicated  
legacy of the suffrage movement."

—Marcia Chatelain,  
Pulitzer Prize-winning  
author of *Franchise*

# FREE THINKER

THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE  
OF THE FALLEN WOMAN  
WHO WON THE VOTE

KIMBERLY A.  
HAMLIN

## **Lobbying: "Everybody Reads" Book Club & Field Trip**

**What better lead-in to Lobby Day 2024 in Olympia than to read an engaging biography of the woman who lobbied President Wilson and Congress to win women the right to vote?**

**LWV Spokane Area members are invited to join other curious League members in reading the book *Free Thinker: The Extraordinary Life of the Fallen Woman Who Won the Vote*, by Kimberly A. Hamlin (W.W. Norton & Co. 2020).**

A facilitator will guide the discussion and we hope to meet twice in the fall; once to talk among ourselves, and again to Zoom with the author. The Voter will keep you informed about upcoming dates.

**This biography of Helen Hamilton Gardner is a fascinating exploration of an outspoken individual who was both a trailblazer and a close-minded product of the times in which she lived (1853-1925).** Hamlin gives us a close examination of a woman whose early mission to expose the hypocrisy of sexual double-standards in 19th century U.S. evolved and later turned to advocating for women's right to vote, while excluding black women from the circles in which she was active. Hamlin, a feminist historian and faculty member at Miami University of Ohio, is also a member of the LWVUS board of directors.

**Our discussion of the book will focus primarily on Gardner's work as a lobbyist on behalf of the 19th Amendment.** What were her strengths and weaknesses? What difference did it make that she was more than 60 when she began this work? How did factionalism within the suffrage movement move the debate? How might this history inform our present political climate? What impact did Gardner's work have on the League's nonpartisan stance?

What lessons about lobbying might one learn that will help us when we go to Olympia?!

**For those who want to extend reading about lobbying to actually taking action, tentative plans include:**

- Fall - LWV Spokane Area members meeting others who want to have “get acquainted” visits with their legislators (Districts 3, 4, 6, 7, 9) in Spokane.
- December - Action Workshop focused on League interests in the 2024 legislative session.
- February - an excursion to Olympia and have either an in-person or a virtual visit to legislators in early 2024.

***Sound interesting?***

Get yourself a copy of the book, either from the library or your favorite bookstore and start reading! **Conversations about the book will take place later in the fall, so you’ve plenty of time.**

**For more information contact Lunell Haught at [LH1@fastmail.com](mailto:LH1@fastmail.com).**

Also, check out this website: <https://www.kimberlyhamlin.com/author/writing/free-thinker/>

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## Voter Services

**Elaine Harger, Chair**

July's Voter Services activities included three requests for assistance in organizing candidate forums for the primary elections. Since the requests came at short notice, LWV Spokane will instead work on forums for the general election.

The requests came from **Medical Lake** for the school board election, **Southside Senior Center** for the mayoral election in Spokane, and from **Spokane Public Library** for an as yet unspecified candidate forum. After the primary elections are over, plans will begin to be made on all fronts.

**The League of Women Voters has long been highly regarded for our candidate forums**, and although the current political climate has caused some problems in ensuring balanced representation at forums, certainly we can find ways to bring candidates for elected office into the public arena for productive and informative dialogue.

On July 24 th, **Linda Milsow, Babs Velategui, Sally Phillips and I** registered several new citizens to vote at the naturalization ceremony that took place in Spokane Valley at Centerplace. What an event! This was my first time attending a naturalization ceremony, and it was both interesting and moving.

**Eighty-seven people from thirty-five different countries became citizens that day**, and the presiding judge spoke eloquently of the U.S. as a country of immigrants. One woman told me her

daughter-in-law had been on her journey to citizenship since 2007 !

Families and friends gathered in Centerplace’s big hall to celebrate with flowers, chocolates, photos, and even a bouquet of LGBTQ+ flags. One thing I learned — the oath of naturalized citizens contains no mention of the rights and responsibilities of citizens to vote ! What’s with that?

**Questions? Interested in helping? Contact Elaine at [eharger@drizzle.com](mailto:eharger@drizzle.com) or 509 893 8862.**



## AHHS - Affordable Housing and Homelessness Solutions

The Affordable Housing and Homeless Solutions Committee is on summer hiatus. We did receive a report regarding the July Homeless Coalition.

**Arielle Anderson, Spokane Housing Authority**, spoke on the recent changes for Permanent Supportive Housing PBV.

**Julie Garcia, Jewels Helping Hands**, and **Ami Manning, SLIHC**, offered a PowerPoint presentation, *Beyond Camp Hope*. They provided data which showed the positive outcomes from the efforts of the advocates and the hard work of the residents who were able to move onto permanent housing.

**Gavin Cooley, Spokane Unite**, shared with the Coalition the responses and reactions since the organization unrolled their plan for a regional response to homelessness. Many of the regional representatives still have many questions and concerns. Gavin encouraged the audience to contact

municipal and county government officials and voice their support for a regional authority to tackle the homeless and housing crisis.

Our committee has learned that many of the candidates for city positions are concerned about how to finance a regional authority and how the staff from the different government bodies will be transitioned to a regional authority. Many questions remain, but our committee and many of the advocates will quickly remind voters the current plan isn't working.

**Our committee will next meet on August 27, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.** If you would like to attend, send an email to [LWVSAAHHS@gmail.com](mailto:LWVSAAHHS@gmail.com) for a Zoom link.

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## Environmental Issues

Amy Compestine, Chair

### The Enviro Team Needs Your Stories & Book Recs!

**An effort is underway to celebrate the 50 th anniversary of Expo '74**, the world's fair that occurred in Spokane in the spring/summer of 1974. **Matt Santangelo, former Hoopfest director**, is organizing the celebrations which will take place next year



beginning on May 4, 2024, and culminating on July 4, 2024.

Community groups, municipal agencies, non-profits and individuals have been brought in to help and are organized into five subcommittees: Environment, Recreation, Native Tribes, Arts and Culture, and Legacy. Each subcommittee will be responsible for planning and conducting one event each week during the nine weeks of the celebration.

The main theme of Expo '74 focused on the environment and concerns at that time regarding pollution and what was then referred to as the greenhouse effect (global warming/climate change).

**Members of the Environmental Issues Committee of the LWV Spokane Area are active in the Expo '74@50 Environment subcommittee.** In considering what the LWVSA might bring to the Expo '74@50 celebration, we think a community-wide book club (such as SCLD's "Spokane is Reading") would be an excellent way to bring community members together to engage in conversations regarding the climate crisis and what ordinary people can do in regard to it.

The Environmental Issues committee is gathering book recommendations for this purpose. **We are looking for fiction or non-fiction books for a broad audience** (YA and adults) that focus on some aspect of the climate crisis, including actions to address climate change.

**Please send any book recommendations to Elaine Harger at [Eharger@drizzle.com](mailto:Eharger@drizzle.com)**

Also, the folks organizing [Expo '74@50](#) are interested in videotaping people telling short stories about how Expo '74 impacted them personally or how it impacted community efforts in some way.



Maybe you know someone who has a story, or perhaps you have your own story to tell. These would be relatively short and part of a video loop playing regularly during the expo celebration.

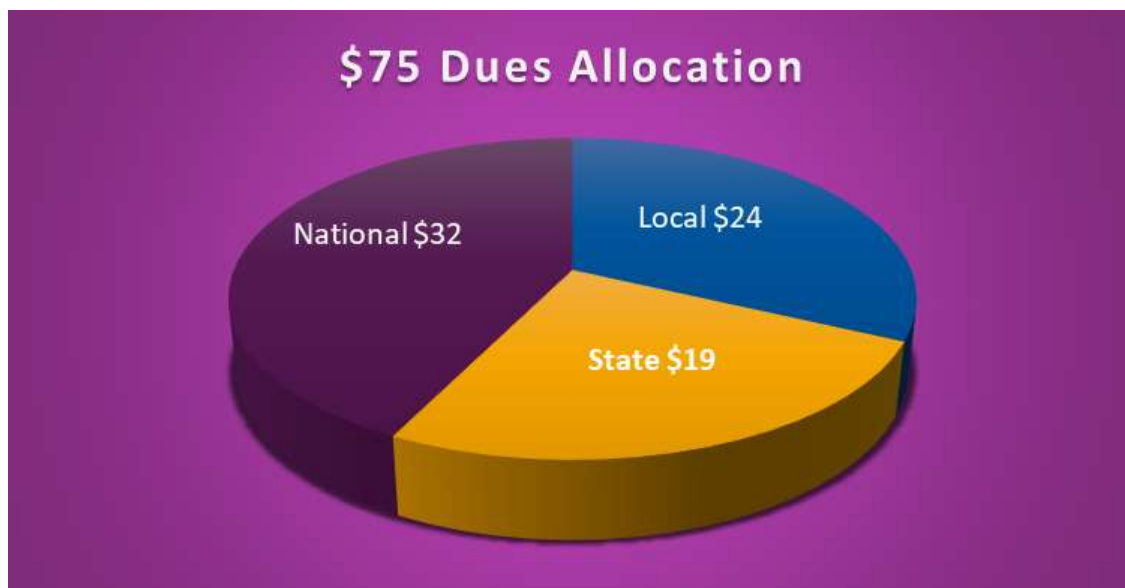
If you have a story to share, please email Pamela Joyner at [joynerpam@gmail.com](mailto:joynerpam@gmail.com)

**CORRECTION:** In the July 2023 issue of The Voter, we neglected to give credit to **Rebecca MacMullan** who authored that month's column for the Environmental Issues Committee. Please accept our sincere apologies Rebecca. Thank you for your well written contribution!

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**Join the League of Women Voters of Spokane Area**

[Join or Renew Online](#)



# Calendar



**August 11, 2023 - LWV Spokane Area League Luncheon 12:00 p.m. at Perkins on Division**

**August 16, 2023 - LWV Spokane Area Board of Directors Meeting 4:00 p.m. on Zoom**

**August 27, 2023 - Affordable Housing Committee Meeting 5:30 p.m. on Zoom**

## **NEXT MONTH:**

**September 12, 2023 - General Membership Meeting Shadle Park Library & Zoom 5:00 p.m.**



### **Need a Member Directory?**

A printable pdf of the most recent issue of the member directory can be found on the [Members Only page](#) of [LWVSpokane.org](http://LWVSpokane.org).

If you're not able to access the directory, please email [LWVSACommunications@gmail.com](mailto:LWVSACommunications@gmail.com) and we will send you one.

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