

April 2nd – LWVWA State Workshop on “Empty Chair Debate”. This is a statewide problem – candidates do not respond to requests to participate in forums and League requires candidates from all parties to be present before a forum with questions to the candidate can be held.

April 23rd LWVWA State Forum “How to get word out” to candidates and voters.

Sign-up is on the LWV Mason County and LWV WA websites.

3.4 Observer Corps

Cindy S.& Lynda L.

Cindy S -

Focus on local officials and meetings / sunshine laws – important to observe local meetings.

The Observer Corps workgroup will reconvene this month to continue our work and set up a schedule for member training and activities. Lynda L reported that the Mason County Commission is holding a public meeting for comments on the Belfair Sewer Expansion on Zoom on Apr. 5 at 6 PM. Members are encouraged to attend and can access the link on the Mason County website.

3.5 Member Services

Lynn B.

Three new members including Chris Mason from Seattle, who is attending this meeting.

We are always taking new members.

3.6 Programs

Amy D. & Lynda L.

Amy D

April 19 –Possible program: Holly Jones – Dean of Students at Evergreen College

May 17 Possible program: Law enforcement or “Project Democracy”

June 7 In Person at Harmony Hill: Possible Program: Mark Neary, County Administrator

“Transparency”

April 7, 11:00 AM CCC Meeting with Sandra Kaiser “Climate Change on the International Stage”
snyderjn22@live.com

3.7 Centennial Committee

Cindy S.

Colorful posters already on display at the Museum.

Out of the 7 women recognized, 2 are still living, one of them planning to attend Open House.

New addition to Women Leaders of Mason County– Lynn D is researching Joyce Simmons Cheeka from Squaxin Island.

Written report from Cindy S

“We are preparing for our Open House to celebrate our Mason County Women Leaders, Saturday, April 2, 2 to 4 PM. You are all invited, and we hope you will be able to join us at the Mason County Historical Museum in Shelton. We would love it if you wear a centennial hat or any historical garb that highlights the contributions of women. We plan to participate in events across the county in the communities that relate to each of our women. The first event we hope will be at the Old Timer Festival in Matlock on May 7. Stay tuned for more information.”

3.8 Climate Change

Nancy S.

Meetings

- a) March 24th = “The Lorax Connection”
- b) April 7th Sandra Kaiser “Climate Change on the International Stage”

No answer to date from County Commissioners on Nov 9 LWVMC letter.

Nancy S to speak to Mark Neary, County Administrator.

3.9 Advocacy

Amy D. & Karen H.

Karen H – Short session - Many bills did not make it out of committee or come up for vote.

Many bills to be reintroduced next year.

Some Highlights

- a) HB 1876 – Concerning public investment impact disclosures for certain ballot measures. that repeal, levy, or modify any tax or fee and have a fiscal impact statement that shows. that adoption of the measure would cause a net change in state revenue.
- b) HB 1953 Exempting sensitive voter information on ballot return envelopes, ballot declarations, and signature correction forms from public disclosure.
- c) Several Climate Change bills:
 - 1. HB 1619 – Energy efficiency requirements.
 - 2. HB 1280 – Reducing greenhouse emissions for new facilities.
 - 3. HB 5842 – Executive Office of Climate Policy and Accountability – in Dept of Ecology.
- d) Several bills passed supporting housing including some directed at homeless youth.

LWVWA website has a complete listing of League Supported bills.

3.10 Book Study: "Saving Us"

Cindy S.

Written Report from Cindy S

"We will discuss the first half of our book, Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case of Hope in a Divided world, Mon. Mar. 21 at 6 PM. The second half will be the following Monday, Mar. 28 at 6 PM. You are welcome to join in even if you don't have time to read. You can watch a YouTube video by searching You Tube for the author, Katharine Hayhoe".

4.0 New Business

LWV-WA's June Council

Dee Ann K

- a) State Council June 10th - 12th at the Delta Hotel in Everett. It is just off freeway, and we can get there by train.
- b) Cost for event = \$125 for all three days. Rooms reserved at \$139 per night and rooms can be shared.
- c) This is a voting council, so we will need to send delegates to vote.
- d) Event is planning for covid safety- masks, vaccine, distancing, good airflow .
- e) Local leagues can set up a table. Do we want to set up a Centennial table?

5.0 Adjournment

Lynn B adjourned regular business meeting at 12:07 pm.

Calendar

March 21, 6:00 pm Virtual Book Discussion "*Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's Case for Hope & Healing in a Divided World*" Part 1 cindyshotts@hotmail.com

March 24, 11:00 am Climate Change Committee (CCC) Meeting (virtual) with *The Lorax Coalition* snyderjn22@live.com

March 28, 6:00 pm Virtual Book Discussion on "*Saving Us*" Part 2 cindyshotts@hotmail.com

April 1, 12:30 pm LWV-Mason County Board Meeting

April 2, 2-4 pm Open House for "*Women Leaders of Mason County*", our Centennial Project on display at the Mason County Historical Museum. Look for your invitation in the mail soon.

April 7 11:00am April 7th Sandra Kaiser "Climate Change on the International Stage"

Program: “The Decline of Local Journalism and Its Impact on Democracy” featuring Dee Anne Finken and Sally Carpenter Hale

Speakers:

Sally Carpenter Hale worked 40 years at AP. She was Bureau Chief in New Jersey and Director of Pennsylvania Journalism Board.

Dee Anne Finken Worked for the Oregonian and taught Journalism at Clark College

- a) Two LWV Mason County members are participating in this study. Carolyn M is on the Reading Committee and Dee Ann K is the State Board Liaison to the study.
- b) The study is focused on Washington State
- c) The study group reviewed 400 articles about decline of journalism
- d) They talked with those locally “on the street, not only about newspaper closures but also reduced coverage by surviving papers.

The Power Point presentation will be on the website in the Meeting Notice for “January General Meeting”

Questions read by Amy D and asked by meeting participants.

- a) Q: Why decline not more alarming by public? A: Prior study -> 70% not aware of decline. More awareness now. Many people do not care. Get information from social media etc.
- b) Q: Do young people read “Watchdog News?” A: Look past headline – “Media education”.
- c) Q: Oversight on uncredentialed reporters? A: Not much education on media literacy.
- d) Important to get attribution – more than one source. Are people reliable. Facts not opinion
- e) Q: How to combat misinformation.? A: Both sides “guilty” -> Fox News? MSNBC? Being objective is not partisan.
- f) Q: What sources can be trusted NPR? 1440 Digest? A: Recommend Associated Press – non-profit – Staffers world-wide sharing news.
- g) Q: Are there safety concerns after reporting in local papers? A Never felt threatened but we are retired. Reporter spat on at Clark County event. Reporting challenged at Clark College. Important to be accurate& thorough. Losing reputation like losing virginity, once lost gone forever.
- h) Q: News lost in Journal includes paid content “Ghost Newspaper? A: Just a few family-owned newspapers in State. Family newspapers hurting financially. Subscription prohibitive for some. Gig Harbor non-profit working well.
- i) Q: Polarization is evident in Journal letters. A: Much polarization due to national news. Much due to cable news and social media.
- j) Q: Should all opinions be published? A: Contrasting views ok but extreme not helpful.
- k) Q: Are newspapers more inclusive in news? A: Trying but financial challenges particularly during covid. Newsrooms more diverse recently. Some newspapers of color. Serve local community. Spokane Review very focused on local news, for example Gonzaga basketball.

- l) Q: Should we give gifts to neighbors and friends of subscriptions? Many locals do not subscribe to Journal A: Digital subscriptions are sometimes shared.
- m) Q: What is the cost of oversight when newspapers close? A: No quantitative study. Things happen when there is no oversight. For example, gov officials giving themselves large raises.
- n) Q: What resources available to implement ethics training? A: Free resources available Basic ethics: Do no harm / act independently / transparent / provide attribution. Organizations providing training and conferences.
- o) Q: Don't newspapers have to publish legal notices? A: Not sure what rules are but publishing legal notices not an indicator that paper is reputable.
- p) Q: Grants available for digital start-ups? A: No government support currently. Should newspapers have reduced B&O tax?
- q) Q: Effect of pandemic? A: Absolutely – reduced staff to run papers.
- r) Q: Didn't we bail out car manufacturers?
- s) Q: Does declining local newspapers lead to lower candidate numbers for public offices? A: No quantified study. One opinion is that candidates are under a microscope. In Gig Harbor – Voters were not aware that no one was running for Mayor.
- t) Q: Fewer students attending journalism schools? A: Some increases because increased variety of ways to distribute news. Some quit low pay etc. Some go into Journalism to prepare to become lawyers. Some similar skill sets – writing, interviewing.
- u) Q: Newspapers mainly funded by advertising? A: Used to be, but now newspapers are relying more on subscriptions which is hurting. Online classified ads now – but local business count more on local papers.
- v) Q: Is 100% digital news coming? A: Inevitable but probably down the road, maybe 5 years. Youth now does not read print. Content printed less days during week. By the time news is in print, everyone is already aware.