



JUNEAU VOTER

Summer 2012

**League of Women Voters of Juneau
P.O. Box 22048 Juneau, AK 99802**

Go to www.juneaulwv.org/ to review our events, positions and principles.

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Greetings to all LWVJ members!

Your board of directors has had a busy spring to date. See the report on Voter Registration for information on this important activity.

We have two local members attending the National Convention in Washington, D.C. in June. Read about George Brown's purpose in attending further on in this VOTER. Carolyn Brown will also be attending as she has been nominated for a LWVUS board position. She is on the slate of nominees that will be voted on at Convention.

In early April, we had a showing of the pay equity film "Made in Dagenham" in collaboration with Vision 2020's Juneau representative Barbara Belknap (also an LWVJ member) and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship. We had about 20 folks in attendance, and although the group was small, the interest in pay equity was high. Since that time Barbara and her volunteer crew have finished their video on pay negotiation, and it has been posted on YouTube. You can watch it at the link below—25 hits as of this moment:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zxb114ZhA_0&feature=youtu.be

Barbara graciously had a thank you to the Juneau League added to the final credits! In addition, Barbara spoke on the issue of pay equity at the state annual meeting in late March.

At the LWVJ annual meeting, the members present voted to work on the issue of transparency in government, pay equity, and our ongoing efforts on the Voter's Guide and Municipal Candidate's Forum as well as voter registration. We are finishing up the review of the local position on education; be sure to review the final draft and send Margo Waring any comments you may have—see the final draft at the end of this VOTER. We will also be looking at an updating of our position on Advisory Committees; the current position is dated 1984.

At our most recent board meeting, we visited with City Manager Kim Kiefer. Kim reported that the CBJ would be looking at ways to increase the various CBJ reserve funds: Rainy Day, Sales Tax Reserve, and the Emergency Fund. As city manager, Kim is working on creating a leadership team composed of all CBJ department heads. Such a team will increase resource use efficiency. Another area of efficiency Kim is interested in strengthening is the collection of data on CBJ public services. To that end, the manager's office is working on new software to improve data collection. Kim asked the League to assist the CBJ in improving voter turnout numbers. Your board will be working on ideas for this effort. Let George Brown know if you have ideas on this issue!

Judy Andree, President of the League of Women Voters Juneau

VOTER REGISTRATION
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LWVJ continues to work on voter rights and voter registration. George Brown and Marjorie Menzi have scheduled voter registration events at UAS and Juneau-Douglas High School. We could not cover Thunder Mountain due to a lack of volunteers and the limited time allowed. On April 27, Marjorie Menzi, Hetty Barthel, Barbara Belknap, Marie Olson, Cheryl Jebe, and Beverly Haywood registered 18 new voters at UAS. Plans are in the works to hold regular voter registration events on the UAS campus in the fall. If you would like to assist with this effort, contact George Brown, gbrow177637@yahoo.com, or Marjorie Menzi, marjoriemenzi@msn.com. In addition, contact Cheryl Jebe, Cheryl_Jebe@msn.com, if you are interested in attending the local Naturalization Ceremonies

League of Women Voters
End of session update: April 20, 2012

(Compiled by Caren Robinson and [carolyn Brown](#))

Passed both houses:

HB 311 Reports to APOC

Status: Signed by Governor on Feb. 20

HB 326 Child Only Insurance Policy

Status: HB 218 (Prescription Drug Specialty Tiers) was amended in such a way as to make it possible for child only insurance policies to be written in Alaska again so HB 326 didn't go anywhere, but the problem got addressed in another bill.

HB 310 Puts in place a plan for payment for immunizations and vaccines in Alaska

SB 151 Mitigation at sentencing for persons with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

Died in committee:

HB 287 Absentee Voting

Status: Died in H JUD

SB 70 Establishes Alaska Health Benefit Exchange

Status: Died in S RLS

SB 9 Compulsory School attendance

Status: Died in H EDC

SB 171 Increase the Base Student Allocation for school funding

Status: Died in H FIN

SB 194 Low Performing Schools

Status: Died in S FIN

HB 330 Education Standards for Alaska

Status: Died in H FIN

SB 53 Re-establishes Alaska Commission on the Status of Women

Status: Died in H RLS

HB 347 Prohibits Municipal funds to support/oppose ballot initiatives

Status: Died in S JUD

SB39 Support National Popular Vote

Status: Died in S FIN

SJR 10 Amend Alaska Constitution, regarding membership for Redistricting Board

Status: Died in S FIN.

Never made it out of first committee of referral:

HB 260 Permanent absentee voting

HB 77 Non-Partisan Blanket Primary

SB 191 Ultrasound before abortions can be done

HB 244 Corporations are not persons for influencing elections

HB 325 Establishes Coastal Management

HB 363 Oppose use of public funds for abortion

HR 10 Support current Electoral College/oppose SB 39 to establish a National Popular Vote

Summary of a Resolution for Action at the LWVUS Convention supported by LWVAK

Resolution for Adoption by LWVUS in 2012 Convention in Support of Violence Reduction in the U.S. and Establishment of a Cabinet Level Department of Peace

This resolution is based on four League positions which address overlapping issues of violence prevention.

- A) Violence prevention (1994) B) Early Intervention for Children at Risk (1994)**
C) United Nations (1997), (2002) D) U.S. Relations with Developing Countries (1986)

**The name of the League proposing the resolution:
League of Women Voters of Columbia/Boone County (MO)**

Evidence that the issue is a current legislative priority:

- A) Acceptance of violence begins at home. We have major problems of violence within the U.S. with relatively little funding to address the underlying causes. Even with limited resources, this is changing with decreasing rates of child abuse and domestic violence. We need increased leadership and more funding for preventive measures.**
B) The U.S. is using our troops more frequently around the world.

Evidence that the issue is time sensitive and requires federal government action:

- A) Use of U.S. troops can only be addressed by the federal government. This is a major cause of our current and huge federal deficit. While numerous federal, international, and NGO efforts focus on conflict resolution to prevent more wars, they too have miniscule funding to address the underlying causes.**
B) A federal, cabinet level Department of Peace will be an excellent place to improve effective violence prevention within the U.S. League positions advocate public and private development and coordination of programs that emphasize primary prevention of violence and allocation of public monies in government programs to prevent violence.

Sent to *THE VOTER* by
George W. Brown LWVJU, Douglas, AK
gbrow177637@yahoo.com

(George Brown has been working on this resolution along with members of several other Leagues across the nation. He will attend the National Convention next month to assist with the introduction of this resolution.)

DON'T FORGET THOMAS.ORG AS A RESOURCE ON FEDERAL LEGISLATION INFORMATION!!

WHAT IS THOMAS.ORG?

For up-to-the minute information on federal government legislative activity, the LWV recommends THOMAS, a Library of Congress website. The address is <http://thomas.loc.gov>. THOMAS was launched in January of 1995, at the inception of the 104th Congress. The leadership of the 104th Congress directed the Library of Congress to make federal legislative information freely available to the public. Since that time THOMAS has expanded the scope of its offerings to include the features and content listed below.

- [Bills, Resolutions](#) , [Activity in Congress](#) , [Congressional Record](#) , [Schedules, Calendars](#)
- [Committee Information](#), [Presidential Nominations](#), [Treaties](#) ,[Government Resources](#)

Book Discussion Group News

The following Book Discussion report by Vivian Hegg is included here to give members an idea of the types of discussions that the Book Group is having. In addition to the May book mentioned below by Vivian, the June selection is “Aftershock” by Robert Reich, July “Winner Take All Politics” by Pierson & Hacker, and August “America Beyond Capitalism” by Alperowitz & Speth. If you are interested in joining the group, give Vivian a call (number below) to check on latest titles, times, and dates.

Report on the April 2012 meeting of the LWV Book Discussion Group

We met at the Downtown Library on April 26 to discuss Jon Krakauer’s “Under the Banner of Heaven: A Story of Violent Faith.” Neither the book, nor our wide-ranging discussion, provided a full understanding of what would lead the brothers to feel compelled to (and justified in) killing their sister-in-law and her daughter for questioning their version of God’s will. The book suggested that narcissism in many of the leaders (a conviction of their own intellectual and moral superiority), as well as their desire for power, underlay their desire to establish these sects.

We did recognize that a close-knit, cooperative (and isolated) life style could provide a feeling of safety and intimacy for many people. A former member told Krakauer that in a world with too many hard decisions to be made, belonging provides tremendous security and relieves the anxiety of fearing to make mistakes. The clear, and all-encompassing, rules of the Prophet leader relieve burdens of guilt or confusion for followers who convinced they are following the Lord’s will. As he said, “I think people within the religion are probably happier, on the whole, than people on the outside...But some things in life are more important than being happy. Like being free to think for yourself.” Though Krakauer grew up with, and admires Mormons, in the end he was unable to answer the question which fascinated him--how they can reconcile their faith with its own strange history and sustain their belief when confronted by facts that refute it? Perhaps in a time when so many people are skeptical of, or even dismiss, widely accepted scientific understandings we shouldn’t find this so surprising.

Next meeting: 5 p.m. Thursday, May 24, at the Valley Library. We will discuss, "It Takes a Pillage: An Epic Tale of Power, Deceit, and Untold Trillions" by Nomi Prins [Paper 2010]. Be sure you get the correct title because Ms. Prins has written other books on this topic (including a new one in 2012). Her experiences working at Goldman Sachs and other financial firms should provide fascinating insights into their role in the financial meltdown.

--Vivian 789-7311

MEMBER ACTION REQUIRED: LWVJ Education Position Update

For the past year, Margo Waring, Majorie Menzi, and Andi Story have worked diligently to update the local Education Position; the older positions on education date from the 1970's and a few ideas about education methods and policies have changed since that time. We currently have two positions which can be found on the juneaulwv.org website. The updated position will be one combined position. We discussed the update at our annual meeting; since then minor changes have been made to wording and the section on full-day kindergarten has been added. Please read over the update following and send any comments you may have to Margo Waring (margowaring@ak.net) by June 15, 2012. Your ideas and suggestions will be considered carefully by the revision committee. We hope to have the final draft ready to be adopted at our June 23rd meeting. Thank you!

EDUCATION POSITION—1973-74 // Revised 2012

Draft May 19, 2012

The League of Women Voters Juneau (LWVJ) supports high quality public education for a wide variety of reasons. As an organization with a mission to enhance citizens' knowledge of and participation in our democracy, the LWVJ is especially concerned with education environments in which barriers to education are eliminated, where optimal conditions for education flourish and where students learn about our history and government. Participation in democracy and governance is a necessary prelude to active adult citizenship.

I. Classroom Loads

The League of Women Voters Juneau (LWVJ) recognizes the value of classrooms in grades K-3 with 15 or fewer students.

Classroom loads may be adjusted on the basis of the availability of instructional classroom aides, teaching methods and techniques, and room and furniture size. Considerations of subject matter and building construction, i.e. sound barriers, should also be taken into account.

II. Testing

Testing should provide both diagnostic and achievement data. Achievement tests should provide information on accomplishments to meet national core standards. The LWVJ supports efforts to raise Alaskan and Juneau standards. National core or higher standards should be adopted by the Juneau School District (JSD).

The League favors the use of an ongoing District-wide testing program in all grades notably, evaluation measures for grades K-6 from AIMSweb (a progress monitoring system by Pearson conducted by continuous student evaluation) and MAP (Measures for Academic Progress) from NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) for grades 7-12.

The LWVJ supports testing that allows Juneau School District (JSD) students to compare their achievements with those of similar students around the country and to compare their achievements with core standards.

When measures are aligned with instruction, frequent in-class testing serves important diagnostic purposes to allow teachers to focus on needed skills or comprehension.

The League places a high priority on early identification testing in order to detect potential problem areas and ensure accurate student placement in special education or gifted programs.

The League considered other testing programs and concluded:

- Aptitude assessment for academic and vocational purposes should be available on a request basis for ninth through twelfth grade students.
- Students should be encouraged to take PSATs, and these tests should be at public expense.

Consideration should be given to avoiding or minimizing the loss of instructional time for the purposes of testing.

The League feels that it is important that parents and/or designated caregivers be kept informed by the District about the testing programs, both regular and optional, and should be notified when the tests are to be administered and the meaning of test results.

III. Professional Development

Teacher quality is the primary school-based determinant of student achievement. The League advocates a multi-faceted in-service program, with equal access to professional development information for all educators, as an effective means to promote quality education. It should include, but not be limited to:

A. While the best use of teacher release time is to review student data and plan instruction, LWVJ recognizes the need for individual teacher release time, at District expense, if consistent with the teacher's professional development plan.

B. Student release time to enable teachers to participate in teacher groups, group workshops or seminars on a school-wide or district-wide basis. Parents should be given maximum advance notice of planned student release time in-service dates to facilitate making arrangements for their children. Time away from classrooms is not desirable and should be minimized.

C. As evaluation data warrants, an instructional coach program to provide ongoing training. An instructional coach does not function as an administrative evaluator, but acts as a consultant to classroom teachers on methods and techniques.

League believes in-service programs enabling teachers to discuss student achievement can be most effective if they are responsive to teacher needs and enhance teachers' skill levels.

IV. Evaluation

The League advocates that the District establish performance criteria for teachers to be used in the evaluation program. Evaluation should include analysis of student outcomes. A uniform set of objectives will give teachers a valid basis for self-evaluation and will insure consistency and continuity in the evaluation program throughout the District.

Although an instructional coach plays an important role in promoting improved teacher skills, the League believes it is essential that the instructional coach function independently of the administrative evaluation process. This insures that teachers will feel free to take full advantage of the services of the coach.

V. Libraries

The League endorses the multi-media resource-center concept for the school library program as instrumental in furthering individualized instruction.

The League advocates employing full-time professional librarians for each school library to effectively implement the multi-media program.

VI. Exceptional Students

The League of Women Voters Juneau advocates a multi-faceted special education program to meet the needs of exceptional children, those with learning or other disabilities and those with special academic gifts. We endorse

mainstreaming as one of the major components of such a program for students with disabilities if, and only if, the necessary support services and staff are available not only to help the children but also to provide consultative services for the regular classroom teachers. In mainstreaming, the responsibility for educating the exceptional child is a shared task: to function well as a team, the classroom teacher and special resource teachers must have adequate opportunities to meet and confer about the children they serve.

VII. Accountability

The League of Women Voters Juneau advocates accountability in local education. Adoption of the national common core will facilitate accountability.

We advocate development of district-wide curriculum goals and objectives and the establishment of criteria by which components of the program and the program as a whole may be judged. LWVJ supports the goal of all children reading at grade level by the end of the third grade. Students who have not achieved or exceeded grade level reading before they enter fourth grade, according to many studies and research data, are unlikely to catch up with their peers and are, thus, more likely to have academic problems and to drop out of school before graduation.

VIII. Safe Schools

All students should feel safe in school, as well as traveling to and from school. The LWVJ supports conducting on-going research-based anti-bullying curricula at all grade levels, notably Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. Racism, sexism, sexual preference biases are all deplorable and LWVJ supports JSD and community efforts to eliminate discrimination.

VIV. Pre-K

Many Juneau children are in need of high quality pre-K programming, served by a variety of professionals, to prepare them for school. Currently, the JSD offers an integrated special education and general population pre-K program. The LWVJ supports efforts by the JSD to offer voluntary pre-K programs to children whose school success can be improved by such programming and to advocate that voluntary pre-K programming be a part of the State's School Foundation Program.

Community efforts using research-based early-literacy emphases are essential components of kindergarten readiness.

X. Kindergarten

Each Juneau elementary school should offer voluntary full day kindergarten.

XI. Attendance

Children have to attend school in order to benefit from it. Truancy should not be tolerated and the JSD should work with families, social service agencies and the court system to assure that all students attend school.

XII. Technology

Technological literacy is important to success in today's world. Students should be afforded opportunities to learn computer and similar technological skills, in order to be competitive in our modern world.

Computer literacy must be taught within the context of information evaluation.

XIII. Fine Arts (music, visual arts, drama and dance) and World Languages

The fine arts, and world languages should not be viewed as "add-ons" to education but should be considered basic components of education, especially for young students. Learning the fine arts and a second (or more) language develops brain capacity and enhances the acquisition of mathematics, science, social studies, and reading. The fine arts and world languages should be taught K-12. Language instruction should begin in grade 1.

XIV. Civics Education

Civics education is especially important to the LWVJ. The goal of civics education is to understand the participatory responsibility of all citizens and the functioning of government in our democracy. The LWVJ supports the JSD efforts to increase civics education at all grade levels, through classroom learning, out of classroom projects, and in partnerships with local, state, and national organizations.

XV. Alternative Programs

The LWVJ supports effective options for meeting student and family needs at all grade levels within the Juneau School District. The LWVJ rejects the use of public funds supporting vouchers for private education. LWVJ encourages collaborative efforts between JSD and UAS, looking for ways to build creative programs that engage students at both the technical and academic level as extensions or supplements to JSD offerings.

XVI. Foster and Homeless Students

For students in non permanent foster care and for students who are homeless, LWVJ supports the JSD's role as a point of stability in these students' lives and as a focal point for the delivery of social services.

(Updated 2012 by Margo Waring, Marjorie Menzi and Andi Story)