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# The Voter

A newsletter from

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Join League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County for our February Forum

## Climate Justice: Down with Carbon Emissions — Up with Community Equity!

In our region, the climate crisis will demand substantial community engagement and investments in resilient infrastructure. A framework of climate justice and equitable access to resources and improvements is key to our success. Please join us to hear from a diverse panel of local experts whose perspectives can help guide our work.

**Thursday, February 3 at 7 p.m.**  
**Register at [bit.ly/3zMa9qy](https://bit.ly/3zMa9qy)**



Nives  
Dolšak



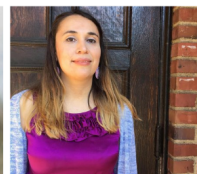
Lylianna  
Allala



Michael  
Carter



Constance  
McBarron



Pah-tu  
Pitt



Vicky  
Raya

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**Mark your calendars!** The League of Women Voters turns 102 years old on February 14, 2022. Yes, it's the same day as Valentine's Day!

- Help us celebrate this birthday with a commemoration gift of [\\$102](#) or any amount.



Your gift will fund the work we do to protect our vote and defend democracy. [Donate today](#) and your gift will help further the work LWVSKC does locally by providing voter services and education, and outreach to legislators and local elected officials.

- Thank you for being a faithful supporter of LWVSKC!



Tax-deductible donations can be made to the LWVSKC Education Fund [here](#).

## February Forum

### Climate Justice: Down with Carbon Emissions – Up with Community Equity!

Thursday, February 3 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom

Pre-registration is available; visit [lwvskc.org](http://lwvskc.org) for details.

*Callie Ridolfi, City Climate Action Committee Chair*

In our region, climate resiliency will demand substantial citizen engagement, city planning, and investments in sustainable infrastructure. The LWVSKC City Climate Action Committee is creating a proactive response to climate change through democratic engagement of residents in King County to support our cities in meeting their climate action goals. Cities are the source of over 80 percent of carbon emissions in our region and represent the unit of change needed to meet the targets of 50% reduction by 2030 and 95% by 2050. This is a historic challenge and opportunity for reshaping our region's future!



Last spring, King County released a Climate Action Toolkit to guide customized city climate strategies. Carbon emission inventories for the cities in our region are in development, to be released later this year. Since 2020, we have activated LWVSKC Climate Guides in 18 cities with a focus on engaging citizens and city leaders on climate issues. Inclusive community outreach and equitable engagement are critical to successful climate action, and this is where our work lies.

Empowering residents is critical for cities to meet their climate goals. A framework of climate justice and equitable access to resources and public improvements is emerging as key to our success. Systemic inequities leave frontline communities with limited opportunities for input and access to fewer resources. With the urgency of the climate crisis, community resilience requires that we promote equity for all, especially the most vulnerable.

Our forum will address the following topics:



- What is climate justice and how can we implement it in our engagement with cities?
- What does a fair and transparent process for delivering evidence-based results for all look like?
- How might we uplift climate actions that promote equity, eliminate barriers, reduce harm?
- How might LWVSKC members interact with local agencies and programs to support pro-equity actions?
- What actions can we take to support climate equity and build community resilience?

Moderated by **Nives Dolšak**, Stan and Alta Barer Professor in Sustainability Science; Director, School of Marine and Environmental Affairs, University of Washington, Seattle

Panelists include:

**Vicky Raya**, Climate Equity and Community Partnerships Program Manager, King County

**Lylianna Allala**, Climate Justice Director, City of Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment

**Pah-tu Pitt**, Native Kut, member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

**Michael Carter**, Green Jobs Program Manager, King County

**Constance McBarron**, Communications and Engagement Lead, Earthlab, University of Washington

Panelists will describe their grassroots perspectives and crosscutting strategies for advancing climate equity in frontline communities. Join in to engage and envision an equitable and resilient region together!

#### ***Further resources***

[Climate Action Toolkit - King County](#)

City Climate Action Committee, [City Climate Guides](#) - League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County

King County [Equity Impact Awareness Tool](#), also available at [kingcounty.gov](https://kingcounty.gov)

[Sustainable & Resilient Frontline Communities Section](#) of the 2020 King County Strategic Climate Action Plan

[Climate Handbook 2021](#), prepared by the Association of Washington Cities and also available at [cfqc.org](http://cfqc.org).

## Double the Elections, Double the Fun on February 8!

*Sara Thein*

The February elections are rapidly approaching! Voter turnout in these “other” elections is typically around 30-40%.

- ***Let's increase that number!***

Your vote is crucial to ensuring critical funding for our parks and schools!

### ***Fun One!***



Ballots for special elections will be mailed on Wednesday, January 19, and election day is Tuesday, February 8.

These votes are for 27 ballot measures, mostly for ***school district propositions***, covering 14 of the 20 school districts in King County. Auburn, Highline, Issaquah, Skykomish, Tahoma, and Tukwila School Districts do not have measures

on the ballot.

All measures ask voters to approve or reject levies and bonds targeted for specific purposes — mostly related to funding educational programs and technological improvements. Most of the measures reinstate or replace expiring levies. Two school measures are new:

- Lake Washington School District Proposition 3 asks voters to authorize additional property tax levies to fund construction expansion projects.
- Northshore School District Proposition 2 asks voters to approve the issuance of bonds to pay for renovations, upgrades, and new construction of school facilities.



Only the city of **Shoreline** has a non-school measure on the ballot.

- City of Shoreline Proposition 1 asks voters to approve the issuance of bonds to improve **parks and recreation areas**.

### **Fun Two!**



King County Conservation District is also holding an election for Seat #2 on the Board of Supervisors. Voting begins January 18, 2022 and ends February 8, 2022. All registered voters in **King County** are eligible to vote in the KCD election, excluding those voters who live within the city limits of Enumclaw, Federal Way, Milton, Pacific, and Skykomish.

King Conservation District (KCD) is a natural resources assistance agency authorized by Washington State and guided by the Washington State Conservation Commission. Its mission is to promote the sustainable use of natural resources through responsible stewardship. A five-member Board of Supervisors is responsible for overseeing all KCD programs and activities.

Although King County Elections tabulates ballots and publishes results from the KCD election, the KCD election relies primarily on electronic ballot access (with alternative print and mail options available). **Ballots for this election must be requested through the KCD website online ballot access system** and are not automatically sent to voters.

- Click [here](https://kingcd.org/about/board-of-supervisors/elections-and-appointments/) to participate!
- Or paste this link in your browser:  
<https://kingcd.org/about/board-of-supervisors/elections-and-appointments/>.

The following individuals are vying for Position #2:

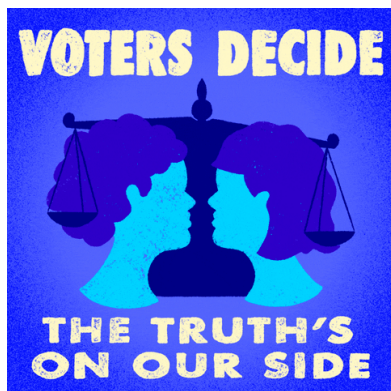
- Kirstin Haugen
- Barbara Roessler
- Dominique Torgerson
- Tripp Williams.

You can view candidate statements on the King Conservation District website, <https://kingcd.org/>. For questions, assistance, or more information, contact King Conservation District at [elections@kingcd.org](mailto:elections@kingcd.org) or call 425-282-1900.

It's worth noting that House Bill 1652 – sponsored by Representatives Dolan, Lekanoff, Shewmake, and Fitzgibbon – is a bill pre-filed for the 2022 Washington state legislative session that aims to allow Conservation Districts to choose how and when they conduct elections. Currently, state law mandates that Conservation District elections occur within the first quarter of the year, which prevents them from benefiting from the resources of county election departments, mailed ballots, and increased turnout in general elections.

## Voters Decide – Spread the Word!

*Julie Sarkissian, LWVWA*



As part of the [January 6 Virtual Vigil Day of Remembrance and Action: Defending Democracy](#), organized by Leagues including LWVSKC and LWVWA with allied nonprofits, the vigil team published an [Action Guide](#) to provide guidance on how you can speak up, spread the word, and help defend our democracy.

January 6 was a violent and deadly attack against all Americans ... against our country, our democracy, our elected representatives, and our freedom as voters to choose the leaders that represent us ... so that we have a government of, by, and for the people. One year later, activists and elected officials of like mind to those who stormed the Capitol are hard at work trying to silence our voices by restricting our right to vote, attacking fair voting districts, and preparing future procedure-based attempts to undercut free and fair elections – and thus our democracy.

The [Action Guide](#) helps you, your friends, your family, and your allies craft effective messages to specific influential audiences across a variety of platforms to speak up for our democracy. **Worried that writing your representatives isn't enough anymore?** Try sending your message to corporations, and let their leaders know you hold them accountable for corporate donations to extremist politicians who spread falsehoods about election integrity. Seattle, King County, and Washington state are the hometown for major corporate donors, and they care what you think.

This is the most pressing issue of our day. Without democracy our other efforts to promote the common good fail. **You can do your part!** And to join up with other League members, contact Lev Elson-Schwab at [action@lwvskc.org](mailto:action@lwvskc.org).

## Tired of Sitting Around Worrying About the State of Our Democracy?



In August, our colleagues in LWVNJ launched the Activist Training Program to equip participants with the skills needed to organize winning advocacy campaigns. The program offers training in three core skill areas: Legislative Advocacy, Grassroots Organizing, and Voter Outreach.

Check out the 2022 Spring Semester Activist Training courses [here!](#)

## Journey Into the Program of Work for 2022-2023

*Adele Reynolds*

### ***What are our next steps after the January 6 Program Planning Forum?***

**Step 1: Get organized** Some of the forum's eight breakout groups will form into teams or committees ... or fold into standing committees ... or even disappear. ***Missed the forum?*** LWVSKC members met in small groups to discuss:

Climate :: Civics Education :: Criminal Justice Reform :: Urban Sprawl and Transportation  
Public Safety :: Issues Affecting Tribes :: Democracy Reform

New ideas may come in or re-emerge while gathering supporters.

- ***Watch for an email*** giving the full list of ideas!



**Step 2: Do our research** Now it's data-gathering time! Can we determine if the issue has already been studied by our League or another? Is there a position that fits, so that Action is appropriate?

- **Are you willing to help?** Contact Action Chair Lev Elson-Schwab at [action@lwvskc.org](mailto:action@lwvskc.org).

**Step 3: Submit a proposal for discussion** If a proposal seems viable, the next step is for the team to complete the LWVSKC **Program of Work Form 2022-2023**. You can also use this form to work up a new idea. Find it here: [www.lwvskc.org/docs.ashx?id=923122](http://www.lwvskc.org/docs.ashx?id=923122).

- What's our due date? **February 15** ... or very soon after.

After review and recommendation, the actions, forums, studies, or updates will be presented for discussion and a vote at the LWVSKC Annual Meeting on **June 4**.

**Step 4: Get it done!** During the following twelve months the issues we approved in June will be our "program": our forums, studies, actions, and voter service efforts. Together, these will be our LWVSKC "Program of Work 2022-2023."

Our committees carry out educational actions at our local LWVSKC level as the committees see fit. Any political Action that is speaking in the name of the League must be done by the LWVSKC President, our Action Chair, or their designee.

### **Resources**

**Saunatina Sanchez**, Membership Coordinator, is glad to help you find resources of all kinds. Is it tech help, knowledgeable members, or partners in the community that you need? Find Saunatina at [membership@lwvskc.org](mailto:membership@lwvskc.org).

**Lev Elson-Schwab**, Action Chair, will help you get started if you want to take action or join the Advocacy Team. No matter what your issue is, Lev connects you with the group or people you want to work with, in partnership with Saunatina. You can reach Lev at [action@lwvskc.org](mailto:action@lwvskc.org).

**Sara Thein**, Voter Service Chair, will connect you with instructions, supplies, or fun companions for work on voter registration, voter education, and voter mobilization, also known as "get out the vote" or GOTV. Sara is at [voterservice@lwvskc.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvskc.org).

**Adele Reynolds**, Program Chair, can help you with forums, studies, and more. Do you want to put on a forum? Is there a LWVSKC position that needs to be updated? Have you found a potential concurrence in another state? Do you want to start a new study? Adele will help you get started. Reach Adele at [program@lwvskc.org](mailto:program@lwvskc.org).

**Want to go national?** We will submit any recommendations or other input from our League for national LWV program proposals by **March 1**. Participants at the National Convention will vote on these in the summer of 2022 – date pending confirmation.

- If you wish to contribute to our input, please email 1st Vice President Kathy Sakahara at [KathySakahara@gmail.com](mailto:KathySakahara@gmail.com) before **February 1**.

## March Forum Preview

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in the League

Thursday, March 3 from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm via Zoom

*Tania Hino and Lauren Pixley*

Our March Forum on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) will feature panelists from each level of the League (local, state, and national) who will provide insight on how our organization is moving forward on our commitment to DEI and what resources are available to members. We'll take an introspective look at ourselves and our organization as a whole.

- We hope you'll join us and add your voice to our discussion.

The goal is to take the work of DEI in action throughout our board and members' experiences of implicit biases. Silence and denial of implicit biases is compliance to keeping racism alive. Acceptance and working on our blind spots of implicit biases is the power to change.

- Come hear from the panelists how we can all make an impact together for a better world.
- Let us come together to see the world with the lenses of DEI.

**Saunatina Sanchez**, our Member Coordinator, will moderate the forum.

Panelists will include:

**Tania Hino**, Director-at-Large, League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County

**Heather Kelly**, President, League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County

**Julie Sarkissian**, Director, League of Women Voters of Washington

**Liz Bander**, Director, League of Women Voters of the U.S.

Questions? Contact Lauren Pixley at [lauren.pixley@lwvskc.org](mailto:lauren.pixley@lwvskc.org).

## Does the Pandemic Make You Think About Health Care Reform?

Mo Brinck-Lund

The League has developed a [website](#) with lots of helpful links and information!



The web address for *Healthcare Reform for the U.S.* –also known as *HCR4US* – is <https://lwvhealthcarereform.org/>. This toolkit spells out the League position, tracks national and local legislation, identifies allies we can work with, and offers tips on how to organize for education and advocacy on health care reform.

Interested? ***Want to do more?*** Contact our health care committee chair, Mo Brinck-Lund, at [molunida@gmail.com](mailto:molunida@gmail.com) or 206-398-9089.

## The 2022 Edition of TRY is here!

Allison Feher



TRY – They Represent You is our annual directory of elected officials that has information about people you vote for, from school board members to people in the U.S. Congress. It also has information about voting – how to register and how to vote – and a bit about the League too. The newly elected have been added and edits to data are complete.

The online edition was published on January 15. You can find it [here](#), at [www.lwvskc.org/try](http://www.lwvskc.org/try) – it has loads of hyperlinks that automatically take you to key websites or email for elected officials you want to contact. The print edition will be available in early to mid-February.

- Members will automatically be mailed a print copy.
- If you're not a member and want a printed copy, just let us know by the end of January and we'll add you to the bulk mailing.
- ***Want more than one copy?*** Let us know and we can work out the best way to get them to you. Just call or email us at [info@lwvskc.org](mailto:info@lwvskc.org).

The TRY is one of our biggest, most popular products — and its cost is high. Thank you to all who have sent donations to support it and the League. If you haven't done so, please consider a donation to the LWVSKC [Education Fund](#) to help support its production and distribution.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

### My Thoughts On Ruby Hamad's *White Tears, Brown Scars: How White Feminism Betrays Women of Color*

*Sarah Beth Miller*

Reading *White Tears, Brown Scars* has been an unsettling, educational, entertaining, and profound experience for me! The book traces the white woman's role in long history of colonial oppression, and the author examines how vestiges of that role continue to influence the behavior of some white feminists today, to the detriment of women of color around the world.

Hamad is an Australian journalist of Arab descent who has been writing about women and race for decades. She has worked extensively in the United States as well. In presenting her thesis, Hamad cleverly weaves in recent news events, such as the Kavanaugh hearings, and examples from popular culture to illustrate her devastating conclusions; Hamad's cultural frame of reference is broad enough to include the radio/TV show *Amos 'N' Andy* and the music of Weezer and Beyonce. This is what makes her writing both entertaining and deep. She calls up multiple instances in which the scrim of popular culture masks the truth of colonial oppression.

From the time that I was in college in the 1970's, I fully subscribed to the "second-wave" of feminism. Since then, I have been reluctant to question almost any aspect of the struggle for equality between the sexes. My philosophy was that women should focus on "kicking the biggest a\*\*es" of the patriarchy, and not quibble among ourselves. But Hamad's exploration of why white feminism fails to support the struggles of black and brown women **really** made me think. Hard.

According to Hamad, white feminism focuses on the acquisition of power and status that is now in the hands of white men. But white feminism has not been concerned with making power and status also available to black and brown women.

This book examines the long history of colonialism and asserts that, for centuries, sexual subjugation has been a powerful tool in the success of Western imperialism. White colonialists claimed superiority over their non-white subjects and held up white women as the paragon of superior virtue. White women were “the damsels in distress” who needed constant safeguarding to stay chaste and virtuous. This justified the use of brutal force to “protect” the purity of white women against the purported threat of rape from the non-white “natives”. In this construction, non-white men were subjugated because they were inferior, but the status of non-white women was even lower. As their white sisters were beacons of purity, black and brown women were held to be the opposite;; they were morally weak, lascivious, and intellectually simple. They were “sexual objects without agency” and fair game for the sexual exploits of white men. Unlike white women, black and brown women lacked the “protection” of their menfolk, who were disempowered by the white colonialists’ insistence that they were simple, irrational sexual predators. The extreme American expression of the protection of white women was the lynching of “predatory” black men and the state of terror that this act created.

Hamad shows how white dominance was supported by “scientific racism” in the 19th century. The American School of Evolution promoted a campaign of misinformation about the “inferior” moral and intellectual abilities of people of color, which sought to rationalize white colonialism and supremacy. White Europeans were the supposed “apex” of evolution because only they, among all humans, had evolved to the point of having distinctively different male and female brains. White, male brains were seen as superior to those of white women, as these male brains possessed the capacity for reason, logic, and objectivity. White female brains possessed feelings and devotional sentiments which had to be safeguarded by the rigor of the white male brain.

Through her exploration of this historical and cultural background, Hamad asserts that the “tears” of white women are a throwback to the “damsel in distress” legacy of colonialism. The author presents a scenario that is very familiar to people of color, but often invisible to white people: When questioned or challenged by women of color, white women revert back to the historical trope of exquisite sensitivity, and they cry tears of distress. These tears trigger the protective instincts of white men and women. They rush to the defense of the weeping woman, accusing the non-white woman of bullying. This diversion allows them to disregard the needs and wants of women of color, while shoring up the worth and power of the white woman.



I don't recall ever witnessing the scenario that Hamad describes, but she has convinced me that it happens often. The dynamic of "protected status" for white women has led to the failure of white feminism to support their sisters of color.

As I said, this book has really made me **think**, as a good book should! I highly recommend it for LWVSKC members. I look forward to the discussions that it will inspire!

## Connecting With Our Leadership

*This month, President Heather Kelly interviewed Program Chair Adele Reynolds.*

Watch this interview [here](#).

HEATHER: Okay, I am Heather Kelly, President of the League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County and this month for our *Connecting with the* (sic) *Leadership* column, I thought I would try something different. So we're doing an exposé of Adele Reynolds, our very gracious, willing Program Chair.

ADELE: And the funny thing is we've been fussing about what we look like on a Zoom screen. But it's not going to appear in Zoom. It's going to appear as words on a page.

HEATHER: Yes, it will probably appear as words on a page, but I'm thinking maybe we'll post the video too. I don't know. We got ... we got all fancy.

ADELE: Sure did.

HEATHER: Okay, I have a list of questions that Adele has vetted. And, you know, we're really getting to the heart of things today. No, I'm just kidding. We're gonna keep it pretty light. Okay, so, Adele, when did you join the League?



ADELE: I joined the League sometime very soon after we moved from Stockton, California, with a two year-old child and the baby in the tummy. And I was wanting to get acquainted with the state of Washington. That's when that was. That was 1963.

HEATHER: So I'm going a little off-script here, but it's a natural follow-up. Did you feel like the League helped you get more acquainted?

ADELE: Oh, absolutely. And that's why I joined, because I knew all about the Mission history of California and the Gold Rush. But that's not Washington State.

HEATHER: That's really neat. So you got to know your new home through the League, and my new neighborhood, and your new neighborhood. So was it about developing relationships with your neighbors, too?

ADELE: Indeed, the West Seattle area of Seattle. And it was later on when I was first on the League Board that I got to know all of Seattle, and expanding into King County. We had a requirement to visit a different unit every month. So we really got around. That's when I learned to drive into downtown Seattle, and even hit North. Now. Was I-5 even finished then? I'm not sure that it was. And certainly we did not have a big bridge going over the Duwamish River. So West Seattle was quite insular.

HEATHER: Well, we've returned to that now, haven't we?

ADELE: It's just about open again.

HEATHER: Oh, that's great.

ADELE: This summer.

HEATHER: Okay, so going back a second. How many times have you been on the Board?

ADELE: Just that time and this time. So that would have been maybe in there somewhere in the 70s. Okay. So, yes, in the 70s, because it was before I went to work for a capitalist.

HEATHER: Employers! Yes. Okay, so you took, you went on tour around Seattle to get to know all of the units and this was when the League was still the League of Seattle. We hadn't become the League of Seattle-King County. Right?

ADELE: I do not even remember that. So it must have been before.

HEATHER: I think that was later, I think that was like in the late 90s or something. Um, so, and you braved the hills, because Stockton is not hilly, right?

ADELE: Oh, that's true. Seattle is hillier than any place I've lived otherwise.

HEATHER: Well, and now you live on First Hill. You live, you live on a major hill!

ADELE: I do. Right.

HEATHER: Okay, so, from your perch on First Hill, you eventually joined the First Hill unit.

ADELE: If you were to describe somebody with white hair and glasses, that would be a Horizon House resident, that would be a member of the First Hill unit. Some of them have had more than 50 years experience being League members. This means that they have very clear memories of things that happened in the league 40, 30, 20 years ago. Right.

HEATHER: So it sounds like there are more people I need to interview probably to get the full, rich story of the League, from a bunch of different perspectives.

ADELE: Sure. We have so many young people now, and thank goodness, where many of the organizations that some of us have been members for 20, 40 years have difficulty moving out of that age group. Whereas the Seattle-King County League of Women Voters has many people who have grown up with computers. Oh my goodness, I didn't get into computers until the early 90s. I was an executive secretary. And all of a sudden, of the people I was supporting, we had to trust them to write their own emails. Oh, dear. We were revising everything they said.

HEATHER: That sounds like a lot of work! So. So, over the years, has there been, like, a particular project or activity or League events that stood out as kind of your favorite?

ADELE: I don't know that I have an all-time favorite. But I certainly do have many little points at which the League taught me things. Okay, I remember the first time I tried to change the way League did things – that we used to have the annual meeting at some big hotel, and you had to sign up to pay for this fancy luncheon to go. And I thought that was a bit unfair to those of us who lived on budgets. So I said, there should be a different entry cost, if you just came to sit around the edge of the room, instead of coming to dine at the table. And they adjusted to my request. So that was a feeling of power. I joined the League to make a difference. Didn't know it'd be to push on the League itself!

HEATHER: Yeah, I feel like that's something that we're, that we're still experiencing. Sort of the internal transformation of the organization, and then also our advocacy outside in the world. It's like two jobs at once!

ADELE: And one thing I do remember, as a favorite experience, we had a League project that was measuring the air pollution in different parts of the city. Oh, and to me, that was a real contribution to what was going on in the city. Yes, it was kind of a scientific thing. We needed to report on what it was like at a certain time at a certain place. And that was great.

HEATHER: That sounds like a lot of fun.

ADELE: It was fun. But yet it was a real contribution to what needed to happen, to change. We learned what a difference it was between the area over by the airport or by the dump. Right there, to know that air pollution really registered. That's up here to the North End of Seattle.

HEATHER: Yeah, I've been talking with the units and they've ... some of the unit leaders and unit members have been sharing that it's time for us to reflect on how we can be of service and be of value to our community, because there are so many organizations that

are excelling in voter registration and voter education and some of the traditional League sort of tasks. And so finding those ways to fill in the gaps, and, you know, do something different and new that's needed.

ADELE: Look at what our Climate Committee is doing. That is a major contribution, and so important to the future of our world.

HEATHER: Absolutely. As someone with young ones, I'm so grateful for anybody tackling climate change and climate solutions, because I have to answer to my kiddos when they ask what we're doing. And it feels like, you know, the county came to us. And we found a way to facilitate those conversations throughout King County, about how people can individually make a difference. So it feels continuous with the project you described.

ADELE: Where have we been in between? And maybe we've been working all along. But now, I had a gap in my membership. When my kids were in school, I felt the need to contribute to my family's income. So I did not have the time to participate in League while I was working and had children at home.

HEATHER: Yeah, it's a tricky balance. It's definitely a tricky balance.

ADELE: And the League had to depend on other people, not me. Absolutely. They kept going.

HEATHER: Sure did. And we still are, but you know what, there's been a suggestion that if we had child care at meetings, even if it was just sort of informal, like a League member offering to sit and draw with a kid, you know, it would allow folks to feel like they could continue participating in the, in the right way for them. Without feeling like it was impossible, you know, to juggle everything, but it's different for every person.

ADELE: It is, but back in those very olden days, when I joined with preschoolers, there was a unit, I think it was maybe on Capitol Hill, where people had good-sized homes, and they just would put a gate across the dining room, and the kids all played while they had their unit meeting. That meant you could have a cup of tea. Or you could be walking back and forth, tending whoever needs ... needed tending. And now, we are so lucky. We have Zoom.

HEATHER: We do have Zoom, and you've seen my kids pop in and out of meetings. Sure. Yeah, it is. It is a relief. But there is something wonderful about, you know, and I know you miss it as much as I do, about coming together in person. And thinking about ways to revive some of those strategies that worked, especially for working women, or working mothers, where kids could be there. And the other thing that's really interesting to me is my kids listen when I'm in a meeting. They ask questions after questions afterward. They're like, "What are you talking about? Taxes?" Or, "What are you talking about, schools?" Right? So that's kind of a side benefit I've experienced from when my kids can be,

maybe not participating, but accompanying me to League events. So let's see. Have you ever worked on a study?

ADELE: Yes. And can you believe it was an education study?

HEATHER: I certainly can believe it, with you having kids of your own. So tell me what that experience was like for you?

ADELE: Well, part of the fun of it was that I needed to be so dependent on the members of my unit that had done such things before. So they really helped in the planning. I guess I should admit, they insisted on having me be in charge. And that gave them a chance to teach me. Yeah. So that was great. And one of those people ran for school board. That's next year. So that was wonderful – Ellen Sutton. And oh, her first name wasn't Ellen. But anyway. And she had, oh, a whole house full of children, maybe as many as ten. And you would see her at school board meetings, doing mending on her lap, or whatever. But she made a good difference. And what did I learn in that study? I learned that I could get into the details of the number of low-income kids, how many, what percent of the kids were having supplemental lunches. And also, I could get into the comparative amount of contribution. Different parts of the budget, that was very revealing. All the schools are not equal in what resources they are given. And we are still working on those issues.

HEATHER: Yeah, we sure are. Was it Pat Sutton? Possibly?

ADELE: You bet it was. Thank you.

HEATHER: Oh, I thank Google. I Google things on the fly sometimes. So. Okay, so it sounds like you learned through the study, through doing the education study – a little bit about the League, and a little bit about the world, you know, and inequity and education, but also that it kind of brought you closer with some of the folks in your unit. And I know, we've dropped off sort of doing studies, do you feel like that should come back, or there's a way to achieve those outcomes through other League activities?

ADELE: I listen to stories from various different Leagues. And I think they are jumping in, in different ways. So there's certainly ... there are a lot of pluses with having a unit, whether it's on Zoom, or whether it's in somebody's living room, or in some spare room in a retirement home, which is how several of our units have been operating for several years. There was a West Seattle unit that started long ago. Over the last 20 years, I would say, have probably met in various retirement home spare rooms. Yeah.

HEATHER: I know the West Seattle unit and University House have both struggled to continue meeting during the pandemic.



ADELE: That's because not everybody has jumped onto Zoom. Right. And that was most unfortunate. In our First Hill unit, just this coming month we're having our third face-to-face meeting. Well, believe me, we lost our sense of camaraderie. We had new people who have moved into the building. But during COVID we didn't get to know them. So we're having brand-new challenges. We are, for the first time in three years, having that sense of friendship, building those friendships within our unit.

HEATHER: Yeah, it's been really hard because it's almost like there's such a need for community right now. But people wind up so lonely because there's such a limited number of ways you can interact, and if you don't have access to technology or you're not experienced or comfortable using it, then you're isolated.

ADELE: We've had some amazing learnings. We have a new unit chairperson. That's Madeline. She's so fabulous.

HEATHER: I love her.

ADELE: It is amazing. She helped to start the Alaska League of Women Voters.

HEATHER: Oh, that's awesome. What a cool thing.

ADELE: And her perspective as a person who was in the state, as it was becoming a state, what things they have needed to establish. Now it would be very different, I'm sure, if she was still there. But we are benefiting from her sense of empowerment.

HEATHER: Okay, here's a question. So how did you convince her to lead that unit? And how do you think we can get other people to say yes, who have fabulous rich histories of experience like Madeline?

ADELE: Well, to have that kind of rich experience, you have to look to your seniors, of course.

HEATHER: Yes, ma'am! I agree completely.

ADELE: But for many people, for many of our newer members, what gathers people to the League of Women Voters? Why, the Women's March. We thought it was silly, to knit those pink hats. However, it helped people. That march helped people to want to jump into the current issues. And of course, we as League members, were shocked to realize how racist our forebearers were. The people who started the League were not looking at everybody as equal. Yeah. And we've had to admit to our history, and we've had to admit to the need to change it. And we are still feeling the need to change it. Remember, when the early pandemic, oh, when we were shocked by the racist attitudes, not just of our forebearers, about, but when League stood up and said, We should make these changes as a city. And we discovered that not everybody in the League was ready to agree with those changes.

So we found we are the enemy and it is us. Yeah, good old Pogo. Now that's back (to) my history time, to, maybe, people don't know who Pogo is. But, Pogo, who was this funny little character in the cartoon strip, discovered that we have caused many of our own problems. Who would have thought we'd have even thought of Pogo in a comment on climate change? Yes, we have. We are the enemy. We have found the enemy. And it is us.

HEATHER: Yeah, I think another way, I've heard the same message expressed is the work starts here. Right, like we have to do the work of acknowledging our history of racism in the League, and taking an actively antiracist approach to our work.

ADELE: Yes, yes. Yeah, that is indeed true. And keep on climate change. Right. I'm so glad that the League is working in the county, which means working in every single city, because it's the cities that have to make those decisions. Absolutely. I'm looking forward to our February program, because we'll get another peek into what those many cities are doing.

HEATHER: I am too, and I think ... well, let's just leave it there. We'll leave the audience wanting more! So, Adele, thank you so much for your time this morning. I feel like I learned a ton, and I'm just, like, itching to do more of these now because ... I don't know, we've just got to talk to each other. And we've got to learn from each other like we always have. And I don't know, just sitting down one-on-one is so nice. So, thank you.

## **Board Brief**

### **Happy New Year – Let's Hang Out!**

*Heather Kelly, President*

Thanks to all of you who attended our Program Planning Forum on January 6. I was thrilled to see so many faces and hear many thoughtful remarks on such a wide range of topics! On the anniversary of last year's insurrection it was heartening to come together and collectively commit to taking action in our community. I was so grateful to share the evening with those who came, and I hope you all left as determined and motivated as I did!

With these new projects kicking off, it's the perfect time to talk about how we can best coordinate our work. The Board has the benefit of having a "bird's eye view" of the League, but would love to connect with members individually too. Similarly, members in our units have expressed an interest in knowing more about the Board's work. So let's come together!

The Board does a lot of its outreach through the Tuesday weekly email, on the website, at our events, and of course in *The Voter*. All of those communications include ways to get in touch with us, because we really want this to be a two-way street. In fact, we count on you as our eyes and ears across King County. Can you think of a problem in your community that the League can research? Maybe we can help you advocate for change in your own backyard! What about a topic for voter education? You know your communities best, so what are your needs? To connect with us, please see the Board roster [here](#).

Did you know that you can also attend Board meetings? You're welcome to come and observe us in action on the first Saturday of the month from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. If you need time on our agenda, please ask. We love to get updates from members, especially unit and committee leaders who can share about their groups' activities and questions. The Board also plans to publish our meeting agendas, minutes, and LWVSKC financial reports under the "members-only" area of our website. These changes are all in the spirit of improving accessibility and transparency and strengthening our connection as a community.

I wish you a healthy and productive new year. Onward!

## Units Unite Us

*Sarah Beth Miller*



Our nine small discussion groups (Units) meet once a month to discuss topical issues and connect members to outreach activities.

Any member can attend any Unit meeting.

**Check our [website calendar](#) for locations and times — including our virtual-only Unit!**

The Enumclaw unit will next meet in March — no meetings for January or February. See you in the spring!

## Exciting Ideas From 2nd *Units Revitalize!* Brainstorming Meeting

Sarah Beth Miller

Last month I wrote about our first *Units Revitalize!* meeting, where Units and Board members expressed concerns about the health and growth of Units, and the need for more connection with the Board. It was clear that a second meeting was needed to harness the energy generated at that December 6 meeting, and to brainstorm preliminary solutions for reinvigorating Units. Although it was mid-December, several Unit leaders and members decided to pause their “holi-daze” and have one more meeting on December 16, 2021 to keep the revitalization momentum going. Summarized below are suggestions and solutions from this second *Units Revitalize!* meeting.

- Please note that in many cases, suggestions for solutions came in the form of more questions!

**Communication** Unit members were delighted to learn from the Board that there were 500 viewers for the recent YouTube Forum on Behavioral Health. But they were also surprised that, until now, they hadn’t known about this success. This underscored the need to introduce all members to all of the new communication modes available –such as the new website, ClubExpress functionality, and our social media presence – and to give members a chance to practice using them. There are solutions for building communication technology skills already in the works!

- Check out Membership Office Hours – training and support for League business – streamed monthly on YouTube. Check the calendar on the website or email Saunatina Sanchez at [membership@lwvskc.org](mailto:membership@lwvskc.org) for more details.



- Members of our Communications team (find us at [communications@lwvskc.org](mailto:communications@lwvskc.org)) also are available by email and through visits to Unit meetings.

**Forums** For many years, the LWVSKC’s monthly Forums were the focus of League activity. Experienced members remember that monthly Forum topics gave structure to energetic and informative Unit discussions. Units then made recommendations that flowed back to

the Board for further action. Due to changes over the past few years, however, this common understanding of how the Forums relate to the Units is less clear. But many Units want to preserve the back-and-forth flow between Forums and Unit activities. There was interest in exploring ways to rebuild or revive this dynamic.

**Ready, set, go!** Units offered many suggestions and solutions about more active involvement ... about “getting out there!” **“Getting out there and doing stuff”** was a refrain heard often during this meeting! Among the ideas:

- Joining forces with Voter Services to spread the word about voter registration and the voting process. Contact Sara Thein at [voterservice@lwvskc.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvskc.org).
- Continuing to register voters whenever possible. Also, using the “On-line Voter Registration Training” developed by Sarah Phillips, a North King County Unit member ([sarah.phillips@comcast.net](mailto:sarah.phillips@comcast.net)), with Voter Services, to educate the public about the importance of signatures on ballots, and to participate in “ballot curing”, which is the process of fixing any problems with absentee or mail ballot to ensure that a vote is counted.
- Reaching out and following up with underrepresented groups with whom the League has worked previously to promote voter registration to all populations.
- Calling or sending postcards to infrequent voters in “purple” states.
- Launching a way of “buddying up” for tasks. For example, a member might have an afternoon to register voters on a ferry. She or he could “post” that plan for others to see, and League members from any Unit could join in.
- Building alliances with other organizations such as Rotary, PTSAs, and similar. Kathy Sakahara ([kathy.sakahara@lwvskc.org](mailto:kathy.sakahara@lwvskc.org)) mentioned that there is a grant in the works to boost this effort.

**Civics Education** Because education is a fundamental role for the League, there was strong interest in promoting Civics Education, especially through the use of the textbook, *The State We’re In*.

- Units can sponsor a teacher or a school at the elementary, secondary, and community college level in their geographical area; make classroom visits; and contact school administrators.



- Units might also donate *The State We're In* to their local school or school district; to home-schoolers; and to private schools.

Contacts are Susan Vossler at [vosslers66@gmail.com](mailto:vosslers66@gmail.com) or Beth Pellicciotti at [pelliccmb@gmail.com](mailto:pelliccmb@gmail.com).

**Board Practices** Unit members were clear about their need for more information and direction from the Board. Regular visits from Board members to the Units are greatly appreciated, and Units suggest that more Board members actually join Units to get a sense of who we (Units) are and what we care about, and to learn more about the Board. With more back-and-forth between the Units and the Board, Units can take on more tasks and the Board can get a clearer picture of the wants and needs of the grassroots. There was also a call for more accounting of Board activities (such as publishing monthly minutes) from the Unit Liaison.

**Unit Practices** Unit leaders acknowledged the need for a clear focus on what our Units want to achieve, both individually and collectively. More casual meetings between units, for coffee and conversation, also could help build a sense of community ... Covid permitting, of course. If we are the grassroots, we must be able to channel our thoughts and ideas to the Board. In the past, Units spent time doing in-depth study of issues; this is a worthwhile effort and should continue. Units can bring up key topics of study that affect their communities — such as opioid addiction, homelessness, and disinformation — and propose action and request input from the Board. Members also called for an “action-feedback loop” process between the Board and Units so that topics of concern don’t get overlooked. Similarly, there was a call for the creation of a “Template for Action” for various issues and tasks that would outline the task and list steps for accomplishing it.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)** There is curiosity about how Units that are geographically based can implement ideals of diversity, equality and inclusion. More reading and discussion about this at the Unit level was suggested. Board member Tania Hino ([tania.hino@lwvskc](mailto:tania.hino@lwvskc)), who has developed Board DEI training and discussion, also has visited Units to talk about DEI and will continue to do so; she also is leading a diversity book group with the Board. This type of reading and discussion can help Units understand diversity more deeply and promote innovative thinking within Units.

**Training** Continued training in multiple areas is in big demand! Many members, even the most experienced, have benefitted from the excellent Orientation training developed by Lauren Pixley ([lauren.pixley@lwvskc.org](mailto:lauren.pixley@lwvskc.org)) and Judy Deiro ([judy.deiro@gmail.com](mailto:judy.deiro@gmail.com)); this will

be offered again in April. Members would appreciate more informal training sessions, member-to-member or Board-to-members. For example, Sarah Phillips (sarah.phillips@comcast.net) offers informal training in Zoom and Voter Registration registration training. Opportunities for on-going technology “classes” offered on a regular basis were supported by many members. In addition, Saunatina Sanchez ([membership@lwvskc.org](mailto:membership@lwvskc.org)) provides help for members, helping them “figure out what role to engage in and what support you need to be effective in that role.”

Whew! ***This is just a start*** in generating more solutions to revitalize Units! Future *Units Revitalize!* meetings will contribute more ideas, and get Units into “fighting shape” for the challenges to come as we empower voters and defend democracy!

- Please send any questions or solution suggestions to Sarah Beth Miller at [sarahbethmiller410@gmail.com](mailto:sarahbethmiller410@gmail.com) or [unitliaison@lwvskc.org](mailto:unitliaison@lwvskc.org).

## On the Shoulders of Giants

*“If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.”* Issac Newton, 1675 letter  
Photo credit: Harper’s Weekly, February 1865



In 1862, during the U.S. Civil War, amid a press of work and a shortage of men to do it, U.S. Treasurer Frances E. Spinner hired the Treasury's first female worker, Jennie Douglas, to trim money — with scissors. Over the course of the war, over 400 women worked for the Treasury Department, facing down the public outcry and a Congressional investigation about possible “immoral” behavior that might result from men and women working in the same organization. Notably, Helen L. McLean Kimball joined the Treasury work force in 1863 and rose to be chief of the Treasury Library before her retirement in 1910. Treasurer Spinner is credited today with making the first push to hire women on a large scale for the federal workforce. At the time the women at Treasury earned \$600 per year, while men in the same job made from \$1,200 to \$1,800 per year. Over 100 years later, in 1963, Congress voted in the Equal Pay Act, prohibiting discrimination in pay on the basis of sex. Today the federal government employs 897,892 women, who represent 44% of the total federal workforce.

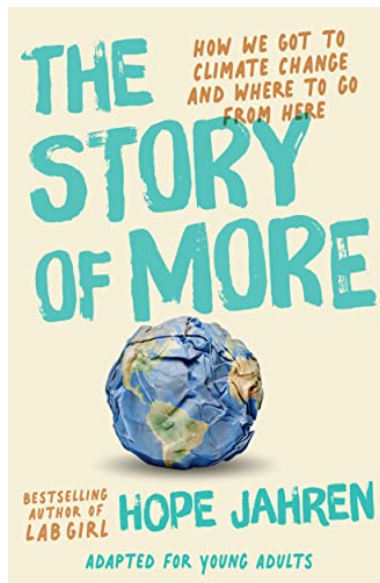
# ***The Story of More: How We Got to Climate Change and Where to Go From Here***

**Hope Jahren**

Book Review

Vicky Downs

Over the last half century “world population has increased, agriculture has intensified, and energy use has skyrocketed.” Recently our country dumped the Paris agreement on climate, dismantled much of our Environmental Protection Agency, and left the U.S. Department of Agriculture in bad shape. A new government is changing back, but Jahren shows us how the entire world has changed, and how we can do better.



She reports, “curbing population growth revolves around the elimination of gender inequality.” If we don’t change, the population will continue to grow, breaking the ten billion mark by 2100. Though she doesn’t say so directly, Jahren makes it clear we should have fewer children, and care better for those we have. More people in more cities require more in general, but especially with respect to food supplies.

I was surprised she says we grow too much food. Every plant on earth needs water and nutrients to survive and grow. Pesticides and genetically modified organisms guarantee that even as populations grow, food will be produced. Unfortunately, every year we waste a great deal of what could be good food. How? Processed corn is eaten as cornmeal, but a great deal is made into non-edibles such as gum, acid wax and oil. Humans eat “only 10% of the annual harvest.” About 45% becomes seed for the next harvest, and the other 45% will be converted directly into fertilizer. A staggering amount of food we had planned to eat is thrown into the garbage.

Regarding energy, we use more than three times more today than we did in 1970, and we Americans consume “a full 15% of the world’s production ... and almost 20% of the world’s electricity despite making up only 4% of the world’s population.” In addition, it is sobering to learn that “the average American car gets about thirty miles to the gallon ... and the average airplane goes 400 feet to the gallon.” Though a 747 jet can carry over 500 people, it is seldom completely full.

We all know ocean waters are rising, but Jahren points out that “one quarter of the earth’s population lives less than sixty miles from the coastal oceans.” She adds that sea level rise will likely displace thousands, and make local drinking water, and farming nearby fields, impossible for thousands more.



Jahren (*pictured left*) asks, “Do you want to live in a more equitable world with a brighter future?” If so, it’s worth reading her final pages divided into sections showing us how to go about examining our values, gathering information, and picking out one activity to get started.

Looking for ways to use less, I realize it is possibly good news that several newspapers report more Americans say they are not planning to have children, and it makes me proud of those who adopted babies, whose parents were unable to care for them.

E.O. Wilson has written that our Earth may prove to be the only life-bearing planet within ten light years. As a result, I know I’m not doing enough, though I try to never throw out food, and am looking for ways to fly less.

How about you?

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*Editor’s note:* Jahren’s other book, *Lab Girl*, is also an inspiring read, about her career as a pioneering woman scientist grappling with mental illness.

## We'd Like to Hear From You!

*Not sure who to reach?* You can always find us at [info@lwvskc.org](mailto:info@lwvskc.org) or 206-329-4848!

**Membership coordinator** Saunatina Sanchez is at [membership@lwvskc.org](mailto:membership@lwvskc.org) and holds in-person and virtual office hours. Check our [events calendar](#)!

**Want to stop by our office?** We have office hours every Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. We're located at:

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