
The Voter

A newsletter from



Our mission

The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Want to work with us? Become a [member](#)!

Want to reach us? We're at info@lwvskc.org!

Election day deadline is Tuesday, November 2! Find out more [here](#).

November Forum: Behavioral Health Find out more [here](#).

The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County and The Seattle Times Mental Health Project invite you to a virtual forum –

The Behavioral Health System in King County:

Challenges, Innovations and Opportunities in Addressing Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

Thursday, November 4
7–8:30 p.m



Hannah Furfaro



Isabel Jones



Sharayah Lane



Rep. Nicole Macri



Jim Vollendroff

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Election day deadline is Tuesday, November 2!

- **Mailing your ballot?** Do so by tomorrow, Friday, October 29.
- **Using a ballot drop box?** Do so by 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 2.
- Still need to **register**, or want to **vote in person**? You can find a Vote Center [here](#).

Did you already cast your ballot? **Reach out to your friends and family!** Call or text at least three people you care about and help them make an easy four-step **voting plan**:

1. Is their registration current? [VoteWA.gov](#) is the place to check.
2. When will they fill out their ballot? Would they like to get together and fill it out over coffee or beers?
3. Do they need information? [Vote411.org](#) is a League resource to learn about who and what is on our ballots, find a polling place, and understand vote-by-mail. And the [WA State General Election Voters' Guide](#) and the [King County Guide to What's on the Ballot](#) are great resources too.
4. When and where will they return their ballot? By mail? Or, help them find the nearest [drop box](#). Or, can you give them a ride, or help them plan a route via bus or light rail, to a convenient [Vote Center](#)?

Why do I vote? Sharing a personal story is a proven technique for voter mobilization.

- What's **your** story? VoteForward, a 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization, has a [worksheet](#) to help you craft a heartfelt personal message.

All our many **candidate forums** are on video at [lwvskc.org](#). Some highlights:

- We co-sponsored the **Shoreline Council** candidate forum with [Save Shoreline Trees](#). Our 48 participants asked the four unopposed candidates – Laura Mork, Eben Pobe, John Ramsdell, and Chris Roberts (incumbent) – questions such as, “How do you see the interaction of racial equity and diversity with environmental sustainability?”
- Our forum for **Seattle City Attorney** candidates Ann Davison and Nicole Thomas-Kennedy drew over 30 attendees, with questions on how to provide youth development programs to prevent delinquency, and how to effectively manage the caseload of the department by determining which crimes to prosecute.

- Horizon House and the First Hill Unit of LWVSKC jointly held the forum for **Seattle City Mayor** candidates Bruce Harrell and M. Lorena Gonzales. The candidates responded to questions ranging from homelessness plans to the reimagination of the police force.

Want to track your ballot? Look [here](#).

Curious about voter turnout? King County overall averaged 42 percent voter turnout in the 2017 local elections, and Seattle City 49 percent. The 2021 updates are available [here](#).



This election season reminds us that democracy in America isn't a given.

We must all work to defend it.

[**DONATE**](#)

November Forum: Behavioral Health

Now co-sponsored with The Seattle Times Mental Health Project!

Thursday, November 4 , 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm, via Zoom

The Behavioral Health System In King County: Challenges, Innovations & Opportunities

Mary Taylor

The League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County and The Seattle Times Mental Health Project invite you to a virtual forum –

The Behavioral Health System in King County:

Challenges, Innovations and Opportunities in Addressing Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

Thursday, November 4
7-8:30 p.m



Please join the League of Women Voters of Seattle King County and The Seattle Times Mental Health Project on Thursday, November 4, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm for a forum on the current state of publicly funded Behavioral Health (mental health and substance use disorders) treatment and services in King County.

Hannah Furfaro, reporter for The Seattle Times Mental Health Project, will moderate the forum.

Panelists include:

Sharayah Lane Acting Program Manager at Philanthropy Northwest, Member of the Lummi Nation, and Person with Lived Experience

Isabel Jones Deputy Director of Behavioral Health for King County

Representative Nicole Macri State Representative for the 43rd legislative district and Deputy Director for Strategy at the Downtown Emergency Services Center

Jim Vollendroff Behavioral Health Senior Advisor for Policy and Advocacy for the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Washington

What you need to know about behavioral health services: Accessible and effective behavioral health treatment and services are critical to the persons confronting these disorders and to their community. The quality of behavioral health services is a "... major public policy issue worthy of increased understanding and advocacy as referenced in the Mission Statement of the League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County." According to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([SAMSHA](#)), "the impact of untreated behavioral health conditions on individuals' lives and the cost of health care delivery in the United States is staggering".

These concerns are echoed in a 2017-2018 King County Policy Paper on Behavioral Health. In a section on overview of needs, authors note a disproportionate number of people with untreated behavioral health conditions become involved in the criminal justice system, visit emergency departments on a higher-than-average basis, and are disproportionately affected by homelessness. In a [paper](#) on homelessness in support of the 2019-2020 King County Executive Budget, inadequate access to behavioral health treatment services was second only to lack of affordable housing in a list of five root causes of homelessness in King County.

In King County, and across the state, the funding, structure, and delivery of Medicaid-funded behavioral health services has undergone significant changes following the passing of WA State Substitute Senate Bill 6312 in 2014. Legislation required the

integration of two separate service systems, mental health, and substance use disorders, into one behavioral health system, followed by integration of behavioral health and physical health which [King County completed](#) in January 2019. As a result, for residents on Medicaid, their physical health, mental health, and substance use disorder treatment services are under a [managed care plan](#). The King County Behavioral Health and Recovery Division (KC- BHRD) has developed a unique model in partnership with the State's managed care plans, to manage behavioral health programs for over 400,000 low-income King County residents, through a public-private partnership model called the King County Integrated Care Network.

Efforts aimed at improving community response in King County to behavioral health crises through innovative and effective interventions are underway at the Behavioral Health Institute ([BHI](#)), which operates as part of Harborview Medical Center and in partnership with the UW Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. According to their website: "The Behavioral Health Institute (BHI) brings together innovation, research, and clinical practice to advance mental health and addiction stabilization and treatment." In 2020, voters approved Proposition 1, Harborview Medical Center Health and Safety Improvement Bonds, which will fund a new Behavioral Health Building. Plans for the new building include consolidation of Harborview outpatient behavioral health services into a single healing and therapeutic environment. The [new building](#) will also house the BHI and its programs, including a 24/7 crisis stabilization unit (CSU), the First Episode Psychosis program, and the Training, Workforce and Policy Innovation Center. Preconstruction work is scheduled to occur between 2021 and 2023, with construction taking place between 2023 and 2025.

Already in progress is the King County Health through Homelessness initiative. Made possible by the WA State Legislature, King County is dedicating one tenth of one cent of sales tax revenues for the purchase of hotels, motels, and other single-room settings to house people experiencing chronic homelessness. By the end of 2022, King County will partner with local jurisdictions and create 1600 [supportive housing units](#). The sites may serve as emergency or permanent housing and will be staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. In addition to case management and employment counseling, staff will also provide access to health and behavioral health services. This could reach people with untreated behavioral health disorders who are ready for treatment and services if they are readily accessible.

During the last legislative session, the Washington State Legislature passed [E2SHB 1477](#), a measure endorsed by LWVWA which implements the 988 system in Washington, the three-digit number for behavioral health emergencies, to be implemented nationwide by July 2022. As the legislation notes, 6,000 Washington adults and children died by suicide

in the last five years, according to the federal centers for disease control and prevention. The legislation also requires enhancement and expansion of behavioral health crisis response and suicide prevention services, such as increasing mobile crisis teams and crisis stabilization facilities. An improved system will reduce reliance on emergency room services and the use of law enforcement response to behavioral health crises, and will stabilize individuals in the community whenever possible.

Lastly, behavioral health treatment and services is about recovery. People do recover with the right support. [Title 2.43](#) of the King County Code states that today's behavioral health system shall be based on the goals and principles of recovery and resiliency within a trauma-informed framework. A trauma-informed, recovery- and resiliency-focused system offers respect, information, connection, and hope.

A guide to League positions on behavioral health is on our website [here](#).

Questions for your discussions about this forum:

- What did you learn about the Behavioral Health system in King County (Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders)?
- Do you feel more or less hopeful about the state of behavioral health in King County after viewing the forum. Why or why not?
- What stood out to you as the most glaring gap in services?
- Which of the programs or approaches did you find most promising?
- If you could ask Sharaya Lane additional questions, what would they be? Was hearing her story helpful to understanding behavioral health needs and treatment? If so, in what way?
- As a League member, do you have ideas about how or if the League should advocate for more resources for behavioral health in King County? Is this a particular concern of yours?
- If I had the job of Isabel Jones, Deputy Director of Behavioral Health for King County (or any other speaker's job), I would ...

December Forum Preview: Homelessness

Thursday, December 2 from 7:00 pm to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom

Peter Shapiro



Our December Forum on homelessness will review its many causes and effects, and current approaches to prevent and

mitigate this county-wide problem. The forum will focus on proven methods to help the many chronically homeless persons living on our sidewalks, in our parks, and other public places, by providing them with permanent supportive housing and stability. A second focus will be the transition to a regional approach for preventing and reducing homelessness. The newly operational King County Regional Homelessness Authority will consolidate those efforts beginning January 2022. Two years ago, our Forum on homelessness featured the legislative work taking place to create the Authority. Now we will focus on the nascent operations of the Authority.

Erica C. Barnett, publisher and editor at [Publicola](#), will moderate the forum.

Panelists will include:

Alison Eisinger Executive Director, Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness

Daniel Malone Executive Director, Downtown Emergency Service Center

Marc Dones Chief Executive Officer, King County Regional Homelessness Authority

Cynthia Stewart Housing and Homeless Issues Chair, League of Women Voters of Washington

Questions? Contact Peter Shapiro at j.peter.shapiro@gmail.com.

Solidarity With, and Aid to, our League Colleagues in Texas



LWVSKC recently wrote to the League in Texas to express our solidarity with the Texas League's "condemnation of the Supreme Court's refusal to rule on Texas's near-ban on abortions," considering the ban as "an unconstitutional attack on human rights and the practice of medicine."

We also offered our support. "If you believe letters from other Leagues to government officials or other correspondence could provide support, we are offering to do this work...please let us know what your priorities are." Read the letter in full [here](#).

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!

As my predecessor, Roslyn Duffy, has written here, the League is a grass**roots** organization. And the League's roots are its **units**. Units generate the connections, ideas, and knowledge that make the larger state and national Leagues informed and effective. But these roots – **units** – need to be well-tended, and their new offshoots must be nurtured, as well. While our units accomplish many tasks, their essential value is growing connections among our members.

Tending, nurturing, growing ...how do unit leaders and members accomplish this?

League Links is one of the ways that units can promote and enrich connections among members.

- In the League Links model, small groups or individual members become specialists in a *Hot Topic* of their choice. These *Hot Topics* are drawn from the Program Planning suggestions that emerged from LWVSKC January 2021 Forum, but unit members are invited to contribute their own ideas. *Hot Topics* include, but are not restricted to:
 - affordable housing
 - police and law enforcement Issues
 - healthcare
 - climate change
 - civics education
 - homelessness
 - criminal justice
 - mental health
 - local taxation and tax policy
 - public school equity

- gun control
- college debt funding.
- Unit specialists research their chosen topics. At monthly unit meetings, the unit specialists report on new developments about their topics. This sharing engenders rich conversations and ideas within the unit, and these “new shoots” inform the League as a whole.
- League Links are a way for members to increase their own knowledge and share it with unit cohorts. It is also a practice which encourages every member to be responsible for contributing to the Unit meeting. Ideas and concerns expressed at the root-level units can then sprout upwards to inform the regional and state League positions.

Want to know more about League Links and Hot Topics? Units Unite Us each month will spotlight different *Hot Topics* and describe how different units address them. This month, I want to shine the light on ***civics education***. Providing civics education to the public is a time-honored League tradition, and our methods for doing so benefit from periodic updates. North Seattle Unit member Susan Vossler is involved in the state League’s current civics education project to create a civics inventory for students in Washington State. Last year LWVWA’s Civics Education Committee created a full inventory of civic activities that engage adults. Now the Committee is looking to the future and focusing on activities that engage young people. Susan is connecting with LWVSKC Units to describe the civics inventory and to gather examples of activities that LWVSKC Units have offered to students, at the elementary, high school, or post-secondary level, or youth groups. Input from each Unit will be helpful to other Units and Leagues around the state. To learn more about this project, contact Susan Vossler at vosslers66@gmail.com.

ClubExpress outreach coming for our units! As we move forward, units will have additional ways of connecting to each other and the League via our website. We want to be sure every unit member feels comfortable logging in and will be doing outreach to the units in November to help! In addition, Communications Chair Lisa Nelson is always willing to guide you through the new site. Please reach out to her at communications@lwvskc.org with your questions.

The Board wants to get acquainted with your unit! The Board of the LWVSKC hopes to engage with leaders and members at the unit level to learn about the issues that members care about. Board members also want to share their interests and efforts with LWVSKC

Units. Want to connect with Board members to learn more about how the Board ticks, or a topic like Voter Services or diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)?
Contact Sarah Beth Miller at unitliaison@lwvskc.org.

Interested in Education?

Joanna Cullen



Our Education Committee meets on the third Saturday of the month, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, via Zoom. Our meetings are open to all League members and the public. The next meeting is November 20. To join us, contact Joanna Cullen at jfoxcullen@gmail.com, or check for the link in LWVSKC's weekly email.

Our October meeting included a discussion with Action Chair Lev Elson-Schwab on a synergistic relationship between the Action Chair and LWVSKC Committees such as Education, along with ongoing conversations regarding our goals and possible topics for a forum. We also concentrate on educating ourselves, integrating our work into educational forums, and providing information on endorsement activities.

Board Brief

Heather Kelly, President



In keeping with our goal of creating greater community cohesion in the League, the Board is continuing to deepen its understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Our approach is to learn, reflect, take responsibility, and strategize.

A primary source of support for our Board in this area is Board member Tania Hino. In addition to her League work, Tania founded [Somos Mujeres Latinas](#), an organization dedicated to connecting, educating, and empowering Latinas. I deeply appreciate the wisdom and experience Tania brings to our group.

Before our last meeting, Tania created a survey for us to take about our exposure to DEI concepts and familiarity with resources. Based on our responses, she selected a book for

us to read together: *White Tears, Brown Scars: How White Feminism Betrays Women of Color*, by Ruby Hamad. I'm a few chapters in and already I have a richer understanding of the ways that colonizers positioned white women as morally superior to women of color, and how white feminists weaponized those same stereotypes against feminists of color. It is sobering to consider that part of our work today involves bridging a gulf that our founders and their colleagues helped create.



Along with our reading, the Board finalized our agreements for how we want to treat each other as a team. These agreements are designed to balance different styles and promote kindness, trust, and accountability. Now we will work on putting them into practice!

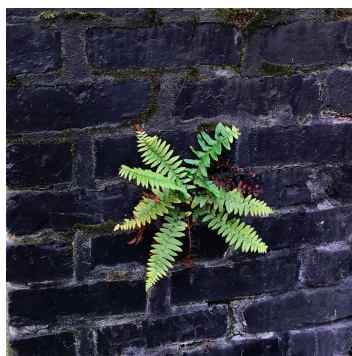
A majority of the board will meet later this month to continue revising our strategic plan, including adding a DEI goal with specific objectives.

I feel so fortunate to be part of a League that puts relationships first, and to be learning from such incredible community leaders and activists like Tania. If you're interested in following along with our reading, please pick up a copy of [White Tears, Brown Scars](#) and email me at president@lwvskc.org so we can get discussion going!

A DEI Policy Conundrum

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Learning Lab #10

Heather Kelly



The LWWUS DEI policy expressly states our commitment to equity. However, it then goes on to provide that “[t]here shall be no barriers to full participation” in the League based on a member’s characteristics, including “thinking style, personality type... political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.” (Read the full policy [here](#).)

Conflict can arise when you entitle everyone to “full participation” without explaining how that aligns with our goal of equity. For instance, suppose a League group meets to discuss homelessness. The group’s guidelines require members to yield the floor to anyone who has experienced a form of oppression relevant to the topic at hand. In the discussion, a member reveals she was formerly homeless and

shares at length about that experience. When she finishes speaking, another member brings up an unsightly tent encampment in her neighborhood, which she believes the city should address. The discussion leader steers the conversation back to the first person, and the meeting ends before the second speaker can make her point.

Hence the conundrum: By centering the discussion on the first person, has the discussion leader created a barrier to full participation for the second speaker? If not, then what does “full participation” mean and who gets to define it?

The League has been working hard to acknowledge that systematic oppression has impacted specific groups more than others, so it’s confusing to me that we put characteristics like race and gender on equal footing with “personality type” in our own DEI policy. That phrasing suggests that our goal is equality rather than equity.

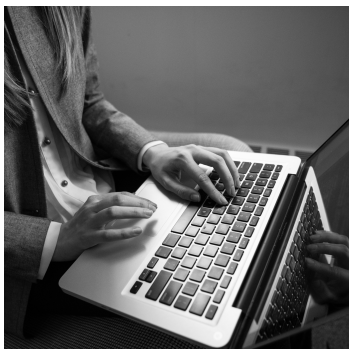
While the scenario above is hypothetical, I worry that people will cite our DEI policy to demand respect for political viewpoints that undermine or distract from our mission. I worry that the ambiguities of the DEI policy, incorporated by reference into our bylaws, make us vulnerable to false accusations of hypocrisy. Even when everyone is acting in good faith, confusion seems inevitable.

Racial justice activist Paula Dressel reminds us that “The route to achieving equity will not be accomplished through treating everyone equally. It will be achieved by treating everyone justly according to their circumstances.” I would be more comfortable with a policy that expressed that sentiment, framing our intent in positive terms with a reference to what we will do rather than a list of biases we will avoid.

What’s your take on this issue? Share your thoughts with me at president@lwvskc.org.

ClubExpress: Logging in Helps the League!

Lisa Nelson



Thank you to all the League members who have logged in to our new website! We encourage every member to log in by November 30.

Only by logging in can you see the Membership Directory, add yourself to it, participate in member discussion forums, and register for members-only volunteer opportunities.

You can find step-by-step instructions, with images, explaining how to log in on our [Tech Tips](#) page.

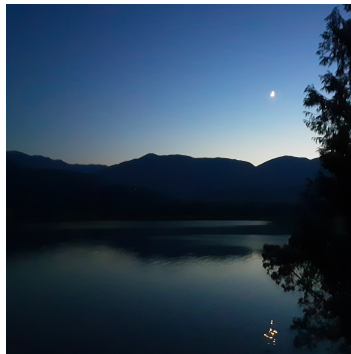
Remember, when you log in, you help us manage the League more efficiently. That means more time and resources can go directly to our mission of empowering voters and defending democracy.

See you on the site!

Our New Website, Cybersecurity, and You

Kathryn Hoffman

Photo k.kennel



You may have noticed when you first logged in as a member that our new website, [here](#), offers you the opportunity to fill in your member profile, with information such as your address, phone number, and birthdate, and a separate option to store credit card information.

We want you to know that this information is stored securely. League of Women Voters of Seattle-King County uses this information only to:

- administer the League
- provide services for members
- maintain accurate and complete financial records
- fulfill its legal obligations in accordance with laws pertaining to non-profits
- strengthen and grow the organization
- communicate with you about news and activities
- advocate for issues that are important to members.

You also can be sure that our leadership – Board members, committee chairs, event organizers and the like – will never ask you to send money, gift cards, or financial information directly to them, rather than to the League.

A link to our complete Privacy Policy can be found at the bottom of every page on the website. It might be dull, but we strongly encourage you to read it!

Here's a refresher on some other cybersecurity fundamentals, just like Grandma used to say:

Don't talk to strangers

Many successful cybersecurity attacks involve tactics that we – and our grandmas – would recognize as suspicious immediately if we were face-to-face. A nice young man in a crisp uniform shows up and asks to enter your home to “check on” your electrical panel, even though you never requested service? Most likely you'd ask for identification, or call the power company's customer service line to confirm the young man's bona fides.

How might this translate to on-line today? In the “do me a favor?” scam, you might receive an email that *seems* to be from someone you know – a pastor, a school principal ... maybe even a friend from the League! The scam-sender asks you for a favor involving money, such as asking you to purchase gift cards for a purpose related to your shared interests, including sending along the redemption codes on the back. The scammer then claims the value of the card – it's almost impossible to trace, and you're left without redress or reimbursement. You can learn more about this and other on-line scams, courtesy of the Federal Trade Commission, [here](#).

- **Tip:** Before granting access or sharing information on-line, be sure of the other party's identity and the legitimacy of the request. In doubt? Feeling cautious? Pick up the phone!
- **Want to be extra careful?** Your personal information, even if it seems insignificant, might be useful for the next stage of a cybersecurity attack. You want to skip that Facebook quiz – the quiz-makers collect not only the information you type in, but a great deal of other information on you *and* your friends through Facebook. Or if the other party doesn't need precise information, your conscience can be clear if you fudge your answers. That supermarket loyalty program does not need your exact date of birth, so you can give them one that's close enough. If their database comes under attack next week, your name and birthdate won't be available for identity thieves to scoop up.

Look both ways before you cross the street

The walk/don't walk signal at the crosswalk won't keep you safe if a drunk driver is steering a huge truck down the street – you need to look both ways before you cross. Similarly, the https:// prefix or the lock symbol in your browser are signals of safety, but you still need your common sense and some healthy skepticism.

- **Tips:** Slow down, look around, and think before you click links or provide information. For example, is the website's name spelled correctly? Does a message contain non-idiomatic grammatical errors?
- **Want to be extra careful?** Email is especially easy to spoof and manipulate. Moreover, scams and harmful software can seem to come from a friend whose email has been compromised. You can turn off images and delivery confirmations in your settings to help safeguard your information. You can also copy links to a plain text editor and inspect them, or use search in your browser to find the cited resource yourself. Need help? The *New York Times* [Wirecutter](#) series provides easy-to-follow directions. Or ask a savvy friend you trust – we're all here to help each other.

Use protection. Yes, on your computer and your phone too.

- **Tips:** Use unique passwords – don't put all your eggs in one basket! – and update to new ones at least once a year. Avoid public wifi; use your phone's cell data instead. Keep your software up-to-date by turning on automatic update reminders. Both Windows and Mac OS X come with firewalls – named Windows Firewall and Mac Firewall – which can help screen out hackers, viruses, and other malicious activity that occurs over the internet.
- **Want to be extra careful?** Consider using VPN (Virtual Private Network) software to encrypt your data across the internet. A password manager program can help keep your strong passwords secure and easy to use. [Consumer Reports](#) reviews password managers and other cybersecurity tools.

Remembrances

Photo k. kennell

It is with sadness that we note the recent passing of two League members, David Griffith and Kiku Hayashi.



David Griffith

October 7, 1943 - September 4, 2021

Born and raised in Richmond, Virginia, David graduated from George Wythe High School and the University of Virginia School of Engineering in Charlottesville. He also earned a master's in Electrical Engineering from the University of Maryland. Dave began his career with Bell Laboratories and moved to Pacific Northwest Bell, now Century Link/Lumen, when he and wife Pat moved to Seattle in 1974. He came to Seattle with Boeing, working on the Command Post aircraft project. After working with the phone company he went on to work on telecommunications policy with the Washington Utilities Commission and 911 communications and emergency services.

David would want to be remembered for his twelve years as a board member of the ACLU of Washington, his volunteer journalist work on civil rights and community action for KBCS radio station, and his work planning for fiber optics. He joined the League as a supporter of his wife, long-time LWV member Pat Griffith, and is remembered as a genial presence at, and supporter of, League events and forums. Pat has served as a LWVSKC board member and a LWVWA lobby team member, and is known for much other committee work.

David leaves his wife Patrice, daughter Shoshana and son-in-law Jim Galindo of Alexandria, Virginia, and two grandchildren, Robin and Rosemary.

Kiku Hayashi

December 17, 1942 - September, 2021

First Hill Unit member Kiku Hayashi passed away unexpectedly but peacefully the weekend of September 11.

She was born December 17, 1942, in Rohwer, Arkansas, in a World War II Japanese-American internment camp. Perhaps the injustice of this situation kindled her lifelong support of civil rights, democracy, and community organizations.

After graduation from the University of Washington, Kiku began a 30-plus year career with Boeing. A staunch Democrat, she was given a lifetime achievement award by the Metropolitan Democratic Club of Seattle for her work. She joined the League in 2010 and was a passionate community volunteer in this and other organizations. She served on a number of boards, including the Board of LWVSKC from 2016 to 2020. Members of the First Hill Unit remember her as a regular attendee at monthly meetings, often followed by a visit to the Horizon House "Monday Market" and lunch with her friend Joan Lawson. She loved her cat.

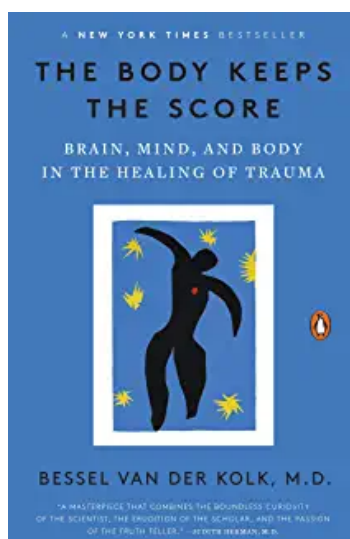
Her generous heart and loving spirit will be greatly missed, as a tireless advocate for many causes and an inspiration to many.

- If you know of a League member who has passed away, please [contact the office](#) so that we may remember them in *The Voter*.

***The Body Keeps The Score*, Bessel van der Kolk**

Book Review

Vicky Downs



Trauma is a fact of life for a great many people. "The terrible aftermath of combat is felt by veterans and their families. One in five Americans was sexually molested as a child. One in four grew up with alcoholics. One in three couples have engaged in physical violence."

"Trauma happens to us, our friends and families and to our neighbors." It affects those who are exposed to it – and those around them. By definition, trauma is unbearable and intolerable. Those affected cannot stand to think about it, and

try to get it out of their minds as if nothing happened, and move on with life.

Unfortunately, our brain cannot easily deny what happened. A tiny hint of the person, place, or event that caused the trauma can secrete enormous amounts of stress hormones that lead to “unpleasant emotions, impulsive and aggressive actions and often feeling out of control.”

Traumatic stress “literally rearranges the brain wiring.” Other parts of the body can also be affected. Many of us have heard of post-traumatic stress disorder that we associate with the military. Developmental trauma disorder is a diagnosis for the cumulative effect of chronic child abuse. Flashbacks, recurring nightmares, and loss of control can overwhelm and shut down someone affected by trauma.

Though there seems to be no perfect treatment for this, we do know the brain will be affected. The brain’s most important job is to ensure our survival, even under the most miserable conditions. “It is the brain that tells us when we need food, rest, protection, sex and shelter.” It will even show us a way to satisfy the need, and generate the energy to get us there. Usually it warns us of dangers and opportunities and helps us adjust our actions based on the requirements of the moment.

However, “psychological problems occur when we are too paralyzed to move and our actions don’t respond to our needs or our relationships to the brain break down.” What can we do?

Nobody can “treat” a horrendous event from war, abuse, rape, or molestation, because what happened cannot be undone. Trauma robs you of the feeling you are in charge of your life. The challenge is “to reestablish ownership of your body and your mind—of your self.”



“For most people, this involves finding a way to become calm and focused, learning to maintain that calm in response to images, thoughts, sounds or physical sensations that remind you of the past,” writes Bessel van der Kolk (*pictured left*). You will also need to find a way to be fully alive in the present ... and not keep secrets about the way you managed to survive. I was surprised that simply learning to focus on one’s breathing can be remarkably helpful. Practicing yoga can help too. Psychiatrists are often needed, but they tend to be costly for many.

Though this book has much to say about trauma, it does not inform us how the poor, the homeless, and historically marginalized communities can find the assistance they need. These groups once again seem to be “disproportionately underserved.” Fortunately, this book does show us what the path to psychiatric health looks like, and that can suggest ways we might help those who are less able to help themselves.

We'd Like to Hear From You!

Not sure who to reach? You can always find us at info@lwvskc.org or 206-329-4848!

Executive Committee of the Board of LWVSKC

President	Heather Kelly	president@lwvskc.org
First Vice-President	Kathy Sakahara	kathy.sakahara@lwvskc.org
Second Vice-President	Barbara Tengtio	2ndVP@lwvskc.org
Secretary	Barbara Erickson	secretary@lwvskc.org
Treasurer	Marilee Fuller	treasurer@lwvskc.org

Directors of the Board of LWVSKC

Action Chair	Lev Elson-Schwab	action@lwvskc.org
Communications Chair	Lisa Nelson	communications@lwvskc.org
Voter Services Co-Chair	Chelsea Jordan	voterservice@lwvskc.org
Voter Services Co-Chair	Sara Thein	voterservice@lwvskc.org
Volunteer Coordinator	Lauren Pixley	lauren.pixley@lwvskc.org
Program Chair	Adele Reynolds	program@lwvskc.org
Unit Liaison	Sarah Beth Miller	unitliaison@lwvskc.org
Director-at-Large	Mary Taylor	mary.taylor@lwvskc.org
Director-at-Large	Tania Hino	tania.hino@lwvskc.org
Development Chair	Meg Van Wyk	meg.vanwyk@lwvskc.org

Education Fund of LWVSKC

Board members also serve as the Education Fund Board.

Treasurer	Katie Dudley	eftreasurer@lwvskc.org
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Committee Chairs for LWVSKC

Economics and Taxation	Nora Leach	nleech2002@yahoo.com
Education	Joanna Cullen	jfoxcullen@gmail.com
City Climate Action	Calli Rudolfi, interim	callie@ridolfi.com
Investment	Cindy Piennett	cindypiennett@gmail.com
Observer Corps	Heather Kelly	president@lwvskc.org

Nominating Committee for LWV-SKC

Chair	Joanna Cullen	nominations@lwvskc.org
Member	Jerri Gordon	nominations@lwvskc.org
Member	Pat Griffith	nominations@lwvskc.org

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Find us on the web at lwvskc.org!

