

THE VOTER



This Newsletter is published by and for the
League of Women Voters of Yakima County
PO Box 723, Yakima, WA 98907 509-452-3419

On the Web at:
<https://lwvyakimacounty.org>
Find us on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/>

June / July, 2023
Vol.24, No 3

We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work on the traditional lands of the fourteen Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation.

MISSION STATEMENT:

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

VISION:

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.

VALUE STATEMENT:

The League believes in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy.

Leadership Team

President: Lee Murdock
Secretary: Betty Van Ryder
Treasurer and Membership:
Janis Luvaas

Dori Baker-Peralta
Criss Bardill
Steve Hill
Kitty Jubran
Karri Livingston
Karen Pilon
Cindy Olivas
Ulla Whitmont

Voter Editor: Susan Kaphammer
509-949-0127; susanlkap@gmail.com

The Leadership Team currently meets at 4:30 PM, usually the first Monday of the month at the YWCA, 818 W Yakima Ave, Yakima.

All members are welcome.

CALENDAR

Monday, JULY 10: LEADERSHIP TEAM. Normally meets the 1st Monday of each month at 4:30 PM at YWCA. Members always welcome.

Sundays, JULY 23, AUGUST 20, SEPTEMBER 17 and OCTOBER 15: LWVYC BOOTH at FARMERS MARKET. 9AM to 1 PM, Downtown Yakima. Contact Lee Murdock to volunteer at our booth. It is easy and fun!

Thursdays, JULY 27, AUGUST 24 and SEPTEMBER 28: COMMUNITY CONVERSATION. 5:30 PM at Wesley Methodist Church, 14 N 48th Ave, Yakima. *See scheduled speakers below.*

Thursday, JULY 14: VOTER SERVICES COMMITTEE. Noon to 1 PM at C & S Coffeehouse, Terrace Heights.

VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE
Tuesday, AUGUST 1: PRIMARY ELECTION DAY!
VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE VOTE



Community Conversations

JULY 27: OIC Panel, OIC Programs and Services

AUGUST 24: Quinn Dalan and Jessica Mendez, Yakima County Volunteer Attorney Services

SEPTEMBER 28: Stan Hauck, Beekeeper

4th Thursday of the Month
5:30 – 7:00 PM at Wesley Methodist Church
14 N 48th Ave (48th and Chestnut)

Message from LWVYC President...

THE ENDURING SIGNIFICANCE OF NONPARTISANSHIP

In a world often divided by political affiliations and partisan discourse, the League of Women Voters stands as a beacon of nonpartisanship. With a rich history and an unwavering commitment to empowering voters and defending democracy, the League exemplifies the enduring value of nonpartisanship. By transcending political biases and fostering inclusivity, the League serves as a driving force in decision-making processes, promoting fairness, objectivity, and a collective pursuit of the greater good.

- **Promoting Fairness, Objectivity, and Rigorous Processes** - At the heart of nonpartisanship lies a commitment to fairness, objectivity, and the development of positions through a rigorous process. The League of Women Voters understands the importance of separating issues from politics, as exemplified by President Lincoln's policy of having advisors from both parties. This approach recognizes that diverse perspectives contribute to well-rounded decision-making. It also resonates with my own personal experience of being in a bi-partisan marriage for over 20 years. Through dialogue and mutual understanding, I have learned the value of seeking common ground and focusing on shared goals, rather than being solely influenced by political affiliations.
- **Inclusivity: The Key to Progress and Position Development** - Nonpartisanship within the League fosters an inclusive environment where all voices are valued and heard. While the League's positions may be viewed as progressive, it is important to recognize that amidst even the most divisive issues, there is often a common goal that unites us. By engaging in open-minded discussions and embracing a rigorous process of research and analysis, the League ensures that its positions are rooted in a comprehensive understanding of complex issues. This commitment to inclusivity and the pursuit of common ground allows for the development of positions that reflect the diverse perspectives within the League and the broader community.
- **Safeguarding Against Polarization through Constructive Dialogue** - In an era marked by increasing polarization, the League's commitment to nonpartisanship plays a crucial role in mitigating its detrimental effects. By promoting constructive dialogue, the League provides a platform where members can engage in meaningful discussions without the burden of rigid party lines. This emphasis on respectful discourse enables the pursuit of shared goals and encourages the exploration of solutions that transcend ideological boundaries. Nonpartisanship thus becomes a vital safeguard against the dangers of polarization, preserving the League's effectiveness and impact.
- **Strengthening Trust and Governance** - Nonpartisanship lies at the core of effective governance and the promotion of trust in institutions. By upholding an unbiased and inclusive approach, the League reinforces its credibility as a trusted advocate for voters and defenders of democracy. The rigorous process employed by the League in developing its positions further enhances this trust, demonstrating a commitment to thorough research, evidence-based analysis, and thoughtful decision-making. It is through this dedication to nonpartisanship and the recognition of common goals that the League continues to empower individuals, strengthen communities, and advance the collective well-being of our society.

As we navigate an increasingly polarized world, the value of nonpartisanship, exemplified by the League of Women Voters, becomes ever more crucial. By prioritizing fairness, objectivity, inclusivity, and a rigorous process in developing positions, the League serves as a model for effective governance and democratic engagement. Through its unwavering commitment to nonpartisanship, the League empowers individuals, strengthens communities, and advances the collective well-being of our society. In embracing nonpartisanship, we uphold the principles that lie at the heart of a thriving democracy—a democracy where every voice is heard, every vote counts, and every individual feels empowered to shape the future.

Lee Murdock, President, League of Women Voters of Yakima County

LWVYC Annual Meeting...

POSITIONS RE-ADOPTED AND LEADERSHIP TEAM ELECTED

Our Annual Meeting opened on June 21 with a light dinner and lively conversations. When League business got underway, LWVYC Consensus Positions were presented in hard copy. These 17 statements on Government, Natural Resources, and Social Policy have been studied and adopted by our local League, and were re-adopted at this meeting as consensus of our membership. These positions are available in full on our website at <https://lwvyakimacounty.org/league-positions/#ConsensusPositionStatements>.

President Lee Murdock highlighted the emerging group, Yakima County Civic Engagement Collective. Our League and Lee Murdock in particular, have been instrumental in forming this group, aiming to bring together non-partisan organizations to promote voter registration, voter education and get-out-the-vote efforts. The group is moving forward in planning for a variety of events at various locations around the valley, including Ballot Walk Throughs with our Voter Services Committee.

Accepting the report of the Nominating Committee, the membership re-elected Lee Murdock as President, Betty Van Ryder as Secretary, and Susan Kaphammer (*Voter* editor) and Criss Bardill on the Leadership Team. Newly elected to the Leadership Team are Cindy Olivas (with a full term after being appointed in Feb. 2023), and Ulla Whitmont. Continuing to fulfill terms through 2024 are Janis Luvaas as Treasurer and Membership Chair, Karri Livingston (Voter Services Chair), and Karen Pilon, Kitty Jubran, Steve Hill and Dori Baker-Peralta on the Leadership Team.

A special **WELCOME** to Ulla Whitmont upon joining the Leadership Team. A huge *thank you!* to all of the individuals who are committed to the Leadership Team in leading our organization to meet our mission and fulfill our vision! And heartfelt **Appreciation** to Quinn Dalan and Cheri Kilty for their previous service on our Leadership Team.

Community Organizer Address...

NEED FOR CIVIC EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTED BY SPEAKER

Community Organizer, Audel Ramirez, spoke at our LWVYC Annual Meeting on “Increasing Voter Participation in the Yakima Valley.” Born in Mexico and raised back and forth between Mexico and Los Angeles, Audel has lived in Yakima for the past 15 years. He has been involved in community organizing since 2015 with special attention to Latino voting. He shared the history of recent redistricting efforts in the County and walked through the reason why they were needed.

In 2015, there was a lawsuit filed against the City of Yakima under the Voting Rights Act of 1968 – the decision from that lawsuit, to redistrict the City of Yakima into seven individual districts (with district only elections), was the basis used for designing the Washington State Voting Rights Act of 2018. This Act was utilized in the 2021 lawsuit against Yakima County which resulted in a settlement which included redistricting which eliminated the at-large voting, which Ramirez explains, diluted the Latino vote.

Prior to these lawsuit, Latino candidates would win in their primary elections, but lost the general election. This contributed to lower turnout as people did not value voting if it didn't make any change they can see. But tight margins in many elections means an increase in voting could change the outcomes. Ramirez identified several strategies to increase voter participation: Civic Education, Community Outreach, Candidate Development, Culture Change to value the vote, and Empowerment. He stated that too many citizens fail to understand elections. As he visited potential voters, he would find individuals lacking in civic education and stated there is a needed for targeted communications to help citizens understand the process, the importance, and the potential impact of their votes.

May Community Conversation

LON INABA RECOUNTS JAPANESE AMERICAN PRESENCE IN YAKIMA VALLEY BEFORE WORLD WAR II

About three dozen people gathered on May 25 to hear Lon Inaba recount the experiences of Japanese Americans living and working in the Yakima Valley the first part of the 20th Century. A thriving community of farms and business developed from the early 1900s.

Often family members followed earlier immigrants to settle in the Lower Valley. Their hard work resulted in the clearing of farm land and early development of irrigation that contributes yet today to the agricultural richness of the area. Homes and businesses, the Yakima Buddhist Church, the Japanese Cemetery, and successful baseball teams all testify to the settled presence of about 1200 Japanese Americans in and around Wapato.

Discrimination was always present from individuals and organizations. Laws prohibited land ownership. Yet Lon spoke of the positive relationships among the white population, the Japanese Americans and the Yakamas. A third-generation Japanese American himself, Lon was raised on the family farm on the Yakama Reservation.

These relationships were tested and many broken in 1942 with Executive Order 9066 following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. As local Japanese Americans departed for internment camps, they left with no idea of what was to come. When the camps closed down in late 1944, most settled elsewhere as they had lost what they had here. Lon, however, noted the good people who helped preserve the Buddhist Church and helped some former neighbors re-establish in the Valley.

For his family, previous good relationships with members of the Yakama Nation enabled them to resume operations and build up the Inaba Produce Farms. The Nation had supported his grandfather by leasing land to him when he began farming in the early 1900s. Now the Yakama Nation has purchased the Inaba Farms, re-named Yakama Nation Farms. Lon continues as general manager on the land his grandfather first cleared over 100 years ago.

June Community Conversation



END OF LIFE CHOICES OUTLINED

Dr. Connie Brumm, outlined possible choices for end of life care, and highlighted state legislation for Death With Dignity. A retired family practice physician, Dr. Brumm volunteers with the organization, End of Life Washington (EOLWA), to spread the word about choices and to help individuals and families navigate the fulfillment of their choices. (She also serves as a board member with her local League of Women Voters!)

As a person approaches the end of life with a disease or condition, the first choice can be to seek treatment options or to decide on no treatment to correct the disease or condition. The default is usually treatment; doctors, hospitals, the entire medical field is most commonly oriented to fight the disease. But an individual may choose no treatment, which does not mean do nothing. The options then may include: palliative care to reduce pain and stress; hospice when six months of life or less is expected, which includes palliative care; and/or Death with Dignity, which means an intentional hastening of death. No option is “right” or “wrong”; it all depends on the wishes of the patient.

With Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) the patient controls the timing of death by acquiring access to life-ending medication. A specific process with a several-day timeline authorizes physicians to prescribe the medication. EOLWA helps patients who ask for help with the decisions and process.

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END OF LIFE CHOICES (continued from Page 3)

Dr. Brumm clarified terms: for MAID, the individual wants to live but is terminal, whereas with suicide the person wants to die. Euthanasia is death by the action of a third party. With MAID, the death certificate cites the underlying disease as the cause of death. Washington State legislation this year affirmed the option for MAID and reduced some timelines as well as requires hospice facilities and hospitals to file their official End of Life Policies with the State Department of Health.

When MAID is not an option, for example when a patient has a debilitating illness that is not terminal such as Parkinson or ALS, a choice can be the voluntary stopping of eating and drinking (VSED). This is legal in all states and is not termed suicide. Lining up the support of surrounding people and of an understanding physician would help ease the seven-to-ten-day process. EOLWA can also offer support.

“If you think you might ever use Death With Dignity or VSED, be sure to have identified someone with Power of Attorney for Health Care who knows your desires and is willing to see them through,” Dr. Brumm emphasized. Planning and paperwork can start with a Values Worksheet to help you identify what makes life worth living for you and what you might prefer as you are dying. Conversations with family and/or friends are recommended for all adults long before the need, and plans should be reviewed every year.

The Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care allows you to choose someone who knows your wishes to speak for you when you can't. A Health Care Directive guides medical professionals, family and your Power of Attorney to follow your wishes. Drawing up a Dementia Directive or an Eating and Drinking Directive may help reduce anxiety we may have about what may happen.

The End of Life Washington website (<https://endoflifewa.org/>) has numerous resources including information on various End-of-Life choices and samples of Living Wills, Power of Attorney, Advance Directives and other documents.

Worry Free Wednesdays (<https://worryfreewednesdays.com/>) also provides information and resources valuable for all adults. Of initial interest is a one-page checklist as a starting point to planning for anyone who wants to relieve worry about what may happen when approaching, as we all will, our own death.

Remembrance...

RUTH COFFIN SCHROEDER

Ruth Coffin Schroeder died peacefully on June 24, 2023, at the age of 97. While not recently active, some of our longer members will remember her. Ruth served as State President of the League of Women Voters of Washington. She achieved Lifetime Member status with over 50 years as a League member.

Ruth's obituary in the Yakima Herald Republic identifies her as “an activist while living in Yakima and Seattle. From her early years she was passionate about community politics, theater and volunteer work.” In addition to her association with our LWV, her service was noted on the Board of Advocates for Planned Parenthood in Seattle, as well as on the Governor's Commission for Judicial Conduct, and on the Commission on Ethics in Government and Campaign Practices. Ruth spoke her mind in a February, 2018, letter to the *Yakima Herald Republic* in response to another school shooting. She concludes, “Enough of this heartbreak and waste of our country's most precious capital, those who will build our future. I do not know of a peaceful solution to this problem except electing people who firmly believe in the principles of justice.”

Ruth leaves us an “example in demonstrating a strong will to live the best life with dignity and loving kindness.” A Celebration of Life, which Ruth requested as a “party, not a funeral,” will be held at a later date. Donations may be made to the Myositis Association or to the Warehouse theater in care of Brookside Funeral Home, PO Box 1267, Moxee, 98936. Memories and condolences may be shared at www.brooksidefuneral.com



League Membership....

YAKIMA COUNTY LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP GROWS

As of our Annual Meeting in June, our local league tallied 55 members, including twelve new members within the past year! The interest, support and energy of new and continuing members bodes well for meeting the challenges to our mission of empowering voters and defending democracy.

The League of Women Voters of the United States recently posted the newly developed policy on member rights and responsibilities. This statement, excerpted below, identifies the League as a proud and effective organization and helps guide new and continuing members in participation.

The full document, including Guidance for Policy Compliance and Frequently Asked Questions about membership, is available at: <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/league-fundamentals/member-rights-responsibilities-policy>.

LWV Member Rights and Responsibilities Policy

Approved by the LWVUS Board of Directors April 29, 2023

Member Rights

Individuals who join the League of Women Voters as voting members become part of a highly trusted, 100+ year-old organization comprised of a large grassroots network of activists, with Leagues in 50 states, plus the District of Columbia, the US Virgin Islands, and Hong Kong. LWV is committed to providing opportunities for members to amplify their individual political power by participating in local, state, and national League actions. Additionally, League voting members in good standing:

1. Are automatically members of their local and state Leagues and LWVUS.
2. Can join any local League they choose. However, an individual may be a voting member of only one local League and its related state League.
3. May participate in LWV-sponsored events and activities, including access to members-only opportunities.
4. Can participate in their local League's annual meetings and their state and national LWV conventions according to the bylaws of their local and state Leagues and LWVUS.
5. Elect their local, state, and national leaders according to the respective local and state Leagues' bylaws and the LWVUS Bylaws.
6. Are eligible to run for LWVUS leadership positions and leadership positions in their local and state League according to the respective bylaws.
7. Are entitled to full participation in LWV without barriers as stated in the local, state, or national Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policies.

Member Responsibilities

To promote the success of LWV and help ensure a safe environment for collaboration, all members must:

1. Abide by the applicable rules of LWVUS and their state and local Leagues as set out in each League's [bylaws](https://www.lwv.org/league-management/bylaws/lwvus-bylaws-and-certificate-incorporation) (<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/bylaws/lwvus-bylaws-and-certificate-incorporation>) and official policies.
2. Abide by the applicable [nonpartisan policies](https://www.lwv.org/blog/remaining-nonpartisan-hyper-partisan-times) (<https://www.lwv.org/blog/remaining-nonpartisan-hyper-partisan-times>; also see Lee Murdoch's column on Page 2 of this issue) when acting on behalf of LWV. LWV members are free to participate in partisan politics on their own, including campaigns and being a candidate themselves, but they must not identify themselves as a LWV member or use any League's nonpublic resources when doing so. Members in LWV leadership positions should further consult their local, state, and national LWV nonpartisan policies.

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MEMBER RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES (continued from Page 6)

3. Abide by the applicable diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies.
4. Engage in behavior that promotes respectful discourse and refrain from physically or verbally abusive behaviors toward any LWV member, employee of any League, or members of the public when participating in LWV activities, including undertaking any duties they may have as leaders of a League, promoting [LWV policy positions](https://www.lwv.org/impact-issues) (<https://www.lwv.org/impact-issues>), or identifying themselves as LWV members. This includes online activity. LWV is committed to creating an inclusive environment for all, particularly for members of historically marginalized groups.
5. Commit LWV to action only when authorized to do so by their state or local League or LWVUS.
6. Not act in opposition to a League position or policy when authorized to act on behalf of LWV or when identifying themselves as LWV members. Members are not required to agree with all LWV positions and may choose to not participate in activities that promote positions they oppose.
7. Not make statements on behalf of LWV or purport to represent LWV through any public medium, including online media, unless specifically authorized to do so by their state or local League or LWVUS.
8. Comply with all LWVUS brand standards to protect its trademarks.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS NOW DUE!

Continuing memberships are due for renewal as of June 30 of each year. Take a moment now to renew with the Membership Form on Page 8, or through our website at:
<https://lwvyakimacounty.org/membership/#HowtoJoin>.

LWVYC Activities....

LEAGUE ACTIVE AROUND TOWN



Left: Criss Bardill and Janis Luvaas proudly march our Banner at the Yakima Pride Parade.

Below: Susan Kaphammer and Amy McCargar-Davis engage with visitors to our booth at the Pride Festival, one of 14 events where we met the public.



Over the past year, LWVYC tallied over 400 interactions, added more than 70 names to our Friends of League mailing list, and signed up or provided registration forms to 14 new voters.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS POLICY ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

LWV is fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice:

The League of Women Voters is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization’s current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF YAKIMA COUNTY**

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

Cordially invites you to: JOIN US!

New Member **Renewing Member**

Name: _____

Membership Categories:

Address: _____

_____ \$10 Student

_____ \$60 Basic

Phone: _____

_____ \$40 Each added family member at the same residence

E-Mail: _____

Scholarships are available for potential members who cannot afford dues. Please contact us at yakimacountylwvyc@gmail.com

Additional Sustaining Gift: \$60 _____ \$40 _____ \$25 _____ Other: _____

Your Sustaining Gift will help support our local activities.

Make checks payable to: LWVYC And mail to: LWVYC, PO Box 723, YAKIMA WA 98907

Please note: Our fiscal year is July 1 through June 30. Initial dues received before December 31 will be subject to renewal on June 30 of the following year. Initial dues received after January 1 will be subject to renewal on June 30 of the year following that year.

- Examples: a) Initial dues paid October 10, 2022, renewal date June 30, 2023
- b) Initial dues paid February 24, 2023, renewal date June 30, 2024