

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

October –
November, 2023
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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 meets at 4:30 PM, usually the first Monday of the month at the YWCA, 818 W Yakima Ave.

All members are welcome.

CALENDAR

Monday, Nov. 6 **LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING.** 4:30 PM at YWCA, Yakima. Members always welcome.

Tuesday, Nov. 7 **ELECTION DAY VOTE!**

Ballots must be postmarked as of this date or dropped into an official Ballot Box by end of day. Voting-day registration available at Yakima County Courthouse from 8 AM to 8 PM.

Thursday, Nov. 9 **VOTER SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING.** Noon to 1 PM at C & S Coffeehouse, Terrace Heights.

Thursday, Nov. 16. *Fall Social Event*, 4 to 6 PM at 1606 W. Nob Hill. *See notice below and flier on p. 8.*

Monday, Dec. 4 **LEADERSHIP TEAM MEETING.** 4:30 PM at YWCA, Yakima. All members welcome.

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'
OF YAKIMA COUNTY

Inviting all members and friends...

FALL SOCIAL EVENT

Thursday, Nov. 16, 4 to 6 PM
At Yakima Vintners Tasting Room
1606 W. Nob Hill Blvd.

RSVP by Nov. 13 to:

Criss at 509-930-2622 or cbardill@gmail.com
Susan at 509-949-0127 or susanlkap@gmail.com

See attached flier for additional information!

Message from LWVYC President and Past President . . .

**CLARIFYING OUR COMMITMENT:
NONPARTISANSHIP AND CONSENSUS POLICY**

In light of recent publications, we feel it is essential to clarify our organization's dual commitment to nonpartisanship and our consensus policy positions. We believe that a clear understanding of this distinction is crucial.

The League's nonpartisan policy is unequivocal. As per the national policy: "The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization. We encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League acts in support of, or in opposition to, selected governmental issues which its members have studied. It does not support or oppose candidates, factions, or political parties. League members, as individuals, may support candidates of the political party of their choice."

We acknowledge our historical support for progressive values, dating back to our founding during the battle for women's suffrage. Over the years, our dedication to improving the legal status of women, the welfare of children, and consumer protection has led us to advocate for policies considered progressive. This commitment continues, with current national policy positions, including fighting voter suppression, limiting the influence of big money and donor secrecy in politics, opposing racial and partisan gerrymandering in redistricting, and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout our organization.

It's crucial to remember that the League has always been a place where individuals from diverse political backgrounds come together. We have proudly welcomed members from both major parties, minor party affiliations, and independents. In the face of today's heightened partisanship, we maintain our dedication to encouraging thoughtful study and respectful debate when forming our consensus positions.

We invite all community members to join us as members, regardless of their political affiliations. We encourage ongoing engagement and involvement in the League because the better-informed and civically engaged our voters are, the stronger our democracy becomes.

Our mission, "Empowering voters. Defending democracy," is a mission that resonates across our entire community. We all share the desire for better-informed and civically engaged voters. We are committed to this mission, and we welcome all community members to stand with us in achieving it.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement with the League of Women Voters of Yakima County.

Sincerely,

Lee Murdock
President, League of Women Voters of Yakima County

Criss Bardill
Past President, League of Women Voters of Yakima County

September Community Conversation . . .



BEEKEEPER SHARES ENTHUSIASM AND FACTS

As a self-professed “student of bees,” **Stanley Hauk** became teacher for an enthralled audience at our September Community Conversation. Unlike the production of honey that we may expect from a “beekeeper,” Stanley cares for and propagates hives to breed and trade in queen bees.

Over ten years ago, his son got him involved with bees, and Stanley found a passion for the industrious insects. Their first year they got no honey and all their bees died over the winter. The second year with two hives about 50% of the bees survived, and by the third year they had 5-6 hives and began to capture swarms. When his son dropped out of active efforts, Stanley assessed his practice and realized that using chemicals with his bees did not prevent loss of bees and cost more than it was worth. He stopped chemical use and continues to learn how to work with the bees as a natural beekeeper.

Some people meet Stanley when they discover a swarm in an inconvenient place; maybe in a tree in the yard, under house eaves, or even within a wall. Stanley dislodges the swarm, which can range from softball size to over the size of a basketball. He doesn’t wear the full protective gear we may have seen photos of, and he gets stung sometimes. “You don’t get used to it,” he reports. But, he explains, bees are at their gentlest when swarming as they are only protecting the queen and looking for a home, not viciously protecting their young as in settled hives.

A small colony may range from 20,000 to 120,000 bees. A bee colony is a collective with members working as one, each with their own jobs. The queen lays eggs – up to 3000 per day - - and releases pheromones that “keep the bees happy without chaos.” Worker bees clean the hive and take care of the queen. Foragers leave the hive to return with back legs swollen with pollen. They also collect tree sap, bee “glue,” that can glue the lid of a hive down.

Male drone bees have one job – to mate with a new virgin queen. The drone congregation can fly hundreds of feet in the air waiting for the queen to fly through to collect enough semen sacs for three to five years. One egg, much smaller than a rice grain, is deposited in a cell in the honeycomb. Nurse bees follow the queen to clean up and toss out any eggs not successfully fertilized. Males in the hive are of little use; they are kicked out to starve when food is scarce. This year, drones have been kicked out early, perhaps forecasting a hard winter coming.

Stanley shared many more fascinating facts about bees and their hives. He has about 50 hives spread throughout the upper valley to raise queen bees to sell or to give away. His activity helps extend the genetics to maintain the bee population. While bees are not the only native pollinators, if all were to go away we would lose an estimated 2/3 of our food supply. We can help by cultivating bee friendly plants. Lavendar one of many good choices.

You can follow Stanley on Facebook at Generation Bees of Yakima:

<https://www.facebook.com/generationbeesofyakima>.

LWVYC Activity . . .

INPUT SOUGHT TO PLAN COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

The monthly Community Conversations organized and provided by our local League restarted in April of this year after a three year pause during the Covid pandemic. Attendees have appreciated the quality of the information and presenters. We are in a current pause through at least January, 2024, due to election events and the holidays. Before resuming the series, the current committee – Criss Bardill, Betty Van Ryder, Dori Peralta Baker, and Kitty Jubran – want input from members.

With two exceptions, turnout this year has been quite small. How might we attract larger attendance? Would a different time or format be more appealing? What topics or presenters would prompt you and members of the community to attend? Is this an activity we might consider letting lapse for lack of interest?

Please look for a Survey of Members about LWVYC Community Conversations. Take a few moments to respond and give your honest feedback and ideas, or reach out to one of the committee members to share your thoughts.

Local League Initiative . . .

LWV YAKIMA COUNTY DONATES TO LA CASA HOGAR



This past spring, our Leadership Team voted to approve a request from President Lee Murdock to donate 15 Spanish Language editions of the State League civic textbook, *The State We're In: Washington*, to La Casa Hogar. These were recently delivered, along with a teacher's guide. Of note, one

of our newer members, Ulla Whitman, is a volunteer with the citizenship classes. The text of the letter accompanying the donation:

On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Yakima County, we are pleased to offer our support to La Casa Hogar's outstanding civic engagement programs. We are inspired by the incredible work your organization is doing to empower Legal Permanent Residents on their path to becoming United States citizens.

We understand the significance of civic education and its role in fostering a stronger and more engaged community. Your Citizenship Education program, which has facilitated the naturalization of over 1,370 adults since 2014, is a testament to the positive impact you are making in the lives of those you serve.

*In recognition of your commitment to promoting civic participation and U.S. history education, we are donating 15 copies of our Civics textbook, *The State We Are In: Washington*. We believe that these resources will be a valuable addition to your educational initiatives, aiding individuals as they prepare for naturalization and actively engage in their communities.*

(Continued on Page 5)

LWVYC DONATES TO LA CASA HOGAR (continued from Page 4)

We admire the dedication of your team and the meaningful work you do in our community. If there are any ways in which we can further assist or collaborate with La Casa Hogar in the future, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for your dedication to advancing civic education and engagement in Yakima County. We look forward to seeing the positive impact that your organization continues to make in our community.

Voter Services Event . . .

YOUR VOTE COUNTS! BALLOT EVENT HELD



The Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) of Washington and the League of Women Voters of Yakima County collaborated to host a joint ballot education event on October 24. The purpose of the gathering was to assist voters for a more responsive general election outcome.

Attendees were invited to bring their ballots and any related questions. Community guides explained each section as well as how to mark and send ballots for accurate and informed voting. Held in English with Spanish interpreter assistance, the event provided deliberately non-partisan information and assistance. The official Voter's Guide and, if needed, some candidate biographies and statements from the newspaper were shared, but no recommendations were made to direct participants on their voting choices.

The goal of such events is to enhance voter confidence and reduce errors or confusion for ballot completion. Gaining knowledge and learning about the voting process as well as the candidates and issues on the ballot are powerful steps to becoming well-informed voters.

Maryrose Gonzalez, Civic Engagement & Advocacy Coordinator from OIC, and Karri Livingston, Voter Services Committee Chair from the LWVYC led the efforts by their organizations. Dori Peralta Baker engaged her prodigious talent for organizing events, detailing needs from table set-up to pens and pencils and clarifying volunteer assignments as well as assuring everyone understood the schedule and the procedures.

Comments by individuals involved include: "I know we helped two of the attendees." – Barb Schultz. "It was encouraging to engage with the young activists who also contributed and attended..." -- Barbara Hersey. "I went to bed last night thinking that I've never participated in anything more well-organized. Thanks to everyone." -- Joy McKinney. "...setup couldn't have been more expertly executed. Thanks to the team for all your hard work; one more outstanding effort." -- Steve Hill.

After the event, Dori Peralta Baker noted, "Many were disappointed that we didn't have a lot of voters there... The sharing of information and open conversation was priceless; we can all learn from each other. There was a lot of activity at the table level which reinforces conversation and learning more about the ballot. That was our goal." She encourages everyone to consider this a beginning, "As we prepare for Election Year 2024, thank you all for your help in creating a civic engagement learning space."

League Cross-County Connections . . .

LEE MURDOCK PRESENTS TO BELLINGHAM LEAGUE

Our League President, Lee Murdock was invited to address the Fall Member Meeting of the League of Bellingham-Whatcom County to comment on efforts to diversify the League. She and Criss Bardill met with their members by Zoom on October 21. Lee focused on lessons we are learning as one of many Leagues taking on the goals of diversity, equity and integration.

Asked about the demographics of Yakima County, Lee talked about how the underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latino voters and the recent successes by organizations such as One America in increasing voter engagement amongst that population.

Audience members spoke of the “historic perception” of the League as a group of white, older ladies. Lee spoke of the challenge to become, in our membership and leadership, more representative of our entire community. She stressed the need to serve the communities we want to represent, rather than the tokenism of just finding someone from that community to increase our diversity.

One strategy is to target tabling, outreach and events in other county towns and areas, not just our larger city of Yakima. A challenge in this is limited bilingual ability among our members. Nevertheless, Lee explained, we are working to have our materials translated, and we aim to provide interpreters at our events.

Lee explained that one of the greatest successes of the last year was the development of the Yakima County Civic Engagement Collective. Formed during the last Candidate Forum, the local league became aware that multiple non-partisan groups were conducting voter outreach and civic engagement. Many of these organizations were also experiencing capacity concerns and the vision was to collaborate on voter education and outreach. This coalition of currently 12 nonpartisan community organizations partner, share communications and leverage resources to increase civic engagement throughout the county. The monthly meetings provide a safe space for learning about the various communities and collaborating to address the needs and support the activities toward informed, involved voters. Our LWVYC website provides a central listing for all election-related activities of the members of the Collective. While the League was instrumental in the development of the collective, it is now a stand-alone group with rotating leadership and facilitation. The League’s membership in this Collective has been an important factor in extending our reach to widespread communities and diverse populations.

While we jumped into this work with partners to increase our service with and for diverse population, we have yet to focus on DEI training for our Leadership Team and members. Such training, Lee reflects, is challenging, requiring first and foremost an internal process of awareness, assessment and acknowledgement of one’s own thinking, habits and attitudes. Our national League provides materials to assist this process and further steps in looking at our policies and practices. Lee expressed that DEI is not another project; it is an overlay, a way of approaching what we do. Like many other Leagues taking this on, we are making progress, sometimes with baby steps.

More than a week after Lee’s participation at their member meeting, Robin Barker, President of the LWV of Bellingham – Whatcom County reported, “Attendees are still talking about it!” She forwarded a \$200 donation to LWVYC in appreciation and support for our work.

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

Join familiar and new
friends and members at our

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF YAKIMA COUNTY

FALL SOCIAL EVENT

Thursday, Nov. 16, 4-6 PM at:

Wine, sparkling cider or other beverage

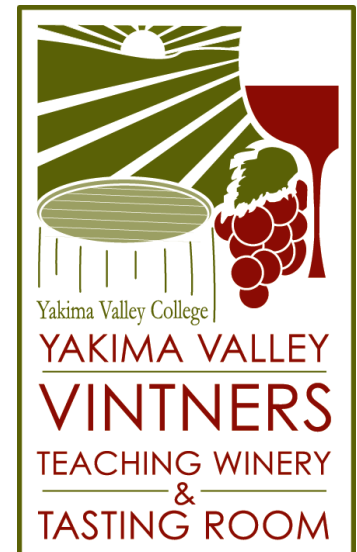
Charcuterie Cups

Drawings for door prizes

Larson Gallery open 'til 5

Pantry Clean-out - Bins for food items

for Northwest Harvest



1606 W. Nob Hill Blvd

Look Back and Move Forward with LWVYC!

Members are encouraged to invite a guest.

RSVP by Nov. 13.

Criss at 509-930-2622 or cbardill@gmail.com

Susan at 509-949-0127 or susanlkap@gmail.com

