

THE VOTER



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

On the Web at:
<https://lwvyakimacounty.org>
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June
2025
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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.

Core Principles

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

- Betty Van Ryder, Secretary
- Cindy Olivas
- Criss Bardill, Interim President
- Dori Baker-Peralta
- Janis Luvaas, Treasurer and Membership
- Karri Livingston
- Kitty Jubran
- Steve Hill
- Susan Kaphammer

Meeting the first Monday of the month at 4:30 pm at the YWCA located at 818 W Yakima Ave, Yakima, WA 98901 in the second-floor conference room. **All members are welcome!**

Calendar

- **6/14 No Kings Day Rally,**
<https://lwvyakimacounty.org/event/no-kings-rally/> REGISTRATION REQUIRED
- **6-17-2025 Annual Meeting** 4:30pm at the YWCA – All members **and guests** are welcome! **RSVP by Sunday 6/15**
- **6/21 Pride Parade**
<https://lwvyakimacounty.org/event/yakima-pride-festival-parade-2/>

Know Your League

Check these websites to more fully understand your League:

Our local Yakima County League:

<https://lwvyakimacounty.org/>

Our Washington state League:

<https://www.lwvwa.org/>

Our National League:

<https://www.lwv.org/>

Message from the Interim LWVYC President

Criss Bardill

Greetings, fellow League Members and Friends!

I am looking forward to our Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 17, not only because I will be stepping back from my role as Interim President, but because our incoming leadership is brimming with ideas, our community connections are stronger than ever before, and we are responding to the many challenges in our current political climate with energy and commitment.

Three members; Cindy Olivas, Janis Luvaas, and Marie Jett, just attended the State League Convention in Vancouver WA, and I know have returned with a lot of information and ideas to share.

The Voter Services Committee is scheduling tabling and other activities in the community, and many of our members are affiliated with and sharing work with other non-partisan organizations.

There is no question in my mind that these are scary and unsettling times, and I hope you each are finding ways to preserve your emotional and mental health while seeking avenues of engagement, of which there are many.

Thank you for your support of me these last several months, which I trust you will be also offering to our incoming officers and Leadership Team. I hope to see you at our Annual Meeting, Tuesday, June 17!

In League,

Criss Bardill

Members' Corner

Congratulations to League member **Tracy Levy** and husband Daniel Levy on the birth of their son, Solomon Jeffrey Levy, On May 15th. Solomon weighed in at 6 pounds, 10 ounces and 20.5 inches.

Congratulations to League member **Dori Peralta Baker** for winning the Spirit of the Dream Award at the Martin Luther King celebration at the Yakima Convention Center Monday, Jan. 20, 2025.

Membership Report

Welcome, **Marci Barton**, to League membership. Marci is the daughter of long-time member Mary Stephenson.

Dear League Members,

Hello to all of you. I am grateful for the opportunity to attend and be a delegate at the LWVWA State Convention held in Vancouver, WA May 6-8. Janis Luvaas and Maria Jett also went as delegates. Delegates vote on important issues at the State league and on its positions. We represented the Yakima County League of Women Voters.

There were many caucuses and workshops to choose from: the Media Literacy and News Education Project, DEI, Criminal Justice Advocacy Team, Health of Democracy in WA State, Observer Corps, The Benefit of Being Nonpartisan in Highly Partisan & Divisive Times, Redistricting, Using Local News to Resist Threats to Democracy, Updating 1980 Tribal Treaty Rights Study and Voting Outreach to Formerly and Currently Incarcerated Individuals.

Speakers at the Convention were Diane Wynn, President of the LWVUS. She was a very inspiring speaker talking about defending democracy. WA State Attorney General Nick Brown's knowledge of the law and basic human rights was very clear in his presentation. Did you know that he was the first public official to file a suit against President Trump's executive order of Birthright Citizenship? Another impressive speaker was Kate Starbird, Professor in Human Centered Design & Engineering at the University of Washington. She spoke on human-computer interaction and crisis informatics. Kate addressed misinformation and disinformation affecting social media rumors. She demonstrated with graphs how President Trump's team use AI and created lots of social links during his campaign

Susan Martin is the founder and first director of Georgetown's Institute for the Study of International Migration. She is the President of the LWV of San Juan County and serves as chair of the Immigration Study committee "Welcoming Immigrants In Washington State." We also heard from Anne McEnery-Ogle, the mayor of Vancouver City. She is Vancouver's first woman mayor and is deeply engaged in civic life, regional transportation and emergency preparedness. Willie Frank III, Founding CEO, Medicine Creek Tribal Strategies. His late father Billy Frank Jr, is a nationally recognized activist for tribal rights and salmon conservation and was a key player in the landmark 1974 Boldt Court Case. Willie continues to protect the treaty rights and tribal sovereignty of the Nisqually and other tribes

We voted on the Positions that LWVWA and local leagues will take, which are established by the LWVUS. The proposed 2025-27 New Program of Work/Positions for this year are as follows:

- Elder Caregiving Study
- Update of 1980 Indian Rights Study: Update
- LWV of Washington State Housing Study: Update
- The State of Democracy in Washington: Education Project
- Welcoming Immigrants In Washington State
- Redistricting
- Criminal Justice
- Local News and Democracy
- Civic Education

How many of you know about Robert's Rules of Order? Well, here is what I learned...wait, I am challenging all members to look up Robert's Rules of Order. Please bring your answer to the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, June 17th. You will receive a ticket which will be entered into a drawing. Only one person can win. Hint: It is used in meetings. Good luck!

Cincy Olivas, Leadership Team Member/Nominee President

Meeting with Rep Dan Newhouse

I was honored to be included in this group organized by Wenatchee-based Jess Ingman of Faith Action Network. It was great to meet the group this past Friday (May 23rd) and hear a little bit about all the work they're doing. Note the diverse backgrounds:

Faith Action Network, East Wenatchee
Shalom United Church of Christ, Richland
St. Michael's Episcopal Mission, Yakima
Yakama Nation, Yakima
The Sunnyslope Church, East Wenatchee
Rotary Food Bank and Kittitas Valley Unitarian Universalist Congregation
Islamic Center of Tri-Cities, West Richland
Unitarian Universalist Church of Yakima
Founding president of Heritage University

These folks are supporting Afghan and Iraqi refugees, running food banks, offering ministerial outreach to LGBTQ people, and much more. Very inspiring!

Mr. Newhouse was welcoming, listened attentively, and asked a few questions. He made several general points about the One Big, Beautiful Bill recently passed in the House of Representatives:

- He worked hard to keep the bill from being worse than it turned out to be.
- He is working to "Make Medicaid sustainable" by making sure it's only used by people who "deserve it." (In a prior email response to me he mentioned the need to avoid "waste, fraud, and abuse.")
- Because work is a treasured American value, there is a work requirement for Medicaid recipients, but this can be volunteer work, school, or some other kind of training. One of the attendees referenced evidence of the administrative burden for states that decided to track work requirements, not to mention the difficulty for Medicaid recipients. Mr. Newhouse indicated he had heard about this.

Our group shared an illuminating discussion afterwards regarding what we heard and what more we'd like Mr. Newhouse to consider and agreed that we'll try to meet

with him again before this long process is completed. Of course, now the bill heads to the senate and eventually back to the house for final passage.

FYI, the Faith Action Network (<https://fanwa.org/>) is an organization in Washington State combining many communities of faith with legislative advocacy, including a handy "bill tracker" for bills passing through the state legislature. I think they're an excellent resource.

I admit to sometimes feeling discouraged and scared, but I'm inspired by all of you to stay connected and engaged for the long haul, as we live through these "interesting times."

Joy McKinney, LWVYC Member

Reports From State Convention

LWVWA State Convention was an intense and inspiring experience. Things happened fast and there were a lot of working parts to decipher. Day one focused on a lot of governance and a lot of energy went into just meeting people from around the state. People were friendly and helpful and excited to get to know the Yakima team, since we have not been represented at the convention in recent years.

By day two, I was able to put names to faces and start networking. It was exhilarating to gather with several hundred brilliant, dedicated activists, all passionate and knowledgeable in their fields. I learned that no matter what a person's interests, from legislative activism to issue based projects like reproductive rights, media literacy, civics education in schools and jails, tribal relations, and even international issues, the League offers many ways to directly connect with an impactful, diverse and dynamic network of doers from around the state.

Key topics discussed were disinformation, the media, and civic engagement strategies for these volatile times. Of the speakers, I most enjoyed Dr. Kate Starbird (formerly of the WNBA), who founded The Center for an Informed Public at University of Washington. She delivered a data driven and moving presentation on disinformation, where it comes from, how it's used, and how to be mindful of democracy and human and civil rights when we consume and share information. Fortunately, her talk, called "[A Spotlight on Rumors](#)" is available for all to watch online. It's about an hour long, but well worth the listen. (see link below). I also really enjoyed learning about Willy Frank III's work with [Wa He Lut Indian School and The Billy Frank Jr. Leadership School](#) (see link below). These are healing Washington State projects that remind us that the ark of justice does indeed run right through our own communities.

Ellensburg and Tri Cities Leagues were in attendance as well, and they look forward to connecting with us to foster regional partnership and share best practices. I thank the League for offering me the opportunity to get to know my teammates and to further develop as a leader. I look forward to using what I learned to help grow the League and foster grassroots, outcome driven coalition building in Yakima and beyond.

Maria Jett

Link to "A Spotlight on Rumors"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjiGbgRAhJo>

Link to "Wa He Lut Indian School"

<https://www.whlis.org/billyfrankjr>

STATE AND NATIONAL

TWO RECENT STUDIES FROM OUR STATE LEAGUE

ELDER CAREGIVING STUDY

At the LWVWA Convention in 2023, Washington state League members voted to undertake a new study on "Caregiving in Washington State: What exists and what is needed to support seniors and other vulnerable adults and their caregivers?"

With the aging of the population due to increased life expectancies and lower birthrates, an increased proportion of Washingtonians require long-term care to meet their basic needs. This care falls disproportionately on family caregivers, who provide the bulk of care for older adults. These caregivers are also central in ensuring access to health care and community-based social services. Research shows that family caregivers are predominately women, many of whom are employed outside their homes. When long-term care outside the home becomes necessary due to increased disability, the care available is limited, of variable quality, and extremely costly. While this proposal speaks specifically about seniors and their caregivers, these issues have implications for younger vulnerable adults who are unable to care for themselves and expect that most of the findings and recommendations of this study would apply to them as well.

This report is the culmination of that study:

<https://www.lwvwa.org/eldercare>

WELCOMING IMMIGRANTS TO WASHINGTON STATE STUDY

At the LWVWA Convention in 2023, Washington state League members voted to undertake a new study on Immigration and Immigrant Integration.

The proposal stated, "This study will delve deeply into legislative options at the state level for enhancing the lives of immigrants and the role the League could be playing in ensuring immigrants have pathways to economic, social, and civic integration into the communities in which they live. It would also allow LWVWA to assess systematically the extent to which current WA state legislation, such as the 2019 Keep Washington Working (KWW) Act, is fulfilling the legislative intent to protect immigrants living in the state."

This report is the culmination of that study.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=goiY1yvduRQ>

In recognition of Pride Month, Members are encouraged to read the following article from the LWVUS Blog

<https://www.lwv.org/blog/trans-rights-are-essential-healthy-democracy>

National League of Women Voters Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be accepted within the League, including but not limited to race, socio-economic status, age, ability status, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender identity, or marital status. The League is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging for all people. The League is an organization that respects and values the richness of our community and our members. The collective sum of our individual differences and life experiences represents not only our culture, but our reputation and the organization's mission and achievements as well.

Opportunities for Action

Following is a list of planned demonstrations and events, some occurring within the next few days and weeks. You are encouraged to support these efforts to defend democracy and our constitutional order and bring pressure on our local representatives and elected officials.

Saturday, June 14th, 10 AM to noon.

The No Kings Rally sponsored by Indivisible and other local non-partisan activist organizations requires advanced registration for the reveal of the location. This will be a Honk and Wave event on Saturday, June 14, from 10 AM to noon. <https://lwvyakimacounty.org/event/no-kings-rally/>

Saturday, June 21, 10 AM

Join other League members, families, and friends in the Pride Parade starting at Portia Park (Yakima and 11th Avenue) at 10AM to carry our banner and walk in the parade ending at Naches Avenue. We will coordinate ride sharing and shuttling. Please call or email Criss Bardill if you would like to participate or have questions. cbardill@gmail.com 509-930-2622 <https://lwvyakimacounty.org/event/yakima-pride-festival-parade-2/>

Saturday, August 2, 5-8 PM

“Celebrating People of Our Valley” This event will raise funds for Between the Ridges: Alliance for the Common Good. Enjoy good company, great food, local wine and beer, in a beautiful setting. Celebrate the people of our Valley with a diversity of live music, a short program and the opportunity to raise the paddle. Purchase tickets and learn more about this event at **Fred Fontanilla's Home** 5010 Terrace Heights Dr, Yakima <https://betweenthebridges.org/event/celebrating-people-of-the-valley/>

MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION FORM

CONTACT INFORMATION

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Email: _____ Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Street Address

City

State

Zip Code

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Understanding the demographics of LWV's membership base helps us progress in our value of being a fully inclusive organization. **Please fill out as much of the following info as you are comfortable with:**

Gender: _____ Pronouns: _____ Race/Ethnicity: _____ Birth Year: _____

DUES AMOUNT

Please select the dues amount you wish to pay. **The recommended rate is \$75.00**, but you may choose an amount below that, down to a minimum of \$20.00. Higher dues payments help to allow some members to pay below the recommended amount but do not grant additional benefits. *Attach a check payable to the League of Women Voters of the United States.*

☐ \$75.00/year ☐ \$150.00/year ☐ \$250.00/year ☐ \$500.00/year

☐ Choose your own amount (minimum \$20.00): _____

The amount you choose to pay in dues will be split between your local, state, and national League. Would you like to make an additional donation exclusively to your local League?

☐ Yes ☐ No Amount: _____

Pay by credit card or bank account online by clicking on the join/renew form on our website's [Join page](#) or scanning this QR code



To pay by check: fill out this form and mail to:

LOWVYC, PO Box 723,

Yakima, WA 98907

ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS?

Do you have a household member wishing to join or renew LOWV membership?

Please complete an additional form and send in with additional dues, thank you!