

# 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>

March, 2026  
Vol. 27, No 2

*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

- Cindy Olivas, President
- Barb Schultz, Secretary
- Janis Luvaas, Treasurer and Membership
- Karri Livingston, Voter Services Chair
- Kitty Jubran
- Steve Hill
- Criss Bardill, The Voter Editor
- Joy McKinney
- Lana Barnes

Meets on 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

Monday, March 16, 4:30-6:00 PM. **LWVYC Spring Quarterly Meeting for All Members.** At Neighborhood Health Services, parking and entry at back. *See the flier on Page 8.*

Monday, March 23, 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. **NAACP Town Hall: Lunch with Dr. Trevor Greene, YSD Supt.** At YV Tech, 1120 S 18<sup>th</sup> St. Register to attend. *See the flier on Page 9.*

Saturday, March 28, 1:00 to 3:00 PM. **NO KINGS RALLY #3.** At Main Street and Valley Mall Blvd.

Monday, April 6, 4:30 PM. **LWVYC Leadership Team Meeting.** At YWCA, 818 W. Yakima Ave. All members welcome!

Saturday, April 10, 12 Noon. **LWVYC Voters' Service Committee Meeting.** Starbucks, 5906 Summitview Ave., Yakima.

Turn to "Opportunities for Action," on Page 3, for additional events.

## 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/>

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Hello to all of you. I hope that you enjoy reading *The Voter* newsletter. Have you ever wondered who gets a copy of *The Voter*? Current league members, alliances, and league friends do. This is an effective method for sharing local, state, and national issues. Let us know if there is something else that would be of interest to you.

What has changed in the league since January 1, 2026? The League gained six new members: Neil McClure, 1-1-26; Judy Backer, 1-14-26; Natalia Farber, 1-24-26; Judith Strosahl, 1-29-26; Lisbeth Kaplan, 1-30-26; and Peggy Peterson, 2-2-26. The League welcomes all of you. Thank you for choosing to be a part of the League of Women Voters of Yakima County. I enjoyed meeting those of you who were available to attend the new members' orientation this past February. Thank you to the members that are already involved.

For the last two months, The Leadership Team and I have been organizing our committees and tasks. The Leadership Team added three new committees: Membership Committee, Finance Committee, and the Nominating Committee. For the last 4 years, the only working committee has been Voter Services. I will be speaking more about this at the Annual Meeting.

Janis Luvaas's term as Treasurer is ending on June 30, 2026. She would like to step down and continue with other endeavors as she has been doing this for many years. If you are skilled with numbers and have budget experience, please contact me. Firsthand training would be beneficial. If you are interested and wish to be considered, your name can be submitted to the Nominating Committee. The full membership will vote on approval at the Annual Meeting scheduled for June 16th.

I survived my first round of legislative issues and actions by sending pros and cons to legislators for the past six weeks. I learned more about how bills move in the House and Senate. Hopefully, next year, I can visit the State Capitol during one of the legislative sessions in the House and Senate. This is on my bucket list. I have always wanted to see the inside of the chambers and rooms.

Then in February, with the organizational skills from Coleen Anderson and Dori Peralta Baker's knowledge of legislation, this League was able to speak with Senator Curtis King, District 14, about SB5400: Supporting Local Journalists. The bill calls for a small surcharge of 1.22 percent on search engines and social media platforms that gross more than \$5 million annually. It would raise an estimated \$20 million annually to help both nonprofit and for-profit publications and broadcasters, all which are under duress as internet giants scrape their content and dominate advertising. Janis, Coleen, and Dori were able to speak with Senator Curtis King. This bill now sits in the Senate Ways and Means Committee. The next public hearing will be on March 18, at 4:00 p.m. I was able to gather information from KDNA Cadena Radio in Granger and the Sunnyside Sun. Without our local news networks, our rural and underserved areas, non-English or limited English-speaking residences would not receive essential local news affecting their communities. I sent messages to District 15 Senator Nikki Torres, Representatives Chris Corry, and Jeremie Dufault through the Legislature Website for their support of SB5400.

Last, please remember to come to the Spring Quarterly Meeting on Monday, March 16, 2026. I would like the opportunity to meet you all. See the flyer in this issue of *The Voter*.

Respectfully,  
Cindy Olivas, President

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

Saturday, March 21: **Sign Making Sessions** for No Kings 3; Hosted by Yakima Indivisible at Glenwood Square. 9:30 -11:30 and 12:30 - 2:30. Link for details and to sign up:

[https://www.mobilize.us/mobilize/event/908225/?force\\_banner=true&share\\_context=event\\_details&share\\_medium=copy\\_link](https://www.mobilize.us/mobilize/event/908225/?force_banner=true&share_context=event_details&share_medium=copy_link)

Monday, March 23: **NAACP Town Hall: Lunch with Dr. Trevor Greene, Yakima School District Superintendent 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM.** Dr. Green presents proposed bond projects, bond facts, and districtwide facility improvements. Register to attend. *See the flier on Page 9.*

Saturday, March 28: **NO KINGS 3.** Main Street & West Valley Mall Blvd., Union Gap.

1:00 – 3:00 PM. Register with Indivisible. Link for details and to sign up:

[https://www.mobilize.us/nokings/event/901956/?force\\_banner=true&share\\_context=event\\_details&share\\_medium=copy\\_link](https://www.mobilize.us/nokings/event/901956/?force_banner=true&share_context=event_details&share_medium=copy_link)

Saturday, March 28: **74th Anniversary Dinner** of the Filipino American Community of Yakima.

12 Noon – 4:00 PM. 211 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> St., Wapato. Tickets are \$20 per person.

March 31 – April 3: **Let the City Speak** – Week-long valley-wide series of workshops, conversations, film screenings and free community concert. The band **Quetzal** is coming to Yakima! This Grammy Award-winning ensemble from LA uses their music to support community organizing. Their visit will include a concert, a new documentary screening, community songwriting workshops, and opportunities to mentor emerging local organizers. Many thanks to Yesenia Hunter for leading the effort to bring them here to inspire the community and the Between the Ridges Alliance. Link for details: <https://betweentheidges.org/event/let-the-city-speak/>

April 10: "**Know Your Rights.**" Presented by Northwest Justice Project; Hosted by Yakima County NAACP.

5:30 – 7:30 PM at the Henry Beauchamp Community Center, 1211 South 7th Street, Yakima. Register with NAACP by April 3. Link: <https://www.yakimacountynaacp.org/events-training>

Ongoing: The Yakima Immigration Response Network (YIRN) is a Yakima County-based network of volunteers working to support immigrant communities throughout the Yakima Valley. League member Danielle Surkatty is an integral part of the leadership of YIRN, which is seeking donations to support the vital work they are doing. Link for Ways to Donate (bottom of page), and check out "About Us:"

<https://yakimaresponsenetwork.org/>

## WEBSITES AND VIDEOS TO EXPLORE

An Introduction to Between the Ridges Alliance: <https://youtu.be/eGDx7wCmc1c?si=lw9hgO5Vzq-Elsj4>

Planning for WA State celebrations of the 250 Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence:

<https://america250wa.org/>



## GET OUT THE VOTE!

On Jan 10, I attended the candlelight vigil in downtown Yakima, to honor victims of ICE. Hundreds of people gathered, each with a candle, hundreds of tiny points of light in the night. I looked around at this large, silent crowd and was moved and inspired that so many in the community had shown up in support. And then a speaker shared an amazing idea. She said, "Identify and reach out to 10 people who didn't vote in the last election and provide them with the information and the motivation to vote in the next one."

I couldn't stop thinking about it. I imagined what we could do if each one of those people in that crowd got 10 others to vote. It's simple but not easy, potentially so powerful, and for which huge effort or vast sums of money are definitely not required. I searched for attribution and traced it back to none other than Michelle Obama in 2018. You can sign up with her non-profit When We All Vote, supporting voter engagement, especially among young and diverse communities. <https://whenweallvote.org/>

I think we're right to be concerned about barriers to having free and fair elections in the US. We know about the mega-donors. We've heard about legislation requiring specific forms of identification that people may not have to even register to vote. We know people who may think twice about going to the polls, fearing encounters with federal immigration agents. We hear calls to ban voting by mail (as in our state), and more.

We groan at reports of low voter turnout, where a few voters make consequential decisions for the many. For example, the recent City of Yakima property tax increase was voted down, slashing funding for public safety and firefighting, plus closing "lifeline" facilities including Harmon Center, Washington Fruit Place, and the Lions Pool. No matter which side you're on, how does it strike you that only 364 people made the decision for our entire area?

Recent research into effective ways to mobilize voters validates the intuitive genius of Michelle Obama's entreaty. People are influenced more than anything else by person-to-person contact with those in their social networks.

When we reach out to people, they tend to tell their friends and family, creating a multiplier effect. Systematically making contact with others requires intention and effort, yes, but requires minimal to no funding, making it something most of us can do.

This basic idea has been refined and systematized and appears as "relational organizing," a powerful and pragmatic concept for our voter engagement toolbox.

The League has a long tradition of holding table events in schools and public places. We do a version of relational organizing by engaging people from our local neighborhoods and schools, listening to their hopes and concerns in addition to their voting registration status. We persuade them that their vote makes a difference. We empower a first-time voter by walking them through a sample ballot. We offer the chance to join our email list as a Friend of the League. We don't tell them how to vote, but we ask them to commit to making plans to become voters.

Please join us March 16 for our first Quarterly Membership Meeting of 2026, to find out how to get involved in getting out the vote in 2026! We need your ideas and we need your help! (*See attached flyer.*)

Joy McKinney, Leadership Team

## YWCA LEADERSHIP LUNCHEON SCHEDULED

Criss Bardill is hoping to host a full table of 10 League members and guests for the Annual YWCA Leadership Luncheon on Tuesday, April 14 at noon at the Convention Center. It is a meaningful way for us to show our appreciation to the YWCA for the free use of their space for meetings and activities. Criss is committing to a full table with an advance purchase, insuring a favorable placement in the Convention Center.

Please consider joining her at this event, which is always a meaningful and informative look at the work of the Yakima YWCA. Leslie Morgan Steiner, an author, consultant and thought leader on women's leadership, work-life balance, inspirational parenting, overcoming adversity and surviving violence against women will be the featured speaker. (<https://www.lesliemorgansteiner.com>)



Tickets are \$100/person, but Criss is underwriting the cost and will be pleased to receive partial payments or to seat people at no charge. You can contact Criss at [cbardill@gmail.com](mailto:cbardill@gmail.com) or 509-930-2622. Please help our community recognize the LWVYC as a strong supporter of the Yakima YWCA. Please don't purchase tickets through the YWCA link unless you are choosing to sit at a different table.

Link for more information about the event: <https://www.ywcayakima.org/leadershipluncheon>

## VOTER SERVICES COMMITTEE LOOKS AHEAD

### High School

We will be tabling again at area high schools at their Career Counseling events. Davis, Ike, and Selah have been arranged. We were still waiting to hear back from West and East Valley. This has become a labor-intensive effort, so Karri will be soliciting volunteers at the Quarterly Meeting March 16<sup>th</sup>. Karri will order some more of the popular "little yellow ducks" for these events.

### YVC Presentation

A presentation to YVC will be held either the week of April 13 or April 20. We will once again wear our historical League costumes for the event.

### Earth Day – April 18, 2026

We will be staffing a table again on Earth Day and will provide rocks and paints for rock painting. This was a very popular activity for all ages.

*VOTER SERVICES... continued on next page*

*VOTER SERVICES COMMITTEE LOOKS AHEAD (continued from previous page)*

Yakima Farmer's Market

The Market will be charging \$40.00 per day for non-profits this year and limiting the non-profits to four for each market day. We decided not to participate this year except for possibly in September.

Other business:

- Washington State League Voter Services Affinity Group – Zoom meetings the second Wednesday of the month, 4:30 – 6:00 pm. Local league leaders responsible for voter registration and civic engagement present best practices.
- National Voter Registration Day is September 15 and National Voter Registration week is in October. We hope to table at YVC and/or Perry Tech on these dates.

League members are welcome to attend our meetings, and we encourage your interest in volunteering for our tabling and other events. If you're interested in knowing more, call Karri at 509-945-2960.

## HELPING LOCAL NEWS SURVIVE

“Local news reporting plays a pivotal role in the health of our communities—and our democracy.” This statement from our state League's website explains the alarm of our LWVYC and Leagues around the country. Our local league member, Dori Peralta Baker, also serves on the Yakima Herald Republic Reader Advisory Committee. She shares this information and call for action:

As you know, local newspapers are struggling to stay in business. The Yakima Herald Republic has downsized and is financially struggling in operations and staffing. In 2020, Microsoft provided the Yakima Herald Republic with over \$275,000; funds to support El Sol, reporting on indigenous issues and health care. Only four USA publications were chosen; data and need were determining factors. Microsoft support was a godsend but that was over 6 years ago.

In support of rural publications, the League of Women Voters of Yakima County recently supported Senate Bill 5400 during Legislative Advocacy Week. The bill advocates a 1.22% surcharge on search engines and media platforms to support small publications and broadcasters. (*See comments in The President's Message.*) The loss of local news has directly impacted our communities and local businesses. The crisis has resulted in Washington's loss of roughly two-thirds of the reporters and editors in the newsrooms, and the closure of news outlets has cultivated growing news deserts. What if the YHR could not cover our public forums, events and the 2026 elections?

Our league and its members are encouraged to donate to the fund drive, *Support Local News Reporting in the Yakima Valley*. To learn more details about the campaign and how to donate, see the information on the following page. To donate online or by bank draft, go to <https://www.yakimaherald.com/> and click on DONATE HERE.

The Yakima Herald Republic is part of our daily lives and without local news, we in Central Washington could become a news desert.

## Supporting trusted local news reporting in the Yakima Valley: 2026

You make big decisions every day.

Decisions about your health, your safety, your children's education.

But you make smaller decisions, too.

Decisions about where to eat, things to do with the kids, and which community festivals to check out this weekend.

Whether they're big or small, to make informed decisions, you need trusted local news and information.

We're the Yakima Herald-Republic. We provide the timely, fact-based reporting you need to live your life to the fullest in the Yakima Valley.

### A strong commitment to education reporting

You deserve to know if your kids are safe, if their schools are teaching them effectively, and if your tax money is being put to good use.

That's why we partnered with Report for America to hire education reporter Alexander Banks in July 2025. We split his salary with RFA.

### Covering community life in the Valley

Sometimes you hear people say there's no good news in the paper. But Explore is a section full of uplifting stories and useful information.

Edited by Sara Rae Shields, Explore is the place where the Valley comes together. It's filled with informative, upbeat features about places to go and things to do, food columns, personal essays, calendars and book reviews.



### Keeping trustworthy local news & information alive

Your donation will help us sustain education reporting by Alexander Banks, community coverage from Sara Rae Shields, and newsroom operations.

### Our goal is to raise **\$150,000** by Dec. 31, 2026

To make a **tax-deductible donation**, visit [yakimaherald.com](http://yakimaherald.com) or use the QR code below.

Or, if you'd prefer, you can send a check made out to the Yakima Herald-Republic. Our mailing address is 114 N. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Yakima, WA 98901. Include "Yakima Herald-Republic Newsroom" on the memo line. It will be deposited by our fiscal sponsor, The GroundTruth Project, who will acknowledge your gift and provide an EIN for tax purposes.



# QUARTERLY MEETING INVITE

Your presence is requested. Bring a guest!  
**LET'S BRAINSTORM FOR A SUCCESSFUL**

**'GET OUT TO VOTE' PLAN FOR 2026**

**EVERY VOTE COUNTS!**



**When:**

**MONDAY, MARCH 16TH 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM**

There will be socializing from 4:30 - 5:00 p.m.

**Where:**

NEIGHBORHOOD HEALTH SERVICES, 12 S. 8TH STREET, YAKIMA.  
PARKING LOT IS BEHIND THE CLINIC OFF OF S. 7TH STREET AND  
E. YAKIMA AVE. ENTRANCE IS LOCATED IN THE BACK.  
2ND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM. ELEVATOR ACCESSIBLE.

**Purpose:**

IMPLEMENTING A PLAN TO "GET OUT THE VOTE"  
YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO BRING IDEAS, LOTS OF IDEAS!

**LIGHT REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE**



*Yakima*  
SCHOOL DISTRICT  
DISTRITO ESCOLAR

# NAACP Town Hall

*Lunch With Dr. Trevor Greene  
YSD Superintendent*



**March 23, 2026**

**11:30 AM - 1:00 PM**

**YV Tech 1120 South 18th Street  
Yakima, WA 98901**

*Join Us As Dr. Trevor Greene Presents  
Proposed Bond Projects And Bond Facts*

## **Districtwide Facility Improvements**

- Heating & Cooling Replacements
- Roof Repairs & Replacements
- Equal Access Upgrades To Student Spaces (Title IX)
- Repairs & Upgrades To School Grounds
- Turf Replacement, Track Resurfacing, & Court Repairs
- Updates To Aging Spaces That Affect Instruction & Student Use

*Translation Services Available*

For more information please contact Adrienne Garner  
president@yakimacountynaacp.org or 509-930-7132

Scan QR Code  
to register



**NAACP**  
*Yakima County*





BECOME A MEMBER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF YAKIMA COUNTY, OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

## 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:  
LWVYC, PO Box 723,  
Yakima, WA 98907

### ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS?

Do you have a household member wishing to join or renew LWV membership? Please complete an additional form and send in with additional dues, thank you!