

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>

September 2026

*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
- Janis Luvaas, Treasurer
- Tracy Levy, Communications/The Voter Editor
- Dori Peralta Baker, Voter Services Chair
- Steve Hill, Nominating Committee, Budget Committee
- Susan Kaphammer, Parliamentarian

The Leadership Team meets on the first Monday of the
month at 4:30 pm in the second floor conference room
at the YWCA, 818 W Yakima Ave, Yakima

All Members are Welcome!

KNOW YOUR LEAGUE

Yakima County League: <https://lwvyakimacounty.org/>
Washington State League: <https://www.lwvwa.org/>
Our National League: <https://www.lwv.org/>

CALENDAR

Monday, September 28, 3:00-4:00 pm

Get Out the Vote (GOTV)

The Giving Foundation Building, E. Yakima Avenue & S.
4th Street, Yakima

Monday, October 5, 4:30 – 6:00 pm

Leadership Team Meeting, YWCA – 2nd floor conference
room, 818 W. Yakima Ave., Yakima

October 5-9

National Voter Education Week

Friday, October 9, 1:00-3:00 pm

Member meet and greet with LWVWA President.
Unity Spiritual Life Center, 401 S. 8th Ave., Yakima

Saturday, October 10, 9:00 am-1:00 pm

Walk the Line, Rock the Vote Community Event.
See further information below

Saturday, October 24

Vote Early Day community day with Poder Latinx.
See further information below

Monday, October 26

Last day to register to vote **online**.

Can still register to vote up until election day, but must be
done in person after 10/26

Tuesday, October 27,

Mail Ballots *early* if returning by USPS

Tuesday, November 3

Election Day!

Return ballots to Auditor's office or Ballot Drop box by
8:00 pm

Register to vote in person at the Yakima County Auditor's
office

MESSAGE FROM THE LWVYC PRESIDENT

Hello to all LWVYC members and friends,

I can't believe that summer is ending. There is something about going from Summer to Fall that brings sudden changes. Instead of slowing down and having leisurely time, relaxing. It is a hustle and bustle to start preparing for shorter days, colder mornings, and evenings. Most of us still haven't recuperated from "Getting Out the Vote" during the primary elections. Those tasks included canvassing, sending notecard reminders to vote, reminding family and friends to vote, and volunteering at tabling events around the valley. Don't stop now, this is the time to start planning for the General Election. Make sure that you are prepared and up to date to ensure that your vote counts.

Most of you have read the results of the low voter turnout number of ballots that were received and counted at the Yakima County Auditor's Office, 28%. It was unfortunate that over 1,700 of the voter's mail-in ballots did not get counted due to ballots not being postmarked in time from the US post office to be validated and counted when received at the Yakima County Elections Office. Please send your mail-in ballot at least 9 days ahead of the deadline of November 3. Take your ballot to the nearest US Post Office and ask the staff to postmark the ballot in your presences. The other sure way to get your ballot counted on time is to drop it in the nearest ballot drop box in your community, or hand deliver it to the County Courthouse Election drop box. I believe our efforts need to be constant and consistent in reminding voters to vote once their ballots arrive. The ballots will be delivered to your mailbox on October 16.

Listen for candidate forums or "meet and greets" near your community that are happening. Make sure that you know if you are residing in Yakima County Legislative District 14 or 15. When listening to candidates pay close attention to their message. Do they represent you and your community issues? Are the candidates reaching out to you in your neighborhoods by canvassing? Are the candidates present at community gatherings and making time to speak to you? Do not be afraid to ask questions, either.

Don't forget to research initiatives that will be on the November 3 ballot. The measure's descriptions will be displayed in the online voters' guide at VoteWA.gov. They are:

- IP26-645 concerns state and local taxes
- IL 26-001 concerns parental rights relating to their children in public schools
- IL26-638 concerns participation in athletics at K-12 schools.

❖ **share this message with people who may not know how to get started in formulating a plan to vote. When no one votes, there is no choice.**

Cindy Olivas, LWVYC President

UNITE & RISE FOR VOTING RIGHTS PEP RALLY RECORDING AVAILABLE NOW.

Dear LWVYC and Friends of the League,

You're not alone in your concerns about where our democracy is headed.

Thousands of League supporters took the **2026 State of Democracy Survey**.

Even if you didn't have a chance to participate in the survey, we wanted to share what we learned because these findings reflect the concerns so many Americans are feeling right now.

When the administration issued an executive order this spring requiring new citizenship verification for federal elections, the League filed suit within 48 hours. That's not the only fight underway.

Right now, the League's attorneys are challenging documentary proof of citizenship laws in six states, defending fair congressional maps against gerrymandering, and fighting to keep private voter data out of the wrong hands. Last year, we won 76% of our federal cases.

That's why every voice, including yours, matters more than ever.

And your concerns are shared by thousands of others. These are the top priorities our community is ready to fight for:

#1

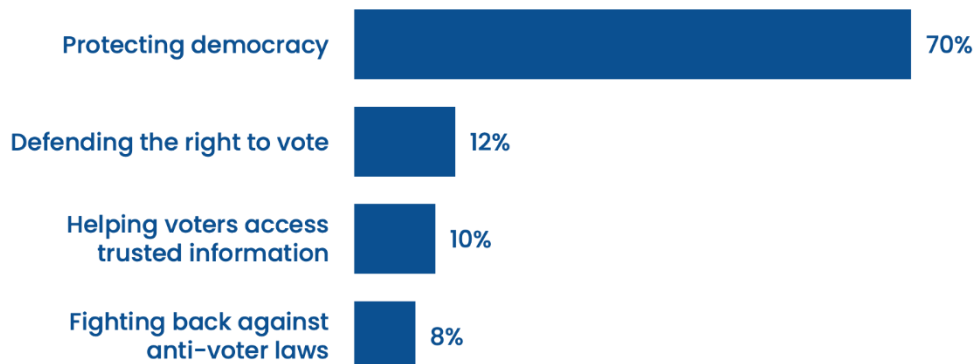
Top priority
for our
donors was

**"Protecting
Voting Rights"**

92%

of donors said they are
"Very Concerned"
about voters having access to
fair and secure elections in 2026.

Top motivations for supporting the League of Women Voters:



VOTER SERVICES COMMITTEE UPDATE

Nine members of the Voter Services Committee met in person on September 11th to reorganize and reconfirm the directions and paths they should be traveling.

Dori Peralta Baker was asked to be the Chairman, but this was conditional. She asked for two Co-Chairmen to share responsibilities. Linda Beath will help on state and national meetings to keep us updated. She will also help with parliamentary procedures and the bylaws. Joy McKinney will help VSC interface and collaborate with other special interest groups with similar GOTV goals. Karri Livingston will keep the tabling calendar and logistics (time, place, shifts) and Kitty Jubran will keep our tabling materials pertinent and current for the upcoming elections. The remaining members present were Barb Schultz, Lana Barnes, and Ulla Whitmont who are also committed to volunteering their time and efforts to increase voter participation in the upcoming elections. The hope to gain more Spanish-speaking members/volunteers for our 51% Latino population of Yakima County was an important point addressed.

If you would like to join our efforts for community education and outreach, please join us! Questions or queries can be addressed to a member of the VSC or to lwvycvoterservices@gmail.com.

Future VSC meetings are on Fridays at 1pm to 2pm, on Oct 2 at the new Center for Democracy at 30 N 3rd St in Yakima. Hopefully the Oct 30 and Dec 4th Meetings can also be held there.

Submitted by Dori Peralta Baker, Voter Services Committee Chair

IN THE COMMUNITY

There are two community events that will take place in October to "Get Out the Vote"

- ❖ Walk the Line/Rock the Vote, Oct. 10, hosted by LWVYC in partnership with NAACP and OIC.
The walk starts at Larsen Park and ends at OIC Excel Youth Center. Community organizations are invited to set up a table at this event. See Flyer in this issue of The Voter for more information.
- ❖ Vote Early Day. Oct 24, hosted and organized by PoderLatinX with partnership organizations.
The gathering will be at the Rotary Pavilion Market Place in downtown Yakima. More information in the future.

The League will continue to support non-profit, non-partisan organizations that are finding ways to reach out in our communities.

MEET AND GREET WITH LWVWA PRESIDENT

League of Women Voters of Washington's president, Karen Crowley and Chair of the Legislative Action Team, Alison McCaffree will be in Yakima for a meet and greet with our local league on October 9 from 1:00-3:00 Unity Spiritual Life Center, 401 S. 8th Ave., Yakima.

They are looking forward to meeting members of our league and will participate in the Walk the Line, Rock the Vote event the next day.

This will be an informal meeting, and we will be sharing food potluck style.

Please feel free to bring a guest

Your LWVYC president,
Cindy Olivas

REDISTRICTING WORKSHOP A SUCCESS!

On Saturday, September 19, from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., the rescheduled Redistricting Workshop was held at the Sunnyside Community Center. It was a success! Guests were greeted with smiles, coffee, water, and food. We had a late start as we could not get into the building until 9:50 a.m. Thank you, Erin and Blaine for helping to set up. Alison McCaffree with LWVWA, and Chair of the Redistricting Committee, did a wonderful job of explaining the history, current issues, and what could be in the future for mapping out the districts. Alison talked about the People First Commission which would select members of communities to determine the Congressional and Legislative districts, taking it out of the hands of the politicians.

Since 1984 and currently, the WA State legislators appoint four people (2 Democrats, 2 Republicans) and one non-voting chair to determine the redistricting boundaries. This commission is called The Washington State Redistricting Commission. Redistricting is the process of changing boundaries of voting districts so that all districts have the same number of people and keep groups together that have minority interests in government. This is supposed to ensure that everyone has equal representation using the Census data.

The Census is a constitutionally required program to create an accurate count of all people in the United States and is done every ten years. The data also determines how many seats each state has in the House of Representatives. There have been states that have been challenged in courts for not representing the people in their county districts. Yakima County has been one of the challenged areas. The Census data is given to the State Redistricting Commission to assist in the redistricting process.

At the Saturday workshop all the participants were thoroughly engaged and asked great questions. The other success was PoderLatinX, Good Trouble Yakima Valley: Red, Wine, and Blue, Unidos Nueva Alianza, APIC, council members, Benton-Franklin Co LWV, Yakima Co. LWV, and individuals attended. The time was well spent.

If you would like to be involved in Redistricting: Taking Back the Maps, the committee meets every third Wednesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. via zoom. Please reach out to Alison McCaffree, Cindy Olivas, or go on [LWVWA.org/events](https://www.lwvwa.org/events) online.

Cindy Olivas,
LWVYC President

THE RESULTS ARE IN!

The Yakima County Auditor's Office has provided the data results from the Primary Election on August 4, 2026. Even though our percentage of ballots returned were higher than last year, our work is not done, 1,700 ballots were not counted because of late postmark dates from the United States Postal Service.

ATTENTION MEMBERS!

There are vacant Elected Positions for secretary and treasurer.

If you are interested in learning more reply to this email or reach out to Cindy or any member of the leadership team.

WHAT TO CONSIDER WHEN CASTING YOUR BALLOT FOR THE STATE SUPREME COURT RACES

By [Annie Todd](#) and shared with permission by Cascadia Daily News
Find original article [here](#).

In the long list of races that voters will find on their ballot this year, no race may be more consequential, and unknown, than the five seats open on the Washington Supreme Court.

Of the five seats, four are open (two of the justices in those seats were appointed by Gov. Bob Ferguson), while Chief Justice Debra Stephens is seeking reelection.

But what do voters need to know about how to select a Supreme Court justice? Especially when those justices issue opinions on a range of topics like education, the environment and will likely issue an opinion on the constitutionality of the new “millionaires tax” passed this past legislative session.

During a Saturday morning, Sept. 19 panel discussion hosted by the League of Women Voters between Whatcom County Superior Court Judge Lee Grochmal, Washington Court of Appeals Presiding Chief Judge Cecily Hazelrig and Supreme Court Justice Sheryl Gordon McCloud, they reflected on their legal experience and what they think voters should know before heading to the ballot box.

Does the candidate want to be on the bench?

This may seem like a no-brainer for someone running for office. But Hazelrig and Gordon McCloud pointed out that the candidate needs to know their way around a courtroom.

Not every lawyer is a good lawyer, McCloud pointed out. “Becoming a lawyer and getting a bar card is a great first step. But before you can be a judge on any court, though, I think you need to show that you can do legal research.”

That’s because judges and justices are making hundreds of decisions every year that impact people’s everyday lives. If judges know the legal precedent (what was ruled on before) and the law, they can be precise in their rulings.

For Hazelrig, she believes a good candidate must love the law.

“Do you want to be this or do you want to do this? I think that’s a critically important question to be asking of all our judicial candidates,” she said.

“I want to do this the best that I can
I want to serve my community in this way.”

McCloud suggested looking at candidates’ previous opinions, like Stephens, and their law careers. Hazelrig suggested looking at a candidate’s previous findings if they served on an appeals court.



Cont.

What's the candidate's appetite for working hard?

Work ethic and integrity came up frequently during the panel.

McCloud said she's used to getting emails at midnight from her colleagues because of a case they were thinking about based on "their thorough research of the subject, not based on their politics or their whims."

On a local level, Grochmal said when she first became a judge, the first few years were a steep learning curve because of the breadth of decisions she was making from criminal law to family law. For her, putting in the time to read all the briefs and motions as well as doing additional research is critical.

"This is particularly important for the Supreme Court election, to be ready to ask intelligent questions," she said.

"Someone who is hard-working, industrious, and curious about the law and wanting to learn new things are qualities that are really important."

Is the candidate humble?

Since judges and justices weigh in on a litany of legal topics, Hazelrig said it was OK to be humble and to know where a person's legal gaps may be.

"You want to be extra sure that you haven't missed something because of the gravity of what we're doing," she said. "It can feel a little uncomfortable to be that humble, but I think that's essential."

Part of that humility is also having an open mind, Grochmal said, pointing out that judicial candidates should be able to see issues from all sides.

And sometimes, humility can be recognized when previous courts have erred and fixed the problem.

McCloud used the example of when, in [2020, the state Supreme Court](#) vacated criminal charges against a Yakama Nation tribal member. The 1916 case went against tribal treaty standards when Alec Towessnute was fishing on traditional tribal fishing grounds off his reservation.

"The opinion in State v. Towessnute is an example of the racial injustice described in this court's June 4, 2020 letter, and it fundamentally misunderstood the nature of treaties and their guarantees, as well as the concept of tribal sovereignty," according to the 2020 order.

As public opinion changes and more people with diverse backgrounds are elected to the courts, different decisions can be made.

"We're all learning and it can reveal that past decisions were incorrect and harmful, and it can place people with more and better diverse knowledge on the courts," McCloud said.

For more information about the state Supreme Court race and for interviews with the candidates, please visit the [League of Women Voters'](#) website.



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:

LOWVYC, PO Box 723,

Yakima, WA 98907

ADDITIONAL FAMILY MEMBERS?

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

ROCK THE VOTE WALK THE LINE

OCTOBER 10, 2026

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

STARTS:

LARSON PARK

1209 W ARLINGTON STREET

YAKIMA, WA 98902

ENDS:

OIC OF WASHINGTON

815 FRUITVILLE BOULEVARD

YAKIMA WA 98902

REGISTRATION AT 9:00 AM

WALK STARTS AT 9:45 AM



Scan HERE
To Register

Vendors



Individual/
Teams



VOTA CON GANAS CAMINA LA LINEA

10 DE OCTUBRE DE 2026

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

COMIENZA EN:

PARQUE LARSON

1209 W ARLINGTON STREET

YAKIMA, WA 98902

TERMINA EN:

OIC DE WASHINGTON

815 FRUITVILLE BOULEVARD

YAKIMA WA 98902

INSCRIPCIÓN A LAS 9:00 AM

LA ACTIVIDAD INICIA A LAS 9:45 AM

