

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>

October 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

Tuesday, October 20
Election Hero Day

Saturday, October 24, 12:00 – 4:00 PM
Vote Early Day community day with Poder Latinx.
Tacos & Treats: Your Vote, Your Voice, Your Fiesta!
Yakima Rotary Pavillion, 15 W. Yakima Ave, Yakima

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- 128 N 2nd Street, Room 11, Yakima

Monday, November 5, 4:30 – 6:00 pm
Leadership Team Meeting, YWCA – 2nd floor conference
room, 818 W. Yakima Ave., Yakima

Wednesday, November 18, 12:00 – 1:00 pm
Lunch & Learn, Coleen Anderson will present on Data
Centers
Unity Spiritual Life Center, 401 S. 8th Ave, Yakima

Monday, December 7, 4:30 – 6:00 pm
Holiday gathering for all league members
Location TBD

MESSAGE FROM THE LWVYC PRESIDENT

Dear Members and Friends,

I am at it again speaking about something that is important and necessary in our communities, voting and having local officials that represent us. How do we encourage our citizens to vote? What does it take to communicate that democracy belongs to all, to every person that lives in our valley of unique diversity, opportunities, and lifestyles? We are living in challenging times where chaos, distrust, and confusion are discouraging eligible voters from voting. The good news is that we are fortunate to live in a state that is fighting to protect our voting rights and the League of Women Voters are right there is this fight.

What is important about the mid-term elections? These elections are about local people running for offices that should represent you, your communities. These are the people who will be your voice for the next four years. As a voting citizen you have the right and obligation to ensure that you are voting not only for your own interests but for your friends, family and neighbors. There will be decisions made by these candidates that may determine how your family maintains a living that will allow you and them to live in neighborhoods of your choice, how children attend schools, seek affordable healthcare, education beyond high school, buying a vehicle, maintaining it and paying for gas to get to work. How about the high price of food? What food will you be able to afford to put on your own table? What about your neighbors who do not have resources? These are issues that are and should be important to all of us and our communities.

Let us be even more clear, what else is at stake during the mid-term elections? There will be decisions made about data centers, surveillance cameras, court services, property taxes, funding for law enforcement, emergency services and detections centers, public school funding, ICE detentions, immigrants due process, lack of water in our valley, recycling, utility services, healthcare, changing climate patterns affecting our valley, the survival of agriculture, taxes, and our voting rights.

Please share this article with others in your network and at places where there are young people, people who work in agriculture and warehouses, attend schools of higher education, and underserved communities that are going to be hit hard by the changes that are taking place.

We should see our mid-terms elections as a priority and obligation to vote. More so, than voting for a president. Elected officials should be speaking up about the issues that are important to you and me. Their job is to present issues of importance to State legislation and to our federal government. This is part of the check and balance in our democracy. As the League of Women Voters of Yakima County, it is our job to engage and education you on voting. If you do not see us, please let us know. As the League's president, I am genuinely concerned about our presents in your and other communities.

Please view our website at lwvyakimacounty.org. Hopefully, by the time you read this newsletter, there will be a CD4 forum and an initiative forum on three initiatives that are on our ballots on the website. These are excellent and informative resources that we are providing for you. These forums have already been shared with members of the League. Let us get out the vote together. Here is the League's email if you would like to leave a message: yakimacountylwvyc@gmail.com

Your President,

Cindy Olivas

FROM THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WASHINGTON

Security and Access Go Together | [Link](#)

The League believes elections should be both secure and accessible. Voters should never be forced to choose between confidence in election administration and confidence in their ability to participate.

Election Security in Washington

- Washington state elections are safe, secure, and accessible. There is no evidence to date that widespread fraud exists in Washington state or that it has ever impacted election outcomes.
- Election officials already have tools and processes in place to investigate citizenship status when or if concerns arise.
- Non-citizen voting is extremely rare, according to repeated investigations and academic studies. As Secretary of State Hobbs recently said: “Incidents of voter fraud are incredibly rare. In Washington state, there were just five cases between 2008 and 2025, out of 90 million ballots cast during that time.” (Washington Secretary of State Steve Hobbs responds to Homeland Security’s ‘voter fraud investigation surge’ | The Journal of the San Juan Islands)

Candidate Forums | [Link](#)

Across the state The League and our partners have been hosting candidate forums to help voters, search through the online database to see any upcoming forums, or watch the recording of past forums

Ballot Initiatives

There are three ballot initiatives on the Washington’s ballot this year. The League **opposes** all three read more about what they propose and why the LWVWA Oppose

Vote “NO” To Protect Vulnerable Kids (IL26-001 & IL26-638) | [Link](#)

Vote “NO” on Initiative 645 | [Link](#)

Washington Supreme Court Candidate Interviews: Four Questions | [Link](#)

The Washington Supreme Court is the top court in the state’s judicial branch. It’s on equal footing with the legislative and executive branches of state government, and it’s the final court of appeal in Washington—meaning its rulings can’t be appealed to any other state court. The Court’s main job is to make sure justice is carried out promptly and in an orderly way, and to issue rulings on legal questions brought before it.

The Court has nine justices; five of these positions are up for election this year.

Hear directly from the candidates in their own words. Each video interview is paired with a short biography to help you prepare to vote.

VOTER SERVICES COMMITTEE UPDATE

October is our busiest month of the year. It's GOTV --Get Out The Vote!

Some ideas on how you can help:

Inform folks that West Valley now has an official Ballot Drop Box located in the East parking lot of Wray's on North 56th Ave. It's **BIG**, it's **RED** and can't be missed!

During the week of Oct 26, Voter Services has tabling events at three high schools. We currently need tabling volunteers for two locations:

Oct 27 @ Eisenhower HS from Noon to 3:00pm - 2 volunteers

Oct 28 @ Davis HS 12:00pm to 3:00pm -1 volunteer
3:00pm to 6:00 pm – 2 volunteers

New volunteers can be paired with knowledgeable volunteers. We register voters, provide general election information, advocate voting early, and dropping your ballot off at the closest Ballot Drop Box. VSC is asking Spanish-speaking volunteers to help at our tabling events. Contact Karri Livingston at lwvycvoterservices@gmail.com to volunteer at our high school tabling events.

VSC wants to help increase voting in the General Nov 3 election. Please join us in this effort by attending our next meeting on Friday, October 30 at the Center for Democracy, 32 South 3rd St. The meeting begins at 1:00 pm

Kitty Jubran, VSC Member

MEET AND GREET WITH LWVWA PRESIDENT

On October 9, 2026, the League of Women Voters of Yakima County had the pleasure of meeting with our LWVWA State President, Karen Crowley, who is a member of the Snohomish County League. And Alison McCaffree, LWVWA, Chair for Democracy, Redistricting & Census Issue Chair, and member of LWV of Tacoma-Pierce County. It was a pleasant and informal event with a potluck lunch held at Unity of Yakima Spiritual Life Center. There were 11 League members that were able to attend.

President Crowley shared with all of us that during the disruptions and changes in our democracy this is not the time to be silent.

We need to be **Bold**;
We need to be **Loud**;
We need to be **Visible**
We need to be **Nimble**;
We need to be **Influential**.

The League is nonpartisan, but not neutral to political issues that affect our democracy. It is important for the League of Women Voters to be civically engaged.

WALK THE LINK / ROCK THE VOTE!

On October 10, 2026 the League hosted Walk the Line/Rock the Vote. The Asian and Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Opportunities Industrialization Center of Washington partnered with us. The day was perfect for a walk, which began at Larson Park and ended with a social celebration at the OIC Excel Youth Center Park. Approximately 12 walkers registered for the walk. The walkers enjoyed the activity, found it an easy walk and learned about the neighborhoods in Legislative Districts 14 and 15. An additional five more attendees came to the park for the celebration at the end of the walk. Mitch Weary/StatusFaction was the DJ to help us celebrate with classic hits tunes. Pizza, fruit and refreshments were provide for all in attendance. Our LWVWA President, Karen Crowley was able to attend this event.

Alison McCaffree, Chair of the LWVWA Redistricting Committee came to Yakima for all three events. She shared her knowledge about the history of redistricting in Washington State; the Soto Palmer v Hobb Federal Case in 2022; and what redistricting maps could be if given to a People's First Commission. Redistricting maps are determined every decade after the Census is completed. In 2024, the LD 14th & 15th maps were challenged and redrawn to include our Latino and Tribal communities in representation.

Thank you to all who helped make this event a success!



NONPARTISAN. NOT NEUTRAL

By Karen Crowley, President, LWV of Washington

Every election season, someone asks the same question, usually with a raised eyebrow: "If the League of Women Voters doesn't take sides, why does it have so much to say?"

It's a fair question. It's also based on a misunderstanding we'd like to clear up, because the answer is rooted in what democracy requires of people who care about it.

Political distinction

Since our founding in 1920, the League has held this stance: We do not support or oppose any political party or candidate. We don't ask our members who they vote for. We don't fund campaigns. We don't wear party jerseys.

We take this commitment to nonpartisanship seriously. It's why our voice carries above the noise of party politics, and why people across the political spectrum have trusted our voter guides and candidate forums for decades.

But nonpartisan never meant neutral. And it certainly never means silent.

Being partisan means taking a firm side tied to a political party — prioritizing one group's success and often resisting compromise because the goal is winning for the team.

Being political, in contrast, means engaging with civic life, public policy and the problems a community faces. It means showing up to public hearings, pushing for clean water or defending the right to vote — none of which requires choosing a party. That's the League's distinction: nonpartisan on candidates and parties, unapologetically political on issues.

What this means in practice

We take positions on governmental policy — such as voting rights, environmental protection, education, health care — and do so through study, not allegiance. We follow the policy, not the person or party behind it.

Sometimes that position aligns with a party platform; sometimes it doesn't. That's the whole point: We're don't push a team. We evaluate whether a policy serves voters and strengthens democracy.

Nonpartisanship does not require silence about the actions of elected officials. Once elected, a candidate becomes our representative. We have a right — even an obligation — to weigh in on policy decisions they make on our behalf.

The League is not neutral about democracy itself. We are pro-voter and pro-democracy, and consider the defense of voting access, government transparency and democratic norms a civic duty — not a partisan strategy.

This year, the League of Women Voters of Washington has taken public positions opposing state ballot initiatives we believe would strip protections from vulnerable children and undermine successful state policy, and we support requiring the highest earners to pay their fair share toward education, health care and working families. None of this is about which party wrote an initiative. It's about what the initiative would actually do.

Standing firm without picking sides

The line between 'political' and 'partisan' isn't always where our critics claim. Those who oppose reforms the League supports sometimes call our advocacy 'partisan' to try to limit our influence. The accusation won't silence us.

Cont.

That same clear-eyed confidence guides how we work with others. Partnering with another organization to co-host a voter registration drive, work in a coalition or share the stage at an event does not compromise our nonpartisanship, even if that partner has endorsed a candidate. What matters is whether the partnership itself stays focused on the shared issue. Each League's board weighs that, considering local conditions and community trust.

In fact, today's issues warrant deep, authentic coalition work. We are stronger and more effective when we can work together to speak with one voice.

The League's bright line remains: We will not organize or lead an effort built explicitly to support or oppose a candidate or a party. Everything short of that is a judgment call, made locally.

Bold, loud and still nonpartisan

This moment calls us to be bold enough to name issues, loud enough to be heard without apology, nimble enough to mobilize quickly — all while remaining scrupulously nonpartisan. Those aren't contradictions. They're part of the same muscle the League has flexed for 106 years.

Nonpartisan never meant passive. This discipline lets us fight harder for voters. We don't check our voice at the door to prove we're fair. We stay fair so that our voice means something. That's the deal we made in 1920, and it's the deal we're keeping now.

But nonpartisan
never meant
neutral. And it
certainly **never**
means silent.





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?