

THE VOTER



This Newsletter published by and for the
League of Women Voters of Yakima County
PO Box 723, Yakima, WA 98907 509-452-3419

*We respectfully acknowledge
that we are on the traditional
land of the Yakama People.*

Spring 2022
Vol.22, No 2

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.

CALENDAR

1st Monday of Each Month 4:30 PM Leadership Team Meeting at YWCA, 818 W Yakima Ave, Yakima. Contact Cheri Kilty if prefer to attend via Zoom.

4th Tuesday of The Month, 5:30 PM Community Conversation. On LWVYC Facebook Page. *See Below for Upcoming Topics and Speakers*

SAVE THE DATE! Monday, June 13 LWVYC Annual Meeting at YWCA, 818 W Yakima Ave, Yakima. Details to follow.

Officers

President: Cheri Kilty
Secretary: Karen Pilon
Treasurer: Janis Luvaas
Membership: Rhonda Hauff

Leadership Team

Criss Bardill
Quinn Dalan
Kitty Jubran
Susan Kaphammer
Lee Murdock

Voter Editor: Susan Kaphammer
949-0127; susanlkap@gmail.com

The Board currently meets at 4:30 PM,
typically the first Monday of the month.

All members are welcome.



Community Conversations

Attend via ZOOM at

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85239315653>.

or by phone at 253-215-8782

Passcode 852 3932 5653; ID 238187

OR

View on Facebook 

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

*Events will also be summarized in
the following months' issues of The Voter*

April 26, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Leadership Lessons for Everyone

with Layci Nelson, Owner and Coach at Transcend

May 24, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Superior Court Pre-Trial Program

with Judge Richard Bartheld

June 28, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Yakima Domestic Violence (DV) Coalition

Lt. Chan Janis, Yakima Police Department

LWVYC President's Message...

NOTES FROM CHERI

Happy Spring! There are so many things happening in the world.

The LWVWA Council Meetings are scheduled June 10-12 in Everett. These will be in-person meetings for the first time in 2 years! The theme is **Reconnect*Restore*Renew**. Information can be found at <https://lwvwa.org/event-4743999>: registration fees (which include meals), lodging options (if you wish to stay over) and daily highlights. The presentations, panels, and discussions will inform and inspire local League leaders and members. Topics include nonpartisanship, civics education, environment and advocacy, plus many opportunities to connect with old friends and make new ones.

Have you checked out the Washington State League Website lately? Find it at <https://lwvwa.org/>. There is a ton of information and tools for us to use in connecting with our community. It's time to start preparing for upcoming elections in the fall.

Our own Yakima League Annual Meeting will be June 13th at the YWCA Yakima. Stay tuned for more information. Our Nominating Committee is at work identifying leadership positions.

I have let the leadership team know I won't be able to continue for another year as your League President. This was a difficult decision. I am so honored that the membership had the confidence in me to lead the League this year. I can't thank everyone enough for your support and encouragement.

The League is one of the most important assets in our community. Engaging people to learn about issues and to vote is what makes this a great place to live. – Cheri Kilty

Upcoming County Election...

ALL THREE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ON 2022 BALLOT

Our local League President, Cheri Kilty, reminds us in her column above, "It's time to start preparing for upcoming elections in the fall." While making contacts to gather information to update our **TRY: They Represent You Political Directory for Yakima County**, Kitty Jubran held conversations with Martha Jimenez, Bilingual Program and Office Coordinator for Yakima County Elections Office. Kitty shares some specific information about the upcoming election for County Commissioners.

Normally each County Commissioner position is elected in different years. This year all three are up for election due to the 2021 settlement of a lawsuit by the immigrant rights group, OneAmerica. The lawsuit contended that while primary votes had been by district, the countywide selection in the general election disenfranchised Latino voters. Beginning this year, each of three Commissioners must stand for election in one of three districts. A new pattern to stagger the terms of the three positions is yet to be determined. The district boundaries for the County Commissioners, incorporating 2020 census data, are expected to be announced by the end of April.

This leaves a tight timeline for Commissioner candidates, as the deadline for filing and submitting the filing fee of over \$1000 is May 2 by mail and May 16 in person. [Note: Filing fees are indexed to salaries of the position.] Current Commissioner Ron Anderson, whose primary district was essentially the City of Yakima, has announced he is not seeking re-election. Amanda McKinney and LaDon Linde are expected to run again.

Our primary election has an August 2nd deadline for ballot return with the general election concluding on November 8. Stay alert, learn about candidates, and defend democracy by voting!

2022 Elections ...

NUMEROUS POSITIONS ON BALLOT; VOTING MATTERS

Every primary and general election has the potential to affect our lives in ways we may not anticipate. Review of national news makes clear that the difference of a few votes in a few districts can dramatically impact the decisions and functioning of our government. The same is true locally.

2022's ballots will include many positions in addition to County Commissioners. (*See article on Page 2 about the election of County Commissioners.*) Senator Patty Murray, all state representatives, all county officials, all district court judges, and many school board members around the county will be chosen.

As has been stated by proponents for all political parties, "Elections have consequences." A local example is provided by our Yakima County Commissioners. According to the official Yakima County Commission webpage, "In addition to the oversight of County administration, the Board's duties include adopting and enacting ordinances and resolutions, levying taxes and establishing county policies. As the County's legislative authority, the Board is responsible for adoption of the annual budget, provision and maintenance of public facilities, construction and maintenance of County roads, development and implementation of planning and zoning policies, and appointments to advisory boards and commissions."

An example of the impact of elected officials has been the County Commission's work related to the County Health Board and our Covid response. In January, 2021, they established rules giving "commissioners more power over the health board," as reported by the Yakima Herald-Republic. Their efforts related to Covid are reflected by a May, 2021, letter from the Commission urging Governor Inslee to "declare the emergency over and remove *all* criteria that was set forth under the phases and allow each county to independently manage their own heal issues involving covid..."

Whether an individual agrees or disagrees with such actions, this illustrates that elected officials wield power, limited power, but power enough to matter. As citizens concerned about our world, our country, our community and our families, we are called to understand issues and candidates, and as League of Women Voters members to make real our vision that "every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate."

January Community Conversation...

GAIN A HEALTHIER LIFE THROUGH FOOD

Dr. Yami Cazorla-Lancaster introduces herself on her website, <https://www.doctoryami.com/>, as "pediatrician // coach // author // speaker." She shared her passionate promotion of healthy lifestyles and plant-based nutrition at our January Community Conversation, which is still available to be viewed on our League Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/LWVYC>.

Nutrition is "important – now more than ever," Dr. Yami explained, citing that 129 million Americans, 52% of the population are living with at least one preventable chronic disease, with heart disease ranked #1. People are dieting more and enjoying food less plus experiencing diet-related disease. She encourages people to recognize the benefits of improved nutrition:

1. Feeling good now,
2. Decreasing the risk of preventable chronic disease by 80 to 90%, and
3. Living longer lives in better health; reducing the disease and disability than often plague the last 15 years of long lives.

(Continued on Page 4)

Gain A Healthier Life... (Continued from Page 3)

Improving personal and family nutrition, Dr. Yami emphasizes, is simpler than we may think and does not need to be all or nothing. Small changes make a difference, and can add up to improved health now and in your future.

Eat more unprocessed food. Choose more “as grown,” unaltered food. Picture the food at the supermarket on a continuum. An unprocessed apple, for example, can be selected from the bin in the produce section. “Natural” applesauce is minimally processed, with the change of texture but nothing added or taken out. Apple juice is moderately processed with peel and pulp removed, water and sometimes sugar added, and no fiber remaining. An ultra-processed food is Apple Jacks cereal which is totally transformed in a factory. Another example of the continuum from unprocessed to ultra-processed is corn on the cob – popcorn – tortillas – Cheetos. Children in our country typically consume 70% of their calories in ultra-processed food.

Eat more whole plant foods. Eating a variety of whole plant foods, referred to as “eating the rainbow,” provides a variety of fiber and nutrients. Fiber helps a person feel full with fewer calories and keeps our gut working well. Whole plant foods add essential nutrients to the diet, including antioxidants, phytonutrients, vitamins and minerals. Protein needs can also be met with whole plant foods. After all, animal protein begins with animals eating plants; we can obtain our protein directly from plants to improve our health and our environment.

These “rules” for better nutrition, Dr. Yami emphasized again, do not have to be all or nothing. Happily, a plant-based, whole food diet offers abundant options with over 50,000 edible plants, over 400 varieties of beans alone. Think about integrating fruit, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts and seeds into menus. Don’t focus on what you take out of your diet but what you can put in. Then focus on how you feel, your energy level, your sleep, a healthier now and healthier future.

Dr. Yami offers a number of free resources at <https://www.doctoryami.com/free>, from shopping lists, to menus and recipes, to parent guides for helping kids develop healthy eating habits.

March Community Conversation...

**CHAIR OF 2021- 2022 REDISTRICTING COMMISSION
PROUD OF “MESSY” COMPROMISE**

Sarah Augustine gave an informative overview and shared her point of view of Washington State’s recently completed redistricting process. While this article will summarize some of the information, it is well-worth hearing her unique perspective that remains available for viewing on our LWVYC Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/LWVYC>.

A LWVYC member, Sarah brought extensive education and experience to her role as non-voting chair of the Redistricting Commission. Her credentials include Executive Director of the Dispute Resolution Center of Yakima and Kittitas County, as well as leadership involvement in advocacy organizations, advisory committees and oversight boards. She has advocated for vulnerable populations as well as employed shuttle diplomacy and group decision-making strategies to de-escalate conflicts and establish common ground among communities and external interests. These skills helped her promote a compromise process in a partisan environment for establishing new political boundaries.

Redistricting is required every ten years after each national Census. 2020’s count for Washington State is over 7.7 million people, almost a million more than ten years ago. Urban areas account for more growth than rural areas, so political boundaries have to be re-drawn so each district represents nearly the same number of people. In Yakima County, the Lower Valley showed a loss of population while the Upper Valley had moderate growth with a somewhat greater increase in Yakima city.

(Continued on Page 5)

Chair of Redistricting Commission... (Continued from Page 4)

Sarah’s personal commitment for her work with the Redistricting Commission was to support democratic institutions and processes, demonstrate that compromise can prevail over winner takes all, and provide transparency and inclusion, especially for those traditionally disenfranchised.

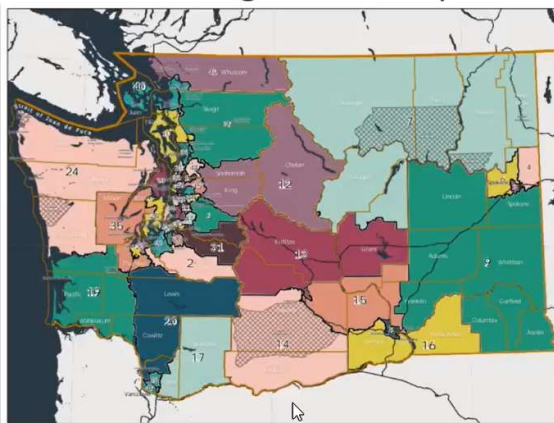
The Commission includes four members, with one each appointed from the Democratic and Republican caucuses of the State House and Senate. Sarah began her time with them by meeting individually with each commissioner to understand their “higher calling” for the work they were to undertake. This led to mission and values statements that she kept at the forefront of their deliberations.

Challenges included both a short time-line for their work, and the need for virtual meetings and a virtual public process because of the pandemic. What should be a 10-month process was reduced to 10 weeks with late arrival of Census Data. Entirely virtual meetings until the final week made it tougher to build rapport and compromise. On the other hand, Zoom enabled more robust engagement, simplifying simultaneous translation. Staff time and budget was directed to provide information to engage the public and to make virtual involvement accessible to residents from their homes or public libraries.

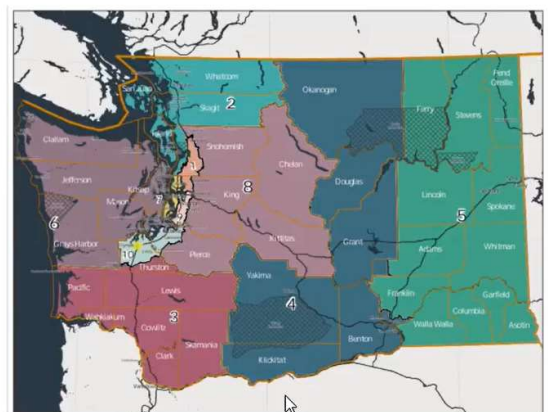
Sarah and her staff worked to “front-load” public testimony and provide plenty of opportunities for public input so the Commission’s work would be framed and influenced by individuals and communities around the state. She reminded the four Commissioners that the “fifth party” to their decisions is the public. An historic level of engagement was achieved with over 2 million Facebook views; over 16,000 hours of YouTube content watched by more than 750,000 people; more than 400 individual commentaries at live meetings; 3000 emails, comments on the website form, letters, or voice mails; and at an interactive site at least 1300 people tried their hand at drawing their own maps with 70 of these maps formally submitted for commission consideration.

Outreach to diverse populations was a focus, including unprecedented efforts by the Commission to engage in tribal consultation. Eight tribes within our state borders were formally involved, and the final maps reflect some, but not all, of changes each tribe wished. For example, the Yakama Reservation is now included in one legislative district rather than split between two as previously.

Washington State Redistricting Commission
Final Legislative map



Washington State Redistricting Commission
Final Congressional map



As Chair, Sarah was ethically bound to facilitate the process but had no say in the final maps. There are challenges to the maps, with lawsuits about voting rights and transparency of the final decision-making. But she is proud of the Commission’s work for arriving at consensus in a very polarized time. The State Supreme Court accepted the maps as reflecting the interests of thousands of involved citizens.

Understanding that, “A democracy is as healthy as the amount of inclusion of ordinary people,” prompted Sarah to accept the challenge of chairing the Commission. She concluded the conversation by reminding us that people have to remain engaged, as the alternative to public engagement is tyranny.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WASHINGTON STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY

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. We will actively work to remove 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, 2020; renewal date June 30, 2021
- b) Initial dues paid February 24, 2021; renewal date June 30, 2022