

# VOTER

## LWVSJ Happenings

**Holiday Luncheon – Monday, December 11<sup>th</sup>**  
**12pm – 2.30pm - The Grange**  
**Catered Lunch by Green Beat Kitchen**  
**Lunch \$30 per person – RSVP by December 4<sup>th</sup>**



Our Holiday Luncheon speaker is Vince Dauciunas, President of the OPALCO Board of Directors. He will share OPALCO'S plans on local energy, and the local implications of the larger Pacific Northwest energy transition. Vince believes that the coming years are likely to be challenging because of the realities and politics of energy, global economic uncertainties, and climate change. It is vital that all organizations in the County responsible for the infrastructure be prepared to respond to these challenges.

OPALCO will continue to meet members' need for reliable electric power. Given the above concerns, a long-term plan should be put in place to ensure that the power supply remains secure and affordable. As a member of the Board, Vince believes OPALCO should actively support energy conservation and efficiency efforts and

encourage member and community owned renewable energy generation systems. He will share some of these insights with us at our meeting.

*Vince Dauciunas and his wife Vikki moved to San Juan Island in 2002 after 30 years in Silicon Valley. He has a BS and MS in Electrical Engineering from University of Notre Dame and UC Berkeley. His professional experience includes Jet Propulsion Laboratory; Hewlett Packard; and Agilent Technologies, where he worked in R&D, General Management, and Business Development. He served as Vice President at Symyx Technologies, focused on research on fuel cells, advanced battery technologies, and alternate fuel technologies.*

*Here on San Juan Island, Vince is in his 10<sup>th</sup> year on the Board of Directors of the Friday Harbor Animal Shelter. Vince enjoys flying, and has a Commercial Pilot certificate. He has served as the San Juan Island District 1 OPALCO Director for the last 12 years.*

**Please contact Jill Belcovson at [jbelcovson@gmail.com](mailto:jbelcovson@gmail.com) by December 4<sup>th</sup> to RSVP**  
**Let us know if you prefer a vegetarian option for lunch.**

## Meeting Dates Winter-Spring 2023/2024

Board Meetings	Membership Meetings
December 4	December 11 <i>Holiday Luncheon – The Grange</i>
Jan 8	January 8
Feb 5	Feb 12
March 4	March 11
April 1	April 8
May 6	May 13
June 3	June 10
July 1	<i>Summer Picnic</i>
August <i>Board Retreat</i>	<i>Summer Break</i>

*All members are welcome to attend our board meetings – please send any board member an email and we will send you the zoom link.*

## Register Today for Saturday's Action Workshop! Saturday, December 2 | 9am-3pm | Virtual Action Workshop & Democracy Lobby Week

Each year, the LWVWA Lobby Team participates in planning and conducting two events related to the Legislature:

In December of each year, the Lobby Team conducts an **Action Workshop** at which League members and interested public learn about what issues are likely to come up in the ensuing legislative session and get tips about League positions to support.

### **December 2 - SAT | Annual LWVWA Action Workshop**

Gear up for Washington's 2024 legislative session! Attend our Action Workshop to learn from our LWVWA Advocacy Team, lobbyist, and from legislators what's expected in the upcoming session on the League's key issues. [Click here](#) for more information or to register.

**January 22 – 26, 2024 MON-FRI | Democracy Lobby Week**  
**| 6:00 - 8:00 PM | Nightly and Virtual**

In January, the Lobby Team works with **Fix Democracy First** (FDF), a partner organization, on **Democracy Lobby Week**. During this week, League and FDF members can attend daytime or evening sessions. During evening sessions, attendees get more details about specific bills that we are supporting, and during the daytime sessions, they have an opportunity to meet with their local legislators in support of these bills. Learn about what's expected in the upcoming legislative session on the League's key issues from our lobbyist, legislators, and Advocacy Team. On the agenda:

- Legislative forecast from LWVWA's contract lobbyist
- Panel discussion with elected state legislators
- Attend breakout groups focused on the League's key issues:
  - Redistricting
  - Local News and News Media Literacy
  - Health Care
  - Behavioral Health
  - Children's Issues & Education
  - Elections & Money in Politics
  - Climate Change & Energy
  - Revenue
  - Housing & Homelessness
  - Criminal Justice

Join us for this empowering and informative event!

Both of these events will continue to be virtual this year - please save the dates on your calendars!

## **We Had A Retreat!**

On November 18th, LWVWA members and Board gathered at Friday Harbor House for our Annual Retreat and to brainstorm and do our program planning for next year. After some social time to catch up with each other, President Susan Martin recapped last year's retreat and what we have done in response. Voter Forums were our top priority and we held primary and general election Voter Forums on San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez. All of the meetings were also available via Zoom. We formally launched the Observer Corps and have been covering seven public meetings and publish the resulting notes in the Journal of the San Juans, The Islander and have links in the Salish Current. We have been getting strong positive feedback from the public about our notes, which have raised the League's profile in the community. In outreach we had a booth at the County Fair. We shared a preview of the new website and got member feedback on the design and structure ahead of it's launch in early 2024.





We launched several new activities in 2023 and we look to 2024 to be a year to consolidate and institutionalize some of these programs. To that end we asked about how to engage more members to be active volunteers to maintain and carry out key programs such as voter forums, civic education outreach and the Observer Corps. The national League is encouraging state and local Leagues to develop partnerships to broaden our engagement with the community and our members brought forward ideas on groups and organizations we could partner with and specific joint activities or projects we could

potentially partner on. Libraries, schools, resource Centers, Service Clubs and other non-profits topped the lists.



We wrapped-up with our annual program planning exercise. The top choices for membership meeting topics are: 2024 Elections; Destination Management Plan; New County Administrator; Water Availability in the County; Local Climate Sustainability; Disaster Preparedness. We suggested again doing a booth at the County Fair, the Summer Picnic, and, as always, we plan to march in the July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade. New things we plan to do include “Meet the League Road Show” events on Orcas and Lopez; perhaps do a series of adult education meetings at the Library; have a “Bring a Friend” Membership meeting;

and to look at sponsoring a High School Debate. We also talked about taking some steps towards having a county-wide Civics Bowl and in the interim possibly sponsor some civics questions in the Knowledge Bowl. A truly exciting and challenging agenda that we look forward to sharing with you next year.



**Help Wanted** – Our nominating committee are hard at work reaching out to those in our community to consider becoming a member of our Board. There are many reasons why members choose to apply for a board position, including:

- Expanding their commitment and understanding of the League
- Sharing their League’s successes with other members
- Continuing to build leadership skills, and
- Helping set the future for the LWV of the San Juans.

If you are interested in learning more please contact any of our nominating committee members -*Leslie Veirs, Chair; Audra Adelberger, Mary Campanella or Barbara Marrett*



Join us for our first membership meeting of 2024 in which we explore the impact on our island community of Food Insecurity. We hope to have knowledgeable speakers and open Q&A so mark your calendar and we will see you at the library on January 8th.

## **Around the League – State & National Issues**

### **2023 LWVWA ADVOCACY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The League of Women Voters of Washington's advocacy is primarily done by the Lobby Team. This team is comprised of experienced (volunteer) subject matter experts who work year-round on legislative issues as nonpartisan advocates for League positions.

During the legislative session, the team monitors state legislation and testifies based on League positions. The team also publishes a weekly newsletter giving updates on issues and calling for member action in some cases. Outside of the legislative session, the team works with nonpartisan issue-based coalitions who share League's values and interests in specific topics. This work involves sharing information, developing advocacy strategies, and educating each other on the issues in preparation for the upcoming legislative session.

League issue chairs contributed to a wide range of major legislative achievements in the 2023 session in the areas of elections, health care, education, growth management, waste reduction, and more. There are too many to list them all, but here are just a few of our 2023 advocacy accomplishments:

#### **Elections**

- Adoption of the Washington Voting Rights Act, which seeks to protect members of classes who do not have an equal opportunity to elect candidates of their choice through methods that have created vote dilution or polarized voting.
- Abolition of advisory votes on the ballot—these were confusing and nonbinding

#### **Education**

- Clarification of policies and regulations that prevent and respond to harassment, intimidation, bullying, and discrimination in schools
- Various bills supporting special education and equity in programs for highly capable students

#### **Growth Management**

- Changes in the Growth Management Act that now require more extensive planning for housing for residents at all income levels and climate mitigation and resilience

#### **Health Care**

- Required coverage for hearing aids in most group insurance plans
- Establishment of a new role in dentistry, a dental therapist, which will make dental services more accessible in rural areas and for low-income people
- Protection of access to abortion medication
- Various improvements to standards for health care workforce
- Increased access to the provisions of the Death with Dignity Act or Medical Aid in Dying

### **Criminal Justice**

- Waiver of certain legal financial obligations owed by defendants who have been convicted
- Elimination of juvenile offenses from offender scores used to determine sentencing ranges for crimes

### **Solid Waste Management**

- Measures related to upgrades in recycling, including batteries and plastics, and composting

### **Children's Programs**

- Improvements in the childcare system and a new Transition to a Kindergarten Program.

These legislative victories were also accompanied by large increases in funding for behavioral health, affordable housing, the working families tax credit, and carbon sequestration measures.

## **LWVWA CIVICS ED WRAP-UP**

The League of Women Voters of Washington is committed to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and to supporting civic education throughout the state. Civic education inclusion involves reaching out to underserved and underrepresented groups with information on how the government works and how to be engaged in a democracy. Civic education is for youth, but also for adults. We all need to know more about how government works and the role we play in our democracy.

Each year, the LWVWA solicits civic education grant requests from local Leagues, with grant funds pulled from the LWVWA's Education Fund. The guidelines are broad "How are you reaching underserved/underrepresented groups with voter education or civic education?"

Below are some examples of civic education grant work serving youth.

### **KSPS Civics Bowl** *(civic education and inclusion)*

In 2021, the Spokane Area League partnered with the local public broadcasting station, KSPS, and the Spokane Public Schools to support teams of high school students to compete in a jeopardy-like civics bowl. Spokane League members wrote 700 questions from the two League civics textbooks used in schools. Civics teachers served as coaches; family members watched live recordings of the shows; and community members saw broadcasts of highly educated civics students competing.

In 2022, one of the semi-finalist teams hailed from the Spokane project-based Community School (an alternative high school), In 2023, the KSPS Civics Bowl is still going strong! Watch recent student Civic Bowl participants answering questions about their experience [here](#).

### **Legislative Page Program** (*civic education and equity*)

In 2022, the Clallam County League partnered with their local Boys and Girls Club to support and encourage club members to become legislative pages. Some of the young folks who wanted to participate in our state government as pages, in the capital for a week, learning the legislative process, could not afford the transportation, living, and clothing costs.

To assist efforts to get these young folks to the capitol, the Clallam League served as the content expert on the legislative page program—answering questions, assisting with applications, and keeping track of important deadlines. The Boys and Girls Club gave students funding for clothing, transportation, as well as room and board costs. Read about the world view altering experience of one legislative page below.

### **Civics Textbooks to Schools** (*civic education, equity, and inclusion*)

Both the Clark County and the San Juan County Leagues received funding to purchase the LWVWA civics textbooks, *The State We're In* for our school districts experiencing severe budget cuts. The head of curriculum for that district asked for help paying for textbooks for elementary and middle school teachers. While the LWVWA textbooks are **free online**, teachers and students like to have a hardcopy. Access problems arise because not all school districts can afford printed textbooks, and many do not have broadband internet access.

Additionally, through the work of long-time League volunteer Karen Verrill, the League's textbooks, posters, and a recent supplement on *The History of Latinos in Washington* have been translated into Spanish! Ongoing planning with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is focusing expanding access to the translated versions to the over 40,000 students in dual language programs. It is important that ALL of us—whether our first language is English or not—have access to materials to aid in learning how Washington State and Native American governments work.

*by Beth Pellicciotti—LWVWA Board, Civic Education*

## **League of Women Voters of Washington Acts to Protect Voter Access to Campaign Expenditure Information**

**Seattle, WA**—The League of Women Voters of Washington has joined an [amicus brief](#) urging the Washington State Court of Appeals to uphold a lower court ruling that Meta violated state campaign transparency law. The law requires media platforms hosting political advertising—such as the Meta-owned Facebook—to make information about who purchased this advertising publicly available.

“The League of Women Voters supports full disclosure of campaign finance expenditures so that voters can cast an informed ballot,” said LWVWA President Mary Coltrane. “Microtargeting unsuspecting voters with campaign ads that fail to tell who is trying to influence harms democracy. Finding out who paid for these ads is challenging at best. Voters, and the journalists that serve them, should be able to readily access information about campaign ads,” she added. Fix Democracy First, Campaign Legal Center, and the Brennan Center for Justice are additional amici curiae in this critically important brief. The Campaign Legal Center (CLC) filed the brief on August 10, 2023. Fix Democracy First is a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization focused on fair elections and campaign finance reform. The Brennan Center for Justice is a nonprofit, nonpartisan law and public policy institute that seeks to strengthen, revitalize, and defend our systems of democracy and justice.

The League of Women Voters strongly supports transparency in elections and provides voters with important information about candidates and campaign issues.

## LWV Member Rights & Responsibilities

Individuals who join the League of Women Voters become part of a highly trusted, 100+ year-old organization comprised of a large grassroots network. LWV is committed to providing opportunities for members to amplify their individual political power by participating in local, state and national League actions.

Read more at <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/league-fundamentals/member-rights-responsibilities-policy>

## An Update on Local News and our Democracy

Local news reporting plays a pivotal role in the health of our communities—and our democracy.

Extensive research, including a [two-year study](#) by the League of Women Voters of Washington, reports on the benefits of credible news sources that keep us up to date about what’s happening in our neighborhoods, at City Hall, in boardrooms and workplaces, in our schools and on our sports fields: *Because of their reporting, we’re more likely to vote, be more engaged in our communities, see more candidates seek office, and be less likely to hold polarizing political viewpoints.*

After thorough study and discussion known as reaching consensus, the 2,400-member League adopted a public policy on local news: **“The League of Women Voters of Washington believes it is the responsibility of the government to provide support for conditions under which credible local journalism can survive and thrive.”**

Several factors prompted the League’s study, “The Decline of Local News and Its Impact on Democracy,” and the subsequent adoption of our public policy position. Among them was Washington’s loss of three daily and more than two dozen weekly newspapers between 2005 and 2022. Also motivating our efforts is newsroom staffing across the state decreased by two-thirds, resulting in considerably less coverage.

In the League’s call for support for local news, we don’t distinguish between news published in print on paper or online: **“The League supports credible and ethical local journalism, in whatever format it is published, as essential to our democracy.”** Important, too, is that regardless of the source of support or assistance, the League is adamant that **“control of a publication’s content must remain exclusively with the news organization.”**

**GET THE STUDY** - <https://lwvwa.org/local-news#Get>



### Upcoming Events

**1.6 SAT | LWVWA Speak-Up School**

**SAVE THE DATE:** [Attend Speak-Up School](#) and learn how to effectively engage with legislators and use resources like the legislature’s [website](#) and the League’s [Legislative Action Newsletter](#).



A great way to stay current and involved is to sign up for the Legislative Newsletter from the WA League. This provides a weekly update on key issues in the legislature, including Action Alerts for upcoming votes and information on current activity on major bills. Newsletters come out every Sunday during the Legislative Session.

Click here: [sign up for the Legislative Newsletter](#)

### **Join Your Local League!**

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person 16 and older may become a voting member of the League.

### **Follow Us on Facebook!**

Follow what local, state and national league are up to at our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVSanJuans>

## **Board Members of the League of Women Voters of the San Juan's**

### **Officers**

Susan Martin	President	360-370-5205	<a href="mailto:martinsf@georgetown.edu"><u>martinsf@georgetown.edu</u></a>
Barbara Sharp	Vice-President	360-472-0148	<a href="mailto:b_gsharp@hotmail.com"><u>b_gsharp@hotmail.com</u></a>
Stephanie Butler	Voter Services	907-209-5885	<a href="mailto:sjbutlerak@gmail.com"><u>sjbutlerak@gmail.com</u></a>
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Diana Sibert	Secretary	360-370-5269	<a href="mailto:dianasibert@gmail.com"><u>dianasibert@gmail.com</u></a>
Jill Belcovson	The Voter	805-689-2260	<a href="mailto:jbelcovson@gmail.com"><u>jbelcovson@gmail.com</u></a>

### **Members-at-Large**

Audra Adelberger	Nominating Committee	360-378-6322	<a href="mailto:audraaeaba@gmail.com"><u>audraaeaba@gmail.com</u></a>
Mary Campanella	Nominating Committee And Action Chair	800-364-1984	<a href="mailto:marycampanella@icloud.com"><u>marycampanella@icloud.com</u></a>
Susan Eberhard		360-378-3608	<a href="mailto:eberhard@rockisland.com"><u>eberhard@rockisland.com</u></a>
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Steve Bowman – Board Member Emeritus		360-370-5814	<a href="mailto:steve.bowman52@gmail.com"><u>steve.bowman52@gmail.com</u></a>

*Nominating Committee: Leslie Veirs, Chair; Audra Adelberger, Mary Campanella, Barbara Marrett*

When you join the League, your dues go to three different places: to National League to help support voting rights advocacy efforts, to State League for voter education as well as advocacy for state issues that League supports; and then there are a few dollars left to support our local forums and programs. Below are the different levels of dues payments and the PO Box number. If you choose to give at a higher level than the “Regular” level, the extra money stays with our local League to support our important work here. Thanks for supporting LWV at all levels!

*A Note from the Treasurer:*

*A big thank you to members who have recently paid dues. We are well into our current fiscal year which started on June 1, 2023. When you receive an updated roster in your email inbox please look at the column (labeled "Paid thru") near the far-right-hand side to see if you are paid through 5/31/2024. If not, please consider sending your check to our PO Box. Also please let us know of any changes that need to be made to your contact information. Thank you for continuing to support the important work that we do.*

YES! I want to become a member of the League of Women Voters of the San Juan's.

**Name(s)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email** \_\_\_\_\_

Circle one:

	<b>Regular</b>	<b>Carrie Chapman Catt</b>	<b>Susan B. Anthony</b>
<b>Individual</b>	\$60	\$100 to \$249	\$250 and up
<b>Family</b>	\$90	\$150to \$374	\$375 and up
<b>Students</b>	Free		

I would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the League of Women Voters of WA Education Fund and have enclosed a separate check (to LWVWA—EF) in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

**PLEASE RETURN TO:** League of Women Voters of the San Juans  
PO Box 784  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

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