

VOTER

June 2022
LWVSJ Happenings

June Membership Meeting – 13th June
12pm – 1.30pm
Via Zoom



Want to hear the latest town updates?

Denice Kulseth, Friday Harbor Town Administrator, will speak at the LWV's June 13th Program at 12pm. She will give us current information about the fire-cleanup and possible future reconstruction. In addition, she will bring us up to date on several other ongoing issues, such as ferry traffic flow and construction projects. All members are encouraged to invite guests.

This meeting will be via Zoom – please follow the link below.

<https://georgetown.zoom.us/j/97141392690?pwd=TU9hM0VaenVHYTVnd0VRSGlrQzNBdz09>

Kulseth has served in State and Local government for most of her professional career. She worked as an Assistant Attorney General for the State of New Mexico, then was appointed County Attorney for Santa Fe County where she advised the County Commission and all departments on the day-to-day operations of County government. Kulseth and her husband John (elected SJC Assessor) moved to San Juan Island in 2000 to raise their family. In 2019, after their children graduated from Friday Harbor High School, Kulseth worked for San Juan County. As Town Administrator, she is the Chief Administrative Officer of the town and is responsible to the Mayor and Town Council for proper administration of all affairs of the town. She attends all meetings of the Town Council and recommends for adoption by the Town Council such measures as she may deem necessary or expedient. She sees that all laws, ordinances and policies of the Town Council are faithfully executed and keeps the public and Council informed on Town operations.

Recap of the May Annual Meeting

We were back in person for a membership meeting for the first time since the pandemic began. It was also our first hybrid membership meeting with a number joining us on Zoom. The in-person crowd gathered at the Grange and enjoyed a chance to catch up with each other as well as a delicious lunch.

The business portion of the meeting elected our new slate of officers and board members, amended the by-laws to take into account regular meetings via Zoom, and approved the budget which included \$1000 to the National League to support lawsuits defending voters' right and challenging gerrymandering and money for our own Zoom account and equipment to support hybrid meetings. The review of last year's budget informed the membership of \$500 donation that the Board approved to assist Ukrainians in the wake of the Russian invasion of their country. Highlights of the year in review included our marching in the July 4th parade commemorating 100 years of women's suffrage and having Attorney General Bob Ferguson as our Holiday meeting speaker, as well as voter forums for the fire and port commissioner races.

Our Speaker, Spokesman Review Editor and Chief Rob Curley was grounded in Spokane by the Alaska Airlines pilots vote, and was unable to join us in person, but he gave his entertaining and informative talk via Zoom. It was both a sobering and hopeful look at the state of the press and its importance to the functioning of our democracy. Thanks to all who joined us.

Necia Quast

A Response to the Ukraine Crisis

As the conflict in Ukraine passed its 100th day, the LWVSJI has reflected on how this crisis relates to the work of the League. The Russian invasion of Ukraine is an assault on democracy. As Virginia Kase Solomon, CEO of the League, wrote soon after the conflict began: "We support and stand united with the people of Ukraine. An attack on democracy anywhere is an attack on democracy for all of us. We stand in the belief that democracy will always prevail both internationally and right here at home." Millions of Ukrainian women and children have been displaced internally and across borders. After researching the capacities and mandate of dozens of humanitarian organizations, the board approved donations to two networks with strong presence on the ground inside Ukraine and in neighboring countries. Save the Children International has been working with displaced persons in Ukraine since 2014. Throughout the eight-year conflict, it has delivered essential humanitarian aid to children and their families, including winter kits and hygiene kits and providing cash grants to families. A priority is providing access to safe, inclusive, quality education for children. Caritas International has had a presence in Ukraine and its neighbors for several decades. Caritas staff and volunteers are working inside Ukraine and its neighbors to provide refugees and displaced persons with food, medicine and temporary accommodation. LWVSJI has also ways we can help Ukrainians (and Afghans) seeking admission to the United States. Welcome.US is a new national initiative built to inspire, mobilize, and empower Americans to welcome and support those seeking refuge in this country. For more information on how all of us can help, please visit Welcome.US' [website](#).

Susan Martin
President
LWVSJ

Meeting Dates 2022

Board Meetings 1 – 3pm	Membership Meetings 12 – 2pm
June 7	June 13
<i>Summer Break</i>	<i>Summer Break</i>
Board Retreat – August 2	<i>Summer Break</i>
September 6	September 12
October 4	October 10 (Forums)
November 1	November 14
December 6	December 12 (Holiday Luncheon)

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

Around the League – State & National Issues

LWVWA Sends Pro-Choice Letter to Legislators

Washington is in a unique position regarding reproductive choice compared to many other states. In order to reinforce how important this is, in May, LWVWA President Lunell Haught sent the following letter about reproductive choice to each Washington state senator and representative. The LWV uses privacy and health care positions to support reproductive choice. Lunell has received a few thank you notes from legislators.

Family planning is difficult. Those who are parents know the challenges and uncertainties of bringing a new life into the world and realize that it affects not only the individual but the entire family constellation and society. The League of Women Voters of Washington supports universal access to a comprehensive, uniform, and affordable set of health services and an individual's right to privacy in making their own reproductive choices.

The League is grateful for the foresight that Washington voters showed in securing the right to terminate a pregnancy (1973). Adding to this is the legislative work done to enact RCW 9.02.110 (a woman's right to choose). We appreciate your recognizing that every individual has the fundamental right to choose or refuse birth control and that every pregnant person has the fundamental right to choose or refuse to terminate a pregnancy (except as specifically limited).

Those of us who lived through the days when there was no access to reproductive choices know firsthand how lives can be upturned and ended without access to reproductive care. We are thankful to live in a state that recognizes this is a family, not a government, decision. Thank you for your service to the people of Washington in ensuring the rights of women and their families to make their own decisions about important family matters.

*Lunell Haught
President
LWV Washington*

Decline to Sign I-1929

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed the capital gains tax, a 7% excise tax on the sale of capital gains exceeding \$250,000. This has been likened to a real estate excise tax paid on property when it is sold. It was estimated that the tax would generate nearly \$1 billion per year and would affect only about 0.2% of Washington's population because of various exemptions from the tax—such as sales of residences, retirement funds, and more—that protect less wealthy people.

The first \$500 million of revenue from the tax is dedicated to the state Education Legacy Trust Account, which can only be used for education (supporting common schools, expanding access to higher education through funding for new enrollments and financial aid, early learning and child-care programs, and other educational improvement efforts). The remainder would be deposited into the Common School Construction Fund.

In March of this year, Initiative 1929 was filed to repeal this tax, calling it an income tax. If it receives enough signatures, it will go on the ballot in November and, if approved by the voters, would repeal the capital gains tax. However, Washington state needs new revenue to cover the costs of many as yet un- and underfunded needs. The League of Women Voters supported the capital gains tax as one of several ways to generate more revenue while making our currently unfair tax structure more fair. Right now, people with fewer means and income pay far more of their income in state and local taxes than people with higher incomes. The capital gains tax would affect only the most wealthy in the state.

At its April meeting, the LWVWA Board approved the League's participation in the "Decline to Sign I-1929" campaign urging voters not to sign I-1929, with the intention of keeping it off the ballot. League members are encouraged to tell friends, family, social media contacts, and others *not* to sign this initiative and to join with other organizations as they campaign to keep this off the ballot.

For more information, refer to this [fact sheet](#) produced by the Washington State Budget and Policy Center. And please, Decline to Sign.

LWVWA's "Be A Voter Campaign"

The LWVWA's "Be a Voter" campaign was selected as a finalist for the LWV of the US *Powering Democracy Award*, which will be announced on June 26 at the national convention. The Powering Democracy Award recognizes state and local Leagues for their exemplary work over the past biennium. The award's theme was inspired by the national League's [Women Power Democracy](#) campaign, and ideal submissions support the Women Power Democracy goals and/or the goals of the [Campaign for Making Democracy Work](#) and the League's [Strategic](#)

[Framework](#). All winners will receive a cash prize from the LWVUS in recognition of their excellent work over the past biennium.

The Be a Voter Campaign is a voter outreach project highlighting local Leagues working together with the state League, statewide outreach, materials in Spanish, a social media campaign, and a partnership with a major newspaper, *The Spokesman-Review*. The Be a Voter Campaign is a research-based project providing a broad suite of tools for local Leagues to use across Washington state. With uniform messaging, an accompanying Be a Voter graphic, and the LWVWA logo on voter outreach tools, local Leagues achieved messaging synergies across a statewide audience.

National League

Reproductive Rights Take Center Stage

Following the leak of a [draft Supreme Court opinion](#) in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*, Leagues have allied with reproductive rights partners to advocate for the constitutional right to control our own bodies via abortion and other health care decisions.

This included supporting the *Women's Health and Protection Act*, which the [Senate failed to pass](#), and co-sponsoring nationwide [Bans Off Our Bodies](#) efforts.

The League remains an amicus partner in *Dobbs* and continues to push for reproductive justice through other gender equity reforms, such as [passage of the Equal Rights Amendment](#).

Ending Gun Violence

In June, the Supreme Court will rule in the *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association v. Bruen*. The case will determine whether guns are allowed in public spaces such as polling locations.

This comes on the heels of a month that saw 33 mass shootings within its first 15 days, and ultimately held two of the worst mass shootings in recent history in [Buffalo, New York](#) and [Uvalde, Texas](#).

The Leagues of the US, New York, and Florida are amicus partners in *Bruen*. On May 26, LWV submitted [recommendations on gun safety reforms](#) to Congressional Judiciary Committees.

Supporters of gun reform are encouraged to [contact their Senators](#) about the necessity of passing the *Bipartisan Background Checks Act*.

[LWVUS urges U.S. Senate to vote yes on Women's Health Protection Act](#): The LWVUS urges U.S. senators to vote yes on S.4132, codifying women's right to reproductive choice by prohibiting governmental restrictions on access to abortion services.

[League joins call for social media companies to address election disinformation](#): The LWVUS joined a letter with more than 120 groups to urge social media platform leaders to control the spread of disinformation online as we head into the midterm elections.

[LWVUS advocates for passage of the DISCLOSE Act of 2021](#): The LWVUS urges the U.S. Senate to debate and pass the DISCLOSE Act (S.443) that would provide transparency and

complete, truthful information in campaign funding. The act would require organizations and politicians to disclose donations over \$10,000 during an election cycle.

Saturday, June 18, the LWVUS will participate in the [Moral March on Washington](#) in partnership with the Poor People's Campaign and the Low-Wage Workers Assembly.

Leagues in the News:

- Suzanne Brock, president of the LWV of the Cape Cod (Massachusetts) Area, wrote a powerful op-ed on the right to privacy and how repealing *Roe v. Wade* could impact our democracy. Read the piece, "[Opinion: I had an abortion. Here's why Roe v. Wade should not be repealed](#)," in the *Cape Cod Times*.
- Read and share a [statement from the LWV of Texas](#) in response to the mass shooting in Uvalde, "A Child's Life Outweighs Anyone's Right to Keep and Bear Arms."

The League is a Nonpartisan Source You Can Trust

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization. We encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League acts in support of, or in opposition to, selected governmental issues which its members have studied. It does not support or oppose candidates, factions or political parties. League members, as individuals, may support candidates of the political party of their choice. In order to protect the League's nonpartisanship policy, guidelines regarding the political activities of the Board of Directors are reviewed frequently.

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

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Stephanie Butler		907-209-5885	sjbutlerak@gmail.com
Diana Sibert		360-370-5269	dianasibert@gmail.com

Nominating Committee: Audra Adelberger, Mary Campanella, Robbie Lawson, Leslie Veirs

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!

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:

	Regular	Carrie Chapman Catt	Susan B. Anthony
Individual	\$60	\$100 to \$249	\$250 and up
Family	\$90	\$150to \$374	\$375 and up
Student	\$35		

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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