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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.*

October, 2019

Vol.19, No 10

**CALENDAR**

Tuesday, October 15, 6:00 to 8:00 PM **Hate Crimes Forum**. Henry Beauchamp Community Center, 1211 S 7th Street, Yakima. *See article in this issue.*

Thursday, October 17, 6:00 PM **Wapato Mayoral & City Council Candidates Forum.** Filipino Community Hall, 211 W 2nd Street, Wapato. *Confirmation pending! See Notes from Criss in this issue.*

Sunday, October 20, 5:30 PM **Potluck with State League Board and area League members.** Condo Clubhouse at Windcrest Villa, 5910 W Lincoln, Yakima. *See Notes from Criss in this issue.*

Monday, October 21, 9:00 AM **State League of Women’s Voters Board Meeting.** Red Lion Hotel, 607 E Yakima Ave, Yakima. *Local members welcome.*

Tuesday, October 22, 5:30 PM **October Conversation: El Censo 2020.** Wesley United Methodist Church, 14 N 48th Avenue, Yakima. *See attached flyer.*

Monday, November 4, 4:00 PM **Leadership Team Meeting.** LWVYC office at Unitarian Universalist Church, 225 N 2nd Street, Yakima.

**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.

March 26

April1, 4 PM

**Officers**

 *President:*  Criss Bardill

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 *Treasurer:* Janis Luvaas

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*Voter Editor:* Susan Kaphammer

949-0127; susanlkap@gmail.com

The Board meets at 4:00 PM the 1st Monday of each month at the League office.

**All members are welcome to attend.**

NOTES FROM CRISS

Our Yakima City Council Candidate Forum held last Thursday was a mix of success and disappointment. Four of the 8 candidates did not participate (for various reasons, including illness), and our audience was a little sparse, approximately 20 people. But excellent questions were submitted and those candidates attending had ample

 *(Continued on Page 2)*

**NOTES FROM CRISS** *(Continued from Page 1)*

***The Voter,*** *October, 2019 Page 2 P*

time to give their responses. One new addition to our structure was that each candidate had one challenge opportunity to respond to something another candidate had said, with that candidate then having an opportunity to respond back. We intend to continue that practice at future forums.

As previously announced, on Sunday, October 20, the State League Board will be gathering in Yakima for their regularly scheduled Board meeting. We will host a potluck Sunday at 5:30 (see calendar). The Kittitas Valley League as well and the [Klickitat-Skamania Unit-at-Large](https://lwvwa.org/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Klickitat-Skamania) League have been invited to join us. We will provide a catered Mexican main dish, probably enchiladas, and we are asking members to contribute wine, appetizers, sides, and desserts. This will be a great opportunity to welcome the State Board to Yakima, and I hope many of you will attend and contribute to the potluck. Please watch for an email from me asking for your specific help. Also, the actual State Board meeting will be the following morning at 9 AM at the Red Lion, and is open to local League members.

We are still pursuing a Wapato City Council and Mayor Candidate Forum. At this time we have a date; Thursday, 10/17 at 6 PM, a location; the Filipino Community Hall, co-sponsors including American Legion Post 133, the Wapato Lions Club, the Filipino American Community of Yakima Valley, and the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition-Yakima Valley. What we don’t have is a fulsome response from the candidates. We will start making phone calls to hopefully get more commitments. The good news is that we have not notice from any candidate that they will not participate, so we are hopeful we can build participation with more direct contact. We will send out our flyer once we know for sure we are going forward.

NAACP reached out to us to co-sponsor a Hate Crimes Forum they are organizing for Tuesday, October 15, from 6-8 PM, at the Henry Beauchamp Community Center. We are pleased to give our support to this event, and will have a League table for voter registration and League information, and, hopefully, League members there in support.

Finally, the Yakima Valley Museum has invited us to participate in a series of events in 2020 recognizing suffrage with a Living Voices production, a show of local women artists, and a display of a private collection of couture clothing. We are looking for a point person to work with the Museum on our participation. This is a perfect opportunity for a non-Leadership Team member to be our person on this time limited activity. Please call me if you are interested or want to know more. 965-2351

**LWVYC CO-SPONSORING HATE CRIMES FORUM**

Steve Hill, a member of our local league, will moderate a public Hate Crimes Forum on Tuesday, October 15, from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Henry Beauchamp Community Center, 1211 S 7th Street, Yakima.

The forum will explain the legal definition of Hate Crimes, which includes, “he or she maliciously and intentionally…because of perpetrator’s perception of target’s race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, mental, physical or sensory disability…causes…injury…damage to or destruction of the property…or threatens a specific person or group of persons...” (RCW 9A.36.080)

Organizers note that Yakima County is home to a broad range of religious communities, a multiplicity of racial and ethnic groups, and individuals with various sexual orientations and gender identities and expression – all of whom may experience Hate Crime activity. Law enforcement officials will share information and the audience will have the opportunity to participate. Spanish translation will be provided.

***The Voter,*** *October, 2019 Page 3 P*

**2019 ELECTION CHANGES**

*By Kitty Jubran*

Washington State voters will notice significant changes and additions to the election process.

1. Future Voters: This law allows 16 and 17 year olds to pre-register to vote with the Washington State Auditors system. Their information will be put “On Hold” until they reach the age of 18, at which time Voter Registration cards will be mailed to the individuals. During the “Hold” period, any name and address changes will need to be made at the local Auditors office; only the Auditor can access the “under 18” files to make changes. After turning 18, voters can make their own changes online.
2. Mailed Ballots: Ballots will be mailed to every voter three (3) weeks prior to the election. All ballots have return postage included for ease of return. To ensure your ballot is counted, it is recommended that the ballot be mailed back the day prior to Election Day.
3. Ballot Drop Boxes: Once ballots have been mailed to voters, the Yakima County Auditors Office will distribute Ballot Drop Boxes in 15 locations across the county. Boxes will be located in city halls, with the exception of Wapato where the box will be located in the City Library. City Hall hours of operation will apply.
4. Same Day Registration: New voters may now register and vote on election day at the County Auditors Office. On Election Day only, the Yakima Auditor will open a satellite office in the Sunnyside Neighborhood Health Clinic to facilitate Same Day Registration for Lower Valley residents.
5. Video Voter Guidance: The Auditors Office has made a Spanish Language video that answers questions about completing a ballot. The video has been posted on our League of Women Voters of Yakima County Facebook page.

Times… they are a changing!

***About Us…***

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS WA DIVERSITY POLICY**

LWV 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.

***The Voter,*** *October, 2019 Page 4 P*

***Shur Fellow Guidance…***

**CELEBRATING U.S.A. HISTORY WITHOUT WHITE WASHING IT**

Often when celebrating holidays like Thanksgiving and Fourth of July we are caught between celebrating the United States’ history for all its goals and achievements and/or acknowledging the havoc racism wreaked on people of color throughout history. we want to explore how we can celebrate American history without erasing the crimes committed against people of color. So often, there are traditions and holidays that we want to hold on to but don’t want to perpetuate racist ideologies or as Ta-Nehisi Coats puts it, “national amnesia.”

**What do we mean when we say “erasing people of color from our history”?**

When the story of how our country began is recounted, the narrative usually includes how the America’s Native people greeted the pilgrims with open arms and corn. This narrative, however, does not capture the whole story. Native people have diverse stories and no one nation (or tribe) has the same story from another. For more information on Native nations in your hometown follow this link: <https://native-land.ca>

We can celebrate the Fourth, but are we neglecting to mention the role slavery played in the formation of our country? White colonists kidnapped Africans from their homes and took them as slaves to then colonize the Americas and take over Native lands.

When celebrating the Fourth, we often praise the nation we live in without critique. Some may find it difficult to call our Nation great when its inception is founded on the oppression of others. Two things can be true at once: that the U.S. has great objectives (“all men are created equal”) and we have a racist past and present.

**How to avoid it**

Acknowledgement of all aspects of our history and educating ourselves on the problematic aspects of it is a necessary place to start. When using social media, celebrating with friends and family, or thinking to yourself, remember the people who were forced to undergo genocide, torture, and/ or enslavement. By acknowledging and educating ourselves we can move forward to do more to deconstruct current racism and make people of color feel more included in our work at the League and in our everyday life.

Here are some ways to go about celebrating our national holidays without ignoring the racism intertwined in such holidays:

* Make a statement! Post on social media about how excited you are to celebrate, but mindful of the mass genocide of Native people and/ or the enslavement of Africans that came with the conception of the Nation.
* Be an ally to other organizations within your community who focus on the lives of diverse communities.
* Call it out! If you see someone who might be unaware and/ or neglecting the full truth common history, politely but firmly provide them with resources to educate themselves.

**Moving forward**

How can we celebrate U.S. history without erasing people of color from our collective memory?

* **Be genuine:** It can be unproductive when actions are done without real desire to change. As

 (*Continued on Page 5)*

**CELEBRATING U.S.A. HISTORY** *(Continued from Page 4)*

***The Voter,*** *October, 2019 Page 5 P*

leaders it is important that we take steps to include everyone. Authenticity provides people with a space to feel heard, listened to, and speak their mind. Undoing years of oppression doesn’t happen overnight, therefore it’s important to remain diligent in making space for a range of feelings/ emotions about the holiday.

* **Make mistakes!** No one is perfect and this, like anything is a process. When we make mistakes we have the opportunity to learn and grow. No one is perfect. Acknowledge these mistakes out loud and apologize. Most importantly, learn and be open. Refer back to our DEI Webinar where we utilize the calling in method in which you pull someone aside to call attention to a problematic behavior.
* **Again, acknowledge:** Continuing to learn and listen allows us to continue to provide space and develop a deeper understanding on the pervasive nature of racism.

**Resources**

A list of resources on understanding U.S. racism is available here:

* <https://www.soundvision.com/article/a-brief-history-of-racism-in-the-united-states>
* Read Ta-Nehisi Coates’ *Between the World and Me* and *We Were Eight Years in Power*
* <http://masshumanities.org/files/programs/douglass/speech_complete.pdf>
* Honoring Your Native Land

**Remember:** this is by no means a complete guideline on how to end racism or absolve yourself of individual racism. Rather it is a list of suggestion on how and when to expel our prejudices and lean in to deconstructing racism.

***September Conversation…***

**BRINGING OUT THE VOTE: SHARING YOUR PASSION**

*****Section of handout provided by Katherine Murphy at September Conversation*

Katherine Murphy, LWVWA MELD Network Coordinator, provided an upbeat appeal to become and stay active in our democratic society. Katherine reminded us of our League Vision: *We*

*(Continued on Page 6)*

***BRINGING OUT THE VOTE*** *(Continued from Page 5)*

***The Voter,*** *October, 2019 Page 6 P*

*envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.*

The facts of voter participation indicate that citizens are falling short of this vision. From 1952 to 2018, the percentage of Washington’s eligible voters who are registered to vote dropped from about 91% to about 74%. More alarming is that only a portion of registered voters actually fill out their ballots. In 2016, our last presidential election year, about 61% of all eligible voters cast ballots. In 2018’s mid-term elections the percentage was only 53%. Obviously, there is work to do.

Washington State is better situated than many other states in protecting and facilitating the right to vote. (See article on 2019 Election Changes elsewhere in this issue.) Washington is one of four states with “Top Two Primary”, one of 20 states not requiring party affiliation to vote, one of 38 states providing online voter registration, one of seven states providing detail voters’ pamphlets, and one of only three states that conducts voting by mail.

Katherine offered specific suggestions to increase participation in our community:

•Start conversations inside your circle of influence

•Be a responsible digital publisher

•Share that you vote regularly and why

•Listen to discover common ground

•Ask others to join you in voting

•Share how you go about researching candidates

•Offer to host a “fill out our ballots” party

•Remember that change takes time and persistence

 Katherine’s enthusiasm reminds us that our work to maintain and build democracy is necessary and important, and it is work that can be joyful.



 ***League of Women Voters of Yakima County***

 **Cordially invites you to: JOIN US!**

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Membership:** \_\_\_\_\_\_$60 Basic\_\_\_\_\_\_$40 Each additional family member at same residence

**Make checks payable to:**

LWVYC

 PO Box 723

YAKIMA WA 98907

Sustaining Gift: $60 \_\_\_\_\_ $40 \_\_\_\_\_ $25\_\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Your Sustaining gift will help support our local activities.

**\*Please Note Annual Dues Distribution:**

National: $32 State: $19 LWVYC retains: $9

## VOTER INFORMATION WEBSITES

Secretary of State LWVWA- Vote 411 Yakima County Auditor

[www.secstate.wa.gov/](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/) [www.VOTE411.org](http://www.vote411.org) <http://yakimacounty.us/170/Elections>