

# In Remembrance



**JoNell Edlin**  
*Spokane Area*

We lost a valuable member this past January. She had not been a member long, but she was committed to service with every organization she belonged to. She was a volunteer for Big Brother Big Sisters, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and S-R Christmas Bureau.

After she “retired” she brought her skills to our League. Election season 2022, we promoted voter registration at neighborhood block parties, Gonzaga and EWU campus events and candidate forums. JoNell didn’t hesitate to step up and get all the equipment and supplies to many of the venues. We have a wonderful group of members who volunteer at these events, but it takes an extra willingness to make sure everything they need gets there. She was also a working member of our Affordable Housing and Homelessness Solutions Committee, helping with our efforts to advocate for those in need. Her last activity was for our Housing/Homeless LWVSA General Meeting in December.

Giving back and helping others were cornerstones of her personality. Our League was so very blessed to be a recipient of her determination, joyous laugh and strength of character that captivated everyone.



# In Remembrance



**Cynthia Anne  
Garrick**  
*Yakima County*

Cynthia Anne Garrick, 72, of Yakima, Washington, died peacefully after a brief illness, on Saturday, February 25, 2023. She spent the last 39 years of her life in Yakima, working at the Public Library where she held various reference, supervisory, and managerial positions until she retired.

Cynthia was a life-long avid reader and passionate advocate for books and libraries. She loved theater, film, contra dancing, and music of all kinds, from classical to folk. Friends recall her as smart, funny, kind, generous, compassionate and caring.

Cynthia actively participated with the LWV of Yakima County for many years. She served as President for the 2008-2010 term and again in 2016-2018 as Co-President with Criss Bardill. Cynthia served on the Plath Committee, overseeing our receipt of the Dorothy and Fred Plath Grant to LWV Yakima County in 2017. League members recall Cynthia's cheerful and upbeat nature, as well as her steady encouragement for League members and support of our activities. Cynthia served our organization well and is fondly remembered.



# In Remembrance



**Louisa Nishitani**  
*San Juan County*

Louisa Nishitani passed away July 14, 2022, at age 99. She was a pioneer in the sciences, long before STEM came to our schools, with a BS, MS, and Ph.D. in Botany from the University of Washington.

Her early studies were interrupted by World War II when she volunteered with the Navy WAVES. She was trained as a code breaker and also an aerographer, deciphering Japanese weather information. After the war, she finished her MS on the GI Bill and received her Ph.D. twenty years after that. Louisa had a long career of teaching and research, including at the UW Marine Labs in Friday Harbor. In between her studies and work, she had three children.

On San Juan Island she was an environmental activist and dedicated to preserving the islands' unique character and environment. Her activism also led to many years with the League of Women Voters of the San Juans. At 90, she still pitched in after meetings helping to fold chairs and was seen dropping her ballot off at the San Juan Island drop box in 2019 at age 95.



# In Remembrance



**Robin Jacobson**  
*San Juan County*

Robin Jacobson passed away August 2, 2022 at age 72. Robin was a native Washingtonian who graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in communication. She was extrovert who was fascinated by people, politics, world travel, history, genealogy, and Broadway plays. She parlayed her communications degree into a wide variety of PR jobs in radio and television.

After moving with her family to San Juan Island in 1998, she worked for the San Juan Islands Visitors' Bureau and Whale Museum. Robin's love of history led her to the San Juan County Historical Society and an expertise in local lore. She often led ghost tours of Friday Harbor and used her genealogy skills to track down pioneer island families. Robin believed that one of her most essential missions was to care about and contribute to others. She was a member of the League of Women Voters of the San Juans because it gave her more ways to contribute to her island community.



# In Remembrance



**Coralee Brewer**  
*Clark County*

Coralee joined the Clark County League in 2015, after she and her husband, Andrew, also a League member, moved to Vancouver. They relocated from Spokane, where Coralee worked at the *Spokesman-Review* for 33 years as the pre-press foreman.

A board member, Coralee was also on the Communications Team and managed the League's Facebook page. She explained in a 2020 profile in *The Voter* that she was drawn to voting rights for women. "I knew both of my grandmothers, and I discovered both of them were born before white women had the right to vote," she said. "I figure I owe it to them—and all those who came after."

Coralee was a trained League election observer. "Coralee was insightful and dedicated with a good sense of humor mixed in," said Edri Geiger, observers committee chair. A volunteer for the Clark County Historical Museum, Coralee helped forge a relationship with the museum, leading the museum to become caretaker of the League's archives. "Coralee was a friend to the League as well as to many of us," said President Nancy Halvorson. "She was bright and full of life."



# In Remembrance

## Joyce Dennison *Yakima County*

Joyce Dennison, a Yakima County League member, passed away on March 30th at the age of 98.

She was an active member since 1962, with most of that time spent with the League of Yakima County. She served as treasurer for many years and participated in study groups including water issues and children's health.

She stayed active and engaged until the end and was a strong supporter of the vision and values of the League of Women Voters.

Joyce was the Executive Director of Central Washington Camp Fire for many years.



# In Remembrance



**Joella Campbell**  
*Snohomish County*

Joella Campbell is remembered as a sweet, helpful lady in a crafting group. But there was another Joella, as we learned from interviewing her and other long-time League members. Marian Harrison said “Norma Bruns [another local Legend] and Joella Campbell could have run the world.” Joella was on the International Relations Committee, and when the national League was looking into tariffs the European Union was imposing on chickens, Joella borrowed a friend’s chicken and brought it to a meeting. In a cage, fortunately!

In addition to committee work, she served as co-president from 1983 to 1985. A major interest of Joella’s was transportation, especially public transit. She biked or took buses everywhere, including to workshops at the University of Washington, and to LWVWA meetings in the UW district office when she served on the state’s Transportation Committee. A passionate advocate for rapid transit, she wrote yearly reports on the progress of the plans for public transportation, and she was delighted that light rail is finally coming to Lynnwood. We might be better off if Joella Campbell were indeed running the world. She is missed. (Joella Campbell was honored as a Legend of the League in Snohomish County in 2020.)



# In Remembrance



**Marilyn Perkins**  
*Benton/Franklin Counties*

For our community, Marilyn Perkins was truly the face of League. She was an inspiration who influenced many of us to join. Marilyn had a bachelor's in history with a minor in math, which explains why she forgot more history than some of us ever knew. She was able to relay that information during Civics Ed presentations to students, including the dates. Marilyn was president of the LWV of Benton and Franklin counties at least four times, served on the state board, attended national conventions, state conventions, councils, and was a MELD coach. Candidate forum questions were her specialty. She also moderated many of the forums herself. She could be found doing Voter Registration at the Naturalization Ceremonies in the Federal Bldg. in Richland, at senior centers, back to school nights, various League events, even going to the auditor's office to pick up the forms. She was instrumental in organizing and delivering TRY's. If there was a need, she filled it.

A scholarship fund has been established from community and family donations in honor of Marilyn, enabling our League to give \$1000 each to two students for seven years total to eligible high school applicants.





# In Remembrance



**Benita Helseth**  
*Snohomish County*

Benita Helseth contributed greatly to League as well as to many other community groups. She was a longtime member who served for many years as our newsletter editor, sharing with us wisdom gleaned from her extensive reading. She was a prolific writer of thoughtful letters to the editor, some of which can still be found with a google search, along with a statement to the state legislature on behalf of the League. In addition, she was a thoroughly unpretentious and delightful person with a wonderful sense of humor. Quoting from her obituary, “Benita cared about creating a just and equitable world for all, taking care of the earth, and elevating the lives of women in the world.”



# In Remembrance



**Ingeborg Paulus**  
*Bellingham/Whatcom  
County*

Ingeborg Paulus was 93 years old and a longtime resident of Morey Avenue in Bellingham. Born in Germany, she emigrated to Canada in the early 1950's and settled in Vancouver where she had family. Inge completed her education at UBC, attaining a PhD in Sociology. Moving to Bellingham, she was a Sociology professor at Western Washington University until she retired. During this time she had her Morey Avenue home built. Inge was a longtime active member of the American Association of University Women, Bellingham branch, and the League of Women Voters of Bellingham/Whatcom County as well as book clubs. Inge was an avid supporter of our local League.



# In Remembrance



**Joan Airoidi**  
*Bellingham/Whatcom  
County*

Former Whatcom County Library System director Joan Airoidi died Dec. 3, 2022, at the age of 76. Joan had been a League member since 2004, and most recently served on the budget committee for several years.

Joan was best known for standing up to the FBI in 2004. As recorded in [Wikipedia](#), with the support of staff from the Deming Library, a branch of the Whatcom County Library System, Joan refused to provide information requested by a visiting FBI agent regarding a patron's use of a book on Osama bin Laden. The library system informed the FBI that no information would be released without a subpoena or court order. She also led the library board to vote to fight any such subpoena in court. When that grand jury subpoena was eventually issued, the library prepared to challenge it in court, and the subpoena was quickly withdrawn. At the time, Airoidi made this statement: "Libraries are a haven where people should be able to seek whatever information they want to pursue without any threat of government intervention."



# In Remembrance

## Martha Burns *Bellingham/Whatcom County*

Martha Burns, a long-time member of the League, died peacefully on November 28, surrounded by family. She was 94 years old.

Martha will be remembered for her commitment to the League. She served as President of the LWVBWC in the 1980s, in addition to serving on the Board and numerous committees. Martha was the second recipient of our local Carrie Chapman Catt award. As a community activist, she was recognized for her knowledge about City and County politics.

Martha was an amazing woman who lived a full life. She maintained an interest in our County until her death. She had a positive spirit, a keen intellect, and graciousness about her.



# In Remembrance



**Ellen Fisher**  
*Kitsap County*

Ellen Morford Fisher of Bainbridge Island passed away on January 16, 2023, at the age of 88.

At age 16, Ellen was an exchange student at Oberschule fur Madchen in Braunschweig, Germany. After graduating from Garfield High School, she went on to Smith College, graduating with a history degree in 1956. She then taught social studies classes to 7th to 11th graders at Annie Wright Seminary in Tacoma. She joined the Junior League in 1957. Her volunteer stints later in life included leadership roles in institutions such as the Pony Club, the League of Women Voters Kitsap (serving as president from 2007 to 2009), Delta Kappa Gamma, Amnesty International, Plymouth Church, and Eagle Harbor Congregational Church.

Ellen and Don married in 1958, making their first home in Seattle before moving to Mercer Island where her three children were born. In 1975, the family moved to Bainbridge Island. Ellen returned to school at Seattle Pacific University in 1976, earning a teaching degree. After that, she spent most of her teaching career at Suquamish Elementary School, retiring in 2000. Ellen traveled extensively and was very active in her Bainbridge Island community.

