

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

August 2018
Vol.20, No 5

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.

Officers

Co-Presidents: Cynthia Garrick and
Criss Bardill

Secretary: Karen Pilon

Treasurer: Janis Luvaas

Board of Directors

Kathy Lambert
Rhonda Hauff,
Kitty Jubran
Elaine Smith

Voter Editor: Criss Bardill
965-2351 or cbardill@gmail.com

The Board meets at noon on the 2nd
Thursday of each month at the League office.
All members are welcome to attend.

Calendar

Thursday, August 8, noon, **LWVYC Leadership Team** meeting, League office at YUU Church. Board meetings are open to all members. Please enter through alley door.

League Conversations will resume in the fall.

Notes From Cynthia and Criss

League Conversations will resume on Tuesday, September 26. We have several interesting speakers we hope to line up for the fall. It was clear at our Annual Meeting that members would like to see us hold the *Conversations* at a different location. We are working on that, but there is no perfect solution. We do not have the funds to pay for a location, and we need a space where audio-visual equipment could be used and where we would be separated from any other activity or gathering of people. We also need to stay fairly central to the greater Yakima area. If anyone has an idea for a possibility, please let us know. We would be happy to follow up. This is one of those issues that needs many minds, not just those of the Leadership Team.

WE have proposed a candidate forum to 4th District Congressman Dan Newhouse and his opponent Christine Brown either the last week of September or the first week of October. We are waiting to hear back from Congressman Newhouse's campaign. Christine Brown has agreed to participate. We will keep you posted on date and location.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Joan Robertson – Joan, who is retired, had a multi-faceted career in social services and business. Her last position was 15 years as the Family Services Coordinator for Washington State’s Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program in Deer Park, WA. She has 4 adult children, and currently volunteers at a local retirement home helping residents 3 days a week. Her friendship with Betty Van Ryder was her introduction to our local League.

Successful County Commission Candidate Forums

On July 18 in Terrace Heights and on July 25 in Sunnyside, your local League conducted what we all agree were two successful forums for the candidates running for the Yakima County Commissioner District 3 position. Our attendance in Terrace Heights was 68 and Sunnyside was 26.

All 7 of the commissioner candidates were able to attend the Terrace Heights forum. Regretably, one missed our Sunnyside event because of an emergency.

Sarah Augustine, Executive Director of the Dispute Resolution Center, served as our moderator. She also moderated our Yakima City Council candidate forum fall of 2017. Sarah does an excellent job of presenting questions (from League members and the audience), and keeping the event moving along well with poise and tact.

Elaine Smith was the coordinator of our forums and handle contact with the candidates, arranging locations, working with our co-sponsors, developing a flyer and press releases for both print and radio, and many other details. Betty Van Ryder, Millie Stenehjem, and Criss Bardill served as timers. Rhonda Hauff handled the sign-in and League information table, and Kitty Julbran, Karen Pilon, and Elaine received and reviewed written questions from the audience before forwarding them to the moderator. Many thanks are due them all, and especially Elaine.

Co-sponsors were the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition, Sunnyside Mayor Julie Hart, Planned Parenthood of Greater WA and North Idaho, One America, Casa Nuestra of Sunnyside, and La Casa Hogar of Yakima. We received Ed fund donations from some of the sponsors to help cover our expenses, and help with setting up and tear down at both venues. Co-sponsors publicized our

event to their communities and service recipients, and most of the co-sponsors had information tables at one or both events.

I think the forums were very well received by the candidates and the co-sponsors, and I know the League members that attended were very pleased with both events.

Criss Bardill

Yakima Herald Editorial of July 23, 2018

For those of you who may have missed it, we are delighted to share the following Editorial.

Not everyone's a policy wonk. We get that. Not everyone pores over local political minutiae. Basing one's vote on reading a dry recitation of issues and candidates' statements can make the eyes of even the most dedicated voter glaze over. And blithely picking a politician solely on shiny campaign placards on street corners hardly makes for an informed choice.

What we need, then, is a fulsome debate of the issues mixed with, frankly, a little personality to spice things up.

We at the Yakima Herald-Republic, in print and online, have you covered – and, closer to the general election, be sure to check out our videos of candidates appearing before the editorial board. Still, the public sometimes needs a little live face-time with politicians. Which is why the nonpartisan League of Women Voters of Yakima County should be applauded for staging two audience forums presenting the seven primary candidates for the Yakima County Board of Commissioners, District 3 position.

The first took place on a stifling hot evening last week at the Terrace Heights Civic Center — the hot air being circulated by a lone, overworked ceiling fan, not from the candidates themselves. For two hours, those vying for commissioner answered questions posed by moderator Susan Augustine, a professional dispute-resolution specialist, and submitted by those in attendance. (The county's Republican party also is hosting meet-and-greets this week. Valuable as that is, that's strictly for GOP candidates. The League of Women voters' forums ask tough questions of those from both parties.)

The result was an earnest, at times lively, discussion. One bonus was that the audience got glimpses into the candidates' personalities as well as their platforms. To paraphrase the late Tip O'Neill, all politics is personal. So, having a chance to learn the backstory of the candidates, see their mannerisms and hear speaking styles, and judge their ability to think on their feet was edifying and occasionally entertaining.

What people came away with was the sense that these are real people running for office, not just names on a sign. They are just like us, with jobs and a life. We tend to forget that.

One of the candidates, Summer Derrey, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Transportation, kept her phone affixed to her hand throughout and apologized for being "on-call" — something about a bridge getting struck by a car — and lamented that she might have to leave at a moment's notice. That lent an air of suspense – will she or won't she be called away? (Spoiler alert: Derrey did, briefly, leave the dais to take a call.)

Another candidate, businessman Brent Knautz, at one point played the proud papa and pointed to his two children, who slumped lower and lower in their chairs as Dad rambled on about making the county better for youth. And we also learned, among other things, that Lisa Homer once owned a Papa Murphy's

franchise, that Norm Childress' pet peeve is dusty roads, that Stephen Changala lived on the Yakama Reservation for 22 years, and that Jose Trevino can absolutely rock a bright blue plaid sports coat.

Such moments help humanize the candidates. Of course, the issues are what matters. The commissioner's race is no reality TV show — there are major concerns, including the ongoing ground-water concerns, spikes in crime and how to spend that \$600,000 windfall burning a hole in the county's pocket — but likeability should not be discounted.

The only thing agreed upon was a disdain of snooty, elitist "Westsiders" who slag on the Valley. Childress got the biggest laugh when, during a disquisition on public safety, he mentioned that one of his skittish Seattle-area friends once told him, "We're not even getting off the freeway in Grandview because we might get knifed."

Other candidates then told their clueless-Westsider stories. The room bonded over it.

This gang of seven will convene again Wednesday night in Sunnyside for Round Two. Check it out.

* Members of the Yakima Herald-Republic editorial board are Bob Crider and Sam McManis.

#####

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF YAKIMA COUNTY
Cordially invites you to: JOIN US!

Name: _____

Membership Categories:

Address: _____

_____ \$10 Student Associate

_____ \$60 Basic

Phone: _____

_____ \$40 Each additional family member at the same residence

E-Mail: _____

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

Your Sustaining gift will help support our local activities.

Make checks payable to: LWVYC, PO Box 723, YAKIMA WA 98907

VOTER INFORMATION WEBSITES

Secretary of State www.secstate.wa.gov/

LWVWA- Vote 411
www.vote411.org

Yakima County Auditor
<http://yakimacounty.us/170/Elections>