



**38th Annual
National Conference
Orlando, FL**

2023 Professional Practices Program

**Stronger Together: Snohomish County Elections & League
of Women Voters - Partners in Outreach and Education**

Snohomish County, Washington

Submitted by:

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Willing to do Webinar/Workshop? Yes**

Mission Statement:

“To conduct fair, accountable elections and encourage people to understand and participate in the voting process.”



Snohomish County Elections
A Division of the Auditor's Office

Summary

Nestled in western Washington state along the scenic Puget Sound, Snohomish County is a vibrant hub of democracy with 511,326 registered voters who have embraced mail-in voting since 2006.

The League of Women Voters of Snohomish County (LWVSC) is an influential grassroots, non-partisan political organization that has been dedicated to safeguarding democracy and empowering voters for more than a century. Snohomish County Elections and LWVSC have formed a highly successful partnership for nearly 30 years, focusing on enhancing election outreach efforts in the county. Together, we prioritize active civic engagement and informed participation, resulting in consistent improvements in election transparency and accessibility.

The tireless efforts of the League have significantly enhanced Snohomish County Elections' mission – to conduct fair, accountable elections and encourage people to understand and participate in the voting process. The League exemplifies an unwavering commitment to fostering democracy and civic engagement non-partisanly. Their active involvement in Snohomish County Elections' work further demonstrates their dedication.

To learn more about the LWVSC and their important work, visit their website: <https://lwvsnoho.org/>

Our collaboration involves various initiatives, including the following:

Supplying organizations with voter registration forms

In 1994, voter registration by mail became law in Washington State. It required that “postcard” voter registration forms be maintained at convenient, accessible, and permanent locations within the county, such as fire stations, schools, city and town clerk offices, and any location considered appropriate by the County Auditor.

That year the Snohomish County Elections and LWVSC entered into an agreement where the LWVSC identifies, establishes, and maintains voter registration postcard sites throughout the county. In addition to voter registration forms, the LWVSC has developed other material to provide at these sites. One example is their “They Represent You” (TRY) pamphlet, which lists local elected officials with their contact information and office term.

The most recent quarterly report on the activities performed by LWVSC reported that the courier team traveled 573 miles distributing 1,117 English voter registration forms, 389 Spanish voter registration forms, and 862 TRY brochures to 122 sites.

Mailing postcards to encourage action from voters with signature challenges

Washington is one of a handful of states that votes entirely by mail. Every ballot envelope returned on time has the signature on the return envelope checked against a known signature on the voter's registration record. If the signature on file does not match the voter's ballot return envelope or does not have a signature, the envelope is marked as challenged.

State law requires notifications to be sent to voters whose envelope signature has been challenged. In addition to these required notifications, Snohomish County Elections and LWVSC have partnered in a “Postcard Brigade” program. LWVSC volunteers will handwrite notes on pre-stamped postcards provided by Snohomish County Elections. The postcards with personalized messages encourage voters to complete and return forms previously sent to remedy signature issues.

In the November 2022 General Election, 48 LWVSC volunteers handwrote messages and mailed 3,308 postcards. We will continue this outreach initiative in 2023 and track the Primary and General Election results.

Collaborating on Candidate Workshops & Candidate Forums

Candidate Workshops are organized by Snohomish County Elections to assist individuals interested in running for office. These workshops cover various aspects of the election process and feature speakers from the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC), responsible for campaign finance reporting in Washington state, and the LWVSC, who provide information about

opportunities available to candidates. The LWVSC opportunities include participating in live-streamed or recorded candidate forums and engaging with voters through Vote 411, a nationwide voter guide project featuring campaign information and answers to policy questions.

Snohomish County Elections also promotes LWVSC candidate forums in local voters' pamphlets, through social media posts, and on our website, www.snoco.org/elections. These forums allow voters to engage with candidates in person, learn about candidate positions, share information about election dates, and encourage voter participation.

Performing Election Observation

Snohomish County Elections depends on the LWVSC, a trusted and non-partisan organization, to fulfill an essential role in election observation. The LWVSC recruits members responsible for monitoring and reporting irregularities to election officials. This includes observing pre- and post-election audits such as the Logic and Accuracy Test, Random Batch Audit, and Risk Limiting Audit. The participation of LWVSC representatives adds a significant level of credibility to the integrity of our election procedures.

In 2019, Kristen Mueller from the LWV of Washington State observed our Risk Limiting Audit pilot, which was conducted in collaboration with the Washington Secretary of State's office. This pilot was documented in "Knowing It's Right – Part 2" by Jennifer Morrel of Democracy Fund.

Being another trusted voice for our local media and community

In partnership with KSER Community Radio 90.7 FM Everett, the LWVSC produces a program called "Magazine on the Air," which features various election segments. During election periods, they frequently invite the County Auditor as a guest on the show to explain the voting process and to answer questions about how the county administers elections. Podcast versions of these programs can be found on Spotify and the LWVSC website.

The LWVSC has contributed numerous election-related articles to the Everett "Daily Herald," the prominent local newspaper serving Snohomish County. These articles often reference the Auditor's Office and utilize the elections website as a trusted source for verifying elections-related information. These regular news and media activities provide significant support to the Snohomish County Elections' newsflashes, press releases, and social media communications.

Shared social media posts between the LWVSC and Snohomish County Elections help disseminate accurate election information, which is crucial in combatting the spread of misinformation and disinformation. The League also produces public service announcements for radio broadcasts, encouraging residents to register and exercise their right to vote. These trusted, non-partisan sources of information are extremely important for voter education.

Empowering members to become knowledgeable elections ambassadors

LWVSC, as an organization and as individual members, are trusted sources of elections and voter registration information in our community. To help them in this role, Snohomish County Elections conducts comprehensive tours of our processing facility for LWVSC members, ensuring they deeply understand election policies and processes.

LWVSC events regularly feature guest speakers from the Auditor's Office, ensuring that League members are well-informed about election processes. This empowers League members to serve as ambassadors to the public, sharing their knowledge and promoting civic engagement.

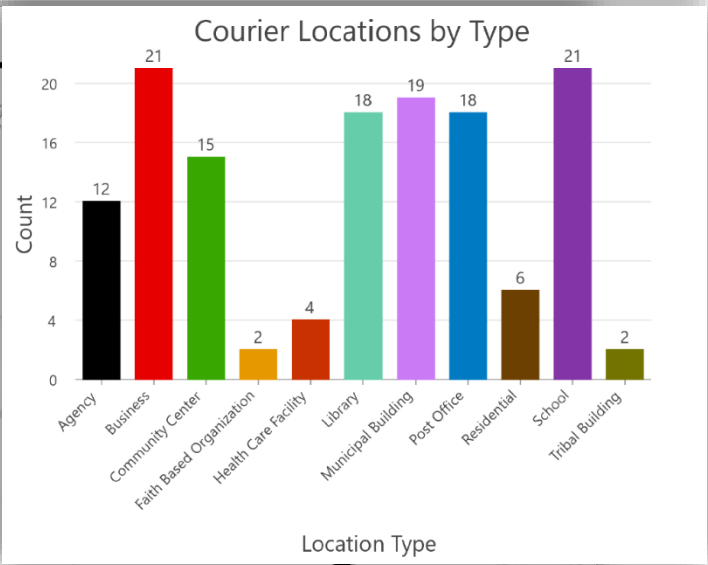
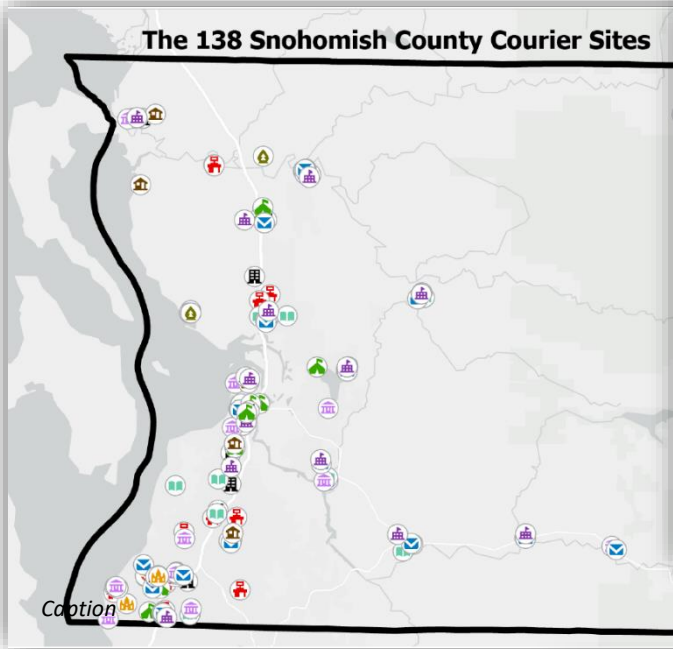
Conclusion

This collaborative partnership between a county elections office and the League of Women Voters is not commonplace in every county. Some local leagues across Washington have only recently been invited to observe election processes. We greatly appreciate the relationship we have built over the years with the LWV in Snohomish County.

Through our collective efforts, we magnify the impact of our respective organizations, ultimately benefiting the voters of Snohomish County.

Supporting Documents

Election Support



WA State Parks GIS, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, FMO, METI/NASA, USGS, Bureau of Land Management, EPA, NPS



Courier Service:
LWVSC Couriers deliver voter registration forms, election information pamphlets (including resources on spotting misinformation and civic engagement tips), with most of them translated into Spanish, to sites across Snohomish County.

Election Support (continued)

August 1st Primary Election

The League is planning a series of moderated forums designed to introduce the candidates running in 2023 primary races. We will ask the candidates a short series of questions—the questions you might ask if each came to your door. We referred to these forums as “virtual door-belling.”

Each forum will be live-streamed to our [YouTube Channel](#). Audio and video podcasts will be available following the forum, and most will also be re-broadcast on KSER 90.7 FM/KXIR 89.9 FM. Here is our planned schedule. We are in the process of inviting candidates to attend.

Forum Date	Race	Forum Time
Tuesday, June 20	Bothell Council Pos. 4	6:00 PM
	Brier Council Pos. 4	6:45 PM
	Port of Everett Commissioner Dist. 2	7:30 PM
Thursday, June 22	Edmonds Mayor	6:00 PM
	Edmonds School District Director Dist. 5	6:45 PM
	Northshore School District Director Pos. 3	7:30 PM
Tuesday, June 27	Everett Council Pos. 6	6:00 PM
	Everett Council Pos. 7	6:45 PM
	Everett School Dist. Director Pos. 5	7:30 PM
Thursday, June 29	Marysville School District Director Pos. 2	6:00 PM
	Marysville School District Director Pos. 3	6:45 PM
	Stanwood School District Director Pos. 5	7:30 PM
Thursday, July 6	Monroe Council Pos. 5	6:00 PM
	Monroe School District Director Pos. 1	6:45 PM
	Snohomish School District Director Pos. 4	7:30 PM
Tuesday, July 11	Snohomish Superior Court	6:00 PM
	Sultan School District Director Pos. 1	6:45 PM
Thursday, July 13	Sultan School District Director Pos. 4	7:30 PM
	County Executive	6:00 PM
	County Council Dist. 2	6:45 PM
	County Auditor	7:30 PM



Lot Draw:

LWVSC rep. chooses a new alphabet for determining the order of candidates on the ballot, ensuring a transparent and impartial process that eliminates any doubts of bias or partisanship.

Other Opportunities

League of Women Voters

- League of Women Voters of Snohomish County (LWVSC) might invite you to participate in a Candidate Forum
- League of Women Voters of Washington (LWVWA) will invite you to submit information to [Vote411.org](https://vote411.org)
- Check out our organization at <https://lwwsnoho.org>

Snohomish County Elections
A Division of the Justice Office

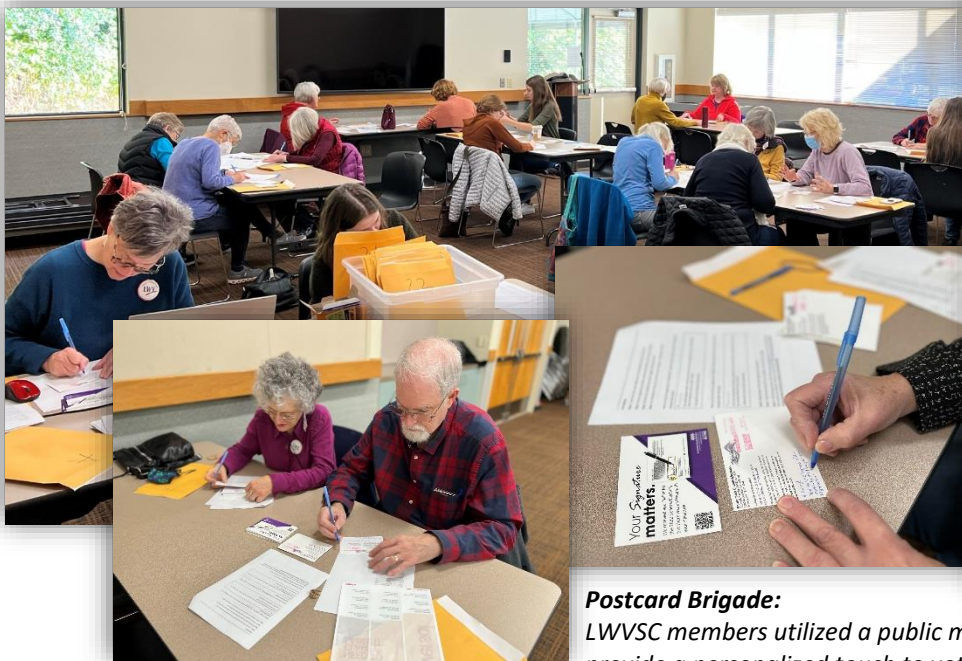


Future Voters:

Visiting a local high school to register and educate future voters.

Candidate Workshops & Candidate Forums:

A snapshot of the LWVSC website featuring the schedule of “Candidate Forums” for the August 1st Primary, including the LWVSC slide from our candidate workshop.



Postcard Brigade:

LWVSC members utilized a public meeting room at a local library to provide a personalized touch to voters, helping them fix signature issues on their ballot envelopes.

News & Media Support

Be a Voter! Local elections matter

By Jen Winkler
League of Women Voters
of Snohomish County
President 2022-23

It's not surprising that Presidential elections get a lot of attention every four years - after all, the President of the United States has an important role that did you know that results of local elections impact your day-to-day life? Your school board members, county or city council members, judges, and other elected officials help determine policies, projects, laws and ordinances, and even budgets within your local area. Your state legislature (representatives and senators) shapes how our state is run. United States Congress representatives and senators represent our state at the national level. You are being asked to vote for many different things - and



Jen Winkler

becoming educated on those choices is important before you cast that vote.

Resources for voters

It can be overwhelming to know what to choose on the ballot. Identifying how you feel about issues can help. What are you passionate about? Does the person on the ballot hold the same views as you? Take some time to learn about the issues being decided. The voter's pamphlet that you receive is just one way.

To further help you make a choice, find impartial candidate forums for many of the races on the League of Women Voters of Snohomish County's (LWVSC) website and YouTube channel. These are interviews of the people who are asking to represent you. Now that the primaries have narrowed the field, the September and October forums will feature the candidates currently running. LWVSC's website also includes other resources, such as links to your current representatives, and to spot mis-

dis-information, how to speak at a public meeting, and much more (www.lwvsnoho.org/voter_education). You may even spot us at a community event sharing voter information! The VOTE411.org website, hosted by the League of Women Voters Education Fund, is another resource for election-related information. Simply type in your address to find the races on your ballot and read the candidates' in-depth answers to several wide-ranging questions. Look for the issues that mean

the most to you. If the candidates have not responded to the questions in VOTE411, contact their campaign to learn when they will respond. This lets the candidates know that you are serious about making an informed decision. If you are unclear on the voting process, look to the Snohomish County Auditor's office. For example, did you know you do not need to mark a choice for everything on the ballot? If you know how you want to vote in one race, it's okay to leave the others blank.

Your vote matters

This past election (August 2022 primary), Snohomish County had a 77.5% turnout rate, less than half of the registered voters in the county decided the outcome for the rest of us. We encourage voters to exercise their right to vote and participate in every election. Washington State has a secure mail-in ballot

process, enabling you to do your research and mark your ballot when it's convenient for you - no waiting in line! Postage is free, or you can drop off your ballot in a designated ballot drop box.

Your next opportunity to be a voter is the General Election on November 8th. The top two candidates from each race in the August primary will be on the ballot. General elections typically have a higher turnout than primaries - will your vote be included?

The League of Women Voters can be a resource to help you navigate the elections process, from voter registration and upcoming election information to voter education materials. Our focus is to encourage civic engagement and empower voters. As a nonpartisan organization, we do not support or oppose any candidate or party. You can reach us at info@lwvsnoho.org or visit our website www.lwvsnoho.org



LWVSC: www.facebook.com/LWVSCWA
LWVSC Website: www.lwvsnoho.org

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The VOTER

National Voter Registration Day

Traditionally, the fourth Tuesday in September is a very big day for the League of Women Voters, as League members throughout the country turn out to make sure every citizen is registered and ready to vote. The pandemic has slowed us down, but it has not stopped us by any means. On September 28 our Snohomish County League volunteers set up tables at five locations, at the Everett and Evergreen Libraries, the Lynnwood and Mountlake Terrace Libraries, and in the foyer to the County Auditor's Office.

In contrast to some states where registration to vote is being made difficult, it keeps getting easier here. Most of the people we talked to were already registered, having said yes to automatic registration when they got their driver's license. But

we still met a few people who just moved and were delighted to have an easy way to change their address. Our presence reminds people that the local elections are fast approaching, and we also raise the visibility of the League.

Vicki Roberts-Gassler

Not just a card, a way of life

What are you

Everett Daily Herald - September 21, 2022:
LWVSC President Jen Winkler's op-ed emphasizes the significance of local elections and offers resources for informed voting, while highlighting the Auditor's office as a trusted source of information.

LWVSC: www.facebook.com/LWVSCWA
LWVSC Website: www.lwvsnoho.org

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The VOTER

We ARE Fired Up!

Our recently held Fire Up meeting reminded me of the reason I recently rejoined the League of Women Voters of Snohomish County. It was well organized, upbeat, fast paced, informative, and sprinkled with humor (that time keeper was relentless!)

I thought our guest speaker, County Auditor Garth Fell, was the perfect choice as his department aligns with our core mission of voting accessibility and election integrity. I recently worked my first election and could relate to many parts of his discussion. It was also nice to hear his complimentary words about our League as he expressed his appreciation of our contribution to the community.

I found it extremely valuable to be given a quick synopsis by

each committee chair as a reminder of all the various groups within our League and some of our current projects. It was great to hear from Children's Services, Natural Resources, Voter Services to name a few as well as GOTV (Get Out the Vote) that will focus on reaching new audiences, introduce them to the League and all the great things we do, while utilizing new platforms.

I was especially impressed and pleasantly surprised by the depth of talent in our midst. We're on the radio, creating music videos, commercials and even appear on the front page of the paper on occasion. (Natural Resources) I am proud to again be part of this group and come away revitalized for the future. Best part was to put names with (non-Zoom) faces of my fellow hardworking, caring, dedicated fellow League members! You Rock!

Candy Kreger thank you to Joan Smith for photos

President Jen Winkler welcomes members

Garth Fell

Fun to see everyone in person!

LWVSC The Voter Volume 64 Issue 2:
At the annual LWVSC Fired Up! Event at Everett Community College, County Auditor Garth Fell addressed topics of election transparency, observation opportunities, and the actions taken by Snohomish County Elections to combat misinformation and disinformation.

LWVSC The Voter Volume 64 Issue 4:
On National Voter Registration Day, LWVSC participated in registering voters at the Snohomish County Campus Plaza.

Social Media:
LWVSC regularly amplifies Snohomish County Elections' social media posts on Instagram and Facebook to expand our outreach and educate voters.

Alternate Format Supporting Documents

News & Media Support (continued)

Magazine on the Air: https://lwvsnoho.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=108940&module_id=472524



“A recent program addressed the timely question: Are our elections safe and secure? An in-depth interview with the County Auditor assured listeners that the answer is an emphatic YES!”

– Karen Crowley, LWVSC

Snohomish Co. Elections Guest Appearances “Civics Education on the Air”

Are our elections safe and secure? We talk with Snohomish County Auditor Garth Fell about local election processes. [Podcast](#) (24 minutes)

Podcast episode link (will download MP3):
<https://lwvsnoho.org/docs.ashx?id=988500>

Running for Office: We visit with Wendy Mauch, Snohomish County Elections and Voter Registration Supervisor, about the rules and requirements of running for office, and where to find help. [Podcast](#) (17 minutes)

Podcast episode link (will download MP3):
<https://www.lwvsnoho.org/docs.ashx?id=813131>