

# VOTER

**February 2022**

## **LWVSJ Happenings**

### **Old Military Trail Update – Jim McNairy**

**February 14th, 2022**

**12pm – 2pm via Zoom**

The Old Military Road Trail Committee is looking forward to presenting an overview of their San Juan Island legacy project to the League of Women Voters on Monday February 14th. Jim McNairy will oversee the presentation that will start with a 4-minute video, followed by about 10 slides that will be used to illustrate the scope of the trail project. A Q&A period will follow.

The proposed trail will honor the historic road used by Cowichan First Nation peoples, followed by the Hudson Bay Company in the 1850s, and later as a link between posts during the joint military occupation of the island by British and American forces. It will commemorate the original cross-island Old Military Road built during the Pig War era that connected rival military encampments at English and American Camps and helped lead to the eventual peaceful resolution of the international boundary dispute in 1872. The Committee believes the trail will serve as a wonderful way to celebrate the island's history and culture, as well as provide islanders of all ages another healthy outdoor recreational opportunity as they walk, hike or ride through some of our beautiful forests and pastoral farmlands.



The Committee anticipates a number of benefits to the San Juan Island community from the development and implementation of this trail:

- First, it will provide a safe, recreational corridor across San Juan Island for pedestrians, bicycles and possibly equestrian use on some sections, expanding access to outdoor recreation and promoting healthy lifestyles and improved safety for walkers, cyclists, hikers, and joggers by providing an off-road route across San Juan Island.
- This trail will celebrate local history and enhance the enjoyment and mission of the San Juan Island National Historical Park and the San Juan Historical Society.

- It will engage our youth by providing a novel connection to the natural world. It will provide a new venue for educational field trips, community recreational events, and stewardship sites for the local youth conservation corps.

This endeavor will continue to support the current cooperation between local land conservation groups who already work in a coordinated fashion to protect wildlife habitat, to reestablish native flora, to eradicate invasive species, to preserve natural wetlands, and to conserve the natural beauty and unique character of the Island.

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89256367226?pwd=R0t1SXBrNUFicVRmS2dwc1FCc3pvdz09>

Members are encouraged to invite guests.

## Meeting Dates 2022

| <b>Board Meetings<br/>1 – 3pm</b> | <b>Membership Meetings<br/>12 – 2pm</b>         |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| January 4<br>(via Zoom)           | January 10<br><i>(Program Planning Meeting)</i> |
| February 1                        | February 14                                     |
| March 1                           | March 14  |
| April 5                           | April 11  |
| May 3                             | May 9 - <b>Annual Meeting</b>                   |
| June 7                            | June 13   |
| July 5                            | <i>Summer Break</i>                             |
| <b>Board Retreat</b> - TBD        | <i>Summer Break</i>                             |
| September 6                       | September 12                                    |
| October 4                         | October 10<br><i>(Forums)</i>                   |
| November 1                        | November 14                                     |
| December 6                        | December 12<br><i>(Holiday Luncheon)</i>        |

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

## Recap of our January Program Planning meeting

Our January program planning meeting was well attended and offered up some interesting themes for future discussions. It was decided to firm up programs through June and then decide at our August retreat how the second half of the year will play out, giving us an opportunity to be flexible. The proposed program focus is the *Campaign for Making Democracy Work* and covers many important topics including voting rights, improving elections, redistricting and money in politics. Topics that will be featured in the first half of this year will include, in March, a panel discussion on protecting democracy; April will feature Earth Day and the environment/climate change. Our May meeting is our Annual Meeting and we plan to have two speakers – one each from the WA state House and Senate to give us a legislative update. June will be a city and county update surrounding local issues and our new town manager. Other topics that the group introduced and approved were those surrounding women's health care and public policy on reproductive choices, and immigration. We look forward to sharing with the membership details of our upcoming meetings and the issues we plan to cover.



### Think Local and Be Vocal: Register & Vote in every Election February 8, 2022 – Special Election

Registered voters on San Juan Island have received ballots for this election. San Juan Island voters will vote on two levies:

- San Juan Island School District is renewing a four-year levy for educational programs and operational expenses not funded by the State.
- San Juan County Hospital District is renewing a six-year emergency medical services property tax levy. More information can be found at: <https://www.sanjuanco.com/1292/Current-Election>

***YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE AND TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN OUR COMMUNITY***

## Around the League – State & National Issues

### A Voting Rights Rollercoaster

After escalating actions demanding that President Biden do all within his power to promote voting rights legislation, the League was thrilled to see POTUS stand for the freedom to vote and call for the end of the filibuster. His shift was a direct result of all the work activists undertook in 2021.

During this time, we're reminded of the many obstacles that the *Voting Rights Act* faced before passing; we know that our current fight, though no less challenging, will be successful.

## Protecting Voting Rights Today!

As we remember Dr. Martin Luther King, we should also remember his campaign to enact the Voting Rights Act of 1965. As early as 1957, Dr. King told us why voting rights were essential to freedom: “Give us the ballot, and we will no longer have to worry the federal government about our basic rights. Give us the ballot, and we will no longer plead to the federal government for passage of an anti-lynching law; we will by the power of our vote write the law on the statute books of the South and bring an end to the dastardly acts of the hooded perpetrators of violence. Give us the ballot, and we will transform the salient misdeeds of bloodthirsty mobs into the calculated good deeds of orderly citizens.” At the end of the bloody march from Selma to Birmingham in March 1965, Dr. King returned to this theme, stating: “Let us march on ballot boxes until race-baiters disappear from the political arena.” President Lyndon Baines Johnson by the end of the month, sent the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to Congress. Four months later Congress enacted the legislation and the President signed it into law. Dr. King knew the country is strongest when all citizens can exercise their right to vote. Protecting voting rights is as important today. Dr. King’s family has called on voting rights groups to focus their work this year on action to commemorate his legacy, saying “No celebration without legislation!”

An unprecedented number of bills—more than 440—were introduced to restrict voting access in 2021, according to the Brennan Center for Justice. Thirty-two restrictive laws passed in 19 states. Still more are being deliberated in 2022, with new ones introduced. The situation is not all gloomy. Twenty-five states enacted laws that expanded voting access. This state-by-state process of restriction here and expansion there leads to great disparities amongst states. Only federal legislation will provide an even playing field throughout the country.

In January, the Senate failed to act on two important pieces of legislation to remedy the assault on voting rights. *The Freedom to Vote Act* expands early voting and same-day and online registration opportunities; combats voter suppression; includes reforms in redistricting processes; prevents election sabotage; modernizes voter registrations; offers campaign finance reforms; and promotes election security. *The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* would restore the Voting Rights Act and ensure that every voter—regardless of where they live—has equal access to the ballot box and is protected from unfair laws and practices that make it more difficult to vote.

The League of Women Voters strongly supports these two bills. We must not let the setback in Congress be the last word on reform. Please take these steps:

- Contact your Senators—they need to know that passing federal voting rights legislation is still a priority for their constituents and for the country as a whole. At present, two Senators stand in the way of reforming or ending the use of the filibuster as a way to block voting rights bills from even coming to a vote. In keeping with policies adopted by the League board, express your support for ending the filibuster if it is the only way forward.
- Contact President Biden—thank him for his support of voting rights and encourage him to continue to fight, using all of the powers of the Presidency to ensure the passage of *The Freedom to Vote Act* and *The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act*.
- Talk to your friends and family about why protecting voting rights matters—in this country, the voters decide the outcome of elections. Therefore, all of-age citizens must be able to exercise this freedom. This fundamental fact of our democracy must be protected.
- Vote in each and every election. Your right to vote was won by those willing to put their lives at stake. The least every American can do is to vote and be counted on election day.

\*A shortened version of this blog appeared in the Journal of the San Juan Islands on January 18, 2022 (<https://www.sanjuanjournal.com/opinion/protecting-voting-rights-today/>)

## An Update on Redistricting

The fight for fair and unbiased redistricting has moved from commissions and state legislatures to the courts. For example, the League of Women Voters of Baltimore County has joined with a group of Baltimore County voters, the Baltimore County Branch of the NAACP, and Common Cause - Maryland to file a federal lawsuit, *Baltimore County Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, et al. v. Baltimore County, Maryland et al.*, which challenges a redistricting plan approved by the Baltimore County Council on December 20, 2021. The plaintiffs in the [lawsuit](#) argue that the plan “violates the racial fairness commands of the Voting Rights Act, which are meant to protect against diluting the voices of Black, Indigenous, and other Voters of Color, as well as BIPOC candidates.”

In a second redistricting case, the League of Women Voters of Georgia joined Common Cause and individual Georgia voters in filing a federal lawsuit, *Common Cause v. Raffensperger*, challenging the 6th, 13th, and 14th congressional districts. Susannah Scott, President of the League of Women Voters of Georgia, argued that “the Georgia Legislature has created a number of Congressional districts that once again unconstitutionally pack and crack racial minorities in order to dilute the voices of voters of color in Georgia...This is unacceptable and the League of Women Voters of Georgia is proud to fight to ensure that the bedrock principle of ‘one person, one vote’ is honored in Georgia.” For example, the lawsuit argues that the General Assembly packed the Black population from six counties into a much larger bloc than necessary to elect Black-preferred candidates. At the same time, it reduced Black voting strength in other districts. As an example, Black voters in Cobb County would now be a minority in the district that elected Marjorie Taylor Greene, a congresswoman known for racist statements.

To learn more about the League’s work on redistricting [sign up](#) for the League’s *People Powered Fair Maps™* newsletter.

## 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

#### Officers

|                |                   |              |  |
|----------------|-------------------|--------------|--|
| Necia Quast    | President         | 360-370-5502 | <a href="mailto:collquas@aim.com">collquas@aim.com</a>                       |
| Barbara Sharp  | Co-Vice-President | 360-472-0148 | <a href="mailto:b_gsharp@hotmail.com">b_gsharp@hotmail.com</a>               |
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| Steve Bowman   | Voter Services    | 360-370-5814 | <a href="mailto:steve.bowman52@gmail.com">steve.bowman52@gmail.com</a>       |
| Michael Martin | Treasurer         | 360-370-5205 | <a href="mailto:martinml@ieee.org">martinml@ieee.org</a>                     |
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| Clare Kelm     | Roster            | 360-378-3373 | <a href="mailto:twopilots@interisland.net">twopilots@interisland.net</a>     |

#### Members-at-Large

|                  |                      |              |  |
|------------------|----------------------|--------------|--|
| Audra Adelberger | Nominating Committee | 360-378-6322 | <a href="mailto:audraacaba@gmail.com">audraacaba@gmail.com</a>           |
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| Beverly Zapalac  |                      | 360-375-5302 | <a href="mailto:zapalacbeverly@gmail.com">zapalacbeverly@gmail.com</a>   |

*Nominating Committee: Audra Adelberger, Robbie Lawson, Susan Martin*

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:

|                   | <b>Regular</b> | <b>Carrie Chapman Catt</b> | <b>Susan B. Anthony</b> |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Individual</b> | \$60           | \$100 to \$249             | \$250 and up            |
| <b>Family</b>     | \$90           | \$150to \$374              | \$375 and up            |
| <b>Student</b>    | \$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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