

# VOTER

**March 2023**

## **Consensus on Local Journalism**

**Monthly Meeting – March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – 12 Noon**

**Friday Harbor Library & via Zoom**

At our February Membership Meeting we talked about the findings of the recent LWWVA study on the decline of local news reporting and, specifically, how this situation affects all of us in San Juan County. Heather Spaulding, Editor at the Journal of the San Juans, Sharon Kivisto, Editor and Publisher of the San Juan Islander and Mike Sato, Managing Editor and Amy Nelson, Founder and Publisher of The Salish Current gave an in-depth look at the state of local news.



The panelists engaged in a lively discussion around the findings in the study and how it relates to their experience reporting local news, the challenges of covering local news, and possible ways to support and reimagine local news. Did you know that the Journal has only 2 employees?

This month we will take part in the consensus process to help the League take public positions on support for local news. The study was prompted by a series of national reports tying the decline of local newspapers nationwide to reduced voter turnout, increased political polarization, higher government costs and less community engagement You can find

the study here:

<https://www.lwwva.org/resources/Documents/Studies/LocalNews/Decline%2036.pdf>

Because the study is lengthy, you can get an overview of keys points by reading these 12 pages: Preface pg. 4, Executive Summary pgs. 6-9 Conclusion pgs. 73-75 Quick Takes pgs. 76-81 and the Ratings Guide pg. 82. You can see the discussion and consensus questions here: <https://form.jotform.com/230386385048158>

These and additional resources can all be found here: <https://www.lwwva.org/journalism-study-members>.

At the meeting we will go over these questions and form a consensus position to submit to the State by March 20<sup>th</sup>. Please join us to give your input on this important issue that is

critical to the League's mission of having an informed civic engagement in our government.

This will be a hybrid meeting. To join via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83364651803?pwd=OUhtWHJJK0FQQUduYU5aS3BUT0NwUT09>

Meeting ID: 833 6465 1803

Passcode: 498480

*This event is not sponsored by the San Juan Island Library*

## Meeting Dates Winter-Spring 2023

Board Meetings	Monthly Meetings
March 6	March 13
April 3	April 10
May 1	May 8 <b>Annual Meeting</b>
June 5	June 12
July 3	<i>Summer Break</i>
August 7 <i>Board Retreat</i>	<i>Summer Break</i>
September 5 (Tuesday)	<i>September 11</i>
October 2	October 9 <i>Forums</i>
November 6	November 13
December 4	December 11 <b>Holiday Luncheon</b>

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

## Observer Corps Update

The Observer Corps is in full swing and we now have most meetings covered by our volunteer corps. We continue to get good community feedback and if you would be willing to attend meetings and take notes, please contact Necia at [collquas@netscape.net](mailto:collquas@netscape.net).

This month we are looking to cover the Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup> County Council Meeting at 9.00am in the Council Hearing Room. If anyone is willing to cover this meeting, please contact Necia.

All reports are posted on our website: <https://lwvwa.org/San-Juan> and most can also be found on the Journal of the San Juans and the Islander websites.

Everyone who signs up will get guidance on how to do notes and Necia will prepare a monthly calendar of meetings. Please contact Necia at [collquas@netscape.net](mailto:collquas@netscape.net) or 360-370-5502, if you are interested in learning more or in taking part.

Organization	Frequency	When	Time	Where	Virtual	Volunteer
SJI School Board	Monthly	4 <sup>th</sup> Weds	5pm	HS Library	No	S. Bowman/Susie Dehlendorf
SJI Public Hospital District	Monthly	4 <sup>th</sup> Weds	5.30pm	849 Spring St	Yes	B. Sharp
Port of FH	2 x Month	2 & 4 <sup>th</sup> Weds	12pm	Yacht Club	No	J. Belcovson
SJI Fire District 3	Monthly	2 <sup>nd</sup> Tuesday	3pm	Mullis Firehouse	No	M. Martin
FH Town Council	2 x Month	1 & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs	12pm	Council Chambers	Yes	
County Council	2-4 x Month	Tues/some Mon/Weds	9am	County Office	Yes	

## Around the League – State & National Issues

It's great to live in WA state! Washington is leading 12 states in suing the FDA for putting excessive restrictions on access to medical abortion pills, given the strong scientific evidence of their safety. The strategy is to counter the Texas case trying to put a ban on medical abortion across the country. WA is asking the judge to rule that the pills are safe and effective and is dumping a load of evidence to support that position. Bravo to Bob Ferguson and his team. This action is consistent with the resolution on reproductive health passed at last year's LWVUS convention: *Be it resolved that the LWUS, supports the rights of women and those who can get pregnant to self-determination related to, and including, but not limited to bodily autonomy, privacy, reproductive health, and lifestyle choice.* The full resolution was written by LWV of the San Juans and introduced by LWV Washington State.

### **12 States Sue F.D.A., Seeking Removal of Special Restrictions on Abortion Pill**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/24/health/abortion-pills-fda-lawsuit.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>

Recently, the League released its latest report on the LWV Impact on Issues which references the resolution adopted at the convention last year. (p. 143).  
[https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/LWV\\_ImpactOnIssues2022-2024.pdf](https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2023-02/LWV_ImpactOnIssues2022-2024.pdf)



The League celebrated their 103<sup>rd</sup> birthday in February when (white) women won the right to vote, while the fight for voting rights for all people of color continued for decades more. Today, the right to vote is again under attack—and so is our Democracy.

Here are some celebratory stories from our own backyard:

### **Washington State Leads the League, 6/24/22: LWVUS National Conference, Denver, Colorado**

#### **Our First Story:**

Over the course of a year’s work, the LWVWA election credibility project and our Voter Services committee worked with the Secretary of State and local county auditors to compile accurate election process and safeguard details. These were included in a special edition of the Spokesman Review (link) giving all people in our state access to accurate election information.

Election details have also been honed into ‘infobits’, simplified information about elections, that voters can trust. [English-, Chinese-, and Spanish-language Infobits](#) are available on our website.

The LWV voice is trusted and we continue to earn that trust by the thoroughness of all we do.

#### **Our Second Story:**

This past year the LWVWA conducted an in-depth study on the decline of local news and its effect on our democracy.\* After its publication, Attorney General Bob Ferguson announced a bill to expand Washington’s support for local newspapers, citing our study when describing the damaging effect the loss of local news outlets has on our democracy: “Fewer people running for office and fewer people voting, less community engagement, increased political partisanship, and negative outcomes in public health and public finance.”

He then invited our News study chair and LWVWA president to sit on a panel (neither for nor against the bill) to share this important study.

The LWV reputation is a trusted and responsible voice for democracy.

*\*The study is currently being reviewed by our entire membership and when/if adopted, it will become the basis for an official LWVWA position.*

#### ***FUN FACT:***

**In 2020 The League protected more than 25 million voters in courts across the nation – And we are still fighting!**

On March 2, Susan Martin, President of LWVSJ, spoke at a webinar organized by the Pasadena League entitled:

### **Crisis at the Border: What is it Really About? What can LWV Do?**

Dealing with the thousands of asylum-seekers and struggling families waiting to enter the US is a hotly debated issue. Susan was joined by Esmeralda Flores, Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA) in discussing their experiences addressing large-scale movements of people across the US-Mexico border. As the Executive Director of the U.S. Commission on Immigration Reform, Susan advised the President on immigration and refugee policy. In her remarks she explained the evolution of U.S. border policy, with a particular focus on asylum-seekers, and how we arrived at the present situation. Ms. Flores discussed how the border is a humanitarian crisis as well as a legal and political crisis. The aim of the webinar was to examine how League members could most effectively influence the US policy towards asylum seekers and immigrants? The recording of the webinar is available at [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8zGsytSihwGtGb\\_6xW4DqA/videos](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8zGsytSihwGtGb_6xW4DqA/videos)

In November 2022, the League sent delegates in person and virtually to observe the UN Conference of the Parties (COP27) to the 1992 [UN Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt. The UNFCCC is an international environmental treaty, whose Parties (member states of the UN) meet annually to discuss climate change-related problems, solutions, adaptation, and financing.

The League of Women Voters has had [observer status at the United Nations](#) since 1945 when it was invited by President Harry Truman to serve as a consultant to the US delegation. Along with other experts at the COP, the LWV highlighted ways in which climate change disproportionately affects women and girls, who are insufficiently represented in climate change response decision-making.



The goal of the UNFCCC is to stabilize GHG concentrations “at a level that would prevent dangerous...human... interference with the climate system.” Under the UNFCCC, countries that are disproportionately responsible for GHG emissions adopt policies on reducing emissions and report their emissions annually. Industrialized nations also provide financial support for climate change activities in developing countries.

The 2015 [Paris Agreement of the UNFCCC](#) aims to limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels. Under the Agreement, countries submit nationally determined contributions (NDCs), which are country-specific climate action plans to reduce GHG emissions. The US signed the Paris Agreement in 2016, [withdrew](#) in 2020, and rejoined in 2021. COP27 reiterated the Paris goals and came to an historic agreement to provide loss and damage funding for vulnerable countries hit hard by floods, droughts and other climate disasters.

Read more at <https://www.lwv.org/blog/women-girls-and-climate-change-cop27>

# The Legislative Newsletter

A great way to stay current and involved is to sign up for the Legislative Newsletter from the WA League. This provides a weekly update on key issues in the legislature, including Action Alerts for upcoming votes and information on current activity on major bills. Newsletters come out every Sunday during the Legislative Session.

Click on the links in the document to learn more about bills currently being reviewed in the state legislature. You can “take action” on these most pressing bills by sending a suggested, editable email to legislators, encouraging them to vote to promote the League issue in question.

<https://www.lwwa.org/resources/Documents/Newsletter%20Archives/Legislative%20Newsletter/2023/LegislativeNewsletter3.5.23.pdf>

Click here: [sign up for the Legislative Newsletter](#)

## We Heard You!

At the member retreat in November, there was a lot of praise and enthusiasm for our candidate forums. Now we need your help, we need volunteers for this next cycle of voter forums. Would you like to try it out? We also would like to hear about other areas of the League business or projects you might be interested in. Please let us know by emailing us at [pres.lwvsji@gmail.com](mailto:pres.lwvsji@gmail.com).

## Help Wanted!

*The League is still looking for a tech savvy person who can help us navigate our hybrid monthly meetings both with in-the-room technology and via the zoom feed.*

*Please contact Susan Martin at [martinsf@georgetown.edu](mailto:martinsf@georgetown.edu) if you or someone you know may be able to assist us on an ongoing, one time a month basis.*

## Join Your Local League!

Are you passionate about democracy and looking for a community of like-minded people? The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person 16 and older may become a voting member of the League. When you join a local League, you automatically become a member of the state and national Leagues, as well.

## Follow Us on Facebook!

Follow what local, state and national league are up to at our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVSanJuans>. We are working on our website – stay tuned for updates and check it out at <https://www.lwwa.org/San-Juan>

## Board Members of the League of Women Voters of the San Juan's

### Officers

Susan Martin	President	360-370-5205	<a href="mailto:martinsf@georgetown.edu">martinsf@georgetown.edu</a>
Barbara Sharp	Vice-President	360-472-0148	<a href="mailto:b_gsharp@hotmail.com">b_gsharp@hotmail.com</a>
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>
Jill Belcovson	Secretary	805-689-2260	<a href="mailto:jbelcovson@gmail.com">jbelcovson@gmail.com</a>
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:audraeaba@gmail.com">audraeaba@gmail.com</a>
Mary Campanella	Nominating Committee	800-364-1984	<a href="mailto:marycampanella@icloud.com">marycampanella@icloud.com</a>
Chita Miller		360-378-2153	<a href="mailto:chita.miller@gmail.com">chita.miller@gmail.com</a>
Necia Quast		360-370-5502	<a href="mailto:collquas@aim.com">collquas@aim.com</a>
Kari McVeigh		310-678-1403	<a href="mailto:kmcveigh630@gmail.com">kmcveigh630@gmail.com</a>
Stephanie Butler		907-209-5885	<a href="mailto:sjbutlerak@gmail.com">sjbutlerak@gmail.com</a>
Diana Sibert		360-370-5269	<a href="mailto:dianasibert@gmail.com">dianasibert@gmail.com</a>

*Nominating Committee: Audra Adelberger, Mary Campanella, Robbie Lawson, Leslie Veirs*

*Hello Members:*

*A big thank you to members who have recently paid dues.*

*We are well into our current fiscal year which started on June 1, 2022. When you receive an updated roster in your email box please look at the column (labeled "Paid thru") near the far-right-hand side to see if you are paid through 5/31/2023. If not, please consider sending your check in to our PO Box. Also please let us know of any changes that need to be made to your contact information. Thank you for continuing to support the important work that we do.*

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

***Voter Editor: Jill Belcovson – 805-689-2260 – [jbeltcovson@gmail.com](mailto:jbeltcovson@gmail.com)***  
***Contributing Editor - Susan Martin***