

# THE VOTER



SEPT., 2011  
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This Newsletter published by and for the League of Women Voters of Yakima County

## MISSION STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

## VISION

To empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide.

## OFFICERS

*President:* Becky Scholl  
*1st Vice Pres:* Jackie Hertel  
*2nd Vice Pres:* Chris Bardill  
*Secretary:* Karen Pilon  
*Treasurer:* Janis Luvaas

### Board of Directors

Doris Ayyoub  
Chris Bardill  
Jackie Call  
Cynthia Garrick  
Kitty Jubran  
Elaine Smith  
Millie Stenejhem

*Voter Editor :* Elaine Smith

### WEB Sites

Secretary of State:  
[www.secstate.wa.gov/](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/)  
Yakima Co. Auditor:  
[www.co.yakima.wa.us/auditor/](http://www.co.yakima.wa.us/auditor/)  
LWVYC: [www.lwwa\\_yakima.org](http://www.lwwa_yakima.org)  
LWVWA: [www.lwwwa.org](http://www.lwwwa.org)  
LWVUS: [www.lwvus.org](http://www.lwvus.org)

## Calendar

LWVWA Action Workshop: Ellensburg October 8  
Yakima River Basin Water Study Meeting: Oct.12, 9:30  
Yakima Arboretum  
LWVYC League Board Meeting: Thurs. October 13 Noon  
Unitarian Universalist Church  
LWVYC Forum/Roundtable on Home Rule: TBA October  
LWVYC City Council Candidates Reception: TBA October  
Mail-in Election Ballots: October 19  
Downtown Committee Dia de los Muertos Tour: November 2  
LWVWA Conservation Districts Consensus Study, Due Oct. 30  
*LWVUS Education Consensus Study, Due Nov. 30*

## 2011 Annual Spring Membership Meeting

The League Board is pleased to welcome **Becky Scholl** as the new Yakima County League President. We have two new Vice Presidents: **Jackie Hertel** for Programs, and new member **Chris Bardill** as VP for fundraising. Our Treasurer is now **Janis Luvaas**. **Karen Pilon** returns as our enduring Board Secretary. **Cynthia Garrick** and **Doris Ayyoub** return to Board positions after their heroic tenures as Board officers. A warm thank you and welcome to all who are serving the Yakima County community on the League Board.

# President's Report, Becky Scholl

**Hello to everyone.** I am very excited about the many projects we have underway this fall and I am proud of the energy I see in so many of our members. From our annual meeting we have set ourselves a number of **local objectives**. And from the state and national Leagues we have been given **Consensus tasks** to accomplish. Briefly, we are participating in a consensus study on Washington State Conservation Districts (due Oct.30) . We have been asked to join an on-going consensus study on Education on the national level (due Nov.31) and an up-coming "Privatization" study (due March 30, 2012) . We have been invited by the unit leader to join a state study on the issue of the Supreme Court decision on "Corporations as Persons".

On the local level, in our annual meeting in early summer we identified a number of **concerns for our attention**, many of which were identified last winter in the February retreat: the local primary election and the city charter propositions, the Yakima County Home Rule signature campaign, the Yakima River Basin Integrated Water Plan, and the relationship between gangs, guns and drugs. Our **increasing awareness of the developing Hispanic community in Yakima County** has led to the selection of presenters at the Kara Kondo spring luncheon. Margaret Luera, historian of the Morelia/Yakima Sister City organization was our guest speaker at the annual membership meeting. The Downtown committee has arranged a Dia de los Muertos Tour November 2, and the Board has formed a **Dia de los Muertos altar committee** with the theme of the "death of civility" in politics. Janis Luvaas, Karen Pilon, Millie Stenejhem, and Mary Crago have volunteered to create the altar. **Contact** Janis at [janisluvaas@clearwire.net](mailto:janisluvaas@clearwire.net) to join in this fun and artful venture.

We also need to **update our own League's consensus positions** which currently date from 1976 to 2009. We are seeking members who are willing to review our positions on government, utilities, natural resources and social policy and form study groups to update relevant positions.

President 's report continued

**Future events:** In early October before the November election ballots are mailed, we are planning a Home Rule Charter forum and a city council candidates reception. In November, we hope to co-host with the Washington State DOE a presentation of the Integrated Water study open to the public .

**Membership goal:** We hope you will all help us to expand our local League membership. Please, ask someone to join the League today. We have important work to do.

## LWVWA Consensus Study on Washington state Conservation

### Districts Board Open Position Elections

In 2009, the Yakima League participated in the LWVWA Conservation District study by collecting data on the North and South Yakima County Conservation District open Board member elections. *(To review the outcome of that state study, log on to the LWVWA website and click on "studies" where you will find a complete text of the results.)*

To assist the state League in creating a consensus position based on the study, the local Leagues were ask to draw together a committee to discuss the study and to come to a consensus on questions to be submitted to the local League Board October 13th for approval. Our local League consensus responses will be submitted to the state League by October 30th.

Joyce Dennison, Eleanor Hungate, and Elaine Smith volunteered to conduct a study session. Karen Pilon, Kitty Jubran and Jackie Hertel attended. Diana Hillis, a former North Yakima County Conservation District Board member, assisted us. The committee's response was delivered to the LWVYC Board September 2. If you have additional comments before the October 13th local Board meeting, please contact Joyce Dennison, joyceand clay@mac.com or call the office, 452 3419

**Becky Scholl's comments on Conservation Districts** This District consensus study constitutes the state League's consensus efforts for 2011, whereby all Washington state Leagues study the materials, pull in their regional experts, and then answer the consensus questions (hopefully with local consensus, put also valuable if the unit meetings on the topic are 50/50).

Now, in all of my years as a resident in the valley, I've never noticed information about Conservation Districts. As a result of the study sent by state League, I see evidence of the work of these districts just about everywhere: Yakima, Kittitas, and Kitsap County news articles and publications seemed to be ubiquitous! The central issue of the state League study is the way District Board members are selected and elected, which means that there is insufficient public awareness of the election process and the persons running for the offices.

## ***OUR INVITATION to a Consensus Study on “Citizens United v. FEC”***

*from Jackie Aase, Unit Chair, LWV-Jefferson County*

Dear Washington State Leagues:

In July, twelve members representing seven Washington State Leagues met to discuss concerns regarding the January 2010 Supreme Court decision on *Citizens United v. FEC* and its effect on democracy in the United States. The ruling removed restrictions on how political campaigns are funded and permits corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts of money (anonymously) supporting or opposing a candidate. The ruling reverses decades of campaign-finance laws aimed at preventing undue influence over local, state, and national elections including striking down two major Supreme Court decisions and part of the landmark McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform legislation.

This domination of public debate and campaigns allows policy to be skewed toward protecting corporate interests in regulation and taxation, even foreign-owned or multinational corporations, without regard to whether it is in the public’s best interest—a power far beyond what an individual citizen has.

The LWVUS position on *Citizens United v. FEC* is well documented; i.e. the Appellee Brief *Amici Curiae* the League submitted to the Supreme Court as well as former LWVUS President Mary Wilson's oral statement before the Committee on House Administration “Defining the Future of Campaign Finance in an Age of Supreme Court Activism,” which supported the Disclose Act of 2010. The Disclose Act was passed by the House; however, the Senate filibustered it twice, and it was not taken up in the lame duck session. In the 112th Congress, the US House defeated a Democratic bid to add requirements for campaign-finance transparency to HR 359.

Since basic campaign finance laws have been nullified by the Supreme Court, we discussed how legislation is not a permanent solution, how the 2012 elections are fast approaching, and how corporate money is already dominating the electoral process.

There are many organizations, towns, cities, and counties that have passed resolutions in support of a Constitutional amendment stating CORPORATIONS ARE NOT PEOPLE. The LWVUS has not made any statement regarding such an amendment.

## Our questions to you:

- 1) Have you discussed this issue at your meetings?
- 2) Have you taken any actions?
- 3) Would you agree with any or all of the following proposals:
  - A) Encourage LWVWA and/or LWVUS support of the resolutions proposed in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress (federal)? (S.J.Res.36, 07/27/10 and H.J.Res.74, 02/02/10, neither of which tries to repeal corporate personhood—only regulate corporate expenditures for political speech.) See attached.
  - B) Provide “fact sheets” with information on this issue and/or a speaker list on the subject?
  - C) Encourage LWVWA support for passing the *WA State Senate Joint Memorial 8007* sponsored earlier this year by Senators Kline, Conway, and Kohl-Welles? (This does “resolve” that corporations are not persons under the law, but it never made it out of the Committee on Judiciary.) See attached.
  - D) Contact Leagues in other states to discuss and promote action on this issue?
  - E) Propose a Resolution for the LWVWA supporting a Constitutional amendment stating that corporations are not natural persons, that they do not have the same constitutional rights as human beings, that they cannot anonymously spend an unlimited amount of money influencing elections?
  - F) Present a Constitutional amendment resolution for adoption at the next LWVUS convention stating that corporations are not natural persons, that they do not have the same constitutional rights as human beings, that they cannot anonymously spend an unlimited amount of money influencing elections?

[We must keep in mind that members and local Leagues cannot communicate with state legislators speaking “for the League”. An official League letter to state legislators needs to be signed by Linnea Hirst or Kim Abel, our co-presidents. Also they would have to get permission from the LWVUS to send letters or talk to our state’s Congress on behalf of the League.]

Will we stand by while corporate money dominates the electoral process and the voices of the American people are drowned out by special interests? The LWV has a lot of power; our organization is highly respected, and we have history of leading in voting rights and election integrity. Preventing improper influence of corporate wealth in elections has gone hand-in-hand with modern democracy’s embrace of the principle of political equality. Are we instead repeating the Robber Baron Era of unrestrained corporate power and the best government money can buy? Is democracy as we know it at stake?

Please respond to these questions c/o Jackie Aase (Unit Chair, LWV-Jefferson County), [aase@waypt.com](mailto:aase@waypt.com), 360-385-6027.

***DIA DE LOS MUERTOS TOUR***

LWVYC DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE'S

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS TOUR

**BEGINS NOVEMBER 2ND AT 4 PM**

**YAKIMA MALL**

*(IN THE OLD HALLMARK SPACE)*

THE TOUR WITH OUR GUEST TOUR LEADER

WILL BE FOLLOWED BY A LIGHT DINNER

**AT SANTIAGO'S 5 PM**

— FOR RESERVATIONS —

**CALL THE LEAGUE OFFICE**

**452-3419.**

COST: \$20 FOR INDIVIDUALS — \$35 PER PAIR

JACKIE CALL, COMMITTEE CHAIR.

# Get INVOLVED

—Log on to LWVUS and review the information on the Education Consensus study now underway and the Privatization Consensus study beginning in December. **LWVUS: [www.lwvus.org](http://www.lwvus.org)**

—Log on to LWVWA and review the information on the Conservation District study. Read a Voter issue from another Washington State League like Thurston or Clallam. **LWVWA: [www.lwvwa.org](http://www.lwvwa.org)**

—Review the LWVYC's Consensus positions and find a topic to study — Available from a League Board member.

**LWVYC: 452-3419**

—Volunteer for one of the national, state or local League study groups or event committees. **LWVYC: 452-3419**

—Volunteer to register voters. Karen Pilon, LWVYC Voter Services: [kabobilo@yvn.com](mailto:kabobilo@yvn.com)

—Become a League **observer** and attend the Yakima City Council meetings or the Yakima County District Commissioner meetings. Apply for an appointment to a city or county government Board.

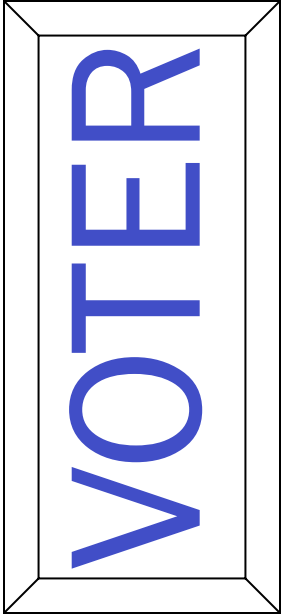
League of Women Voters Of Yakima County

PO Box 723

Yakima, WA 98907

Phone: (509) 452-3419

Return Service Requested



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF YAKIMA  
COUNTY LWVWA\_YAKIMA.ORG

Cordially invites you to: JOIN US!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Categories:

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$10 Student Associate**

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$60 Basic**

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$70 Contributing**

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$80 Supporting**

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$40** Each additional family member

at the same residence

**Student Associate** is not a voting member