

THE VOTER



This Newsletter published by and for the League of Women Voters of Yakima County
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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 4:00 PM the 1st Monday of each month at the League office.
All members are welcome to attend.

Calendar

Monday, March 4, 4 PM, **Leadership Team Meeting**,
League office at YUU Church. LT meetings are open to all members. Please enter through alley door.

Tuesday, February 26, *League Conversation*, 5:30 PM,
Wesley United Methodist Church, 14 N 48th Avenue.
Sarah Augustine, Executive Director of The Dispute Resolution Center, will talk to us about Indian Child Welfare Act (see flyer enclosed).

Notes From Cynthia and Criss

We were very pleased with the turnout for the *League Conversation* on January 22. The topic was the "Public Charge" and a write-up from Rhonda Hauff is enclosed.

A reminder, our next League conversation on March 26nd will be at Wesley Methodist Church, 14 N 48th Avenue. This will be our first gathering in this new location, and we believe you will find it has more convenient access and parking.

The Leadership Team meeting scheduled for Monday, Feb 4, was cancelled due to weather. We hope to reschedule as soon as weather permits, which at the time of this writing has yet to be determined.

Please note enclosed invitation from YWCA, which sounds very interesting!

Are you interested in serving on the State Board? The state nominating committee is looking for you! Please contact nomcom2019@lwvwa.org



League of Women Voters of Yakima County

Presents

Sarah Augustine

on the

**Indian Child Welfare Act
(ICWA)**

Tuesday, February 26, 5:30 PM

Wesley United Methodist Church

14 N 48th Avenue (corner of 48th and Chestnut)

The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (ICWA) is a Federal law that governs jurisdiction over the removal of Native American children from their families. The ICWA was struck down by a federal court in Texas in October 2018. The decision is heading to appeal in the 5th district, and if the decision is upheld it will most likely go on to the Supreme Court.

Briefly, the ICWA was created to strengthen the rights of Native American families, and stipulates that where children are removed from their families, they must be placed with relatives, tribal members, or members of another tribe.

Report on January Conversation: Public Charge PSA

Alma Zuniga, Senior Attorney from the Yakima office of Northwest Justice Project, presented on the topic of “Public Charge” to an audience of about 35 LWVYC members and guests on Tuesday, January 22.

“Public Charge” means an evaluation of immigrants who are likely to become dependent on the US government for support (cash or certain other benefits). The current Public Charge policy has been in effect since 1999, and determined “Public Charge” to be primarily cash benefits and the likelihood of need for institutional support. Under a new proposed rule published in the Federal Register October 2018, the definition of public charge would expand to include other benefits such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or food stamps), Section 8 Vouchers and other housing subsidies, and possibly other benefits like Medicaid, Medicare Part D, and nursing home care. The proposed rule also asked for comments about whether the CHIP (Childrens Health Insurance Program) should be considered.

Under the proposed rule, the Public Charge Test looks at a person’s “Totality of Circumstances” to determine whether a person should be inadmissible. Considerations include age, health, family status, assets, financial status and resources, education level and skills, and an affidavit of support. Under both the existing and proposed rules, an immigrant is required to have a Sponsor, who agrees to support the immigrant in the event he/she cannot support himself/herself so the immigrant will not be a burden to the U.S. Under federal law, this sponsor deeming (commitment) ends after ten years or when the sponsor dies (whichever is sooner). Under Washington State law, the deeming ends after 5 years.

Those people who may be affected by changes to the Public Charge test include those seeking to get legal status through a visa petition, some employment based visas, diversity visas, and certain Temporary Lawful Immigrants (green card holders). There are many types of immigration status and immigrants concerned about how the changes to Public Charge might affect them were encouraged to seek legal counsel.

Over 220,000 comments were received on the Proposed Rule. It is unknown at this time whether Congress will debate the Rule and comments before enacting the Final Rule. The federal Privacy Act protects information from being shared, as does the Affordable Care Act. Washington State Law (Commitment to Tolerance, Diversity, and Inclusiveness) has re-affirmed the right to privacy for individuals seeking legal status.

For more information:

National Immigration Law Center www.nilc.org

Washington Law Help www.washingtonlawhelp.org

Updates on public charge issues: www.childrensalliance.org/protecting-washingtons-immigrant-families

Rhonda Hauff

We have received the follow invitation from League member Cheri Kilty, Executive Director of the YWCA:

Washington's Undiscovered Feminists

Noon, Wednesday, March 27, 2019

Yakima Valley Museum

Sponsored by Yakima YWCA

Meet five "women warriors" who changed our state - and American society. This FREE presentation is part of Humanities Washington's Speakers Bureau program.

For more information:

<https://www.humanities.org/event/washingtons-undiscovered-feminists-4/>

Bring Your Voice to Olympia
Support Democracy on February 21

Last year LWVWA and Fix Democracy First sponsored the first Democracy Lobby Day and it was a terrific success. Washington State expanded voting opportunities and passed powerful protections for voting rights, disclosure and audits in 2018.

On February 21, we will again gather in Olympia to lobby our legislators in support of bills that will strengthen our democracy. We will be working for expanded voter access, including prepaid postage for ballots; campaign finance reform; election security; and transparency and accountability.



Please join us join us! [Sign up](#) now for the 2019 Democracy Lobby Day in Olympia on Feb. 21.

Gathering in Olympia to bring our concerns directly to our representatives is a powerful activity. It shows our elected officials that we are watching and demanding good government. It brings us together to share knowledge and hope. And it's a lot of fun!

Please Note: I registered to attend the above, subject to safe travel conditions. As of this writing, I am assuming I will not be going because of weather and pass conditions forecasted for next week. Criss Bardill



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

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Membership: _____ \$60 Basic _____ \$40 Each additional family member at same residence

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>

