

Volume LXXXVIII Issue 11, November 2025 A printable version of *The Voter* is available at <u>here</u>

A Message From Co-Presidents Sue and Ruth

Where has the time gone? It was just 5 months ago that we took office. We continue to be awed by the work of our local League members. The entire Board of Directors is grateful for your continued commitment to your various projects and cooperation with each other.

Our monthly meetings are relevant, educational and inspiring as shown in our recent October meeting organized by our Civic Education and Immigration Committees. Kudos for finding ways to work together.

Our November 12th meeting promises to be as informative and meaningful. Julia Presar will be facilitating this presenting with our virtual guest Susan Martin, co-author of LWVWA study Welcoming Immigrants to Washington State. **Please note this is a change to a Wednesday** as Veteran's day is on Tuesday the 11th.

With the challenges and hard work ahead of us, it is important to for us to all take care of ourselves and each other. No task is too small nor should it go without recognition. So our December 9th meeting at the Hive will be a time of Recognitions and Reflections. Our special guest for this event will be Karen Crowley. We look forward to sharing our time with her. Watch for details on this event!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DIRECT DONATIONS TO OUR LOCAL LEAGUE! Since July we have raised nearly \$3,000 through your generous contribution!

As you renew your membership with LWVUS you will have an opportunity to select our local Spokane chapter for additional donations and it is working!

The best way to donate to LWVSA is directly at our LWVSA website: https://my.lwv.org/washington/spokane-area/donate

November Calendar

AH&HS meeting, Sunday, Nov. 2, 5:30pm-6:30pm on Zoom email lwvsaahhs@gmail.com for link

LVWSA Board Meeting, Thursday, Nov. 6, 5pm-7pm on Zoom, email ruthmay250@gmail.com for link

General Membership meeting Wednesday, Nov. 12, 4:30-6:30pm. Virtual Guest Speaker, Susan Martin Liberty Park Library

The Voter Newsletter Deadline is Friday, Nov. 14. Send info to: corderographics@gmail.com

Immigration Committee's Cultural Awareness Workshop, Saturday, Nov. 15 See page 6 for details.

Redistricting meeting, Thursday, Nov. 20, 3pm, at Liberty Park Library Meeting Room B

Immigration meeting, Tuesday, Nov. 25, 7pm-8:30pm on Zoom, email lchadez@gmail.com for link.

League Orientation and Lunch, Wednesday, Nov. 26, 11am-1pm See page 10 for details.

Environmental Issues meetingContact Amy Compestine for meet-

Contact Amy Compestine for meeting info at acomp4274@gmail.com

Save the Date, December 9th!
General Meeting, Tuesday, 4:30-6:30pm. A time of Recognitions and Reflections. See Co-Presidents Message this page.

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What YOU Can Do!

By Alison Wells

✓ ...locally: LWVSA

VOTE. The best way to preserve our democracy is to vote! You can sign up for ballot status text alerts by adding your cell phone number to your registration:

https://voter.votewa.gov/portal2023/login.aspx In addition to casting your own ballot, encourage friends, family, and neighbors to cast theirs. Ballots are due by 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 4, but election officials are encouraging voters to get ballots in early.

Expand your use of social media. Think about how powerful the postings and photos of supposedly "war-ravaged" Portland have been in countering the attempts by the federal administration to portray that city as dangerous. Speaking as an individual, not as the League, use social media to combat attempts to stifle free speech.

✓ ... statewide: LWVWA

Join the Decline to Sign campaign. Initiative Measure IL26-126 would require all voters to have an enhanced drivers' license or provide documentary proof of U.S. citizenship in person or have their registration canceled. To find out more about why the LWVWA is opposed: https://lwvwa.org/IL26-126 LWVWA would like to know if you see I-126 signature gatherers. Contact info@lwvwa.org with the location, date, and method of approach (tabling, circulating, etc.)

Sign up for the LWVWA's annual Action Workshop to get ready for the upcoming legislative session (which convenes on January 12). The LWVWA's lobby team will offer insights into legislative processes, League priority issues, tools for effectively communicating with legislators, and more. The workshop takes place on November 15: https://secure.everyaction.com/glRsT3zPKE2wXzrG x7UIA2

✓... nationally: LWVUS

Speak up about National Guard deployments in cities across America. The LWVUS has declared these deployments unconstitutional. Send congressional representatives a message telling them to sponsor and support legislative action to stop this weaponization of the military against its citizens: https://www.congress.gov/contact-us

Please Complete LWVSA's Annual Survey!

The League of Women Voters of Spokane Area asks members every year to share their interests and abilities in a short questionnaire.

This is so that you have the best possible experience with your membership in the League. Please complete and submit the short survey by **Wednesday**, **November 12**, **2025**. Even if you've done this for LWV US—this one is different so please do submit it.

https://www.jotform.com/assign/252856534911159/243236943981061

Observer Corps - An essential watchdog in these chaotic times.

Here is an easy way to help the LWVSA defend democracy and to stay connected with what is happening in our local government. Just attend, in person or virtually, a city council, county commissioner, school board, planning commissioner or a neighborhood council meeting, fill out a short report form found on our website and submit to Sue Irwin at sgirwin@gmail.com. The idea is to attend regularly enough to understand what is going on so that you can alert members if there is something the League needs to comment on. Stephanie Baker, from our committee, has created a google calendar that will help in organizing our presence at these and other meetings. Thank you, Stephanie!

City Council meets Mondays at 6:00 pm and streams live on Channel 5 online at https://my.spokanecity.org/citycable5/live

County Commissioners meets Mondays for Board Briefing at 9:00 am and Tuesdays at 2:00 pm. https://www.spokanecounty.gov/2077/Public-Meetings

Spokane School Board meet in the evening at 6:00 pm. You can register for the zoom link at https://www.spokaneschools.org/page/school-board-meetings

Public Hearings are held in the Commissioner's Hearing Room. Lower Level of the Public Works Building. To find public hearing information, visit the page.

Public Meetings can be held either in the Commissioner's Hearing Room or a conference room in the Public Works Building. Please email Sue Irwin at sgirwin@gmail.com if you have any questions or are interested in helping out.





LWVSA's presence was easy to spot at the No Kings event, with our very visible banner on display. Here, members (l. to r.) Shari Gangitano, Mary Ann Amemiya, Judy Silverstein, John Marvin, and Alison Wells listen to one of the speakers.



Sue Irwin (I.) and Ruth May (r.), co-presidents of the LWVSA, spoke at the No Kings 2 rally. Ruth reminded the audience of the upcoming election and urged them to use their votes to make their voices heard. The demonstration of the right to free speech exemplified by the crowd was celebrated by Sue as an essential part of democracy.

The League Participated in the No Kings 2.

On October 18, members of the League of Women Voters of Spokane Area joined thousands of other local citizens at the No Kings 2 event at B.A. Clark Park in Spokane. This event was just one of about 2700 taking place in communities across the country and around the world. It was endorsed nationally by the LWVUS as well as by our Spokane League to provide an opportunity for people to voice their opposition to unconstitutional acts and policies the federal administration has implemented in recent months. It was a visible affirmation of our rights to free speech and dissent, both rights that are guaranteed by the Constitution.

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Affordable Housing and Homelessness Solutions (AHHS)

Spokane Advances Bold Housing Strategy with H.O.M.E. Starts Here

By Stacey Mainer

In 2025, the City of Spokane formally adopted H.O.M.E. Starts Here—an ambitious strategy to address the complex challenges of housing instability and homelessness. The plan, which stands for Healthcare, Outreach, Multidisciplinary Engagement, and Economic Stability, combines housing development with essential wraparound services to help residents achieve long-term stability.

This effort builds on earlier milestones, particularly Washington State's House Bill 1590, passed in 2020. The legislation authorized local governments to dedicate sales and use tax revenue to affordable housing, generating millions of dollars that Spokane has since invested in building and rehabilitating homes.

What makes H.O.M.E. Starts Here distinctive is its integration across city departments and its focus on measurable outcomes. Key metrics include reducing the number of severely cost-burdened households, adding housing at all income levels, expanding homeownership opportunities,

and increasing healthcare access for vulnerable populations.

Several initiatives are already underway. In September, Catholic Charities Housing launched a Neighborhood Outreach Program deploying teams seven days a week. Working alongside police and code enforcement, these teams connect unhoused individuals with shelter, healthcare, and social services—offering not just immediate relief but pathways to long-term dignity and stability. At the same time, Jewels Helping Hands, in partnership with Providence, opened the Cannon Street Navigation Center, a daytime hub linking people with housing case managers, medical care, and recovery services.

To complement these services, the Spokane Police Department reserved 10 downtown jail beds for chronic re-offenders, aiming to stabilize individuals before reintegration. Together, these efforts reflect Spokane's commitment to a balanced, compassionate, and practical approach to housing and community safety.

Thank You New & Renewed Members!



NEW MEMBERSJohn Marvin

John Marvin Marilyn Sullivan

RENEWED MEMBERS

Jean Alliman Stephanie Bond Jennifer Calvert Christine Clark Emily Grizzell Charles Hansen Judy Krueger Rebecca MacMullan Lin McGinn Joanne Smieja

(Updated 10-21-25)

The deadline is November 17 for the December issue of **THE VOTER**. Email submissions to Julie at <u>corderographics@gmail.com</u>

Civic Education Committee Update

Presentations to Five Civics Classes in Spokane Public Schools

By Beth Pellicciotti

For many years, the Spokane League has worked in partnership with the Spokane Public Schools presenting on the importance of voting and inviting students to register to vote. On October 17th, 125 students in five civics classes at Shadle High School heard presentations by Spokane League members, Emily Grizzell and Beth Pellicciotti. Forty-five students registered to vote; several of these registrants were age-eligible to vote in the upcoming general election.

James Mace, Social Studies teacher at Shadle High School, emphasized to students that they might approach this invitation to vote as a series of decisions. He said, "Today you decide to register to vote. These League members are here today to help you. If you decide to vote in the future, you have already saved yourself time and have taken the first step. You can always decide not to vote in an upcoming election, that is up to you."

Emily Grizzell showed students a sample ballot from a 2020 election. She noted that three envelopes and a ballot arriving in the mail might be confusing for any first-time voter. She demonstrated how the envelopes worked, stressing the importance of the security envelope, and said, "Your voting is private; nobody knows how you vote." She also passed out the recent Local Voters' Pamphlet (Lake County Elections), citing it as one important source of information on candidates and voting measures.

Beth Pellicciotti spoke individually with each student completing a voter registration form saying, "Your first election will be the August primary or the November general election. Look for a ballot to arrive in mid-July (for the primary election) or mid-October (for the general election)."

She stressed to each student, "When you vote, make sure you sign the envelope for mailing your ballot just like this (pointing to the student's signature on the registration form)." She congratulated each future voter, "You are ready to go."

Immigration Committee Update

Immigration Committee Hosts Heather Richardson at General Membership Meeting

By Beth Pellicciotti

On October 14, Heather Richardson, Director of English Language Development, Spokane Public Schools (SPS), presented her work in supporting immigrant and refugee students and their families in the Spokane Public Schools. Ms. Richardson stated that Washington State is third in the nation for settling refugees (New York and California are first and second). King County is first in resettlement and Spokane County second. From 2016 to last year, students who required these services from SPS increased by 62%, by 1,000 students.

Ms. Richardson's office provides support services to students and their families in 14 languages. Services include English language instruction and language interpretation for parent-teacher conferences, school choice, busing, state screening, reading and mathematics testing, Individual Education Plans, and special

education. In professional development sessions, teachers learn the cultural adjustments that students and families make in entering this country. Teachers also learn strategies for helping students adapt to very different and sometimes bewildering educational settings.



A list of interpreter services that Spokane Public Schools provide for families.

Spokane League members had many questions after her presentation, including who pays for these services, how students and families eventually let go of this support, and whether other school districts offer this level of support.

Immigration Committee Update

Immigration Committee in Action

By Susan Hales, Immigration Committee member Julia Presar and Louise Chadez, Co-Chairs

This Fall, the Immigration Committee activities focus on building understandings and cultural competence as we respond to invitations from the broader community to collaborate in supporting Spokane's immigrants and their many communities which enrich our area's diversity.

Immigration Committee member, Beth Pellicciotti coordinated the October General Meeting, hosting Heather Richardson, Director, English Language Development, Spokane Public Schools. Richardson informed us of the many innovative and effective systems and practices that SPS District 81 employs to support the high number of language and culturally diverse refugees and immigrants who are new to Spokane. With poignant examples, she demonstrated the complex and personal, language and cultural challenges these students navigate.

At our November General Meeting on Wednesday, November 12, Julia Presar, Immigration Committee Co-Chair, will lead us through the in-depth research presented by Susan Martin, San Juan League President, in Welcoming Immigrants to Washington State. Martin's fascinating report illustrates Washington State's leadership role in embracing and empowering people escaping life-threatening conditions abroad. Her immigration history and statistics provide us with a broad base of knowledge, informing all our work engaging with local immigrant communities.

A few short days later, on November 15, we continue our journey to cultural competence and immigrant community engagement with the Immigration Committee's Cultural Awareness Workshop, coordinated by Louise Chadez, Immigration Committee Co-Chair and Susan Hales, Committee member. At The Woman's Club from 9am to 12 noon on November 15,

Rumyana Kudeva will lead us in interactive learning activities and share resources to build our cultural understandings and skills. Kudeva, DSW, brings years of experience as an engaging cultural di-



Immigration Committee's Cultural Awareness Workshop At The Woman's Club 9am to 12pm, November 15.

Rumyana Kudeva will lead us in interactive learning activities and share resources to build our cultural understandings and skills.

versity workshop presenter, EWU Social Work faculty member, Health District Program Specialist and clinical social worker. The League presents this workshop in collaboration with Eastern Washington University's School of Social Work through which participants can receive three Social Work continuing education credits, upon request. Further information can be found on the registration form at: https://forms.gle/1Z-jNU12EnF7R9jeh8. The registration fee is \$35 and registration is open through November 12.

More and more, our League is reaching out and engaging with underrepresented and underserved immigrant communities. This work began many years ago with our registering new citizens at Naturalization Ceremonies and has grown with tabling at ever more cultural events, translating the 2020 and 2024 General Election ballots, and presenting cross-cultural voter workshops. Now we all prepare ourselves to accept invitations to collaborate.

All are invited to join the Immigration Committee! Meetings are monthly on 4th Tuesday, from 7:00pm – 8:30pm on Zoom. We welcome and value new ideas, energy and relationships.

Join the Immigration Committee

Meetings every 4th Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:30 pm on Zoom. Contact Co-Chairs: Julia Presar (julia.presar@gmail.com) and Louise Chadez (lchadez@gmail.com) for an invite.

Redistricting Committee Update - A Program Action Committee

Redistricting Commission Reform Committee (RCRC) – Next Steps

By Mary Lloyd

Current state task force members and attendees recognize the aim to establish an Independent Redistricting Commission for the 2040 census.

Our LVWWA Leagues Redistricting Commission Reform mantra is **Put People First**.

- Washingtonians deserve stable representation that protects the voices of all voters.

Redistricting is the process of drawing district lines to elect our representatives for/in/of legislative districts. Our goal is to promote a change first through state legislation which then comes to the vote of the people of the state of Washington through a voting process to change to WA State Constitution. A Civic lesson!! See the state government site for more information at Constitutional Amendment Lesson.pdf

To change the Washington State Constitution, the following steps are required:

• **Legislative Proposal:** A proposed amendment must be agreed upon by a two-thirds majori-

ty in both chambers of the Washington State Legislature.

- Voter Approval: Once the amendment is approved by the Legislature, it must be submitted to voters for approval in a general election.
- Public Notification: The legislature must publish notice of the amendments to be submitted to the people at least four times during the weeks leading up to the election.
- **Voter Vote:** The amendment must then be approved by a simple majority of voters to become part of the Constitution.

This process ensures that significant changes to the Constitution are made with broad support from both elected representatives and the public.

What our WA Redistricting league committee members and Local Action Teams (LAT's) participants have been preparing these past months is creating a survey that first goes out to our collaborative membership. This first go-around will provide feedback in further development

Redistricting Committee Update cont'd on page 8



2026 is the 250 anniversary of the signing of the US Declaration of Independence.

If you are interested in helping plan and coordinate activities in the Spokane area please contact Lunell Haught at <a href="https://linear.nc.nlm.nc





Board of Directors

Co-President 2 year Co-President Ruth May

Co-President 2 year Co-President Sue Irwin

Treasurer 1 year Treasurer Mike Bell

Secretary 2 year Secretary Samantha

Armstrong Ash

Directors 1 year Director Emily Grizzell

1 year Director Elaine Harger

1 year Director Kathy West

Redistricting Committee cont'd from page 8 from their responses to help committee further define a public open-ended survey with the proposed Amendment as our goal. This public outreach for the Amendment process is again, the goal of Put People First.

REDISTRICTING 1. Outline of Topics - WA State Constitution REDISTRICTING Components ver2.docx - Google Docs from where it is under Amendment 74 (1983), to what it can become. This includes the Commission Formation; Size; Qualification; Legislative Action to Support Commission; Redistricting Criteria; Map (Plan) Amendments by Legislature; Reconvening of Commission to Modify Map (Plan); Terms and Vacancy; WA Supreme Court Rule; Legal Standing of Maps (Plan) by Commission; Legal Establishment of REDISTRICTING as Amended.

At the November Spokane Area Leagues' General Meeting, chair leaders of both Program and Standing Committees will again host tables so members could introduce themselves and share their team's goals and current activities.

Stop by and say "hello" and we can start our brief conversation focusing on what Redistricting means with the basics of which Legislative District you may currently be registered to vote.

And of course, we invite all of you and others with interest to our monthly - Third Thursday of each month at 3PM at (TBD) location if they wish to learn more about our program goal and become a member of the Local Action Team of Spokane Area. Through this action we can help in our goal of *Defending Our Democracy!*

For next month (November is reserved), our RCRC local program team will meet at the Liberty Park Spokane Public Library (SPL) Branch Study Room B location to be readily accessible to attendees in our Spokane Area.

What is The Redistricting Committee? In both state and local levels - are LWVWA and SA Program Committees.

As such, both state and local teams work together in monthly statewide Task Force committee meetings shaping our steps forward. The state regularly hosts this monthly meeting, bringing together coalition partners, leaders, and non-members for one-and a half-hour to two-hour sessions. Very insightful participation occurs where independent organizations help in our building blocks of engaging other individuals towards a commitment to a redistricting process that reflects a truly Independent Redistricting Commission.

Contact me at <u>riteasrain190@gmail.com</u> to let me know your questions, thoughts or concerns each month and I will let you know monthly location. Branch library reservations can only be made monthly with a month's day prior to each meeting date.

If you'd like a head start a League website is available with informational materials in Redistricting 'LITE' available to all league members. Model Legislation - Google Drive. I'm always thankful our state team leaders have provided this link to enable each of us to keep informed and have the availability of prepared materials for discussion.

I'm ready for November ahead with raking now as my yard activity.

Warmth to all, stay well and eat something leafy! Mary

Defending democracy starts at home.

State and national elections are important, of course, but the real change and infrastructure for democracy is local. Community boards and commissions are the beginning and frequently the end of democracy. Think about school, planning, park, and library boards. This is where League members play an important role in securing democracy.

Attend, testify, and observe meetings. Better yet, apply to be on a board.

https://www.spokanecounty.gov/2061/Current-Vacancies

https://my.spokanecity.org/bcc/

https://governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/MonthlyOutreachReport_1.pdf



Millwood mayoral and city council candidate forum on October 29, 2025. From left: Mike Bell, LWVSA timer; Shaun Culler, candidate for mayor; Shawna Beese, candidate for mayor; Dan Sander, city council position 2 candidate (unopposed); Tina Seifert, city council position 1 candidate; Gareth Kahl, city council position 1 candidate; Judge Ellen Clark, moderator; Sue Irwin, LWVSA co-president.

Voter Services Report

Have you ever wondered what's involved in putting on a candidate forum? Well, here's an answer:

by Elaine Harger

- 1 Partner with a member of the community who lives in the electoral jurisdiction. In the past three years, LWVSA has been approached by a community member who sees a need in an upcoming election for a candidate forum. The partner can simply be a concerned voter or an organization, business, public library, etc. It is very important to know who the people are who must absolutely be "in the loop" as you organize especially individuals like school superintendents.
- **2** Find out who the candidates are by going to the Spokane County Elections website and checking the page "Candidates who have filed": https://voter.votewa.gov/CandidateList.aspx-?e=894&c=32
- **3** Find out from your community partner what venues are possible for the forum. Try to find a neutral, secular venue. For example, not everyone feels welcome at religious facilities.

and what dates to avoid. Every community has a calendar of events happening that would be

- best not to conflict with. Select two or three dates that work best for the LWVSA, and if at all possible that are _before_ ballots are mailed out.
- **4** Make a list of all the candidates with their phone numbers and email addresses.
- **5** Email the candidates individually! with the possible dates, asking them if they are interested in participating in the forum. Some will reply quickly in the affirmative. Some won't reply at all. Try phoning. Leave a brief, polite message. Even if it seems a candidate is not interested, keep them in the loop, acknowledge that you understand they are busy, and let them know they are most welcome to participate even at the very last minute.
- **6** Once a date, time and location are set, inform the candidates.
- **7** Seek LWVSA volunteers to help. The number of volunteers needed will depend on the size of the venue and the anticipated number of people in the audience. One or two volunteers

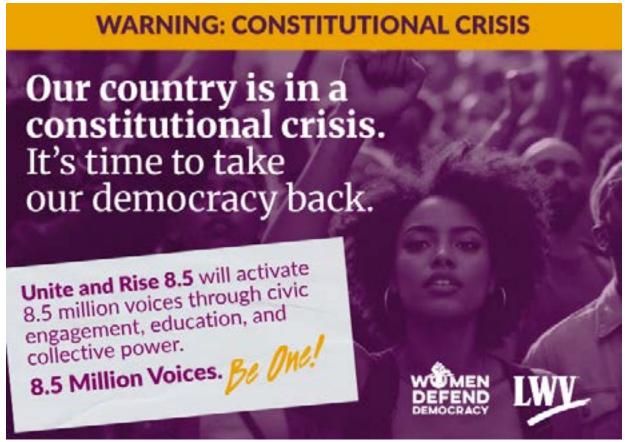
will be needed to greet people at each entrance to the venue. Two volunteers should be posted at the League table. One volunteer will be needed to work as timekeeper, and the LWVSA president/s is needed to give welcoming remarks.

- **8** Find a moderator. The best moderator is someone from the community, known to be fair, and skilled at keeping speakers to time limits and responding to questions. This person is the most important one at the forum, so select wisely and in consultation with your community partner.
- **9** Advertise! Use whatever system works best in the community an email alert system; social media; flyers posted around town; ads in the newspaper; etc.
- **10** Formulate questions with your community partner. The LWV has guidelines about preparing unbiased questions for forums use them! Here is one very informative guide:

https://my.lwv.org/sites/default/files/candidate_forum_faqs_2019.pdf

- **11** Send rules for the forum to the candidates and moderator. Again, always communicate individually, no group emails!
- 12 Write the agenda/script that includes: LWV welcome statement; brief intros to each candidate; rules (to be read by the moderator); questions. The script should include a timeline for each part of the forum: welcome, intros, rules, opening statements from candidates, questions, closing statements, closing words. The script is given only to the moderator, timer, and League organizer.
- **13** Send email reminders, or phone calls, to candidates, moderator, timer, League volunteers.
- **14** Gather League materials for the info table, and arrive one hour before the start of the forum to set up, and be at hand to greet candidates and members of the public. Be friendly, helpful, and...nonpartisan! Enjoy observing democracy in action!

Check out ChapterSpot the new League membership platform https://www.lwv.org/league-management/membership/chapterspot-resources



Welcoming Committee Update

by Lunell Haught

Watch for the LWV Spokane Area Survey

You should receive in your email a quick survey to let us know what your civic interests and values are so we can be sure you get the most out of your membership. It should be submitted by Wednesday, November 12, 2025.

November Orientation and Lunch

Orientation to demystify the League will be at the usual 11 am on November 26 followed by a no-host lunch at noon at Frankie Doodle's at 30 E Third Street, east of Division. Questions? Contact Ih1@fastmail.com That's the day before Thanksgiving, not everyone is traveling or cooking that day. If the weather is awful we will cancel.

No heavy lifting required

Curious about what other Leagues in the state are doing? Interested in bringing membership ideas back to the Spokane League? League members working with membership and leadership activities meet in small, facilitated groups in a monthly zoom. If you would like to join a group representing Spokane and bring back ideas to the Welcome committee this could be the perfect job for you. All that is required is curiosity and an interest in learning and sharing ideas. Contact Lunell at lh1@fastmail.com



Upcoming General Election
The next election is the Nov. 4, 2025
Remind Your Friends and Neighbors!

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be accepted within the League, including but not limited to race, socio-economic status, age, ability status, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, or marital status. The League is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and belonging for all people. The League is an organization that respects and values the richness of our community and our members. The collective sum of our individual differences and life experiences represents not only our culture, but our reputation and the organization's mission/achievements as well.

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