



*Welcome! We are glad you are here!*

**Here We Go! Membership Meeting - September 16, 2025**



# Thus far this year ...

- **January** - Announced winners of annual Barb Harris Student Essay Contest
- **January 8** - LWVMT's "2025 Montana Legislature: Taking Action" zoom to track and comment on legislation this session
- **January 14** - Education Briefing book Recap via Zoom to prepare for consensus meeting
- **January 16** - Book and Discussion Group: Health
- **January 23** - Help Shape Helena's Future Forum on Growth Policy and Land Use Plan held jointly with Lewis & Clark Library
- **January 24** - Joined LWVMT Table at State Capitol for Climate Advocacy Day
- **February 1-28** - Members continued to respond to LWVMT Action Alerts for the Montana Legislature
- **February 13** - Tabled for Constitution Day Rally at State Capitol
- **February 14** - Celebrated LWVUS' 105<sup>th</sup> Birthday at Library during Art Walk; invited public to help create Democracy Tree
- **February 19** - Many members attended Rally for Public Lands at State Capitol
- **February 25** - Held in-person and Zoom meeting to come to a consensus on updated Montana Education Position
- **February 27** - Book & Discussion Group: *How to Stand Up to a Dictator* – Maria Ressa
- **March 1-31** - Members continued to respond to LWVMT Action Alerts for the Montana Legislature
- **March 6** - Zoom meeting with LWVMT to discuss proposed LWVUS Judiciary Position
- **March 10** - Held Consensus Meeting via Zoom for LWVUS Judiciary Position
- **March 20** - Book & Discussion Group: *How to Stand Up to a Dictator* – Maria Ressa part 2
- **March 27** - Coordinated Land Use Planning – membership meeting and public forum held jointly with Lewis & Clark Library
- **April 1-30** - Members continued to respond to LWVMT Action Alerts for the Montana Legislature
- **April 5** - Tabled at Hands Off Rally at State Capitol – LWVUS a joint sponsor
- **April 19** - Tabled at Stop the Save! Rally at State Capitol
- **April 22** - LWVHA Annual Membership Business meeting – elected officers, passed budget, approved bylaws changes
- **April 23** - School Board Candidate Forum public meeting held jointly with Lewis & Clark Library
- **April 24** - Book & Discussion Group: *How to Stand Up to a Dictator* – Maria Ressa part 3
- **April 28** - Our Public Schools: Levies, Laws & Local Impact educational forum held jointly with Lewis & Clark Library
- **May 3-4** - Montana League of Women Voters Convention in Bozeman
- **May 5** - Voter Registration Reboot held by Voter Services Committee
- **May 6** - Special Election held for Helena Public School Board of Trustees
- **May 7** - Observers Luncheon held by Local Government Committee
- **May 20** - Active Learning! Civics Education for All showcasing Suffrage Timeline, Nitty Gritty of Voting
- **May 22** - Empowering Presenters with News Literacy Knowledge zoom and public meeting sponsored by LWVMT
- **May 29** - Book & Discussion Group: Jonathan Haidt's *The Righteous Mind and The Anxious Generation* part 1
- **June 7** - Tabled at D-Day Anniversary Protest Rally at State Capitol
- **June 14** - Many members attended No Kings Rally at State Capitol; partisan, so not endorsed by LWVUS
- **June 18** - LWVHA begins sending representatives to Yes! for Helena Schools to weekly meeting to organize to pass school bon
- **June 23** - Civics Trivia at Brothers Taproom membership meeting
- **June 26** - Book & Discussion Group: Jonathan Haidt's *The Righteous Mind and The Anxious Generation* part 2
- **July 5** - Many members rallied at Constitution Park to protest the unlawful ICE detention of Christopher Martinez
- **July 7** - Members attended and spoke out at the Helena City Commission meeting to protest the unlawful ICE detention of Christopher Martinez; president of LWVHA gave a statement asking for clear policies
- **July 10** - LWVHA member & LWV of Missoula reported on court hearing of Christopher Martinez in Missoula
- **August 2** - Members marched with LWVHA banner in Helena Pride Parade; YES! For Helena Schools marched with them
- **August 5** - First Tuesday Sip & Share Coffee
- **August 7** - Speed Date Your Candidates! Candidate forum held jointly with the Helena Area Chamber of Commerce
- **August 9** - Member Postcard Party to get out the vote for Yes! for Helena Schools
- **August 12** - Sip & Share Coffee
- **August 19** - Sip & Share Coffee
- **August 21** - Save Our Tradition of Excellence: School Facilities Matter Public Forum
- **August 26** - Sip & Share Coffee
- **August 26** - Tabled at Kiwanis Event at Myrna Loy showing movie Join or Die
- **August 28** - Book and Discussion Group
- **September 2** - Sip & Share Coffee
- **September 9** - Sip & Share Coffee
- **September 9** - Primary Election for City Commissioner and Mayor of Helena
- **September 11** - Young Professionals Informational Social
- **September 16** - Here We Go Membership Meeting



# Our Positions Drive Our Work

- Observer Corps
- Educational Forums
- Collaborating to Empower
- Rallies



The Time is Now.  
**YES!**  
for Helena Schools

[FAQ](#) [Donate](#) [In the News](#) [Contact](#)

## League of Women Voters support schools

At our 2025 State Convention, the League of Women Voters of the Helena Area voted, along with other Montana Leagues, to support a position "To promote efficient and equitable financing of public education, with the state funding its share of the cost, and to provide a high-quality public education, beginning in early childhood, which produces graduates with skills in critical thinking, reading, writing and mathematics and an understanding of democracy and how governments function."

As many in our community know, right now our students at Helena High, Capital High, and Kessler Elementary learn in buildings with inadequate space, lighting, heating, and ventilation. This does not equate with a high-quality education, no matter the efficacy of the teaching. And when Helena High's boiler fails, we'll be forced to cram 2,400 high school students into Capital High on a split-day schedule. Students and teachers will face terrible challenges we could have prevented.

No help is forthcoming from the state to invest in our school facilities, give the PAL program adequate space, or upgrade the central kitchen that prepares meals for all of Helena's students. It's up to us. The plans are there. The community spirit is there. Our desire to provide the best environment for ALL our students and teachers is there.

## SPEED DATE YOUR Candidates



Thursday, August 7, 2025 | 06:00 - 8:00 PM

**BEST WESTERN PREMIER HELENA GREAT NORTHERN HOTEL**  
(835 GREAT NORTHERN BLVD)

Meet the candidates running for City Commissioner and Mayor of Helena in a fast-paced, engaging format. Each candidate will give a brief presentation, then rotate among tables to answer your questions directly. Afterward, enjoy open mingling and conversation.

SCAN TO RSVP



This free, nonpartisan event is designed to promote informed voting and civic engagement.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 07, 2025

# Coming to Consensus on Positions

## New LWVUS Position on the Federal Judiciary

The Federal Judiciary position states that, within the bounds of the US Constitution, the overarching principles of **transparency, accountability, independence, and ethics** are essential to an effective federal judiciary. It notes that these principles are not only essential for a strong democracy but also foster public trust in the federal judiciary and adherence to the rule of law, which is the essence of our constitutional democracy.

Read the full Judiciary Position at <https://www.lwv.org/impact-issues>.

## New LWVMT Position on Education

To promote efficient and equitable financing of public education, with the state funding its share of the cost, and to provide a high-quality public education beginning in early childhood, which produces graduates with skills in critical thinking, reading, writing and mathematics and an understanding of democracy and how governments function.

Read the full Education Position at <https://my.lwv.org/montana/position/education>.





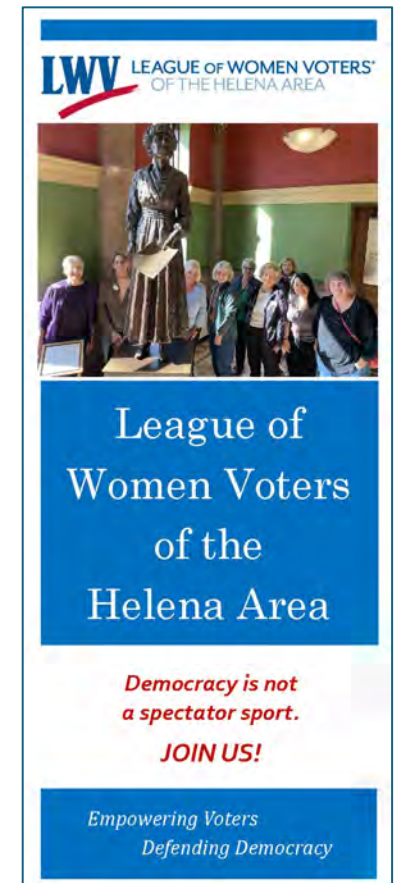
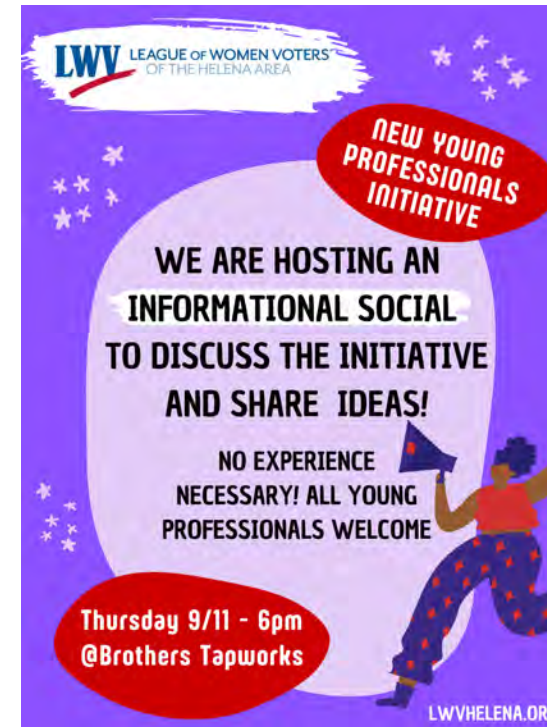
# Empowering & Educating Voters

- Election Information
- Voter Registration
- Public Programs
- Legislative Tracking
- Community Presence



# Engaging and Growing Our Membership

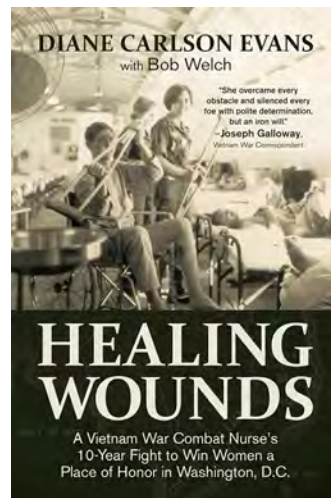
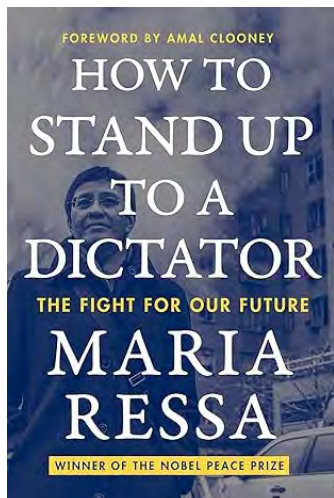
- Sip & Share
- Membership Committee
- Young Voters Project
- Young Professionals Initiative





# Informing Our Members and Our Community

- LWVHA Book Club
- Outreach & Communications
- Monthly IR Column
- Social Media



**GUEST VIEW**

## Vote in the Sept. 9 Helena city primary and school bond election

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE HELENA AREA**

If you are reading this, you care. We at the League of Women Voters of the Helena Area are grateful that you do, because your vote truly matters. In fact, it matters much more for local government and primary elections, like the upcoming (Sept. 9) election, which has both Helena Public Schools Elementary and High School Bonds and the primary ballot for City of Helena Mayor and Commissioners.

We at LWVHA know that elections have consequences – and that voters have the power to make a true difference in our community.

When you cast your vote this election, you will help to determine which two mayoral and which four commissioner candidates will progress to the November general election. The League and the IR are great sources for getting to know your candidates before you vote. The IR has published interviews with all the current candidates, and, as always, the League's online voter guide (<https://VOTE411.org/plan-your-vote>) includes all the current candidates' own statements on how they would lead if elected, and what issues they feel are the most critical.

Voters will also decide the fate of two bonds to address the huge facility needs for both the High School and Elementary School Districts.

Helena Public Schools officials and the YES for Helena Schools campaign have given voters numerous opportunities to know the facts and have our questions answered. For even more information, the LWVHA presented a forum on the school bonds at Lewis & Clark Library that was recorded and is available to watch on Helena Civic TV's website and cable channels. More information about the bonds can be found at <https://helenaschoolbond.org> and <https://yesforhelenaschools.com>.

By the time you are reading this, most active voters in the Helena area have received their ballots for this election. If you have not received a ballot, you can check your voter registration status at <https://myvoterpageid.com> and then go to the Elections Office to update your registration or register to vote from now through Election Day so you can vote in this election. The Lewis and Clark County Elections Office is in the City-County Building, 316 N. Park Ave., and is open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Remember, there will be no polling locations on Election Day. This election is only by mail-in ballot.

Your completed ballot must be mailed or dropped off in person at the Lewis and Clark County Elections Office by 8 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 9 for your vote to count. Remember to sign and date your ballot envelope and include your birth year in the space provided. Please note that the requirement to provide your birth year is due to a new Montana law that officially begins Oct. 1, 2025, but, for this election, if voters forget to include that new information, their ballot will not be rejected.

This Sept. 9 you can make a real difference by voting; and, as a well-informed voter who cares about your community, you can make your voice heard.

Cherri Jones, President  
Rebecca Johnson  
Patti Borneman  
Mary Johnson  
Becky Piske  
Bob Jones  
Patrice Anderson  
League of Women Voters of the Helena Area

The League of Women Voters of the Helena Area (LWVHA) is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to helping democracy work. We do not support candidates or parties; we support voter rights and voter access to information about candidates and issues. Visit <https://wvhelena.org> to learn more.

**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup>  
OF THE HELENA AREA

## THE VOTER

September 2025

The Monthly Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Helena Area

A colorful illustration of a diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities. They are holding up several signs. One sign says 'USE YOUR VOICE', another says 'VOTE INFORMED', a third says 'VOTE', a fourth says 'VOTING IS PEOPLE POWER', and a fifth says 'shape your city'. One person is also holding an umbrella.



# Civics Education

- Civics Education Presentations with LWVMT
  - Suffrage Timeline & Nitty Gritty of Voting
- Barb Harris Student Essay Contest
- Judged the 2025 Civics Bee



**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF HELENA AREA

**Barb Harris**  
**STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST**  
For Helena Area Students in High School

**DUE: Monday, October 28, 2024**

**Write an essay, answering:**  
*Should voting be just a right or should  
all eligible voters be required to vote?*

**First prize: \$500   Second prize: \$350  
Third prize: \$150**

#### ESSAY RULES

- Typed, 500-600 words.
- Include your name, phone number, email address, grade level, and school.
- Attach your essay as a Word or PDF document and email to:  
[lww.helena@gmail.com](mailto:lww.helena@gmail.com) no later than Monday, October 28, 2024 by 5:00 pm.  
Please put "Student Essay Contest" in the subject line.
- For more information, contact Sherry Meador at [lww.helena@gmail.com](mailto:lww.helena@gmail.com).
- By submitting their essays, the authors of the three winning essays agree to allow the League of Women Voters of the Helena Area to publish their essays on the Montana LWV website and publicly announce the awards.

**Are you smarter than a middle schooler?**

Find out at the  
**2025 Montana Statewide  
Civics Bee!**

The Mansfield Center is proud to host the  
Montana State Civics Bee in partnership with the  
National Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

Join us in Helena as 18 middle schoolers  
from across the state showcase their  
civics knowledge and pitch creative  
solutions to real issues in their  
communities.

The first-place winner will earn \$1,000  
and a trip to Washington, D.C. to  
represent Montana in the National  
Championship, with a chance to win a  
\$100,000 college scholarship.

**Save the date!**  
**Saturday, May 10th, 2025**  
**2:30-5:00 pm**  
**Capital High School Auditorium**  
**100 Valley Dr. Helena, MT**

Audience members can join the  
fun by answering civics questions  
live on a smartphone!

Scan to RSVP

**National  
Civics Bee**  
OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF EDUCATION

**STATE OF MONTANA**  
MAINTENANCE AND MARK  
MANSFIELD CENTER

**250**  
ALPS





# Be active and engaged with the Helena Area LWV!

- Stay informed! Read the monthly *Voter* and email updates and reminders
- Follow social media and visit our website: <https://lwvhelena.org>
- Pop into Sip & Share (*Tuesdays at 10:00 am*)
- Attend meetings and forums (*being here is a good start!*)
- Join a committee (*PLEASE*)
- Come to Book Club meetings and social events (*on Zoom or a member's home*)
- Check out our “What You Can Do” handout (*there's something for everyone!*)
- Get to know one another (*in these times, we need community and friendships*)

# Here We Go! Which Committee Will You Join?

- Book Club
- Civics Education
- Communications
- Health Care
- Local Government
- Membership
- Program
- Student Essay Contest
- VOTE411
- Voter Services
- Young Professionals Initiative
- Young Voters Project

*What really matters from the point of view of social capital and civic engagement is not merely nominal membership, but active and involved membership. ... Social capital makes us smarter, healthier, safer, richer, and better able to govern a just and stable democracy.*

**Robert D. Putnam, author of *Bowling Alone* and featured in the documentary, Join or Die**