

THE VOTER



Message from the Co-Presidents

Dear Members,

While I write this message, we are digging ourselves out of the flurry of 892 legislative bills that blew out of the Capitol from this 68th session of our Legislature before Transmittal.

What a season - bills, bills, bills.

No change in the forecast, more storms of old and new bills promised over the next 45 days. We cannot thank Nancy and Robyn and the entire legislative action committee and Outreach Circle team enough. We begin anew, watching for opportunities to speak up and out to SAVE our Constitution, our voting rights, and our impartial judicial system. Then there are all the other issues: housing, reproductive rights, safety, health--all important.

Resilience is the ability to keep shoveling through the legislative process, step away to warm up, maybe hand the shovel to a teammate, rejuvenate and come back at it with renewed focus. I feel so fortunate to have a team that meets on Wednesday nights where we reinforce our focus and efforts. Hoping spring flowers will arrive by May 6, the last day of the legislative session.

As you read this beautiful Voter edition (thank you Patti and Clare), you can catch up on all the other parts of our LWVHA lives. We still have voter registration grant projects in process focused on youth and post incarcerated voting. Our first VOTE411 local guide is coming out for school elections. In April, we'll hold our Helena league's annual business meeting, with new officer elections. The MT LWV State convention is in Helena this year, a work in progress. Our Observer Corps is growing, members are attending civic meetings and reporting back.

We welcome your input. We salute your ongoing efforts. This chapter is moving on right through the season. Enjoy the snow, stay warm, and we'll see you soon!

Becky Piske and Sue Hoell

Board Members & Committees

Co-president: Sue Hoell

Co-president: Becky Piske

Treasurer: Julie Huntington

Secretary: Cherri Jones

Membership: Wendy Wheeler

At-Large Board Members:

Sharon Haugen

Mary Johnson

Nominating Chair: Lynn Hinch

Voter Services Chair: vacant

Program Chair: Darien Scott

Publicity Chair: Marga Lincoln

Website/Social Media: Sherry Meador
and Hadley Scoles

Book Club Chair: Cherri Jones

The Voter Co-editors:

Patti Borneman and Clare Kearns

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CALENDAR

Tuesday, March 21, noon via Zoom: Monthly Member Meeting with Legislative Update.

Every Wednesday evening, 7:00 pm via Zoom: Outreach Circle Action Alerts and Legislative Updates

Monday, April 17, 4:30 - 6:00 pm at Lewis & Clark Library. Annual Member Meeting

May 2, 2023 - Helena School Board Election

May 6-7, 2023 – LWV Montana Convention, Helena

Monthly Membership Meeting – Tuesday, March 21

State President **Nancy Leifer** and our LWVHA Action Chair and voice at the Legislature, **Robyn Morrison**, will report on the happenings inside our beautiful Capitol Building and what's coming in the second half of the 2023 legislative session. *Watch for the ZOOM link in your email inbox and join us!*

Annual Membership Meeting on Monday, April 17, 2023 – Review Officer Nominations

The annual LWVHA membership meeting is in-person at Lewis & Clark Library, 4:30-6:00 pm. Join us for pizza and engage in the League's democratic process.

The LWV bylaws require a 30-day advance notification to our membership for the upcoming officer elections that will take place at the annual meeting. The Nominating Committee suggested the following candidates (and continuing officers) for the 2023-2024 term. Additional nominations can be made from the floor at the annual meeting on Monday, April 17, 2023.

- Co-Presidents: Becky Piske and Sharon Haugen
- Treasurer: Julie Huntington
- Secretary: Cherri Jones
- At-Large Board Members: Ann Gilkey, Mary Harlow, Mary Johnson
- *The Voter* Co-editors: Patti Borneman and Clare Kearns

Volunteer Opportunities for Local LWV Issues

Local LWV Study Topics

Health Care in Helena and *Local Government Home Rule*: We will discuss these suggested study topics at the annual member meeting on April 17. Please read the detailed information emailed to members on March 17 or download from the LWV website Members-Only page.

If you would like to participate in one of the studies, but cannot attend the Annual meeting, please let us know and we will contact you. A study will not be voted on unless enough people volunteer to work on the study AND someone volunteers to chair the study.

Update Local LWV Positions

LWVHA local Positions Statements need to be updated. A copy of the current Position Statements is attached to the email with this issue of *The Voter*. If you would like to participate on a committee to update these Position Statements, please make this known at the Annual LWV Meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting but would like to help with the updates, please let us know via email and you will be contacted.



2023 Montana State Legislature

Stay informed, Get involved!

It's not too late to join in the session action in person or via Zoom. You can look up bills, and watch hearings live or recordings on the Internet at <http://leg.mt.gov>. The session ends May 6, 2023.

Night of Action: Wednesdays at 7 pm

Every Wednesday at 7:00 pm the League Legislative Action Team will be hosting a Zoom meeting during which League members can come together for mutual support, find out more about bills pending that week, and take action.

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84320429919>



The League's online action tool, Outreach Circle, is a good way to stay on top of relevant action items, on the statewide and national level.

If you haven't signed up for Outreach Circle, visit <http://outreachcircle.com> and follow the instructions. If you need more help, a detailed guide on joining the LWV Montana Outreach Circle is available for download on the Members-Only webpage here: <https://my.lwv.org/montana/action-alert/join-mt-lwv-outreach-circle>.

See the next page for information on creating an account to access this special Internet resource for members!

LWVHA Book Group

Book Group Chair: Cherri Jones

Book Group discussions will take place on the 4th Thursday of the month from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Mountain Time. We'll Zoom from February to April, and meet face to face in May. Zoom information will be emailed at the beginning of the week of Book Group, and again on Thursday morning.

Thursday, March 23, *I Never Thought of It That Way: How to Have Fearlessly Curious Conversations in Dangerously Divided Times.* Journalist Mónica Guzmán is the loving liberal daughter of Mexican immigrants who voted—twice—for Donald Trump. When the country could no longer see straight across the political divide, Mónica set out to find what was blinding us and discovered the most eye-opening tool we're not using: our own built-in curiosity. Available on Libby, Kindle, Audible, Hoopla (through Lewis & Clark Library) and probably more...

Thursday, April 27, *Shouting Fire: Stories from the Edge of Free Speech.* Emmy Award-winning filmmaker Liz Garbus explores the current state of free speech in America and gives viewers a fascinating perspective on the First Amendment throughout our history. Documentary available on Prime, iTunes, HBO Max, Hulu.

Thursday, May 25, *Demon Copperhead* by Barbara Kingsolver. It's long, so start early! *Demon Copperhead* is a new fiction book that has gotten solid reviews from members, and it sounds like a good change of pace. Available from Libby (audiobook and print), iTunes, Kindle, etc.

Welcome New Members!

We welcome two new LWVHA members **Cathy Ayers** and **V. Lee Harrison**.

LOG IN

Register
Forgot password

Did you know there is a Members-Only section on the MT-LWV website?

We welcome the general public to many of our events and webinars, but much of our business is designated for members only, so this online resource is where members will find current and past issues of *The Voter*, upcoming meeting details and Zoom links, action alerts, and other member-related news and important documents.

To access the Members-Only content on the website, you will need to create an account. When you visit the site, log in, and the Members-Only pages will appear in the website's menu.

To create an account, simply visit <http://my.lwv.org/montana>. Click on **Register** in the top right corner of the website and follow the prompts. Your access will be pending until it is activated. This is to ensure only current Montana LWV members are accessing these pages.

For more information or for assistance, send an email to lwv.helena@gmail.com.

Report from the Observer Corps

Observations at Hometown Helena by Barbara Harris

Feb 9: A presentation from the **Helena Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Helena, Inc.**, and from the **Montana Business Assistance Connection (MBAC)**.

Feb. 16: We had a presentation from the **Great Divide Ski Patrol** on their fundraising project to build a clinic at Great Divide Ski Area, and Sussex Construction regarding a proposed housing development west of town, and from Robotics team4133, who beat Bozeman in competition and will be going on to nationals.

Feb. 23: We had a delightful presentation from the **Carroll drama department** of a scene from Shakespeare's Twelfth Night which is currently running at the Carroll Theater. This was followed by a presentation from **Hope Ministries**, a group that sponsors a substance abuse recovery program for women. They have a facility outside of town and have been very successful in rehabilitating women who come to them for help. It is a faith based group that only serves women. It was most informative.

March 2: **City Commissioner Sean Logan** went through the process of how they selected the new city manager. It was a very open process with opportunity for input from the community. Then we had a brief presentation from the **Endangered Species Coalition** explaining what their organization was all about. Finally, we had a presentation from the **Helena Indian Alliance**. We were informed about all the services the Alliance provides for the Native American community including a slide presentation of the newly redone facilities of the old National Guard building on Euclid Avenue and an update of the expansion of the Leo Pocha Clinic.

Read more about the LWVHA Observer Corps in the December 2022 issue of *The Voter*, available to download on the Members-Only page of our website at <https://my.lwv.org/montana/members-only/helena-lwv-voter-newsletter>

See sidebar for instructions to create a member account that will give you access to members-only web pages.



VOTE 411 Update

By Co-Chairs: Becky Piske and Mary (Mickey) Harlow

The May School Board Election is Tuesday, May 2. Candidates for the Trustee vacancies must have their applications submitted to their District offices by the end of March.

The VOTE 411 Committee is developing a candidate survey with non-partial questions that are relevant to voters. League positions are not included in the questions and are intended to give voters useful background on the candidates.

We will post the candidates' responses on the LWVHA website to share with all voters. Stay tuned for more information about this election and candidates' views on the issues.



At the Montana State Capitol on February 1 during the Rally to Protect our Montana Constitution: Members Tracy Donaldson, Mary Johnson, Clare Kearns, and Wendy Wheeler spreading good voter cheer!

Volunteer Shout-Outs!

Our thanks to **Katherine Anderson** who graciously provided Zoom and Google apps training to local League members.

Thanks to **Marga Lincoln** and the **Program Committee** for their excellent arranging and publicity for our webinars and public events on the Montana Constitution. We had a high turnout at the Capitol Rally and advanced the LWV mission for voter education.

Thanks to the **Nominating Committee** for presenting a full slate of chapter officers and board members to vote on at our annual meeting in April.

Thanks to **Rebecca Johnson** and the Voter Services committee for acquiring a grant to enhance voter registration outreach through Montana.

Thanks to **Tracy Donaldson** and **Mary Johnson** for creating the member survey and collecting important feedback on our members' ideas, preferences, and the League's work.

Special thanks to **Sue Hoell** for serving as our Co-president this past year.

LWV Grants to Support Voter Outreach Projects throughout Montana

By Rebecca Johnson

The LWVHA applied for and won two grants from the National League of Women Voters; one grant is to advance the Youth Vote, and the other is to advance voting by formerly incarcerated people.

A team of volunteers (Becky Piske, Clare Kearns, Rebecca Johnson, Nancy Perry and Ronnie Whitaker) have been working hard developing voting materials and class presentations which have been offered to 67 high schools in and around the Billings, Great Falls, Bozeman, Missoula, Helena and Browning areas.

We have been working closely with the Billings and Bozeman LWV Chapters to develop voter services for high schools in their area as well as the LWV in New Jersey to adopt the Suffrage Timeline class presentation (a 40-minute interactive class lesson on how our voting rights evolved through our country's history, the timeline of voting rights over time) for Montana high schools.

If you have a contact in any Montana High School that you think would be interested in our voter services, please email Rebecca Johnson at rebeccainmt@gmail.com.

REGISTER TO VOTE

Must be 18 or older by next election, a US Citizen, and reside in MT for at least 30 days.

Register at www.mtvr.org or Register in person at your local Election Office



HOW DO I VOTE?

1. **VOTE BY MAIL** (absentee ballot), you will get your ballot 3 weeks before the election.
2. **VOTE IN PERSON** at your polling place (bring photo ID)

Find polling location, voter info and status at MyVoterPageMT.com

 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HELENA AREA



Helena LWV Co-president, Becky Piske, met with Bozeman LWV members Pat Purvis (left) and Sally Maison (right) to discuss the project and ways to collaborate.

VOTE 411

MAKE A VOTING PLAN

1. **CHECK YOUR REGISTRATION AND/OR REGISTER TO VOTE**
It takes 2 minutes! Get started using VOTE411's easy online tool.
2. **LEARN ABOUT EARLY VOTING OPTIONS**
Many states offer absentee, mail-in or in person early voting options.
3. **EXPLORE YOUR DAY-OF VOTING OPTIONS**
Find out where you can vote, what voting machines are used, and what you need to bring with you on Election Day.
4. **RESEARCH CANDIDATES**
Learn more about ballot measures and where candidates stand on the issues.
5. **SHARE YOUR PLANS!**
Tell your friends and family and encourage them to make a voting plan at VOTE411.org.

YOUR VOICE YOUR VOTE

27% of youth (ages 18-29) cast a ballot in 2022, the second-highest youth voter turnout in 30 years.

WHY YOU SHOULD VOTE

You can be hit hardest by policy decisions.
You can shape your future.
Your vote can sway elections if you vote in every election.

VOTER INFORMATION RESOURCES

Vote411.org
forwardmontana.org/voterhub
montanawomenvote.org
westernnativevoice.org
SOSMT.gov/elections
ballotpedia.org

Help other students register to vote by scheduling a VR event at your school. Email lwv.helena@gmail.com

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF ONE VOTE



Contact lwv.helena@gmail.com to learn more and volunteer to participate. The displayed Youth Voter bookmark and VOTE411 voting plan card will be handed out to voters at all LWVHA events.

LWV Montana Convention - Save the Date!

Saturday, May 6 – Sunday, May 7, 2023

Registration opens April 3rd – watch your email for details!

Convention Venue & Lodging: Ramada (formerly Jorgenson's), 1714 11th Avenue. For our out-of-town members, the special room rate ends April 21. Call (406) 442-1770 to make your reservation. The convention begins at noon on Saturday, May 6 and ends at noon on Sunday, May 7. Guests are welcome to attend the Saturday evening banquet.

Homestays: Please send an email to lwv.helena@gmail.com if you are able to volunteer your guest room for an out-of-town League member the night of May 6 – our State Convention. Out-of-town League members who request a home stay are asked to pay \$10, saving them the cost of lodging elsewhere. The \$10 is applied to Convention costs for name tags, printing, paper, etc.

Delegates to State Convention: All League members are invited to the State Convention which will be in Helena this year. More Helena League members are expected to attend than members from other Montana Leagues. Helena will have four voting delegates. If you are planning to attend the convention and want to be a voting delegate, please send an email to lwv.helena@gmail.com to make your request. The Registration form will ask if you are a designated voting delegate.

MT-LWV President - Special Guest Speakers - Performers



NANCY LEIFER

President of the Montana League of Women Voters. She will preside over the Convention and discuss the League's past and present role in revising and protecting Montana's unique Constitution.



MAYLINN SMITH

Presiding Officer of the 2020-2023 Montana Districting and Apportionment Commission and Managing Attorney and Civil Prosecutor for the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.



THOMAS JODOIN

Legal Counsel and Deputy Director of the Montana League of Cities and Towns. He formerly served as Helena City Attorney and Interim City Manager for the City of Helena.



**MIKE JETTY and
SAPPHIRE FERGUSON-JETTY**

Mike Jetty is a humorist and drummer and Indian Education for All Specialist with the Office of Public Instruction (OPI). His daughter, Sapphire Ferguson-Jetty, is an old-time/Metis fiddler.