

The VOTER

Spring 2025

Upcoming Events:

September 25: Y.E.S. Youth Empowerment Summit

September 27: NAMI Walks! LWVYC Team Walk

October 9: Member Meeting and Democracy Works
Award Reception



Board Meetings:

September 10: 1:30 pm

October 8: 1:30 pm

November 12: 1:30 pm

All Board Meetings are available via Zoom. Please email info@lwvyolo.org if you'd like to attend an upcoming Board meeting. We encourage members to join the meetings.

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OUR LEAGUE NEWS



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By *Michelle Famula*

The summer began slowly for LWVYC, with an opportunity to catch our breath after our highly successful annual members meeting in June. We finished out last year with a newly elected board, and we bid profound thanks and farewell to some long-serving board members. While stepping down from the board, Janet Ruggiero, Judy Wohlfrom, Komal Hak, and Janice Ratner will now step up to work on our many committees and community service projects.

...and just as we were all getting set to comfortably cruise past this “non-election” year... **along comes Proposition 50 and the announcement of a November 4th California SPECIAL ELECTION!** Suddenly, September and October are going to be much busier than we thought in June... but more on that later.

Here is a quick summary of our not-so-slow summer!

Early in July, we initiated outreach to local City Councils and civic organizations, beginning with the **City Council of Winters** and the **Winters Rotary**. What a pleasure to be so warmly received in Winters.

On July 22, we presented to the **Yolo County Board of Supervisors**, introducing all five supervisors to our new countywide League. We were wonderfully welcomed by the board members, whose good questions helped us to further explain and publicly promote our nonpartisan, grassroots values and principles. As we work to help support county civic engagement events and promote informed election day participation, we are truly privileged to serve in a county community as engaged and receptive as Yolo.

Our League board has attended to a few operational items this summer. We fully implemented our new LWVUS centralized “member portal,” which is now providing seamless renewals for many continuing members, while concurrently welcoming new ones. With minimal local recruiting efforts, a very modest design update to our webpage (LWVYolo.org/membership), and the implementation of the new national site (portal.LWV.org), we are already seeing increases in new members with a process that is making renewals easier for all.

Our Membership Committee was delighted to welcome five new members to our [New Members Tea and Orientation](#) in mid-July. This was our second successful welcome event and, going forward, the board has approved continuing these quarterly.

In late July, the **Website Update** subcommittee published several design changes and content updates to our home page, public calendar, donation page, and board pages.

We also opened up online nominations for our fall **Democracy Works Award** and welcomed countywide submissions for both individuals and organizations that meet the award criteria. Award selection has begun, with recipient(s) to be announced in early October during a public recognition at our fall members meeting.

Early in August, LWVYC held our annual league board retreat to plan the 2025-26 program and event schedule. The finalized calendar includes the program priorities identified during our annual members meeting, including increased member engagement opportunities and countywide outreach. There are still many opportunities for additions to the calendar as community and civic events present themselves.

Looking to the fall, LWVYC kicks off the season with two popular, well-established member participation events and one new one. The **Y.E.S. Youth Civic Engagement Summit**, sponsored by the Yolo County Elections Office and Office of Education, is returning, as is our own LWVYC **DemocracyWorks Award** recognition. New for this year, we are introducing an LWVYC walk team to participate in the local **NAMIWalks!** mental health awareness event, sponsored by NAMI Yolo County. Each of these events gives our Yolo County League an opportunity to further promote our commitment to civic education, issue awareness and responsive government.

And, now, we must also rise to the new challenge of the **California Proposition 50 Special Election**, and the voter outreach expectations presented by a Special Election ballot measure.

How do we best educate and prepare voters for the November 2025 ballot measure? How will we best uphold the League's nonpartisan, democratic principles in our tabling and presentations? How can we help voters, assist Elections Office officials, and defend democracy through constituent engagement?

We must first ensure that we ourselves are fully informed. LWVYC Voter Services will provide required training to support and educate all members interested in providing voter outreach for this election.

Read the California League's Final Proposition 50 Ballot Measure

Statement [HERE](#).

The November 4, 2025 Special Election will be divisive. It will raise questions that go to the heart of the League's Mission, Vision and Values.

As we address these questions, we must remember:

- Our **Mission** is to empower voters and defend democracy.
- Our **Vision** seeks a democracy where every person has the desire, right, knowledge, and confidence to participate.
- Our **Values** call on our nonpartisan commitment to provide issue-focused (not candidate or political party) advocacy and education that informs voters, promotes election participation and supports good governance.

The Special Election brings a heightened reminder from LWVC to educate and inform without favor or bias. This year, it also comes with the challenge to preserve the public's trust and the non-partisan reputation the League has carefully curated for 105 years. As we meet that challenge, let us acknowledge and respect the complexity of this assignment.

I look forward to working with all League members in this dynamic and difficult time.

So we say farewell to Summer and welcome to Fall.

Warm regards,
Michelle Famula, President
LWV Yolo County

SAVE THE DATES: Two Important Community League Events in September; Fall Member Meeting in October

September offers members interested in *Voter Service* an opportunity to participate in civic education and youth voter pre-registration. Join us for the Yolo County Election Office-sponsored **Y.E.S. Youth Empowerment Summit**.

If you are energized by educating and guiding the next generation of voters, this event is for you. Voter Services Director Judy Higginson is looking for volunteers. All youth outreach volunteers will be required to attend pre-event training to review our educational materials and become familiar with the voter pre-registration resources and election rules.

There is also a service opportunity the day before the event to prepare

the room, stuff swag bags, and organize materials for distribution.

Let Judy know she will have the help she needs by signing up [HERE](#).

Wednesday, Sept. 24, 3 to 5 pm (set up only)

Thursday, Sept 25, 8:15 am to 10:15 am, 1:15 pm setup, 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm tabling and breakdown.

UCDavis, ARC Ballroom, UCD Campus



FOR 2025!!

LWVYC has its own WALK TEAM for NAMI Yolo's NAMIWalks!

Do you want to help promote our [League Mental Health Position](#) and increase County mental health resource awareness? Come take a leisurely 1K walk with our team and league colleagues.

LWVYC Vice President and Health Committee member, **Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt**, is our team captain. Stephanie will coordinate all LWVYC members wanting to “represent” our League's support for Mental Health services in Yolo County.

Go to [LWVYC's NAMIWalks Team 2025](#) for more event information, and contact **Stephanie** at sdegraffhunt@gmail.com to volunteer.

Not a walker, but want to support our team or table with November election voter education materials and LWVYC Mental Health Position advocacy information? We'll be tabling with other community organizations at the event as well. To distribute voter information, contact **Voter Services Director Judy Higginson** at jihigginson@gmail.com. For LWVYC membership outreach or Mental Health advocacy outreach, email us at info@lwvyolo.org.

*Saturday, Sept. 27, 9 am-12 pm (tabling 8:30-12; walk 10 am -12 noon)
Woodland Community College, 2300 E. Gibson Rd, Woodland 95776
(LWVYC Team walkers should gather at our LWVYC table at 9:15)*

October Members Meeting: Join us in-person to learn about the League event schedule for the full year and our League's November *Special Election* voter education activities. Learn what nonpartisan education materials will be available to Yolo County voters and how we can support Elections Office officials.

Our meeting will include a celebratory recognition of our 2025

Democracy Works Award recipient(s), a member social, and refreshments. Help us honor our county democracy champions.

More information is coming up soon.

Thursday, Oct. 9, 6-7:30 pm

Davis Veteran's Memorial Center, 203 E. 14th St, Davis, CA 95616

LWVYC Reintroduced to the County Board of Supervisors



On July 22, LWVYC Board President, Michelle Famula, and Secretary, Lorna Carriveau, addressed the County Board of Supervisors to introduce our new countywide scope of services and to share our recently adopted **Mission, Vision and Goals**.

We reaffirmed our commitment to nonpartisan voter education and ballot issue awareness. We identified our commitment to community service and democratic governance principles. We reviewed our grassroots history and our commitment to inclusive democracy. At the close, Michelle and Lorna answered a variety of questions from the board.

Members wishing to see the recorded presentation, along with the BOS discussion, can see the **video on our website homepage** through the month of September. The recording will be archived on our site and on YouTube after that.

2025 Board Retreat News

Meeting in early August, the LWVYC Board convened its retreat to create a schedule of continuing events and priorities for the coming year.

The board established a calendar of events to include:

- LWVYC Democracy Works Award Presentation (October)
- State of the Community Luncheon (February)
- UCD Picnic Day Parade Participation (April)
- Community Senior Center Events (April/May)
- Community Pride events (June)

The Board approved that monthly Board Meetings be available to members virtually by Zoom.

Four in-person Member Meetings throughout the year will present an opportunity for committee presentations, guest speakers and updates on State and National League advocacy events. Our first Member Meeting is planned for October 9th, 2025, to be followed by meetings in January, March and June.

Please watch for these dates on our **Public Calendar**.

The board recognized our growing membership and increasing countywide representation. We voted to approve continuing quarterly "New Member Tea and Orientation" gatherings in July, November, February and an all-members picnic in May.

The Board named a number of new subcommittees for the 2025-26 year to address the following issues.

- LWVYC Bylaws language review
- Fundraising
- A 501C(3) study committee to consider local League tax-exempt status
- An Issue Positions review subcommittee to be chaired by former Advocacy Director*, Janet Ruggiero.

* The Advocacy Director position is vacant. Local issue advocacy may be led with guidance from active committee chairs as aligned with LWVC/LWVUS positions. MH position advocacy will be led by LWVYC Healthcare committee.

Other board actions included:

- The addition of Membership Director, Kathleen Stack, to the 25-26 Nominating Committee
- A call for a new slate of Finance committee members, to be selected in the coming months.
- Support for continued Healthcare Committee advocacy for our newly adopted (2025) County Mental Health Issue Position— including voter education outreach and policy forum speakers.
- Support for continued Housing Committee education and advocacy for local housing initiatives and policies that are supported by the

LWVYC Issue Advocacy News: County Mental Health Services



Advocacy of our local MH position begins with the LWVYC Healthcare Committee assessment of opportunities to promote our consensus priorities.

Advocacy requires understanding the key county agencies, networks and authorities that implement current policies and manage the county resources that direct services and oversee program planning and delivery.

Our Healthcare committee met on July 8th and August 12th and will continue to meet monthly to plan for action. The Healthcare committee, with continuing members and three former MH study committee members, will spend 2025-26 pursuing advocacy opportunities for community engagement.

NAMI Executive Director, Jen Borchee-Danzer, addressed the committee in July to reflect on the current status of County MH financial challenges resulting from Prop 1 and on MHSA/BHSA revenue shortfalls. On her advice, members will serve as observers at county BOS meetings and the monthly Behavioral Health Board (BHB) meetings.

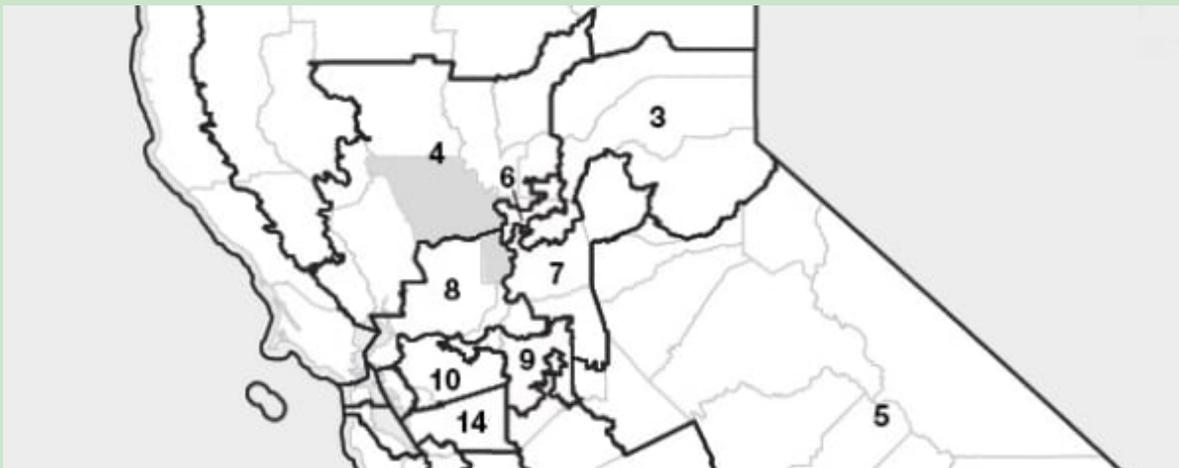
YC Behavioral Health Interim Director, Tony Kildare, Davis District 2 BHB member Kim Myra Mitchell, and the Yolo 211 team (Alana Hitchcock at California 211, Gabriel Kendal and Katherine Sorenson, both of SAC/Yolo 211) will be invited to help us identify additional networking opportunities to advance our advocacy priorities.

This year, LWVYC's sponsorship of a walk team in Yolo County NAMI's **NAMIWalks** seeks to increase visibility of our support for those needing county mental health resources. We welcome all LWVYC members to **donate** to Yolo NAMI on behalf of our walk team. You can let Stephanie DeGraf know (sdegraffhunt@gmail.com) you would like to be part of the walk.

Healthcare Committee members will also be tabling at the NAMIWalks event with information to increase public awareness of current county mental health programs and services, and areas needing resource improvements.

We are seeking additional opportunities to partner with non-profits and city and county agencies to help promote mental health programs and services in our county. If you are interested in helping the League provide advocacy actions to support local mental health programs and resources that benefit individuals and families in Yolo County, email us at info@lwvyolo.org to join in this effort.

LWVYC Voter Education News: Prop 50 Information



The League and our community call on us to help educate voters for this Special Election. While voter registration and ballot return procedures are similar to those of 2024, the complexities of this Special Election ballot measure require us to increase our own understanding of the issues and impacts of the voters' decision, regardless of the election outcome.

To educate others, we must first ensure that we ourselves are fully informed. LWVYC Voter Services will provide REQUIRED training to support and educate all members interested in providing voter outreach for the NOVEMBER 4th election before registering to participate in tabling.

Background:

After the Texas legislature announced its plan for a mid-cycle *partisan* redistricting effort to amend the State's congressional map, an effort began nationwide to conduct similar mid-cycle congressional district map changes in other states.

The *League of Women Voters of California* has a long history of strong support for nonpartisan, congressional redistricting. In 2008, LWVC was a principle advocate for Proposition 11, establishing our current California Citizen's Redistricting Commission.

For more than a decade, LWVC has worked alongside many other pro-democracy organizations nationwide to advocate for the use of non-partisan, citizen committee, congressional redistricting as supported by the federal **John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (JLVRAA)**. Today, LWVC and LWVUS advocate for the passage of this federal legislation, introduced in 2021.

In early August, before the Legislature announced its 2025 California redistricting ballot proposition language, LWVC President Gloria Chun Hoo published an **Op-Ed** highlighting the value of nonpartisan, citizen-determined congressional districts in California.

On August 21, Governor Newsom signed the legislature's proposal for the **Proposition 50** ballot measure, sending it before the voters in November as a Special Election.

Prop 50 would implement legislature-drawn congressional **district maps** for the election periods of 2026-2030, and continue using these maps until the 2030 census, after which redistricting returns to the **California Citizens Redistricting Commission** process.

Having reviewed the ballot language and impacts of the proposition, LWVC has issued its statement of **No Position**. Read the statement **HERE**.

Educating Voters in 2025:

Proposition 50 appears as the only state measure on the **Special Election** ballot for November 4th, 2025. LWVC will make its **Easy Voter Guide (EVG)** available on September 22. All League members and voters can access the EVG to learn more about the ballot Proposition language, its supporters and opponents.

LWV of California offers nonpartisan, voter participation information **HERE** and guidance for assessing ballot propositions **HERE**.

Our Yolo County League is currently pursuing a voter education **Proposition 50 Issue Forum** to be held in mid-October (date, time, location TBD). League members and the public will be notified of event details in early October.

Local League members will provide nonpartisan LWVC, County Election Office and California Secretary of State voter education materials at various local events. Ballot language information, voter registration, election process, and ballot return dates and procedures will be made available to all eligible voters.

LWVYC members wishing to offer voter registration information and ballot education materials through League community outreach will have opportunities throughout October to be trained on the online and printed voter resources.

League members will utilize a variety of nonpartisan voter education materials to help voters understand the importance of Special Election voter participation and the impact of the election result on congressional districts.

STATE/NATIONAL LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY NEWS

STATE NEWS

LWVC Asks for Support for SB 42:

The League of Women Voters has joined the California Clean Money Campaign and California Common Cause to support SB 42. It was written out of concern for the amount of big donor money in campaign finance, as well as the amount of money a politician has to spend on campaigning. LWVC believes it will lift California's outdated ban on public financing of campaigns – but only if the Legislature passes it *and* voters approve it in 2026.

A similar bill was passed in 2016, but the courts decided that the voting public must approve it. Five California charter cities currently empower voters by providing public financing matching funds or democracy vouchers to help voters support qualified candidates, but state law currently bans counties, districts, general law cities, and the State from offering public funds for campaigns.

The League has fought for decades to curb big money's grip on politics and restore equity, transparency, and accountability.

LWVC has long taken the position that campaign finance should limit the amount of money big donors can give, and prioritize the voices of ordinary citizens and voters. The League is urging people to contact their Assembly members to support SB42.

You can read more about SB 42 [HERE](#).

LWVC Asks for Support for SJR-1:

Democracy is under attack. ICE raids are targeting California Communities and snatching people off the street. Federal legislation is rolling back environmental protections that keep our air and water safe, threatening reproductive rights, decimating access to healthcare, and working to suppress votes.

Senate Joint Resolution 1 (SJR 1) is necessary to protect our most fundamental rights to safety, health, family, and democracy itself.

SJR 1 (Wiener), sponsored by the League of Women Voters of California, would rescind all of California's prior calls for an Article V Constitutional Convention. In today's political climate, where extremist forces are actively seeking to undermine democracy, California's open calls for a convention offer a direct pathway to chaos. California has seven open calls on the books, each one an open invitation to dismantle the Constitution. SJR 1 is our chance to close that door before it's too late.

To learn more about SJR-1, download a Fact Sheet [HERE](#).

Ask your Assembly member to support SJR 1: TAKE **TAKE ACTION**

LWVUS NATIONAL ADVOCACY NEWS

LWVUS Advocacy Actions: View current national League Action Opportunities [HERE](#).

Reject Anti-Voter Policies

The House of Representatives passed the *Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act*, which would require citizenship documentation to register to vote, even though voters in every state are already required to affirm or verify their citizenship status when registering.

The SAVE Act would create one more barrier to the voting process, as many eligible voters do not have easy access to the necessary documents.

[Tell your Senators to oppose the SAVE Act.](#)

Tell Your Representatives to Protect Equal Voting Rights

Since the 2013 Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* gutted the *Voting Rights Act (VRA)*, at least 31 states have enacted 114 voting laws that make it harder to vote, with the burden falling hardest on Black voters and other voters of color. We need a fully restored VRA to defend our democracy and protect the freedom to vote. Protect the

freedom to vote! Defend democracy! Support passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (JLVRAA).

[Tell your members of Congress to support passage of the JLVRAA.](#)

Hold Congress Accountable for the One Big Beautiful Bill

The *One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBA)* was enacted in early July. As members of Congress head home to connect with their constituents, it's time for us to let them know how we feel about the bill.

What's in the OBBA legislation? The 1,000-page bill changes federal spending levels by stripping health care and nutrition from tens of millions of our most vulnerable Americans. It slashes programs like Medicaid, Medicare and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance programs, to fund tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the wealthiest in our county and to expand a four-fold increase in immigration enforcement spending.

Learn more about the multiple changes to federal assistance and enforcement programs in the bill **[HERE](#)**.

[Contact Your Representatives to express your views on OBBA](#)

STAY IN TOUCH

YOLO COUNTY LEAGUE BOARD

OFFICERS

- President: Michelle Famula
- Vice President: Stephanie DeGraff-Hunt
- Treasurer: Carla Cox
- Secretary: Lorna Carrivou

DIRECTORS

- Voter Services: Judy Higgerson
- Co-Communications: Jessica Smith, Christine Golden
- Membership: Kathleen Stack
- Events: Faye Smith-Gee
- Advocacy/Positions: (Vacant*)
 - In 25-26, LWVYC will review all active LWVW positions for renewal in 26-27; Position Review Committee -Janet Ruggiero, Chair
 - LWVYC Mental Health Position will be prioritized for advocacy: Healthcare committee- Michelle Famula, Chair

COMMITTEES

- Finance: (TBD 9/25)
- Nomination: Kathleen Stack, Judy Wohlfrom, Leslie Hunter, Chair



**P.O. Box 2463
Woodland, CA 95776**

League of Women Voters of Woodland | P.O. Box 2463 | Woodland, CA 95776 US

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