



League of Women Voters of Alaska
Annual Report 2022-23
April 2023

2022 was a landmark year for elections in Alaska, not only was it the inaugural year for ranked choice voting and the return of open primaries, but, due to the death of our longtime Congressman Don Young, in June we saw a special mail-in primary with an unprecedented number of candidates and a special election that coincided with the regular August primary election.

This year we began our co-presidency with great support from Past President Judy Andree. Our year started with a collaboration with Title IV and Alaskans for Better Elections to launch a ranked choice voting and candidate guide. We and other League volunteers attended weekly meetings until the funders cancelled the project. The outcome was disappointing but Judy Andree carried the candidate guide component forward for both the primary and the general election for posting on our website <https://www.lwvalaska.org/>. It also resulted in a \$7500 grant from Title IV that was distributed among the state and local chapters.

In 2022 our voter education activities were in high gear. The local chapter reports will reflect those activities and more. Important state League actions and accomplishments were:

- Adopted Mail Chimp as a means to reach all state members directly
- Launched a legislation newsletter, produced by Juneau member Judith Mitchell to replace *Capitol Currents*
- Opened our monthly board meetings via Zoom to all Alaska League members
- Instituted board portfolios that served to distribute our work by committees lead by board members with a health portfolio led by Juneau member Dr. Carolyn Brown.
- Collaborated with Maine LWV on their Digital Democracy project and organizational idea exchanges under the leadership of Tanana Valley member Shari George
- Reached out to rural voters with pre-elections ads in the Arctic Sounder, Bethel Delta Discovery, and Bristol Bay Times to provide links to the Division of Elections and highlight the requirements for absentee ballots
- Continued to publish THE VOTER, our periodic newsletter edited by Kenai member Therese Lewandowski
- Reinvigorated VotingRightsAlaska.org as our web pages for voter information and a general election candidate guide
- Offered Ranked Choice Voting information through VotingRightsAlaska.org and a series of workshops both live and via Zoom.
- Produced a Constitutional Convention ballot measure forum via Zoom in collaboration with LWV of Tanana Valley

- Worked with ACLU Alaska, Arctic Village, Council, the Native American Rights Fund, and two individual voters as plaintiffs to press for a pre-election “cure” process for mail-in and absentee ballots, as is possible in almost half of the states, instead of our current postelection ballot rejections when inadvertent but correctable errors are made on the ballot envelope
- Selected a vendor to revamp our state website along with the Tanana Valley and Kenai Peninsula webpages with a goal of upgrading and modernizing the digital platform, providing more support for our webmaster, and eventually uniting our votingrightsAlaska.org site and all four chapters’ webpages under the umbrella of the state website.
- Initiated a Lunch with League series, an occasional Friday virtual program on topics of current interest to members.
- Recruited two LWVAK members-at-large, both located in the North Slope Borough
- We provided LWV letters of support for 3 bills, testified at hearings for 2 bills, and at this point have issued 2 action alerts to support or move forward election-related legislation.
- Delegated two LWVAK leaders, Cari Zawodny of Anchorage and Shari George of Tanana Valley, to attend the national LWVUS Council in Las Vegas in June 2023.

We, with help from Carol Dickason, Judith Mitchell, and Shari George, made the traditional January fundraising appeal which to date has raised \$5072. With the help of a convention committee, we organized the 2023 Convention as a hybrid conference, a first step toward resuming face-to-face conventions in the future.

As part of our duties we responded to LWVUS surveys and attended monthly LWVUS leadership webinars.

We are happy that League provides the opportunity for co-presidencies. We found that with the variety of ways to communicate these days—email, text messaging, telephone and Zoom sessions-- that it was easy to coordinate our activities, and there was great value in having a colleague as we learned our duties and more about the organization and structure of the League overall. Again, we are indebted to Past President Judy Andree for guiding us along the way and for her mentorship. Most of all we were impressed and inspired by the activities of our local chapters and contributions of our individual League members. You make League of Women Voters of Alaska a vital and important organization.

Sue Sherif and Alex Koplín
 Co-Presidents
 League of Women Voters of Alaska