



Rita R. Robison

Rita R. Robison joined the League of Women Voters in 1964 just after graduating from Washington State University. She worked for Ora Mae Orton at WSU's Housing and Food Service. Ora Mae advised her to skip joining PTA and go straight to the league.

A year after graduating from WSU, Rita moved to Sydney, Australia, where she taught at East Sydney Technical College. Three years later, she moved to Olympia. After joining the Thurston County League, Rita was appointed to the Thurston County Board of Adjustment, then to the county planning commission.

While working on the Thurston League board, Rita served as newsletter editor, Environmental Committee chair, and Action chair.

Rita led the Thurston League study on Olympia's commission form of government. After the League decided the council-manager plan would be a better form of government for the city, she formed a citizens' group called Olympians for Council-Manager Government, which worked on changing the city's form of government. Rita considers this project to be one of the most valuable she's done for the league.

During 1969, Rita was a board member for the Puget Sound Leagues of Women Voters, a regional group of nine Leagues. She edited the PSL newsletter and worked on PSL studies on air pollution, the Nisqually Delta, and regional governmental structure. (PSL discontinued operating in 1983.)

In 1977, Rita ran for Olympia city commissioner based on the interest she'd gained in local government from her league work. Although her race wasn't successful, she learned how difficult it is to run for public office and why more people should do it to help our democracy and government function as well as possible.

After Rita earned a journalism degree at Eastern Washington University in 1981, she worked for The Spokesman-Review and The Anchorage Times. At The Times, Rita wrote a column called "Tell It to Bud," "Bud" being short for ombudsman. In the column, she answered questions from consumers.

When Rita returned to Olympia in 1989, she worked for the Department of Commerce as a land use planner in growth management. In her job, she reviewed comprehensive plans and development regulations and edited growth management publications.

Rita attended The Evergreen State College, and received a master's in public administration in 1991.

Rita loves Western Washington, and, although moving enabled her to have a rewarding journalism career, she was pleased to return to Olympia where she has so many league friends. That's what Rita loves so much about the league; she has made so many wonderful life-long friends, including her league mentor, the late Marie Cameron.

For more than 18 years, Rita wrote a monthly senior consumer column for The News Tribune in Tacoma as a free-lance writer.

Rita joined the Tacoma-Pierce County League of Women Voters in 2016. What Rita likes about the league is that it provides such important information through its research on governmental issues and such valuable work in carrying out its positions.

Rita retired from the state in 2007 so that she could pursue her interests in consumer journalism. She writes two blogs, [Rita R. Robison, Consumer and Personal Finance Journalist](#), a national blog, and the [Boomer Consumer](#), a reader blog on the Seattle Post-Intelligencer website. As a blogger, Rita has written more than 6,300 articles.

A big project Rita is working on now is a memoir on her journalism career called "Follow the Money: My Life as a Financial Journalist."

Rita grew up on apple ranches in Central Washington. Her daughter Mona lives in Sacramento, and her daughter Lisa lives in Madrid.

###