

2024 Annual Meeting

League of Women Voters
of Benton & Franklin Counties

Tuesday, May 21, 2024

Meet at the **CG Public House**
(9221 W Clearwater Ave in the Amon Creek Room)

at **5:30 p.m.**
to socialize and place your orders

*Please **RSVP** for yourself and any guests **by May 18**
to Diane Molleson at 509-554-7317 or molleson@frontier.com*

Please bring an electronic or printed copy of this Annual Meeting Packet
and wear your League name tag!

Basic Parliamentary Procedure:

Parliamentary procedure is necessary for the orderly conduct of a meeting. However, the agenda and order of business as outlined here are based on the League tradition of allowing as much free debate and interchange of ideas as possible with a minimum need for parliamentary maneuvering.

Business is conducted by acting on motions. A motion must be:

- 1) made
- 2) seconded
- 3) stated by the presiding officer after which it may not be withdrawn without the consent of the assembly
- 4) debated or amended if debatable or amendable
- 5) put to a vote
- 6) the result of the vote is declared by the presiding officer

A subject is introduced by a **main motion**.

While a main motion is being considered, **parliamentary motions**, which affect either the main motion or the general conduct of the meeting may be made. The main parliamentary motions are:

- 1) **to amend** (debatable, amendable)
- 2) **to refer** to a committee for study or redrafting (debatable, amendable)
- 3) **to postpone** to a stated future time (debatable, amendable)
- 4) **to table** (not debatable, requires a future motion to “take in from the table”)
- 5) **the previous question** (not debatable, assembly votes immediately on whether to close debate on the original motion)
- 6) **to reconsider** (usually debatable, must be made by someone who voted on the prevailing side)
- 7) **point of order** (member feels procedures are not being followed and asks the presiding officer to rule)
- 8) **questions:**
 - * **parliamentary inquiry** (asks advice as to correct procedures)
 - * **point of information** (requests facts)
 - * **question of privilege** (seeks a change for comfort or convenience)
- 9) **to adjourn** (usually not debatable).

Proposed Agenda:

Presentation of the 2024 Marilyn Perkins Scholarship Awards

Call to Order

Introductions

Credentials Report

Adoption of Agenda and Rules

Announcements

Upcoming State Council – in person & virtual – June 1-2 – Lacey, WA

Upcoming National Convention – in person & hybrid – June 27-30 – Washington D.C.

Presentation of 2024-2025 Recommended Local Program

Suggestions for Non-Recommended Local Program

Treasurer’s Report

Presentation of Recommended 2024-2025 Budget

Adoption of 2024-2025 Budget

Report of the 2023-2024 Nominating Committee

Nominations from the Floor

Election of 2024 - 2025 Officers, Directors, and Nominating Committee

Presentation of Recommended Bylaw Amendments for 2024

Adoption of Recommended Bylaw Amendments for 2024

New Business

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Directions to the Board

Adjourn

Nominating Committee Report

The 2022-23 Nominating Committee is continuing the policy of asking for only a one-year commitment from elected officers and board members. With that in mind the 2023-24 Nominating Committee presents **the following candidates to hold a one-year term (May, 2024 – May, 2025) in the position they are being elected to.**

Officers

President:	Diane Molleson
1st Vice President:	Susan Thornton
2nd Vice President:	Ruvine Jimenez
Secretary:	Peggy Gregory
Treasurer:	Carla Chiotti

Elected Directors	JoAnne Dimond
	Janet Nail
	Leona Hassing
	Bev Johnson-Torelli
	Polly Parton
	Lora Rathbone

Up to six additional Directors may be appointed at the June Board meeting.

2024-25 Nominating Committee

- 1. Ruvine Jimenez, chair**
- 2. Michele Pirotte**
- 3. Bev Johnson-Torelli**

Two additional Nominating Committee members may be appointed at the June Board meeting

Submitted by the 2023-24 Nominating Committee:

Ruvine Jimenez, Chair	Bev Johnson Torelli
Judy Golberg	Michele Pirotte
Lorie Rowley	

Recommended Local Program Approval of LWVWA Concurrence

At our program planning meeting this past January, our League approved the LWVWA's request for a concurrence on their new Position on Local News and Democracy. The LWVWA will ask for concurrence with this Position at the LWVUS Convention in June with the goal that delegates will approve, and it becomes a national Position.

The LWVBF did not recommend a formal study that would lead to a new or updated position. Our League agreed to continue its efforts to Make Democracy Work and this year focus on the youth vote by reaching out to youth groups (i.e. Boys and Girls Club, Key Club) to provide voter education, encourage their members to vote, and listen to what is important to them.

Membership

At last year's annual meeting it was reported the League of Women Voters of Benton & Franklin Counties had 85 members, including 8 students and 9 second-in-household. This year we report an increase. Currently there are 104 members, including 12 students and 14 second-in-household.

There will be a transition in the collection of dues in 2025. The League of Women Voters U.S. (LWVUS) will be collecting dues for all local Leagues. Our League is working to make this transition proceed as smoothly as possible.

Janet Nail

MELD (Membership Engagement / Leadership Development)

MELD is a state program which facilitates a line of communication for members and officers to share and exchange ideas. MELD Pod #4 meets monthly via Zoom. Pod #4 includes a facilitator, a State Board liaison, and representatives from Bellingham/Whatcom, Clallam, Kitsap, Thurston, and Benton/Franklin counties.

Meetings follow a general format of sharing successes and challenges, a report from the State Board liaison, and discussion of an assigned topic determined by the facilitator. Meetings are one hour in length. Topics shared may include – but are not limited to – tabling, DEI activities, involvement of new members, “Coffee with League”, observer corps, personal outreach, political forums, civics education, retention of members, and youth involvement.

The State Board liaison plays a vital role in that she listens to member comments, ideas, and offers assistance. As State Board liaison she relays current actions of the Board to the Pod members. Recently, in preparation for Council, the Board liaison sought suggestions and ideas for caucus topics.

Leona Hassing

2024 WA Legislative Session Report

The WA League of Women Voters provides valuable information to the local Leagues during the Washington State legislative session. The advocacy chairs help to relay that information to our members and encourage their involvement in this annual bill-making process.

Our League participated by attending Democracy Lobby Week in January, which was a week filled with detailed information on the wide range of issues that the League studies, as well as private meetings with League's legislators. A few of our members met on Zoom with our Eighth Legislative District senator and representatives. We explained how the League chooses bills to prioritize based on League positions adopted by member consensus following studies of the issues. We then identified a few bills we wanted them to support. The meetings are always cordial and informative to all who attend.

For the remainder of the session, members were encouraged to sign up for the LWVWA Legislative Newsletter and to respond to their weekly action alerts to help get bills passed, by written or oral testimony during hearings or by contacting the legislators.

This year was the shorter session of 60 days, which typically addresses budget adjustments and a few bills from the prior year. (The longer sessions of 105 days are on odd-numbered years.) An unusually large number of bills as well as several initiatives were addressed this year. To learn about the outcome of the League's priority bills, read the issue papers at <https://lwwva.org/current-issues-2024>. Two Democracy bills that passed unanimously were 1241 (addressing Harassment of Election Workers) and 5890 (Reducing Ballot Rejection Rates).

LWVWA Takes Stand Against Three Ballot Initiatives

Three of the initiatives were addressed by the legislature. The other three, which will appear on the November ballot and are being opposed by the LWVWA are:

- Initiative 2109 – Repeal Capital Gains Tax
- Initiative 2117 – Prohibiting all state agencies, counties, and cities from implementing any type of carbon tax credit trading [Repeal the Climate Commitment Act (CCA)]
- Initiative 2124 – Opting out of Long-Term Services Insurance Program

“Our stance against these initiatives is a reflection of the League’s firm commitment to equitable education funding, climate resilience, and accessible long-term care,” said Mary Coltrane, president of the League of Women Voters of Washington. “We’re safeguarding our state’s future with each vote against these regressive measures.”

The Directors voted to contest these proposals for the following sessions based on League positions adopted by member consensus following studies of the issues. The League would like our help to educate others about the reasons to oppose these initiatives. Learn more at <https://lwwva.org/in-the-washington-news/13344327>.

Lora Rathbone, LWVBF Advocacy chair

Proposal of Bylaw Amendments
May, 2024

Submitted by Bylaws Committee: Carla Chiotti, Judy Golberg, Peggy Gregory and Diane Molleson

ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 5. Absences: Three consecutive absences from a Board meeting of an elected or appointed director without a valid reason ~~shall~~ **may** be deemed a resignation. (change is in **bold**)

Rationale: Previous wording did not reflect Board practices.

ARTICLE VII – NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 2. Suggestions for Nominations: The chair of the nominating committee shall request ~~in writing~~ suggestions for nominations from the membership, by advising them of the positions and offices to be filled. Any member of this organization may submit suggestions ~~in writing~~ for nominations to the chair. (change is in **bold**)

Rationale: Suggestions for nominations do not have to be submitted 'in writing'.

ARTICLE IX – FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 2. Dues: **Members shall pay dues in accordance with LWVUS policy. All members shall pay membership dues except those who are lifetime members.** (change is replacing old text with these two sentences, in **bold**)

- ~~• a. Annual dues shall be determined by the annual meeting by a majority of those present and voting and shall be payable in the month of September. Any member who fails to pay dues by the national deadline for membership submission shall be dropped from the membership rolls. The Board shall determine policy with respect to dues for those joining after February 1.~~
- ~~• b. Two or more members in a common household: When two or more members reside at the same address in a common household, the first member shall pay the dues determined at the annual meeting; a payment equal to one-half the amount dues shall be paid for each other member.~~
- ~~• c. Students: The dues for a member who is a student shall be free.~~

Rationale: Changes reflect the new LWVUS Board policy regarding dues and memberships that will go into effect in January, 2025.

2023 – 2024 Year in Review: Highlights

The League had a productive year, thanks to the contributions of so many of our members. A huge thank you to our officers, board members, committee chairs and volunteers who participated in the important work of League. A very special thanks to Shirley Sonnichsen, our dedicated treasurer, who will be stepping down from her position after more than two decades. Shirley's expertise, wisdom and attention to detail has served our League well.

2023

The LWVBF hosted the LWVWA Convention on May 4-7 in Pasco, where our League received the Strengthening Democracy Award in recognition of our programs directed at Making Democracy Work. These include our candidate forums, civics education program, advocacy, and active participation in the election observer program run by the Benton County Auditor's Office. The LWVWA's approved Program of Work included a study on Immigration Integration in Washington State with LWVBF members Judy Golberg and Chris Grantham joining the study committee when its work got underway. More information on Convention can be found in the *July 2023 Voter*.

At our May 18 Annual Meeting, two scholarship awards of \$1,000 each in memory of Marilyn Perkins were given to Kylie Glendenning and Lacey Hudlow, both graduates of Connell High School. These scholarships were made possible thanks to a generous donation from Marilyn's husband, John Perkins, and will allow us to continue our scholarship program for the next four years.

In June and July we organized and held five candidate forums for the Primary election. The forums included all three positions for the Richland School Board. Produced by Northwest Public Broadcasting, the forums were televised on KTNW and appeared on You Tube and other sites. A huge thank you to Bev Johnson-Torelli, who organized these debates for the primary and general elections, with the help of Ruvine Jimenez, JoAnne Dimond, Polly Parton and Kathryn Schroeder.

LWVBF member Richard Badalamente formed and led a committee to raise awareness of Emergency Risk Protection Orders (red flag gun laws) in Benton and Franklin Counties where this law is used only sparingly. This group has continued its work over the past year and has met with SARC, the Benton-Franklin Health District, and the Kennewick Police Department, among others.

Dr. James Conca was the guest speaker at our Equality Day picnic, held indoors at the East Benton Franklin Historical Society on August 18 due to excessive heat. His talk on the history and status of nuclear power and the most optimal sites to dispose of nuclear waste was lively and informative.

A large crowd attended the wine social at Membership chair Janet Nail's home on September 19. Our guest speaker Beth Pellicciotti, the LWVWA's chair for Civics Education, showed us how much of the League's work is tied to civics education and how it helps us better understand our responsibilities to our communities. She also spoke about the LWVWA's 40-year-old publishing program and its well-regarded textbook, *The State We're In*, which enjoys wide circulation in Washington state.

The League spent much of September preparing for our candidate forums, which aired in October. We covered 22 local races across the Tri-Cities and debuted our GOTV video in English and Spanish. A big thanks to Christine Grantham for bringing this video to fruition with the help of Pasco High's dance team. If you have not seen it, both the English and Spanish versions are prominently posted on our website.

Janet Nail hosted a post-election social at her home in November where Chuck LoPresti and Kelly Doyle presented information on Benton County's election observer program, Lora Rathbone discussed the League's advocacy work, and Bev Johnson-Torelli spoke about the candidate forums. A big thanks to Chuck LoPresti for serving as our League's initial coordinator for Benton County's election observer program and Kelly Doyle for serving in the same capacity after him.

In December our League held a holiday party at the East Benton County Historical Society, with guest speaker Matt Truman, Coordinator of the Benton-Franklin Housing Consortium who spoke about the Consortium's efforts to prevent homelessness.

We continued our Civics Education work and partnership with Communities in Schools under the guidance of Janet Nail, who stepped in as our Interim Civics Ed chair after Wendy Espinosa, our former chair, moved away. Janet arranged for League to speak to a Key Club group over Labor Day weekend, which included students from across the NW region. She also visited River View High School in Finley to teach their student leaders how to run voter registration drives.

Thanks to Leona Hassing, several members have been attending the LWVWA's Zoom forums on Redistricting to hear about their efforts to create a People-Powered Redistricting Commission by 2030. Leona is also the MELD (Membership, Engagement, and Leadership Development) representative for our League.

2024

In January, our League held a program planning meeting where we approved the State League's request to advance their new Position on Local News and Democracy to National Convention, where LWVUS delegates can vote to make it a National Position. Our League agreed to continue our efforts to Make Democracy Work, with a focus on reaching out to youth groups.

During Lobby Week (from January 22-26) five members from the 8th Legislative District met on Zoom with their State Representatives and Senator. Many thanks to our Advocacy chair Lora Rathbone for arranging these meetings and all her work keeping us up-to-date on legislative issues throughout the year.

Andy Miller, Benton County's retired Prosecuting Attorney, was the guest speaker at our Birthday Lunch on February 16 at CG Public House. He shared many stories about the cases he tried over his 36 years as Benton County's longest-serving prosecutor. We celebrated Women's History Month and Black History Month in March, with a wonderful talk by Ashley Jenkins, held in the Richland Public Library. Ashley spoke about her personal "sheroes" – a group that included sharecropper turned civil rights activist Fanny Lou Hammer.

In preparation for the March 12 Presidential Primary, we registered voters at CBC and at many of the libraries in the Mid-Columbia library system. Thanks to the efforts of Bev Johnson-Torelli, Chris Grantham and Lora Rathbone, our League ran numerous voter registration drives throughout the year. Locations included Naturalization ceremonies at the Federal Building in Richland, Pasco High, Kamiakin High, Legacy High, Highlands Middle School, Sunset View Elementary, Cascade Elementary, the Islamic Center, the Gay Pride parade, and the Kitchen and Spice Market in Richland, among other venues. A huge thank you to the many volunteers who participated in these events.

Thanks to Judy Golberg and Susan Kreid for the guidance and board training they provided to our newly-elected board this past summer, Peggy Gregory for our monthly VOTER, and Kay Ottem for producing this 2024 Annual Meeting packet.

Diane Molleson, 2023-24 LWVBF President

LWV-BF PROPOSED 2024-25 Budget

Income	2023-24		2024-25	
Dues for 2024-25 (Reg Mbr)	75 @ 75	\$ 5,625	75 @ 75	\$ 5,625
Dues for 2024-25 (SIH)	9 @ 35	\$ 315	12 @ 35	\$ 420
Contributions		\$ 4,054		\$ 3,907
Member Contributions		\$ 500		\$ 500
Non-Member Contributions		\$ 100		\$ 100
Reserves-Ed Fund (Scholarships)		\$ 2,500		\$ 2,500
Reserves - Savings (includes TRY)		\$ 954		\$ 807
Reserves - Convention		\$ -		\$ -
Other		\$ 2,100		\$ 600
Interest from savings		\$ 0.15		\$ 0.20
Fund Raisers		\$ -		\$ -
Publications		\$ 1,500		\$ -
Table Talk		\$ 100		\$ 100
In-Kind Contributions (Member)		\$ 500		\$ 500
In-Kind Contributions (Non-Mbr)		\$ -		\$ -
		\$ 12,094		\$ 10,552
Expenses	2023-24		2024-25	
Operating Costs		\$ 1,050		\$ 1,070
Meeting Facilities (incl Zoom)		\$ 250		\$ 250
Incorporation Fee		\$ 10		\$ 20
PayPal Fees		\$ 50		\$ 60
Post Office Box Rental		\$ 240		\$ 240
Web Site Creation/Maintenance		\$ 500		\$ 500
Board and Administration		\$ 425		\$ 425
Annual Picnic		\$ 75		\$ 75
Public Relations		\$ -		\$ -
Board & Administration		\$ 100		\$ 100
Sunshine Fund		\$ 50		\$ 50
President's Materials		\$ 100		\$ 100
Treasurer's Materials		\$ 100		\$ 100
Convention and Workshops		\$ 3,100		\$ 1,100
National Convention		\$ 2,000		\$ -
State Convention/Council		\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000
Workshops		\$ 100		\$ 100
Membership Fees		\$ 3,519		\$ 4,182
PMP - LWVUS (Regular Members)	65 @ \$32	\$ 2,080	75 @ \$32	\$ 2,400
PMP - LWVUS (Second-in-Household)	8 @ \$16	\$ 128	14 @ \$16	\$ 224
PMP - LWVWA (Regular Members)	65 @ \$19	\$ 1,235	75 @ \$19	\$ 1,425
PMP - LWVWA (Second-in-Household)	8 @ \$9.5	\$ 76	14 @ \$9.5	\$ 133
Member Services		\$ 750		\$ 525
Recruitment & Membership		\$ 150		\$ 175
Programs: Events		\$ 500		\$ 250
Handbook		\$ -		\$ -
Annual Meeting		\$ 100		\$ 100
VOTER		\$ -		\$ -
Educational Activities		\$ 3,200		\$ 3,200
TRY		\$ 700		\$ 700
Voter Service		\$ -		\$ -
Educational Support/Local School Programs		\$ 2,500		\$ 2,500
Action		\$ 50		\$ 50
		\$ 12,094		\$ 10,552