

VOTER

www.lwv-bf.org

August 2019

From the President

In the midst of busy summer activities, we held three Candidate Forums to inform voters about the August 6th primary election. Forums were held on July 10 in Kennewick, July 17 in Richland, and July 23 in Pasco. Many thanks to Kay Ottem and Marilyn Perkins who organized and scheduled the forums. Also thanks to Tracci Dial, news anchor for KNDU TV, who moderated the three forums.

There will be opportunities to help with candidate forums to be scheduled before the November general election and questions are always needed. If you are interested in helping with forums, call Marilyn Perkins, 783-8610, Kay Ottem, 735-4684 or JoAnne Dimond, 438-2330.

On Thursday, August 22, our annual Women's Equality Day picnic will be held in Howard Amon Park in Richland. This year our speaker will be LoAnn Ayers, and the topic will be the 2020 Census.

Women's Equality Day Picnic on August 22

Our annual picnic celebrating the ratification of the 19th amendment will be held on Thursday, **August 22** at the north pavilion in Howard Amon Park (behind Sterling's) in Richland, beginning at **5:30 pm**. Please bring a dish, snack or dessert to share, as well as a folding chair or picnic blanket. Drinks, plates, cups, napkins and utensils will be provided. You're welcome to bring your own water bottle and table service as we are trying to go green at these events. Our guest speaker will be LoAnn Ayers, President and CEO of United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties.

Officers

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JoAnne Dimond

1st Vice President:

Vacant

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Janet Nail

Secretary:

Polly Parton

Treasurer:

Shirley Sonnichsen

Past President:

JoAnn Bengtson

Voter Editor:

Diane Molleson

Elected

Directors:

JoAnn Bengtson

Heather Cunningham

Shari Gasperino

Diane Molleson

Lora Rathbone

Virginia Rogalsky

Appointed

Directors:

Christine Grantham

Bree Bowen

Candidate Forums

Marilyn Perkins

The three primary candidate forums were well attended. As always, we are very grateful to Mike Charboneau (Richland) and Jon Funfar (Pasco) for recording the forums and putting them on YouTube. I've seen several references on Facebook to the forums and people encouraging others to watch.

We were fortunate to have the Kennewick School District provide a space for the school board and city council candidates to meet the public and answer questions. If anyone knows of a friend or family member who might be willing to record the Kennewick forum in the fall, please let Marilyn Perkins know at 783-8610. (We may also be able to work with the Tri-Tech Skills Center to record the Kennewick forum.)

Kay Ottem and Marilyn Perkins have done the bulk of the work for the forums—contacting candidates, writing questions and recruiting members to help. They are looking for more members to help this fall and moving forward. They have tentatively planned a meeting on **Wed., August 7 at 10 am or 2 pm**, whatever works for most people. The meeting will be at Marilyn's home: **4512 West Yellowstone in Kennewick**. If that date is not good, another will be worked out. Voter service is what we are best known for and is a rewarding and interesting area to work in.

This fall, in addition to the city council and school board races, we hope to include the port commissioner races. We have also agreed to help Benton City with their forum. If you can come to the meeting on the 7th, or cannot make that time and would like to help, please contact Marilyn Perkins at 783-8610 or jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com

View the July Primary Candidate Forums

Kennewick:

<https://www.facebook.com/KNDU25/videos/662212084203200/>

Richland:

School District Positions 4 and 5: <https://youtu.be/zAU6z8jcVok>

City Council Position 1: <https://youtu.be/8LPn0AS20O4>

City Council Position 2: <https://youtu.be/-4Oh7g0M9Pc>

City Council Position 5: <https://youtu.be/xwpdeDHjcJA>

Pasco:

City Council Position 7: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-1beYNm6Rk>

LWV: Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI)

The League's Shur Fellows—dedicated volunteers across the country who work on engaging members— have prepared a glossary of commonly used words as part of their work on DEI. One or two of these words are appearing each month in the VOTER. Here's this month's word:

Collusion: When people act to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression. Example: Able-bodied people who object to strategies for making buildings accessible because of the expense.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

Humanities Washington: Upcoming Speaker

Marilyn Perkins

Our League has agreed to help sponsor a speaker from Humanities Washington. We will be working with former Tri-Cities news anchor Christine Brown, the Badger Club, and possibly other local groups. The speaker, philosopher and religious studies professor David Smith, will be traveling throughout eastern Washington in mid-September and will be in our area on September 12th. His topic, "Civil Conversations in an Angry Age," is very timely. Smith has a PhD in Religious Studies and currently teaches at the Osner Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Washington.

We are still looking for a good location and possibly other partners. Anyone willing to help work on this project or who has ideas for a location should contact Marilyn Perkins at 783-8610 or jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com

For more information on Humanities Washington, go to <https://www.humanities.org>

Treasurer's Report

Shirley Sonnichsen

June 30 was the end of Fiscal Year 2018-19. We started the new fiscal year in July with \$2281.72 in checking and \$1,856.33 in savings for a total of \$4,138. Membership

Checking: \$ 2,281
Savings: \$1,856
Total: \$4,138

dues are due September 30, but anyone who wishes to pay their dues early or make a contribution may do so now that the new fiscal year has begun. Checks should be made out to *League of Women Voters of Benton-Franklin Counties* and mailed to P.O. Box 765, Richland, WA. 99352 or you can pay through PayPal — www.lwv-bf.org

Income: \$405.73

- \$50 contribution from Bev Johnson-Torelli in memory of Kathy White
- \$30 cash leftover from convention
- \$325.73 from Judy Golberg for half of the room charge at Convention and 1/2 of her gas charges (reimbursed by the State League).

Expenses: 1,465.57

- \$45.88 to Marilyn for the Annual Meeting Packet
- \$480 reimbursement for the Convention registration fee - Toyoko Tsukuda, Heather Cunningham
- \$105.78 parking charges for Judy Golberg and Heather Cunningham
- \$35 - gas charge for Judy driving 2 of us to convention
- \$545.91 room charge for Heather Cunningham and Judy (reimbursed 1/2).
- \$252 for checks to Jo Ann Bengtson and Shirley Sonnichsen towards half of their rooms at Hotel Murano.

In kind:

- Half of Toyoko's, Jo Ann's and Shirley's rooms (League only pays 1/2 for having a single room) less reimbursement to Jo Ann and Shirley - \$567 plus incidental meal and gas expenses.

Membership:

- Karen Ringwood paid per PayPal in June, but I did not get it moved over to the bank until July. We will have a total of 60 members with her membership.

2019 LWVWA Convention

Toyoko Tsukuda

My most memorable experience at the convention was when League delegates were deciding on a program, not previously recommended, to be eligible for consideration and adoption. The program under discussion concerned the Snohomish County League's position on Civil Discourse: "*Promote civil discourse through action and education for all government bodies, staff and the public for the purpose of improved public decisions and processes. Civil discourse means, at a minimum, mutual, respectful, courteous, constructive and orderly communication.*" Their proposal was to establish a formal LWVWA position on civil discourse. Before voting, we had a lengthy 'For' and 'Against' discussion. Those in favor said that we needed to have a civil conversation at a time when society has become so divisive and our democracy is at stake. One league member in support of the proposal described her experience of encountering a boisterous attendee at a forum telling an immigrant, "If you don't like the US, go back to your country." For the argument "Against," one league member said the government already has a code of conduct for elected officials, and the league could not make a rule for the government bodies. Another person "Against" argued that "civil discourse" would mean different things in different cultures. Minority communities may have a different definition of "Respect" than the majority. The arguments on both sides had merit. More people wanted to take a mic to either support or oppose the non-recommended program. But the vote had to be taken. The voice vote sounded even. So the delegate votes had to be counted. The final vote was Yay, 40 and Nay, 53. The delegates decided the non-recommended program was not eligible for consideration and adoption. For me, it was an exciting experience. True civil discourse was unfolding right in front of me. Both sides had different opinions and were so passionate about their principles. I wished this event had been videotaped. The video could be used to show how people can have civil discourse to debate issues they do not agree on.

From the LWVWA

State-Owned Public Banks: A National "Hot Topic"

The LWVWA established a Public Bank Task Force (PBTF) to address League members' interest in discussing the current legislative proposal for the Washington Investment Trust, a state-owned public bank cooperative. If enacted, potential impacts of this proposal may affect both urban and rural communities throughout the state. The PBTF distributes information on the LWVWA This Week In League (TWIL) newsletter with links and will provide resource materials compiled to date on the LWVWA website. However, it is important for us to hear from Local Leagues in both urban and smaller communities, which are often not strongly represented in Olympia. To address the need to share information, educate all League members and determine what, if any, involvement the league should have, the PBTF has begun contacting every local league asking that one person be identified as a point of contact. This person should be the main point of contact for the PBTF to share pertinent documents with the local league members, and to solicit member input. **Please reply to the task force by August 11** with the name, email address, and possibly telephone number of the contact person. Also, let the PBTF know if your members are currently aware of the public bank proposal and if they have an opinion of the idea. Please email publicbanktf@lwvwa.org with your comments and questions.

LWVBF Calendar

August 2019

Wednesday, August 7—Candidate Forum Planning Meeting, 10 am or 2 pm TBD, Marilyn's home

Thursday, August 15— Business and Planning Meeting, 6 pm, Benton Franklin Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail). All members are welcome.

Thursday, August 22—Women's Equality Day picnic, 5:30 pm, Howard Amon Park/ North Shelter in Richland

September 2019

Thursday, September 12—Humanities Washington Guest Speaker— time and place TBD

Thursday, September 19— Business and Planning Meeting, 6 pm, Benton Franklin Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail). All members are welcome.

Email us at
lww.of.bf@gmail.com

League of Women Voters of
Benton & Franklin
Counties
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