



**VOTER**  
**December 2024**  
**January 2025**

[www.lwv-bf.org](http://www.lwv-bf.org)

**President's Message -- Diane Molleson**

The 2024 election is over, but the work of League continues. We remain committed to our mission of “empowering voters and protecting democracy.”

We hope you can join us at our **Holiday Party** on December 8 at Christine Grantham’s home where we will have a guest speaker, snacks to share, and the opportunity for you to meet and mingle with your fellow League members. Guests are welcome. (Details are in a separate announcement.)

Our annual **Program Planning Meeting** will be held on January 25 at Diane Molleson’s home. There we will discuss our League’s priorities for the coming year, suggest a study or program of action, and give the State League ideas for what to focus on during the next two years.

In February we are planning a **Hanford Workshop** with our League’s Hanford Advisory Board representative, Charles LoPresti. Charles welcomes questions, concerns and opinions from local League members about the Hanford site. Please email him with your questions by December 31 at [lopresti@owt.com](mailto:lopresti@owt.com)

In February, the national League will launch its **new membership system, ChapterSpot**. Please be on the lookout for a message from the LWVUS at the beginning of February where you will be asked to log into the ChapterSpot portal and create a profile. You will not be asked to renew your membership until it expires a year after you have joined, but you must be entered into the LWVUS’s portal so they can create a roster for our league and collect membership dues. (See the Treasurer’s report in this issue for more information.)

**Happy Holidays and all the best in 2025!**

## Holiday Party

Our Holiday Party will be on **Sunday, December 8, from 1- 3 pm** at the home of Christine Grantham, 105105 E. Tripple Vista Drive in Kennewick.

Our guest speaker (confirmation to come) will focus on the Tri-Cities immigrant community. Guests, family, new and potential members are welcome.

Members can bring an appetizer or dessert or beverage to share, if they wish. We are also collecting new or gently used warm clothing for all ages (coats, hats, gloves and mittens) for World Relief. Please RSVP to Christine Grantham at [christinegrantham3@gmail.com](mailto:christinegrantham3@gmail.com) if you can attend.

## Program Planning Meeting and Brunch

Our annual Program Planning meeting will be held on **Saturday, January 25 from 10am - noon** at Diane Molleson's home (4375 Kimberly Street, Richland). At this meeting, we will plan our programs for the coming year, review our positions, and decide if we want to pursue a study or program of action. In odd-numbered years, we can also suggest ideas for the State League to focus on in the next two years. Members can review our local positions on our website ([www.lwv-bf.org](http://www.lwv-bf.org)) under Positions.

We need your ideas! Please come, share food, see League friends and be part of a good discussion. Members can bring something for brunch, such as fruit, muffins, breakfast casseroles, juice, but if you've had a busy week, just bring yourself.

## From LWVWA

Lunell Haught, the former president of the LWVWA, is looking for an LWVBF member to help with a report on democracy. She writes, "There is an affinity group in LWVWA focused on doing a report on democracy similar to Maine's - <https://www.democracymaine.org/SOD>"

If anyone in the LWVBF is interested in doing some research to help them, please contact Lunell Haught at [lh1@fastmail.com](mailto:lh1@fastmail.com) or 509-443-1319 (landline). They (Linnea Hirst, Jean Snider, Nick Lovrich, Julie Anne Kempf, and Lunell Haught) are planning to recommend it as an educational/study item at the state convention.

## From LWVUS

The LWVUS would like our help contacting President Biden regarding the Equal Rights Amendment. Please see the statement below and consider taking action.

“Despite having fulfilled the ratification requirements, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) has not been published. With just weeks left in office, **we are urging President Biden to act and enshrine gender equality in our Constitution by instructing the US Archivist to publish the ERA.**

## LWVBF Treasurer’s Report – Carla Chiotti

As of October 31, 2024:

Checking is	\$9,632.13
Savings is	<u>\$1,857.32</u>
Total	\$11,489.45

**Income: \$1,335.01** We received \$1,160 in membership dues. We had 15 members and one second-in-household member renew this month. We also received \$175 in contributions.

**Expenses: \$257.15** We paid \$10.55 in PayPal fees and \$232 for the post office box rental. We also purchased postage stamps for \$14.60.

**Membership campaign:** During October, 15 members and one second-in-household renewed their memberships. Members who had not renewed received phone calls asking if they planned to continue their membership. Since the new ChapterSpot membership system begins next year, memberships must be renewed by the end of the year, or the member will be listed as inactive.

**Transition to ChapterSpot Membership Platform:** The National League of Women Voters (LWVUS) plans to start the new membership system on February 1, 2025. At that time, all members will receive an email asking them to log in to the ChapterSpot portal, but they will not be asked to renew their membership until it expires in September 2025. Members must have an individual email address to access the new membership system and pay dues, but there will be an option for members who do not use email.

Leadership of our local league are currently viewing Zoom trainings on the ChapterSpot platform, designed for Presidents, Membership Chairs, Roster Managers, Treasurers, and Webmasters.

Information is available for all members on the [ChapterSpot Resources page](#) of the LWVUS Management Site (<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/membership/chapterspot-resources>).

**Education Fund:** Our balance stands at \$8,440.42.

Members can donate to our education fund for scholarships by sending a check to: **LWVWA Education Fund**. The address is 1511 Third Avenue, Suite 900, Seattle, WA, 98101, Attn: Ed Fund Treasurer. Please earmark your donation to the Benton-Franklin League Scholarship Fund in the memo line. Thank you.

## Advocacy Update – Lora Rathbone

The LWVWA Annual Action Workshop.

This virtual event will be held December 7, 2024 at 9am - noon and will help prepare League members for advocacy during the upcoming legislative session. Attendees will learn about the issues, relevant league positions, and how to be involved. [Register Here](#). The league will be sending out a survey on legislative issue priorities soon.

If you would like to meet with the legislators in your district before the legislative session, please contact Lora Rathbone, [ldrathbone@outlook.com](mailto:ldrathbone@outlook.com). We could meet in person or on Zoom. We have a few people from the 8th and 16th legislative districts who are already interested. To check which legislative district you are in, go to <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/>

Take action on the ERA before January 20.

Please contact President Biden regarding the Equal Rights Amendment. Leave your comment here: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/> In the United States, women are still not guaranteed equal rights. We have seen the devastating consequences of this reality. Yet, the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which will update the U.S. Constitution to protect the equality of rights under the law regardless of sex, can be added to the Constitution with one action. With just months left in office, we are urging President Biden to act to ensure that the ERA is published.

The ERA will protect against the rollback of rights, provide a vital tool for the judicial branch to decide sex discrimination cases, and pave the way for further legislative progress toward sex and gender equality. The 2024 election results were not friendly to women's equality, and our future status in the country is at stake. It's imperative that President Biden take urgent action to ensure the process of publishing the Amendment is completed since it has been fully ratified since 2020.

Urge President Biden to instruct the US Archivist to certify and publish the ERA in the Constitution! Equality cannot wait.

## **Hanford Advisory Board - Chuck LoPresti**

### **Hanford Advisory Board is seeking applications for membership.**

The Tri-Party Agreement agencies are accepting applications now through December 6, 2024 for next year's Hanford Advisory Board (the HAB). The Hanford Advisory Board was created to inform and involve stakeholders and the public more directly in Hanford Site cleanup decisions. The collective written advice of board members can influence cleanup and remediation outcomes by advising the Tri-Party Agreement (TPA) agencies on community and public perspectives and feedback.

HAB members are community volunteers who either represent specific organizations or represent the public-at-large. If you know someone who would be interested, please encourage them to apply! Two-year terms will begin on October 1, 2025.

The online application form is available at: <https://www.hanford.gov/page.cfm/hab>. The nominations process also involves our local LWV chapter President and the State League President. The HAB is supported by the U.S. Department of Energy, and it exists to provide to DOE advice about various issues that come up or are ongoing from individuals and organizations in the community. All three organizations of the Tri-Party Agreement that created the modern Hanford cleanup mission are represented on the HAB: the U.S. Department of Energy, Washington Department of Ecology, and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. Local organizations represented on the HAB include local City and County governments, TRIDEC, the Yakama Nation and other First Nation tribes, Columbia Basin College, several unions and employee organizations, environmental organizations and more, as well as the League of Women Voters and other citizens' groups. The current HAB membership is about 30 primary members and 20 alternate members.

Charles LoPresti has been a member of the HAB for the first year of his two-year term representing the League of Women Voters, and is sharing his experience here. Being an active member of the HAB is somewhat time-consuming because it involves attending several meetings each month, working on projects and issue management teams, and keeping up-to-speed on Hanford matters by reading mailings and attending to news about the Hanford Site. Meetings are mostly local in the Tri-Cities, and many meetings are hybrid: in-person and also via Zoom. Total time averages around 20 hours per month. In Charles's experience, HAB members are professionals from a variety of disciplines committed to the success of the Hanford clean-up mission, and a fair number are or were actively employed at

Hanford and/or have in depth knowledge about various aspects of the Hanford project and its history. In keeping with the goal of having wide citizen perspectives and input, one does not have to have been a Hanford employee to be on the HAB.

Previous members of the HAB from the League of Women Voters were Sue Leckband, a former HAB Chair, and Jan Catrell. The League has to nominate a League member to the HAB, an application has to be sent in to the Department of Energy, the application has to be vetted, and the process takes months, so calls for applications are announced a year before the term begins on October 1. The online application form is available at <https://www.hanford.gov/page.cfm/hab>. The nominations process also involves our local LWV chapter President and the State League President. It would be good for the LWV to have both a primary member and an alternate member, so don't be shy!

## **LWVBF Book Club – Polly Parton**

In November we read historical fiction *The Women* by Kristin Hannah, from the perspective of young Frankie serving in the Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War. We will skip December. On January 13 we will discuss *Rules of Civility* by Amor Towles and February will be *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid. Please send in your suggestions for the balance of 2025.

Join us the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday each month, 6pm via Zoom by emailing or texting Polly Parton to be added to the link. We keep discussion to one hour. Please join in even if you did not have time for monthly read. [Polly.parton@yahoo.com](mailto:Polly.parton@yahoo.com) or 509 -551-3818

## **Redistricting Reform Committee - Leona Hassing**

The redistricting reform committee met with 16 attending. We discussed the post-election results and what it means for redistricting reform. In the 14<sup>th</sup> legislative district which had been redrawn per the Soto Palmer court decision, three positions were on the ballot, the senator and two representatives. Of the three races, two minority candidates were elected. Analyzing the results will be on the agenda for discussion in relation to the newly created 14<sup>th</sup> district. The appeal for the Soto Palmer decision will be heard in March/April, 2025.

As the redistricting reform committee notes the work of the committee will be a heavy lift. Basically, state legislators are comfortable with the current redistricting procedure. As Alison reported on her discussions with Senate staffers, the focus will be with the representatives, not the senators. The newly elected

representatives maybe more likely to be in favor of looking at the redistricting process and possible adopting a constitution amendment.

## Calendar Of Events

No December Business and Planning/Board Meeting.  
December 7 LWVWA Action Workshop, register on State League website  
December 8 LWVBF Holiday Party, Home of Christine Grantham  
January 13 LWVBF Book Club  
January 21 LWVBF Business and Planning Meeting/Board Meeting 6 pm via Zoom  
January 25 LWVBF Program Planning Meeting and Brunch, 10 am - Noon

Email: [lwv.of.bf@gmail.com](mailto:lwv.of.bf@gmail.com)

Instagram: [lwv.of.bf](https://www.instagram.com/lwv.of.bf)

Facebook: [League of Women Voters of Benton & Franklin Counties](https://www.facebook.com/LeagueofWomenVotersofBentonFranklinCounties)

## Mailing Address:

League of Women Voters of Benton and Franklin Counties  
P.O. Box 765  
Richland, WA 99352

### **OFFICERS:**

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

### **ELECTED DIRECTORS:**

JoAnne Dimond  
Leona Hassing  
Beverly Johnson-Torelli  
Janet Nail  
Polly Parton  
Lora Rathbone

### **APPOINTED DIRECTORS:**

Sabiha Khan  
Michelle Pirotte  
Shirley Sonnichsen

### **VOTER EDITOR:**

JoAnne Dimond