

Helena Area LWV ~ VOTER NEWS



This is a very busy time, so we have a lot of news (and more to come in the weeks ahead), but we promise to slow down and not overwhelm with too many emails. We all need a relaxing break. But for now ... get yourself a cup of tea or coffee or a glass of something good, and enjoy this issue of your *Helena LWV Voter News*

Inside this issue, you will find:

- October 7 - Membership & Public Meeting on Ballot Initiatives
- October 24 - Book & Discussion Group
- News from the Montana LWV
- Cor Encabo at the Capitol and October 9 Workshop
- Recap - September "Here We Go" Meeting and Candidate Forum
- Observer Corps Deployed and Mickey's Report on Hometown Helena
- Voter Registration Update and Shout-outs to Volunteers
- Civic Education Presentations Marching On
- Coming up in the November LWVHA Voter News
- Annual membership dues reminder coming your way
- Welcoming our new and renewing members!



October Membership & Public Meeting

Monday, October 7 - 5:30 pm
Lewis & Clark Library and via Zoom

Our October Membership Meeting will be a special public forum to learn more about CI-126, CI-127, and CI-128. This meeting is open to the public and offered via Zoom and in-person at Lewis & Clark Library, starting at 5:30 pm.

If you are planning to attend via Zoom, click the button below to pre-register.

The **Montana League of Women Voters** and **Lewis & Clark Library** are co-sponsoring “Do You Know What You’re Voting For?” to explore and learn about the implications of CI-126, CI-127 and CI-128.

CI-126 would create an open primary system in Montana, allowing voters to choose any candidate on the primary ballot regardless of the candidate’s party affiliation. All candidates would appear on one ballot in June rather than separate party ballots, with the top four candidates for each office going on to the general election in November.

CI-127 would require that the winner of the general election receive a majority of the votes – more than 50 percent.

Frank Garner, a former Republican State Representative from Kalispell and board member with Montanans for Election Reform (a coalition of Republicans, Democrats and third-party advocates), will speak in support of the two initiatives.

Speaking in opposition to these two initiatives will be former Republican Montana legislator and Bozeman attorney **Matthew G. Monforton**.

LWVHA member and retired General Counsel of the Montana State Bar **Betsy Brandborg** will explain the effect of Constitutional amendments generally. She will also discuss the reason that CI-128 is on the ballot. CI-128, if passed, would provide a right for women to obtain a pre-viability abortion.

This is a hybrid meeting open to the public, both on Zoom and in person. The in-person event is at Lewis & Clark Library, 120 S Last Chance Gulch.

If you are attending virtually, register in advance for this webinar by clicking the button below. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

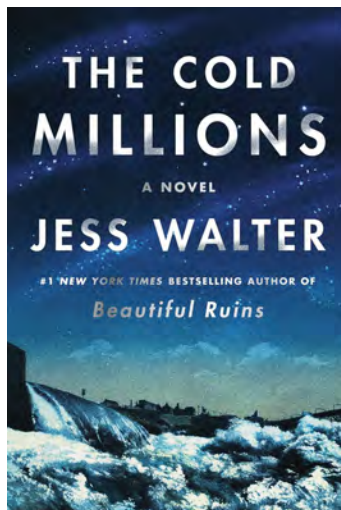
[Visit the Montana LWV website for details.](#)

**Zoom Webinar
Registration**

BOOK & DISCUSSION GROUP

To be rescheduled via Zoom for a very special BDG event with Helena author Diane Carlson Evans

We are reading *Healing Wounds: A Vietnam War Combat Nurse's 10-Year Fight to Win Women a Place of Honor in Washington, D.C.* by Helena author Diane Carlson Evans. This book can be purchased at Helena's locally-owned Montana Book Company. Lewis & Clark Library card-holders can access both the audio and e-book version on [HooplaDigital.com](https://www.hoopladigital.com) and the book is also available for check-out.



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24 - 6:00 to 7:00 pm

The Cold Millions by Jess Walter

This is Lewis & Clark Library's Big Read selection for 2024 and we invite BDG members to read the book and take part in the month-long activities all through October, including the author's talk at Carroll College on October 22.

This historical fiction book is based on the free speech riots of 1909 and 1910 that took place in Spokane, Washington. The Library hosts lots of activities and programs throughout the Big Read month of October. Visit the Library's [Big Read web page](#) for more information.

In November, the BDG hopes to tackle the hot topic of the Electoral College. Stay tuned.

We maintain a separate list of BDG members who receive reminders and the Zoom link. Please send an email to lww.helena@gmail.com to be placed on the list.

Sue Hoell and Niki Whearty are co-chairs of the Book & Discussion Group (BDG) and welcome your ideas and suggestions for future selections. We read books, articles, and essays and watch films or TV programs. Members are welcome to attend the BDG meetings (mostly on Zoom) to share or to listen and learn.

Do You Have a Story to Tell?

Sign up now to attend a special workshop for League members

The Helena Area League of Women Voters has the opportunity to participate in *Memoir in the Everyday*, on Wednesday, **October 16**, from 2 to 4 pm. Sarah Capdeville, prize winning writer and editor based in Missoula, will facilitate the workshop. She holds an MFA in Creative Writing, has written a prize-winning memoir and has works that appear in many publications. Learn more about her at sarahcapdeville.com.

The Lewis & Clark Library is presenting this workshop in conjunction with the Big Read's *The Cold Million* by Jess Walter. As a child, Walter grew up listening to his grandfather tell stories about train-hopping, saying "I wanted to be able to write with the sense of adventure that I remembered (from) those stories."

Why is the Library offering this workshop to our League? "We thought it would be fun if League members would share stories, because they would be very interesting, given the vast life-experiences of the members," says Adult Services Librarian Suzanne Schwichtenberg.

This workshop will include memoir excerpts, writing exercises, and discussion, and participants should expect to walk away with the beginnings of their own memoir essay.

If you are interested in attending the two-hour workshop and have not already signed up for it, please send an email to lwv.helena@gmail.com before **Friday, October 4**.



Help Promote VOTE411.org!

Non-partisan information about participating in the election and about candidates running

for office is hard to find. NOT ANY MORE! VOTE411 is the LWVUS-hosted on-line website that has complete information about how to register and vote, and offers information directly from the candidates themselves! Encourage your friends and others to use VOTE411 for Montana-specific election and candidate information!

Visit <https://www.vote411.org/montana>.



MEMBERS KICK OFF THE YEAR AT SEPTEMBER MEETING!

There were 50 attendees at the September 16th "Here We Go" membership meeting! Members were invited to join committees and our Observer Corps as well as to help register voters. State president Nancy Leifer was the keynote speaker and encouraged members to stay involved during the upcoming Legislative Session. Thanks to all who came!

Candidate Forum a Success!

More than 30 people attended our candidate forum for Lewis and Clark County Commissioner on Monday evening, September 23rd at the Helena Avenue Theatre.

Our co-president, Sharon Haugen, deftly moderated as candidate Joe Dooling and incumbent Andy Hunthausen stated reasons they are running and answered questions sent to them by our Local Government Committee. They also responded to queries submitted by the audience.

The forum was a model of decorum, and we all learned a great deal. Thanks to Sharon Haugen for moderating, Pat Bik for serving as timer, and Mickey Harlow and Felomina Garvin for quickly gathering audience questions.

Watch the recording on [Helena Civic TV's website](#).

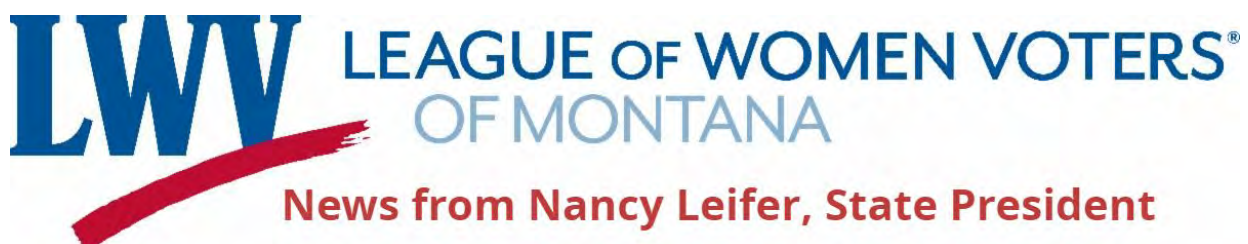
Cor Encabo at the Capitol with LWVHA Members



Bob Jones, Cor Encabo, Cherri Jones, Julie Huntington, Sharon Haugen, Ann Gilkey, Mickey Harlow, Wendy Wheeler, Elizabeth Hale, and Connie Griffith.

Members of LWVHA hosted LWVMT's Mansfield Fellow, Ms. Cor Encabo, during the week of September 22. Cor is interested in all forms of civic engagement, with a focus on youth development and inclusivity. The Montana Historical Society arranged a tour of the Capitol for us; here we stand in front of Montana artist Hadley Ferguson's mural, "Women Build Montana: Community." Look closely at the sandwich board – it lists "League of Women Voters" in its "Notes for Women!" - *Cherri Jones*

On Wednesday, October 9, Cor will present a Montana LWV-hosted Zoom workshop with suggestions for engaging younger members. **The Zoom link is in the next article.**



LWV Montana October Events

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6 - 5:00 pm - Butte

Preserving our Democracy: Action Items for Every Montana Citizen

In-person at the Covellite Theater, 215 W. Broadway, Butte

Join the LWV MT and Forward Montana for an evening discussion with two former Governors of Montana on what you can do to preserve our democracy.

- Marc Racicot, 21st Governor of Montana (R, 1993-2001)
- Steve Bullock, 24th Governor of Montana (D, 2013-2021)
- Moderator: Evan Barrett, Montana Constitutional Historian

This event is in-person only, but will be recorded and available later.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9 - 7:00 pm

How to Engage Youth in the League of Women Voters

ZOOM LINK: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81168000970>. Pre-registration is not necessary.

Join all four local Leagues for an evening presentation from the state League's Mansfield Visiting Fellow Corina "Cor" Encabo on how to engage young people in the League and in League activities. Cor is a mid-career Fellow from the Philippines where she runs student engagement programs at the University level.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30 - 5:00 pm

Braver Angels Zoom Training for League Members

Via Zoom - You must register in advance to get the link. [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

Come join other Montana League members for a LWVMT-only Braver Angels training session titled "Depolarizing Within." This is a 3.5 hour workshop exclusively for LWV Montana members that teaches participants to look at their own attitudes towards the political "other," and develop strategies for engaging in politics without demonizing and for constructively intervening in conversations with like-minded peers when those conversations stereotype or demonize the other side.

OCTOBER TRAININGS & VARIOUS DATES IN NOVEMBER

Montana Election Observation Project sponsored by The Carter Center

Learn more and sign up here: <https://mteoi.org/observation>.

Are you eager to do something to support the integrity of the 2024 general election? The Carter Center needs volunteers! The Carter Center is sponsoring the Montana Election Observation Initiative, a nonpartisan observation effort designed to increase trust and transparency around elections. Volunteers will be trained to understand the laws, procedures and safeguards in Montana's electoral process and will verify that those procedures are consistently and correctly followed.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20 - 5:30 - 8:30 pm

Mark your Calendars now for the second Braver Angels workshop

Via Zoom - You must register in advance for the Zoom link. [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

The Family and Politics workshop teaches participants how to preserve family bonds while staying true to their values and political beliefs. Although the focus is on family relationships, you can use these strategies with any loved one. You'll have some fun in this workshop – it won't be all serious. After all, we all come from quirky families.

Hope to see you at these events!

Sincerely,

Nancy Leifer, President, LWV of Montana

Government Committee Welcomes New Member and Announces Observer Corps



The September membership meeting provided the Government Committee with one new member for a total of eight members. Denise Pengeroth, who is also Helena League Board Secretary, is our new member. Sue Hoell and Mary (Mickey) Harlow serve as co-chairs and Pat Bik, Bob Jones, Sharon Haugen, Filomena Garvin, and Anne Stites Hausrath are members.

Observer Corps: Eight League members volunteered to serve on the new League Observer Corps at the membership meeting.

Observers are an important part of the League grassroots program. They help to promote government transparency by keeping elected and appointed officials on notice that someone is watching what decisions are being made and how they are being made. Observers are also our League "ambassadors," introducing themselves to the officials

they are observing. The public who attend these meetings like to talk to League members and ask questions about the League. League Observers only observe and never testify or make public comment on issues being discussed.

City of Helena Mayor and Commission: Mary Ann George, Bob Jones, Clare Kearns

Lewis and Clark County Commission: Stephanie Wallace, Connie Griffith, Mary Beth Linder

Helena School Board: Cherri Jones, Katherine Anderson

Hometown Helena: Mickey Harlow will report on this early morning meeting of Helena citizens who share community news and activities. Her report from the September 19 and 27 meetings (Tanzanian refugees, Hope Center Ministry in Clancy, new Helena Food Share building, local candidate introductions, and appreciation for the League's work in the community) can be [downloaded here](#).

Observer Corps reports will be archived in the Members-Only section of the [Montana LWV website](#). When you click on the link, you'll be prompted to log in or create an account. Your membership needs to be verified before access is allowed. Please allow a day or two and then log in OR send an email to lww.helena@gmail.com to let us know you've registered and need to be verified as a member.

Mary (Mickey) Harlow and Sue Hoell, co-chairs, Government Committee

VOTER REGISTRATION NEWS

Kudos to our Wonderful Volunteers!

By Rebecca Johnson, Chair, Voter Services

As of October 1, 2024, we have registered **901 voters** so far this election year. This is all possible by our team of amazing volunteers.

Remember, ballots will be mailed out October 11th and volunteers will help deliver Independent Record voter guides around town.

SHOUT OUTS TO VR VOLUNTEERS!

- Thank you Cherri, Darien, Niki, Laura and Rebecca for registering students at Helena High School!
- Thank you Clare, Marjean, Felomina, and Joanne for registering voters at the Naturalization Ceremony in Great Falls on September 19th.
- Thank you Clare, Laura and Rebecca for registering voters at the County Jail.
- Thank you Tana and Nancy for registering voters at the Farmers Market!
- Thank you Chandra, Tana and Rebecca for registering voters at the NAMI Walk event.
- Thank you DeeDee and Carrie for registering voters at Touchmark.
- Thank you Laura for having a table at St. Paul's Welcoming Sunday event.
- Thank you to the outstanding team of volunteers for all their incredible work on National Voter Registration Day: DeeDee Cress, Cherri Jones, Laura Gerlach, Nancy Perry, Darien Scott, Mary Johnson, Jamie Dolan, Tana Meeds, Janice Frisch, Sher Ehret, JoAnne Thune, Clare Kearns, Susan Epstein, Marjean Heisler, Susan Duncan, Stephanie Wallace, and Rebecca Johnson.
- Thank you Pat and Sher for registering voters at Senior Commodity Days at Food Share.
- Thank you Felomina and Lynn for checking all the VR drop boxes around town.

It has been an outstanding month for voter registration!

And, to top it all off, the **City of Helena** proclaimed September 17, 2024 as National Voter Registration Day. **Lewis and Clark County** proclaimed "the week of September 16 through September 20, 2024 as Voter Registration Week in Lewis and Clark County." We'll publish the proclamations on our website soon.

2024 NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY IN HELENA!

On National Voter Registration Day, we had 17 volunteers who worked from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm on September 17, 2024, to help register 76 voters at 25 different VR events at Shodair, Starbucks, Library, Fire Tower Coffee Shop, St. Paul's Shower to Empower, Guardian Apartments, Carroll College, Helena College (2 Campuses), Our Place, ME Anderson, Stewart Homes, Van's Thriftway, Walmart, and the Windbag.



Sheri Waller at the Library



Nancy Perry, Rebecca Johnson and Lauren Genach at the Library



Sher Ehret at the Helena College Airport Campus



Cherri Jones and Mary Johnson at the Library



Cherri Jones and Jamie Dolan at Starbucks



Mary Johnson, Darien Scott, and Rebecca Johnson at the Library

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

Our volunteers do amazing voter registration work all across the Helena area. Voter registration is an incredible experience and new volunteers are always needed. Please join us!



CIVIC ED PRESENTATIONS MARCH ON!

Our team of presenters were also very busy this past month giving Suffrage Timeline presentations for six classes at Helena High School, for students at PAL High School (see above), at Edgewood Senior Center, and at Boyd Andrew Community Services along with the Nitty Gritty of Voting presentation. Thank you to Cherri, Darien, Niki, Laura, and Rebecca for your time and enthusiasm to teach folks about the importance of learning the history of our voting rights and of protecting these rights.

MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE BY 12/31/24 FOR MOST MEMBERS

Members who joined or renewed prior to April 1, 2024 (the start of our fiscal year), need to renew by December 31, 2024. Reminder postcards will go out this month to all members

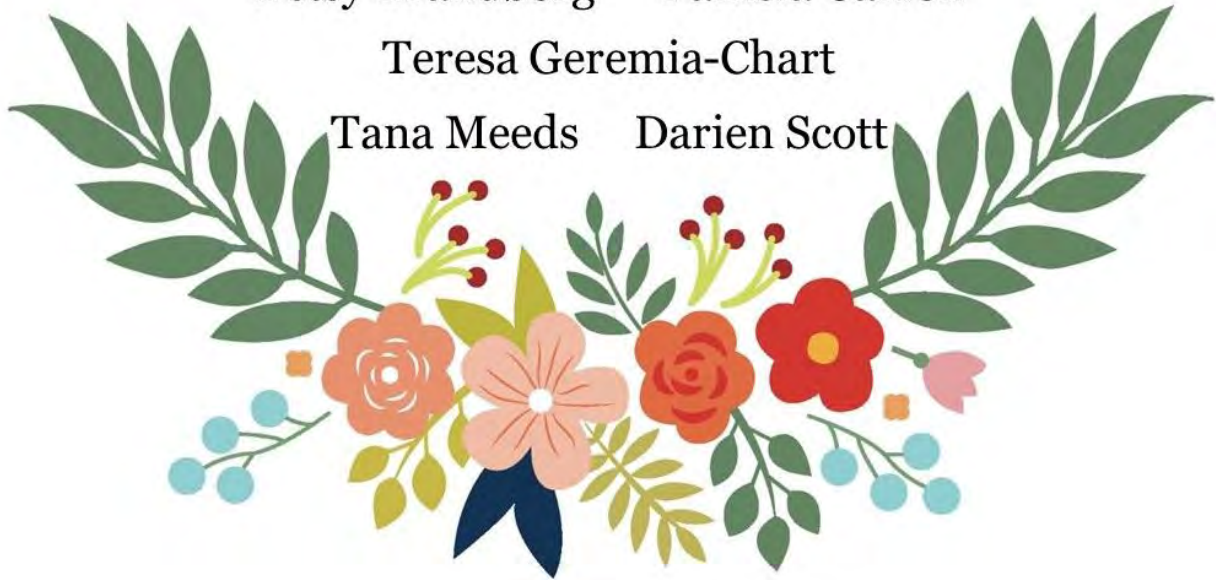
[RENEW ONLINE HERE](#)

Welcoming our New and Renewing Members in September!

Betsy Brandborg Pamela Carroll

Teresa Geremia-Chart

Tana Meeds Darien Scott



2025-26 Board Members

Co-president: Sharon Haugen

Co-president: Cherri Jones

Treasurer: Connie Griffith

Secretary: Denise Pengeroth

At-Large Board Members:

Ann Gilkey

Mary "Mickey" Harlow

Julie Huntington

Committee Chairs

Book & Discussion Group: Sue Hoell & Niki Whearty

Communications: Patti Borneman & Becky Piske

Government: Mickey Harlow & Sue Hoell

Membership: Wendy Wheeler

Nominating: Becky Piske

Program: Mary Johnson

Publicity: Marga Lincoln

VOTE411: Patrice Anderson & Becky Piske

Voter Services: Rebecca Johnson

The Voter Editor: Patti Borneman

Coming up in the November issue of the Helena Area LWV Voter News

- The November issue will be published after the November 5 election and include big thanks for members' dedication and involvement, perspectives on the election season, and ways to recharge and rejuvenate for the 2025 Legislative Session.
- Observer Corps Reports
- Outreach Circle
- Membership Renewals
- News from LWVMT
- November Membership Meeting - TBD
- Book & Discussion Group



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