



## VOTER

December 2021/  
January 2022

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

### President's Message ~ Beverly Johnson-Torelli

#### HAPPY HOLIDAYS and Have a Wonderful 2022!

The holiday season brings to mind "Peace on Earth." It gives us the hope, cheer and optimism that this worthy goal is within our reach. The traditions and celebrations with family, friends and others help us feel good will toward mankind. Although COVID-19 is still a presence in our lives, the holiday season of 2021 promises to be better than 2020.

That said, it was decided at the November 18<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, that our League functions would remain virtual at the present time. That includes:

December 4<sup>th</sup> LWVWA Action Workshop from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

No Holiday Party or December Board Meeting

January 15<sup>th</sup> Program Planning from 10:00 a.m. to noon

January 22<sup>nd</sup> Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m.

January 24<sup>th</sup> Lobby Day

A decision will be made at the January Board Meeting regarding the League's 102<sup>nd</sup> birthday celebration in February.

LWVBF members are invited to participate in any and all League activities, board meetings, and events. Please contact me at [sasjoh@aol.com](mailto:sasjoh@aol.com) if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

The state League is asking the following questions of the local Leagues:

If you have ideas or suggestions or would like to fill the Investment Committee role they are seeking, please let me know so that we can give them our feedback.

[SasJoh@aol.com](mailto:SasJoh@aol.com)

*Below are the questions.*

*1. Council still looking at ideas – what would you and your members like to go to? League Management – what would you include? Speakers on topics?*

*2. How do you like the TMIL/VOTER (This month in the League) redesign? Anyone want a month to show off their league?*

*3. Idea of statewide sharing of programs, some from local Leagues, others would be state sponsored. (LWVWA does Civics, Voter Services, Action, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion). What topics would you be interested in - would you like to present something you're doing state-wide?*

*4. Culture – League culture so all feel welcomed and included. Preferences versus requirements; tasks and relationships. (They come for the policy, stay for the people)*

*7. Investment Committee candidates – someone who knows something about investments*

*8. Lobby Day/Week preferences- survey coming*

## **Redistricting**

Please follow the link below from Lunell Haught, LWVWA President.

It is an op-ed from the Seattle Times related to redistricting that she co-authored with Coalition for Open Government: <https://bit.ly/3xCLrYs>

## **They Represent You (TRY) Pamphlets**

The TRYs include names and contact information for the President, Vice President, members of Congress from Washington, well as our State Senators, Representatives, Officials, Legislators, and local County Offices, Judges, City Councils, School Boards, etc. They are typically given out to the auditors' offices, libraries and other entities, as well as at any and all in-person League events. An electronic copy can also be found on our League website at [lwv-bf.org](http://lwv-bf.org) under "Publications." Updating the information and producing a new one after the election season is a yearly task. Please let Diane Molleson [molleson@frontier.com](mailto:molleson@frontier.com) know if you would like to help with this.

## Treasurer's Report ~ Shirley Sonnichsen

At October 31, 2021:

**Checking is:**           \$8,670.92  
**Savings is:**           \$1,856.75  
**Total:**                \$10,527.68

**Income:**                \$1,060.00  
We received dues for \$860.00 and contributions of \$200.00

**Expenses:**             \$188.00  
\$188 for our post office box which went up from \$144.

**Membership and Dues:** We have 85 members including 7 students, 11 second in household. Two members have not yet paid but are included.

**Education Fund:** At the end of October the total Washington State Education fund for our Benton -Franklin league is \$4,514.00.

## November Table Talk: Washington State Tax Structure Work Group ~ Diane Molleson

On November 4, 2021, the LWVBF hosted a virtual Table Talk featuring the Washington State Tax Structure Work Group (TSWG). Comprised of bipartisan Washington State legislators, representatives from the Governor's office and Washington State's Department of Revenue, among others, the TSWG is exploring options to make Washington's tax code more "fair, adequate and transparent."

Noting that Washington State's tax structure has not been updated in more than 80 years, members from the group outlined the state's current tax code (sales tax, property tax and Business & Occupation (B&O) tax). They then explained different tax ideas for the future and asked for our feedback on a variety of scenarios. For instance, did we prefer progressive taxes or flat taxes, would we support adding a wealth tax and lowering sales and property taxes, and would we favor eliminating the B&O tax and replacing it with a Value Added Tax and/ or Employer Compensation Tax, among other scenarios. Their presentation can be viewed at this link:

<https://taxworkgroup.org/s/Tax-Town-Hall-Slide-Deck-Web>

The group is giving its presentation all over Washington and would like feedback. The new, shorter survey can be taken at this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/QQ6KNPH>

Many thanks to Lora Rathbone for arranging this very informative Table Talk.

## **Observer Corps ~ Diane Molleson**

The LWVBF has an Observer Corps where members attend and observe the workings of local governmental agencies with rule-making authority, such as city councils, school boards, ports, city planning commissions, irrigation districts, and library boards, among others. Observers attend the meetings of these agencies, listen, observe and make note of any information the Board may want to know. Typically, observers write up a short summary of the meeting that is distributed to our members.

We currently have members observing the Richland, and West Richland city councils and Richland school board meetings. Additional observers would be very welcome. With the decline of local news, observers serve a vital role in keeping us informed. Those interested in joining can check this link to see the meeting times for many local agencies.

<https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/embed?>

[src=wa04calendar@gmail.com](https://calendar.google.com/calendar/u/0/embed?src=wa04calendar@gmail.com)

For more information, please contact Diane Molleson at [molleson@frontier.com](mailto:molleson@frontier.com)

## **Membership, Engagement, and Leadership Development (MELD)**

**~ Polly Parton**

Membership, Engagement and Leadership Development (MELD) 11/15//2021

MELD calls provide a monthly interaction between Leagues to network, share ideas, accomplishments and best practices with guidance and mentorship from our coach Lynn Busacca. We are in a new Pod #4 this month with added members including Benton-Franklin, Thurston, Kitsap, Lewis and Clallam Counties. Our new State Liaison Jayne Freitag shares State and National resources with us and gives state leader summaries from the local Leagues. Our calls are usually 60 minutes, Lynn provides an agenda. Discussions are casual and productive. Some highlights of our last call are-

- Polly reported on B-F Table Talk on Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> from 2 speakers of Washington's Tax Structure Work Group. They presented, explained and took questions on how to make our state tax structure more equitable and stable (not increasing or decreasing the tax collections). An on-line survey followed for our input. Thank you to Lora Rathbone for arranging this!
- Maree Lerchen of Lewis County noted challenges in forming a new Unit at Large in a large in a sparsely populated area. Civil discourse is a likely topic for their largely conservative area. Upon retiring (January 2022) she has a goal of recruiting younger members. She plans to give League memberships to her 2 daughters (in Richland) for Christmas. She felt having a public face (President, Vice President) is important for local leagues.
- Carol Goss (Thurston League) said prior to some meetings, they have ½ hour meet-n-greet to help new members be more familiar with League. Their November program about Communications with Contentious Conversations had 180 RSVP and only 60 attended. Is this common?
- Shelley Kneip (Thurston was formerly of the Kitsap League) joined membership activities.
- Maren Halvorsen (Thurston League) works with Civics Ed Committee and Voter Services. Her challenge is for more young people to have League participation as a habit. She wants to strengthen and deepen her League. Exit surveys for non-renewing members could be helpful. A suggestion was to develop a simple *Survey Monkey* exit questionnaire.
- Lynn Busacca likes a phrase from a fellow member "Put your dues to work even if you can't". Lynn reviewed MELD progression was from MLD with *engagement* add a few years ago with the Ruth Shur donation. The meetings have evolved from a topic list to a cross pollination of ideas, which are very beneficial.
- Carol Larsen (Kitsap League) as Membership Chair remembered when she joined, *league jargon* was confusing as a new member and confirms the lack of socializing is challenging. Carol enjoys our round robin sharing each month. She did not get meaningful results when they tried to survey non-renewing members
- Jayne Freitag is our State Liaison (formerly of Seattle-King County League). She is involved with the Public Hospital District Work Group and the planning for the June State Council. The Council theme will be *Reconnect, Restore and Renew* and elections will be held at Council. Topics are being narrowed down but they still welcome suggestions.

We will skip December and change to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 5 pm in January as the new meeting date with younger members as our topic.

**Please contact Polly Parton if you would like to join in any Zoom meetings.**

[Polly.parton@yahoo.com](mailto:Polly.parton@yahoo.com)

## **League of Women Voters Name Badges ~ Janet Nail**

As we prepare for more in person meetings, we realized we need to bring our name tag orders up to date. As with so many things in League, Marilyn Perkins had taken charge of this project. With her passing and so many Zoom meetings where name tags were not needed, we overlooked this valuable accessory for in-person meetings and when representing League at community events.

Check to make sure you have a name badge. If not let me know, I will be placing an order next week. We order from a local company and know we have not placed an order since 02/01/2020 but they do not have a record of the names on the badges.

The League budget includes money to provide new members with a name badge free of charge when they join. The name badges are 3 inches by 4 inches. The name, League of Women Voters, is engraved in white on a blue background and the member's name is engraved below. There is a choice of having a pin-type badge or a magnet-type badge.

If you joined League and never received a badge, I need to know how you would like your name to appear on the badge and if you would like a pin-type or magnet-type badge. If you received a pin but have misplaced it, the charge is \$7.00 for the pin type and \$9.50 for the magnet type. Looking forward to those in-person meetings and seeing lots of blue name badges. Order today: [janet@janetnail.com](mailto:janet@janetnail.com).

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 15, 10:00am-noon ~ Zoom Program Planning

January 22, 6:00pm ~ Zoom Board Meeting All members are welcome to participate

January 24 ~ Lobby Day

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

### Mailing Address:

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P.O.Box 765  
Richland, WA 99352

#### OFFICERS:

President: Beverly Johnson-Torelli  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Diane Molleson  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Polly Parton  
Secretary: Sandra Hendry  
Treasurer: Shirley Sonnichsen

#### VOTER EDITOR:

Peggy Gregory

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Wendy Espinosa  
Ruvine Jimenez  
Janet Nail  
Lora Rathbone  
Ann Roberts

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