

# VOTER

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

September 2019

## From the President JoAnne Dimond

As summer comes to an end, League activities ramp up in September and October in anticipation of the November election. There will be opportunities to register voters and help with candidate forums. On Thursday evening, August 22, League members and guests attended our annual Women's Equality Day picnic in Richland and heard from our guest speakers, LoAnn Ayers from United Way and Marisol Lister from Planned Parenthood. The topic was the National Census, which will happen next year in 2020.

Our League will host a speaker from Humanities Washington on Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, 6 pm, at the Mid-Columbia Library on Union Street in Kennewick. National Voter Registration Day is coming up on September 24. Stay tuned for more information on this event.

## Civil Conversation in an Angry Age

Thursday, September 12, 6 p.m.  
Mid-Columbia Library (1620 S. Union St., Kennewick)

The League of Women Voters of Benton and Franklin Counties invites you to attend a public lecture presented by Dr. David Smith. He explores how we can have meaningful, respectful conversations on notoriously difficult topics like politics, religion and morality. In our increasingly polarized political environment, Smith provides participants with the tools needed to embark on more thoughtful, fruitful discussions.

Dr. Smith has a PhD in religious studies and currently teaches at the Osner Lifelong Learning Institute at the University of Washington.

This event is made possible by a grant from Humanities Washington. For more information, see <https://www.humanities.org/program/speakers-bureau/>

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JoAnn Bengtson  
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## Appointed

### Directors:

Christine Grantham  
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# Voter Registration Day on September 24

## Beverly Johnson-Torelli

With Voter Registration Day approaching on September 24, the LWVBF is reaching out to the area high schools to register eligible students and offer civics education. The schools that have responded so far are:

Kamiakin High School—September 3 from 6 to 7 p.m. by the 300 Building during their Resource Fair. Tables and chairs will be set up. Arrival time is 5:30 p.m.

Legacy High School—Back to School Carnival, time and date TBD; they are also interested in civics education.

If you would like to help at these events, please contact Beverly Johnson -Torelli at 521-0947 or [sasjoh@aol.com](mailto:sasjoh@aol.com) for the Kennewick schools. To register voters at other events this fall, contact Marilyn Perkins at [jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com](mailto:jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com) or 783-8610.

## Candidate Forums in October

### Kay Ottem and Marilyn Perkins

The LWVBF is planning several candidate forums before the general election on November 5<sup>th</sup>. The forums will all be held in October. Here is the schedule so far:

The Richland and West Richland candidate forums will be on Monday, October 7 at 6 p.m. at the Richland Public Library (955 Northgate Drive, Richland).

The Pasco candidate forum will be on Tuesday, October 8 at 6 p.m. at the Pasco Police Department Regional Training Facility (204 West Clark Street, Pasco).

The Kennewick candidate forum is on Thursday, October 10 at 6 p.m. in the Commons Area at **Tri Tech** (5929 W. Metaline Ave., Kennewick).

There will also be a forum for the Benton City candidates, date and time TBD.

We will need help at the candidate forums to sign in the candidates, time their responses, collect and write questions. Please contact Marilyn Perkins at [jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com](mailto:jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com) or 783-8610 if you can volunteer.

## From LWVWA: Sign Up for TWIL (This Week in League)

Your League can be the most informed in Washington (yes, we can keep track of this). TWIL (This Week in League) is THE way friends and members get the inside scoop on neighboring Leagues and the State League issues, ideas, and events. It is quick to scan, there are [copies archived](#) on the [For Members](#) section of LWVWA.org. The goal is to have 100% member subscribers, and 95% of them regularly opening the link to check it out. If you have signed up for this and aren't getting it check your spam filter. If you haven't signed up for it, or you aren't sure, [sign up here](#).

## LWV: Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI)

The League's Shur Fellows have prepared a glossary of commonly used words as part of their work on DEI. Here's this month's word:

**Culture:** A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.

*Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit.*

# Women's Equality Day Picnic Held on August 22

## Polly Parton

We had a beautiful evening at Howard Amon Park celebrating the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment that gave women the right to vote. Our speakers for the evening were LoAnn Ayers, President and CEO of United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties and Marisol Lister of Planned Parenthood. Both are volunteering for a successful census count, and they explained its importance to our community. Each person not counted in the census results in \$2,000 lost each year in federal funding. Undercounting may result from homelessness, moving populations, multi-family households, mistrust or fear of our government, and various other reasons.

Please watch for your notice in April 2020 with instructions for how to fill out the information online. After two unanswered prompts, a paper form is used and/or a census taker will knock on your door. Libraries and other public locations will have kiosks available to enter an online form for those with no reliable Internet. To prevent fraud, no email or phone calls are used. The Census Bureau is prohibited by law from sharing any information on individuals with any other public agency. It was noted that the citizenship question is NOT on the census.

Temporary employment for part time and full-time local census takers will be available at \$18 per hour after training. We as individuals and informed League members can spread the word of the value and importance of the upcoming census.

## Treasurer's Report

### Shirley Sonnichsen

We started the new fiscal year FY2019-FY2020 with a new budget of \$9,375.

On July 31, 2019:

Checking is \$1,755.88  
Savings is \$1,856.35  
Total \$3,612.23

Checking: \$1,755
Savings: \$1,856
Total: \$3,612

Income: \$150

We received two new member dues for \$150.

Expenses: \$675.84

PayPal fees for the two new members were \$4.96

\$10 for the Secretary of State Incorporation fee

\$29 for the picnic Pavilion at Howard Amon

\$392 for the first Per Member Payment (PMP) to National (LWVUS)

\$239.88 for the first PMP to the State League (LWVWA)

Membership: We have 60 members with the four new members: Laura Hendrickson, Karen Ringwood and student members Brissa Perez and Sabastian Marichalar. The dues letter should be out the end of this month or the beginning of next month. You can send your dues in now that the new fiscal year has begun. Please make the check out to LWV-BF and send to P. O. Box 765, Richland, WA 99352 or pay through PayPal on our website [www.lwv-bf.org](http://www.lwv-bf.org). Please consider adding \$10 or more as a contribution to League. Even if you don't have to pay dues this September, a contribution would be welcome. These extra dollars will help pay for students to join. We only keep \$24 from the \$75 for regular members and \$9.50 from the \$35 for second-in-household. Student members are free to our League, LWVWA and LWVUS.

# League of Women Voters of Benton and Franklin Counties: A History

The Benton-Franklin League of Women Voters began as two separate leagues: Richland and Kennewick.

The Richland League was organized in the spring of 1947. Its first task was to register voters for the presidential election of 1948. Since Richland, as part of the Federal reservation, was unincorporated and essentially under county rule, the nearest registrar was in Prosser. League members were deputized to register voters and proceeded not only to register over 11,000 persons, but also to draw up precinct lines and street guides. On April 12, 1957, the Richland League applied for and received Incorporation by the State of Washington. The names of 47 women appear on the incorporation papers.

Meanwhile, the Kennewick League started as a Provisional League about November 1954. It attained League status in March 1956. The first accomplishment of the Kennewick League was the publication of a booklet entitled "Know Your County," in 1957-58. In 1965, the Kennewick League became the League of Pasco-Kennewick.

In April 1971, the Pasco-Kennewick League and the Richland League merged to form the Benton-Franklin Counties League. Apparently the merger occurred because of the efforts of some of the board members at that time. It took about a year to complete all the necessary paperwork and to work out all the problems, such as from which League were officers to be chosen, whether to be a bi-county or a tri-county League and how to go about the merger. The reasons given for the merger were: "Our community was and is growing together rapidly. The organization needs to be in a position of encouraging this consolidation. It will let us make better use of our woman power and be a more effective and efficient force in the community."

The first local program for the newly-formed League was a review and comparison of the city governments of the three cities. Over the next several years local studies included the justice system and facilities; "An Evaluation of the Merger of Benton-Franklin Counties"; Port Districts; taxes – those that are properly exempt in the two counties; and local government budgets.

**Note:** This history was compiled from a 1976 report found in LWVBF files. Many thanks to Marilyn Perkins for finding it and Judy Golberg for typing up the electronic version.

## Voter Registration at WSU Tri-Cities Marilyn Perkins

JoAnn Bengston contacted WSU-TC about registering students and her timing was perfect as we were able to have a table at their community activity fair in August. We had a prime location, at the entrance to the building, plus we were close to the food.

Luckily, Valerie Moffit was also able to help. Not having registered people before, she was a natural. Though most of the people we spoke with were registered voters, we did manage to sign up a few new ones, and we processed a change of address for the Chancellor.

The highlight of my day was when a young student recognized me from registering him at a Naturalization Ceremony over a year ago. He is from Iraq, has his AA from CBC, and is working on an engineering degree at WSU. I remembered him because he was so outgoing and positive at the ceremony. Hopefully there will be a time when we can all meet him.

Last spring some of us attended the dedication of a ballot drop box on the WSU-TC campus. Student government leaders took the initiative to get one on campus, which is not an easy undertaking. After talking to students, we learned that Franklin County students use it as well. (Continued on next page)

## Voter Registration at WSU Tri-Cities (Continued from previous page)

Benton County election workers date stamp the ballots and get them to Franklin County, where they are willing to accept them. It's good to know our local officials make the extra effort to ensure every ballot submitted on time is counted.

### LWVBF Advocacy

### Lora Rathbone

#### TAKE ACTION: Restore the Voting Rights Act

[http://participate.lwv.org/c/10065/p/dia/action4/common/public/?action\\_KEY=13739&utm\\_source=actionalert&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=080619](http://participate.lwv.org/c/10065/p/dia/action4/common/public/?action_KEY=13739&utm_source=actionalert&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=080619)

#### From LWVWA: 50-State Redistricting Campaign

The League of Women Voters US will be leading a national 50-state redistricting campaign focused on creating fair political maps nationwide—the People Powered Fair Maps Campaign. Although Washington is in much better shape than many states, we'll be part of this effort.

The June 27, 2019 decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in three partisan gerrymandering cases (including *Rucho v. League of Women Voters of North Carolina*) was a call to action for the League of Women Voters. When the court decided to take a hands-off approach to redistricting, the League decided to jump into a people powered fair maps campaign to ensure fair representation across the country.

Because the Supreme Court has said they won't hear any more of these cases, **state legislators have a green light to continue this undemocratic process that silences voters.** We don't have an equal playing field when it comes to election maps across the country, and the redistricting process set to begin in 2021 is in danger. We do not have to rely on the Supreme Court to solve partisan gerrymandering.

It would be good if some of our members would attend this webinar to see if there's any work we should do on the east side:

Wednesday, September 4—People Powered Fair Maps Campaign Tele Townhall, 3 p.m.

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/9102504223989902859>

#### Electoral College:

A federal appeals court ruled late Tuesday, August 20 that presidential electors who cast the actual ballots for president and vice president are free to vote as they wish and cannot be required to follow the results of the popular vote in their states. The decision could give a single elector the power to decide the outcome of a presidential election — if the popular vote results in an apparent Electoral College tie. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/politics/faithless-electors-a-court-ruling-just-changed-how-we-pick-our-president/ar-AAG8tdZ?ocid=spartandhp>

## Upcoming Events

**Saturday, Sept. 7**

**Celebrating Our Immigrant Community Through the Arts**

5:00-8:00 p.m.

Monarcha Winery (421 E. Columbia Dr., Kennewick)

Art exhibit includes original art by immigrants and first generation children. Art, wine and food will be available for purchase. Hosted by the Tri-Cities Immigrant Coalition.

## More Upcoming Events

**Thursday, Sept. 19**

**Climate Changes Health: A Discussion with Dr. Sara Cate**

7:00-8:30 p.m.

Benton-Franklin Health District (7102 W. Okanogan Place, Kennewick)

Hosted by the Benton-Franklin Health District and the Tri-Cities Citizens' Climate Lobby.

## LWVBF Calendar

### September 2019

**Thursday, September 12—“Civil Conversation in an Angry Age” Humanities Washington Guest Speaker, 6 pm, Mid-Columbia Library (1620 S. Union St., Kennewick)**

**Tuesday, September 17—Table Talk: Perspectives from the Kennewick Teachers' Strike, 6 pm, Tagaris Winery (844 Tulip Lane, Richland)**

**Thursday, September 19— Business and Planning Meeting, 5:30 pm, Benton Franklin Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail). All members are welcome.**

**Tuesday, September 24— Voter Registration Day, register voters at local high schools**

### October 2019

**Monday, October 7—Richland and West Richland candidate forums, 6 pm, Richland Public Library (955 Northgate Dr., Richland)**

**Tuesday, October 8— Pasco candidate forum, 6 pm, Pasco Police Dept. Regional Training Facility (204 West Clark St., Pasco)**

**Thursday, October 10—Kennewick candidate forum, 6 pm, Tri-Tech Commons area (5929 W. Metaline Ave., Kennewick)**

**Thursday, October 17— Business and Planning Meeting, 6 pm, Benton Franklin Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail). All members are welcome.**

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

League of Women Voters of  
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