



VOTER

December 2023/January 2024

www.lwv-bf.org

President's Message ~ Diane Molleson

After all the activities focused on Election Day, December is a quieter time for Leagues. It can be a time to reflect on what we learned, how our efforts benefited our community, and what we hope to accomplish in the year ahead.

Join us for our **Holiday Party** on **December 3** at the East Benton County Historical Society and Museum where we will have a guest speaker, snacks to share, and the opportunity for you to meet and mingle with your fellow League members. Please feel free to bring a guest. We look forward to seeing you there!

Please join us for our **Program Planning Meeting** on **January 13**. Please come, share your ideas and suggestions. There we can discuss what you would like our local League to do, suggest a study or action, and give the National League ideas for what to focus on in the next two years.

Happy Holidays and all the best in 2024!

Holiday Party

This year's Holiday Party will be on **Sunday, December 3, from 1:00-3:00pm** at the **East Benton County Historical Society and Museum** at 205 W. Keewaydin Dr. in Kennewick.

Our guest speaker is Matt Truman, Coordinator of the Benton-Franklin Housing Consortium and the Executive Director of the Housing Authority of the City of Pasco and Franklin County. He will talk about how the newly formed Consortium will be better able to serve those experiencing homelessness.

Members can bring an appetizer or dessert or non-alcoholic drink to share. (We do not have a permit to serve alcohol in the museum.) We will have coffee, sparkling

sodas and water on hand. As always, guests, family and potential members are welcome.

Program Planning Meeting and Brunch

Our annual Program Planning meeting will be held on Saturday, January 13 from 10:00am - Noon at Diane Molleson's home (4375 Kimberly Street, Richland). At this meeting we will plan our programs for the coming year. In even numbered years, we can also suggest ideas for the National League to focus on in the next two years. If members would like to review our local positions, they are available on our website (www.lwv-bf.org).

We need your ideas! Please come and share food, 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. All members are welcome.

Treasurer's Report ~ Shirley Sonnichsen

On October 31, 2023:

Checking is:	\$8,260.56
Savings is:	\$1,857.14
Total:	\$10,117.70

Income: \$2,180.00

\$2,250.00 was received for dues. \$280.00 for second- in -household and \$280.00 in contributions.

Expenses: \$1,133.00

\$552.00 was paid to the National League for the second quarter Per Member Payment (PMP); \$327.75 for the State PMP; \$27.32 in PayPal fees; \$226.00 for the annual post office box fee. Beverly Johnson-Torelli made an In kind \$100.00 payment to EBCHS for the September picnic. Please, if you have "in kind" payments for our local league submit them to me.

Membership and Dues:

Please welcome Katie Larson, our newest league member. Our membership is currently 98 but taking into account that students (10) don't pay as well as members who joined after January 31, 2023. Of the members who needed to pay dues, 66 members have paid and 9 have not. This includes new members and 11 second-in-household. If you have not paid your dues, please do so at your earliest convenience.

Ed Fund: \$10,590.00

No changes from last month and no report from the state league.

League Advocacy ~ Lora Rathbone

League Advocacy for the Washington State Legislative Session

The 2024 Washington State Legislative Session begins on **January 8**. It will be a short session this year, ending on **March 7**. And now is the time to prepare!

1. **Attend the LWVWA Annual Action Workshop** on Saturday, **December 2** from 9:00am-3:00pm on Zoom. Attendees will meet with Lobby Team members to learn about the issues coming up in the 2024 legislative session.
2. **Attend Democracy Lobby Week:**
Democracy Lobby Week, co-sponsored with Fix Democracy First, is scheduled for the evenings of **January 22 through 26** at 6:00pm-8:00pm. During the evenings, legislative updates are provided on specific issues; and during the day, local League and Fix Democracy First members can participate in meetings with their legislators.

Registration details for both virtual events are coming soon and will be posted on the State League's website: <https://lwvwa.org>

Meet with the legislators in your district during Democracy Lobby Week.

Please contact Lora Rathbone, ldrathbone@outlook.com then we will schedule a Zoom meeting prior to speaking with our legislators to plan and practice what to say. We will meet with each legislative district separately.

3. **Register for the weekly LWVWA Legislative Newsletter.** This makes it easy to follow the legislative process. It includes concise summaries of the proposed bills, updates on key issues, and action alerts. Subscribe [HERE](#). Or you may wish to just receive my email updates that narrow down the action alert to a smaller number of bills our league will follow. Please let me know if you want to be added to my list. ldrathbone@outlook.com
4. **Attend the Legislative Workshop** on Thursday, **December 7**, at 7:00pm at the Richland Public Library. Hosted by the 8th LD legislators, "to cover the ins and outs of the legislative process for both veterans and beginners alike." You can RSVP on Facebook [here](#).

MELD ~ Leona Hassing

The November meeting of Pod #4. Those attending were

Facilitator, Lunell Haught

LWV Board representative: Susan Baird-Joshi

Pod members: Carol Goss, Thurston County and Leona Hassing, Benton Franklin County.

The task was to preview page 13 from the MELD handbook and come up with examples of ideas your league is planning to promote membership.

Some of the ideas brought forth were:

Should your board reflect the demographics of your county? 2% of league membership is under 65 years of age. How to entice younger members. Push issues like climate change since the younger groups see that as an issue that will affect them. Recruiting from colleges. There is a Citizen Temperance Day in January. High school teachers, per OSPI, can register students in their government classes. This action is by suggestion only. League could offer their services at that time. When setting up a display table at an event, strive to reach out to groups such as PRIDE, faith communities etc.

How does league partner with a partisan group without it reflecting on the non-partisan nature of league?

MELD will meet again on the fourth Monday in January.

Washington State Redistricting Task Force Workshop ~ Leona Hassing

The Redistricting Workshop held on Saturday, November 18, drew 40 participants from across the state. Included in that number were 4 members from our unit. That's 10%.

Facilitators for the workshop were Allison McCaffree, LWV Redistricting and Census issue Chair and Karen Crowley, LWV Snohomish president.

The workshop started with a PowerPoint showing a review of the progress of the task force to date and a discussion of the past commission and their failure to draw equitable districts, the use of backroom chats and the perception of partisan favoritism.

Included in the PowerPoint was a slide showing the anticipated timeline over the next 8 years. The years 2023-24 will focus on gaining champions, solidifying partners, building relationships, and educating the public. Two chat rooms provided the opportunity for individual participation in small groups.

#1. "Why changing the structure of Redistricting Commission is needed?" Currently 5 out of 6 legislative districts are not competitive. People are less likely to vote if the same legislator is elected each cycle.

#2. Allies and Partners

The task was to brainstorm within groups to ask them to become allies/partners. The generated list was impressive. One league member mentioned the civics classes her League was teaching and having a possible ally/partner with the students and teachers.

Resources are available at
LWVWA.org/Redistricting
Tinyurl.com/rrcfaq

The workshop ended with this note...
Reform only works...if you participate.

Fix Democracy First Happy Hour Upcoming Topics/Schedules

- **December 6**, 5:00pm-6:30pm ~ - The Future of Public Banking in Washington and Beyond with Marco Rosaire Rossi, [Washingtonians For Public Banking](#)
- **December 13**, 5:00pm-6:30pm ~ Universal Voting with [100% Democracy](#)
- **December 20, 27 & Jan 3** ~ CANCELED - No Democracy Happy Hours - Happy Holidays!

Cindy Black, CEO, Fix Democracy First is a partner with the League. She joins us during Lobby Week and also joins us at other events .

2024 Scholarship Committee ~ Judy Golberg

Tuesday, **January 9**, 6:30pm via Zoom, there will be an organizing meeting for the Scholarship Committee. If you are interested in helping, please let me know and a Zoom link will be sent to you. We will discuss last year's process, update what or how we managed the program, set a timeline, and proceed from there. As in the past, the scholarships will be awarded at our annual meeting held in May. Thanks for your interest. Jgolberg@charter.net or call 509-627-5347.

Wanted! Website Administrator ~ Judy Golberg

Our League is looking for one or two people who are willing to learn how to manage our website (www.lwv-bf.org). There will be tutoring available and there is a great resource already available for self-study. Are you curious? Please contact Judy Golberg, jgolberg@charter.net or 509-627-5347 if you have questions.

LWVBF Book Club ~ Polly Parton

For November we discussed *Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown. It was a definite thumbs up! We will take the month of December off. For January we will read *Mad Honey* by Jennifer Finley Boulanger and Jodi Picoult; which was delayed to January because of book availability. February choice will be *How the Penguins Saved Veronica* by Hazel Prior. Join us **January 8**, 6:00pm via Zoom by emailing or texting Polly Parton to be added to the link. We keep discussion to one hour. Polly.parton@yahoo.com or 509-551-3818

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 2, 9:00am-3:00pm ~ LWVWA Annual Action Workshop via Zoom

December 3, 1:00pm-3:00pm ~ Holiday Party at East Benton County Historical Museum 205 Keewaydin Drive Kennewick

January 8 6:00pm ~ Book club via Zoom

January 9, 6:30pm ~ Scholarship committee meeting via Zoom

January 13, 10:00am-noon ~ Program Planning Meeting at Diane Molleson's house

January 16, 6:00pm ~ Business and Planning/Board Meeting via Zoom

January 22-26, 6:00pm-8:00pm ~ Lobby Week

Email us at:

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Mailing Address:

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OFFICERS:

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