



## VOTER

February 2021

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

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

2021 has started out as a memorable year for a variety of reasons. On January 6<sup>th</sup>, the unbelievably horrific insurrection at the Capitol Building stunned the nation. As the situation developed, Capitol Policeman Eugene Goodman showed us the bravery and courage of a true hero as he diverted the ensuing crowd that was right on his heels, possibly saving the lives of Congress members, especially former Vice President Mike Pence. Later, Representative Andy Kim was observed single-handedly cleaning up the trash in the rotunda, a symbol of democracy that he reveres.

Then on January 20<sup>th</sup>, a historic inauguration took place. The glass ceiling was finally struck down as Kamala Harris became Vice President. As a woman and a person of color, she is a role model for so many people in the nation who now know they too can realize their dreams. At seventy-eight, Joe Biden is three years older than the baby boomer generation and the oldest President ever at the time of his election. Even though he is the ultimate old white guy, his staff selections are the most diverse ever.

The two most popular figures who emerged from the Inauguration were potential 2036 Presidential Candidate, Amanda Gorman, the 22-year-old National Youth Poet Laureate, who put our thoughts into words we couldn't find ourselves, and Bernie Sanders, who has now appeared in countless memes, not for his politics but for his mittens! With this unexpected occurrence, Bernie has decided to make and sell the pictures on souvenir items and donate the money, particularly to Meals on Wheels.

The allegations of election fraud culminating in the events of January 6<sup>th</sup> have literally made an assault on our Democracy. Now we know just how fragile and precious something we have always taken for granted really is. League must take the challenge and remain undaunted in continuing our march to Making Democracy

Work. “If not us, who? If not now, when?” With that in mind, please read the articles in this Voter that depict many different opportunities for you to get involved in League. If you are a new member, welcome!

## **Treasurer’s Report~ Shirley Sonnichsen**

At December 31, 2020:

<b>Checking is</b>	<b>\$6,696.72</b>
<b>Savings is</b>	<b><u>\$1,856.61</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$8,553.33</u></b>

**Income: \$700**

We received \$450 in dues and \$250 in member contributions.

**Expenses: ~\$8.47 – PayPal fees**

**Membership and dues:** We have 72 members including new members Kelly Doyle, Naomi Young, and Naomi Solomon-Oblath. Members who have not paid have been removed from the membership list except for students, those who joined after February 1<sup>st</sup> and lifetime members. The National Database will be finalized before January 31<sup>st</sup>. The next fiscal year Per Member Payment is determined by our membership at February 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Education Fund: \$604**

We have \$604 to use for TRY’s or other projects if needed.

**Budget Committee:**

A 2 or 3 person Budget committee has been formed to establish a budget for FY21-22 which will be voted on at the Annual Meeting in May. The committee will meet in February or March most likely via Zoom. The Treasurer does the worksheet but cannot be the Chair. Let the Treasurer know if you are interested in being on the committee. It’s a learning experience. [Jsson.dawgs@charter.net](mailto:Jsson.dawgs@charter.net) or 509-627-1473.

## **Program Planning in January~Marilyn Perkins and Judy Golberg**

On Saturday, January 23, twenty of our members met to discuss ideas for State and Local program planning. Our League will send in one or two topic areas to the State Board by February 25<sup>th</sup>. The decision of what to recommend will be made by our local board at the Feb. 18<sup>th</sup> meeting based on what our members were most interested in. The State will then make a recommendation on what we and other Leagues submitted. It is not too late for you to share your ideas.

Below is a list of the topics that were discussed. Of the subjects listed the one that probably had the most interest was providing Civics Ed. If any of these are of interest to you or you have other ideas, send an email to Marilyn Perkins at [jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com](mailto:jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com).

Statewide interest areas, listed in random order:

1. Police Reform
2. Prison and Sentencing Reform
3. State Parks-funding and staffing
4. Management of State Forests, including fire prevention
5. Funding of Schools (K-12 and early childhood education)
6. Funding of Higher Ed
7. Ranked Choice Voting
8. A Capital Gains Tax
9. Civics Education for schools and community members
10. Climate Change
11. Upcoming Statewide Redistricting.

Local issues suggested are listed below. As you can see, many overlapped with state studies. Anyone interested in working on local issues can contact Marilyn, or Judy Golberg at [jgolberg@charter.net](mailto:jgolberg@charter.net).

1. Local Education - Civics and voter education for both students and adults
2. Civil Discourse with the possibility working with Justin Raffa's new group
3. Parks & Recreation - Preserving parks, ridges, and open spaces. River front usage. Support Friends of Badger Mountain in creating Little Badger Mountain Preserve
4. Sustainable Communities
5. Nuclear waste (grouting vs. vitrification)
6. Redistricting - Participate in Speak Up School - contacting Yakima League to consider participating in a project involving the 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District
7. Learning facts from fiction in our culture

## **Membership Orientation ~Janet Nail**

On January 7<sup>th</sup>, a membership orientation was presented by Zoom. Various members covered different aspects of League membership including: Advocacy, Table Talk, Dues, Observer Core, TRY's (They Represent You brochures), Voter newsletter, Voter Service (voter registration, candidate forums, Vote411 and program planning) and Civic classes. If you did not have a chance to attend, we will be having another orientation in a couple of months. Whether you are a brand new member or a seasoned member, the orientation offers something for everyone.

Our website <https://my.lwv.org/washington/benton-franklin-counties> posts extensive information about our League but we also offer a hardcopy Membership Handbook. If you would like a hardcopy, please let Janet Nail know. ([janet@janetnail.com](mailto:janet@janetnail.com) 509-546-1467).

## **LWV Birthday Celebration~Lora Rathbone**

The League of Women Voters turns 101 on February 14, 2021. Our league traditionally celebrates this occasion with a birthday luncheon and guest speaker. This year, on February 4<sup>th</sup> at 6pm, we will have a guest speaker, but you will have to bring your own cake since it will be on Zoom. Our special guest is Kathy Sakahara, LWV WA Issue Chair for Elections, Voting Rights, and Campaign Finance.

Kathy Sakahara is a lifelong political activist. She served on the board of the LWV of Washington for six years, and most recently served as vice president of advocacy. She manages all advocacy relating to campaign finance and elections.

Kathy also served on the board of the LWV of Seattle-King County for two years. Kathy had a successful career as a presentation coach and trainer to Fortune 500 executives and technical experts. Her specialty was teaching scientists, engineers, and other technical specialists to present complex information in a clear, understandable way that facilitated decision-making. She carried that work into her nonprofit career, providing speaker bureau consulting, communication, advocacy, and media outreach training to several nonprofits across Washington.

Kathy will give us an update on the bills the league is following on elections and campaign finance, and answer our questions about the legislative process or effective communication. This should be a fun and informative event, and we hope you will attend.

## **You can be an Advocate ~Lora Rathbone**

### **Advocacy Simplified:**

The 2021 WA State Legislative Session is in full swing, and you can participate! There is power in numbers, and we need you to advocate for change. The LWV WA has done a lot of work to keep us informed.

Sign up to receive their weekly Legislative News Letter at:

[https://participate.lwv.org/c/9163/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup\\_page\\_K  
EY=7468](https://participate.lwv.org/c/9163/p/salsa/web/common/public/signup?signup_page_KEY=7468) or get on my email distribution: [ldrathbone@outlook.com](mailto:ldrathbone@outlook.com) I forward the newsletter and select one or two actions to take that are appropriate for our

positions and legislative district, and give you all the info you need to send a quick email or call.

### **LWV WA Democracy Lobby Week: February 22-26, 2021**

You will hear about key issues in democracy, in our state and nationwide, and will be able to strategize with others in our area. Please register at <https://www.lwvwa.org/event-4101747>

I have set up and appointment with our 8<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Senator and Representatives so we can tell them “in person” (on Zoom) what is important to us.

All events will be recorded. If you cannot make it to one or more of the events, please register anyway, as registrants will receive links to all events.

### **Membership, Engagement and Leadership Development (MELD)~Polly Parton**

January 18th zoom meeting

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. Our State Liaison Susan Fleming, also shares State and National resources with us and gives state leaders summaries from the local Leagues. Benton-Franklin is currently in Pod #5 with members from Kitsap, Grays Harbor and Thurston Counties.

Our calls are 60 minutes, Lynn provides an agenda. Discussions are casual and productive. Some highlights of our last call are:

- What documents are saved by your local league? Where? By whom? Is there an archive process? Our league could discuss and form a plan and inform our members.
- Other leagues are scheduling new member meetings, program planning, local government ‘home rule’ discussion, convention planning, adult civic education planning, Speak-up School training ...
- Many league’s websites are a source for information and activities such as the January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 4 pm, 1 hour webinar (hosted by Rogue Valley, Or.) on Ranked Choice Voting. We could develop ways to post these events on our local website for our members.
- League websites will be reviewed (for ease of posting, appearance, costs...) by a League Infinity Group. We use MyLO (My League On-line), but various websites (such as club express) are used by other leagues.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

February 4, 6:00pm ~Zoom 101<sup>st</sup> Birthday Celebration, guest speaker Kathy Sakahara

February 18, 6:00pm~Zoom Board Meeting

February 22-26 ~LWV WA Democracy Week

March 11, 6:00pm~Zoom Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

May 20~Annual Meeting

### Email us at:

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### Mailing Address:

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#### OFFICERS:

President: Beverly Johnson-Torelli  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President: Diane Molleson  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President: Polly Parton  
Secretary: Mary Shaw  
Treasurer: Shirley Sonnichsen  
Voter Editor: Peggy Gregory

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JoAnne Dimond  
Janet Nail  
Marilyn Perkins  
Lora Rathbone  
Ann Roberts

#### APPOINTED DIRECTORS:

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Ruth Giese  
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