



VOTER

November 2020

www.lwv-bf.org

President's Message~Beverly Johnson-Torelli

November 3rd, Election Day, is quickly approaching and with it, the culmination of the League's ambitious efforts in educating the public regarding the candidates and the voting process, as well as registering voters. Along the way, we collaborated with the Mid-Columbia Mastersingers, Allied Arts and Northwest Public Broadcasting-NWPB. Fun Fact: The LWVBF Candidate Forums/Debates on YouTube and Facebook combined received 5602 views, 297.9 hours of watch time and 16,602 Impressions/Reaches. Those statistics do not include television viewers. Other efforts to push the voting message included: presenting Civics Education to high school classes, running a very successful high school essay contest and a subsequent video contest, doing photo ops at ballot boxes, writing letters to the editor, speaking to organizations or appearing at community events, doing Voter Registration all year long and recently at the Richland and Kennewick food banks. Thanks to everyone who participated in one or more of these efforts. In our society, we are so privileged to have the right to vote, and nothing can be more important than exercising that right. As the election nears, not only is there COVID-19 fatigue, but there is heightened anxiety on both sides of the aisle regarding the election and the apprehension of what may happen on November 3rd and the aftermath. The best ideas for coping were seen on a Facebook post:

1. Do not watch the news.
2. Stay off the bathroom scales.

In all seriousness though, take care of yourself during these turbulent times and be kind always.

ZOOM License Purchase

The League of Women Voters of Benton and Franklin Counties purchased a Zoom license recently. Judy Golberg will be the "keeper of the gate." Please contact her if you need to schedule a League committee meeting or event at jgolberg@charter.net. We will also still have **access to a LWVWA Zoom account, if/when needed.**

News for November 3rd

Our League is popular! Marilyn Perkins was contacted by morning anchor Madeline Carter from KNDU to request a League telephone interview on November 3rd regarding the anxiety level as it relates to the election and its outcome. Marilyn agreed to the interview but invites others to join her. If you are interested, contact Marilyn for details at Jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com

Also on November 3rd, Northwest Public Broadcasting has invited our League to participate in a four to five minute interview after the election is closed at approximately 9:25-9:30 p.m. Topics will include outreach to voters during COVID-19, the political climate in the Tri-Cities, and with four of the six county commissioner positions on the ballot, what the election might mean for Benton and Franklin counties. It will be LIVE (virtual, but interactive) on KTNW-TV, KWSU-TV and all of the NWPB digital platforms. Beverly Johnson-Torelli has agreed to the interview but invites others to join in. If you are interested, contact her at sasjoh@aol.com for more details.

Important Dates:

November 12th--6:00 p.m. Table Talk--Debrief the General Election. All members will receive an invitation via Zoom.

November 19th --6:00 p.m. Board Meeting

Treasurer's Report~Shirley Sonnichsen

On September 30, 2020:

Checking is	\$6,316.73
Savings is	\$1,856.56
Total	<u>\$8,173.29</u>

Income: \$4,272

We received the \$500 HAPO check back from State and it was deposited. The two Video winners were paid with those dollars. We received \$2,850 in dues and \$245 in second-in-household dues (we have 7 now). We have received \$655 in contributions which just brought us past our budget of \$650. Thanks to all our generous members. Bev and I paid for our TSWI books for \$22.

Expenses: \$11.67

The only expenses were for PayPal fees.

Membership and dues: We have 69 members if everyone pays. There are 8 people who are exempt from dues because they are students, lifetime or joined after 2/1/2020. There are 11 people who have not paid. 50 members have paid including 7 second in household members.

Education Fund: \$504

We have \$504 in our Education fund by my calculations. If you are interested in making a tax-exempt donation to the Ed Fund for the TRY's, please make your check out to the League of Women Voters of Washington Education Fund and mail the check to me and I will fill out the form to direct it toward our TRY project.

Note: The total contributions and payout for the essay contest was \$5,600 plus ~\$50 in gold coins.

Advocacy~Lora Rathbone

Voter Registration Events- lessons learned

This election season motivated several people to find a way to help educate and register people to vote, and the league is fortunate to gain these new members and friends as a result. Many thanks to Alice Allison, Kathy Blaisdell, Judy Blair, Arianna Caiceros, Brenda Diaz, Carol Larkin, Michele Pirotte, Jeanne Reardon, Ann Roberts, Shirley Sonnichsen, Diane Vanderburg, and Wendy Veysey for taking the time and for your willingness to try something new!

From mid-September to October we worked at several locations and learned which ones are productive. In a typical year we register voters at naturalization ceremonies, and at the community college and WSU-TC. This year we donned our masks and sat at an outdoor table at the Richland and Kennewick foodbanks, and a few other outdoors locations. At the food banks we offered free school supplies and books to entice people to come talk to us. This worked quite well.

Along with registering new voters, we provided flyers in Spanish and English on how to be a good voter, and where to get information on the candidates and ballot issues, and told people how to make sure their vote is counted. We also encouraged people to complete the census. During slow times we had good discussions about the league and brainstormed locations to register voters. Our ideas for the future, experiences this year, and locations the league has registered voters in the past, are now recorded on a chart for future reference. After the election we should gather a team and plan the registration events for next year. Our work helped a lot of people to vote in this election and hopefully people will now be motivated to participate in future elections.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)~Judy Golberg

A committee is being formed to work on the contents of a discussion regarding DEI. The presentation will be scheduled after the first of the year, so the committee has time to develop ideas. If this topic interests you, please volunteer to work on the committee. A virtual planning meeting will be held early in November, depending on committee members' schedules. Contact Judy Golberg to volunteer at 509-627-5347 or at jgolberg@charter.net

Positions~Judy Golberg

Our local League has six major topics and more within those issues that we have studied and adopted over the years as official Positions of our League. If you wish to read the full statements, look at our webpage <https://my.lwv.org/washington/benton-franklin-counties/issues>. Most of those positions were formed years ago—back when we published our documents and gave each member a copy. We voted to study a new concern during our annual meeting—usually a two-year study, formed a committee, interviewed people with a set of questions created by the committee, discussed the findings with our members, had a reading committee to determine the findings were not written with a partisan bias, and published our position. At this time, we have little as backup information, but we do have the final Positions. Normally we discuss potential topics at our January meeting.

If you have attended state or national conventions, you would notice one item on the convention agenda was the reaffirmation of a section of the positions, a motion to drop or a motion to restudy (to update) others. That is one process our League has not done. Or we have not done this for many, many years. **My proposal to the Board is to form one to six committees with a mix of long-time members with newer members to review our Positions** and bring the determination of the committee to the Annual Meeting for action. The Annual Meeting is held in May so there is time to accomplish this task. The idea is to propose reaffirming, dropping, or restudying the issues and make sure the action is noted and dated on our records. I believe many of our positions could stand to be restudied for the purpose of updating the language rather than a completely new study. I also believe this is one way newer members can really get into the work of the League beyond our voter service activities.

Topics and subtopics are:

County Government with subtopics of: Budgets, Home Rule, Jails and Courts
City Government with subtopic of Richland City Charter and Council-Manager
Form of Government
Transportation
Parks and Recreation
Local Education with subtopic of Student Health Needs
Health Care

Anyone interested in working on one of these topics? If you are curious or super excited to delve into one of these topics, please email Bev Johnson-Torelli at sasjoh@aol.com or Judy at jgolberg@harter.net.

National Positions can be found at <https://www.lwv.org/impact-issues>
State League Position can be found at <https://lwvwa.org/league-positions>

Election Information~Marilyn Perkins

“Taco Bout Voting”

Lora Rathbone was approached by the Latino Community Fund about helping with a “Get Out the Vote” rally in Pasco they held on Saturday, October 24th from 1:00-5:00pm. Lora agreed and set up a table with League information and dressed in her suffragist outfit. Bev and Chuck took over at 2:00 and I joined Christine Grantham at 3:00. Unfortunately, the weather didn’t cooperate, it was a bit windy and cold, but we had a chance to visit with community members and inform them about the work of League. I think the Taco truck may have been a bit more popular.

The highlight of the afternoon for Chris and me, was visiting with two young sisters, thirteen and fourteen, from Finley. Their father had brought them along with their nine year old sister. When Chris asked if they were twins, the father said they were Irish twins, meaning they were born less than a year apart. One in May and the other the following April. They were very interested in the election and think they might want to be lawyers. They hope to take advantage of Running Start and their counselor was helping them learn about scholarships they may be eligible for.

It did our hearts good to visit with them and know that there are young people who are interested in voting and wanting to contribute to society by helping others.

League members, Sabiha Kahn and Zahara Roach also stopped by. If any of our members know about similar opportunities in the future, where League might be a part of the festivities or help register voters, contact Lora at ldrathbone@outlook.com

November Table Talk - Zoom Meeting

Traditionally, our November Table Talk has focused on a get together, on the first Thursday after every general election to discuss results, both locally and at the State and National levels. This year we thought the first Thursday might be too soon to know all the results, especially nationally. There has always been lots to talk about, and this year should be no exception, though we try and keep it on the nonpartisan side as much as possible. The Zoom meeting will be, Thursday, November 12th at 6:00 pm.

We will miss the homemade soup that was always part of the festivities, and the company of our fellow members. However, Miriam Kerzner, who teaches U.S. History at CBC and is also a League member, has agreed to facilitate the meeting for us. We will discuss the Presidential and Congressional races, along with Statewide and local races. If you are following some races or issues in another state that you think would be interesting to others, feel free to share. If time allows, we can discuss how we think our democracy is faring overall.

All members will receive a link to the meeting via email. Feel free to enjoy your favorite snack, meal or whatever during the meeting. Loud chewers are encouraged to use their mute button.

Civics Presentation~Janet Nail

Ryan McCord, a Kamiakin teacher, invited our League to give our civics presentation to his senior English class. Marilyn gave the history of our National League and our local league along with highlighting some current issues, Janet instructed the class on the history of voting rights and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Polly reviewed the different branches of government and Lora educated the students about our advocacy program. Mr. McCord did not have a very large class, but it was well received. We think we had an impact on convincing them voting was important.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Table Talk Debrief the General Election via Zoom November 12, 6:00pm

Board Meeting via Zoom November 19, 6:00pm

Email us at:

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Counties

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