



## VOTER

November 2021

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

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

Welcome to our new members and greetings to our continuing ones! Looking back at the last two months on our League's Facebook page, it's easy to see that we continue to emphasize DEI and Civics Education in Making Democracy Work. You will see posts on Indigenous Peoples Day, Hispanic Heritage Month and Phillis Wheatley, a poet and the first African American woman to publish a book. There is also Victoria Woodhull, the first woman to run for President. Notably, she chose Frederick Douglass as her running mate. In addition, you will see the Eight Rules that George Washington Carver lived by. Also advertised on our Facebook page was History of Exclusion in the Tri-Cities, a community conversation, hosted by local WSU professors. Last but not least, there is an article about Cecilia Payne, who discovered what the universe was made of, but because she was female, didn't get credit for her discovery. Every day, let us celebrate each other and the amazing contributions so many people make to our country no matter their race, creed, color, gender, gender identity, religion, political party, ethnicity etc.

Thanks go to student members Cassia Vinci and Twila Lewis who are pictured on the League's Facebook page. They did voter registration and education at Legacy High School Fall Fest on September 30<sup>th</sup>. For the convenience of voters and our members, links to the LWVBF Candidate Forums were posted at [www.lwv-bf.org](http://www.lwv-bf.org). Thanks go to League members Kay Ottem, JoAnne Dimond, Ruvine Jimenez and Judy Golberg, as well as our wonderful partners at NWPB/KTNW TV: Matt Loveless, Greg Mills, Tom Hungate and their production crew for the success of the forums. In addition, we are so grateful for our steadfast and valued partners, Mark Ingham and Jon Funfar from their respective Cities of Richland and Pasco and Kirk Williamson, President of the Columbia Basin Badger Club, who provided links to the Forums on their websites or through YouTube, etc.

Val Moffitt gets the credit for the letter to the editor in the Tri-City Herald encouraging citizens to register and then vote in the November 2<sup>nd</sup> election. It was

a well-written and timely message. In late October, Wendy Espinosa, Janet Nail and Lora Rathbone were invited to make an in-person Civics Ed presentation to Ryan McCord's class at Kamiakin High. In the meantime, League members and teachers, Sabiha Khan (Kamiakin High) and Theresa Buczek (Richland High) used the Your Vote tabloid and the pamphlet Lora published in the October Voter to register and/or educate their students on the voting process. Thanks to all of you!

On November 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. the state tax structure work group will be meeting with us in a Zoom Table Talk venue. Please see the detailed description by Lora Rathbone about their focus. It was sent out in the email invitation and was also in the October Voter. Our late notice came as a result of learning that their last date to do presentations is November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Members: If you are interested in organizing a Table Talk for winter or spring, please attend the November 18<sup>th</sup> Zoom Board meeting to discuss your ideas or send your suggestions to [sasjoh@aol.com](mailto:sasjoh@aol.com). Another opportunity to become involved in League is to attend the Program Planning meeting on January 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. Further details will be forthcoming in the December/January Voter.

**Save the Dates:** Virtual Action Workshops are scheduled for December 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. More information will be passed on to the LWVBF's membership when it is received from the state League.

Most importantly, have a wonderful Thanksgiving! There are so many blessings in life. I am truly grateful for my family, friends, and all of you - our League's membership.

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

At September 30, 2021:

|                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Checking is:</b> | <b>\$7,798.02</b> |
| <b>Savings is:</b>  | <b>\$1,856.75</b> |
| <b>Total:</b>       | <b>\$9,655.67</b> |

**Income:** **\$3,481.00**

We received dues for \$3,141 and contributions of \$340

**Expenses:** **\$1,771.00**

\$111 for annual Zoom; \$23 for stamps; \$18 for PayPal expense. 2 quarters of National and State PMP's were paid for \$1,016 and \$603 respectively.

**Membership and Dues:** We have 84members including 7 students, 10 second in household.

**Education Fund:** At the end of September, the total Washington State Education fund for our Benton -Franklin league is \$4,066. An additional \$250 has been sent in memory of Marilyn but not recorded.

## **Action ~ Lora Rathbone**

### **Local Voting Rights Action**

On April 22, the UCLA Voting Rights Project filed a lawsuit against Franklin County. The lawsuit challenged the **at-large electoral system** used by Franklin County in general elections and the **districting scheme used in primary elections**. This scheme dilutes the votes of Latinx voters, denying them equal opportunity to elect candidates of their choice in general elections and is in violation of the WVRA. This fall Judge Petersen ordered that Franklin County work with the Plaintiffs to draw up proposed district maps **by November 8**. Franklin County commissioners voted to ask the Court to reverse its decision.

**ASK: Please email the county commissioners** at [planninginquiry@co.franklin.wa.us](mailto:planninginquiry@co.franklin.wa.us) and tell them that East Pasco should be kept whole as there is a large number of Latinos who live in that area and deserve an equal opportunity to elect their candidates of choice.

**LWVUS: Send a letter to President Biden for voting rights.**

Go to <https://www.lwv.org/NoMoreExcuses>

“On behalf of the League of Women Voters, I ask you to support reforms that will create a democracy that is representative of all Americans, address the historical barriers to voting, and hold states accountable when they infringe on our freedom to vote”.

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

~ Polly Parton

Membership, Engagement and Leadership Development (MELD), Monday, October 18

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 Joan Lawson 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-

- Marcee Lerchen of Chehalis is planning to retire at the end of the year and is running for Water and Sewer Commissioner for District #3.
- Carol Goss noted their November program “Let’s Talk” is co-sponsored with the Thurston Dispute Resolution Group. The Thurston County Auditor (named Auditor of the Year) was a recent program speaker.
- Lynn Busacca reported their local paper printed a quote on vaccines vs rights from a local school board member. She also noted fewer people are interested in running for school board positions.
- The 12/4 Action Workshop will be on social justice and 12/11 will be on the environment. Clark County has a possible infringement issue on the League Logo by a group representing themselves as the ‘conservative league’.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

November 4, 5:30pm ~ Zoom Table Talk with Tax Structure Work Group

November 18, 6:00pm ~ Zoom Board Meeting All members are welcome to participate

December 4 & 11 ~ Virtual Action Workshops

January 15 10:00am ~ Program Planning Meeting

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

### Mailing Address:

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#### OFFICERS:

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