



VOTER

September 2021

www.lwv-bf.org

President's Message ~ Beverly Johnson-Torelli

Hopefully, like me, you had a wonderful summer despite the heat, the haze, and the Delta variant. As the 2021-2022 year unfolds, our theme continues to be: "Making Democracy Work." The emphasis has been on Civics Ed, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI), and helping educate the voting public through the LWVBF Candidate Forums. However, the most time sensitive issue at the moment is redistricting. Please see Alison McCaffree's message below. Several of our League members will be meeting with Alison on September 9th from 12:30-1:30 p.m. Up to ten members can be involved, so if you would like to be included, please let me know at sasjoh@aol.com and I will notify Alison. You will then receive a confirmation message from her.

Dear LWV WA Local League Presidents and Action Chairs,

With the delivery of the 2020 Census data last week, we have started the final phase of our decennial redistricting. The commission will release draft maps in Sept, we'll get to comment 10/6 and 10/9, and they will finalize the maps by 11/15.

The LWVWA Redistricting team plans to submit a complete mapping solution for legislative and congressional districts to the WA State Redistricting Commission. We have held 8 Speak Up School, held over 15 Redistricting 101 sessions and 25 listening sessions to gather input for our draft maps. We seek the approval of the LWVWA board and need your assistance.

We would like to receive Local League endorsement of our proposal of the district lines in your local area before the September 20, 2021, LWVWA board meeting.

Thank you to many of you who have been involved so far. To assist with this communication, I will be holding office hours via Zoom on three consecutive Thursdays (9/2, 9/9 and 9/16) from 12-2pm and from 5-8pm.

1. *Please connect with your local team and schedule at least 30-minute and perhaps 60-minute meeting to go over any remaining questions and suggestions that you have about the maps. Click the Calendly link to schedule. Let me know if you need another time.*
<https://calendly.com/amccaffree/redistricting-office-hours>
2. *[Review the latest listening session slide show here - with slides for specific regions.](#) I can create an area specific presentation if you need more details about the option for your area.*
3. *Look at the draft maps on Dave's Redistricting App here: lwvwa.org/maps*

Please let me know if you have questions. I will send out links to round 5 of our draft as soon as I have rebalanced the districts with the 2020 data.

Since redistricting is the foundation of our voting system, LWVWA should put our best effort to model the representation, balance, and equity that we value. I value your assistance in the final stretch of this effort.

*Sincerely,
Alison*

*Alison McCaffree
LWVWA Redistricting Issue Chair
amccaffree@lwvwa.org
253-720-6813*

Equality Day Picnic-September 23rd

At our August 19th Board meeting, it was decided that the Equality Day Picnic would be rescheduled from August 26th to September 23rd at 5:00-7:30 p.m. The concerns included the Delta variant, as well as the unhealthy air quality due to smoke. The details of the picnic remain the same. The location is the Highlands Grange Park Picnic Shelter at the Mid-Columbia Library located at 1620 South Union Street in Kennewick. Please bring your own meal, nonalcoholic beverage, and chair. Under the circumstances, we are also requesting that you wear a mask. Since this will be the first in-person event to be held since COVID began, our focus will be getting to know each other. In fact, several new members have joined League in the meantime. You will be given any updates on plans as we get closer to the date. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at sasjoh@aol.com

Website Manager

Many thanks to Judy Golberg, who has volunteered to manage our League website for many years. Judy is ready to give up those duties. In the past, she has advertised in the Voter for others to take her place with no luck. If you are interested, please let Judy know. In the meantime, consideration is being given to hiring a professional to manage the website. Again, if you know someone to contact, Judy's email is: jgolberg@charter.net

Voter Registration Chair

Several of you have indicated that you are interested in doing voter registration. In fact, we need someone to be the Voter Registration Chair. This entails finding events to attend, enlisting others to help, bringing voter registration forms to the events and/or showing others how to register online or change their address, if needed. We have attended back-to-school nights, food banks, community events, retirement homes, CBC, WSU, the Naturalization Ceremonies in the Federal Building and various other places. Beginning with 2020, our venues became very limited due to COVID. National Registration Day is the fourth Tuesday in September, which is the 28th this year. If you are interested in being the Voter Registration Chair, please contact me at sasjoh@aol.com

Candidate Forums

November 2nd is the date for the General Election. If you would like to help with the Candidate Forums or have any suggestions, please let me know as soon as possible. Also, if you have any questions or topics for questions that you think would be relevant, you can submit them to me at any time. Due to League protocols, questions should be written so that they are not leading and give all candidates a fair opportunity to answer them. Also, the questions cannot target any candidate. There are a total of 27 local races in the General Election compared with the eleven that were in the Primary Candidate Forums.

2022 Council

Linda Benson, 2022 Council Planning Committee Chair, is looking for League members across the state to help plan the 2022 Council in June. She plans to start committee meetings in September. If you are interested, please let me know, and I will pass your name onto her. Contact me at sasjoh@aol.com

Treasurer's Report ~ Shirley Sonnichsen

At July 31, 2021:

| | |
|--------------|------------|
| Checking is: | \$6,013.97 |
| Savings is: | \$1,856.72 |
| Total: | \$7,870.69 |

Income: \$225.00

We received dues for the three new members, Lynn Stedman, Christina Liessmann, Elisabet Van Swam.

Expenses: \$2.48

Pay Pal expense.

Membership and Dues:

We have 84 members including 7 students, 8 with second in household.

Education Fund:

At the end of July, the total Washington State Education fund for our Benton - Franklin league is \$4,066. \$904 was the beginning balance, \$3,162 was in memory of Marilyn. Thank you notes have been sent to everyone who donated to the Education Fund.

A new fiscal year began July 1, 2021, and the new budget of \$9,029 is reflected in the spreadsheet. I need an audit committee of two or three to come to my house and be socially distanced to audit the books sometime this fall. If interested, please contact me at jsson.dawgs@charter.net

Civic Education ~ Wendy Espinosa

In 2020-2021 the Civic Education Committee offered high school presentations about the LWV, the history of voting, mail-in secure voting, and explaining how our federal, state, and local government governments are structured. Students and teachers were given copies of "They Represent You: Directory of Elected Officials, 2021 Edition." These are available to all members, providing a great resource for WA voters.

As our communities continue to keep populations safe, we may have limited personal interaction with students this year, but we will continue contacting K-12 schools to offer our current presentation along with activities for young children, including Zoom.

We will have a Civics Education Committee meeting via ZOOM in September. Once we know that date and time, I will email all LWVBF members asking if they would like to participate and/or join our committee. We'll be sharing ideas for future projects, and I will give an update on the LWVWA (state) committee and the resources they share with us.

Voting Rights ~ Lora Rathbone

LWV Statement on House Passage of John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

On August 24, 2021, the League of Women Voters of the United States board president, Dr. Deborah Ann Turner, issued the following statement after the US House of Representatives' passage of HR 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act:

“The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act will restore the Voting Rights Act to its original protections by reviewing and blocking anti-voter policies that too often target voters of color. We commend the House on passing this critical piece of legislation.

“Unfortunately, the US Senate is deadlocked on voting rights, which is why the League of Women Voters is calling on the White House to bring lawmakers together, remove the obstacles in the way, and work collectively on behalf of the American voters to see this legislation become law.

“Today, the League of Women Voters rallied with our democracy partners in front of the White House to demand President Biden use the full power of his office, live up to his commitment to the voters, and prioritize voters' voices in our democracy.

“We cannot afford to wait any longer. We need the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the For the People Act to restore and protect our freedom to vote.”

Tuesday, August 24, afternoon, more than 200 voting rights activists and volunteers joined the League of Women Voters in front of the White House for ‘No More Excuses: Voting Rights Now!’, a rally calling on President Biden to deliver on his promise of voting rights.

See “**What You Can Do**” at https://www.lwv.org/newsroom/press-releases/lwv-statement-house-passage-john-lewis-voting-rights-advancement-act?fbclid=IwAR3KJzQp506NMEBqI2Mi2n1tLnj2rowtS6V2kuwVEQbLyY6_LJ1_565Atdw

Membership, Engagement, and Leadership Development (MELD)

~ Polly Parton

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 leader 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. Highlights of our last call are-

Tony Wilson of Thurston County has continued to work on his leagues' progression to the Club Express website. Google analytics will help drive website traffic using key words. It helps that Snohomish County has already worked through some of the process. It is possible to use a lower priced version of Club Express and still achieve good results such as San Diego has done. He expects to go live with Club Express by year end. Tony suggested considering a longer (2 hour) MELD meeting every quarter involving 4-6 members from our leagues to engage more individuals and enlarge our discussions (I am thinking we should try this).

Carol Goss of Thurston County spoke about a meet and greet event (8/26 at 5:30-7:00 pm on Zoom) for new, nearly new and returning members and guests. One timely topic will be a local 3rd grade teacher and the curriculum including cultural competency for school kids and using *The State We're In*. They are revamping their handbook and holding *Coffee With The League* in Person.

Carol Larsen of Kitsap County noted their primary candidate forums were chaired by committee and will probably stay that way for the general election forums also, due to lack of a single volunteer (this is a frequent issue at various leagues). Carol L. may find a replacement for herself at our MELD meeting to free up some time. They are realigning their observer corps. As Membership Chair, Carol is looking to involve others and Carol Goss suggested inviting younger or newer members to report on what they are involved in such as college events...

Lynn Busacca of Mason County noted they had an in-person board retreat but may move back to Zoom. She is on a new 4-person committee for general programs, and they do take member feedback on topics. Her league is continuing with 6 neighborhood sections that have in-person gatherings for members and invited guests. This limits exposure and still gives opportunity to have discussions and outreach.

Tony suggested we move the next meeting start to 4:30 pm and then finish by 6:00 pm. We all agreed and will do this at the September 20 meeting.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 16, 6:00pm ~ Zoom Board Meeting All members are welcome to participate

September 23, 5:00pm ~ Women's Equality Day Celebration Picnic

Email us at:

lwv.of.bf@gmail.com

Mailing Address:

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and Franklin Counties
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OFFICERS:

President: Beverly Johnson-Torelli
1st Vice President: Diane Molleson
2nd Vice President: Polly Parton
Secretary: Sandra Hendry
Treasurer: Shirley Sonnichsen
Voter Editor: Peggy Gregory

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Janet Nail
Lora Rathbone
Ann Roberts

APPOINTED DIRECTORS:

Peggy Gregory
Sabiha Khan
Additional Appointed Directors TBD