



VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BENTON & FRANKLIN COUNTIES

www.lwv-bf.org

From the President JoAnn Bengtson

Welcome new members! As we prepare for Election Day, let us celebrate the efforts of our members to preserve and impact a more perfect democracy—the theme of the 2018 LWVUS National Convention. We should applaud the countless hours spent preparing and hosting the Washington state caucus, our local League-sponsored forums, table talks, voter registration events, and our national 2018 Convention participation.

As interest in election issues grows, and elections near, our local LWV will continue to promote nonpartisan civil discourse, and broadcast information about who and what is on the ballot. We also have a lot to say and share about election reform, money in politics, the national popular vote, and a multitude of Washington state LWV positions. An exciting development is the national organization's commitment to reach many more voters by supporting a VOTE411.org upgrade.

Membership will grow as nationally and locally, the League commitment is to use a diversity, equity and inclusion lens to strengthen and increase our impact on our communities. I am looking forward to our conversations about how to engage and encourage membership at all levels.

Please join me as we digest and embrace the “Transformation Roadmap” the LWVUS organization has provided so that our local organization will have the tools for the mission ahead:

https://www.lwv.org/sites/default/files/2018-06/transformation_roadmap_exec_summary_april_2018.pdf

From LWVWA: VOTE411.org

Help spread the word about the League's online voting guide—VOTE411.org. A PR toolkit has been sent to all local leagues. We encourage individuals to use these template posts on their own FaceBook pages, Instagram and Twitter accounts to help spread VOTE411.org to your own networks.

August 2018

Officers

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JoAnn Bengtson

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Shirley Sonnichsen

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Elected

Directors:

Beverly Johnson-Torelli

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Lora Rathbone

Chuck Torelli

Appointed

Directors:

Ruth Giese

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Lisabeth Jimenez

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Women's Equality Day Picnic on August 28

Our annual picnic celebrating the ratification of the 19th amendment will be held on Tuesday, **August 28** at the north pavilion in Howard Amon Park (behind Sterlings) in Richland, beginning at **5:30 pm**. Please bring a dish, snack or dessert to share, and a folding chair or picnic blanket. Drinks, plates, napkins and plastic utensils will be provided. We are asking the Benton and Franklin auditors to be the guest speakers.

LWV 53rd National Convention: Creating a More Perfect Democracy **Chuck Torelli**

On June 28 through July 1, the 53rd LWV National convention was held in Chicago, Illinois. Beverly Johnson-Torelli and JoAnn Bengtson represented the LWVBF. The LWV-Yakima, through coordination with the LWV State President and Yakima Board, was represented by Chuck Torelli. Judy Golberg attended as a member of the Nominating Committee for national board members.

For those who have never attended an LWV convention, the format is as follows:

- Morning caucuses, workshops and information meetings.
- Plenary Session with all the delegates (~850 representing 49 states and D.C.), non-voting attendees (~130) and staff (20)
- Evening break for dinner
- Evening caucuses, workshops and information meetings.

The theme of the convention — “Creating a More Perfect Democracy” —was on full display for both external issues and internal self-reflection.

Externally, there were speakers and workshops focused on climate change, redistricting, money in politics, the Electoral College vs. the popular vote, healthcare, and so on. The public policy issues supported by the LWV reflect the value of participation rather than partisanship. The emphasis continues to be on voter involvement. An excellent example occurred Saturday afternoon: League members took the time to make signs and march in 95° heat for reunification of immigrant families and show support for the Dream Act.

The internal focus was seen with sessions on the Transformation Roadmap, Diversity – Equity – Inclusion (DEI), The State of Women, and more. LWV has recognized that for the League to remain relevant, the membership demographics need to be more reflective of society. Current membership is largely older, white, middle/upper middle-class women. Outreach is needed as well as recognizing the unconscious barriers that can be in place.

The convention workbook, schedules and videos can be found at: <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/manage-your-league/council-convention>

Finally, this ‘write-up’ fails to cover the convention’s excitement and energy. On specific issues, people disagreed, argued and still came together. Speakers such as Rosie Rios, 43rd Treasurer of the U.S., inspired us with her dedication to empowering young girls. Keynote speaker Elaine Weiss, author of *The Woman’s Hour*, outlined the struggles of the past and provided hope for the future. Attendees cheered for the ERA and booed gerrymandering. It was a convention with purpose and passion. LWV is about the power of acting and recognizing the dangers of complacency.

It was an honor to be allowed to attend as a delegate and an experience I will always treasure!

From LWVWA: Behavioral Health Study Request

Barbara Chevalier

“My name is Barbra Chevalier, and I'm the study chair for the behavioral health (mental illness + chemical dependency) survey study adopted by the LWVWA at Convention in 2017. The original study time frame has been extended to 2021 due to the current overhaul in process for the state Medicaid system.

We are convening a committee focused on behavioral health issues with representatives from as many chapters around the state as possible to begin tracking and following changes occurring at the local level. We hope this committee can lay a foundation for the work to be completed in 2021 and also inform our state advocacy in the interim. The committee will meet quarterly or perhaps biannually via conference call to report out any changes, successes or failures in local behavioral health services. Is there someone in your chapter who would be interested in serving on this committee and being the resident expert on changes to the behavioral health system in your area?”

If anyone is interested in participating in the State LWV **Behavior Health Study**, please let our new LWVBF President, JoAnn Bengston (628-8019) know. Then contact Barbara Chevalier (425-445-2281) directly to get involved.

Candidate Forums Available for Viewing

The LWVBF sponsored two voter forums in July. The forum for the 8th Legislative District (Richland, West Richland and Kennewick) was held July 16 and included the candidates for State Senator and State Legislator, positions 1 and 2.

The forum for the 16th Legislative District (Pasco and part of Benton County) was held July 18th and included the candidates for Franklin County Commissioner District 3 and State Legislator, position 2. The forums can be viewed at the links below.

A big thank you to all the LWVBF members who helped at the forums, wrote questions to ask the candidates, and showed up and supported the candidates.

8th Legislative Candidates (Richland, West Richland & Kennewick):

Play back schedule on Richland CityView 192 is daily at 9 am, 3 pm and 9 pm. Links:

<https://youtu.be/ZAiJHRnEyUE>

https://youtu.be/0IWGbUsUa_U

<https://youtu.be/ZR5FTDIDuRA>

16th Legislative District (Pasco and part of Benton County):

psctv.viebit.com (Pasco Candidate Forum at Police Training facility on July 18)

On Facebook at the City of Pasco Government page (Pasco Candidate Forum, July 18, 2018):

<https://www.facebook.com/CityofPasco/videos/1800087386705021/>

Voter Registration

The next Naturalization Ceremony is September 17, 2018. Marilyn Perkins and Lisabeth Jimenez will assist the auditors. National Voter Registration Day (NVRD) is September 25. The League has been the single largest on-the-ground partner for NVRD since 2012. The LWVBF may host or publicize a registration event in the community on September 25th. Further details will be in the September VOTER.

Treasurer's Report

Shirley Sonnichsen

At the end of June, checking was \$1,101; savings was \$1,856 for a total of \$2,957.

Checking: \$ 1,101
Savings: \$1,856
Total: \$2,957

Income: None. The fiscal year ends June 30. Dues are due September 30 and a letter will be sent out late August or early September. Anyone wanting to pay their dues early is welcome to either pay me or use PayPal (lwv-bf.org) or by check made out to *League of Women Voters of Benton-Franklin Counties* and sent to P.O. Box 765, Richland, WA. 99352.

Expenses: The Secretary of State 990N form was completed and the \$10 paid.

In Kind Expenses: Bev Johnson Torelli, Chuck Torelli and Jo Ann Bengtson attended the LWV National Convention in Chicago. After the \$1,000 we paid each of them, Bev and Chuck had "in kind" expenses of \$1,471; Jo Ann's "in kind" expenses were \$930 for a total of \$2,401 "in kind" for National convention, which will give us a good baseline. The total "in kind" expenses for members were \$2,700, but I'm sure there were many more that I haven't received.

Membership: We still have 48 paid members and 56 in total. We voted on whether to have students join the LWVBF for free and the motion passed. The mechanisms are set up by National, and their form has been filled out for our League to have students be free until 2021. The survey link was sent to a potential WSU student, Akaana Poor. She was also sent a membership form and the Voter.

A reservation was made at the north pavilion in Howard Amon Park in Richland for our annual picnic on Tuesday, August 28 from 5 to 9 p.m. The picnic will begin at 5:30 pm, but we can start setting up at 5.

From LWVWA: Donations to the State Education Fund

Members and friends of the League of Women Voters of Benton and Franklin Counties may now donate to our Education Fund directly on-line. This is done through the [Find Your Local League](#) page in the State website (<https://lwvwa.org>). On that page there is the note: *You can also donate directly to a Local League (specify which League after you choose a payment method)*. Once a donor clicks "donate directly to a Local League," they just need to type in the name of your League and use a PayPal account, a credit card, or a debit card for payment.

Book Recommendation

Valerie Moffitt

Released in March 2018, *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote* by Elaine Weiss chronicles the passing of the 19th Amendment, which granted women the right to vote. It follows the key players and recaps the political atmosphere before, during and after the amendment's passage. The book also reflects on how opposing forces are still at work in our political life today as we watch history repeat itself.

The LWV came out of those early days and its mission remains as vital and relevant to our politics today as it was 100 years ago.

From LWV: Electoral College

"We are very happy that the recent National Convention of the League of Women Voters of the United States adopted a resolution that 'urgently reaffirms its long-held position that the Electoral College should be abolished.'"

Letter to the Editor: Climate Change

Lora Rathbone

We are breaking heat records again this summer. Imagine what it must be like to work long hours picking our crops in this heat. “Scientists have high confidence that global temperatures will continue to rise for decades to come, largely due to greenhouse gases produced by human activities. Heat waves everywhere are projected to become more intense.”

<https://climate.nasa.gov/effects/> “Episodes of extreme heat can have serious societal, agricultural, economic, and ecological impacts, with heat being the number one weather-related killer.” (National Weather Service 2012). David Arkush and David Michaels (*Spokesman-Review*, July 2018) said “Heat stress is possibly one of the leading workplace dangers in America. And climate change is making it deadlier. We need to protect workers from extreme heat before it grows more intense. That’s where we are headed on our current greenhouse-gas pollution path. And as climate impacts go, losing summer outdoor labor in whole regions of the United States is the small stuff. We need to get ahead of this problem before we face devastating consequences for public health and the economy.” Representative Newhouse’s interest in local agriculture should include concern about the threat of extreme heat to its workforce, and action to slow global warming.

LWVBF Calendar

August 2018

Thursday, August 16—Board Meeting, 6 pm, BF Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail). All members are welcome.

Tuesday, August 28—Women’s Equality Day Annual Picnic, 5:30 pm, Howard Amon Park (north pavilion), Richland

September 2018

Monday, September 17— Naturalization Ceremony, 10 am, Federal Building, Richland

Thursday, September 20— Board Meeting, 6 pm, BF Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail). All members are welcome.

Tuesday, September 25— National Voters Registration Day

Table Talk, date and time TBD

Email us at
lwv.of.bf@gmail.com

League of Women Voters of
Benton & Franklin
Counties
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