



# VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BENTON & FRANKLIN COUNTIES

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

## From the President Polly Parton

I hope everyone is enjoying our mild (so far) winter. I have now been retired one year (hooray!) and am more involved in the League but still learning who we are and how we are a better community for all our members and their work. Thanks to Marilyn Perkins and JoAnne Dimond for hosting and organizing the January midday Table Talk. We had a great turnout and divided into two groups to facilitate lively discussion about immigration, chain migration, border wall/security and DACA. Each month we may choose new and current topics to improve our understanding of an issue and enjoy the company of our fellow members. Next, we look forward to our February 8<sup>th</sup> Birthday Dinner with Mike Blair speaking about the McCleary Decision. The next board meeting is on February 15<sup>th</sup>, and we encourage all members to attend, contribute ideas and provide feedback. Please get involved when and however you can. Thank you.

## LWV Birthday Dinner

The LWV is 98 years old! Mark your calendars for Thursday, **February 8th** and come celebrate our birthday at the Shiloh Inn (50 Comstock St., Richland). Dinner is \$25 per person beginning at **5:30 pm**. Our speaker will be Mike Blair, former superintendent and expert on the McCleary decision with its continuing impact on education in Washington State. We need to give the Shiloh a good estimate by Tuesday, February 6 so please contact Polly Parton at 509-551-3818 or [polly.parton@yahoo.com](mailto:polly.parton@yahoo.com) to reserve. This event is open to the public, and spouses and friends are welcome.

## The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to Turn 100

2020 will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment, which gave women the right to vote. We need to be thinking about how we want to commemorate this event locally. We had a small celebration for the 90<sup>th</sup>, but we want to think bigger for the 100<sup>th</sup>.

February 2018

## Officers

**President:**  
**Polly Parton**  
**1st Vice President:**  
**JoAnne Dimond**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:**  
**Janet Nail**  
**Secretary:**  
**Ruvine Jimenez**  
**Treasurer:**  
**Shirley Sonnichsen**  
**Past President:**  
**Marilyn Perkins**  
**Voter Editor:**  
**Diane Molleson**

## Elected Directors:

**Ruth Giese**  
**Beverly Hunter**  
**Beverly Johnson-Torelli**  
**Diane Molleson**  
**Lora Rathbone**  
**Toyoko Tsukuda**

## Appointed Directors:

**Lisabeth Jimenez**  
**Danette Keegan**  
**Sabiha Khan**  
**Chuck Torelli**  
**Jo Ann Bengtson**

## TRYs: Help Wanted With Distribution

Marilyn Perkins

The 2018 version of our TRYs (They Represent You) will soon be ready, and we are looking for new ways to get them to the public. We are in the process of updating our distribution list and if you know of people through work, church, unions or other organizations that would like some copies, contact Marilyn Perkins, 783-8610. We will also be delivering them to organizations in the community and can always use member help with deliveries. They will be ready by our birthday dinner on February 8th. We also want to make sure all our members receive a copy, and we will mail them to those who can't attend a meeting or the birthday dinner.

## New Member Spotlight: Danette Keegan

I'm excited to be one of the newest members of the League, an organization I've admired since watching the LWV moderators host presidential debates in the 70s. I grew up in Northern California, coming to Washington State for college. I received bachelor and masters degrees from Western Washington University, and my doctorate from Oklahoma State University. I worked as a school psychologist for 37 years, mostly for Department of Defense dependents' schools. My husband Mike and I lived three years in Iceland and 24 years in England before retiring and settling in Richland in 2009. We have two daughters and one granddaughter living in Western Washington.

## Need Help Finding League Resources?

Judy Golberg

League of Women Voter's website, [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) has recently been re-created to make it more user friendly. No longer does it require a password to access information. At the very bottom of the home page there is a red box that says League Management. If you click on that, it will take you to the section with all the information on our positions, policies, bylaws and many other useful resources. Are you looking for something specific? Then it might be quicker if you search for it by using Google or another search engine. Type in: LWV Bylaws or whatever topics you wish. Make sure you locate the national League's webpage when looking for national items. If you wish to find a state topic, try LWVWA Positions or whatever resource you are seeking. Google is not the only search engine available to you. Recently I learned that <http://duckduckgo.com> is also a good search engine that does not collect "cookies" to track what you are searching for. Try doing a little search to find out what is available.

## Mental Health Court

Diane Molleson

Katy Butler, a judge with the mental health court, and prosecutor Megan Killgore were the guest speakers at our holiday party in December. They spoke about how mental health court differs from traditional court in that it's non-adversarial and focused on treatment and recovery. Participation in the mental health court is completely voluntary and those who choose—and qualify for—this option come from two tracks: **Stipulated Order of Continuance** (pre-conviction, case is put on hold for up to two years and dismissed upon completion of mental health court) and **probation** (post-conviction, guilty plea, length of probation can be shortened). Both speakers emphasized the positive outcome of the mental health court, which has improved the participants' quality of life, resulted in over 1,000 hours of community service and reduced the rate of hospitalizations, emergency room visits and contacts with law enforcement. Butler noted how she's watched the participants become a community, build a support system and learn ways to better manage their lives. The mental health court can handle up to 37 participants at a time, and there have been 14 graduates so far. Of those 14, **none has come back into the criminal justice system.** Funded by the public safety sales tax, Benton County's mental health court is the third in Eastern Washington.

## Annual Legislative Lunch

Polly Parton

State Senator Sharon Brown and Representative Larry Haler (Representative Brad Klippert was unavailable) met with us on December 19<sup>th</sup>. The Hirst Decision was a major topic, resulting in the bulk of water permit decisions being thrust upon the counties, where resources for needed decisions are lacking. Both felt a solution for Hirst must be found before the capital budget could be passed. Ms. Brown also spoke passionately about youth suicide in the Tri-City area and how imbedding mental health professionals in the primary care could help this situation. She also noted a possible side benefit of recovering valuable earth minerals from commercial geothermal projects.

## Treasurer's Report

Shirley Sonnichsen

At the end of December, checking was \$3,552; savings was \$1,856 for a total of \$5,408.

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**Income:** We received \$715 in dues and \$18 in Table Talk contributions for a total of \$733.

**Expenses:** Second and third quarter National PMP payment for \$736.

We have 35 paid members at the end of December. Eight members do not owe (paid after Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>) and as of today, five people have not paid. With the board's permission, Shirley Miller will be made a Lifetime member. The PayPal account is working. I found out there is a \$2.48 fee for using their services so we will have to adjust for that next year.

I will be updating the national database for the February 1st deadline and those who haven't paid will be marked inactive. We have two new members from the Program planning meeting at Polly's house: Michele Pirotte and Virginia Rogalsky.

National Convention "A More Perfect Democracy" is June 27 – July 1, 2018 at the Chicago Hilton. We will be able to send one or two members, depending on our membership at February 1st. Rooms are \$209 for League members and the rate is available three days before and three days after the Convention. The early registration fee is \$450. There is an agenda on the National Website, [www.LWV.org](http://www.LWV.org)

## 2018 LWVWA State Council – Help Needed! Polly Parton

Planning continues for the State Council we are hosting in Richland on June 1, 2 and 3.

Emphasis has changed from primarily Hanford-related subjects to member engagement/training and some Hanford information. We will need member help both before and during the council. Some of our needs include:

- Attendee goodie gift bags— sourcing items (pens, pads), request local company/corporate donations, bagging, distributing at registration
- Basket for auction—sourcing local items (possible local company /corporate donations), the large basket, final presentation...
- Volunteers to help as greeters, help with sign-up, distributing paperwork and meal tickets, directing attendees to various meeting rooms, help with possible tours, on-site coordinator with hotel staff, assisting State officers, event wrap-up...
- Phone committee to contact each of our members for possible assistance with this event

Would you like to lead/join a specific task? Fill in where needed? Have any specific ideas? If so, please contact any member of the committee: Polly Parton at [Polly.parton@yahoo.com](mailto:Polly.parton@yahoo.com) or 509-551-3818 or JoAnne Dimond, Shirley Sonnichsen, and Marilyn Perkins ([jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com](mailto:jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com)).

## Let's Talk

Marilyn Perkins

The first current events/hot topics discussion was held in January. The thirteen members who attended chose Immigration—a pertinent local and national subject. We broke into two groups and covered a wide range of issues. We were in consensus about protecting young people in the DACA program but wondered what we would be willing to give up politically to do that. Most were in agreement that “chain migration” wasn’t that important to maintain. Spending billions on a wall did not receive much support either. The recent government shutdown was a good example of such tradeoffs. The importance of immigrants to our economy and the challenge of meeting their needs—twenty-two languages are spoken by students at Westgate Elementary in Kennewick—shows how complicated this issue is.

As usual, we felt it was important to have the facts. Some of our members had just attended the meeting sponsored by the Tri-Cities Immigration Coalition, which was very informative. The date and topic for the next meeting has not yet been determined.

## Program Planning

Marilyn Perkins

About 18 members and two guests met in January at Polly Parton’s home to discuss national and local program planning. The recommendation from the National Board to continue with its efforts for Making Democracy Work – with emphasis on voting rights, improving elections, campaign finance/money in politics and redistricting was well received.

The discussion about local program planning brought up many issues our members would like to learn more about, such as sexual harassment prevention and maintaining safe work environments; the Snake River dams; the Columbia River and possible changes in who controls the river shore; and affordable housing. Public Banking, which is currently being studied, was also mentioned. It is not too late to submit any ideas members might have about topics of interest locally.

## From LWVWA

Lora Rathbone

February 2 is the cut off for all bills not related to the budget. They must pass their policy committee by Friday in order to remain active:

**HB 1800 / ESSB 6002:** the **Washington Voting Rights Act** authorizes district-based elections where at large systems and racially polarized voting have excluded communities of color from a fair chance at representation. This is very similar to the WA Voting Rights Act that LWVWA has supported for the last five years. ESSB 6002 passed the Senate with a strong bipartisan vote and was heard in the House State Government Committee. HB 1800 is in the House and is expected to come up for a vote soon. Please let your Representatives know you strongly support all versions of this bill.

**HB 2455 / SB 5991:** Despite our campaign finance reporting requirements, special interests have found another loophole that allows them to donate virtually unlimited amounts of cash to campaign efforts without any of us ever knowing who they are. And now they are flooding elected officials’ offices with emails demanding that that loophole remain. Let your legislators know you support the DISCLOSE act—HB 2455 / SB 5991.

More information on bills regarding voting, secure elections and campaign financing at:

<https://leagueofwomensvotersofwashington.wildapricot.org/democracy-2018>

## Upcoming Events

**Town Halls with Representatives Larry Haler and Brad Klippert**  
**Saturday, Feb. 17 from 9 a.m. to Noon**  
**ARC of Tri Cities, 1455 Fowler St., Richland**

**8th District Telephone Town Hall**

**Tuesday, Feb. 20 from 6-7 p.m.**

Call (509) 941-2750 to participate. At any time during the call you can press STAR (\*) on your telephone keypad if you have a question.

## LWVBF Calendar

### February 2018

**Thursday, February 8—League Birthday Dinner**, Shilo Inn (50 Comstock St., Richland), 5:30 pm

**Thursday, February 15— Business and Planning Meeting**, 5:30 pm, BF Transit Center (Richland Wye/1000 Columbia Park Trail) All members are welcome

**February — Public Banking Meeting**, date TBD

### March 2018

**Thursday, January 18— Business and Planning Meeting**, 5:30 pm, BF Transit Center (Richland Wye/1000 Columbia Park Trail) All members are welcome

Email us at  
[lww.of.bf@gmail.com](mailto:lww.of.bf@gmail.com)

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