



VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BENTON & FRANKLIN COUNTIES

www.lwv-bf.org

From the President Marilyn Perkins

On January 21st, I participated in the Women's March in Seattle with another League member, Marsha Dunstan, and her daughter. Our small group also included another friend and her daughter and my daughter and twin granddaughters. The three of us who are close to 70 opted to join at the march's half-way mark.

It was a beautiful day and the march stretched over a few miles so we weren't packed together like in some cities, but the most amazing factor was how friendly and diverse the marchers were. The police who rode by on bikes and motorcycles were cheered and thanked. There were many signs, some serious, some funny; unfortunately I didn't think of a sign until the march was over and, of course, it would have encouraged people to be informed voters.

It can be hard to remain non-partisan in such times and that is why it is so important for League members to stay focused on issues and be well informed. For instance, trade, an issue that candidates on the right and left used to fire up their base, is complex and very important to our economy, but the benefits are not always distributed evenly throughout the country. Manufacturing in the U.S. is actually up considerably since the eighties, but robotics and computerization have reduced the number of people employed. As we look to the future (driverless cars, online shopping) and the changes it will bring, we must consider the effects of these changes on our citizens and the jobs that will be lost and created. The human factor is often forgotten, and that is not healthy for individuals or our nation.

Looking back, I realize the march was fun. Being an informed, engaged citizen is not always seen as a fun activity (though we League members are an exception), but it is certainly worthwhile, and it has rewards for us personally and, hopefully, for the country.

February 2017

Officers

President:
Marilyn Perkins
1st Vice President:
JoAnne Dimond
2nd Vice President:
Janet Nail
Secretary:
Lora Rathbone
Treasurer:
Shirley Sonnichsen
Voter Editor:
Diane Molleson

Elected

Directors:

Bree Bowen
Bev Hunter
Diane Molleson
Toyoko Tsukuda
Susan Leckband
Polly Parton

Appointed

Directors:

Ruth Giese
Judy Golberg
Ruvine Jimenez
Beverly Johnson-Torelli
Neil Norman

Treasurer's Report

Shirley Sonnichsen

At the end of December, checking was \$3,802; savings was \$1,856 for a total of \$5,658. Income was \$300 dues. Total expenses were \$55 to Kay Ottem for nametags, \$352 for 2nd quarter National PMP for a total of \$407. We have two new members, Jill McLaughlin who is actually rejoining and Hala Abdel Aal. We have 46 paid members and 52 in total. Three people joined after February, 2016 and did not have to pay dues last year. The national database must be updated by January 31st each year so that the Per Member Payment (PMP) can be calculated for National and State. After some discussions with National regarding the mechanics of the new database, new members were added, addresses changed and people who have moved coded inactive. At the end of January if dues are not received, people will be dropped from the National Database and will not be members for the coming year.

Checking: \$3,802

Savings: \$1,856

Total: \$5,658

Observer Corps

Judy Golberg

It isn't too late to sign up to serve as a League Observer Corps member. Our responsibilities are to attend meetings of a specific entity, listen, and then report to League anything that might be of interest to our members. What you report may be edited for length and included in an article for the *Voter*. If the item is of high importance or action is needed more quickly, the President and Observer Corps chair can decide to send the information directly to our members. The President is the only member who speaks for our organization so if we have a position and want to take action with regard to one of the topics, the President would be asked to do so. We have a description of what an Observer may do and a reporting form. If you are interested, please let Judy Golberg (jgolberg@charter.net) know and we'll add you to the list. Friends of League—this includes spouses of course—can participate using the same guide. Thanks to those of you who have already volunteered.

Program Planning

Marilyn Perkins

Eighteen brave souls joined us at Polly Parton's new home on Jan. 14th for our annual Program Planning meeting. Many thanks to Polly and Fred for making us welcome. This year we discussed ideas for the State League and our local League.

The following topics were suggested: continued education on climate change, making democracy work, the funding of education, a public bank for the state, the Snake River dams, monitoring work at Hanford, immigration in our area, and possible changes to the local Columbia River shoreline. The board will be considering these ideas and others at the next board meeting. Our recommendations to the State are due by Feb. 28. The State League will consider all ideas sent in and make a recommendation for the State Convention in June. We will have more time to think about our local focus, which will be decided in April, in time for the Annual Meeting in May.

Making Democracy Work is an umbrella covering a large number of issues, including getting out the vote, voter education, opposing voter suppression, and other "good government" topics. It is not too late to submit your ideas for the State or our local League. We need to know where members want to focus our time and energy in the year ahead. League "years" run from July 1-June 30. Please contact Marilyn Perkins (jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com or 783-8610) to suggest new ideas or add your voice to those already submitted.

BirthDay Dinner

Marilyn Perkins

Our birthday dinner will be at the **Shilo (50 Comstock St., Richland) on February 9th**. We will start gathering at **5:45 pm** and hopefully get in the buffet line around six. The cost is \$24 per person.

Our guest speaker will be Matt Boehnke, retired from the military, and currently mayor pro tem in Kennewick. He also teaches cyber security classes as CBC. His presentation will include ideas for personal security, as well as the country's energy grid and how vulnerable it is and what might be done to improve it. Obviously some of this information is classified, but it's a timely subject, and we should have good questions.

The Shilo needs our count by Tuesday the 7th, **so please RSVP JoAnne Dimond** (catlovermac@yahoo.com or 438-2330) **by Monday, Feb. 6th**. As always, spouses, friends and potential members are welcome.

They Represent You!

Marilyn Perkins

Hopefully the TRYs will be ready by our birthday dinner and people can volunteer to help distribute them. We are printing less this year, as some places didn't want as many because everything is online. Nevertheless, we think they are valuable, and more people seem interested in contacting their elected officials. We need help in early February to count and bundle them. If you have time, please contact Marilyn Perkins (jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com or 783-8610). It would be good to have a pool of people to start with.

Nominating Committee

Polly Parton

We need you! The nominating committee needs recommendations and volunteers for officers and board members to be elected at May annual meeting. Don't let the commitment deter you. We will work with your time constraints. Get involved and help with our League's activities. Please contact the chair of our nominating committee, Kay Ottem (Otttem@frontier.com or 509-735-4684), for questions, to make nominations, or to nominate yourself for future office or board positions. Please respond by 3/15.

Budget Committee

Marilyn Perkins

Every year at our Annual Meeting, which is the third Thursday in May, we conduct some official League business and that includes adopting a budget for the upcoming year. We are pretty conservative when it comes to fiscal matters and a majority of our dues go to the State and National levels, but we do like to have a good budget going forward. It is helpful to have some non-board members and a fresh perspective on the budget committee. It usually just takes one meeting and the time is flexible. If you would be willing to participate (probably sometime in March), please contact our treasurer, Shirley Sonnichsen (jsson.dawgs@charter.net).

Voter Registration

Marilyn Perkins

Another Naturalization ceremony is scheduled for Tuesday, February 14th and we will be helping to register our newest citizens at the Federal Building in Richland. The actual ceremony begins at 10 AM and we are usually done by eleven or shortly thereafter. It is a fun and uplifting event to witness and participate in. If you would like to help, please contact Marilyn Perkins (jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com or 783-8610).

Public Banking

Toyoko Tsukuda

At the League's Program Planning meeting on January 14, 2017, Toyoko Tsukuda suggested the LWVBF study public banking

Public banking is government-owned banking operating in the public interest, unlike privately owned banks, which are operated for their shareholders but not their depositors. North Dakota is the only state that has a state-owned bank. The state deposits its revenues in the Bank of North Dakota. This money is loaned at low interest rates to North Dakota's residents, which ensures that a high proportion of state funds are being invested in the state's economy. Furthermore, the earnings on those loans are put back in the state treasury. This enables North Dakota to fund projects without incurring new debt. During the recent credit crisis, it was the only state to report a budget surplus every year since 2008. Seventeen states have proposed the establishment of a public bank to fund important projects in all areas of government: education, infrastructure, health care, etc. Washington may be able to increase its state revenue by establishing a state-owned bank without introducing new taxes. LWV-VT adopted a study of the feasibility of a public bank in 2013 and introduced it to the Vermont legislature.

2016 Election

Judy Golberg

After the 2016 election, LWVUS took stock of our impact. Thanks to the hard work— and the reporting of what we did at all levels, the League's impact was immense.

- 423** Leagues participating in surveys representing 49 states + D.C.
- 9,238** Total election-related events hosted by reporting Leagues
- 160,000** Volunteer hours leveraged to carry out Leagues' core election activities in 2016
- 4+ Million** Used VOTE411.org; most often-cited place where Leagues produced their voters' guides
- 1,750,000+** Printed League voters' guides distributed locally

Make a Difference

Polly Parton

What can I do to make a difference and participate as a League member? We ask each member to choose an area of interest(s), then we match opportunities with needs. Email, text, or phone your area of interest and ideas, and we make suggestions or ask for help.

Here are some possible areas of interest to choose from:

Voter service

Voter registration

Candidate forums

Ballot issue presentations

TRY - (They Represent You! pamphlet) production and distribution

Outreach to local high schools on the importance of voting

Observer Corps - attending city council, school board, planning commission meetings

Program Planning meetings for members and public (i.e. arrange for various tours)

Action / Advocacy

Letters to the editor

Contact elected officials

Administration / Membership

Serve on the board

Help with member contacts, retention and recruitment

Serve on budget, nomination or bylaw committees

What would you like to see our League do that is not listed? Email, text or call

Polly.parton@yahoo.com or 509-551-3818.

Calendar

February 2017

Thursday, February 9th— Birthday Dinner, 5:45 pm, Shilo Inn (50 Comstock, Richland), 5:45 PM

Tuesday, February 14th—Naturalization Ceremony/ Voter Registration, 10 AM, Federal Building in Richland

Thursday, February 16th— Board Meeting, 5:30 pm, BF Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland)

March 2017

March— Table Talk (Date and location TBD)

Tuesday, March 14—Pi Day, 11:30 am, Marilyn Perkin's home

Thursday, March 16th—Board Meeting, 5:30 pm, BF Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland)

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

Or visit
www.lwv-bf.org

League of Women Voters of
Benton & Franklin
Counties
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Richland WA 99352**