



# VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BENTON & FRANKLIN COUNTIES

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

## **From the President Marilyn Perkins**

I thought I would share how much fun I had this fall being the president of our League. I had the good fortune to go to Shakey's Pizza on Road 68 in Pasco for the planning meeting for the Latino Coalition's get out the vote rally that took place Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at Volunteer Park. I met the newest member of the Pasco City Council, Chi Flores at the planning meeting. He had just been appointed two nights before and is young and enthusiastic about serving on the council. Many candidates attended the rally as a last chance to win over voters.

The Pasco Auditor's Office agreed to set up on the grounds of the Court House to register people from the October 29<sup>th</sup> rally. This late in the game, it is only legal if done on County property. I heard Benton County was also open on Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. Franklin County will be open late on Monday, November 7<sup>th</sup> for anyone who never got their ballot or lost their ballot and want to vote. They are going above and beyond in accommodating voters.

Now it is up to the voters. Candidates, election staff, community volunteers and others have done their job to make it pretty easy to be informed and to vote in our state. Hopefully, citizens in our two counties will do their job, and we will have a good turnout and a much higher participation rate than in the most recent elections. We have a week to go. Keep reminding your family, friends and neighbors to get their ballots in on time.

Thank you to all the members who helped with our forums. We hosted six, including one on I-732, one in Walla Walla, three statewide races over two nights and two that featured local candidates. Kay Ottem did her usual great job of contacting all the local candidates and keeping tabs on those  
**(Continued on p.2)**

November 2016

## **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**  
**Ruvine Jimenez**  
**Beverly Johnson-Torelli**  
**Neil Norman**

## From the President (continued from p.1)

Marilyn Perkins

who did and did not respond in a timely fashion. Plus, she moderated one forum. Jon Funfar of City of Pasco TV and Mike Charboneau of Richland CityView TV taped the forums and even streamed the statewide races on Pasco's Facebook page. Bev Johnson-Torelli wins the member/citizen of the month award for attending almost all the forums. Her husband Chuck was usually with her as was his daughter, Talia Dickinson, who is our newest League member.

## Watch the Candidate Forums

If you missed the candidate forums, here are the links to view them:

Candidates for the 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District: <https://psctv.viebit.com/#N5ZNTGEpIDUa>

Judicial Candidates: <https://psctv.viebit.com/#iPNXIDfMv7rN>

Candidates for Secretary of State: <https://psctv.viebit.com/#aGZzDOqu3u0b>

Candidates for Attorney General: <https://psctv.viebit.com/#xLaoiXKvq2Zm>

Candidates for Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction:  
<https://psctv.viebit.com/#dpqv4lkEvvLT>

Candidates for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Districts of the Washington State House of Representatives:  
<https://psctv.viebit.com/#Fp9yed0DbKiQ>

For other election forums, go to <https://psctv.viebit.com> and click on elections on the left-hand side of the page.

## Treasurer's Report

### Shirley Sonnichsen

At the end of September, checking was \$2,583; savings was \$1,856 for a total of \$4,439.

Checking: \$2,583

Savings: \$1,856

Total: \$4,439

**Income:** We received dues of \$975 and contributions of \$150. We also received \$319 for the September Table Talk luncheon. Total income was \$1,444.

**Expense:** Total expenses were \$340 for the Table talk catering at the Shilo, and Treasurer's expense of ink and stamps for total expenses of \$446.

**Membership:** We have a new member, Taliah Dickinson. She is related to Bev Johnson-Torelli. We have 22 paid members and 48 in total. I have updated the membership list and it has been distributed.

If you have not paid your dues or would like to join League, dues are \$75. Please send to LWV-BF, P.O. Box 765, Richland, WA 99352.

## November 9<sup>th</sup> Table Talk

Janet Nail

Our November Table Talk is on a Wednesday this month—the day after Election Day! We will discuss the election results or how did we get where we are today? The Table Talk will be at Janet Nail's home (135 Meadows Hill Drive, Richland) on **Wednesday, November 9th at 5:30 pm**. If you see a thought-provoking editorial, bring it. Invite a friend, the more opinions the better. (Please call or e-mail Janet if bringing someone so she has a head count—509-546-1467 or [janet@janetnail.com](mailto:janet@janetnail.com)). Soup, bread, and dessert will be served.

Directions to Janet's house: From Clearwater Avenue, take the traffic circle's first exit to Leslie Road. Travel on Leslie 1.2 miles and turn left on Meadow Hills Drive. Or, from Gage Boulevard, turn on Leslie and go one mile and turn right on Meadow Hills Drive. Once on Meadow Hills Drive, travel up the hill over the canal (about ¼ mile) and turn left. The house is the second on the left. The number 135 is painted on the curb at the driveway.

## Membership and Leadership Development

### Janet Nail and Toyoko Tsukuda

What is your League story? We each have something that caught our attention and made us decide the League makes a difference. It may have been something small, like catching the attention of children while sitting at a table registering voters or a Facebook post congratulating us on one of our forums, a moment with a great impact. We would like to weave these stories into our events and membership drives. Bree Bowen has offered to help “polish” and edit our submissions so if you give us the outline of your story, we will do the rest. Janet Nail ([janet@janetnail.com](mailto:janet@janetnail.com)) or Toyoko Tsukuda ([tmjdaddy@gmail.com](mailto:tmjdaddy@gmail.com))

### Book Review by Bree Bowen

#### ***Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right* by Jane Mayer**

There’s a quote by Gloria Steinem that I love: “*The truth will set you free. But first, it will piss you off.*” I’m in my thirties, and “Big Money” has played a large role in elections for as long as I can remember. But in the past decade, I’ve seen it increase—in staggering, obscene amounts—more than I ever thought was imaginable, or legal. 1980 brought us the first Reagan presidency, and the year that billionaire, oil-baron brothers Charles and David Koch decided they’d be willing to spend huge amounts of money to elect conservatives at all levels of American government, and, in their own words, “essentially buy their way to political power.” We think of the Koch brothers as backing conservative candidates at election time, but their reach goes even farther; they have helped finance and organize a massive network of think tanks, academic programs and news media outlets. Mayer believes that the Koch brothers and a small number of “allied plutocrats” have essentially hijacked American democracy, using their money not just to compete with their political adversaries, but to drown them out. What the Kochs and their allies have created, in her view, is a private political bank capable of bestowing unlimited amounts of money on favored candidates, and doing it with virtually no disclosure of its source. They have established a Republican Party in which donors, not elected officials, are in charge. Furthermore, this kind of practice has been legal since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Koch brothers’ group, Koch Industries, is a 501(c)(4) organization. Our IRS codes allow for 501(c)(4) organizations allegedly devoted to “social welfare” but permitted to engage in electoral politics in an essentially *unregulated way*. A 501(c)(4) is not required to disclose the sources of its funding, and that provision alone has brought in huge amounts of money from donors eager to contribute but hesitant to identify themselves. The 501(c)(4) loophole was given new vigor in 2010 by the Supreme Court’s Citizens United decision, which removed virtually all limits on corporate campaign funding and permitted its anonymity. While this book was frustrating and hard to read at times, I definitely recommend it. It’s up to us to pull back the curtains, like in the *The Wizard of Oz*.

### Jefferson LWV and AAUW Joint Forum

Toyoko Tsukuda

The Jefferson LWV and the American Association of University Women hosted the joint forum on initiatives 752 and 1464 and the introduction of the LWVWA’s Citizens United Toolkit in Port Townsend, Washington on October 13th. Toyoko Tsukuda, and the other Citizens United study committee members, Janet Winan (the Seattle League) and Jackie Aase (the Jefferson League), presented the toolkit. When Janet Winan asked the attendees how many of them had heard of the Citizens United ruling, all of them raised their hands. Please visit the Citizens United toolkit at [www.lwvawacutoolkit.org/](http://www.lwvawacutoolkit.org/). The Importance of informed voters is not cliché. Read the document “David and Goliath” in the toolkit.

## Future Public Disclosure Access

Toyoko Tsukuda

**Informed** voters who understand the sources of campaign funding can make independent decisions without being swayed by the overwhelming barrage of advertising. **The WA Public Disclosure Laws are essential to the protection of the people’s right to be informed during elections and the WA Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) is providing information about campaign donations and spending.**

The Public Disclosure Commission is undertaking a project to develop the next generation of PDC data access. The citizens who are helping to develop the system are called “stakeholders.” Toyoko Tsukuda, a stakeholder from the LWV, attended the first meeting on Oct 13 and will be attending bi-weekly until Aug 2017. She would like to hear suggestions, comments (or complaints), or questions from you about accessing campaign finance information at the PDC website: <https://www.pdc.wa.gov/>

## Calendar

### November 2016

Tuesday, November 8— Election Day

Wednesday, November 9— 5:30 PM, Table Talk, Election Results, Janet Nail’s home

Thursday, November 17— 5:30 PM, Board Meeting, BF Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland)

### December 2016

Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup>— Holiday Party, Good Will in Pasco

No Board Meeting

### January 2017

January 8<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>—Program Planning Brunch, location TBD

January 10<sup>th</sup>—Table Talk

Email us at  
[lwv.of.bf@gmail.com](mailto:lwv.of.bf@gmail.com)  
Or visit  
[www.lwv-bf.org](http://www.lwv-bf.org)

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