



VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BENTON & FRANKLIN COUNTIES

www.lwv-bf.org

September 2016

President's Column Marilyn Perkins

Kay Ottem, Polly Parton and I met with Felix Vargas and David Cortinas of the Latino Coalition of the Tri-Cities. Our meeting took place at CBC in the office of Alice Schlegel whom we have worked with for several years. Jon Funfar, who has videotaped many forums, was also in attendance. Mike Charboneau was unable to come, but Jon and he have been invaluable in making our forums available on TV and the Internet. We are so fortunate to have the Latino Coalition joining with us. They also feel it is important to inform voters and encourage voter turnout, and they have connections with some candidates and access to venues that make planning our forums much easier. These forums don't just happen; they require a lot of work, but they are also a great opportunity to meet people in our community we might not know otherwise. I hope most of our members will attend and hopefully help with one or two of these forums. We might even have cookies.

We have been asked to help sponsor a forum in Walla Walla for the 16th district legislative candidates and include their county commissioner races the last week in September. We are also moderating a **forum on I-732 on Friday, September 30th at WSU-TC at 7 pm**. The first week in October, we plan to have two forums back to back for the Attorney General and three local judges' races one night and the 9th and 16th legislative races and Franklin County Commissioners the next evening. On Oct. 13th at CBC, we will have a forum featuring the statewide races for Secretary of State and the Office of Superintendent Public Instruction. We have been working closely with the State League on that forum. We hope to finish off the season with a forum in Richland with the 8th district legislative candidates and the 4th congressional candidates. The dates, candidate availability and venues are still in the works, but we will let you know when everything is firmed up. **(Continued on p.2)**

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President's Column (continued)

Marilyn Perkins

We are saying good-bye to another long-time League member and friend. Judy Chasse is joining Charlene Franz on the other side of the mountains. Judy and Jim have been planning a move to be closer to their daughter and her family in Puyallup. Judy and I became friends in 1977 when she moved to my neighborhood, and I walked around the block to meet the new folks in town. Judy is the one who introduced me to the League of Women Voters, and I can't imagine what my life might have been like if I hadn't met her. She and I shared many good times together in League and PTA and during summer adventures trying to keep our children entertained. Both Charlene and Judy can become members of the Tacoma/Pierce County League.

Treasurer's Report

Shirley Sonnichsen

The 2016-17 fiscal year has begun and the budget is in the spreadsheet. We voted at the annual meeting to add \$50 in the budget for the *Voter*. Total checking at the end of July is \$1197; savings is \$1,856 for a total of \$3053. There was no income in July. The online Secretary of State Charitable Orgs. Form was completed and the \$10 fee paid. We paid the State League \$209 for the 1st quarter Per Member Payment. Our dues are \$75 and payable in September. A letter should be out in the next week or two. We pay National \$32 per member and \$16 for second-in-household; we pay the State League \$19 per member and \$9.50 for the second-in-household. That leaves us \$24 per member and \$12 per second-in-household to do our League business. Contributions are important because of this limited amount and the fact we only have 50 members. The newest version of the membership list has been distributed. JoAnne Dimond and Bev Hunter volunteered for the Audit Committee and we will meet soon.

Checking: \$1,197
Savings: \$1,856
Total: \$3,053

Voter Registration

Marilyn Perkins

September 27th is National Voter Registration Day and we hope to register voters in locations in Kennewick, Pasco and Richland. CBC has also invited us back to register voters on Sept. 22 as part of their Constitution Day celebration. They will be handing out the pocket copies of the U.S. Constitution. I also hope to contact WSU Tri-Cities and some local high schools to register students and staff there.

October 10th is the last day to register or make address changes in person or online before the November 8th election. 10/10 is an easy date to remember, so remind your friends and neighbors, especially if you know people who have moved recently and might need to update their registration. Oct. 31 is the last day new voters can register in person at their county auditor's offices.

However, registration is not even half the battle. The real challenge is getting people to vote. We have very few reasons for not voting in this state. Our two counties did not do well in the primary election; in Benton County, only 33% of eligible voters mailed in their ballots, and Franklin County would have come in last in the state (28%) if it weren't for Yakima at 27%. San Juan County led the way with 52%. Our State League participates in Vote411.org, which is a great resource for voters and our web page <http://lwv-bf.org> has a link to it and other helpful sites. Help spread the word to your friends, neighbors and others when the opportunity arises.

Fall Table Talks: Ballot Issues

Marilyn Perkins

We usually devote our October Table Talk to learning about the issues on the November ballot. Because there are six initiatives on this year's ballot as well as two advisory votes and one Senate Joint Resolution, we have decided to also use our September meeting to discuss the initiatives so we will have enough time to cover them all.

We have scheduled luncheon meetings at the Shilo in Richland for Thursday, September 8 and Thursday, October 6, both beginning at 11:30 AM. Latecomers can always be accommodated. The cost of the lunch will be \$15 or less, and guests are very welcome. League members will present both sides of the issue, not with the intent of influencing your vote, but of informing you of arguments for and against each initiative so that you can better decide for yourself.

The following initiatives will be discussed:

I-1433 —proposes raising the minimum wage

I-1464 —deals with public financing of elections and limits on lobbying

I-1491—concerns temporary restraints on guns for some people

I-1501 —protects seniors and other vulnerable individuals from fraud

I -732 —proposes a carbon emission tax

I -735 —instructs our Congressional delegation on a proposed amendment that would address federal campaign finance reform

The order of presentations has not yet been decided. It will depend on the availability of our volunteers and whether they can attend both luncheons. We will send out a reminder the week of each luncheon.

Women's Equality Day Picnic

The LWV-BF celebrated Women's Equality Day with a picnic at the Columbia Point Marina in Richland on August 24th. July 2016 was the hottest July on record worldwide, and climate change is a priority issue at the national, state and local levels of League. We heard about climate change from three speakers: local League members Elyn Murphy and Amoret Bunn and a visiting climate scientist, Peter Gleick, who heads the Pacific Institute in Oakland, CA and is the son-in-law of LWV-BF member Neil Norman.

Murphy, the co-chair of the LWVWA Climate Change Committee, talked about the League's climate change toolkit and the resources it contains. Bunn highlighted the weather changes in the Baltic States; they don't have true winters there anymore, and they're having to plant different crops. Gleick discussed the scientific consensus on global warming; the evidence is undeniable that global warming is real, rapid and the rising levels of CO₂ are caused by humans. He gave a link to a website, Skeptical Science (<http://www.skepticalscience.com>) that debunks climate denial, and he noted that because of gridlock at the federal level, it's more important than ever to try to effect policy changes at the state and local level. That an initiative like I-732, which proposes a carbon tax, is on the ballot is very encouraging.

LWV-BF member Toyoko Tsukuda spoke on the status of women in her native Japan. About 35 people attended and enjoyed the speakers, the food and drinks, and the company.

Observer Corps

The LWV-BF would like to resurrect the Observer Corps where members attend events of interest to the community, such as County Commissioner meetings, urban planning conferences and irrigation board meetings, and then report their observations to the League. Members interested in being part of the Observer Corps can contact Marilyn Perkins at jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com

Calendar

September 2016

Thursday, Sept. 8th – 11:30 AM, Table Talk on ballot issues, Shilo Inn, Richland

Thursday, Sept. 15th – 5:30 PM, Board Meeting, BF Transit Center, 1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland (awaiting confirmation from the Transit Center)

Thursday, Sept. 22 – Voter Registration at CBC

Tuesday, Sept. 27th – National Voter Registration Day

Fri., Sept. 30th – 7:00 PM, Forum on I-732, WSU Tri-Cities East Auditorium, Richland

October 2016

Thursday, Oct. 6th – 11:30 AM, Table Talk on ballot issues, Shilo Inn, Richland

Thursday, Oct. 13th – State Candidate Forums SOS and OSPI, CBC, Pasco

Thursday, Oct. 20th – 5:30 PM, Board Meeting, BF Transit Center, Richland

November 2016

Thursday, Nov. 3rd – Table Talk

Thursday, Nov. 17th – 5:30 PM, Board Meeting, BF Transit Center, Richland

Email us at
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Or visit
www.lwv-bf.org

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