



VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BENTON & FRANKLIN COUNTIES

www.lwv-bf.org

From the President JoAnn Bengtson

The League's Birthday Celebration is this month. Plan on attending the birthday dinner on February 12 and bring guests. Perhaps they too will identify with our vision and mission so we can magnify our impact on local, state and national government.

As you reflect on our past, note that we are tasked with highlighting our local League milestones and champions in a display for the League of Women Voters State Convention in June, so make sure you start gathering pictures, and contribute stories to illustrate our local League's activities and achievements.

Thanks for volunteering! And join me in celebrating "US" on February 12th!

League Birthday Dinner

JoAnne Dimond

The League of Women Voters of Benton-Franklin Counties will hold our annual **birthday dinner** on **Tuesday, February 12th at CG Public House**, 9221 West Clearwater in Kennewick. We will start at 5:30 pm (with a no host bar) and order dinner off a limited menu at 6 pm. Entrees will include Chicken Cordon Bleu, Alfredo pasta, London broil, Chicken Caesar salad, and burgers. Prices range from approximately \$15 to \$23. Our speaker will be Ken Robertson, retired executive editor of the *Tri-City Herald*.

To RSVP by February 5, please call JoAnne Dimond, [509-438-2330](tel:509-438-2330) or Marilyn Perkins, [509-521-7716](tel:509-521-7716) or [509-783-8610](tel:509-783-8610).

**The League of Women Voters turns 100 in
2020!**

February 2019

Officers

President:

JoAnn Bengtson

1st Vice President:

JoAnne Dimond

2nd Vice President:

Janet Nail

Interim Secretary:

Polly Parton

Treasurer:

Shirley Sonnichsen

Past President:

Polly Parton

Voter Editor:

Diane Molleson

Elected

Directors:

Beverly Johnson-Torelli

Danette Keegan

Diane Molleson

Lora Rathbone

Chuck Torelli

Appointed

Directors:

Ruth Giese

Judy Golberg

Sabiha Khan

Lisabeth Jimenez

Marilyn Perkins

Kelly Pflieger

Program Planning Meeting on Feb. 4

Marilyn Perkins

League members met in January to begin discussing state and local program planning. Because there was so much to talk about, we decided to have **another meeting on Monday, February 4**. All local Leagues are asked to submit their recommendation of what they would like the State League to focus on over the next two years. This can be a new study, an update of an older position, a concurrence of a local League study, or an emphasis on a League position or activity. Based on the two meetings, our local board will decide what to recommend to the State Board. The State Board will then make a recommendation that will be considered at the State Convention this June.

Local program planning recommendations do not need to be decided until our board meeting in April. They will then be considered at our Annual Meeting in May. Last year we chose a study of Public Banking, with the idea of possibly recommending it for a state study. LWVBF member, Toyoko Tsukuda, was very interested in this subject and other members agreed to work with her. Unfortunately, for us, Toyoko moved to the west side, but she continued to work on this issue with members from here and other Leagues. Their results will be part of our discussion at the February 4th meeting. (See Public Banking article on p. 4.)

Any recommendation for a new study will carry more weight if members are willing to work on it. Topics suggested at the January meeting included higher education, specifically the cost and access for students and consumer fraud by for-profit universities. Criminal justice reform, substance abuse and access to mental health services, climate change with emphasis on water availability, and universal health care were also mentioned.

Local topics discussed were affordable housing and homelessness, climate change as it affects our water supply, substance abuse and rehab opportunities, and the Hanford cleanup. Hopefully, some members who were at the January meeting will be able to come, but it is not a requirement. If you have any ideas or suggestions but are unable to attend, contact Marilyn Perkins at 521-7716 to let her know what issues interest you the most, on the state and local level.

The meeting will be at Marilyn Perkins' home: 4512 W. Yellowstone, Kennewick. Muffins, fruit and beverages (coffee, tea, juice and water) will be served. If the TRYs are ready, those who can stay can help count and bundle them.

LWV Advocacy

Lora Rathbone

The State of Washington Legislative Session opened Jan. 14, so it's time to get ready to work on passing bills for 2019!

For 2019 LWVWA Issues: go to <https://www.lwvwa.org/issues> Click on an issue to see the legislation we are following and find instructions on how to take action.

Democracy: Elections, Campaign Finance and Government Ethics, Election Methods, Election Security, Census and Redistricting

Social Policies: Economic & Social Justice, Criminal Justice, Housing and Homelessness, Healthcare, Behavioral Health and Reproductive Rights, Gun Safety

Education

Climate Change, Energy and Natural Resources: Climate Change, Energy, Forests and Rivers, Shorelines, Wetlands and Land Use, Transportation, Water

Fair and Adequate Revenue

Hanford Advisory Board

Susan Leckband

Do you have an interest in representing the League on the Hanford Advisory Board? The LWV has had a representative and alternate on the Hanford Advisory since its inception 25 years ago. The alternate position is currently open. Susan Leckband is the LWV primary representative and is the chairperson for the Hanford Advisory Board. The next meeting is all day Wednesday, February 13th beginning at 8:30 am. A Public Involvement sub-committee meeting is Tuesday, February 12th, at the Richland Public Library. All meetings are open to the public. These meetings will be very informative on Hanford issues and would be an opportunity to help you decide if you would like to be on the Hanford Advisory Board. Please contact WA State League President Ann Murphy at annmurphylwvwa@gmail.com if you are interested.

Treasurer's Report

Shirley Sonnichsen

At the end of December, checking was \$3,984; savings was \$1,856 for a total of \$5,840.

Income: We received \$560 in dues and \$37 from Table Talk for a total of \$597.

Expenses: the 2nd and 3rd Quarter LWVUS PMP's were paid for \$760 due to slow invoicing on their part. There was \$6 in PayPal fees.

Membership: We have 50 paid members, 58 in total. Four members have not paid and an email was sent to them again. On January 31st, they will be taken off the rolls. Mary Jane Keffer is our newest member. National is updating the Roster database. The National database has to be updated by February 1st in order for the National and State Leagues to have a count for our Per Member Payments (PMP's) for the next fiscal year starting July 1, 2019.

Budget: The budget committee will meet in February or March. Members are Bev Johnson Torrelli, Marilyn Perkins, Janet Nail and Shirley Sonnichsen. Shirley will prepare the paperwork.

Checking: \$ 3,984
Savings: \$1,856
Total: \$5,840

Naturalization Ceremonies: Help Wanted

Marilyn Perkins

Our League enjoys helping register voters at the Naturalization Ceremonies held in the Federal Building in Richland. There was one scheduled on February 14 in the auditorium downstairs, instead of the courtroom upstairs, which it makes it easier for more people to watch. I was just notified it was cancelled because of the government shutdown. Since the government just reopened, they may change their minds. We have a core group of people who enjoy helping at these events, but we can always use more to fill in during the year. There are usually four ceremonies a year. If you would like to be a volunteer, contact Marilyn Perkins at jmperkins.cougs@frontier.com

Voter Registration and Civics Class Opportunity

Janet Nail

For members interested in voter registration and/or civics classes, the League is offering to register and present civics classes in the four Pasco high schools. Volunteers are needed to man tables and/or present some of the civics classes. Our first volunteer opportunity will be at "Adulting Day" on March 14 at Delta High School where we will be promoting voter registration. If you are interested in participating, please let Janet Nail know at janet@janetnail.com or 509-546-1467.

Public Banking

Toyoko Tsukuda

The 2008 financial crisis resulted in huge revenue losses to states and diminished confidence in private banking institutions nationwide. This event triggered a movement to establish a public banking system where state revenues would be deposited in a state-owned bank, enabling the state to manage its own money, provide loans to local governments at lower interest rates, and collect loan interest, which could then be reinvested in public projects.

In 2017, the LWVBF's board voted to have a Public Banking exploratory committee headed by Toyoko Tsukuda with four other LWVBF members participating. The committee's research demonstrated that public banking is a good idea for the state government. However, it fell short on showing how the public banking system benefits the people of Washington. A new PB committee, formed in 2019, is now focused on that question.

In 2010, State Senator Bob Hasegawa introduced his first bill for a Public Bank, and in the 2017 Washington State Legislative Session, he reintroduced SB5464 to establish the Washington Investment Trust to "facilitate investments in and financing of public infrastructure systems that increase public health and safety [and] leverage the financial capital and resources of the State to create jobs and economic opportunities." This effort was not successful. However, in 2018, SB 6375 was the first public banking bill advanced from the policy committee with bipartisan support to assess the risk and develop a business plan for the public bank proposal. Additionally, the Supplemental Budget Bill (SB 6032) committed \$480,000 to those activities. It also changed the scope of the bank from one that would only have received the state's tax funds as deposits, to a "co-op" that would be open to all "political subdivisions that have a tax base." This means the combined revenue deposits of cities, counties, ports and utility districts as well as the state would all have access to the public bank. The business plan is due on June 30, 2019 and legislators expect to vote on the bill no later than 2020.

If successful, Washington State would have the third publicly-owned depository of state financial assets in the U.S. Currently, the Bank of North Dakota and the Bank of Samoa are the other two.

While there is growing support among Washington state legislators, others have voiced their opposition saying a public bank is unnecessary because the Public Works Board and Public Works Assistance Account already provide financial and technical assistance to Washington's communities for critical infrastructure. Other reasons given for opposing the public bank include our "reliable private banking industry," and the unfair competitive advantage versus private banks. Washington State Treasurer Duane Davidson commissioned a "Study of the Studies" of Public Banks and concluded that a state bank is not needed.

We propose a League study of this issue to determine whether a public bank would be of benefit to the people of Washington State. If you have questions or want to join our committee, please contact Toyoko Tsukuda at lwvbf.pbstudy@gmail.com or Dianne Ramsey of Seattle-King County at Ramsey98122@gmail.com

TRYs (They Represent You)

Marilyn Perkins

The 2019 edition of *They Represent You*, our directory of elected officials, is at the printer. We try to have it available by the Birthday Dinner so we can give it to members and get members to volunteer to hand them out to the community. We are having a League meeting on Monday, February 4th and if they are ready, we could get a start or finish the bundling and labeling for distribution. Our goal is to get them in people's hands and not just on display in various offices, where we often see them sitting when we deliver the newest edition.

Paper or Digital Membership Handbook? Janet Nail

The LWVBF has the website: www.lwv.bf.org. The website includes: Home, Calendar, Elections, About League, Publications, Member Tools, Join League, Donate to Us, Contact Us. The Membership Notebook includes: Membership List; Vision, Beliefs, and Intentions; Board Policies; Glossary of League Terms.

All items included in the League of Women Voters Handbook are included on the website except the Membership List. Shirley Sonnichsen emails all members an updated list of members several times a year.

At the website:

Under “About League” are **Vision, Beliefs and Intentions**

Under “Membership Tools” are **Board Policies, ByLaws and Glossary of League Terms**

Under “Action and Advocacy” are **Board Positions**

If you would like a binder with paper copies of these items, please let Janet Nail know at janet@janetnail.com or 509-546-1467.

LWVBF Calendar

February 2019

Monday, February 4— Program Planning Meeting (Part 2), 10 am, Marilyn’s home

Tuesday, February 12— League Birthday Dinner, 5:30 pm, CG Public House (9221 West Clearwater, Kennewick)

Tuesday, February 12— Hanford Advisory Board/ Public Involvement sub-committee meeting, 10 am- 5 pm, Richland Public Library (955 Northgate Drive, Richland)

Wednesday, February 13— Hanford Advisory Board Meeting, 8:30 am, Red Lion Hanford House (802 George Washington Way, Richland)

Thursday, February 14— Naturalization Ceremony (status TBD), 10 am, Federal Building, Richland

Thursday, February 21— Board Meeting, 6 pm, BF Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail). All members are welcome

March 2019

Thursday, March 14— Voter Registration, Delta High School (5801 Broadmoor Blvd., Pasco)

Thursday, March 21— Board Meeting, 6 pm, BF Transit Center (1000 Columbia Park Trail). All members are welcome

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

League of Women Voters of
Benton & Franklin
Counties
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