



Colorado Voter

Volume 29, Number 3, February 2016

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF COLORADO
Educate, Advocate, Impact!

FIRST CALL TO LWVCO COUNCIL 2016

Making Democracy Work Throughout Colorado!

May 21-22, 2016

Holiday Inn Express, Montrose

The LWVCO Council 2016 will meet Saturday, May 21st – Sunday, May 22nd on Colorado's beautiful western slope at Holiday Inn Express in Montrose. We will convene at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday and conclude on Sunday at noon. NEW for THIS COUNCIL: All delegates are invited to come early for a networking lunch at the hotel on Saturday from 11 a.m. - noon. This BBQ luncheon will give you a chance to catch up with your League friends and make new ones!

Each local League can send two delegates to represent it. Who comes? Usually presidents/spokespersons and key board members attend, however the local board has discretion. League members may attend as observers, as space permits. The Council Registration Fee is \$45.00 per delegate, which includes all meals - Saturday lunch and dinner and Sunday breakfast. Hotel and transportation costs are not included in this registration fee.

Hotel rooms are available to delegates and must be reserved by calling 970-240-1800 or 800-550-9252. Be sure to mention LWVCO League of Women Voters for the discount rate of \$99 per night plus tax. Reservations may be cancelled up to 6 p.m. the day before arrival without penalty or fee. Delegate registration and hotel reservation deadline is Monday, April 25th.

Detailed information regarding directions, meeting agenda, workshops, and registration will be included in the Final Call to be sent out in March 2016. Mark your calendars and plan to attend this fun and informative combination of business meeting and training event. Contact Cath Perrone, VP Admin, pcperrone@yahoo.com for additional info if needed before the March mailing.

STATE INNOVATION MODEL GRANT TO DEVELOP INTEGRATED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL HEALTH CARE; CAROL PACE APPOINTED TO ADVISORY BOARD

By Marilyn Brown, Voter Editor

Colorado is among select states to receive a federal State Innovation Model (SIM) grant. SIM grants, provided for under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) allow individual states to explore new methods for health care payment and delivery in specific focus areas. Colorado chose to focus on integration of behavioral and physical health care delivery systems. This has also been a strong LWVCO focus, and a national focus for many groups.

The \$65 million grant over four years will fund broad participation in practice models, involving hundreds of health care practices, researchers, consumers and other stakeholders statewide. The grant hopes to reach clinicians caring for 80% of the population of Colorado. With a strong interest in health care systems and consumer advocacy, Carol Pace, from the Denver League, recent LWVCO Board member, and active participant in the Legislative Action Committee, is one of two consumers appointed by Governor Hickenlooper to the SIM advisory board. Carol is looking forward to hearing from consumers and sharing ways they can be involved in this unique Colorado opportunity.

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If you are receiving this newsletter by U.S. mail, you could have received it sooner and in color! We encourage you to receive your newsletter electronically.

Email Julie Leonard at info@LWVColorado.org to receive the Voter by email in printable format.

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By Barbara Mattison, President, League of Women Voters of Colorado

It's amazing to me that we're already moving toward spring and LWVCO Council in May in Montrose! I look forward to seeing many of you there. The League year is going by quickly; here is a look at some of LWVCO's current work as well as a "shout-out" for LWV Larimer County.

At its 2015 Board Retreat, the LWVCO Board of Directors set two major goals:

1. Achieve LWVUS Concurrence with the LWVCO Behavioral Health Position by June 2016.
2. In partnership with local Leagues, develop/implement a plan to increase League impact and visibility statewide.

How are we doing?

Goal 1: LWVCO has sent a Behavioral Health Concurrence Proposal to LWVUS, asking the LWVUS Board of Directors to make this a recommended agenda item at LWVUS Convention, June 16 – 19, in Washington, D.C. LWVCO has emailed requests for support to local and state Leagues across the country and we're organizing a Behavioral Health Caucus at Convention with speakers from three national organizations: Mental Health America, NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) and SAMHSA (federal Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration). If you're going to Convention, please let Julie Leonard, LWVCO Executive Director, know if you can help with the concurrence process. [See LWVCO's new BH position on page 5.]

Goal 2: LWVCO has developed the LINK Program – League Information Networking and Know-how. Each LWVCO Board member is liaison to one or two Colorado Leagues and makes three contacts a year to learn what local Leagues are working on, to inform local Leagues about LWVCO's work, and to learn what local Leagues need from LWVCO. LWVCO will develop a comprehensive plan for League impact and visibility statewide.

LWVCO Supports ColoradoCare Amendment #69

At its Dec. 7, 2015 meeting, the LWVCO Board of Directors voted to support ColoradoCare Amendment #69 on the November ballot (see article by Nancy Crow, page 4). LWVCO encourages local Leagues to sponsor public meetings on Amendment #69. ColoradoCareYES offers speakers; local Leagues can email Owen Perkins at the ColoradoCareYES office to schedule a speaker: owenperk@aol.com. LWVCO is working with local Leagues to set up a Western Slope speaking tour featuring healthcare writer T.R. Reid.

Congratulations to LWV Larimer County!

LWV Larimer County appears as a success story on the LWVUS website page of guidelines for recruiting young voters, a project of the LWVUS Young People Task Force. The Larimer League participated in a local volunteer fair and listed tasks that youth volunteers could take on, including web design and presenting pro/con ballot issues to requesting groups before national elections.

LWVCO LEGISLATIVE ACTION COMMITTEE

By Nancy Crow, LWVCO VP Program

The Second Regular Session of the Seventieth General Assembly, CO Legislature, convened on January 13, 2016 and is scheduled to adjourn on May 11, 2016. The LWVCO Legislative Action Committee (LAC) met on Friday, January 22, and will continue to meet every other Friday during the legislative session to review legislation that speaks to League positions.

This group of 25-30 League volunteers works with the LWVCO staff lobbyist, Chris Watson, to determine which bills the League can support or oppose **according to League positions** and where the League's lobbying efforts can be best used.

Individual League members can be involved in two ways. First, respond to Action Alerts as they are sent from the LAC. Every League member in the state for which the LWVCO has a valid email address will receive these alerts. Second, subscribe to *and read* the Legislative Letter that is published by the LAC nine times during the Legislative Session. **It also can be viewed on the LWVCO website a few days after it goes out.** This publication is a valuable source of information on bills that are before the General Assembly. The League owes a great debt to the League members who work tirelessly to bring this information to us in a timely fashion.

* * *

Chris Watson, LWVCO staff lobbyist/LAC member, (right) prepares Legislative Conferees for the new legislative session

Here is the form to use to start receiving the Legislative Letters directly either electronically or in paper form:

BUILDING A BETTER COLORADO

By Nancy Crow, LWVCO VP Program

The LWVCO Board encourages League members to participate in the statewide discussion sponsored by Building a Better Colorado. This is a nonpartisan organization that is addressing these important questions: What kind of state government do voters want? How do we create laws and amend our state constitution? How do we elect our representatives to the state government? How do we manage our state budget? These are critical questions to Colorado's future.

Building a Better Colorado has held dozens of community summits across the state to engage civic leaders in a discussion about the initiative process, election system, and our financial future. Go to their website at www.betterco.org to add your comments online. The LWVCO strongly supports the participation of all citizens of Colorado in these discussions.



Subscribe to the *Legislative Letter*

Stay up to date during the 2016 Colorado legislative session— still only \$20.

The biweekly letter is created by the Legislative Action Committee and our staff lobbyist who follow proposed legislation and analyze pending bills based on League positions.

Name _____

Choose Delivery Method:

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Two payment options (\$20 annual subscription):

- Check made out to LWVCO
- Credit card at www.lwvcolorado.org/lwv/legislative-action/ (no PayPal account necessary)

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LWVCO SUPPORTS COLORADOCARE

By Nancy Crow, VP Program

The League of Women Voters Colorado has taken the position of SUPPORT on ColoradoCare Ballot Amendment #69 that will be on the ballot in the 2016 fall elections.

A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF COLORADOCARE (CC):

- It uses an option of the Affordable Care Act that allows Colorado to obtain waivers to create its own health care program
- It provides comprehensive coverage for all residents of Colorado
- It uses a member-owned cooperative business model; e.g., the Rural Electric Association
- It will provide primary coverage for all except those that have coverage under federal health care programs, i.e., Medicare and Veteran Administration Health. These individuals will use CC as secondary coverage
- It is projected to cost less than the current system.

THE LWVCO BOARD BASED ITS SUPPORT OF AMENDMENT #69 ON THE LWVUS POSITION ON HEALTH CARE THAT IS COMPRISED OF THE FOLLOWING SIX STATEMENTS.

1. Basic Level of Quality Care:

Every U.S. resident should have access to a basic level of care that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary care including prenatal and reproductive health, acute care, long-term care and mental health care. Dental, vision, and hearing care also are important but lower in priority. The League believes that under any system of health care, consumer/patients should be permitted to purchase services or insurance coverage beyond the basic level.

[ColoradoCare: Provides the comprehensive care to meet the League position. Includes oral, vision and hearing for children. If revenues permit, these will be added for all members. Mental health and substance abuse treatment are included in the comprehensive care.]

2. Financing and Administration:

The League favors a national health insurance plan financed through general taxes in place of individual insurance premiums. As the United States moves toward a national health insurance plan, an employer-based system of health care reform that provides universal access is acceptable to the League. The League supports administration of the U.S. health care system, either by the combination of the private or public sectors or by a combination of federal, state and/or regional governmental agencies.

The League is opposed to a strictly private-based model of financing the health care system. The League is also opposed to the administration of the health care system solely by the private sector or the states.

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[ColoradoCare: It is a publicly formed insurance pool in which the State Department of Revenue collects the premiums. It is a public partnership, i.e. a cooperative, without using a private market-based model.]

3. Taxes:

The League supports increased taxes to finance a basic level of health care for all U.S. residents provided health care reforms contain effective cost control strategies.

[ColoradoCare: Premium payments are considered taxes. CC is exempt from TABOR.]

4. Cost Controls:

The League believes that efficient and economical delivery of care can be enhanced by a number of cost control methods.

[ColoradoCare: Meets two cost control methods mentioned in the position – (1) the reduction of administrative costs, (2) regional planning for the allocation of personnel, facilities, and equipment]

5. Equity Issues:

The League believes that health care services could be more equitably distributed by use of a number of methods.

[ColoradoCare: Meets one equity issue mentioned in the position – allocating medical resources to underserved areas]

6. Allocation of Resources to Individual:

The League believes that the ability of a patient to pay for services should not be a consideration in the allocation of health care resources. Limited resources should be allocated based on the following criteria considered together: the urgency of the medical condition, the life expectancy of the patient, the expected outcome of the treatment, the cost of the procedure, the duration of care, the quality of life of the patient after treatment, and the wishes of the patient and the family.

[ColoradoCare: It is NOT based on the ability to pay]

RATIONALE FOR THE LWVCO SUPPORTING THIS AS A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

- As a constitutional amendment, it would not be subject to TABOR. It also allows for a method to adjust premiums that would not be subject to TABOR requirements.
- Supporters of ColoradoCare chose to write it as a constitutional amendment because they did not want the legislature, that is subject to political pressure, to be the deciding body on this issue
- The amendment is written so that it contains principles but not rules.

LINK TO AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS:

<http://coloradocareyes.co/amendment69/economic-analysis/>

NOTICE: THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF COLORADO PROPOSES CONCURRENCE WITH COLORADO'S 2015 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POSITION AT LWVUS 2016 CONVENTION

[Editor's Note: As explained in the President's Message, LWVCO Board is petitioning LWVUS Board to propose adoption of LWVCO's behavioral health position by the 2016 Convention as a recommended item on the convention agenda. This process may be new to many League members. Here is a copy of the LWVCO Board's request to other state and local Leagues for support of our effort. If a sufficient number of Leagues support this request during their national program planning discussions, the LWVUS Board will likely put it on the agenda as a 'recommended' item, meaning that a majority, rather than a super majority, of delegates can adopt the concurrence. The concurrence language must be adopted as presented; it cannot be modified. If adopted by convention, the LWVUS Board will integrate it in to our national positions.]

REQUEST TO STATE AND LOCAL LEAGUES

Following two years of work by a Behavioral Health Task Force and a 2015 statewide Behavioral Health Study, the League of Women Voters of Colorado (LWVCO) updated its healthcare position to include Behavioral Health. LWVCO asks state and local Leagues across the country to support LWVUS concurrence with this position. Please indicate your support directly to the LWVUS Board of Directors by requesting that the Board recommend concurrence with this position at the June 2016 LWVUS Convention. Record your support for this concurrence when you respond to Question #2 on the Program Planning Response Form.

LWVCO BEHAVIORAL HEALTH POSITION

I. **Position in Brief** *(Updated and Adopted 2015)*

Support access to adequate health care with funding by state and federal monies where necessary. LWVCO supports access to affordable, quality in- and out-patient behavioral health care, including needed medications and supportive services, for all people. LWVCO supports access to behavioral health care that is integrated with, and achieves parity with, physical health care.

II. **Support for:**

- Behavioral Health as the nationally accepted term that includes both mental illness and substance use disorder.
- Access for all people to affordable, quality in- and out-patient behavioral health care, including needed medications and supportive services.
- Behavioral Health care that is integrated with, and achieves parity with, physical health care.
- Early and affordable behavioral health diagnosis and treatment for children and youth from early childhood through adolescence.
- Early and appropriate diagnosis and treatment for children and adolescents that is family-focused and community-based.
- Access to safe and stable housing for people with behavioral health challenges, including those who are chronically homeless.
- Effective re-entry planning and follow-up for people released from both behavioral health hospitalization and the criminal justice system.
- Problem solving or specialty courts, including mental health and drug courts, in all judicial districts to provide needed treatment and avoid inappropriate entry into the criminal justice system.
- Health education – from early childhood throughout life – that integrates all aspects of social, emotional and physical health and wellness.
- Efforts to decrease the stigmatization of, and normalize, behavioral health problems and care.

SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Arguments that support a Concurrence on Behavioral Health

- The current LWVUS Health Care Position was written in April 1993 and mentions “mental health care” only as the last item in a list of types of care to which U.S. residents should have access. There is no further mention of mental health in the position.
- Today's nationally recognized term is Behavioral Health that includes both Mental Illnesses and Substance Abuse or Substance Use Disorder. Both of these areas are undertreated, stigmatized and increasingly prevalent public health concerns.

- With this position, the League at all levels will be able to advocate for effective Behavioral Health legislation.
- LWVCO has provided comprehensive background information online (see below) to share with your members.

Arguments that oppose concurrence:

Leagues members should examine the issue of Behavioral Health by the traditional study method.

Rationale for using Convention concurrence to adopt these positions:

Concurrence at Convention is a valid method of developing new League positions particularly where traditional local League-based studies could be expected to reach the same conclusion as the proposed concurrence. The LWVUS Bylaws provide the authority for the adoption of positions by concurrence.

Background Information:

In 2013, primarily because of questions about gun violence and mental illness after the Aurora, Colorado, theater shootings, the League of Women Voters of Colorado (LWVCO) established a Behavioral Health Task Force composed of League members who were behavioral health professionals and/or parents of adults with behavioral health conditions. The Task Force published two well-researched and comprehensive reports; the most recent was used as study materials for LWVCO’s 2015 Behavioral Health Study. Through this study, LWVCO updated its healthcare position to include Behavioral Health.

Critical points from the LWVCO Behavioral Health Report:

- Mental illness is a brain disorder and refers to a wide range of mental conditions — disorders that affect mood, thinking and behavior including depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and eating disorders. 50% of lifelong mental illnesses are present by age 14.
- Substance use disorder is defined as both substance addiction and clinically significant substance abuse; addiction means a brain change – a brain disorder.
- Substance use disorders frequently coexist with other types of psychiatric disorders.
- Significant numbers of prison inmates are mentally ill and/or have substance use disorder; treatment varies.
- People are more likely to start and complete behavioral health therapy when it is integrated, i.e. offered in the same place as their primary care.
- Recovery – an individualized, multifaceted process – is integral within today’s treatment, and includes crisis plans and advanced directives (instructions for best treatment in emergency rooms or by police when one’s chronic brain disorder manifests as a serious crisis or episode).
- The Affordable Care Act and Medicaid Expansion are making a difference, but paying for care still introduces silos of funding with long and often confusing applications and qualifications.
- People with mental illness are no more likely to be violent toward others than the general population, however, the combination of alcohol use and gun ownership significantly increases the occurrence of violence, especially suicide.

Link to the complete report: <http://www.lwvcolorado.org/lwv/behavioral-health-care/>

LWVCO Contact: Barbara Mattison, Chair, LWVCO Behavioral Health Task Force, mattisonleague@gmail.com ; Nancy Crow, LWVCO VP Program, crow.nancyc@gmail.com ; Julie Leonard, Executive Director, info@lwvcolorado.org

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LWVCO GRANTS FOR LOCAL LEAGUES

By Liz Nick, Committee Chairwoman

Apply for a 2016-2017 Project Fund Grant or an EZ Grant between May 1 and June 30, 2016. For a Project Fund Grant application, in which local Leagues may apply for up to \$1500, contact the LWVCO office. These grants can be used for various projects, not limited to Ed Fund-type projects. If you need some ideas, past applications may be viewed in the LWVCO drop-box.

The EZ Grant applies to four specific projects with maximum amounts: (1) Great Decision materials (\$300), (2) public

meetings of representatives of multiple levels of local government (\$300), (3) ads for VOTE 411 (\$500) and (4) contests involving local high schools (\$500).

Both grant types are made possible by the Eva Fikova Bequest, funded by the interest and dividends earned. In your application letter, list type of project, outline of plan, contact person with local board approval, costs estimates, amount of dollars requested. In July, a committee will review all applications and make recommendations to the LWVCO Board. The Board makes the final decision as to which Leagues receive the grants.

Checks are then mailed to local Leagues in August 2016.

MLD COACHING TIP: ENGAGING THE NEW LEAGUE VOLUNTEER

By Prue Larson and Patty Schoedler, CO MLD Co-coordinators
Leagues that recently have been lucky enough to find new volunteers have probably noticed that many are “a new breed” of volunteers. In order to retain and to keep the interest of today’s volunteers, the League needs to consider what a volunteer is looking for in volunteer opportunities.

Today’s volunteers have many obligations and they often volunteer for more than one organization. They are tech-savvy, want to work with other competent volunteers, and they don’t want to be micromanaged. They want to make a difference, not just a contribution. They expect to be empowered by their experience.

Leagues should look toward *engaging* prospective volunteers not merely *recruiting* them. Engagement should offer mutual benefit to the volunteer and to the League as a whole. Remember we want our new volunteers to develop a deep commitment to the League. So make it about what they will gain first, and then eventually what the League will gain from them.

COLORADO GAVE ON DECEMBER 8

By Julie Leonard, Executive Director
Colorado Gives Day set a new record in 2015 as donors gave a total of \$28.5 million. The number of donations to the LWVCO Education Fund was slightly higher than last year, at 53, while the total value was slightly down at \$4020. We’re grateful to all the donors, and are especially happy that some of the people we reach through Colorado Gives Day are nonmembers who appreciate League’s work. The Ed Fund’s share of the incentive fund turned out to be \$184.85, which was divided among all the local Leagues.



Members of Jeffco League’s new nonfiction book club, organized by Lynn Ellison, discuss Schell and DeLury’s *Wealth and Power* (about China) at Connie Rayor’s condo in Belmar January 23.

TIMELY RECEIPT OF *COLORADO VOTER* IN COLOR!

By Marilyn Brown, Voter Editor

If you have an email address, we hope you are receiving this LWVCO newsletter, the *Colorado Voter*, by email. If you are, you are receiving the newsletter as soon as it is finalized and IN COLOR. If you are seeing this newsletter in black and white, you can get it on a more timely basis and save the LWVCO effort and money by asking Julie Leonard, LWVCO executive director, to put you on the electronic distribution list.

To make sure you receive other LWVCO emails such as action alerts, share your email address with your membership chair for entry into the new LWVUS member database. Both LWVUS and LWVCO have privacy policies limiting use of your contact information to League business.

LWVCO is now using an email service for mass emails such as the newsletter and action alerts. This takes some adjustment from all of us, but it is necessary to meet anti-spam requirements, so we appreciate your help with the change. Emails will show as coming from League of Women Voters of Colora@mail.vresp.com. Your email provider may not recognize the address and may send the messages to a spam folder, so please add this email address to your address book. If your email provider has a white list or safe list available, list us there, too. If you have gmail or any other email provider that separates your email into categories, ask for your LWV Vertical Response email to go into the category that you read first (unless you read all categories on a timely basis).

Please note: If you Unsubscribe upon receipt of any one of these types of LWVCO emails, you will stop getting ALL emails from LWVCO, including the *Voter*. To avoid this and stay in contact with LWVCO, instead of Unsubscribing, hit the delete key if you are not interested in a particular email. We do not want to lose contact with anyone!

NEW LWVCO WEBSITE

By Julie Leonard, Executive Director

Any day now, when you go to lwvcolorado.org, you’ll find an up-to-date new website. Some of the content is the same, some is new, but the design is more oriented toward **Action!** This is not a finished product, but a work in progress, easier to update and modify as our needs change. We hope you find it useful.

COLORADO PARTY CAUCUSES – MARCH 1, 2016 at 7 p.m.

[Editor's Note: Thanks to LWV Pikes Peak Region for the following Voter article on Colorado caucuses. Other resources for caucus info may be found at www.lwvcolorado.org and also on the Secretary of State's website at www.sos.state.co.us. Enter the word "caucuses" in the search bar.]

Most voters are aware of the differences between primary and caucus states and their respective roles in the presidential nomination process, but many do not know that there are also big differences between caucus systems in different states. While Iowa held its caucuses on February 1, Colorado caucuses will be held during the very important Super Tuesday event on March 1. Only Colorado political parties that qualify as "major parties" (currently the Republican and Democratic Parties) participate in the caucus system. Even though both Iowa and Colorado have so-called "closed" caucus systems (meaning participants must be affiliated with either the Republican or Democratic Party in order to participate), Iowans may affiliate at the caucus event while Coloradans must be affiliated with one party by January 4th in order to participate.

While the Colorado legislature has set up the basic caucus structure for its citizens, it is up to the individual county political parties to plan, locate precinct sites, and conduct the

meetings according to individual party rules. It behooves all caucus goers to check their local precinct number with the Secretary of State's office (GoVoteColorado.com) and then check with their local political party headquarters to get the location of their precinct's caucus. Caucus locations change from election to election, depending upon the availability of the facility (often rented by the party). The CO Secretary of State has been working on the precinct member updates. Close to the day of caucuses, individual party offices will probably be able to provide both precinct number and location for each voter.

While every voter affiliated with the Democratic or Republican Party can participate in his/her precinct's caucus, few actually do. If you choose to get involved, go prepared to dedicate a couple of hours to pick delegates and decide on other party-building matters. It will be a carefully planned procedural and agenda-driven meeting.

Caucus goers usually participate in a presidential preference poll. This year the State Republican Party has decided not to hold a presidential preference poll. While disappointing to some, the decision makes sense because there are so many GOP candidates. The GOP preference poll requires that delegates be committed to a particular candidate; but it is likely that by the time delegates attend their state conventions, several of the GOP presidential candidates will have dropped out of the competition. Colorado Democratic delegates are not similarly bound, so those caucuses will still hold a preference poll.

STRATEGIC PLANNING IS HARD WORK: UPDATE TO BOULDER COUNTY LEAGUE'S PRESENTATION AT LWVCO CONVENTION LAST MAY

By Susan Saunders

In July 2015, the LWVBC's Board of Directors, including departing members who had initiated the planning process, and some of its Issue Team leaders met with our facilitator to take the next big step, which was to create and adopt action plans. Without these plans, we would have no way to measure whether or not we are making progress toward our goals. The plans covered our intentions for this first year of action and some steps for the next 2-5 years as well. Our board is trying to include progress reports on the various action plans on its agenda, on at least a quarterly basis. To be sure we kept referring to our goals, we staggered the reports during the first quarter so some strategic planning topic was covered at each monthly board meeting. The LWVBC planning process has brought us to the following conclusions and focus points for our actions and our decision making process:

- Our League is only vital if it is having an impact in the community it represents.
- Active engagement of the community is more critical than perfect execution of the events sponsored by the League.
- You need a core group of people who really buy into the benefit of strategic planning for continued viability of the League. AND this group needs to be willing to put in time and effort outside of board meetings to keep nudging the process along.
- Whenever a potential project, meeting, issue topic, or event presents itself, we ask, "What would impact our community?" If we asked what our members would do or want, we found ourselves falling back in the comfort zone of not changing our methods, not engaging anyone outside our membership, and fitting the mold of "a study group for retirees", to quote the local League in Chicago. In other words, we'd be losing the respect for the League as a group that impacts and encourages engagement in government.
- Our governing structure needed serious reflection; some revisions to share responsibilities and work load; updated descriptions of the jobs to be performed; creation of operations support teams; and clear links to our strategic goals so our Nominating Committee could seek the best individuals to volunteer for the work.
- Membership and contributions will increase only if the local League is an active, relevant participant in the county's communities' civic foreground.



House Speaker Hullinghorst and Minority Leader DelGrosso greeting League members

LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE 2016

By Jean Fredlund, LAC Chair

The 2016 Legislative Conference was held as usual at the State Capitol in the splendid Old Supreme Courtroom. One hundred thirty League members from across the state were welcomed by our president, Barbara Mattison, as well as by House Speaker Dickey Lee Hullinghorst, House Minority Leader Brian DelGrosso, Rep. Lois Court, and Sen. Jack Tate.

Our first speakers were Denise Maes of the ACLU and Chief John Jackson of the Greenwood Village Police Department. They spoke to the recent controversies concerning police actions in our communities. They agreed that policing is hard, dangerous work, that some really bad incidents have happened but are only a small part of the total, that training is of the utmost importance, and that training takes both money and dedicated leadership. Chief Jackson's officers get 120 mandated hours/year while the State requires only 48 hours.

Next we heard from Kathy Underhill, head of Hunger Free Colorado, who presented many, sometimes shocking, facts about hunger in our state, especially among children and elders. Her organization, while appreciating the role of food banks and other charitable help, sees increased and expanded benefits from the Food Stamp program as the most helpful. She gave us facts about the myths of so-called fraud and/or abuse of the system and emphasized the good that results when people are adequately nourished. [continued on next column]

LEADERSHIP RETREAT TRAINING 2016 DATES HAVE BEEN CHANGED!

By Cath Perrone, LWVCO VP Admin

The LWVCO Leadership Retreat Training has been moved from June to July 29-30 (noon to noon) for 2016. This exciting and essential training continues at the newly remodeled Baymont Inn & Suites in Frisco. We look forward to partnering with you as we create positive momentum for this fall! Look for more info in March.

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Lastly, Mizraim Cordero and Laura Giocomo, Denver Chamber of Commerce, discussed the Chamber's support of changing the present Hospital Provider Fee to an "enterprise" that collects its own fees rather than the present structure that sends all the (earmarked) money collected to the General Fund, where it counts against TABOR caps. After giving a brief but pertinent history, they pointed out that this is the way it should have been done in the first place. The LAC agrees. They then talked about the upcoming ballot issue ColoradoCare Amendment 69 and why the Chamber opposes it. This led to a lively discussion with the audience. The LWVCO Board of Directors has decided to support it.

At lunch we were again educated (and entertained) about the upcoming Legislative session by our very own Chris Watson, now in her 17th year as our staff lobbyist. She told us of some very good bills and some very bad ones, none of which will likely pass in this divided legislature, and also of some issues that just might find bi-partisan support.

IT'S ELECTION TIME AGAIN AND TIME FOR VOTE411

By Karen Connor, VOTE411 Coordinator

Once again it's general election time and this year promises to be a year to remember. As a League we will continue to do all we can to inform voters about candidates and issues through our fantastic on-line Candidate and Issue Guide www.VOTE411.org. As you know, this go around, all local Leagues planning to participate in the April and/or November elections will need to have their VOTE411 coordinator and their backup participate in a hands-on training. We hope that this will make it a lot easier and less stressful for local League coordinators to enter data as a lot of the set up work for the Colorado site has been completed.

Training sessions have been arranged for the Leagues (Chaffee, Larimer and Montrose) planning to have their local April elections included on the Candidate Guide. For Leagues planning to participate in the November General Election only, training sessions will be held sometime during the 3rd or 4th weeks of July. Thank you for all everyone did to make Vote411.org such a successful endeavor in the 2014 election cycle and we look forward to your continued participation in providing this excellent resource for voters in 2016.

DEVELOPMENT DEVELOPMENTS!

By Cinnie Auer, Development Director

Watch your USPS mailbox and the LWVCO website for our new Planned Giving program materials. We have developed new tools to help you make a lasting gift to the League of Woman Voters of Colorado.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF COLORADO
1410 GRANT ST STE B204
DENVER CO 80203-1855

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Mission

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, promotes informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Interested in the League of Women Voters?

Please join us!

All persons of voting age are invited to join the League of Women Voters. Non-citizens and those under voting age are welcome to join as associate members.

Find a local League in your county or area by checking the LWVCO website at <http://lwvcolorado.org/lwv/local-leagues/> or contacting the LWVCO office.

If there is no local League in your county, we invite you to join LWVCO as a member-at-large (MAL) www.lwvcolorado.org/lwv/join . Annual dues are \$50. Please make your check payable to LWVCO or join online.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Mail the above form, with check, to:
LWVCO, 1410 Grant Street B204, Denver, Colorado 80203-1855 or pay online at
<http://lwvcolorado.org/join.html>.

2015-2016 Calendar

| | | |
|--------------|-------|---|
| March | 1 | CO Caucuses |
| | 7 | Board Meeting |
| | 25 | Good Friday* |
| May | 1 | Project Fund Grant Submission Period Begins |
| | 11 | General Assembly Ends |
| | 20 | Board Meeting |
| | 21-22 | LWVCO Council, Montrose |
| | 21 | <i>Voter</i> Deadline |
| | 30 | Memorial Day* |
| June | 13 | Leader of Democracy Event |
| | 16-19 | LWVUS Convention, Washington, D.C. |
| | 30 | Project Fund Grant Submission Deadline |
| July | 29-30 | Leadership Retreat, Frisco |
| | | *LWVCO Office Closed |