



Colorado Voter

Volume 31, Number 2, February 2018

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



LWVCO participated in the second annual Denver Women's March. The above was the theme of many signs – voting means power!



(above) The League leaving headquarters to join thousands of others on the March.

(left) Thousands participated in the second Denver Women's March.

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LWVCO Council Dates

LWVCO Council will be held in Denver at the Stapleton Holiday Inn on Friday, June 1st - Saturday, June 2nd. Council delegates are the local League president or designated alternate and one member chosen by each local League. Members may attend as non-voting observers. Watch for the 'Call to Council' going out to all local League Leaders in late April. Delegate and observer registration will begin in May 2018.

President's Message

We should all be proud of the strength of the Colorado state League (and undoubtedly other Leagues in the state as well). We are going through a rough patch but are staying on course. Our structure and documents allow us to make transitions, anticipated and unanticipated, smoothly and without interrupting the important work we do.

The Legislative Action Committee (LAC) is actively working on its usual long list of 2018 bills. The group put on a very successful Legislative Conference that many of you attended and for which we have received many compliments. A strategic planning committee has been established and is hard at work developing a plan to guide the work of the state League and to move the organization into being a solid 21st Century organization. The development committee continues to look for new and varied ways to raise money for the all the important work of the League.

We maintain the priority areas established last year under the umbrella of *Making Democracy Work*. Our core work revolves around voter protection and mobilization, work for which the League is particularly noted. Other areas included under this umbrella are Election Reform, Money in Politics, Redistricting, and Environment and Sustainability. Of course, the LAC takes on other issues as the need arises.

It is important for us to keep up all our efforts; our Democracy hangs in the balance.

One word of explanation. "Speaking with One Voice" is one of the most important tenets of the League. Local Leagues and State League Units may act only in conformity with positions taken by the League of Women Voters at state and national levels. After a position on an issue is announced by either the state board or the national board, all action by local Leagues shall be in support of that position or they are to remain neutral. Local Leagues cannot express a different opinion from the state or national boards' opinions.

- Toni Larson, LWVCO President

Strategic Plan Update

At the Spring 2017 Convention it was decided that LWVCO would complete a Strategic Plan. Strategic Planning is an essential organizational tool to help LWVCO remain true to our mission. A Plan serves as an organizational roadmap so League can continually align its work with agreed upon goals in all areas of the organization. Through this process LWVCO can identify evolving opportunities and challenges, a strategic pathway forward toward a stronger and higher impact state League and a practical, aspirational and sustainable framework to help guide future initiatives and resource allocations.

The Board of Directors of LWVCO chose JVA, Joining Vision and Action!, as our Strategic Planning consultants at the December 7th, 2017 Board Meeting. JVA was chosen because of its more than 30 years of experience. JVA has led over 700 strategic planning projects, many of which involved state and regional organizations similar to LWVCO's organizational structure and needs.

The Strategic Planning committee met with JVA on January 9th for our kick-off meeting. At this meeting JVA and the Strategic Planning Committee determined the goals and objectives of the project, the pre-session research (document review, environmental scan and board, staff, leaders and members surveys), facilitated retreat, proposed timeline, communications and next steps.

Our goal is keep all leaders and members updated on this project. Each LWV member in the state will receive an electronic survey to complete sometime in February. Please keep a close eye on your email for this survey and complete in a timely manner. We need your input!

Please contact the committee if you have questions.

Strategic Planning Committee

Marlu Burkamp, Toni Larson, Mary Lonergan, Bonnie Seals, Ruth Stemler and Sue Vaughan

Ruth: rjstemler@gmail.com



The Colorado Gives campaign was again successful for our League this year. We had 89 donors, 41 of whom were repeats from last year. The total raised was \$7,690.12 ~ that's more than a 50% increase from last year and by far our highest yield from this campaign. 52% of the donors were not League members. We thank the many members of League who also donated.



Thinking of donating your car to LWVCO? The form is simple and the people are polite and prompt. Check out the LWVCO website at <http://www.vehiclesforcharity.org/Donate/LWV.html> for more information!

2018 Legislative Conference

Over 130 people attended the annual Legislative Conference held on January 29th at the Scottish Rite Temple in Denver. It was a day filled with a variety of information and training. In following the League priorities for Making Democracy Work for 2018, Jeannette Hillery, Legislative Action Chair (LAC) outlined the areas: Voting and Voter Service, Campaign Finance Reform and Sustainability.

Two legislators who have sponsored National Popular Vote legislation in the past were able to attend and explain their bill. Rep. Paul Rosenthal, and Sen. Andy Kerr will be introducing a bill this session to have Colorado become part of a national movement to join the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. This compact is reaching out to all states to look to abolish the Electoral College and promote the selection of President and Vice president by direct popular vote. Linda Sorauf, from the Colorado National Popular Vote gave a good overview of the organization and what their goals are in recruiting more state to sign on to the compact.

Sen. Rachel Zenzinger will be sponsoring legislation again this year to address campaign finance reform. She gave examples of how this reform would be implemented should the bill pass. Deb Gard, LAC co-chair, gave a very good overview of what is happening in the state. She will continue to monitor this legislation. There is an organization in Colorado that is following contribution and expenditure reporting on candidates. Cath Perrone gave an excellent presentation on TRACER (Transparency in Contribution and Expenditure Reporting). There was a power point and handout to explain how to access and areas to get information you are interested on candidates. The November issue of The Voter also had information on this tool.

All Leagues have expressed interest in doing more advocacy both on all governmental levels. Marlu Burkamp from the Arapahoe-Douglas League presented an overview of an Advocacy Toolkit that they have developed. One copy was made available for each League. Vicki McClane, Larimer, spoke on how to advocate on Sustainability Issues. This was a good presentation on their issue and lessons learned.

Prior to lunch, Toni Larson, President gave an update on the redistricting initiative that the League has been working on. Following the lunch there was an intensive Q&A on this with all interested members. Lunch time was filled with a good meal and a short presentation from Andrea Wilkins, lobbyist for the League. Announcements were made of some interesting bills being heard in committee hearing that afternoon.

It was a varied and informative day and appeared to be well received by all.

Jeannette Hillery, LAC Chair



Rep. Rosenthal discusses the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact



Deb Gard discusses campaign finance reform

VOTE411

LWVCO is again participating with LWVUS to produce the VOTE411 online voter's guide for the elections in 2018. The annual fee allows all local Leagues to make use of the website for any local elections throughout 2018. While final details remain to be determined, LWVCO will cover the candidates for all contested state –level races for the Primary Election. This includes the following races: Congressional, Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, Treasurer, Legislative races, and CU Regent. Local Leagues will cover local County and Municipal candidates.

Local League Activities

An early February assessment finds that local Leagues across Colorado are planning a number of voter service activities. Voter registration efforts top the list followed by plans for candidate forums, ballot issue meetings, VOTE411 participation and promoting information about the election.

Naturalization Ceremonies

Voter registration continues at Naturalization Ceremonies at USCIS (United States Citizen Immigration Services). From February – December 2016, approximately 300 new citizens registered to vote. Information is provided to those who choose to register on line at www.govotecolorado.com. The League of Women Voters is typically assigned from 2-6 ceremonies each month. Note that there is a grant from LWVUS available for this activity at naturalization ceremonies. See more at: <http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/4144726/2018-New-Citizens-Voter-Registration-Grant-Application>

Ukrainian Delegation Visits State League Offices

On February 12, a 6-member delegation from the Ukraine visited the LWVCO office. Arranged by Sigrid Higdon, Jeannette Hillery and Gerry Cummins had a lively discussion about the League, why it was formed, and what we do. After discussing our advocacy and voter service activities, we held a lengthy conversation about Colorado's mail ballot system. It covered the voter registration process, ballots being prepared and mailed, what happens when the voter receives a ballot, how the ballot is returned and the tabulation of the ballots. A brief discussion of electronic voting in Estonia was discussed.

The delegation members (ranging in age from 20 – 26) were members of their town councils, staff members for elected bodies, and one who worked for an NGO (Non-Government Organization). They had visited the state legislature, and had plans to watch the Colorado Supreme Court in action before visiting with local officials in Colorado for the remainder of the week.

It's not too late to
Subscribe to the **Legislative Letter**
and stay up to date during the 2018 Colorado legislative session

Just \$30 for a subscription

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

Name _____

Email: _____

Two payment options (\$30 annual subscription):

- Check made out to LWVCO
- PayPal at www.lwvcolorado.org (accepts all major credit cards)

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LWVUS adopts new Mission, Vision and Values statements

Many of you have heard that LWVUS has new Mission, Vision and Value Statements. The LWVCO Board will be discussing these in more detail at the Board Meeting on March 8. Local boards are encouraged to discuss the statements and decide to adopt them.

A mission statement is described as “Why does the organization exist? A succinct expression of an organization’s essential reason for being.” A vision statement is described as “What does the organization want to become? A description of the world as it would exist if the organization succeeds in achieving its grandest aspirations.” A value statement guides the perspective of an organization as well as its actions.

The LWVUS Board adopted the following Mission, Vision and Value Statements and will be using them going forward:

Mission Statement:

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

Vision Statement:

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.

Value Statement:

We believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy.

Why These Statements are Important:

- The League is stronger when we speak with one voice and these statements reinforce our priorities: advancing voting rights and improving democracy.
- These words define who we are in a concise and memorable way.
- These statements are designed to be inclusive – using “WE” instead of “The League”.
- As we look to grow and diversify our network, this language will help us be more welcoming as an organization.
- As part of our greater organizational transformation, these words will help us keep our strategic focus on our mission impact work.
- Our Mission, Vision, and Value Statements give us flexibility to talk about ourselves in different ways to different audiences.

The words chosen for all three statements were intentional and chosen with care. The specific wording of our value statement is a reaffirmation of the organization’s founding and history – to our 98-year commitment to the belief that women have a strong role in our democracy. It is well understood that it takes a collective movement to drive change. We welcome all, but it is part of our competitive advantage that we offer opportunities to women not found elsewhere.

The entire organization needs to be aligned behind the Mission and Vision Statements, because they describe what kind of future we want for our democracy and how we intend to bring that future into being. The intended audience could be considered when including the value statement.

Save the Dates (or not...)

In addition to the Council dates shown on page 2, below are some important dates coming up. Mark your calendars!

LWVUS Convention

The League of Women Voters of the US will be holding convention this year in Chicago on June 28 through July 1. The event will be at the Hilton Chicago, which has a block of rooms set aside for convention attendees. See information about the LWVUS convention at <http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/council-and-convention/convention-2018>

No Leadership Retreat this year

LWVCO will not be conducting a Leadership Retreat in 2018. The rationale for this Board decision is due to:

- LWVCO engaging in Strategic Planning which will examine membership and leadership needs of local Leagues.
- Low numbers of attendees in recent years.
- A need to match training and education to the individual needs of local Leagues and determine the most effective formats.

While we are in the process of examining the most effective and beneficial ways to provide training and information to local Leagues, we will conduct educational opportunities during LWVCO events and send local Leagues information on LWVCO projects. In addition, you should contact your LWVCO Liaison if you have specific needs. Finally, LWVCO will continue Liaison calls to your League contact or conduct conference calls with local League leaders as needed.

Project and EZ Grant Application Time Fast Approaching!

Now is the time to plan to apply for a Project Fund Grant (maximum \$1500) awarded in August or an EZ Grant awarded in July. Each League may be approved for a maximum of two unrelated grants; one EZ Grant and one Project Grant. Applications may be submitted from May 1st to June 30th, 2018. Both grants are made possible by the Eva Fikova Bequest and funded by the interest earned.

The mission of the Project Grant is to provide financial support for established League activities. It must meet the following criteria to be granted: Serve the League's program, education and/or outreach goals; Suitable for replication by other Leagues; Strengthen your local League by increasing membership and promoting leadership; Support the League's mission and goals.

The EZ Grant uses are: Purchase of 'Great Decisions' materials (\$300 maximum); Voter education activities, i.e. advertising Vote411.org, voter guides, candidate forums, etc. (\$500 maximum); Outreach and marketing to support local League events (\$300 maximum).

Questions regarding grants may be sent directly to Liz Nick, committee chair at anthro@privatei.com or the LWVCO office at info@lwvcolorado.org. (To view or download the grant applications, please visit [Dropbox.com](https://www.dropbox.com) folder: Local League / Grants. If you are unable access to Dropbox, please contact your local League President or Leader.)

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
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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.

Colorado Voter, February 2018

Published quarterly by
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Calendar

Feb	16	LAC meeting
	19	President's day*
Mar	2	LAC meeting
	8	LWVCO Board meeting
Apr	16	LAC meeting
	30	LAC meeting
	13	LAC meeting
	27	LAC meeting
	30	Project and EZ Grant application period opens
May	9	CO General Assembly adjourns
	28	Memorial Day *
June	1-2	LWVCO Council
	28	LWVUS Convention begins

*Office closed