



March 2021

Dear LWVCO Members,

March has most certainly “come in like a lion,” but while many of you on the Front Range are probably hoping it will “go out like a lamb,” those of us in the west would love to see a lot more moisture to break the seemingly never-ending drought.

Convention 2021 is right around the corner — May 21-22. Staff, the Board, and local League leadership are already hard at work planning for this very important annual event. For additional information on times and a draft agenda, please visit the LWVCO website. You will notice there is a new **CALENDAR** link at the top of the Home page. Staff added this feature to make it easy to easily see what events are scheduled and to register — all without having to log in. Note that there is a \$10.00 registration fee for Convention. As usual, a link will be sent upon payment and the completion of registration. Questions? Barb Whinery, Board Vice President, is the contact for this event, and of course, staff can provide assistance as well.



Two important votes were taken at the March LWVCO Board Meeting: Approval of the draft budget and approval of the updated bylaws. Both will be included in the Convention Workbook for membership to review in preparation of a final vote during Convention.

My compliments and thanks to both Beth Hendrix and Bonnie Seals for their work on this year's budget. They began the process by reviewing last year's budget to see how actual revenues and expenditures balanced out, developed a tentative budget, then included others for additional input. The current budget was planned before we knew we would be quarantined for a year and counting, so many expenses that had been budgeted did not occur. As our way of doing business evolves due to Covid changes, we foresee that some expenses will continue to be less in the future. As a result, the good news is that this year we will be withdrawing significantly fewer funds from the investment account than we budgeted last year.

Much of the rest of the budget is consistent with last year's with one significant exception. A focus of this year's Board has been to examine how our organization aligns with diversity, equity, inclusion. We are taking an in-depth look at what we are doing and where we need to improve, and to that end, a new DEI line item has been included in this year's budget. The purpose is two-fold: to make funds available to work toward this goal, and to demonstrate our commitment to focus on this area.

This year, under the leadership of Irene Tynes and Jean Fredlund, the Joint Bylaws and Policies & Procedures (Governance) Committee was convened. Throughout the year this committee has met to review and streamline our bylaws and review a number of our policies and procedures. The bylaws are a legally binding document registered with the Secretary of State; a roadmap for how LWVCO conducts business. Since they require a vote of the membership before changes can be made, it is important that the bylaws comply with current laws and are clear and focus on the “big picture,” not details that may need tweaking fairly regularly. To that end, Irene and Jean began the bylaws review process by doing online research to clarify non-profit bylaws requirements, and they used these resources to help guide the review process. Upon careful analysis, Jean determined that some elements of the current bylaws were actually policies or procedures. Consequently, these elements

were transferred into an existing policy, or a new policy was written. Perhaps the biggest change the Committee made was to change Council and Convention to "Annual Meeting," and to eliminate conflicting attendance requirements and clarify the process for determining the number of voting members each local League is entitled to have.

Time was also invested in cleaning up other language throughout the bylaws so that there was more clarity and unnecessary verbiage was removed. As a final step, the committee forwarded the bylaws, along with a Bylaws Checklist, to the Board for their input. Discussion time was allotted at the March meeting, and what you will see in the Convention Workbook are the updated bylaws. A redline version will be provided to make it easy for members to see the changes. Please review them carefully and come to Convention with questions you may have. We hope membership will agree with the Committee and the Board that the changes improve the document and provide clarity. We're looking forward to your input!

Thanks to each of you for your commitment to our democracy –

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Karen Staud".