

EMPOWERING VOTERS, DEFENDING DEMOCRACY

THE VOTER

January 2021 Membership 55

**WE ALL WANT A BETTER FUTURE:
LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!**



IN THIS ISSUE

Our League & Local Leagues in Action	Pages 1-3
LWVCO & LWVUS News	Pages 3 6
Government Contacts	Page 7
Community Support, Calendar	Page 8
Website, Membership Application, Local League Officers	Page 9

Local League News

Club Express has notified those of you whose membership renewals are due. There are two options to accomplish this, and one is on line. Also, locally, we would be happy to accept a check made payable to the LWV Montrose County and sent to P.O. Box 3321, Montrose, CO 81402. If you have a question about your renewal date, call Nancy Ball at 249-8963.

Steering Committee Meeting – January 13

The Board and Steering Committee Zoom meeting was very successful in generating lots of interest as to leadership, communication, programming and membership over the next several months through our League year which ends in May. Sub-committees were formed, and you will be hearing about their progress throughout the coming months. Onward!

Many thanks to those who have stepped up to guide us through the challenging times ahead!

OTHER LOCAL LEAGUES NEWS

DON'T FORGET -

A Citizen's Guide to Realizing American Democracy in the 21st Century Zoom Webinar - Wednesday, January 27 at 7pm.

Will our country continue down the current path of division and violence, or can our crisis of governance become a catalyst for improving and reforming our democratic system? Fort Lewis College Political Psychologist Paul DeBell will situate the past and present of the US's political crisis in comparative perspective and use lessons from the young field of political psychology to start a discussion of what citizens can do to realize the American promise of a democratic republic with liberty and justice for all.

For log-in instructions for the Zoom Webinar please visit their home page www.LWVLaPLata.org
Do spread the word!

United We Sit, Divided We Fail

We were invited by LWV Gunnison Valley to join in their initiative entitled **UNITED WE SIT, DIVIDED WE FAIL** and have gladly done so.

During LWVCO's **Promoting Civil Discourse in Politics** webinar last month, State Rep. Jeni James Arndt (Democrat from District 53) told of growing up with a Republican father (a developer) and a Democratic mother (an environmentalist) and their dynamic family conversations. She's accustomed to hearing both sides so she sits with the Republicans in the Legislature. She has suggested to the Legislative Leadership that they integrate by seating the Democrats, Republicans and Unaffiliated together so they can get to know each other---but that's fallen on deaf ears.

LWVGV's Legislative Committee loved Rep. Arndt's approach and came up with an idea to encourage every League member to write a letter to each State Legislator and member of Congress representing them (5 letters) asking that they sit with members of the other party.

The letter simply says:

Dear (Senator/Representative Name):

In an effort to chip away at the barriers that divide us and find common goals that unite us, the **League of Women Voters** is asking that you do one simple thing --- **ignore** the aisle and **sit** with members of the other party.

We urge you to sit "outside your box" so that you can listen to, talk with, and work with members and leaders from both sides of the aisle. Find what unites us because – ***UNITED WE SIT, DIVIDED WE FAIL***

Sincerely,

(Your Signature)

League of Women Voters of Montrose County, Serving Montrose, Delta and Ouray counties

lwvmontrose.org

Rochelle Needham of LWVGV reminds us that there are 19 local leagues in Colorado and points out that this effort could easily generate hundreds of letters to each representative if we get statewide (dare we say nationwide) participation. She suggests the letters be sent by USPS mail, saying "Let's inundate them with actual letters rather than just filling their email inbox or voice mail box."

Diversity Equity Inclusion

Looking for a bit of stimulation to keep you occupied these wintry days? Read the book by Isabel Wilkinson entitled *Caste: the Origins of Our Discontent*. It is available on Kindle too.

Did you know that Kamala Harris is not the first bi-racial person to serve as vice president? While she is the first bi-racial woman, Charles Curtis was the first bi-racial person, and the first native American, as well. Born in 1860 in Kansas, he was ½ Kaw Indian and ½ European American and, against all odds, he rose to serving in the U.S. House of Representatives and in the Senate, and, in a landslide victory in 1928, he was elected vice president and Herbert Hoover president.

Of particular importance to us as League members is that it was said one of his proudest moments was leading the floor fight for the 19th Amendment empowering women with the right to vote. If that isn't enough, in 1923 Senator Curtis, together with fellow Kansan Representative Daniel Read Anthony, Jr., proposed the first version of the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States Constitution to each of their Houses. The amendment did not go forward.

Our By-Laws are Now Posted on Our Website. Check them out in the Members Only section.

News from LWVCO

Leader of Democracy 2021 – see attached flyer

From Barb Mattison, Chair, Leader of Democracy 2021

The League of Women Voters of Colorado's premier fund-raising event, will be a free, virtual celebration Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 5 PM. Viewers across Colorado will click a

link and watch a celebrative hour featuring three barrier-breaking women honored as Leaders of Democracy, celebrating the League's 101st birthday and **highlighting LWVCO's critical work.**

The event theme is *For the Love of Democracy, For the Love of the League.* Anne Trujillo, News Anchor, Denver's Channel 7, will emcee the event. This free, virtual online event, developed due to COVID-19, provides the opportunity for people across Colorado to attend the celebration and to give a voluntary donation using an on-screen button. It is being professionally produced by Open Media, an innovative nonprofit dedicated to providing technical assistance to Colorado's nonprofit community.

Honorees are **Sen. Polly Baca**, the first Latina elected to the Colorado Senate and a continuing advocate for Latinx and gender equality; **Lauren Casteel**, CEO, The Women's Foundation of Colorado, advocate for the rights of women and girls, and the first woman of color to lead three major Colorado foundations; and **Elizabeth Piper Ensley** (posthumous), Treasurer of the Colorado Equal Suffrage Association and advocate for African American and gender equity and suffrage. Ms. Ensley was instrumental in gaining the vote for Colorado women in 1893.

The event will also honor **Jackson Moody, LWVCO's 2020 Student Winner in Colorado's National History Day competition.** Mr. Moody produced a documentary about barrier-breaking physician Dr. Justina Ford, the first African American woman physician in Colorado.

There is no registration. Nancy Ball is our local League Ambassador, so **let her know if you plan to attend, and closer to the event, she will send a link to people on her list.** Then attendees will just click on the UTube link and come right into the event.

A note from Tanya Ishikawa is very positive: "Many years ago, I interviewed both Casteel and Baca who will be at this state event Democracy 2021. They were incredible ladies then and I'm sure are inspiring today as well."

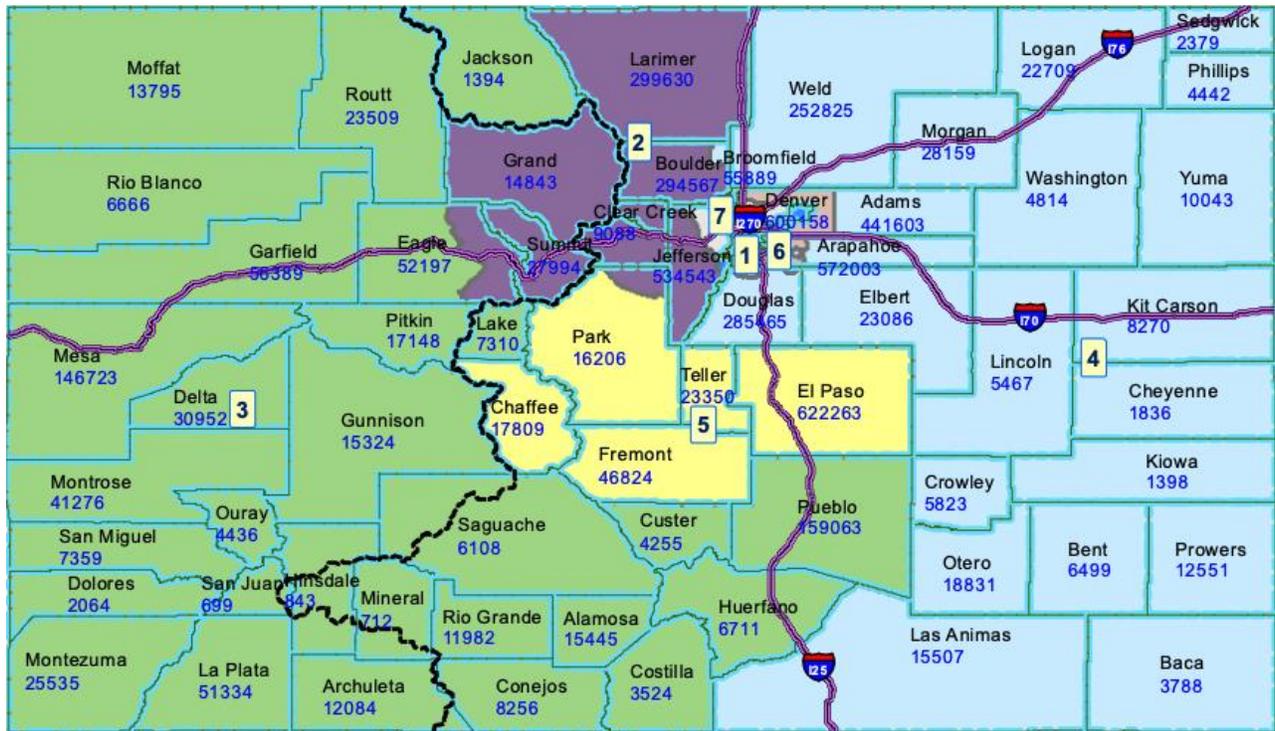
Barb stresses that viewership is critical to the success of Leader of Democracy 2021 and encourages League members across the state to invite friends and family to view the event.

Let's help in this effort to support the vital work done by LWVCO! Plan to view Leader of Democracy 2021 on Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 5 PM. Mark your calendars and spread the word!

Redistricting

This vitally important and very interesting topic was covered during the recent Legislative Day programming. Attendees learned how to get involved through our **Observer Corps.** First, a little background.

As you know, [redistricting](#) is the process by which new congressional and state legislative district boundaries are drawn. District lines are redrawn every 10 years following completion of the United States census.



An image of a congressional district map crafted as part of the 2011 redistricting process. (Screenshot)

On November 6, 2018, Colorado voters approved with over 70% approval two constitutional amendments (Y and Z) establishing separate non-politician commissions for congressional and state legislative redistricting: **Colorado Independent Redistricting Commissions**. Each commission consists of 4 members belonging to the state's largest political party, 4 members belonging to the state's second-largest party, and 4 members belonging to no party, and each is **tasked with approving legislative and congressional maps**. The selection process for the commission members is currently underway.

The governor must formally convene the commissions by March 1, and the federal government must deliver the census numbers by April 1. There is a possibility Colorado will be granted one more U.S. House seat. **The commissions must, "to the maximum extent practicable," provide opportunities for public testimony, including at least three hearings in each congressional district, and publication requirements for relevant comments.** July 7 is the date by which the public hearing phase must be completed.

League members would be excellent participants in the hearings! We will keep you posted as to where and when and how (format) they will be held. Remember these maps stand for the next 10 years!

For each commission, nonpartisan staff prepare an initial plan subject to public hearings, which the commission may modify.

Final maps must be passed with the vote of 8 commissioners, including 2 of the unaffiliated commissioners, and the deadline to submit the final maps to the state Supreme Court is September 15, 2021. The court must approve the final map unless it finds that the commission failed to follow the required criteria.

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK!

Action News from LWVCO and LWVUS

From Karen Sheek, LWVCO President, January 9, 2021

This week, we saw President Donald Trump instigate an insurrection against his own government in a last-ditch attempt to maintain power that turned fatal. On Wednesday, January 6th, our nation's capital came under attack by radical insurrectionists intent on disrupting the transition of power. It was a coordinated attack on our democracy. As advocates for a free and fair democracy, it is imperative that we call for the removal of Donald Trump by impeachment and disqualify him from ever holding federal office again. Donald Trump must be removed from office in order to protect the integrity of the Office of the President. Donald Trump breached his oath of office the moment he posed a clear and imminent threat to national security by encouraging his followers to storm the Capitol.

It is now the duty of Congress to proceed with his impeachment for acting seditiously in flagrant violation of his oath. Our Constitution must be upheld; this can no longer be ensured under the sitting president..... President Trump must be held accountable for his reckless actions that jeopardized the safety of our elected officials, led to injuries and the loss of human life, and threatened our very democracy.

Make your voice heard: Contact your Senators and Representatives and urge them to support impeachment and removal of this president. **We have been told that calling may be more effective.** For email and phone information on our US Senators and Representatives, please see Page 7.

From Deborah Turner, President, LWVUS

We have come to the end of a memorable year that each of us will remember in our own special way. A year of incredible highs and incredible lows. During this unique year, we celebrated our 100th anniversary, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the ERA, and we commemorated the ratification of the 19th Amendment. We served millions of voters during one of the nation's most successful and secure historic elections. We helped voters navigate new and old voting options during a pandemic, and we engaged in litigation to ensure that voters could cast their ballots safely and to combat voter suppression. VOTE411 served over six million voters with voting information in both English and Spanish for the first time ever. We managed to support the work of courageous postal workers while standing against administrative postal changes that promoted voter suppression, and we worked hard to maintain the integrity of the census.

The above-mentioned activities capture only a few of the actions Leagues throughout the country engaged in during 2020 to support the people of our nation and defend democracy. We invite you to take a moment to read our 2020 wrap up blog, **20 Ways LWV Empowered Voters and Protected Democracy in 2020**, which highlights many more aspects of this year's work. As you do so, reflect on the part each of you played in the successes of this year.

By the way, the 20 Ways blog above have been posted on our website.

Contact info for the Colorado U.S. Congressional Delegation

Sen. John Hickenlooper | 303-244-1628/202-224-5941
<https://www.facebook.com/JohnHickenlooper/>

Sen. Michael Bennet | 303-455-7600 / 866-455-9866 <https://www.bennet.senate.gov/?p=contact>

Contact info for the Colorado U.S. Congressional Delegation

Rep. Diana DeGette (CO District 1) | 303-844-4988 <https://degette.house.gov/contact/send-me-an-email/email-me>

Rep. Joe Neguse (CO District 2) | 202- 225-2161 <https://neguse.house.gov/contact>

Rep. Lauren Boebert (CO District 3) | 970- 317-6130 <https://boebert.house.gov>

Rep. Ken Buck (CO District 4) | 970-702-2136 <https://buck.house.gov/contact/email>

Rep. Doug Lamborn (CO District 5) | 719-520-0055 <https://lamborn.house.gov/contact/leave-a-comment.htm>

Rep. Jason Crow (CO District 6) | 202-225-7882 <https://crow.house.gov/contact/>

Rep. Ed Perlmutter (CO District 7) | 303-274-7944
<https://perlmutter.house.gov/forms/writeyourrep/>

Contact Info for Colorado General Assembly

Rep. Marc Catlin (CO House District 58) 303-866-2955
marc.catlin.house@state.co.us

Sen. Don Coram (CO Senate District 6) 303-866-4884
don.coram.senate@state.co.us

Rep. Matt Soper (CO House District 54)
matthew.soper.house.state.co.us 303-866-2583

Rep. Julie Mc Cluskie (CO House District 61) 303-866-2952
RepMcCluskie@gmail.com

Sen. Kerry Donovan (CO Senate District 5) 303-866-4871)
kerry.donovan.sd5@gmail.com

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

2020-2021 LWV Community Support

The League of Women Voters of Montrose County, serving Montrose and Delta counties, thanks these local businesses, organizations and individuals who have donated financial and in-kind support.

Please **add your thank you** when you patronize these businesses or visit with these individuals.

**Alpine Archeological Bank of Colorado
Coffee Trader Horsefly Brewing Company
The Montrose Mirror The Montrose Press
D'Medici Footwear & Clothing**

**Dennis Olmstead Alicia Conroyd
Margaret Edith Sortor Joseph**

Calendar

**Wednesday, January 27
7:00pm – 8:30 pm
Making Democracy Work
Zoom Meeting**

**Thursday, February 11
5:00pm-6:00pm
Leader of Democracy 2021
Zoom Meeting**

The League of Women Voters of the Montrose County is pleased you are joining us in helping to Make Democracy Work for our community and our country!

**EMPOWERING VOTERS!
DEFENDING DEMOCRACY!**

Check out our Website:

<https://www.lwvmontrose.org>

Our webmaster, Tanya Ishikawa, keeps us updated on and linked to local, state and national activities, issues, and websites.

Check us out on Facebook too:

<https://www.facebook.com/VoteMontrose>

Our social media person, Patrice Schell, does the same, plus on Instagram and Twitter ---
@votemontroseco!

**Join League of Women Voters of Montrose County
serving Montrose & Delta counties – 2020-2021
Not for Women Only!**

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (H) _____ (Cell) _____

E-mail _____

___ **Individual \$60** - Of this amount \$32 goes to National League; \$20 goes to State League; \$8 is retained by the Montrose League

___ **Household \$90** – Two members in one household (National League receives \$48; State League \$30; \$12 is retained by the Montrose League)

___ I understand that I can join without being active, and this is my intent at the present time.

___ I would like to make a contribution beyond regular dues and understand it will go directly to our local League (Thank You!).

___ **Sustaining Member \$100** - Of this amount \$32 goes to National League; \$20 goes to State League; \$48 is retained by the Montrose League

___ I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Montrose League. Write a separate check to **League of Women Voters CO Education Fund. Write "Montrose" on the check's memo line.**

Please make checks payable to **League of Women Voters of Montrose County**. Mail to P.O. Box 3321, Montrose, CO 81402

2020 Officers & Board

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janmsw96@icloud.com

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Cyndi Holman, Secretary
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Tanya Ishikawa, Webmaster
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Patrice Schell, Communications
1-970-683-0339 allmine@xmission.com

Nancy Ball, at Large & *Voter* editor
249-8963, nancyball@montrose.net

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MONTROSE COUNTY
SERVING MONTROSE AND DELTA COUNTIES
P.O. BOX 3321, MONTROSE, CO 81402

CREATING A MORE PERFECT DEMOCRACY