

**EMPOWERING VOTERS, DEFENDING DEMOCRACY**

**THE VOTER**

October 2020    Membership 55

**ONCE AGAIN**

**TIME TO EDUCATE, ADVOCATE and GET OUT THE VOTE!**

**INFORMED VOTERS CREATE A MORE PERFECT DEMOCRACY**

**We sadly note and mourn the passing of a very special human being: Ruth Bader Ginsburg---feminist and judicial icon, morally just, inspirational role model, and one tough woman. We will work to keep her legacy alive!**

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## **A BUSY Fall is Upon Us!**

The November 3 ballot has 11 statewide ballot issues, so much education needs to be done to inform and empower voters! The League's "Your Voice, Your Vote" pamphlets have been placed and League's ballot issues pamphlets are being placed around our communities by our voter service team.

2020 is a very unusual election year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Many more people will be voting via mail. Each state has its own guidelines and regulations as to when to starting ballot counting, so it is almost certain contest results will not be available on election evening and for a fair number of days beyond. Spread the word to stay calm and have trust in our system!

Focusing on the League's nonpartisanship and our efforts to create a more perfect democracy through civil civic interaction, the article below by Richard Gaughan, which first appeared in LWV Pueblo's September issue of *The Voter*, is ever so timely---and thought-provoking. Mr. Gaughan is a scientist, teacher, public speaker, and author of four books: *Accidental Genius: The World's Greatest by-chance Discoveries*, *Gravitational Waves*, *Black Holes Explained*, *Antimatter Explained*, *Physics in Your Everyday Life*.

### **We the People**

We in the United States have a unique advantage over nearly every other country in the world: our founders created our government with intention, and they recorded their intentions. "Intentions" is plural because they pored through thousands of years of history and philosophy and selected the varied and multiple elements they believed were both necessary and sufficient to form a just government.

"Intentions" is also plural because the founders — no matter what the myths of the present may relate — did not share a uniform vision for their future. They disagreed — sometimes quite contentiously — on nearly every aspect of the structure and function of their new government. In both 1776 and 1787 those disagreements nearly tore the nation apart before it could even be formed.

But in the midst of vehement disagreements, the founders remained united in their belief, their understanding, that they would succeed only if they accepted their differences and focused on their common goals. Their mutual respect, even in the face of their disputes, is evident in the many compromises they made, both in the Declaration of Independence and in the Constitution. But it doesn't take a constitutional scholar to tease out the importance they placed on their mutual esteem; it's in the very first words of the constitution: We the People.

Those three words, written large at the head of the constitution, have always been recognized as paramount. They echoed across the world when they were written, and they have assumed an almost dogmatic importance in the entire world. The idea of allowing citizens to direct their government was a startling one in the late 18th century. Today an internet search on the phrase "let the people decide" finds it literally being invoked from Afghanistan to Zanzibar.

The emphasis given to "the people" shows that the framers of the constitution identified and articulated what is now universally recognized to be a foundation of justice. Certainly that is true, but the emphasis on "the people" diminishes the most important word in the phrase: "we." "We" does not exist for an individual. "We" is not "me" and "me" and "me."

"We" acknowledges that people have joined together to create a new entity, a group that has powers and responsibilities beyond that of each individual.

"We" demands each person accept that others within the group are equally important.

"We" requires mutual respect; recognition that — as much as one may disagree with another — the individuals are choosing to compromise to ensure the group is strong.

"We" appreciates that individual differences are not cause for contempt, but an opportunity to enhance our individual success by supporting the strength of our group.

In a political environment that appears to be increasingly fractious and disrespectful, each of us can benefit by reflecting upon the most powerful word of the constitution, the word they placed first; the word each of us should place first: "We".

**SO, "WE" ALL NEED TO WORK TOGETHER TO ENCOURAGE ELIGIBLE VOTERS TO REGISTER, TO HELP THEM BECOME INFORMED, AND TO GET OUT THE VOTE! "WE THE PEOPLE" NEED TO HAVE OUR VOICES HEARD!!!**

Again this year, the League was a partner on National Voter Registration Day, but our work is far from over. Encourage your spheres of influence to **register and update their registrations to be sure it is current at <http://govotecolorado.gov/>** through the 8<sup>th</sup> day before the election in order to receive their ballot by mail. Be sure to tell them to have their CO driver's licenses or student ID cards at the ready. Eligible voters can also at any time when open, including election day, register and update their registration at local County Clerk's offices or Voter Service & Polling centers in their counties of residence.

Thankfully, we live in Colorado where we have universal mail-in ballots and safe, secure elections! Ballots will be mailed October 12 in Montrose and Delta counties. Be an informed voter and do vote early!

### **Election News: THE BALLOT**

#### **Issues are placed on the ballot in one of two ways:**

1. **Referendum** -- a proposal by the Legislature which is referred to citizens for a vote
2. **Initiative** -- a proposal by citizens who have gathered the required number of signatures (five percent of the total number of votes cast for Secretary of State in the previous general election)

#### **Statewide issues appearing on the ballot may be of two types:**

1. **Amendments to the Colorado Constitution** -- may be referred to the voters by a two-thirds vote of both houses of the General Assembly or may be proposed by citizens using the initiative process. Only the voters (not the legislature) can change the Colorado Constitution. These proposals are called amendments.
2. **Amendments to the Revised Statutes (propositions)** -- may be referred to the voters by a majority vote of both houses of the General Assembly or may be proposed by citizens using the initiative process. Although approved by voters, amendments to the Colorado Revised Statutes may subsequently be changed by the legislature. These proposals are called propositions and are changes to the statutes.

**2020 Statewide Ballot Issues (11):** (Local issues will also be on the ballots.)

- **Amendment B**- Repeal Property Tax Assessment Rates Amendment: Repeal the Gallagher Amendment of 1982 – **Referendum**

**League Position: SUPPORT**

- **Amendment C**- Charitable Bingo and Raffles – **Referendum**

**League position: None**

- **Amendment 76** - Citizen Qualification of Electors: “only a citizen” of US can vote in CO Constitution, instead of “every citizen” of US can vote – **Initiative**

**League position: OPPOSE**, as this bill removes the allowance of 17-year-olds to participate in primary elections

- **Amendment 77** – Voter approved changes to gaming limits in Black Hawk, Central City and Cripple Creek – **Initiative**

**League position: None**

- **Proposition EE** - Colorado Tobacco and E-Cigarette Tax for Health and Education Programs measure – **Referendum**

**League position: SUPPORT**

- **Proposition #113** - National Popular Vote Interstate Compact –**Referendum petition**

**League position: SUPPORT**

- **Proposition #114** - Gray Wolf Reintroduction – **Initiative**

**League position: None**

- **Proposition #115** - Prohibition of Late-Term Week Abortion – **Initiative**

**League position: OPPOSE**

- **Proposition 116** - State Income Tax Rate Deduction – **Initiative**

**League position: OPPOSE**

- **Proposition 117** - Voter Approval Requirement for Creation of Certain Fee-Based Enterprises - **Initiative**

**League position: OPPOSE**

- **Proposition 118** - Paid Family & Medical Leave Insurance Program - **Initiative**

**League position: SUPPORT**

The above positions are based on the 2019- 2021 LWVCO Positions for Action and the 2018-2020 LWVUS Impact on Issues and were decided by the LWVCO Board.

The La Plata League is offering a Zoom Webinar on the ballot issues on October 14. See page 8.

## **The League's statewide ballot issues pamphlets are now available**

They contain a compilation of pro and con statements of material submitted by proponents and opponents of each ballot issue.

## **The League's VOTE411.org Voter Guide is LIVE**

Get your personalized ballot by typing in your address. It's easy!

**From Tressa Guynes, Montrose County Clerk and Recorder, September 15, 2020**

The Montrose Clerk and Recorder's Office has been notified that the United States Postal Service (USPS) sent out a national pre-election mailer to every household in America that contains misleading election information for voters in Colorado. Many individuals in Montrose County, as well as the state of Colorado have already received this 8 1/2" x 5 1/2" post card in their mailbox. See attached example (USPS Notice Mailer) received by a Montrose voter.

This post card mailer incorrectly asks voters to "Request your mail-in ballot (often called "absentee" ballot) at least 15 days before Election Day" and recommends that voters "mail your ballot at least 7 days before Election Day", November 3rd.

Please Note: **Ballots will be mailed automatically to every registered voter on October 12, 2020—registered voters do not need to make a request to our office.**

**If you choose to return your voted ballot by mail, you should add the appropriate postage on the envelope and deposit your voted ballot in the mail by October 26, no later than 8 days before the election.**

I would like to emphasize that the Colorado County Clerk and Recorder Offices have enjoyed a positive working relationship with Postal Service Officials, the dedicated staff that process the mail, and the route carriers that deliver those ballots to our voters' doorsteps.

Colorado Citizens are encouraged to register to vote or verify their voter registration information is accurate by going to <http://govotecolorado.gov/> We recommend all return their voted ballots to one of our secure 24/7 video surveillance ballot drop boxes. Voters with questions or concerns should call (970) 249-3362 ext 3 or visit our website at <http://www.montrosecounty.net/elections>

**News release from the Colorado Secretary of State's office on September 14.**

## **Colorado To Implement Ballot Tracking Statewide for November's Election**

DENVER, Colo- Colorado Secretary of State **Jena Griswold** today announced that for the first time, voters in all 64 counties will be able to track the status of their individual mail ballots for the 2020 General Election. Voters will be able to receive notifications by phone, email, or text about the status of their mail ballots, from the time their County Clerk and Recorder mails the outgoing ballot packet, to when their voted ballot is received and accepted for counting.

Beginning today, voters in counties that are adding ballot tracking will receive a notification that they have been enrolled in the service if their registration record contains an email address. Those who don't receive an auto-enrollment notification can sign up themselves at <https://colorado.ballottrax.net/voter/> . Voters can opt out of BallotTrax at any time.

## **Local League News**

### **Hispanic Affairs Project "Get Out the Vote" Efforts**

By Karen Sherman Perez

The [Hispanic Affairs Project](#) (HAP) has created and is sharing the first of three videos in Spanish to promote participation in the upcoming general election. The 3-part video series is focused on: 1) How to Register to Vote in Colorado, 2) How to Fill Out Your Ballot, and 3) How to Submit Your Ballot. Here's a link to video #1 [Como Registrarse a Votar en Colorado](#). We are producing these videos in partnership with the Voter Empowerment Project, a group of volunteers from across the country, who are helping smaller organizations with nonpartisan voter engagement efforts. We also have a Spanish-language resource page on our website--here's the link:

<https://hapgj.org/participacion-civica/>

Additionally, the Hispanic Affairs Project (HAP) is hard at work to help get out the Latinx Vote in Montrose County. HAP staff and volunteers will be canvassing in Montrose and Olathe to share LWV statewide ballot issues guides and local election information to registered Latinx voters over the next week. We have heard over and over that people in our community do not vote all the way down the ballot because they do not understand the issues. Our goal is to share information that will help voters understand the complex issues on this year's ballot.

In addition to canvassing, HAP has also launched a robust online campaign to share voter education materials and social media ads to encourage active participation in this year's election. Through support from the [Voter Empowerment Project](#), HAP has received significant technical assistance from volunteers from across the country who are committed to helping small nonprofits serving people of color, youth, and other historically disenfranchised communities to build their capacity to increase voter turnout through voter registration, education, mobilization, protection, and more.

### **SUFFRAGIST MASKS ARE STILL AVAILABLE FOR A \$7 DONATION**

### **Essay & Poster Contests for Ages 16-21 Years**

Entries have been received, and we are in the response of working with the entrants to plan the October 15 awards ceremony.

### **2020 Census Self-Response Deadline Extended to October 31**

The Census Bureau has extended its field operations, which includes Self-Response, to October 31st.

While completion of the Non-Response Follow-Up operation in most areas is close, there are still a few folks who have not completed their questionnaires. The Census Bureau asks that we continue to promote the completion of the 2020 Census, and let folks know that while they technically now have until the end of this month, folks are encouraged respond NOW so as to ensure the most accurate data possible.

**As of October 2, 70% of Colorado households have self-responded; self-response from Montrose, Delta and Ouray counties was 69%, 67%, and 50%.** (%s are rounded up.) The national self-response rate was 67%. By the way, **our 3rd Congressional District response was 59%, the lowest in Colorado.** Good news: with Non-Response Follow-up, total enumeration in Colorado is 99%, so, hopefully, our state will get that additional U.S. Representative!

### **National Popular Vote Virtual Town Hall – September 15 at Noon**

The virtual Livestorm program co-hosted by our League and the “Yes on National Popular Vote” was informative and thought-provoking. Between the video, the Power Point and talk by Senator Mike Foote, and the question and answer session, those who “attended” were well served. For those who were unable to do so, here is a link to the video - <https://www.amazon.com/Winner-Take-Colo-Sen-Polly/dp/B081MV71TR> . Amazon Prime members can watch it for free.

### **National Voter Registration Day – September 22**

Voter registration being vital to the League’s mission, we did our best to make the public aware of this important event within the Covid-19 limitations: displays around our counties, posts on our social media platforms, links on our website, and e-mail notices to our many contacts. Hopefully, our efforts brought about positive results, and, actually, if comments from the Montrose Election Office are any indication, they did! Again, we are so fortunate to live in Colorado where voter registration is EASY

### **News from LWVCO and Other Local Leagues**

#### **Making Democracy Work Day – September 26**

The LWVCO website <https://lwvcolorado.org/> provides links to all of the day’s excellent presentations (Redistricting, the 2020 Ballot Issues, Legislative Update, Get Out the Vote efforts, and more) in the “Members” section. **Check them out!** Some highlights:

- . LWVCO is participating, in partnership with MITRE Corp. and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, in a new project called **SQUINT** to assist state and local elections officers with combating misinformation on social media. Google MITRESQUINT.
- . Details on how to become a “Squinter” are available on the LWVCO website.
- . Colorado law provides for Independent Commissions to Draw Fair Maps for Colorado’s U.S. and state congressional districts. **LWVCO encourages League members to apply to serve on the commission.** Applications are due by November 10.
  - . To learn about the Commissions and how to submit an application, go to <https://redistricting.colorado.gov/>
- . Maggie Bush from the LWVUS gave an excellent presentation on Get Out the Vote efforts, concluding that the **top messages from LWVUS** in this regard are:

- . We believe in the United States Postal Service
- . Counting ballots in this unique election year may take a while, and **that's OK**
- . Local efforts can make a BIG difference in voter turnout and most effective are mailings, live phone calls, canvassing, engaging skeptical and 1<sup>st</sup> time voters
- . Promote VOTE411.org as best place to go for personalized ballot information. The site is now bilingual.
- . Offer help and information to prospective voters
- . **Be personal, positive, and persistent!**

### **La Plata League Zoom Webinar on 11 Statewide Ballot Issues Wednesday, October 14, 2020 5:30-7:00pm**

The 11 Colorado Statewide Ballot Issues will be presented by: Fort Lewis College students of Dr. Thora Giallouri's U.S. National Government Class and Dr. Paul DeBell's Introduction to Political Science Class. The Moderator will be Dr. Paul DeBell.

To attend the Zoom Webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88631543116> . No RSVP required. The Forum will also be live-streamed for viewing on [www.facebook.com/lwvlaplata.org/](http://www.facebook.com/lwvlaplata.org/) and <http://www.durangogov.org/DGOV>

### **La Plata League Candidate Forum – September 30**

Congratulations to the La Plata County League for a most excellent Zoom Webinar candidate forum on September 30 with incumbent Joyce Rankin (R) and Dr. Mayling Simpson (D) for the CO District 3 State Board of Education seat. If you missed it, you can still view it on <http://www.facebook.com/lwvlaplata.org/>

## **LWVUS NEWS**

### **From Virginia Kase, CEO**

October is Voter Education Month and, across the country, more than two million voters have already cast their ballots in the general election. Whether you are voting early in-person, by absentee or mail-in, or waiting for Election Day, now is the time to [make your voting plan](#). A lot of voting rules have changed in 2020, including options for how, when, and where you can vote. Now is a great time to [check your voter registration on VOTE411.org](#) and make sure you are ready to participate in this upcoming election.

Making an election plan is so important this year, and we want you to share yours. [Check out this video](#), and once you've made your voting plan, encourage others to do the same. Post about it on your social media channels and be an #OctoberVoter this year!

**Target has VOTE411.org on its website banner!!! Great PR!**

## **Contact info for the Colorado U.S. Congressional Delegation**

Sen. Cory Gardner | [303-391-5777](tel:303-391-5777)

<https://www.gardner.senate.gov/contact-cory/email-cory>

Sen. Michael Bennet | [303-455-7600](tel:303-455-7600) / [866-455-9866](tel: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](tel:303-844-4988) <https://degette.house.gov/contact/send-me-an-email/email-me>

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

Rep. Scott Tipton (CO District 3) | [970-241-2499](tel:970-241-2499) <https://tipton.house.gov/contact/email>

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

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

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

Rep. Ed Perlmutter (CO District 7) | [303-274-7944](tel: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](tel:303-866-2955)  
[marc.catlin.house@state.co.us](mailto:marc.catlin.house@state.co.us)

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

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

Rep. Julie Mc Cluskie (CO House District 61) [303-866-2952](tel:303-866-2952)  
[RepMcCluskie@gmail.com](mailto:RepMcCluskie@gmail.com)

Sen. Kerry Donovan (CO Senate District 5) [303-866-4871](tel:303-866-4871)  
[kerry.donovan.sd5@gmail.com](mailto: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      Montrose Press  
D'Medici Footwear & Clothing**

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

**Calendar**

**October 12  
Ballots mailed**

**October 14 – 5:30-7:00pm  
2020 Ballot Issues Forum  
La Plata County League**

**October 15  
Essay and Poster Contest Award  
Ceremony**

**October 19  
Voter Service Polling Place opens  
in Montrose Courthouse**

**October 31  
2020 Census Response Deadline**

**November 3  
Election Day!**

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 too!

**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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**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**