

# The Boulder County Voter

1 February 2017

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<http://www.facebook.com/lwvbc.org>



<https://instagram.com/lwvbc>

Happy 2017!

It is such a privilege to be the President of League of Women Voters of Boulder County in this time of enormous opportunity! I hope many of you participated in the Women's March on January 21<sup>st</sup>. I did and it was exhilarating. It reminded me of our tagline which always inspires me. *We were founded on the power of women to create a more perfect democracy!* Now we must bring about meaningful change.



Ruth Stemler, President,  
LWVBC

Please participate in the LWVBC February educational events such as Community Conversations, Drinks and Dialogue, and the film *I Voted?* Our Events and Voting Methods Teams are working hard. We have some new innovations planned. Our Community Conversations will be on Facebook Live! and then posted on YouTube. After we show the film *I Voted?* we plan to Google Chat with Jason Grant Smith one of the filmmakers. We are moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Keep your fingers crossed!!

I also want to acknowledge some unsung heroes as we start 2017. Liz Black and her Membership Team have been working diligently to get all those memberships renewed. Linda Hultman keeps us in line as the Secretary. Lurbin Moore and Pat Long are doing a great job as our newish Treasurers. And Sarah Levison is working on our Membership and Leadership Development Program. And there are many, many more dedicated volunteers. It really takes a village to make LWVBC work.

The Board recently made the decision to acquire Club Express membership management software. This software will allow us to manage membership records, schedule events, collect funds, communicate with members and our extended community friends, help members to provide accurate and up-to-date information, allow Team Leaders to organize their teams and communicate better, host our website and social media and more. Our research shows that Club Express will help us manage a larger membership base. And from our calculations, we hope to save a little money on some of our current monthly expenses. Stay tuned as we offer training for our members. Thanks to the 10-person crew who did the research!

Hope to see you soon, Ruth



# The Boulder County Voter

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## Mark Your Calendars

Community Conversation: More Choices for Voters (Part 1)

Thursday, 2 February 2017, 6:00-7:45 pm  
Lafayette Library, lower level meeting room,  
775 W. Baseline Rd., Lafayette

Drinks & Dialogue: How can we eliminate the Electoral College?

Monday, 6 February 2017, 5:30-6:30 pm  
St Vrain Cidery, 350 Terry St., Suite 130 (east side of building), Longmont

Screening of the film "I Voted?", followed by discussion

Monday, 13 February 2017, 6:00-8:00 pm  
Longmont Library meeting room, 409 4th Ave., Longmont

Community Conversation: More Choices for Voters (Part 2)

Tuesday, 21 February 2017, 6:00- 7:45 pm  
Lafayette Library  
775 W Baseline Rd, Lafayette

Voting Methods Consensus Meeting

Thursday, 23 February 2017, 6:30-8:00 pm  
Front Range Community College Classroom Bldg, Room C1480, 2121 Miller Dr, Longmont

Voting Methods Consensus Meeting

Monday, 27 February 2017, 2:30-4:15 pm  
Frasier Meadows Manor - 4th floor  
350 Ponca Pl  
Boulder, CO 80303

Meet Your Legislators

Saturday, 4 March 2017, 10:00-11:30 am  
BVSD Board Rm, Boulder Valley School District, 6500 East Arapahoe Road  
Boulder

Drinks & Dialogue: Redistricting

Monday, 6 March 2017, 5:30-6:30 pm  
740 Front Restaurant, 740 Front Street,  
Louisville (across from the library)

Check the [Calendar on our website](#) for a complete listing of planned events.



*State Legislative Candidate Forum 13 October 2016, at the Via Hoover Family Conference Center, Boulder*



*Community Conversation: Non-Citizen Rights, 15 November 2016, at the Louisville Fire Dept, Louisville*

League of Women Voters of Boulder County  
Box 21274, Boulder CO 80308  
[www.lwvbc.org](http://www.lwvbc.org)

Membership: 190 as of January 2017

President: Ruth J. Stemler  
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10 issues per year  
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# *The Boulder County Voter*

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## **In Memory of Our Friend Bruce MacKenzie**

From Liz Black

The Reverend Bruce MacKenzie of Boulder died on 3 January 2017. A celebration of Bruce's life was held on Sunday, 29 January 2017, at the First Congregational Church in Boulder. An online obituary is available on the [Denver Post website](#). Owing to his years of community involvement, after his death Bruce was the subject of a front-page Boulder Camera article (Jan 25). He won a Daily Camera Pacesetter Award in 1997 because of his work with the Interfaith AIDS Coalition of Boulder County, the Boulder County AIDS Project, and the CROP Walk and as a founding member of the United Nations Association Boulder County Chapter.

Liz Black and others have collected some of their memories of Bruce:

Bruce was one of the first men to join our League. (Pennfield Tate, Boulder Mayor, was the first.) Louisa Young knew him both in the League and from her membership in the church where he was the pastor for a good many years. Louisa recalls "He was always attending meetings and giving good input." It is difficult for many of us to remember Bruce without thinking also of his wife, Jeanette, a long-time league member. One year Lois Linsky and her husband spent Christmas Eve in Hanalei Kauai with Bruce and Jeanette. "What a wonderful couple they were," says Lois. Back when we had monthly unit meetings (at which the same presentation was made at five different times/ locations to accommodate members' varying schedules) Jeanette hosted a group in the MacKenzie's home while Bruce liked to join the group that met over dinner at the Double Happy in Louisville. Linda Hultman, a regular at those meetings, observed that Bruce "was always fun to talk to, very challenging." Bruce willingly accepted a call from the nominating committee and served a term as Program Planning Vice President on the local league board.

Although Bruce suffered from esophageal cancer for the last few years of his life, even when asked about his condition, he did not complain. Liz Black remembers the walking tour he led of historic Boulder neighborhoods, an optional activity offered to delegates at the state league convention held in Boulder in 2015. He told us not only about the architecture but shared fascinating stories of the characters who had lived in the homes we passed by.

His memorial service was held the same weekend as the MacKenzie Lectureship, an event and endowment created in honor of Bruce and Jeanette. The lecture, on Friday, was given this year by Diana Butler Bass, a historian who specializes in American religion and culture and is a leading voice in the progressive Christianity movement.

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## **Read LWV History on Our Website**

Deborah Hayes and Liz Nick have been writing and documenting the history of our league, and you can trace our roots on the [Our History page](#) on our website. Did you know:

The League of Women Voters of Boulder County was formed in **2007** by the merger of the LWV of **Longmont**, founded in **1965**, and the LWV of Boulder Valley (LWVBV). The LWV of (the city of) **Boulder** (LWVB), founded in **1931**, was the first local League in Colorado. It became the LWV of Boulder Valley in **1984** by expanding to cover the same area as the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD), including Louisville and Lafayette.

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## Members in Action February is Voting Methods Month: Guest Speakers and Consensus Meetings

From the Voting Methods Team

Community Conversation: More Choices for Voters (Part 1): Implications of Maine's Decision on Instant-Runoff Voting for Colorado and the Nation

Thursday, 2 February 2017, 6:00-7:45 pm

Lafayette Library, lower level meeting room, 775 W. Baseline Rd., Lafayette

Community Conversation: More Choices for Voters (Part 2): Colorado's Approval Voting bill and the use of this method by CU student government

Tuesday, 21 February 2017, 6:00- 7:45pm

Lafayette Library, lower level meeting room, 775 W. Baseline Rd., Lafayette

Voting Methods Consensus Meeting

Thursday, 23 February 2017, 6:30-8:00 pm

Front Range Community College Classroom Bldg, Room C1480, 2121 Miller Dr, Longmont

Voting Methods Consensus Meeting

Monday, 27 February 2017, 2:30-4:15 pm

Frasier Meadows Manor - 4th floor, 350 Ponca Pl, Boulder

Thank you, fellow League members, for approving our so-called "fast-track" plan to hold consensus meetings in order to arrive at a Voting Methods position. Having led interactive unit presentations in 2013 and spoken extensively at the 2015 LWVCO League Day, we actually feel as though the path has been quite long. Following the 2016 election, we see great momentum across the nation in terms of electoral reform in general and voting methods in particular.

Our current plurality voting method works well when there are only two candidates for one position. However, when there are more candidates, plurality limits the voice of the voter. There are two main categories of more expressive voting methods: ranking (such as instant-runoff voting) and rating (such as approval and score voting). In ranking, voters get to name their 1st, 2nd, and 3rd (and sometimes more) candidate choices. In rating, voters get to score all the candidates with a whole number within a certain range specified on the ballot; for approval voting the range is binary (1 for approve and 0 for disapprove) while for score voting the

range consists of more options. How votes are tallied in these different methods isn't necessarily a concern of the casual voter but is of great interest to candidates and interested citizens. Ideally, the outcome of an election clearly reveals the expressed preference of the voters.

Our Voting Methods Team will host two public "More Choices for Voters" events in February prior to our consensus meetings, both in the Lafayette Public Library. On Feb 2nd, we are fortunate to have Rob Richie, Fair Vote's executive director. In the US, Fair Vote is the primary organizational proponent of instant-runoff voting (IRV) for single-winner elections and its multi-winner version called single-transferable vote (STV) which, by



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## February is Voting Methods Month: Guest Speakers and Consensus Meetings (continued)

the way, was used to elect the Boulder City Council from 1917 to 1947. On Feb 21st State Representative Jonathan Singer, a sponsor of approval voting bills, plans to join us along with Neal McBurnett, a board member of the Center for Election Science which wants us all to make smarter collective decisions and favors approval voting, the method currently used in CU-Boulder's student government elections.

No voting method is perfect. Each has its strengths and weaknesses. For instance, except for the absence of a voting method (aka a dictatorship), plurality is probably the simplest method to understand and implement. Which criteria do you think are most important? At our consensus meetings, we'll discuss the impact of voting methods on 1) tactical vs honest voting, 2) improving the election experience and voter turnout, and 3) ease of implementation and acceptance by voters. We will drill down into specific criteria within each of the three broad categories. Additionally, some voting methods are designed to be used in single-winner elections, others in multi-winner elections. Should the LWVBC campaign for integrity between a voting method's intended use and its actual application? Help us decide at the consensus meetings.

Colorado is full of voting method activists, and many of them are revved up since the Maine electorate in November approved the statewide implementation of IRV. Our state's history is replete with examples of alternative voting methods. In addition to the CU-Boulder and Boulder City Council examples above, Bucklin voting (aka the Grand Junction method) was used in many jurisdictions in the early 20th century. Basalt and Telluride currently use IRV. Aspen tried IRV in 2009 and repealed it in 2010. In 2011 Fort Collins voters rejected a proposal to adopt IRV. In 2016 an Approval Voting Party ran a presidential candidate in Colorado.

Our consensus meetings are scheduled for Feb 23 at 6:30 in Longmont and Feb 27 at 2:30 in Boulder. We hope that you will be able to attend one of them and perhaps both of the earlier "More Choices for Voters" educational events. Our Voting Methods team has so much going on in February that we have unofficially declared February "Voting Methods Month" in LWVBC. We look forward to educating everyone and continuing to learn ourselves about better voting methods. Please visit our [Voting Methods webpage](#) for more information including prior League presentations.

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## Making Democracy Work for All

From Jeannette Hillary



The LWVBC has begun working with KGNU on a monthly 4-minute radio spot on issues dealing with democracy and issues of importance to our members and the public. We debuted on January 19, 2017 with a spot on the Colorado General Assembly and League lobbying. [Click here to read about this new radio project and to listen to our first broadcast](#)

The following months we will have pieces from our various teams with topics such as money in politics, health care and social policy. Periodically the League will do in depth interviews on the radio. Look for a program on Voting Methods. If you have suggestions for a topic, contact Jeannette Hillery, [jmhillery915@comcast.net](mailto:jmhillery915@comcast.net).

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## LWVBC Health Care Team Meeting Summaries – 2017

From Mary Anna Dunn

January 10, 2017, the full team met at Virginia's home to catch up on developments and form plans for education and advocacy in the new year. Our primary focus continues to be on behavioral health, although tracking the changes in healthcare overall will also engage us. Two or three individuals have expressed interest in joining the team. Since November, Jo and Gwen attended a Boulder Valley Community Action Network meeting. Jo and Barbara are members of the policy committee of the Boulder Public Health effort, with Barbara representing NAMI. On Feb. 9 NAMI will have Boulder police and sheriff's staff present a program about the de-escalation training they do for their officers (7:15-8:30, Mt. View Methodist). Coming up on Jan. 30 is the LWVCO Legislative Conference, featuring Andrew Romanoff of Mental Health Colorado (MHC) as first speaker. MHC's Colorado Mental Wellness Network is sponsoring grassroots advocacy trainings in Denver. This is part of their Brain Wave movement. We will look into collaborating with other organizations to schedule such a training in Boulder County. Mary Anna told about the PBS film Hidden Pictures, which focuses on the stigma of mental illness around the world and advocates for speaking out and empathy training. She also announced that the condensed version of Now Is the Time, the film advocating single-payer healthcare, is now available. At our next meeting, we will view the 35-minute version. (We also own the 71-minute DVD.) Regarding advocacy and action, we brainstormed ideas for four-minute commentaries on KGNU and for letters to editors. MHC offers help on writing and placement, and various organizations—MHC, NAMI, LWV, ACLU and others--provide links to write to or call our senators and representatives on issues and legislation of interest. For radio spots, we are seeking stories, with possible focus on counteracting stigma, behavioral health services in schools, and navigating to find help in general. We will also work on contacting other LWV healthcare teams around the state. Our next meeting is planned for Tuesday, February 21 (with possible back-up on Feb. 26.)

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## Report from the Social Policy Team

From Mary Ann Wilner

The Social Policy Team has three and maybe four new members! We will continue our work on living wage and the rights of undocumented residents. On living wage, we will move into Longmont where we hope to work with the city council to raise the minimum wage for city workers to the self-sufficiency standard of about \$15. Longmont has been using the Self-Sufficiency Standard as its base for ten years, but the current rate of \$13.36 has not been indexed to inflation in that time.

We are also exploring initiating a "good housekeeping" type model for those businesses that meet a certain level of wages and benefits. Durango has been successful with this. Companies that meet a high bar as employers receive lots of public relations, benefits, and presumably attract more business.

We will be expanding the distribution of our research on the rights of undocumented individuals. We are developing a shorter more public version which we hope to deliver to Rotaries, on KGNU and to other audiences. Go to [our website page](#) to read our November 2016 presentation

We will also be exploring and potentially advocating for community identification cards for those who are undocumented. The Boulder Human Relations Commission is exploring this and, based on their research and recommendations, we may advocate for the development of these cards. More about the benefits of these ID cards as we learn more.

Advocating for affordable housing is a topic we may take on, depending on people power and current projects.

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# The Boulder County Voter

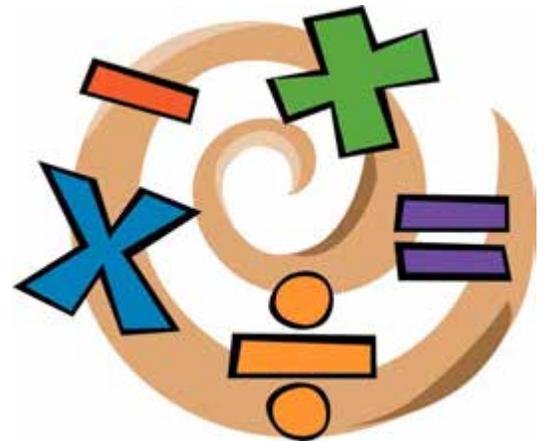
1 February 2017



## Fund Development Team

From Louisa Young and Lois Linsky

Members should know that the Fund Development Team has been hard at work, and we have had some success. Use of grants is a fairly recent development for LWVBC. The state League has given us grants in the past for those projects that are unique to League and could be adopted by other Leagues in Colorado. They recognize the Boulder County League's work as innovative. We received a \$500 grant from the Boulder County Bar Association to help fund Voter Service activities, especially the local ballot issue pamphlets. The Bar Association is interested in educating people about the law, and the pamphlets are law in their incipience. Also, we recently received a \$1000 grant from the Community



Foundation to fund our efforts to reach out to Latinos and minorities. That money will buy table space at events attractive to Latinos and enable us to start some initiatives building on the recruiting success we have had in recent months. The Foundation recognizes the beneficial influence of our non-partisan training ground for activists. We have done some preliminary work on yet another new grant and may pursue others in the near future. These grants are generally one-time infusions of money that help us launch programs. It will be up to us to fund the ongoing efforts.

In addition to grants, we have managed some more traditional fundraisers. Sale of bulbs in the Spring has done well, bringing in over \$1000. Some of that money comes from neighbors and friends of Leaguers, so it isn't just coming from members. Also, we sold tickets to the Longmont Rotary Duck Race in connection with the annual Rhythm on the River event. That was good, clean fun and surprisingly lucrative. All this money goes into our treasury and is used for operating expenses, the largest of which is Per Member Payments to national and state Leagues.

Occasionally we have events, and another is under consideration for late Spring/early Summer. We appreciate the support our members give to all of these efforts. Volunteer hours are critical to League's success, but sometimes there is no substitute for cash.



Remember to reload your grocery card. Every time you do, the League gets money !! Email [Louisa Young](mailto:Louisa.Young) for details.





# The Boulder County Voter

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## Drinks & Dialogue: How Can We Eliminate the Electoral College?

From Peggy Leech

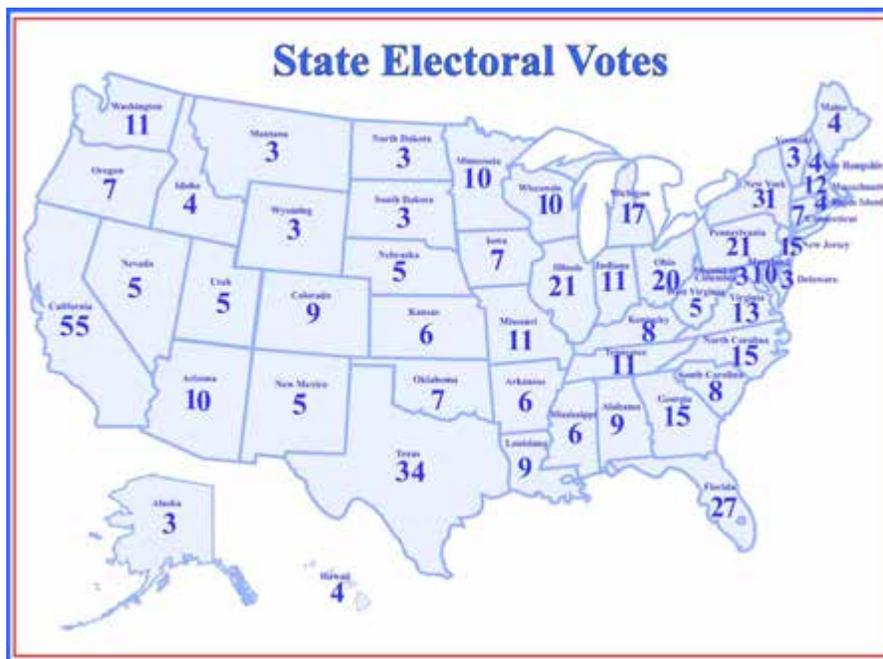
As a part of the League's Making Democracy Work campaign, the Electoral College will be discussed at Drinks & Dialogue, a new program hosted by the League of Women Voters of Boulder County. The Electoral College has been under increased scrutiny following the recent presidential election. Why do we have the Electoral College? Is it time to abolish it? What do YOU need to know about it? The public is invited to participate in the dialogue, from 5:30-6:30 p.m., Monday, February 6, at the St Vrain Cidery, 350 Terry St., Suite 130 (east side of building), Longmont.

The dialogue about the Electoral College will be opened with comments from Nancy Crow, President-Elect of the state League, and facilitated by League members. Click here to read [Nancy Crow's report on the Electoral College and the League's position](#). Drinks & Dialogue provides an opportunity for people to share opinions and ideas, ask questions and become more aware of local, state and national issues and the options for making change.

There's no cost to participate, and refreshments are available to buy.

Drinks & Dialogue is offered for one hour starting at 5:30 p.m. on various dates around the county, with local, state, and national political topics.

Inquiries may be directed to Peggy Leech, 303-666-4720, or email at [pegleech@aol.com](mailto:pegleech@aol.com).



From: "[Electoral Engineering](#)", Conall Cahill, University College Dublin University Observer

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## Updates from the Events Team



From Peggy Leech

The LWVBC Events Team has been very busy over the last 2 months.

In early December, we tried a Holiday Wine and Cheese Party at the Firehouse Art Center in Longmont. It was a great success! Everyone had fun and networked with members and guests as we socialized and celebrated all the great work our League did during the election season. We had 33 LWVBC members and 21 guests, and many donations, including wine, food, and door prizes. Thank you to all who helped and made donations.



*LWVBC Holiday Wine & Cheese Party, Firehouse Art Center, Longmont, 2 December 2016.*

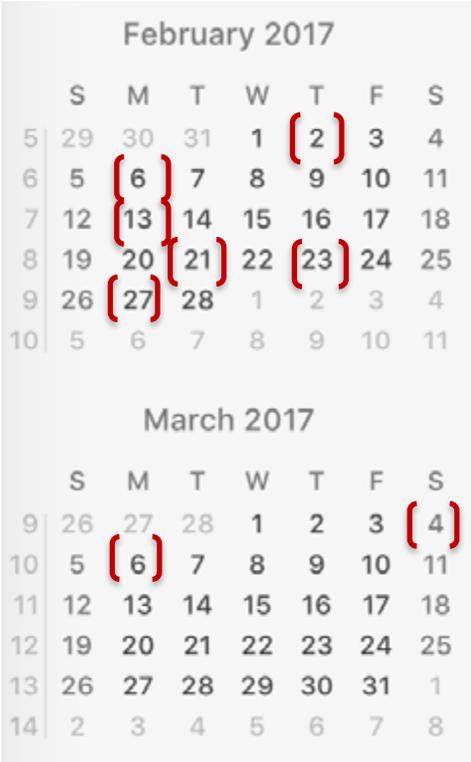
We have also been working very hard to bring events to the community with the theme of “Making Democracy Work for All”. We will be discussing the topics of the Electoral College (February 6 in Longmont), Redistricting (March 6 in Louisville), and Voter Suppression (April 3 in Boulder). This is the debut of our new series called “Drinks and Dialogue”. These will be one-hour sessions which provide an opportunity for people to share opinions and ideas, ask questions, and become more aware of issues and the options for making change.

We will sponsor three screenings of the film “I Voted?”, a nonpartisan documentary that raises questions about our voting processes around the country. It premiered at the Tribeca film festival in 2016. The screenings are on February 13 (Longmont), March 23 (Lafayette), and May 11 (Boulder).

Related to the program planning meetings in January, we have been working with the Voting Methods Team on Community Conversations about different kinds of voting methods. Entitled “More Choices for Voters”, Part 1 will be on February 2, and Part 2 will be on February 21. Both events will be held at the Lafayette Library and will feature speakers who are experts on different voting methods. We will also have 2 consensus meetings on Voting Methods: February 23 (FRCC, Longmont) and February 27 (Frasier).

In addition, we have scheduled the Meet Your Legislators event at BVSD for the morning of March 4.

Members of the team are: Shiquita Yarbrough, Marion Read, Diana Barney, Ruth Stemler, and Peggy Leech. If anyone else is interested in helping with this team, please contact Peggy Leech. Stay tuned to our website for more information.



### LWVBC Calendar

- 2 February      Community Conversation: More Choices for Voters (Pt 1)
- 6 February      Drinks & Dialogue: Electoral College
- 13 February     “I Voted?” – film screening
- 21 February     Community Conversation: More Choices for Voters (Pt 2)
- 23 February     Voting Methods Consensus Meeting
- 27 February     Voting Methods Consensus Meeting
- 4 March          Meet Your Legislators
- 6 March          Drinks & Dialogue: Redistricting

League of Women Voters of Boulder County  
P.O. Box 21274  
Boulder CO 80308