

# The Boulder County Voter

August 2017



## League Health Care Team Joins Statewide Project on Mental Health

The League of Women Voters supports the right and need for comprehensive health care, including mental health care. Our League of Women Voters of Boulder County (LWVBC) Health Care Team is engaged in a new opportunity to understand and address mental health issues through a statewide project called “Let’s Talk Colorado.”

“Let’s Talk Colorado is a social marketing campaign designed to reduce the negatives around mental health treatment so that people who need this care will access it,” said LWVBC Health Team Leader Mary Anna Dunn.

Our League is one of several sponsors in the coalition, which also includes the Boulder County Public Health Department, from whom we learned about the initiative.



League’s involvement in the project stems from our focus on access to health care for all people. Let’s Talk helps us reduce the stigma of mental illness, e.g. helping us understand the most effective language and approaches with people struggling with mental illness. The project is developing resources (including video, social media content, posters, flyer) to help patients, medical providers and the general public.

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



<https://instagram.com/lwvbc>

### August Events Calendar

Visit <http://lwvbc.org> for details

Aug 3: [Campaign Finance Reform Team Meeting](#)

Aug 13: [Social Policy Team Meeting](#)

Aug 20: [Nineteenth Amendment Anniversary Party](#)

Aug 22: [Health Care Team Meeting](#)

Aug 26: [Longmont Farmer's Market Voter Registration](#)

Aug 28: [Drinks & Dialogue: Climate Culture Collaborative?](#)

## President's Letter

By Peggy Leech, 2017-18 LWVBC President

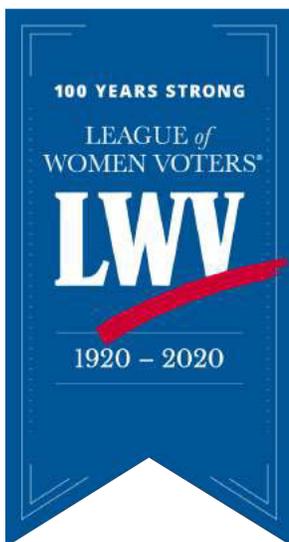
As the League of Women Voters approaches its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2020, leaders from the League of Women Voters of Boulder County (LWVBC) have been planning for our 2017-18 activities to inspire civic engagement and strengthen democracy in our community, as part of our five-year strategic plan that takes us to 2020.

Last month, LWVBC leaders met for a planning retreat focused on "Making Democracy Work for All", which provided the main strategic framework for our plans. **Making Democracy Work for All** is a national and state campaign which focuses on Voter Mobilization, Voter Protection, and Money in Politics. It also includes looking at other opportunities to re-enfranchise voters, such as redistricting reform, alternate voting methods, Electoral College reform, and providing a voice for under-represented people.



Peggy with her dogs, Zoey and Fargo

As you may know, the League of Women Voters was founded in the same year as the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, in which women gained the right to vote. One of our greatest strengths as an organization is that we are non-partisan. The League's non-partisanship is providing opportunities to attract new members and to collaborate with other groups working toward solutions for our community, state, and nation. Our non-partisan, position-based approach to advocacy provides new ways for people to ACT to help solve problems on issues we care about. As such, we've stepped up our Community Engagement activities as a major organizational priority, on critical issues like those mentioned above.



We continue our tradition of providing Voter Service for the community, including through voter registration drives, candidate forums for local/school board elections in Boulder County, and information on various ballot issues. We are also planning various events, such as Drinks and Dialogues, Community Conversations, and member meetings such as the Fall Kick-off on September 23. These types of events proved to be quite popular last year, and they are an opportunity to provide education and action in the community. Stay tuned!

I joined the League in 2004, and I have gained valuable experience in leadership, advocacy, and issues facing our community. I am truly honored to now serve as President for such an incredible organization. I look forward to working with LWVBC leaders, community leaders, and all of you to preserve and protect a democratic process that works for everyone in our community.

Need to contact Peggy? You can reach her by email at [president@lwvbc.org](mailto:president@lwvbc.org).

## Volunteer Opportunities

The success of our League depends on many wonderful volunteers who contribute their time and energy to educate and engage our members and other local groups and residents in a wide range of activities. What can you do to help?

### Voter Registration Drive Volunteer Slots

This summer and fall, LWVBC continues its tradition of tabling at public events to register voters and share information about LWV issues and activities. Voter Registration Drive (VRD) tabling is a great way to serve our community and recruit new supporters and members. To volunteer, email Susan Saunders at [okbeeb@gmail.com](mailto:okbeeb@gmail.com) or sign-up on our website (For members, click on the “Get to Know Us” tab, then go to the Volunteering page).

**Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>** Longmont Farmers Mkt  
Voter Registration Drive 7 AM – 1:15 PM

**Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup>** Boulder Farmers Mkt  
Voter Registration Drive 7 AM – 2:15 PM

**Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>** Longmont Farmers Mkt  
Voter Registration Drive 7 AM – 1:15 PM



*“Too often people in my generation don’t care about voting, so it’s important to remind us. I’m a League member and volunteer because I think it’s important to make sure everyone can participate in democracy.” -- Samantha Allen, LWVBC Member and Voter Registration Drive Volunteer*

### 2017 Voter Guides Need Authors!

The LWVBC prides itself on functioning as a non-partisan source of ballot issue information for voters. How will we provide important information for elections in 2017? The Boulder County Bar Association has awarded the LWVBC funds to print ballot issue pamphlets (voter guides) for this election. *Now, we need researcher/writers to make it happen!*

Anne Norwood is a veteran at this job and will coordinate others for Boulder City issues, but she’s looking for a muni follower to assist with that big issue. We also need people to cover Lafayette, Longmont, Louisville and possibly Superior. You don’t have to live in these towns, you just have to be able to summarize the issue and solicit the pro and con statements from people on either side of the issue. Voters rely heavily on the LWVBC for this information, so they are prepared to “vote smart,” come election day. *Please volunteer by calling or emailing Susan Saunders at [okbeeb@gmail.com](mailto:okbeeb@gmail.com).* Ask questions about the process and decide if you can help.

## Our Democracy is Now for Sale

### Mark your calendars for the First Annual LWVCO “Making Democracy Work!” Conference

By Ruth Stemler, LWVCO Board of Directors

Are you tired of seeing the impacts of millions of dollars on our elections and legislative process? Do you feel overwhelmed at the scope of this problem? Through the League of Women Voters, you have an opportunity to get informed, and get active to stop the negative influence of money on our democratic system.

For years, our LWV of Boulder County (LWVBC) Campaign Finance Reform Team has worked tirelessly to study and educate Boulder County residents on the ways in which money from a small number of wealthy people influences elections and legislation. Now, at the upcoming LWV of Colorado (LWVCO) conference, “Making Democracy Work!”, we’re deepening our understanding of money in politics, and sharing our League’s leadership at the state level.

Conference participants will hear from campaign finance experts; join roundtable discussion groups; and discuss ways we can take action for elections that are free of undue influence.

Conference speakers will include national expert Lisa Graves, Executive Director of the Center for Media and Democracy, who will inform us on what happened in Wisconsin and what may happen in Colorado when individuals of wealth use their resources to affect elections. Common Cause will present their research on Money in Politics. And we’ll learn how court rulings have undermined our democracy, from a Colorado State University Law professor.

Look for notices from LWVCO soon, and sign up on their website to attend. Together, our local Leagues in Colorado, along with our partner organizations, can work toward solutions to the problem of money in politics, that benefit everyone.

**Making Democracy  
Work! Conference**  
(formerly League Day)

**September 16, 2017  
8:30 am – 3:30 pm  
Denver, Colorado**

***It’s time for League  
members to unite  
for action on  
Money in Politics!***



Want to learn more? Check out the LWVBC Campaign Finance Reform Team video, “Let’s Talk...Money In Politics” and other great materials on our website at <http://lwvbc.org/>.

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**“We do not have a democracy when the people's representatives do not work for the benefit of the people.”**

– Shirley Jin, LWVBC Campaign Finance Reform Team Leader

## LWV Website – Let’s Use It!

*A Memo from our Membership Team: Ruth Stemler, Debby Vink, Cindy Outlaw, Judy White, Shiquita Yarbrough and Marion Read*

LWVBC has a terrific, interactive website with many features that make online engagement a breeze. Our Membership Team encourages local League members to get comfortable with these features. Here are some reminders:

- Click on the secure Member Login section, with the login and password that was emailed to you.
- If you don't know/remember your password, click on "Password Assistance." Your login is your first name initial joined to your last name (for example: rstemler).
- Click on the red arrow by your name and complete your profile. We’d like to know all about you!
- Download a picture of yourself. We want to see your smiling face!
- Make payments online, via the website, for event fees, dues, or donations. Online payments are secure, save LWV valuable volunteer time, and save you a stamp and envelope. As always, the decision is yours.

*Still want more help navigating and using the LWVBC website? Go to: [lwvbc.org](http://lwvbc.org), log-in, go to the member info pull-down menu, and click on “surveys” to let us know what training you need! Membership Leader Ruth Stemler can be reached at [membership@lwvbc.org](mailto:membership@lwvbc.org).*



## Let’s Talk Colorado (cont’d from page 1)

How does the Let’s Talk project relate to our civic engagement goals? LWVBC President Peggy Leech said, “Democracy needs to work for the underserved as well as anyone else. Increasing awareness of mental illness, among our League members and in our community, can help us better advocate for comprehensive health care and assist people struggling with mental illness, to engage in the democratic process.”

According to Dunn, Let’s Talk stresses that there are no right or wrong words to use when talking to someone struggling with mental illness. Instead, the campaign emphasizes being “present” when talking with someone with mental illness and to consider offering tangible, specific help. For example, instead of asking, “What can I do to help?” say, “I’d like to bring you dinner tonight. I’ll drop it off at 5 pm. Will you be home then?” This kind of insight can be helpful as we do our work to engage community members in civic engagement events, voting, and the like.

To learn more, go to [LetsTalkCO.org](http://LetsTalkCO.org), and watch for Let’s Talk Colorado posters in Spanish and English at upcoming League gatherings.

## LWVBC Extravaganza Event Success

What's the best way to celebrate LWVBC obtaining our non-profit tax exemption status? With a party, of course! Around 40 LWV members and guests gathered at Ollin Farms in June for an "Exemption Extravaganza" to mark the milestone. Attendees were treated with a hay ride to a creek-side tent where music, drinks and food awaited (specially prepared by Ollin Farms chefs with the Farm's organic produce).



Our guest speaker, Chris Barge of the Community Foundation of Boulder (one of our funders), shared philanthropy statistics and trends in Boulder County. He noted that with LWVBC's tax-exempt status and non-partisan mission, we have good opportunities to raise funds for our education, voter engagement and advocacy work. We raised \$1,500 from the event; an exciting way to end our fiscal year and prepare for our 2017-18 year of action!

Many thanks to everyone who helped make the event a success, especially Lois and Jeffrey Linsky, and Ruth Stemler.

**League 2017 Kick-Off Meeting on September 23!** Every year, LWVBC has a kick-off meeting in the fall, for members and potential new members to learn about our activities for the year and how you can join in. This year, the meeting will be on **Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 10:30 – 12 noon** at the Louisville Public Library. Our featured speakers will address "youth engagement." You won't want to miss it!

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