

The Boulder County Voter

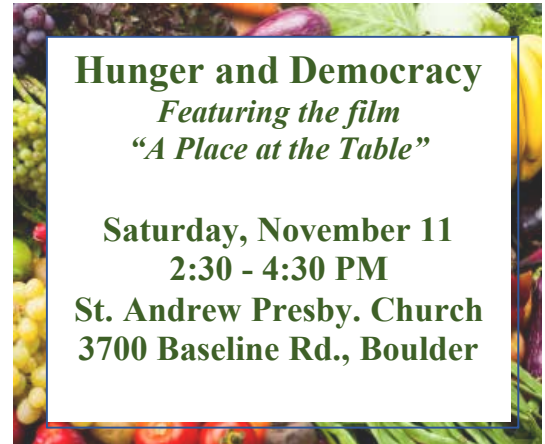


League of Women Voters of Boulder County * November 2017

Voting While Hungry: Food Insecurity and Democracy

by Annie Lessem and Denice Walker

In the current political climate, thoughts of how to safeguard American democracy tend to focus on how to ensure that the right to vote is upheld for all citizens, removing big money in politics, addressing gerrymandering and redistricting policies and, perhaps most significantly, discussions of how to prevent voter suppression. The focus can also include conversations about improving Americans' understanding of civics and how the basic processes of democracy work in our country, and encouraging a wider diversity of Americans to run for office. But what is lost, or overlooked, in this emphasis on access and process?



In keeping with the League of Women Voters' history of expanding our understanding of how to make democracy more receptive and responsive to the needs of all Americans—of “making democracy work for all”—the LWVBC’s Social Policy Team is working to insert the issue of food security into this conversation. Specifically, we seek to broaden our thinking about voter suppression to include issues like food security, that could “suppress” voter participation.

Also in this Issue:

<i>President's Letter</i>	2
<i>Immigration Partnership</i>	3
<i>Membership Announcements</i>	4
<i>Voter Service Volunteers</i>	5
<i>Money in Politics</i>	6
<i>Fundraising Opportunities</i>	7-8



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What is “food security” and how does it relate to making democracy work for all? Food security, as defined by the United States Department of Agriculture, means access by all people, at all times, to enough food for an active, healthy life and includes at a minimum: (a) the ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods and (b) the assured ability to acquire acceptable food in socially acceptable ways. (Continued on page 7)

November Events Calendar

November 5: [Social Policy Team](#)

November 11: [Hunger and Democracy Part 1](#)

November 14: [Dine-Out Fundraiser](#)

November 18: [Hunger and Democracy Part 2](#)

November 21: [Dine-Out Fundraiser](#)

President's Letter: Local Action on Global-Level Issues

This has been a busy election season for the League and its members. We facilitated 5 candidate forums, which were very successful and well-attended. We also conducted our last voter registration drives and ballot issue presentations in October. A big thank you goes out to all of the volunteers who helped with these election activities!

October has been an interesting month to be President of the League of Women Voters of Boulder County. In addition to preparing for the November 7 election and tracking campaign finance issues in local races, I've had the privilege to represent LWVBC on important international issues related to women and democracy.

For example, on October 24th, I spoke (along with LWVBC member and intern Rossanna Longo Better) on behalf of LWVBC to the Boulder City Council in favor of a resolution to support the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). CEDAW is basically a bill of rights for women around the world, and LWVUS has long supported it. The original resolution was passed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, and ratified by all but 6 countries (the U.S. is one of the 6 countries that has not ratified). The resolution passed, thanks to major efforts by the "Cities for CEDAW" campaign. Our LWVBC Board voted to support "Cities for CEDAW" in 2016, and the cities of Louisville and Lafayette have recently passed similar resolutions.



Peggy Leech with the Open World Program participants.

It was also my privilege to represent LWVBC with young people from Ukraine, who were visiting the area thanks to the Longmont Rotary and the Open World program. They were interested in learning about how nonprofits in the U.S. engage with youth in their communities to help promote civic education. It was a very interesting experience, dealing with a translator and making the mistake of mentioning the Electoral College...which brought about a lot of questions about this confusing process!

I thank you all for the opportunity to represent such a fine organization, and look forward to seeing you at LWVBC events lined up for November.

To reach LWVBC President Peggy Leech, you can email her at president@lwvbc.org

Would you like help with our new website? Our webmasters Deborah Hayes and Rionda Osman have loaded our website with valuable resources! If you'd like some help navigating the site, please notify Ruth Stemler, rjstemler@gmail.com, and we will try to schedule some assistance.

Immigration: League Partnerships on Policy Advocacy

LWVBC has formed and fostered partnerships with many organizations and networks over the years, on a wide range of issues, to build more power for advocacy on policies that align with our positions, and to support the capacity of other groups who share our vision for a strong democracy. One recent example of this partnership, is t LWVBC’s new membership in the [Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition](#) (CIRC). Participation in CIRC enables League members to take action for immigrant rights policies alongside people most directly affected by these policies, in Boulder County and across the state.

On October 13-15 CIRC held its annual Assembly, to which our intern Rossanna Longo Better was a LWVBC representative. Rossanna was able to attend workshops, interview CIRC leaders and members as part of her joint internship with LWVBC and KGNU; and, with input from our LWVBC President and Social Policy Team leaders, vote on what issues should be CIRC priorities in the coming year. “I was proud to represent LWVBC at this Assembly,” said Rossanna. “CIRC is a perfect ally for League on immigration issues.”



Youth leaders and participants at the CIRC Assembly

Two key priorities that arose from the Assembly, are 1) advocating for proper funding and implementation of SB251, for a more efficient process for immigrants to obtain drivers’ licenses or other legal identification, which is key to their productive engagement in communities; and 2) promoting the Values Act, a bill that passed in California to prevent state and local funds for deportations that would separate families, or otherwise divide state residents on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and the like. Both of these options, says LWVBC President Peggy Leech, are aligned with our LWV national position on immigration. LWVBC also supports the Dream Act, which we will continue to track at the federal level.

If you are interested in getting involved in [LWVBC’s Social Policy Team](#) to help share information about immigration with our members and enable us to take action at the state and federal level with CIRC and other partner groups, contact Social Policy Team Leader Annie Lessem at quixotic.meow@gmail.com or by phone at [720-263-2201](tel:720-263-2201).

We're Counting On You: Renew your League Membership Today!

LWVBC's Membership Team wants to remind everyone who hasn't already renewed their membership, to please do so as soon as possible! As of September 30th, 70+ members have not renewed by paying annual dues. **If you were one of those folks, please renew today!**

Membership in LWV means you've joined thousands of women and men of all ages, all over the U.S., to speak with one voice on critical policy issues at all levels of government. You help lift up the value of thoughtful, well-researched analysis that rises above party politics and encourage civic engagement among all people Boulder County, and our state.



Introducing LWV to young voters and potential members at Front Range Community College.

Your membership is very important to us! If your membership was due on 9/30/17, you have already received several email and phone renewal reminders. You'll also be receiving a letter from LWVBC in mid-November that is a **final notice**.

You can easily renew your membership online at <http://lwvbc.org> or place a check in the mail to PO Box 21274, Boulder, CO 80308.

If you have questions, please call Membership Team Leader Ruth Stemler at [303.916.1519](tel:303.916.1519).

Where is my Member Handbook and Directory, you may ask? They are on the website, easy to access online!

Just click on the blue box that says "Member Login" in the upper right corner of our LWVBC website homepage.

Then, click on "Member Info," choose the "LWVBC Handbook" or "Member Contact List" options to get what you need. The Handbook and Directory will be updated as necessary, throughout the year.

If you haven't been getting LWVBC emails, please check to make sure the messages are not in your "junk" or "spam" folder.

Email is used most commonly now, to communicate with members about upcoming events, action alerts, membership notifications, and distribution of this newsletter!

Email enables us to use our volunteer time most efficiently, too. If you have concerns, contact Ruth as noted above.

Voter Services: Election Season Wrap-Up

by Susan Saunders

Voter Service activities for the LWVBC in 2017 have been numerous and varied. Following the great framework for voter registration drives (VRDs), created by Jeanine Pow, we conducted VRDs in high schools, farmers' markets, community colleges, festivals and senior residences. Over 30 volunteers took the training, signed up for the events and took care of the registration needs of many citizens. Adding to our service as registrars, the events were transformed into opportunities to educate the public about LWVBC positions and advocacy.



Our candidate forum expertise carried us through events for the Boulder Valley School District, the cities of Boulder, Lafayette, Longmont and Broomfield, which came seeking our help with their first forum. Kudos to Liz Nick for steering so many events to successful conclusions, including two on the same night. Very special thanks to our Perspectiva Forum partners Rebecca Chavez, Laura Zavala, Jennifer Diaz-Leon, Victor Hernandez, Louie Lopez, Manuela Sifuentes and Mardi Moore. Appreciation was expressed at each forum for the League's ability to manage the large numbers of candidates and to keep things civil; "the best forum we've been in this fall," said more than one candidate.

For their work as ballot issue writers and presenters, my hat's off to Anne Norwood for steadfastly covering Boulder and this year's 6 ballot measures and to our writers, Holly Monkman, Brian Long, Carolyn Elliott, and Grace Peng who each covered several ballot issues. Peggy Leech and Diana Haskell joined the writers as they also stepped up to make presentations to groups in each city and some senior residences, and Diana ably managed the vote411 website.

Thanks to ALL our fabulous volunteers (with sincere apologies to anyone we've forgotten)!

Samantha Allen	JoAnne Hyde	Lori Peddie
Jennifer Bales	Shirley Jin	Josephine Porter
Siobhan Bales-Heisterkamp	Claudia Johnson	Jeanine Pow
Catherine Brown	Angie Layton	Joy Reich
Mark Brown	Peggy Leech	Molly Saunders
Kristi Parker Celico	Julie Leonard	Susan Saunders
Elizabeth Crowe	Annie Lessem	Deb Smith
Jane Daniels	Pat Long	Ruth Stemler
Martha Dever	Rossanna Longo Better	Walter Szymanski
Carolyn Elliott	Liz Marr	Sarah Trimmer
Kay Forsythe	Jane Massie	Frank and Pat Venturo
Pay Fridland	Sara Michl	Debby Vink
Leona Furnari	Gretchen Minney	JoAnn and Milan Vondracek
Anne Hallowell	Donella Novak	Judy White
Donna Hamilton	Liz Nick	Mary Ann Wilner
Joan Hemm	Ann O'Brien	Shiquita Yarbrough
Anne Hooker	Marcelle Partridge	Louisa Young

Money in Politics: Local Campaign Finance Concerns



Think dark money and campaign finance issues are only important on the national level? Think again! This past month, community residents and groups have raised concerns about campaign finance activities including organizations' contributions and reporting processes, that may be violating the law, or the spirit of the financing law in the City of Boulder; questionable ties between oil and gas companies and Broomfield candidates; and the benefits of public transparency on spending in Longmont.

The League of Women Voters of Boulder County (LWVBC) is grateful to the local press for focusing on the appearance of big money in local politics, including in Boulder, Longmont and Broomfield. The LWVBC takes particular interest in campaign finance regulations, in part because the League participated in the initial effort to publicly finance City of Boulder elections. The League believes that sound, enforceable election laws make for a vital and effective democracy.

Transparency in campaign financing and spending, is important for fair elections. And, information on campaign funding and spending by candidates in Colorado is at your fingertips! Visit the Colorado Secretary of State's [TRACER website](#), and each city government website for election information including filing and reports, violations and complaints. And visit the LWVBC's [Campaign Finance Reform site](#) for a wide array of non-partisan information, analysis, and action opportunities.

Listen to this interview with Lisa Graves, Center for Media and Democracy, about the state impacts from "dark money" in Colorado, from LWVBC and KGNU Intern Rossanna Longo Better: <http://news.kgnu.org/2017/09/making-democracy-work-money-in-politics/>

LWVBC Annual Holiday Party: December 8th in Louisville

Mark your calendars for December 8, for our annual holiday wine and cheese social! We'll celebrate the season from 6 - 8 pm, at the Louisville Center for the Arts. The cost will be \$30 for members. Bring one or two friends who are *potential members* for LWVBC; there will be no charge for your guests. Holiday music, delicious foods, wine and non-alcoholic beverages and catch up with League friends. *Sign up on the website, today!*

Dine Out to Support League!

Make reservations now to dine at Boulder County restaurants, to have your meal generate funds for League! Through our new partnership with GroupRaise, we select participating restaurants and work to get people there to eat on the assigned day. Here's how it works: make a reservation with the links below and when you go to the restaurant, identify yourself as with the League and enjoy your meal! The restaurant will send a check to the League for an agreed-upon percentage of the total League-associated tickets for the day.

Tuesday, November 14 at California Pizza Kitchen in the 29th Street Mall in Boulder. You can go any time between 11 am and 9 pm. In addition to pizza, yummy salads and other healthy foods are available. Help make this a success. We need a minimum number of 20 people, and reservations need to be made by November 11th. Here is the link: <https://www.groupraise.com/events/42664>



Tuesday, November 21 at Samples World Bistro, 370 Main Street in Longmont. Again, you can go any time between 11am and 9 pm. We need a minimum number of 20 people, and reservations need to be made by November 18th. Here is the link: <https://www.groupraise.com/events/426>



Voting While Hungry – Continued from Page 1

Piya Mahtaney, author on food and globalization, poses this question on the relationship between food security and democracy: “Ask yourself a simple question: can those who remain hungry and undernourished be described as free?” To reframe this questions, consider how (and why) it is that we expect a single mom with a child and a minimum-wage job to find the time and energy to be a regular participant in the voting process, when she is struggling day-to-day to make her paycheck cover her and her child's basic needs – including good, nutritious food. How is a father working two jobs in order to keep a roof over his family's head and food on the table, going to find the time and energy to vote? How would any of us in the same situation find the time, the energy or even the desire to exercise our democratic rights? How can we expect anyone to vote on an empty stomach?

Our focus on this issue, then is to address the reality of food security in Boulder County and to investigate the range of policies that impact the availability of affordable and nutritionally appropriate food for our fellow community members. What are the systemic issues that block access by members of our community to healthy, nutritious and affordable food?

Join us for two meetings to take on this issue. We will be showing the movie *A Place at the Table* at 2:30 on Saturday, November 11 at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 3700 Baseline Rd., Boulder. One week later, on Saturday, November 18th we will be holding a Community Conversation at 2:30, also at St. Andrews. This event will include a panel of experts on food security issues and policies in Boulder, in Colorado and in the United States, and will address questions that arose from the movie. ****

Building A Foundation: A Great Start to Our Fundraising Campaign

Our Campaign to Build a Foundation started off with immediate success. We approached the following members, who agreed to pledge toward our Campaign. Thanks to these generous members, we are well on our way to reaching our goal of \$30,000 for a part-time administrative assistant.

Anonymous (3)
Neil and Judy Bicknell
Janet Buchanan
Diana and Hugh Haskell
Jeannette Hillery
Frieda Holley
Patricia Johnson
Peggy Leech

Annie Lessem
Pat and Brian Long
Kay Palmer Marsh
Louisa and Bob Matthias
Sara Michl
Elizabeth Nick
Jeanine Pow
Marion Read

Judy Reid and Rick Collins
Marlys Robertson
David and Ruth Stemler
Deborah Vink
Mary Ann Wilner
Louisa Young

In October, we mailed a letter and pledge form to our remaining members, and we are already starting to receive pledges. These pledges will be acknowledged in a future edition of the Voter, and hopefully we can then announce that we have reached our goal. Thank you!



Spring Flower Bulbs are in!

Remember the bulb sales promotion form last Spring, to help raise money for LWVBC? You might have forgot you even ordered them, but they are in and ready to be picked up. Fall is the time to plant, so delivery is timely. If you were expecting some, and haven't seen them yet, please call your salesperson or give Louisa Young a call (303-444-6428).

Many thanks to Lois Linsky for managing this project!

Correction notice from the Voter Editor: In the October 2017 article on voting methods, the acronym RCV is not "Ranked Choice Voting" but rather "Real Choice Voting." My apologies to the Voting Methods Team for this error.

League of Women Voters of Boulder County
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