

# The Boulder County Voter

League of Women Voters of Boulder County \* February 2018



## Hunger and Democracy: Film and Discussion in Longmont

By Annie Lessem and Denice Walker, Social Policy Team Co-Leaders

On **February 3rd, from 12 noon to 2pm**, at the OUR Center in Longmont, our social policy team will lead a Community Conversation on the topic Hunger and Democracy. Speakers from local and statewide nonprofits will provide their perspectives on issues raised in the 2013 film *A Place at the Table* and respond to audience comments and questions. This meeting and our January 27th showing of the film repeat our two November 2017 events in Boulder. If you have not seen *A Place at the Table*, you can check out the public library's DVD or watch the film online via the library website. You can [read a summary here](#). You are also invited to [read about the reality behind eight common misconceptions about hunger](#).

Our February 3rd panelists will include experts from six organizations. The [OUR Center](#) helps move people to self-sufficiency by unifying community resources. [Community Food Share](#), created in 1981 when hunger was beginning to be identified as a community problem, provides a large-scale food bank and mobile pantries, and supplies the OUR Center and other agencies in Boulder and Broomfield Counties. [Longmont Meals on Wheels](#) provides hot, nutritious meals and a daily check to older adults and people with disabilities. [Hunger Free Colorado](#) connects people with nutritious food resources and works for change in systems, policies and social views. [LiveWell Colorado](#) increases access to healthy eating and active living by removing barriers that inequitably and disproportionately affect low-income communities and people of color. [Boulder County Farmers Markets](#) operates producer-only farmers' markets to support, promote and expand local agriculture.

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### February Events Calendar

*Feb 3: Hunger and Democracy – Longmont*

*Feb. 5: Longmont City Council Cand. Forum*

*Feb. 8: Civics Education in BVSD*

*Feb. 19: National Popular Vote Compact*

*Feb. 24: Member Coffee*

*Feb. 27: Health Care Team Meeting*

## **President's Letter: Starting 2018 With a Bang!**

*By Peggy Leech, LWVBC President*

After taking a bit of a hiatus over the holidays, there is much to talk about. We're starting 2018 off with a bang! First, I am so proud of the members of LWVBC. In December, we surpassed our goal of \$30,000 in pledges to fund a part-time Administrative Assistant. This has never happened before in the 14 years I have been in the League. I am so grateful for the support we have received from our members to help with our mission of Making Democracy Work for All. There was some work behind the scenes to accomplish this goal, with the Administrative Assistant Task Force and an Interview Committee—thanks to Ruth Stemler, Louisa Young, Debby Vink, Rionda Osman, and finally the board and our members for supporting this project. We have hired our part-time Administrative Assistant, Mandy Nuku.

We have also been busy with planning (Strategic Planning and Program Planning), and we have a Retreat scheduled for February 10. Elizabeth Crowe and Mary Ann Wilner conducted a strategic planning session with our Issue Team Leaders and Board members in December. And thanks to all of our members who participated in the 2 Program Planning meetings that were held in January. Armed with results from those activities, along with action items being implemented during the year by our Operations Teams, we are ready for a mid-year check-in session on February 10. Amazingly, the League's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday is now only 2 years away, so we all need to keep that in mind as well.

I encourage you to take a look through this month's Voter for goings-on, recent and future, in our League. We also have the LWVUS Convention coming up in late June, so we are looking forward to updates from the national level. They have recently developed a new website, and a new mission/vision/value statement, which is quoted below:

*"Our mission is to Empower Voters and Defend Our Democracy. We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate. The League believes in the power for all of us to create a more perfect democracy!"*

To reach LWVBC President Peggy Leech, you can email her at [president@lwwbc.org](mailto:president@lwwbc.org)



### **Meet Mandy Nuku**

Amanda (Mandy) Nuku is our new Administrative Assistant. She has a degree in Political Science and a Masters in Public Policy from the University of Colorado. She has spent her professional career in the non-profit sector in administrative and development positions. She has been an active volunteer in community service organizations, local elections, and Boulder Valley schools. Mandy is a Colorado native, wife, and active mother of three.

Mandy says, "I am excited to be a part of the work the LWVBC is doing because I have always been passionate about being part of an active, involved citizenry. In an increasingly partisan political landscape it is so valuable to provide a reliable source of information for citizens."

## **Strategic Planning: Working for a Strong Democracy**

*By Elizabeth Crowe, LWVBC Board Member, Strategic Planning Team Member*

LWVBC's Program Planning meetings, annual events held in January, provided opportunities for local members to help shape League activities on the local, state and national levels. This grassroots-style engagement is one of the hallmarks of League, and has been important given other strategic planning processes our local League has been undertaking this fall and winter.

We are currently in "Year Three" of our organizational strategic plan, which focused on our goals for 1) more educated citizens/informed voters; 2) greater civic participation; and 3) government/ policies that making people's lives better.

The strategic planning has primarily been focused on improving our Operational Team functions (e.g. Membership, Events, Fundraising, Communications). But in December 2017 League Issue Team leaders met to discuss and determine ways to make our advocacy work more results- and outcome-focused; to use our unique skills and knowledge not only to research and understand important issues, but also take action for tangible, positive change in our Boulder County community and in our state.



*Mary Ann Wilner facilitates a LWVBC Program Planning Meeting at Frasier Meadows.*

The Program Planning meetings in January were helpful in vetting recommendations from national and state LWV leaders, and our LWVBC Board, that we focus more intently on elements of our "Making Democracy Work for All", rather than take on new studies at this time. The majority of League members who came to the Program Planning meetings endorsed that decision.

Does that focus on Making Democracy Work for All (MDWA, which includes Voting Methods, Redistricting, National Popular Vote, etc.) mean that League is losing its grassroots power? Not at all! There is a lot of room for creativity, flexibility and new ideas within this MDWA framework, at the same time acknowledging that we're simply not able to take on every issue that is important to us and to our community.

On February 10<sup>th</sup>, LWVBC Issue Team and Operational Team members will meet for another phase of strategic planning. Look for an update on this process in the March VOTER. Or, if you'd like to see notes from the Program Planning meetings thus far, please contact Mary Ann Wilner at [mawilner3951@comcast.net](mailto:mawilner3951@comcast.net).

And, if you ever are interested in reading Board meeting minutes – please contact our Board Secretary, Annie Lessem.

## Member Announcements

### Annual Awards

Believe it or not it is time to think about LWVBC Awards for 2018. These awards will be presented at the May Annual Meeting. Our Awards Committee will begin meeting soon. We invite all members to submit suggestions by March 5<sup>th</sup>. Award Committee members are Marion Read, Celeste Landry and Ruth Stemler. Email any of them for more info and/or to make a nomination! The awards categories are:



Mary Ann Wilner, Ruth Stemler, and leaders of Wolf PAC, at our December Holiday Party.

- ❖ Community Partner Award
- ❖ Elected Public Official Award
- ❖ Emerging LWVBC Leader
- ❖ LWVBC Board Member of the Year
- ❖ LWVBC Member of the Year
- ❖ LWVBC Issue Team Leader of the Year
- ❖ LWVBC Team Member of the Year

**Need Website Help?** Club Express (our website provider) offers a helpline: 1-866-HLP-CLUB (1-866-457-2582) 6:30 AM – 5:00 pm MST Email: [support@clubexpress.com](mailto:support@clubexpress.com). Contact the Membership Team if you need help with our “newish” website. In the Member Login Section, you will find your Directory and Handbook.

**February All-Member Coffee.** Join LWVBC for coffee on Saturday Feb 24<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 am – 12 noon, Brewing Market, 2610 Baseline Rd, Boulder. We could discuss the new focus from LWVUS and LWVCO on *Making Democracy Work for All!* LWVCO Redistricting update, new LWVUS Mission/ Values/Vision statement, new LWVBC website challenges or whatever you’d like. Buy a cup of coffee/tea at the counter and join us. Hope to see you there and bring a friend! Our plan is to have coffees in Longmont and Louisville/Lafayette in the coming months.



**Leadership Opportunities: We Need You!** With all kinds of talents and skills percolating around the League, you too can apply your gifts for the good of our mission, making democracy work. We need good people for these positions: Communications, Events Planning, Coordinators for Voter Service functions, and Leadership Development. All who are interested, please contact Carolyn Elliott, chair of the Nominating Committee, at [carolynelliott1515@gmail.com](mailto:carolynelliott1515@gmail.com).

## Caucuses and Primaries and Ballot Issues, OH MY!

By Susan Saunders, VRD Coordinator

2017 may have seemed like the Wicked Witch of the West had unleashed her monkeys on government, but we know we're not in Kansas or Oz. In Colorado, we know voting is what makes democracy work, and 2018 Voter Service starts now! The LWVBC is calling on all volunteers who would consider one or more of the following:

- 1) Working at Candidate Forums – we need members to act as ushers, timers, question screeners, and moderators. Also needed are organizers to learn to arrange rooms, invite candidates, and coordinate volunteers, all under the guidance of our long-term forum organizer, Liz Nick.
- 2) Working at Voter Registration Drives (VRDs) – this requires members to take a 5-minute training on-line, have a good eye for missing information on forms, and a ready smile for the public. Also, we'll be introducing "Pledge to Vote" cards and texting participating voters to encourage completion of their ballots. Jeanine Pow is our VRD coordinator.
- 3) Writing Ballot Issue pamphlets – this involves following potential issues as they arise in your community, obtaining and explaining background material and writing the Pros & Cons. To encourage newer writers and those of you curious about the process, an informal meeting is proposed for mid to late February. Susan Saunders will be hosting current and future writers on a Tuesday night, Wednesday afternoon or Saturday afternoon.

If I only had courage...to get people registered to vote. Thank goodness for the League of Women Voters!



Our first candidate forum is **February 5<sup>th</sup>**, and cities and towns are already discussing potential ballot issues. While Dorothy got her wish, no amount of ruby-slipper clicking will make this happen for the LWVBC. Instead, please click on our directory listings on the website, for phone numbers and emails for Liz Nick, Jeanine Pow, or Susan Saunders to sign up NOW to volunteer! LWVBC members have the brains and the hearts to and the courage to educate and activate Colorado's voters. Let's do it!

### Did You Donate to LWVBC in 2017?

LWVBC is now a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, so contributions and dues paid in 2017 are tax deductible!

Grocery card notice from Safeway: "We strongly suggest/ encourage you spend down the older reloadable tomato cards and acquire a new more secure card from your contact. Our new reloadable cards have higher security measures to prevent gift card fraud."

## **Upcoming Candidate Forums**

*Submitted by Liz Nick, Candidate Forum Coordinator*

LWVBC will host two candidate forums, for special elections in Erie and Longmont. We need volunteers for these events! Please contact Liz Nick to help: [liznickco@gmail.com](mailto:liznickco@gmail.com)

**Longmont City Council, Ward 1**  
**Monday, February 5, 2018**  
**6:15 PM**  
**Skyline High School**  
**600 East Mount View Ave.**  
**Longmont, CO 80504**

**Erie Board of Trustees Forum**  
**Thursday, March 8, 2018**  
**6:30 – 8 PM**  
**Vista Ridge Academy at**  
**3100 Ridge View Drive**  
**Erie, CO 80516**

## **Youth Civic Engagement: Doing Democracy Day**

*By Shiquita Yarbrough, LWVBC's Director of Youth Engagement*

LWVBC is again participating in “Doing Democracy Day,” an annual multi-school event devoted to area students wrestling with local issues, using local leaders as resources.

We can be those resources for these high school students, by sharing our expertise with students on such topics as: Homelessness and Mental Health; Zero Net Carbon; RTD and Transportation Issues; Opioid Abuse; Fake News; Safe School Options; and New Career Centered Education Choices. Here are the details:

**Doing Democracy Day**  
**March 13, 2018**  
**Longmont Civic Center**

Volunteer LWVBC resource people are needed from **9:30-11:30**. Then, from **12:30-2:00**, more volunteers are needed to serve as “American Idol” style judges of the student presentations. We also plan to have a VRD table available during the lunch with kids. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Shiquita Yarbrough, LWVBC’s Director of Youth Engagement, at [yar2770@gmail.com](mailto:yar2770@gmail.com).

## **Wonder Woman and the “Justice League”**

Girls and women of all ages know Wonder Woman, the lone female fighting for justice in a male-dominated superhero world. Inspired by the “wonder women” right here in Boulder County, LWVBC Intern Rossanna Longo Better donned her WW costume last December to present her fall semester project, from her joint internship with LWVBC and KGNU. Check out Rossanna’s interviews with League members and our community partners, on the LWVBC Website, under [News: LWV on KGNU](#).



## **Voting Methods Team Update**

*by Celeste Landry, Voting Methods Team*

Over the last couple of months, our Voting Methods Team has been:

- learning about single transferable vote (STV), a ranked voting multi-winner method used in Cambridge, MA municipal elections and from 1917-1947 to elect Boulder City Council.
- talking to election administrators and activists in Boulder County, Broomfield and Denver about the process to institute a better voting method in local elections.
- talking to LWV Oregon and LWV Maine about highlighting better voting methods at the LWVUS convention.
- attending a forum with the Denver Elections Office as they pursue ranked voting for 2023
- checking out the storyboard video project that a CU class made for our group.

And, we will continue:

- learning about risk-limiting audits -- the statistical way to conduct post-election audits that Colorado piloted in 2017 and team member Neal McBurnett has been working on for years.
- keeping an eye on this year's Boulder County Clerk election
- supporting methods which promote proportional representation (PR) such as STV

Multi-winner, at-large districts can solve the gerrymandering problem and promote proportional representation. Colorado has dueling proposals about redistricting going through the citizen initiative process right now. Neither focuses on multi-winner districts, but the Fair Representation Act, House Resolution 3057, proposes such a solution at the federal level.

Want to learn more? Join us! Come for a single event or jump right in with research, education or activism. Visit our [Voting Methods Team webpage](#): or go to [lwwbc.org](http://lwwbc.org) then click on Teams at Work then click on Voting Methods Team.



LWVBC's Voting Methods display.

### **Plurality Voting in Single-Winner Elections with 3 or More Candidates**

What's the challenge? Because you can only show your support for one candidate....

1) You can't express your preferences as clearly as in other voting methods.

2) You might be inclined to vote for a candidate who is not your favorite, or you might decide to just stay home.

3) Two good candidates can split the vote and result in the election of a third, less desirable candidate.

*“The plurality vote is pretty much the worst voting system there is.”  
– UC-Irvine mathematician Donald Saari*

**Development News** *by Louisa Young, Development Team*

Former LWVUS President, Elisabeth McNamara, has been invited to participate in the Conference on World Affairs, so she will be in Boulder the week of April 9-13. She has graciously offered to spend one of those evenings with us and to speak to us for a fundraiser.

If you have never heard Elisabeth speak, you are in for a treat. She is a striking, tall redhead, speaks with a slight southern accent (from Atlanta), and she used to be a prosecutor. She is a very polished speaker with a lot to say on behalf of the League of Women Voters. There will be an announcement in the next Voter with more details, but, for now, SAVE THE DATE!

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**April 11, 2018**  
**6 to 8 pm**  
**Element Bistro**  
**6315 Lookout Rd.**  
**(Gunbarrel)**

**Thanks to All Our Supporters!** *by Peggy Leech, President*

Good News! We exceeded our goal of \$30,000 to fund the first 2 years of an Administrative Assistant! We are still accepting donations to our campaign. Any donations to this campaign will go toward funding our Administrative Assistant even beyond the 2 years originally envisioned.

Our Campaign to Build a Foundation started off with immediate success, and we acknowledged many of our donors in the November Voter. Since then, we have received more pledges from:

Annette Brant  
Elizabeth Crowe  
Joyce Davies  
John & Mary Anna Dunn  
Karlene Ferguson  
Ann Garstang  
Mickey Greenberg  
Barbara Hancock  
Caroline Himes  
Robyn Landry

Mary Leech  
Sarah Levison  
Lois and Jeffrey Linsky  
Marky Lloyd  
Sharon Malloy  
Joan McConkey  
Holly Monkman  
Anne Norwood  
Rionda Osman  
Cindy Outlaw

Lori Peddie  
Kay Pratt  
Beatriz Roederer  
Ceal Ruffing  
Elizabeth Schmidt  
Elaine Smith/Jonathan  
Roberts  
Joanne Stark  
Judy White  
Betty Wickstrom

We asked, and you delivered, in a period of less than 4 months! This is a huge milestone for our League. Thank you to all who pledged.

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