

# The Boulder County Voter

League of Women Voters of Boulder County \* March 2018



## National Popular Vote: A Better Election Process?

If you've been frustrated with our electoral college process for Presidential elections, you're not alone. On February 26<sup>th</sup>, Linda Sorauf from Colorado National Popular Vote spoke at our Drinks & Dialogue event, about what could be a more fair and inclusive general election process. She explained that the National Popular Vote Compact, if implemented, would ensure the President/Vice President candidates who win the popular vote nationally, will win the election.

Basically, the Compact would allow electors to put their support behind whatever candidate has won the popular vote. Advantages of the Compact could include a focus from candidates on all states as opposed to primarily "swing states;" changing the way advertising funds are spent and which issues candidates address; and preventing calling an election before western states' votes are in. That can translate into higher voting turnout in non-swing states, and in general.

"Popular vote works," said Linda. "This method is used for virtually every election policy except for President and Vice-President. And, if applied to our President and Vice-President it would stand the test of time." Already, 10 states and the District of Columbia (totaling 165 electoral votes) approve of the plan. To go into effect the plan would need support from states with a combined 270 electoral votes. A bill is expected to be introduced again in the Colorado State House.

Attendees left the event better informed and interested in the plan, and holding some hope for change. LWVBC member Jeanine Pow summed up the sentiments of many, saying, "This could light a fire under the 40% of people who typically choose not to vote, because they'll feel as though their vote really does make a difference."

For more info, see [nationalpopularvote.com](http://nationalpopularvote.com).

### Also in this Issue:

<i>President's Letter</i>	2
<i>Member Announcements</i>	3
<i>LWVBC Fundraiser</i>	4
<i>Immigration Reform</i>	5
<i>March Special Events</i>	6
<i>Boulder Election Comm.</i>	7
<i>In Memoriam; Thank You!</i>	8



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Newsletter Editor, Elizabeth Crowe:  
[crowe.elizabethann@gmail.com](mailto:crowe.elizabethann@gmail.com)

### March Events Calendar

*March 8: International Women's Day, and the Town of Erie Candidate Forum*

*March 11: Black Panther Screening, Dialogue*

*March 13: Doing Democracy Day*

*March 22: Big Pharma Viewing, Discussion*

**President's Letter** *By Peggy Leech, LWVBC President*

As we head into spring, momentum is building toward the 2018 election season, and toward participating in democracy. Susan Saunders, our Voter Service Director, provided information about caucuses and primaries on a recent KGNU broadcast. This can be found on our website ([lwvbc.org](http://lwvbc.org)) under News, and there is a separate tab for KGNU. I urge everyone to explore the News section on our website. On the KGNU tab is a complete library of monthly commentaries from LWVBC members, and at the bottom of that page there are links to interviews done by Rossana Longo Better, our Fall semester intern, in conjunction with KGNU.

As you are probably aware, the state League (LWVCO) is working on a strategic plan, and we have received a survey link to obtain feedback from League members around the state. To have a meaningful sample, they need a certain response rate from each League. For Boulder County, the goal is at least 57 responses. As a benefit of the state's survey, each local League will receive results of the survey. So, Boulder County will receive results for our League without even having to conduct its own survey! This is your chance to express your opinions anonymously, and the survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. See page 3 of this newsletter for the link.



Cheers to our members! Shiquita Yarbrough, Ruth Stemler and Carolyn Elliot at the February Drinks & Dialogue.

Congratulations to the Membership Team and to all our members. Official membership increased 15% again over the last 1-year period, and we hope at least some of the increase is the result of our work to make LWVBC relevant and more visible in the community.

I continue to meet with interesting groups each month, and I am always impressed with how many people are working to make our democracy work for all. I recently attended a Voter Education Forum in Aurora, where panelists spoke on various topics related to improving our democracy, such as the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, Proportional Representation, gerrymandering reform, and money in politics. And I was privileged to attend a regional meeting of CIRC (Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition), where the membership is focused on action toward specific legislative goals, at the state and national level. We should all be inspired by and supportive of our young people who are not only participating, but often times leading advocacy on issues like immigration and gun safety.

All this activity generates hope that our democracy can be improved, and that more people will participate.

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

## Member Announcements

### Annual Awards: Have You Made Your Nomination?

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:

- ❖ 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

### LWV Colorado Member Survey

LWVCO Strategic Plan Task Force has asked local League members to participate in a survey, as they need our input. The link to the survey is:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LWVCOFeedbackSurvey2018>

The deadline is March 30, 2018. Questions go to Jill Inman: [jill@joiningvisionandaction.com](mailto:jill@joiningvisionandaction.com)

### Upcoming Candidate Forum

LWVBC will host a candidate forum for the Town of Erie Mayoral and Trustee Candidate election. To help out, please contact Liz Nick: [liznickco@gmail.com](mailto:liznickco@gmail.com)

**Thursday, March 8, 6:30 – 8 PM**

**Vista Ridge Academy at 3100 Ridge View Drive, Erie, CO 80516**



### Take the Mic: LWVBC on KGNU

During the past year, the League has been able to get a monthly [4-minute spot on KGNU](#). We have covered all sorts of topics, which have been well received and are aired and archived by the radio station. Jeannette Hillery (*photo, left*) is continuing to organize this effort and has started 2018 with a spot on the Colorado Legislature in January and the Caucus system in February.

We are planning a March spot on immigration and ICE. If any teams or individuals have a program idea, please contact Jeannette Hillery at [jmhillery915@comcast.net](mailto:jmhillery915@comcast.net) or [303-494-7718](tel:303-494-7718).



**“EMPOWERING VOTERS, DEFENDING DEMOCRACY”**  
**An Intimate Gathering with Elisabeth MacNamara**

**April 11, 2018**  
**6:00 – 8:00 PM**  
**Element Bistro**  
**6315 Lookout Road, Boulder CO**



**Join us for Food, Drinks and Inspiring Dialogue!**

*The League of Women Voters of Boulder County is welcoming former LWV National President Elisabeth MacNamara to speak about the unique role of League in this political climate, and our best opportunities to advocate in our local communities.*



**Supporter levels are Silver (\$45), Gold (\$75) and Platinum (\$100).** This includes appetizers; cash bar available. All individual contributions over \$20 are tax-deductible and will be used to advance LWV Boulder County’s voter service and advocacy work in our local community.

**Please register by Monday, April 2 at <http://lwvbc.org/>**

## Immigration Reform: ICE in Boulder County

By Angie Layton, LWVBC Social Policy Team

The national League of Women Voters (LWVUS) position on immigration supports policies that provide an efficient pathway to citizenship for immigrants, and opposes deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity. To those ends, the LWVBC Social Policy Team has supported several aspects of immigrant rights and was instrumental in having our local League become a member of the Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition (CIRC).

**Research has shown that a vast majority of [immigrants] who are being deported from the United States are individuals who are not guilty of a major crime.**

Through our team's immigration related work, we have become more aware of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency (ICE), which is tasked with detention and deportation of individuals who are not lawfully present in the United States. We learned about some of ICE's questionable actions, and ways to improve the Colorado system through which undocumented individuals could obtain drivers licenses or state-issued photo IDs. We heard that ICE agents sometimes stationed themselves at the CO Department of Motor Vehicles offices that can issue these documents, apparently because they felt this was a good place to find individuals they thought should be deported. CIRC is now advising immigrants of this risk, and of the counter risk that being caught driving without a license is a deportable offense. And, at a recent Hunger & Democracy panel discussion we also were told of ICE agents "hanging out" in the parking lots of food pantries as another means to find undocumented individuals.

In 2016, ICE spent \$3.2 billion deporting people from the US. While exact figures were not certain, private prisons have housed more than 50% of the detainees. The largest such facility is located on Peoria Street in Denver and is operated by GEO Group. Another large facility in Texas is charging the US government \$32 million a year for housing 1000 detainees. When a person is arrested by ICE any possessions they have with them are confiscated and they have only 30 days to request those items be returned to them and often this does not happen for various logistical reasons. Most of the time individuals are sent to their country of origin without any identification documents, which makes integrating back into that country very difficult. Individuals who are deported are not allowed to take a toothbrush, soap, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, or any other personal hygiene items. They can't have shoelaces or belts; only one jacket, 5 pairs of socks, one pair of shoes, two pairs of pants and 5 shirts. During the entire trip, individuals are usually shackled except when eating or using the bathroom. The Deportation Center will not accept any money for the person who is being deported. An individual who accepts deportation and has US citizen children, might never get back to them. **ICE continued on p. 7**



LWVBC sharing voter registration information after naturalization ceremonies.

## March Special Events: Black Panther; International Women's Day



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF BOULDER COUNTY



Maybe you've heard something about Black Panther, the new action movie with a predominantly African American cast and strong female leads, that hits on important issues of race, ethnicity, oppression, and empowerment. And oh yeah, superheroes!

If you haven't seen the movie yet – or even if you have – LWVBC is partnering with Families of Color of Boulder County and the YWCA for a private screening of Black Panther, followed by group discussion. We'll also register voters. See you at the movies!

**Sunday, March 11, 2018**  
**1:45 – 5:00 PM**  
**Regal Cinemas**  
For tickets, visit [lwvbc.org](http://lwvbc.org).

**Join LWVBC and the Women's Collaborative of Boulder County to honor Boulder County's women Commissioners!**

**We'll have a table there for networking and sharing information about League in our local community.**



**MARCH 8, 2018**  
**INTERNATIONAL**  
**WOMEN'S DAY**  
**CELEBRATION!**

**View of the World Gallery**  
5:00pm to 7:00pm

1930 Central Avenue, Boulder

Featuring: Laurie Dameron, Guitarist



Organizations demonstrate how they  
Press for Progress



No Charge to Attend: Wine &  
appetizers will be served.

Honoring Boulder  
County Women  
Commissioners  
Cynthia Domenico



Eliase Jones



Deb Gardner



Sponsored by  
The Women's Collaborative  
of Boulder County

## **Campaign Finance/ Elections Working Group**



At the end of January 2018, the Boulder City Council formed a Working Group to analyze the City of Boulder Charter and Code provisions relating to campaign finance, initiative, and referendum provisions and other elections matters. The group is expected to provide recommendations to the City Council to tighten existing provisions, clarify certain requirements, and simplify filing provisions.

LWVBC's Rionda Osman had spoken about the need for updating our election regulations at the City Council meeting on Dec. 19, 2017 when the Council decided to form the Working Group. The call for appointees went to members of the public with demonstrated knowledge and/ or interest in elections matters. The call specifically mentioned that a representative of the LWVBC should be included, and Rionda was invited to apply.

Rionda Osman has joined that group which is made up of: Matt Benjamin, Ed Byrne, Allyn Feinberg, Mark McIntyre, Rionda Osman, Steve Pomerance, Evan Ravitz, Tyler Romero, Michael Schreiner, John Spitzer, and Valerie Yates. The first two meetings have been spent examining the proposed rules for initiatives and referendums. Some of the topics discussed are: a proposed charter amendment to replace language related to 2Q, examining the various processes and deadlines for submitting municipal initiatives, and discussing the signature verification process.

One interesting proposal is to accept electronic signatures on petitions. Many details would have to be worked out, but proponents believe that participation would increase and that more initiatives would be launched. The group plans to address campaign disclosures and the issues surrounding campaign photos and flyers in last year's election. Work should be wrapped up by the end of April. *Submitted by Rionda Osman, LWVBC CFR Team and Board Member*

### **Reminder: Doing Democracy Day**

Doing Democracy Day is right around the corner! LWVBC is again participating in this annual multi-school event devoted to area students wrestling with local issues, using local leaders as resources. The event is on March 13<sup>th</sup>, at the Longmont Civic Center. If you can help out, more information is available on our website, [lwwbc.org](http://lwwbc.org).

***ICE, continued...*** There have been numerous debates about who should be placed in deportation proceedings and how ICE finds individuals who they feel should be deported. However, research has shown that a vast majority of the individuals who are being deported from the United States are individuals who are not guilty of a major crime. The Social Policy Team has not yet come up with a comprehensive action strategy related to ICE and their possible abuses. We know that we must all persist in our work to make our LWV position on immigration a reality. If you are interested in joining us in advocating for immigrant rights please contact Annie Lessem at [quixotic.meow@gmail.com](mailto:quixotic.meow@gmail.com) or [720-263-2201](tel:720-263-2201).



## **In Memoriam: Bobby Hays**

The LWVBC Membership Team has been notified of the death of lifetime member Bobby Hays. Bobby and her husband, Sam, moved to Boulder in 2000. Bobby was previously active in the Frasier Unit meetings. Sam passed away in 2017. Bobby had been quite ill in recent years and had moved to Juniper Village in Louisville. Bobby is survived by four children and their immediate and extended families. LWVBC members and board express our sincere sympathy to Bobby's family.

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

In the November and February issues of the Voter, we acknowledged all our generous members who made pledges to our Campaign to Build a Foundation (to fund a part-time Administrative Assistant). In addition, we have received donations that are not specific to the Campaign, which are essential to the work of our League. Whether you have donated through a sustaining membership, a separate contribution, or in memory of a friend or family member, we appreciate your generosity! Donors for the period of July 2017-December 2017 are:

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**League of Women Voters of Boulder County**  
**PO Box 21274**  
**Boulder, CO 80308**