

## League Tackles Topics of Money in Politics, Fair Districting, to Protect Our Democracy

“The League of Women Voters plays an extremely important role as truth-tellers. League has an opportunity to broaden our base to stand for, and broaden support for democracy,” said Lisa Graves, Executive Director of the Center for Media and Democracy in her address to League members from across Colorado. Her presentation on the influence of dark money on elections and legislation, was part of the League of Women Voters of Colorado (LWVCO) “Making Democracy Work for All” gathering on September 16. Graves also spoke to 60 Boulder County members and residents who attended our LWVBC Community Conversations event on Sept. 18.



LWVBC Intern Rossanna Longo Better interviews Lisa Graves at the LWVCO “Making Democracy Work for All” Day.

Graves’ work has focused on billionaires who use their vast wealth to promote anti-democratic policies and candidates who support them. For example, she examined the Koch Brothers’ funding of candidates and policies that limit voter engagement and increase voter disenfranchisement, through organizations like the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) and the Bradley Foundation.

The threat of dark money in Colorado is real. Internal strategic documents from the Bradley Foundation show that Colorado is one of a few states being targeted for anti-democratic policies, like those that make it harder for people to vote. The work of our LWVBC Campaign Finance Reform Team will remain an important hub for our League this year, as we – along with other local Leagues in Colorado -- determine what actions we will take, that will best ensure our democratic process represents people, not corporations.

*(Cont’d on page 2)*

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### October Events Calendar

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

See page 4 for Candidate Forum schedule.

October 6: [Voter Registration in Longmont](#)

October 7: [New Member Celebration](#)

October 8: [Social Policy Team](#)

October 24: [Health Care Team](#)

## **President's Letter: Get Out and Vote!**

As we approach the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women's right to vote (and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the League's founding), it is important to remember that voting affects all issues, at all levels of government. This is not a Presidential election year, but local city council elections and school board elections are taking place all around Boulder County. And, there are many ballot issues being voted upon locally as well. All of these affect our communities and our county.

The League is working hard to make sure voters know what their choices are so they can be more informed as they vote. Our candidate forums provide a chance for voters to see and compare the various candidates as they answer important questions from the audience. Our ballot issue write-ups translate the complicated ballot language into everyday language so voters can more easily decide. And our [Vote411 website](#) provides comparisons between candidates and information on ballot issues in your community.

In today's political climate, the League's civil, reasoned approach is needed more than ever. There are many issues affecting us on a local level, and some are quite controversial and affecting everyday lives. We can help you see where the candidates stand and what your vote on a ballot issue means. And then be sure to vote, and encourage your family and friends to vote!

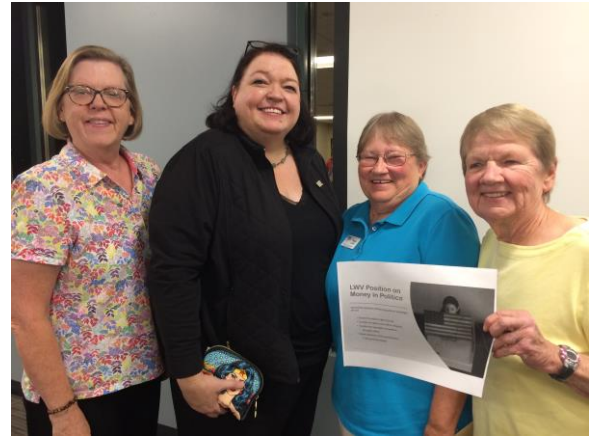
*To reach Peggy Leech, you can email her at [president@lwvbc.org](mailto:president@lwvbc.org)*

### ***Protect Our Democracy, cont'd from p. 1***

The LWVCO meeting also included a presentation from LWVBC's Campaign Finance Reform Team describing their research on Colorado municipalities' campaign financing rules; this information can help Leagues' focus their action on local money in politics issues.

And, LWVCO introduced a new statewide campaign called [Fair Districts Colorado](#), in which we, along with partner organizations and a bi-partisan team of state legislators, are promoting solutions to Gerry-mandering when legislative district boundaries are drawn.

Check out our [Campaign Finance Reform Team webpage](#) for up-to-date information on all Money in Politics issues and what YOU can do to help.



Ruth Stemler, Lisa Graves, Peggy Leech and Shirley Jin at the LWVBC September Community Conversation.

### **In Case You Missed It....**

- Read [LWVBC's Statement on DACA](#), supporting immigration reform that protects DACA recipients and their families.
- Check out LWVBC's "[Making Democracy Work](#)" radio spots on [KGNU](#).
- Catch our September Community Conversation video, with speaker Lisa Graves, and other great Money in Politics information on [LWVBC's Facebook page](#).

## Celebrating League Members on October 7th

LWVBC members, new and old, are all invited to the New Member Celebration on **Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 10 AM – 12 Noon**. The Celebration will be held at the Longmont Public Library, [409 Fourth Ave](#), in downtown Longmont.

We plan to have some fun, get better acquainted with new members, discuss League's projects and priorities and listen to what you'd like to accomplish as a new League member. Members will hear about specific ways to get involved in the organization, to support civic engagement in our community. For new members who are interested in deepening their understanding and engagement, we'll also arrange match-ups with an experienced League mentor.

**All new members attending the Celebration will receive a special gift**, and refreshments will be provided. Please sign up on our website to let us know you're coming. Contact Ruth Stemler, Membership Team, [rjstemler@gmail.com](mailto:rjstemler@gmail.com), [303.916.1519](tel:303.916.1519) if you have questions.

*"Local League members are the life-blood of our organization. The more members we have, reflecting the diverse interests, experiences and perspectives, of people in Boulder County, the better we can empower residents to work to improve our democratic process and our community as a whole."*

-- Ruth Stemler,  
Membership Director



*"I am a historical costumer so I had the elements to pull together an outfit such as a Suffragette would have worn in 1919. Suffragettes wore white with a banner of gold, purple and white.*

*I am proud of those women who fought so hard for us to get the vote, and I think reminding women of all ages that women haven't always had the vote, is very important. And we need to use the power of our votes now, more than ever before."*

– New LWVBC member *Joan Hemm*. Joan visited the LWVBC Voter Registration Drive table in Longmont on August 26, to celebrate passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, granting women the right to vote.

## **Election Day Prep: Be Informed and Vote Smart**

The League of Women Voters of Boulder County (LWVBC) is sponsoring and co-sponsoring candidate forums this fall, to prepare voters for the November 7, 2017 election. In-person audience members will be able to submit questions, in writing, to the forum moderator for consideration. Unless noted otherwise, questions can also be submitted in advance of the forum, to LWVBC's Liz Nick at [liznickco@gmail.com](mailto:liznickco@gmail.com).



Josephine Porter and Jane Massie volunteer at the League's Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) Board Candidate Forum on Sept. 27.

**Broomfield City Council Candidate Forum**  
Presented by LWVBC, Broomfield Chamber of Commerce, and Broomfield Enterprise  
Wednesday, October 11, 2017, 6:00 - 9:00 PM,  
Broomfield City Council Chambers, [One DesCombes Drive, Broomfield, CO](#)

TV coverage will be provided by Channel 8, and will be live streamed.

(Note: advance questions for this forum will be accepted at [info@broomfieldchamber.com](mailto:info@broomfieldchamber.com))

**Lafayette City Council Candidate Forum**  
Wednesday, October 11, 2017, 6:30 - 8:30 PM  
Lafayette Library Meeting Room, [775 West Baseline Road, Lafayette, CO](#)  
TV coverage will be provided on Channel 8, and will be live streamed.

**Longmont City Council Candidate Forum**  
Sponsors: Latino Task Force, OUT Boulder County, Colorado Immigrant Rights Coalition, LWVBC  
Thursday, October 12, 2017, 6:00 – 7:30 PM  
Front Range Community College Community Room, [2121 Miller Drive, Longmont, CO](#)



Liz Nick questions candidates at the BVSD Forum on Sept. 27.

**Boulder City Council Candidate Forum**  
Saturday, October 14, 2017, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
Boulder City Council Chambers, Municipal Building, [1777 Broadway, Boulder, CO](#)  
TV coverage will be provided on Channel 8, and will be live streamed.

### **Ballot Issue Pamphlets Available Soon!**

LWVBC's Ballot Issue Pamphlets will be available soon! Our pamphlets are a great resource for people who want a clear explanation of the issues, and whether LWVBC supports, opposes or is 'neutral' on the issue. Check <http://vote411.org> to read up!

## **“Building A Foundation” Fundraising Campaign Kicks-Off**

**What value do you place on the impact of our local League?** It’s an important question for all of us to consider, as LWVBC is unleashing a capital fundraising campaign to make our work for civic and engagement and a strong democracy, even more effective.

**Our new Building a Foundation fundraising campaign will provide funds for a part time Administrative Assistant, who will help our organization operate more efficiently and effectively, and result in a more active (and less burned-out) volunteer base.**

“No one joins the League to complete administrative tasks. We join and volunteer to transform our community,” said Louisa Young, LWVBC’s Fund Development Team Leader. “Administrative tasks are necessary, but are becoming burdensome and discourage new, younger members from leadership roles. Our longtime volunteers are experiencing burnout. We must become a more nimble organization, that better uses the expertise of current and potential new members and partners, to accomplish our goals.”

Peggy Leech, LWVBC President added, “An administrative assistant can help accomplish critical, yet time-consuming tasks like data base management, information-gathering for advocacy campaigns, and posting and improve consistent, quality communication to our members and our community. With a part-time staff position, we’re building a foundation for bigger League impact.”



The Building a Foundation Campaign goal is to raise a minimum of \$30,000, which will fund a part-time Administrative Assistant for two years, plus basic equipment, software and office supplies.

The good news is, thanks to several generous members, we are well on our way to making this goal! If response to this appeal continues to be this robust, it looks like our minimum fundraising is within our grasp. The more funds we raise, the more time we can lock-in the staff salary, and possibly office space.

**If you value the work of our League, please make a pledge to our Building a Foundation campaign, for an amount that is meaningful to you. Every bit helps!** The pledge period is 2 years, which spans 3 tax years, and remember all contributions are tax deductible.

**[Click here to donate online](#), or complete the pledge statement on page 6 and return to one of our campaign Committee members or by mail. Together, we can make this happen!**

*Many thanks to our Campaign to Building a Foundation Committee members – Peggy Leech, Ruth Stemler, Deborah Vink, Louisa Young – for your work on the Campaign!*



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF BOULDER COUNTY

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**Pledge Statement: Campaign to Build a Foundation**

The undersigned acknowledges that s/he has made a pledge to the League of Women Voters of Boulder County as follows:

Total pledge: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I will give the total amount as a one-time gift on or before \_\_\_\_\_ (date).

OR

I will pay in installments between now and June 30, 2019, as follows:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature / Date

May we acknowledge your gift to our members?  Yes  No (list as Anonymous)  
Amounts will not be disclosed.

Name(s) for the acknowledgement, if different from signature \_\_\_\_\_

Payments can be made online on the Donations page of our website. Checks should be made payable to LWVBC and mailed to PO Box 21274, Boulder, CO 80308.

The League of Women Voters of Boulder County is a 501(c)(3) organization whose EIN is: 84-6060415. Nothing of value was received by the donor in exchange for this donation.

## Voting Methods Team: Community Education Update

This summer and fall, LWVBC's Voting Methods Team is educating and engaging people in Boulder County and throughout the state! Education about alternative voting methods is an important step toward possible use of these methods in the future.

Our Voting Methods Position states that we will: support authorizing and implementing alternatives to plurality voting [our current candidate voting method] that allow people to express their preferences more effectively. The League supports voting methods that improve the election experience, that encourage honest voting rather than tactical voting, and that consider ease of implementation.



The Voting Method Team's recent activities were:

- **Colorado (Denver): Unrig the System Conference** – On Aug. 5 in Denver, Jennifer Bales and Neal McBurnett spoke to a conglomeration of groups all working to improve elections.
- **LWV of Sterling Area** – On Sept. 24 Neal McBurnett and Linda Templin conducted a voting exercise with this League. Logan County Clerk Pam Bacon, who serves as president of the Colorado County Clerks Association, also attended the presentation and spoke.

Upcoming activities include:

- **CU – Boulder's "Technical Communication and Design" class** – We are partnering with students this semester to work on a video storyboard and/or social messaging about voting methods. Frank Venturo is coordinating the project from our end.
- **Pueblo** – On Nov. 16 Diana Haskell will conduct a voting exercise with the Pueblo LWV.
- **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Electoral Reform Symposium** – Team members and LWVCO board members will be attending this free event in **Glendale** on Nov 18 sponsored by Free and Equal Elections. The previous three years the Voting Methods team has helped with the counting of ballots during the alternative voting methods exercise. The event will be live streamed.
- **Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) for Colorado and any interested LWV members** – On Dec. 16 (location TBD), Celeste Landry, who recently spent 3 weeks in Cambridge, MA will speak about their single transferable vote (STV) method of electing multiple winners in local elections. STV is the RCV method used to elect the Boulder City Council from 1917 - 1947.

At local **Farmers Markets and Voter Registration Drive** events this fall, League and community members can check out our "Problems with Plurality Voting" tri-fold poster and brochures, which have been making appearances with the LWVBC Voter Services team.

**What can you do to help?** Read and share our tri-fold brochure, videos and other materials on our [LWVBC Voting Methods Team webpage](#). Please also consider trying out different voting methods whenever you are in a friendly group that has to make a choice.

## Memorial Contributions Honor the Legacy of LWVBC Member Mary Leonard



LWVBC wishes to thank all those who contributed to League in memory of Mary Leonard, a long-time League member who died on April 21, 2017. Memorial contributions are a great way to honor the lives and legacy of our loved ones. "I worked with Mary, both on the board and on the Campaign Finance Reform Team," said LWVBC President Peggy Leech. "She had an incredible talent with words, suggesting valuable edits to make our writings much more effective. She was such a delight, always willing to pitch in, and with her wonderful smile!"

If you are interested in donating to honor Mary, you can do so on the [LWVBC Donations webpage](#) or make a check to LWVBC and mail to LWVBC, P.O. Box 21274, Boulder, CO 80308

### Volunteer Opportunities:

- To volunteer at LWVBC Candidate Forums (see schedule on page 4), contact Liz Nick at [liznickco@gmail.com](mailto:liznickco@gmail.com).
- For people available to help with our Voter Registration Drive table at the Longmont Farmer's Market on Saturday, October 7<sup>th</sup> please contact Susan Saunders at [okbeeb@gmail.com](mailto:okbeeb@gmail.com).
- Check the [LWVBC Volunteering webpage](#) for other upcoming opportunities!

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