

The Boulder County Voter

September 2017



Money in Politics: Taking Action to Protect Our Democracy

LWV of Boulder County (LWVBC) and the LWV of Colorado are providing two great opportunities this month, to participate in discussions and strategic planning on the problem of money in politics in Colorado.

First, join the LWV of Colorado's [Making Democracy Work conference](#) on Saturday, September 16th in Denver to hear state and national experts speak on the theme "Our Democracy is Now for Sale." Presenters will include Lisa Graves, Executive Director of the Center for Media and Democracy (right photo), whose investigation on the impact of big money in Wisconsin's elections and policy making provides lessons for avoiding such challenges in Colorado. More than just listening, conference participants will discuss specific actions that LWV can lead, to protect democracy from influence by billionaires and their special interest institutions. Register by September 8th (\$55 fee required) at <http://lwvcolorado.org/>.



Then, our own LWVBC will host a [Community Conversation, Dark Money in Politics](#), on Monday, September 18th in Boulder, for another opportunity to hear from Lisa Graves and discuss options for local action to keep big money out of our electoral and legislative processes. This event is free for LWV members and the public. Please plan to come, and bring some friends! More information at <http://lwvbc.org/>.

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September Events Calendar:

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

September 9: [Boulder Farmer's Market Voter Registration](#)

September 16: [Make Democracy Work Conference \(formerly Colorado League Day\)](#)

September 18: [Dark Money in Politics](#)

September 23: [Fall Kick-Off Meeting](#)

September 24: [Social Policy Team Meeting](#)

President's Letter

By Peggy Leech, 2017-18 LWVBC President

What can LWV Boulder County gain from engaging youth in our work? A lot! Presentations and discussions at several recent and upcoming LWV events make clear how important it is to lift-up leadership opportunities for young voters, including in our own organization.

Like me, you may have heard that young people are apathetic and don't care about elections and politics. Our experiences – and data! -- show this isn't true. At our August Drinks and Dialogue event, guest speaker, Emma Ruffin, a recent CU graduate and Director of the Climate Culture Collaborative in Boulder modeled the leadership capacity of youth in addressing one of the most pressing issues of our lifetime. Several LWVBC members who recently attended a conference called "Unrig the System", were impressed with the high number of organizations represented by 30-something leaders. Our Fall Kick-off meeting on September 23 has the theme "Youth Are Civically Engaged!" (see article on page 3) featuring two women paving the way for political engagement among younger generations. And, LWVBC members are attending Resource Fairs at both Front Range Community College and at CU, in order to increase the visibility of LWVBC and of democratic issues to college-age audiences.



L to R: Shiquita Yarbrough; Mary Leech; Marion Read; Emma Ruffin; Peggy Leech; Rossanna Better at the LWVBC August Drinks & Dialogue event in Longmont.

In other LWVBC news, our Team members have been busy this past month, sharing expertise with community organizations in and outside of Boulder County and encouraging action to make for a strong democracy. At the Unrig the System event on August 5, two members of our Voting Methods Team were featured in the segment on alternative voting methods (thank you to Jennifer Bales and Neal McBurnett), and Ron Tupa did a presentation on a redistricting initiative coming up in 2018. Our Campaign Finance Reform Team has been busy preparing for 3 presentations in September, all outside of Boulder County.

We have also had some changes on the Board of Directors. Lurbin Moore, our Treasurer, is moving to Utah with her family. The Board has appointed Pat Long to fill out her term, and Dave Stemler will act as Assistant Treasurer. Sarah Levison has resigned, in order to run for Mayor of Longmont. We truly thank Lurbin and Sarah for their contributions to LWVBC while they were on the Board, and we thank Pat and Dave for stepping in. Our new intern, Rossana Better, has started working with us for the fall semester and we're looking forward to working with her.

I hope to see you at our many activities planned this month, including voter registration drives, a Community Conversation on September 18, and the Fall Kickoff meeting on September 23.

Need to contact Peggy? You can reach her by email at president@lwvbc.org.

LWVBC Kick-Off Meeting: Youth Are Civically Engaged!

Since 2006, the organization New Era Colorado registered roughly 150,000 voters in our state, between the ages of 18-34. Leading up to the 2016 General Election alone, the organization registered 55,367 young voters and 82% of them cast a ballot in the election. These numbers bust the myth heard often, that young people aren't interested in our political process. But what are the best ways to reach out and engage young voters? What can an organization like the LWVBC – whose average member age is over 60 – do to equitably integrate younger people as participants and leaders in our programs and campaigns?



To help answer those questions, join LWVBC for our annual Kick-Off Meeting for networking, food, drinks and a program focused on youth leadership in civic engagement. It will be a great way to start the 2017-18 season of League study, advocacy and action!

The Kick-Off Meeting will be on Saturday, Sept 23rd at the Louisville Public Library, from 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM. There is no fee to attend, but please [register on the LWVBC website](#) so we can be sure to provide enough food and drinks.

Our keynote speaker will be **Molly Fitzpatrick, Organizing Director of New Era Colorado**. In an interview for the VOTER, New Era Director Lizzy Stephan described the organization as “of and by young people, for the benefit of all people.” Stephan said the organization works on the belief that the more youth engagement in democracy, the better the government decisions; the more people trust government leaders; and the more we are willing to care for and help each other. At the Kick-Off Meeting, Molly will discuss how engaging, educating, and training a new generation of active citizens and young leaders in Colorado is critical for a healthy democracy.

We will also hear from **Kate Liston, Fairview High School Student and winner of the LWVCO National History Day Award**. Kate will present her exhibit, "The Pen is Mightier than the Sword: Colorado Women and the Stand for Women's Rights."

In addition, LWVBC Membership Team leaders will help members with tips on using our website to find issue team information, register for events, make donations and other functions. Please bring your website member password, if you'd like assistance in using the website.



Molly Fitzpatrick, New Era Colorado

Hello, Goodbye: LWVBC Leader Transitions

LWVBC is extending a warm welcome to Rossanna Better, our 2017-18 Intern. Rossanna has lived in Boulder County for 14 years. As a parent of three sons in the Boulder Valley School District, Rossanna was an active volunteer in the school system, translating Spanish for students and parents and starting-up Spanish clubs. She is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Media and Public Engagement from CU.

Rossanna said her interest in LWV stemmed from her "Media and Activism" class last semester, in which they explored the power of voting to impact elections and legislation, and the power of women as leaders in the political process. When she heard about an internship opportunity with LWV (part of a joint internship with KGNU), Rossanna said, "I found an organization that referenced all the issues we explored in class, that are so important.

League of Women Voters can help people see they are not without power; they have the power to act."



Through this internship, Rossanna is excited to work on increasing participation of Boulder County's immigrant population in civic engagement. She notes that immigrants – including younger immigrants – face additional challenges in knowing how to voice their opinions and share their unique perspectives. "By tapping into and engaging immigrants, we can build strength to address important community issues." Rossanna will be helping with LWV research, social media outreach, and helping foster outreach and partnerships with other community organizations.

On a sad note, we are bidding fond farewell to LWVBC Board Treasurer, Lurbin Moore. Lurbin got involved in LWVBC to utilize her political engagement experiences, financial skills and deep connections in Boulder County's Latino community to strengthen our organization's impact. She says her engagement in LWVBC also came from her belief "that women are the heart of our homes and communities. We have different skills and talents and we need to share them. And once we find out something that impacts our loved ones, we take action." She joined the LWVBC Board at a time when her financial and banking skills were particularly helpful: navigating our transition to a non-profit tax exempt organization.



Lurbin says she appreciates that LWVBC has a strong practice of thoughtful research on policy issues, and that the organization is "willing to listen, learn and change to better serve the community, respecting women who are open to each other's ideas."

Soon, she will be moving to Utah, where her family is relocating for her husband's job. We will miss her, but are so thankful for the hard work and heart-work she invested in LWVBC. All the best to you, Lurbin!

Election Season Prep: Candidates Forums Coming Soon

Election seasons is upon us, and LWVBC is planning Candidate Forums for local races. Candidate forums are a great way to meet the people who want your vote, and ask them questions about the important issues facing our community. Whether you participate in person or by watching on your computer or television, please plan to tune in and share the forum details with your family, co-workers and friends.

The Lafayette City Council candidate forum, co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters and in conjunction with the City of Lafayette, will be **Wednesday, October 11**, beginning at 6:30 pm, at the City of Lafayette Library Meeting Room, 775 West Baseline Road in Lafayette. It will be broadcast live on Comcast Channel 8 and the City's online streaming video webpage. An online, recorded version will be available via the City's On-Demand Streaming Video webpage.

There are 15 candidates running for four (4) seats on the Lafayette City Council. The three candidates to receive the highest number of votes serve on the city council for a four-year term. The fourth highest candidate serves a two-year term. The candidates are: Chelsea Behanna*, Allen Bishop, Michael Daniels, Jamie Harkins, Dana Kusjanovic, JD Mangat, Merrily Mazza*, Ashley E. Neumann, Andrew J. O'Connor, Gustavo Reyna*, Cliff Smedley, Jarrett Tishmack, John William Watson, Richard Welty, Brian Wong. (*current city council member)

Additional candidate forums will be announced once the details are in place. Watch the LWVBC website and the October VOTER for information as it becomes available.



"I became a League member when I was starting to work on the Living Wage issues in Boulder County and realized the League was active in it also; I wanted to work with a group of people, not just be on my own. Now I want to learn more about campaign finance issues and voting methods, because I don't understand a lot about it yet. I know League is the main place to go for this information."

– Mary Ann Wilner pictured with her husband, Jim Lovett

LWV is a trusted source for 2017 election information!

For easy access to information on voter registration, ballots, the voting process and more, VOTE411.org is the place to go.

VOTE411.ORG[®]
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

Volunteer Opportunities

Voter Registration Drive (VRD) Volunteer Slots

This 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 or sign-up on our website (For members, click on the “Get to Know Us” tab, then go to the Volunteering page).

Saturday, September 9th Boulder Farmers Mkt
Voter Registration Drive 7 AM – 2:15 PM

Saturday, October 7th Longmont Farmers Mkt
Voter Registration Drive 7 AM – 1:15 PM

In addition, our VRD team is going to be providing voter registration services on **September 26** at area high schools and at Front Range Community College. Contact Susan for more details.

Candidate Forum Volunteers Needed!

LWVBC will be sponsoring candidate forums for local races, in September and October. We need volunteers to serve as ushers, timers, question reviewers, and moderators. To volunteer and to receive additional information, contact Liz Nick, LWVBC candidate coordinator, liznickco@gmail.com.



Onorina and Greg Maloney stopped by the VRD booth in Boulder, in July. “We recently moved from Massachusetts to Colorado. We were very active in our local government back home, and when we saw the [LWV] table, we felt compelled to stop by because we needed to register to vote. Thank you for the work you do!”

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