

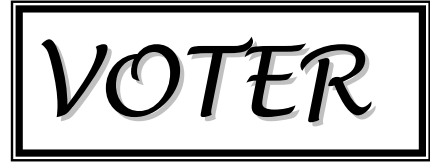


February 2016

Membership: 36

www.montrose.co.lwvnet.org

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
*Serving Montrose and Delta
Counties*



Follow us on **Facebook**: <https://www.facebook.com/VoteMontrose>

Happy **96th** Birthday, LWVUS, February 14

The League of Women Voters has fought since 1920 to improve our systems of government and impact public policies through citizen education and advocacy. The League's enduring vitality and resonance comes from its unique decentralized structure, being a grassroots organization that works at the national, state and local levels.

More relevant than ever in this important election year, we will be working to: get out the vote, develop grassroots efforts to determine which issues affect various voting blocs/generations, build trust in our political process to persuade voters their votes do count, ensure equal access to the ballot box, and strive for transparency and reform in political financing.

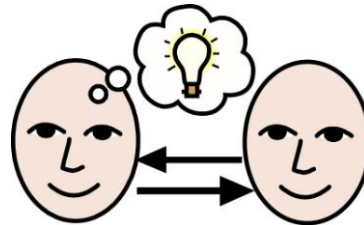
Join members in the celebration by tipping a glass to and with the League at The Bridges on Saturday, February 13, at 5:00 pm. Plus, check out the display at the Montrose Library during the month of February!

IN THIS ISSUE

Notices	Page 1
Our League In Action	Pages 2-5
State League News	Page 6
National League News	Page 7
Calendar, Community Support, Website	Page 8
Membership Application, Board Members	Page 9

2016 PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18, NOON
MONTROSE LIBRARY COMMUNITY ROOM**



It's time to set our 2016 calendar of local programs from our survey results and member input. With the upcoming national general election in November, this is a critical year for strategic program planning for us to support and further the aim of the League to engage our citizens in the local, state and national issues and the general political process in order to get out the vote and have educated voters. See you there! Your input is important!

LOCAL LEAGUE NEWS

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS, BOB & KAREN NICHOLSON, and KATHY HEAVERS



Karen is a Colorado native, having been born in Denver. She worked in early childhood education and child care facility licensing for the State of Colorado before earning a master's degree in journalism. After a brief stint as a newspaper reporter, for most of her professional career she was a writer and editor for nonprofit organizations, such as the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, and for technical publications. Karen is partial to outdoor activities, particularly hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Since moving to Montrose, she has been active in the Friends of the Library and Montrose Recycles.

Bob is also a Colorado native, having been born in Colorado Springs. He received an engineering degree from CU with a minor in business, worked as an engineer in Boulder, and then a founded a construction company which he headed for 35 years. Bob and his two children relocated to Montrose in 1994. Thirteen of his company's projects were recreation centers, two of which were the Bill Heddles Recreation Center in Delta and Montrose's own Aquatic Center! Many of the projects public ones, putting him in contact with local governments. He retired just a few years ago, although he still operates a business on the Front Range with the help of a management company and his two children. Perhaps it was working with local governments that piqued his interest in the public sector, for in 2011 he ran for and won a seat of the Montrose City Council and began serving in 2012. Bob lauds the City staff and relates that holding the seat has been a great experience, but he recently decided not to try for a second term.

Karen and Bob have been married for 16 years. They share many common interests including outdoor activities and the desire to travel, which is one reason Bob chose not to pursue another term on City Council. Both offered as their reason for joining the League their strong belief in educating voters in a non-partisan way. Topics of importance to them are health care and money in politics, and efforts that improve our city and county.

Kathy is in California from mid-January to Mid-February so her bio will appear next month.



League has received news from local member Eleanor Thomas that due to a broken hip she has relocated to Austin, Texas where she is living with her son. She said she misses Montrose and her friends but continues to enjoy our newsletter and plans to join the Austin League soon. Our best wishes for a fast and full recovery are being sent to you, Eleanor.

"MONEY IN POLITICS" CONSENSUS UPDATE



Nine Leaguers and two community members, Paul Janzen and Robert Manley, participated in the first MIP consensus meeting held on January 7 on this vital issue. During the two-hour session, each question and its sub-parts presented by the LWVUS was carefully dissected, thoroughly discussed with scintillating input, and finally answered. We came away feeling quite pleased with our work and each took home some ideas and perspectives that she/he had not considered prior to the meeting! Our meeting on January 14 brought out seven stalwart Leaguers and a repeat of the important time as above described.

While we were able to reach consensus on the balance of the questions, the three that caused much consternation and discourse were Part 1 Question 1d, should the goals and purposes of campaign finance regulation be to ensure that economic and corporate interests are part of the election dialogue (the word "ensure" was the issue); 2b, if an officeholder or her/his staff gives greater access to donors, is that political corruption; and, Part 11 Question 2a, should spending by the press to influence a candidate election by newspapers be banned, limited, or unlimited.

The consensus report was filed with the national League on January 28, and can be viewed on our local League website. We are looking forward to receiving the results of this nationwide consensus study!

Thanks to Shirley Jin and LWV Boulder County for the Info Below



<http://tracer.sos.colorado.gov/PublicSite/homepage.aspx>

Following up on the LWVUS Money in Politics Study, TRACER (**T**ransparency in **C**ontribution and **E**xpenditure **R**eporting) is the Colorado Secretary of State's online campaign finance filing system. It was launched on January 4, 2010 and contains campaign finance data for all state and county candidates, committees, and political parties in Colorado dating back to 2002 including their reports of contributions and expenditures. You can search the system in several ways and review the results online, print them or extract them for further analysis.

Local Thoughts on the 2016 LWVCO Legislative Conference by Karen Connor



Karen & attendees



Barbara Mattison



Jean Fredlund



Dickey Lee Hullinghorst & Brian DelGrosso

On Monday, January 25th, Leaguers from around Colorado gathered in the Old Supreme Court Chambers at the State Capitol for another Legislative Conference. Barbara Mattison, LWVCO President, and Jean Fredlund, LWVCO Legislative Chair, welcomed the attendees. (Photos by Karen Connor and Marilyn Brown, LWVCO Voter editor)

Chief John Jackson of the Greenwood Police Department and Denise Maes, Public Policy Director for the ACLU of Colorado, presented their viewpoints on the "Relations of Police and Community of Today". They were not always in agreement, so this provided for an interesting discussion as well as thoughtful questions from League members. Kathy Underhill, Executive Director of Hunger Free Colorado, provided us with information on social programs in Colorado that are addressing this issue. Hospital Provider Fees and TABOR was the last presentation of the morning and was given by two members of the Denver Chamber of Commerce: Mizrain Cordero, V.P. of Government Affairs, and Laura Giocomo, V.P. of Communications and Marketing. Currently the money collected from the Hospital Provider Fees goes into the general fund and counts against the State's TABOR Cap. Our governor would like to move these funds into an enterprise fund account so that they would not be counted against our TABOR Cap. A very interesting discussion ensued.

The Speaker of the House, Dickey Lee Hullinghorst, and the Minority Leader of the Senate, Brian DelGrosso and Colorado Senator Jack Tate stopped by to address the group. Lunch was held at the Scottish Rite Temple, a short walk from the Capitol with Chris Watson, LWVCO Staff Lobbyist who provided us with an update on what we might expect to see on our November ballot. All in all it was a great day, and **I hope that others will take the opportunity to attend next year as it is well worth the time and effort to be there.**

INTERESTED IN PROPOSED STATE OF COLORADO LEGISLATION?

The **LWVCO Legislative Letter covers legislation the League is tracking** and is made possible by the hard work of our dedicated Legislative Action Committee volunteers, Chris Watson, our staff lobbyist, the LWVCO office, and the support of all of you who donate to the LWVCO Lobby Fund and subscribe to the Legislative Letter. All letters are downloadable within 2-3 days of publication. Make your check for \$20 payable to LWVCO and mail it to LWVCO, 1410 Grant B204, Denver CO 80203. Or sign up by credit card on the via the LWVCO website: <http://www.lwvcolorado.org/legislative-letters.html>

If you are interested in all proposed State of Colorado legislation: www.digitdemos.org allows you to follow 25 pieces of legislation at no cost---and to vote on different forms of the bills as they are written. The site also allows you to follow how your legislator has voted on the bills you are tracking.

TIPS ON TAKING ACTION THIS LEGISLATIVE SESSION: *What is the best way to advocate?*

The Colorado General Assembly convened on January 13th. While the legislature is in session, you will receive emails with a **call to action from the state League** requesting you, as a private citizen, take some specific action on an issue or position. When we respond to calls to action we are, in effect, lobbying---we are advocating our legislators to take a specific position on an issue.

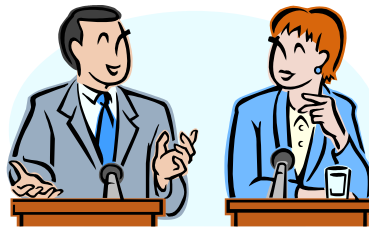
Legislators have minimal staff support while the legislature is in session, and they have NO staff when not in session. This makes it challenging to respond personally to all contacts. Email is often the best way to communicate with your legislator. Tips provided for effective email included: put the bill number in the subject line; make the email short and to the point; if there is a personal story relevant to the issue include it and use bullets when possible.

"GREAT DECISIONS" Reminder

Great Decisions is a series of discussions produced by the Foreign Policy Association, a non-profit, non-partisan educational arm of the World Affairs Councils of America, co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Montrose County and the Montrose Regional Library. Meetings from 7-9 pm in the Montrose Library Community Room begin with a video in which foreign policy experts present their perspectives, and a group discussion follows.

Questions? Call Meg Nagel at 964-2548. Upcoming program topics are: Feb 11 The Rise of ISIS; Feb 18 The Future of Kurdistan; Feb 25 Migration; March 3 The Koreas; Mar 10 The United Nations; Mar 17 Climate change; Mar 24 Cuba and the U.S.

MONTROSE CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE FORUM THURSDAY, MARCH 3, 7PM MONTROSE CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS 107 SOUTH CASCADE, MONTROSE



All candidates will be invited to attend, Doors open at 6:30 pm
Question and Answer session to follow introductions and opening statements
Town Hall format, Forum will be televised live on the City's TV channel 191

To volunteer to assist, contact Karen Connor at kconnor1941@gmail.com

MILLENNIALS OUTREACH



Millennials now comprise the largest generation in the U.S. workforce and will make up 1/3 of the November 2016 electorate!

Our League is gathering information from our local 18-35 year-olds on which local, state and national issues are important and why. Want to know more about Millennials? Check out the Pew Research Center's study at www.pewresearch.org/topics/millennials/

March 1 – Republican Party and Democratic Party Precinct Caucus Day

Colorado is a caucus state and has a so-called "closed" caucus system, meaning voters must be affiliated with a qualified "major party", currently either the Republican or Democratic Party, in order to participate. The state legislature has set up the basic caucus structure for its citizens; however, it is up to the individual county political parties to plan, locate precinct sites, and conduct the meetings according to individual party rules.

Caucus-goers usually participate in a presidential preference poll, however, this year the State Republican Party has decided not to hold such a poll as its rules require that delegates be committed to a particular candidate, and with this year's slate of candidates being so long and with the timing of the state conventions, it is possible that several of the GOP presidential candidates may have previously dropped out of the competition. As the Colorado Democratic Party does not have the same rules, those caucuses will still hold a preference poll.

Every Colorado voter affiliated with the Democratic or Republican Party can participate in her/his precinct's caucus, but few actually do. **If you choose to get involved on March 1, you can have an impact.** Closer to the day of caucuses, individual party offices should be able to provide both precinct number and location for each voter.

STATE LEAGUE NEWS

The Board of the LWVCO requests all CO local Leagues propose concurrence with our Position on Behavioral Health. Responses due February 28. **Locally, we will vote on this at the February 18 meeting.**

I. Position in Brief *(Updated and Adopted 2015)*

Support access to adequate health care with funding by state and federal monies where necessary. LWVCO supports access to affordable, quality in- and out-patient behavioral health care, including needed medications and supportive services, for all people. LWVCO supports access to behavioral health care that is integrated with, and achieves parity with, physical health care.

II. Support for:

- Behavioral Health as the nationally accepted term that includes both mental illness and substance use disorder.
- Access for all people to affordable, quality in- and out-patient behavioral health care, including needed medications and supportive services.
- Behavioral Health care that is integrated with, and achieves parity with, physical health care.
- Early and affordable behavioral health diagnosis and treatment for children and youth from early childhood through adolescence.
- Early and appropriate diagnosis and treatment for children and adolescents that is family-focused and community-based.
- Access to safe and stable housing for people with behavioral health challenges, including those who are chronically homeless.
- Effective re-entry planning and follow-up for people released from both behavioral health hospitalization and the criminal justice system.
- Problem solving or specialty courts, including mental health and drug courts, in all judicial districts to provide needed treatment and avoid inappropriate entry into the criminal justice system.
- Health education – from early childhood throughout life – that integrates all aspects of social, emotional and physical health and wellness.
- Efforts to decrease the stigmatization of, and normalize, behavioral health problems and care.

LWVCO is lobbying LWVUS and Leagues across the country to have this new position become the national Behavioral Health position through a concurrence process at League's national Convention June 16-19 in Washington, D.C.

Julie Leonard, LWVCO's Executive Director, has sent the position and a memo to every local and state League in the U.S. (800+) requesting that they ask - through the current Program Planning process - the LWVUS Board of Directors to recommend this item for the agenda at Convention.

NATIONAL LEAGUE NEWS

Outlining the League's Priority Federal Issues for 2016

By: Jessica Jones 01/12/2016

Here's a sample of some of the important work the League will be focused on in 2016:

Voting and Elections: [Restoring the Voting Rights Act \(VRA\)](#) continues to be a top priority for the League. It's now been nearly three years since the [U.S. Supreme Court gutted key provisions of the VRA](#) and Congress has failed to act on historic legislation to restore the voting rights of Americans across the country. The League will continue to lobby House and Senate leadership, and engage grassroots support, to ensure that legislation to restore the VRA gets hearings and a vote in both houses of Congress.

In the area of voter registration, [LWVUS has called on the Obama Administration](#) to comply with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) when applicants apply for health insurance through the federal health exchanges under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The League believes the exchanges are public assistance agencies and therefore must provide voter registration opportunities to all applicants, similarly to [other social services such as the Department of Motor Vehicles or Medicaid enrollment](#). Some states, [like California](#), that offer state-run health exchanges under the Affordable Care Act have begun to offer voter registration opportunities following pressure from the League. We believe proper implementation of the NVRA at the health benefit exchanges is an incredible opportunity to help every eligible American citizen participate and contribute to our democracy.

Money in Elections: As we enter a Presidential election year, billions of dollars are flooding into our political system and yet, voters still have no idea where the money is coming from. The League continues to push Congress to move the [DISCLOSE Act](#) to the forefront. We also continue to [address disclosure and independent expenditures](#) with the Federal Election Commission (FEC). The League hopes to build on our success of sending [nearly 30,000 comments](#) to the FEC encouraging them to redefine these two terms and end corruption in politics.

Climate Change: Now that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has [finalized the Clean Power Plan](#), the historic regulations to limit carbon pollution from power plants, the implementation of these regulations heads to the states. State officials and legislatures must now follow the common sense building blocks developed by the EPA to meet the goals established in the plan. Leagues across the country are working to [build support for, and promote compliance with, the Clean Power Plan](#).

Redistricting: Late last year, the U.S. Supreme Court heard arguments in *Evenwel v. Abbott*, a major case that could forever change the way we view the political map. *Evenwel* has the potential to upset the criteria for drawing state and local legislative districts so that districts would be determined by the total number of voters instead of total population. The League submitted [an amicus brief in Evenwel](#) that supports the current practice of drawing district lines based on population counts. Leagues around the country are also involved in their own redistricting processes. The [League of Women Voters of Ohio](#) helped pass a major ballot initiative to amend the state constitution and [change how the lines are drawn in Ohio's state legislative districts](#) (PDF).

2016 promises to be a busy year. Across the country, [state and local Leagues will continue to lead the way](#) to fight back against bad voter reforms and initiatives as well as for pro-voter reforms in their own legislatures. At the federal, state and local levels, Leagues will be working hard to influence public policy and encourage participation in government on these key issues and more.

2015-2016 LWV Community Support

The League of Women Voters of Montrose County, serving Montrose and Delta counties, thanks these local businesses, organizations and individuals who have donated financial and in-kind support.

Please add your thank you when you patronize these businesses or visit with these individuals.

Dennis Olmstead
The Montrose Mirror
Horsefly Brewing Company
Shirley Ela
Dalby, Wendland & Co.
Alpine Bank
Altrusa International of Montrose
Alpine Archeological
Karen & Bob Nicholson

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

February

13 Informal League Birthday Party
5:00 The Bridges

18 2016 Program Planning
Noon Montrose Library

March

3 Montrose City Council Candidate Forum

7:00 Montrose City Council Chambers

TBD Community Program
Noon Montrose Library

April

TBD Community Program
Noon Montrose Library

May

TBD Annual Meeting- Luncheon & Election of Officers

21-22 LWVCO Council
Holiday Inn Express & The Pavilion



a NONPARTISAN
political organization,

ENCOURAGES
informed and active
PARTICIPATION
in government,

works to
INCREASE
UNDERSTANDING
of major public policy issues,

and
INFLUENCES
public policy through
EDUCATION and
ADVOCACY.

Check out our Website:

www.montrose.co.lwvnet.org/

Our webmaster, Susan Chandler-Reed, is doing a terrific job keeping us updated on and linked to local, state and national activities, issues and websites.



Check us out on Facebook too:

Google "League of Women Voters of Montrose County, Colorado" and then click "Like us" on Facebook

**Join League of Women Voters of Montrose County
serving Montrose & Delta counties
Not for Women Only!**

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone (H) _____ (Cell) _____

E-mail _____

___ **Individual \$55** (Of this amount \$31 goes to National League; \$18 goes to State League; \$6 is retained by the Montrose League)

___ **Household \$90** – Two members in one household (National League receives \$46.50; State League \$27; \$16.50 is retained by the Montrose League)

___ I understand that I can join without being active, and this is my intent at the present time.

___ I would like to make a contribution beyond regular dues and understand it will go directly to our local League (Thank You!).

___ Sustaining Member \$100

___ I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to the Montrose League. Write a separate check to **League of Women Voters CO Education Fund. Write "Montrose" on the check's memo line.**

Please make checks payable to **League of Women Voters of Montrose County**. Mail to P.O. Box 3321, Montrose, CO 81402

2015-2016 Board Members

President: Karen Connor, 249-2135,
kconnor1941@gmail.com

Vice President:

Secretary: Robin Flom, 249-8963,
nancyball@montrose.net

Treasurer: Rod Britten, 240-1119,
rodbritten@montrose.net

Membership: membership information available at
http://montrose.co.lwvnet.org/join_form.html

Voter Newsletter: Nancy Ball, 249-8963
nancyball@montrose.net

Website & Facebook Page: Susan Chandler-Reed, 249-1076,
susan.chandler.reed@gmail.com

At Large:

Rosemary Murphy, 249-3925,
mmurfh@hotmail.com

Barbara Krebs, 249-3989,
stukrebs@hotmail.com



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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.