

The Boulder County Voter

League of Women Voters of Boulder County * May 2020



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May 16: Member coffee via Zoom

LWVBC Social Media



Annual Meeting 2020

The League of Women Voters of Boulder County held its annual meeting on May 2nd, 2020 via Zoom. It was a productive meeting during which we elected board members, reviewed and approved a budget, revised some bylaws, and discussed important matters such as fundraising and League position on issues.

LWVBC Board

LWVBC Board	
Co-president, community engagement	Elizabeth Crowe
Co-president, administrative	Gaythia Weis
Secretary	Molly Saunders
Treasurer	Pat Long
Action Director	Sylvia Bernstein
Fund Development Director	Anne Bryan
Membership Director	Debby Vink
Voter Service Director	VACANT
Director-at-Large	Shiquita Yarbrough
Director-at-Large	Carol Brown
Director-at-Large	Jackie Alderete Urena
Serving Off-Board	
Next Year's Nominating Committee Chair	Carolyn Elliott
Nominating Committee Member	Ruth Stemler
Nominating Committee Member	Denice Walker
Communications Director	Jennifer Bales
Governance/Leadership/Planning Resources	Caroline Himes
Youth Engagement Coordinator	Denice Walker

LWVBC still needs a **Voter Service Director**, so please contact Susan or Peggy if interested.

(Annual Meeting 2020 continued on page 8)

Presidents' Letter

By Peggy Leech and Susan Saunders, LWVBC Co-Presidents

Thank you to all who attended our Annual Meeting virtually. Even with something new, members adapted well, and the meeting ran pretty smoothly. Mandy devoted a lot of time to preparations, so much of the success was due to her.

Of course, we are not the only ones conducting business virtually now. The state league's Council, which had been planned for late May in Grand Junction, will now be held virtually. And the national league's Convention in late June in Washington, DC, has now been changed to a virtual convention. This was very disappointing, considering that this is the 100th Anniversary of the League and of women's suffrage.

There are tradeoffs to all of this. On the one hand, costs are much-reduced by not having to pay for meeting space, meals, and travel. On the other hand, it takes more effort to shift to a virtual event, and all of the socializing and networking opportunities with other members and leagues are much-diminished.

We don't really know how long these types of meetings and events will need to be conducted virtually, but now the question is: how many of our future events should be done virtually vs in-person, once we are able to host in-person events? What are the preferences of our members? If you have any input about this topic, do not hesitate to reach out and provide feedback.

One item left unfinished at our Annual Meeting was filling the Voter Service Director vacancy. Jeanine has done a good job of recruiting volunteers, including coordinators, for the 4 different "sections": Voter Registration Drives, Candidate Forums, VOTE411, and Ballot Issues. So, we just need someone to oversee the 4 sections and to keep the board in the loop. If you can help with this vital function, please reach out to Susan or Peggy.

Finally, please remember to check our website for upcoming events, pay attention to our emails, follow us on Facebook, and read your newsletter to stay informed about what LWVBC is doing. This is such an important election year!



Member News and Announcements

Bulbs!



Order your Dutch Bulbs now for next spring!

We will again be selling Dutch bulbs to benefit the LWVBC! It is a great way to support the League's efforts and enjoy beautiful spring flowers!

The deadline for orders will be July 1 for delivery



in mid-to late-October. This year the process will be mostly online. The bulb Order forms and bulb pictures are [on our website](#) under "Join & Support US". Mail your forms and checks (Made out the LWV Denver) to Lois Linsky, 1645 Bear Mountain Dr, Boulder CO 80305. Any questions? Call Lois@303-499-2689 or email her at LoisLinsky@gmail.com.

Speaking of League Anniversaries ...

While we join Leaguers throughout the U.S. in celebrating the 100th anniversary of woman suffrage, we in Colorado can also be proud of our ancestors who achieved enlightenment considerably earlier than 1920. In 1876, Colorado's new state constitution granted women the right to vote in school elections. In the 1893 election Colorado became the first state to approve woman suffrage by popular election.

Wilma Davidson in her 1995 history of the LWV in Colorado (accessible from our web page "Our History" in the "Get To Know Us" menu) recounts the details. Carrie Chapman Catt and other leaders of the National American Women's Suffrage Association came to Colorado to help direct the campaign. Mrs. Elizabeth (Baby Doe) Tabor, wife of U.S. Senator H.A.W. Tabor, provided meeting and office space in Denver's Tabor Opera House. Suffrage clubs were formed in Longmont, Colorado Springs, Greeley, Georgetown, Breckenridge, and Denver. Other supporters included most of the newspapers, the Non-Partisan Equal Suffrage Association of Colorado, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Colorado Governor Davis Waite and his Populist Party, and many Republican county conventions. The Colorado men voting in the November 7, 1893, statewide election approved the suffrage law by a vote of 35,798 to 29,451.

In 1993, we in LWVCO celebrated the 100th anniversary of woman suffrage in our state. In 2023 we will celebrate 130 years! Other milestones in the near future are 2021, the 90th birthday of the LWV of Boulder; 2024, 40 years since its expansion into the Boulder Valley; and 2025, 60th birthday of the LWV in Longmont. Much partying lies ahead!



League of Women Voters of Boulder County

Census News

The biggest news is that the Census Bureau has revised its schedule:

- Original plan for responses: March 12 – July 31. **Now extended to October 31.**

Due to this change, they have requested Congressional approval to change the statutory deadlines related to congressional representation as follows:

- Apportionment counts (each state's population total, which determines its number of seats in the U.S. Representatives)—due by December 31, requested delay until April 30.
- Local counts delivered to each state (needed by the states to complete redistricting)—due by April 1, 2021—requested delay until July 31, 2021.

There seems to be bipartisan support for the statutory date changes, although further details will probably need to be worked out. Example: does this mean more funding, since many of the Census employees were originally hired through July and will now continue through October?

And, of course, this has implications for the states, including Colorado, on their redistricting schedules.

Response rates as of 5/1/20:

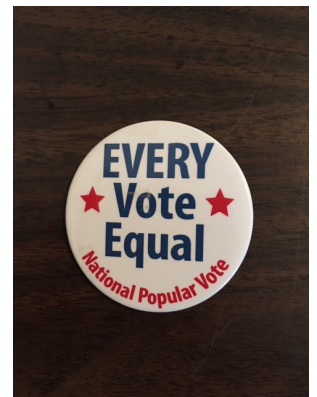
- National: 56.0 %
- Colorado: 59.4 %
- Boulder County: 67.3%

"Yes on National Popular Vote" Kicks off its Official Campaign

On April 14, the coalition supporting the National Popular Vote officially launched its campaign with a virtual press conference. The issue will appear on Colorado's state-wide ballot in November of this year. Many organizations have endorsed this effort, including Common Cause, CIRC, NAACP, New Era Colorado. **The League of Women Voters of Colorado and many local leagues, including League of Women Voters of Boulder County, are strong supporters.**

On April 23, LWVBC and Yes on National Popular Vote hosted a [webinar](#). The documentary film "Winner Take All" was featured, followed by remarks from Senator Mike Foote and then Q&A. The link to this webinar can be found on our website under Teams at Work/NPV Campaign.

Coloradans for NPV, the grassroots group headed up by Linda Sorauf and Sylvia Bernstein, recently started a **postcard-writing campaign**. To start, they are involving local leagues around the state, and they hope to receive thousands of completed postcards by July 1, to be mailed to voters closer to the election. In Boulder County, we have a supply of packets strategically located: Holly Monkman in Boulder, Ruth Stemler in Longmont, and Peggy Leech in Louisville. If you are interested in participating in this effort, please contact one of the three, and we will arrange pickup/delivery. (In a socially-distanced way, of course!) **Please volunteer!**



From Membership:

We will begin holding Member "Coffees" virtually via Zoom beginning Saturday, May 16 at 10:00 am. Have your beverage of choice at hand, login to Zoom and chat. New members, we would especially like to meet you. Watch for an email with a link to register. Contact Debby Vink, Membership Director for more information: MembershipTeam@lwvbc.org

League of Women Voters of Boulder County

Same Ballot, Different Tabulation Methods

By the Voting Methods Team

The ballot on the left is a plurality (aka “choose-one” or first-past-the-post) ballot.

Quick Quiz: What kind of ballot is on the right?

PLURALITY	
Vote for one candidate	
	Arthur
	Bertha
	Cristobal
	Dolly
	Edouard
	Fay
	Gonzalo
	Hanna
	Isaias
	Josephine
	Kyle
	Laura

MYSTERY VOTING METHOD	
Mark 1 for your first choice, 2 for your second choice and so on.	
	Arthur
	Bertha
	Cristobal
	Dolly
	Edouard
	Fay
	Gonzalo
	Hanna
	Isaias
	Josephine
	Kyle
	Laura

Did you answer “RCV” or “Ranked Choice Voting”? If you did, then you might be correct, but you might not. We don’t have enough information to determine the ballot’s voting method. We only know that the voter ranks her choices so we can call it a ranked-voting ballot or Ranking ballot as SurveyMonkey names it. (The SurveyMonkey website provides a variety of free online voting platforms.)

Let’s review the essential elements of a voting method in the table below.

Essential Elements of a Voting Method with Corresponding Examples

A voting method defines	Examples Based on Borda Count – A Ranking Method
1) the form of the ballot,	Rank preferences starting with 1 for your first choice, 2 for your second choice, and so on up to 9 choices
2) what constitutes a valid vote,	You must give a different ranking to different candidates. You must rank a candidate with 1 but lower rankings are optional.
3) how to count votes, and	Award the first choice 9 points, the second choice 8 points, the third choice 7 points, and so on, with the ninth choice awarded 1 point.
4) an algorithm for determining the outcome of the election	Add up all the points each candidate receives. The candidate with the largest sum (or weighted average if you want results from 0 to 9) wins.

League of Women Voters of Boulder County

Recently an organization wanted to elect 9 people in a multi-winner contest. They could have picked boring old plurality-block voting where you vote for up to 9 candidates and the top 9 vote-getters win, but – good for them – they wanted to give the voters more expressiveness. They said, “Let’s use ranked choice voting.” Great!

EXCEPT that the organization used SurveyMonkey’s Ranking method which operates as described in the Example section of the Voting Method table above. SurveyMonkey uses Borda Count, not multi-winner RCV!

RCV can refer to several variations of voting methods, but they all involve transferring votes. You’ve probably heard, “If your first choice is eliminated, then your vote is transferred to your second choice.”

Plurality and Borda Count are summation methods. Each ballot contributes independently to the candidates’ totals. On election night, officials can report candidates’ running totals as the vote tabulation progresses. In contrast, RCV’s vote-transfer feature depends on how candidates are faring on all the ballots so preliminary results may be delayed until all or almost all the ballots are processed.

Colorado statute only permits the two traditional RCV methods: single-winner instant-runoff voting (IRV) and multi-winner single transferable vote (STV). In both methods, the ballot looks identical. (See the August 2018 LWVBC Voter article “RCV: Two Better Ways to Vote.”)

Watch the following Minnesota Public Radio videos to see how traditional RCV vote tabulation works.

Single-Winner IRV: https://youtu.be/_5SLQXNpzsk (1½ minutes)

Multi-Winner STV (but called IRV 2.0 in the film): <https://youtu.be/INxwMdl8OWw> (3 minutes)

“Ranked voting” is the general term used by the Colorado Secretary of State and our Voting Methods Team when referring to a voter ranking choices on a ballot. Ranked voting includes – but isn’t limited to – Borda Count, different vote-transfer forms of RCV, and Bucklin Voting (aka the Grand Junction System used in Pueblo, Denver, CO Springs, Fort Collins and more than 60 cities in the US in the 20th century).

Watch the following Carneades.org videos to learn more about Borda Count and Bucklin voting.

Borda Count: https://youtu.be/NY2oJ_REiQc (Watch the first 2½ minutes.)

Bucklin Voting: <https://youtu.be/CkIYZsJAvNQ> (Watch the first 2 minutes or so.)

The next time you want to conduct an informal poll or carry out a voting experiment, consider trying one of the free user-friendly online voting platforms in the table below. Remember that tabulation is an integral part of the voting method! If the online ballot doesn’t clearly state how the votes will be tallied, the poll creator should clarify that before any votes are cast.

Please note that any online voting system is highly vulnerable to many forms of attack.

No public elections should offer online voting, as explained by the National Academies in

Securing the Vote - Protecting American Democracy (2018):

<https://www.nap.edu/catalog/25120/securing-the-vote-protecting-american-democracy>

Conduct Free Online Informal Polls Using a Better Voting Method

Website or App's Name for the Voting Method	Website	What the Voter Does	Who is the Winner?	Standard Name of this Better Voting Method
Doodle Poll <i>Use "text" option rather than "month" or "week" to name your candidates. Include "if need be" (aka tepid support) for more voter expressiveness.</i>	https://doodle.com/	Vote for as many candidates as you support. Another way to think about this voting method is to say that you are voting yes or no on each candidate.	Candidate with the most votes	Approval Voting
Checkboxes	surveyMonkey.com			
Vote-Yes-Or-No option	http://voteupapp.com/			
Rate-on-Sliding-Scale Option	http://voteupapp.com/	Give each candidate a score within the range provided, e.g., 0 to 5. You may give the same score to more than one candidate.	Candidate with the highest average score wins.	Range Voting (arguably identical to Score Voting)
Matrix/Rating Scale <i>Use weights.</i>	surveyMonkey.com			Score Voting with averages
STAR (Score Then Automatic Runoff) Voting	https://star.vote/		Of the candidates with the two highest sum of scores, the one scored higher by more voters wins.	Score Runoff Voting
Ranking [This is not RCV!]	surveyMonkey.com	Rank candidates where 1 shows the most support. Give different rankings to different candidates.	The higher the ranking, the more points a candidate is awarded. The candidate with the highest weighted average wins.	Borda Count

Online Polling Options for Advanced Users with More Knowledge of Technology and Voting Methods

Website Name	Features	Better Voting Methods Available
HeliosVoting.org	Most secure online voting system using open-source code and end-to-end verification	Approval Voting
OpaVote.com (paid service with free trial)	"... the leading provider of ranked choice elections."	Approval Voting Coombs Method, IRV, STV Borda Count, Bucklin Voting Condorcet (see below)
Condorcet Internet Voting Service (CIVS) https://civs.cs.cornell.edu/	"better than IRV at identifying consensus candidates" and uses open-source code	Condorcet -- ensures the winner beats all competitors in head-to-head contests

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The proposed budget was agreed to. Please see [the April Voter](#) for details. Contributions form a bigger part of the budget than dues after LWVBC pays its share of state and national dues. Grants are another important contributor.

Anne Bryan discussed fund development, emphasizing monthly donations, bequests, and grocery cards. She presented the table at right as an example of how monthly donations add up.

Proposed Giving Plan

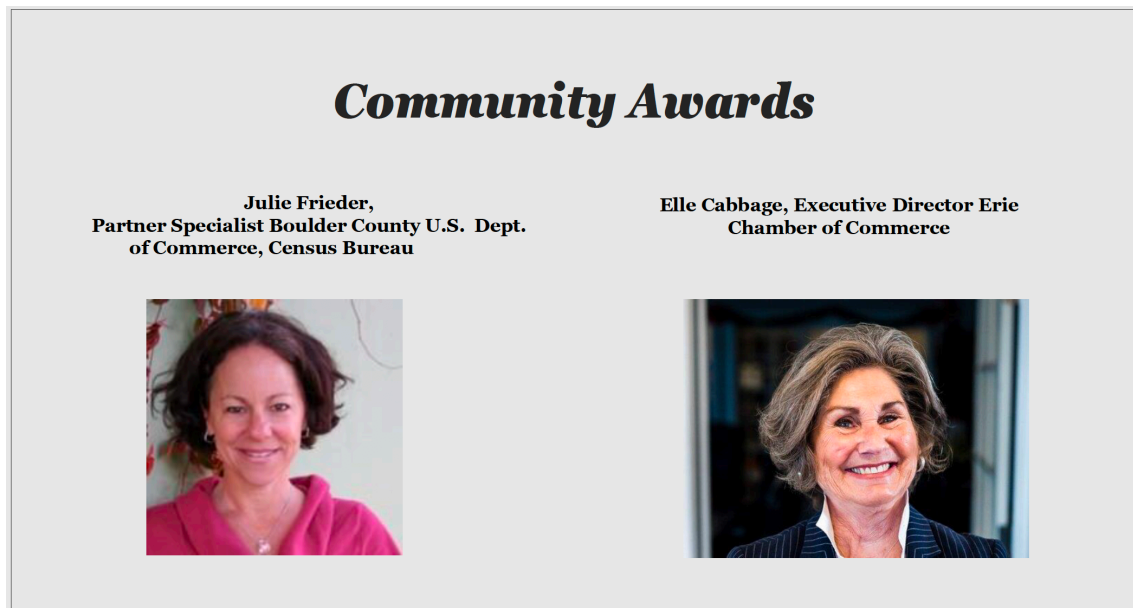
To be successful
we must set BIG
GOALS!

\$ Donated/Person		Number of people donating	Yield
*	\$5,000.00	2	\$ 10,000.00
*	\$1,000.00	8	\$ 8,000.00
*	\$500.0	20	\$ 10,000.00
\$20/month =	\$240.00	40	\$ 9,600.00
\$10/month =	\$120.00	55	\$ 6,600.00
\$5/month =	\$60.00	100	\$ 6,000.00
TOTAL		225	\$ 50,200.00
* Could be installments			

Two bylaws were amended. Term limits were put in place for the LWVBC board, in accordance with Colorado best practices for non-profits. Also, the president and co-president are ex officio members of all committees, now including the nomination committee.

A slideshow of the last year was presented during a break. Please see it on [our YouTube channel here](#).

LWVBC also presented two Community Awards, to Julie Frieder for her work on the census, and to Elle Cabbage, executive director of the Erie Chamber of Commerce, for working with LWVBC over the years on the Erie candidate forum, and especially this year for arranging a virtual forum on short notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Member Awards for 2020 as announced at the Annual Meeting:

LWVBC Student Scholarship Award: Rachael Willihnganz for DU Law School

Emerging Leaders: Catherine Brown and Molly Saunders

Emerging Youth Leaders: Jackie Alderete Urena and Erin Lindblom

Board Member: Jeanine Pow, as Voter Service Director

Members: Carol Brown and Mandy Nuku

Issue Team Leaders: Celeste Landry and Gaythia Weis, Co-Leaders of the Voting Methods Team

Issue Team Members: Pat Venturo of the Voting Methods Team and Mary Anne Davitt of the Money in Politics Team

Operation Team Members: Lois Linski and Louisa Young for the Fund Development Team and Debby Vink for the Membership Team.

Many thanks to these members for their fine contribution to the mission of LWVBC!!



Membership: 266 Members as of April 2020

Co-presidents: Peggy Leech and Susan Saunders
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Boulder County Voter Editor: Jennifer Bales
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