

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF ESTES PARK

**League Lines
February 2020**

100 YEARS!

The League of Women Voters celebrated our 100th Anniversary last week on February 14, 2020. In only 6 more months, we will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote, when on August 18, 1920, the 19th Amendment to the U.S Constitution was ratified.

By this time 100 years ago, the passage of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution was almost assured. Half of the population, disenfranchised for all 132 years of our nation's history, were about to be granted the right to vote. These new voters would need to learn about the voting process, including how to learn about the issues and candidates. Women such as Emma Smith DeVoe and Carrie Chapman Catt, who had previously founded organizations to fight for women's rights, created the League for this purpose. Today women vote in greater numbers than do men, and we continue to fight for the rights of women in this great country.

In the first 50 years of women's suffrage, women and men voted in similar ways, and men voted in greater numbers than did women. That is no longer true. In every Presidential election since 1980, the percentage of women turning out to vote has exceeded that of men. In every Presidential election since 1964, women have voted in greater numbers than do men. In the 2016 election, nearly 10 million more women voted than did men. On party and issues, female voters are now a little to the left of male voters.

There have been many studies on why these patterns have emerged. Reasons for the change include the second feminist movement in the 1960's and 70's and the greater number of women seeking higher education (more women than men now graduate from college). These reasons make sense when you view voting patterns by age, as women under age 65 vote in greater numbers than do men, while the opposite is true for the over-65 age group.

Clearly, women gaining the right to vote, and women exercising that right in greater and greater numbers, is making a difference in our country and its politics. We can celebrate the bravery and tenacity of the women who fought to gain that right for all of us by continuing to fight for voting rights, voting participation, and informed voting. That is why we are members of the League of Women Voters!



President's Message

As the League of Women Voters moves into its second century, it is clear that we are facing a number of challenges to our mission of empowering voters and defending democracy. In recent years, problems with early voting, polling places, and voter registration have threatened the sanctity of the vote for too many of our citizens and that leads to a lack of faith in our democracy and a general feeling of "why should I bother voting?"

Now, more than ever, it is important for all of us to talk to our friends, families and neighbors and encourage them to educate themselves on the issues and the candidates, and then VOTE. There will be a number of opportunities this year to exercise that right. Locally, we have an election on April 7th for mayor and three trustees. We have all received ballots in the mail to vote for a candidate for President of the United States. On March 7th you can participate in a caucus to decide which candidate for United States Senate you prefer. In addition, there will be special district elections for the Estes Valley in May and state and national elections in November.

Voting is a privilege which we must never take for granted and it is also an obligation we must take seriously if we want our democracy to continue. Elected officials make decisions every day that impact our lives, both directly and indirectly. From local school boards and town councils to state representatives to the U.S. Congress and President, these men and women make decisions about whether or not we go to war, our environment, access to healthcare, reproductive rights, civil rights and any number of issues that affect us directly. By not voting it makes it easier for politicians who don't represent your points of view to make decisions for you.

Despite the problems we might face with voting, we, as voters, have the power to change our destiny. As Thomas Jefferson once said, "We Americans do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate." By all means, **participate**.

Liz Zornes
President
LWVEP

Check out our 2019-2020 Program Calendar!

All events below will be held at the Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies, 1700 Brodie Avenue, except as noted

NEXT PROGRAM!

March 24, 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Special Evening Program on Recycling – Learn more about recycling here in Estes Park and what we can do about reducing the use of single-use plastic bags.

April 22, 10:00 am - noon

Update on Broadband in the Estes Valley: Learn more about the status of broadband in our community.

February 27, 10:00 am – noon

Location: American Legion Hall, 850 N. St. Vrain Ave

Note change in date and location!

Rocky Mountain National Park – Park experts will be joining us for updates regarding Rocky Mountain National Park. They will be discussing how climate change is affecting the viability of our plants, birds and animals.

May 13, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Annual Meeting – Our annual end-of-year meeting is a reflection of the work done by the League, election of officers and round table discussions of topics regarding ideas for future meetings.

The League of Women Voters Presents Update on Rocky Mountain National Park

Please Note New Date and Location

On February 27th from 10:00 am to noon in the American Legion Hall, the League of Women Voters of Estes Park (LWVEP) will host Darla Sidles, Superintendent of the Rocky Mountain National Park. Superintendent Sidles and Public Information Officer Kyle Patterson will give us an update on what's happening with traffic management, the struggles to maintain our pristine wilderness environment amidst the hordes of visitors who come to the park each year, and how climate change is affecting the Park. Bring your questions – is it true that wolves have been seen in the park? What is happening with the pikas and what effect do the increasing numbers of visitors each year have on our wildlife and the park itself?

We hope you will join us for a riveting presentation at the American Legion, located at the corner of Highways 7 and 36. As always, LWVEP programs are free and open to the public. For questions, please contact Colleen Ellingson at 414-559-8672.

Update on Membership

100+ for Year 100!

Thank you to everyone who renewed your membership for 2019-2020, and a special thank you to our new members. We set an audacious goal of achieving 100 members for our 100th Anniversary year – and we (**you**) did it! As of January 31, 2020, the date we must report our membership to the League of Women Voters of the United States, we had **104 members** in the Estes Park League! Not only is achieving the goal we set for ourselves particularly satisfying, it is also important to remember how far we have come. In the 2013-2014 year, we had only 46 members. This was a low point due to the uncertainty caused by the flood of 2013. Even so, in 6 short years we have more than doubled our membership. We thank everyone whose efforts have helped us grow, and look forward to a busy and productive year!

Report from the Nominating Committee

The LWVEP Nominating Committee wishes to thank Joanie Crockett, Alice Reuman, Bonnie Seals, and Judi Smith for their years of service to the Board of the LWVEP. Their responsibilities will terminate on May 13, 2020 at our annual meeting.

At that meeting, the following slate will be presented to the membership for voting:

Officers		Committee Chairs	
President	Liz Zornes	Voter Services	Robin Converse
Vice President	<i>Need candidate</i>	Membership	Sue Magnuson
Secretary	Jackie Hertel	Programs	Colleen Ellingson
Treasurer	Cherie Martin	Local Affairs	Kate Parker
Other Board Members		Communications	Janene Centurione
Historian	Becky Urquhart	Recycling	Cathy Alper
Technical Advisor	Doug Sacarto	Development	Jan Gehlhausen
At Large Representative	Ann Finley		

Please note that we still are looking for a member who is interested in joining us as Vice President.

Four Zero-Waste Bills

Community Recycling Committee

Last month, CRC reported in League Lines on a bill that would have allowed local municipalities to ban plastics. Unfortunately, that bill did not make it out of committee. However, there is good news in the Colorado legislature for environmentalists. Four bills are being considered this legislative session that would reduce plastic and other pollutants.

Ban Polystyrene (Colorado House Bill 20-1162)

This bill would ban the use of polystyrene (Styrofoam) statewide. This bill will be voted on by the House Energy and Environment Committee on February 24th. Tell your House Representative you support this bill.

Reduce Plastic Use (Colorado House Bill 20-1163)

This bill would prohibit retail use of single-use plastic carry-out bags and stirrers and provide straws only upon request. This bill will be voted on by the House Energy and Environment Committee on February 24th. Tell your House Representative you support this bill.

Expand Compost (Colorado House Bill 20-1047)

This bill would support the development of an infrastructure for composting food waste and yard trimmings. This bill passed through the House Energy and Environment Committee and is under consideration by the House Appropriations committee.

Develop Recycling End Markets (Colorado Senate Bill 20-055)

After China stop accepting recyclables, there has been a lack of places to send recyclable materials. This lack has opened an opportunity for new entrepreneurs to enter this market, which in turn, provides a place for recyclable materials to go to be made into new products. This bill proposes a plan to attract new end-market businesses to the state. The Senate Business, Labor & Technology Committee passed this bill and it is under consideration by the Senate Appropriations Committee.

TAKE ACTION: This is a great opportunity to have your voice heard and to make a difference for the environment. Let your representatives know that you support a cleaner Colorado.

To learn more about each bill, simply enter the bill name (for example: Colorado House Bill 20-1162) in a search engine.



Update from the Voter Services Committee

On behalf of the Voter Service Committee I wish to welcome Caltha Crowe and Kate Parker as our newest Voter Service Committee members. Thank you, Caltha and Kate!

SAVE THE DATES, AND PARTICIPATE

LWVEP Forum for Estes Park Mayoral Candidates on Thursday, March 5th 6-8 p.m., Town Hall.

LWVEP Forum for Estes Park Trustee Candidates on Wednesday, March 11th, 6-8 p.m., Town Hall.

If you are interested in helping out during the forums (collecting questions, etc.), or if you have any questions for the candidates that you'd like the Voter Service Committee to consider, please contact Robin Converse at 832-646-9395 or robconverse56@gmail.com.

HOW TO VOTE IN THE PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

(SEE www.vote411.org and www.votelarimer.org for more details.)

You must be registered to vote in the primary. Register online or by mail by February 24th in order to receive a ballot by mail. Registration forms are available at the Estes Valley Library and at the Estes Park Vehicle License: 1601 Brodie Ave.

Register in person by March 3, Monday – Friday, 8:00am to 4:30pm. at the Estes Park Vehicle License office on 1601 Brodie Ave.

Ballots have been mailed to all registered voters and must be returned to the Larimer County Clerk by 7 p.m. March 3, 2020. Ballots can be dropped off at the Estes Park Vehicle Licensing Office box on 1601 Brodie Avenue, from February 17th -March 2nd any time, and until 7 pm on March 3rd.

There are two polling centers in Estes Park. The Estes Valley Community Center is open for polling 7 am -7pm on March 3rd only. Ballots can be dropped off at the Estes Park Vehicle Licensing Office box on 1601 Brodie Avenue, from February 17th -March 2nd any time, and until 7 pm on March 3rd.

Note: 17 year-olds who will turn 18 by the General Election may vote in the Primary, as long as they are registered and obtain a ballot.

The LWV, as a non-partisan organization, is not part of the caucus process, but for your information, Precinct Caucuses are being held, Saturday, March 7. The Republican Caucus will meet from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at the Estes Park High School. The Democratic Caucus will meet from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. at the Estes Park Middle School. There is no caucus for unaffiliated voters.

WE NEED YOU! Please consider becoming a member of the Voter Service Committee. VSC organizes voter registration drives, candidate and issue forums, and other voter education activities, which are always non-partisan. The Voter Service Committee has a major role to play in the mission and vision of the LWV.

Please contact Robin Converse, Chair of the VSC for more information:

832-646-9395 robconverse56@gmail.com

Junior Election Update

There will be a Junior Election Forum at 6:30pm on Monday, March 16 (for students 5th grade thru 12th grade). Watch local newspapers, the League website (lww-estespark.org) and Facebook League of Women Voters of Estes Park, CO for details. For more information, contact juniorelection@signsandwishes.com

While parents are welcome to observe, at a Junior Election Forum only the students can ask questions. Students who live outside the Town limits as well as those inside the Town limits may practice voting in the pursuant election and the results will be published in our local newspapers. Our young residents in the Estes Valley are developing their skills in interrogation and evaluation. We are pleased to offer this opportunity to not only Estes Park School District students but also those enrolled in alternative education programs.

The success of this venture is contingent upon students and parents knowing that it will take place and realizing the educational opportunity inherent in the exercise. Voter education starts now for future generations. Please mention this as you interact with local families and encourage them to attend.

Board Members

President – Liz Zornes	Programs – Colleen Ellingson
Vice-President – <i>open</i>	RMNP – Bonnie Seals & Jackie Hertel
Secretary – Jackie Hertel	Recycling – Cathy Alper
Treasurer – Cherie Martin	Local Affairs – Kate Parker
Membership – Sue Magnuson	Communications – Bonnie Seals
Development – Joanie Crockett	At-large – Judi Smith
Voter Services – Robin Converse	Historian – Alice Reuman

Our Mission: Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy

Our Vision: We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.

I'm sorry, but I don't want to be an emperor. That's not my business. I don't want to rule or conquer anyone. I should like to help everyone if possible; Jew, Gentile, black man, white. We all want to help one another. Human beings are like that. We want to live by each other's happiness, not by each other's misery. We don't want to hate and despise one another. In this world there is room for everyone...The way of life can be free and beautiful, but we have lost the way. Greed has poisoned men's souls, has barricaded the world with hate, has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed... To those who can hear me, I say, do not despair. The misery that is now upon us is but the passing of greed, the bitterness of men who fear the way of human progress. The hate of men will pass, and dictators die, and the power they took from the people will return to the people. And so long as men die, liberty will never perish...You, the people, have the power to make this life free and beautiful, to make this life a wonderful adventure. Then in the name of democracy, let us use that power. Let us all unite. Let us fight for a new world... By the promise of these things, brutes have risen to power. But they lie! They do not fulfill that promise. They never will! ... Let us fight for a world of reason, a world where science and progress will lead to all men's happiness.

- Charlie Chaplin