



League Lines

March 2020

COVID-19 and You

The novel coronavirus dubbed “COVID-19” has finally taken hold of the national conscience. Estes Park has not escaped its reach, especially because our local population is largely in the most vulnerable group. Our local Safeway has not escaped the panicked buying of paper products (and apparently chicken, based on my visit today).

What can you do?

First and foremost, stay safe! Most of us are holed up in our respective residences. For an introvert like me, that is a slice of heaven, but those of you who are extroverts and need more social interaction, try using the phone. With technology today, Skype and similar services even allow face-to-face contact. Follow the guidelines such as social distancing, washing your hands frequently and don't touch your face (that's the hardest one...). Please know that washing your hands with soap is far more effective than using hand sanitizer, although the sanitizer is a good substitute in the absence of soap. See this YouTube video about a school experiment for proof: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNjr3F8NYXg>

Don't panic! It is almost always the best policy to stay calm so you can think rationally. You really don't need a year's supply of toilet paper to get through this crisis. Call the doctor if you feel sick or start running a fever. Use the internet to learn more – there are tons of reliable resources out there. Here are a few links:

WHO Global Guidance: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

CDC National Guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Larimer County Guidance: <https://www.larimer.org/health/communicable-disease/coronavirus-covid-19>

Estes Park Local Guidance: <https://eph.org/covid-19/>

Think of others: Check on your neighbors who may be having a tough time (by phone of course). Remember that many shops, restaurants and bars have been ordered to close. People are losing their jobs. Crossroads Ministries needs your help more than ever. While monetary donations are always welcome (<http://crossroadsep.org/>), there is a community-wide food drive planned for April 1st in the Timberline Urgent Care parking lot for drive-by food donation drop-off. Crossroads tells me that taking part in this food drive will reduce stress on their staff, as all canned and jarred goods are having to be wiped down with bleach wipes before being distributed to those in need. The food drive organizers will take care of this step before transporting the food to Crossroads. If you cannot be available on April 1st, or if circumstances prevent it from being held, you can take food donations to Crossroads and they will come out to your car to collect it. Those in need can also collect food while remaining in their cars.

And remember – we are, as always, Mountain Strong!

-Bonnie Seals

President's Message

As I write this, it is St. Patrick's Day and, despite the fact that I don't intend to go anywhere and mingle with other people, I plan to wear green and listen to Celtic tunes. We are all wondering what to do and how to react to the COVID-19 scare and the League of Women Voters of Estes Park is no exception. In an effort to keep our members safe and to respect the dictates of the Center for Disease Control and other health organizations, our board decided last week to cancel all upcoming League events for at least March and April. But we can and should continue to reach out to one another via telephone, Skype, the internet and various meeting websites. We in the League will share information with our members and on social media pages as we receive it and we urge everyone to use common sense and to educate yourselves on what the proper procedures are for staying healthy.

So take some time to read that book you've been meaning to read for some time, go for long walks or hikes, try out new recipes, paint something beautiful, work on puzzles, or clean out a closet. This will pass eventually, and as the great philosopher Unknown once said, "When you can't control what's happening, challenge yourself to control the way you respond to what's happening. That's where your power is."

Happy St. Patrick's Day.

Liz Zornes
President
LWVEP

All March and April Programs are Cancelled or Postponed

The **March 24** program on Recycling has been postponed to a later date. Watch for details.

The **April 22** program regarding Broadband in the Estes Valley has also been postponed and will likely be moved to next year's slate of programs.

May 13, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Annual Meeting – Our annual end-of-year meeting is currently still on the calendar, but of course this will be subject to events. We will keep you posted.

What's Happening at Rocky Mountain National Park?

Our neighbor to the west is also experiencing daily changes as everyone figures out how to cope with this current situation. Currently (as of March 18) all visitor centers and the Wilderness Office are closed. The Information Office will be open 7 days a week from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. You can call (970) 586-1206 for information about the Park. Outside of those hours, you will hear an automated message with current information. The Park itself remains open. We need nature now more than ever, but remember to follow social distancing guidelines. The Secretary of the Interior today waived all entrance fees to National Parks, so the gates will not be manned but will be open. Still staying in? Visit Rocky and other National Parks virtually by going to their websites (Rocky's is <https://www.nps.gov/romo/>) and finding their webcams.

Update from the Community Recycling Committee

Estes Recycles Day Postponed

Estes Recycles Day, originally scheduled for June 13 at the Presbyterian Community Church of the Rockies, has been postponed because of concerns over the rapidly evolving COVID-19 virus. We will report a new date when the situation becomes clearer.

In the meantime, please hold on to those hard-to-recycle materials for future recycling.

Community Recycling Committee – Building Relationships

One of the goals of the CRC this year is to build relationships with people in the community who are in a position to support and even advance our recycling efforts. In February CRC members had a number of positive interactions with community leaders.

- Joanie Crockett and Randy Maharry are working on event recycling with the town. They held a very positive meeting with Rob Hinkle, Fairground & Events Director for Estes Park. They discussed events where they might increase recycling, how to create signs for the current blue recycle bins and the possibility of including new event recycle bins in the town budget for next year.
- Barbara Werner and Alice Reuman met with the new General Manager of Safeway, Dion Steffonich, to begin to build a relationship and familiarize him with what we are doing. There are many ways in which Safeway can be an influencer for recycling in the community.
- CRC members were concerned about the non-recyclable items that were being discarded in the single-stream recycling bins at the Residential Recycling Center (RRC). To better understand how we can support single-stream recycling, Cathy Alper reached out to Stephen Gillette, Solid Waste Director, Larimer County. He informed us that the amount of contamination from RRC is not excessive and can be handled by the WM recycling facility.
- RMNP is holding a conference: Moving toward a Zero Waste Rocky Mountain National Park: A Systems Approach to Solid Waste Reduction. Several CRC members are invited to attend.
- Barbara Werner and Carolyn Lavallee are exploring Community Based Social Marketing which is a process for supporting behavior change in a community. Our plan is to incorporate these practices into our work with the community.

Update from the Voter Services Committee

First and foremost – don't forget to vote! If you are a Town resident, the Mayoral and Town Trustee election is April 7. Ballots are being mailed this week. The Town Clerk is encouraging everyone to mail their ballots to maintain social distancing. If you choose this option, remember that ballots must be received by April 7 at 7 p.m. – postmarks don't count! Normal postage (\$0.55 or a Forever stamp) applies. The Town is planning to have personnel available at the main entrance to Town hall, across from Bond Park, available to come to your car to take your ballot from you in person, and hand you a new ballot if you didn't receive one in the mail or if you spoiled your ballot. Hours for in-person drop-off will be 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. beginning Thursday, March 19, until Election Day. That day hours will be 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Please e-mail the Town Clerk at townclerk@estes.org or call 970-577-4771 if you need a new ballot before driving to Town Hall.

The Voter Service Committee continues to recruit members and is now up to 7 people! Let Robin Converse know if you are interested in joining at 832-646-9395 or robconverse56@gmail.com.

The Committee sponsored two candidate forums for the town election. The first forum was held for candidates for Mayor Wendy Koenig and Charley Dickey on Thursday, March 5th. The forum was well-attended and well-received. The second forum was held for the five Trustee candidates (Barbara MacAlpine, Patrick Martchink, Ward Nelson, Scott Webermeier, Cindy Younglund) on Wednesday, March 11th. It also was well-attended and well-received. Unfortunately live-streaming wasn't available due to technical difficulties. However, both forums were recorded and made available within 24 hours on the Town's website.

March 5 forum recording: (<https://estesgovtv.viebit.com/player.php?hash=4suUj2V0tsvg>)

March 11 forum recording (<https://estesgovtv.viebit.com/player.php?hash=9thp1HoZw5zP>)

For the Trustee candidate forum, about 15 questions went un-asked because of time constraints. These questions will be sent to the 5 candidates, and assuming they are answered, will be put up on the League website and Facebook page.

The committee is now in the process of planning for the District elections for May. The Park Hospital District and the Recreation and Parks District have enough candidates to hold elections. The usual "public" forums will not be held due to the COVID 19 health crisis. However, the Committee will be meeting to discuss alternatives for providing information on each candidate for the voters.



Junior Election Update

Unfortunately, the Junior Election Forum scheduled for Monday, March 16 for students 5th grade thru 12th grade had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus. Instead, an alternative format is being considered, likely written questions and answers between the students and candidates.

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.

Panic is highly contagious, especially in situations when nothing is known and everything is in flux.

- Stephen King