



*Denver***VOTER**

The LWVD Newsletter
December 2021/January 2022

January Briefing Preserving Accessible Reproductive Healthcare

**Tuesday, January 18
5:30 p.m. by Zoom**



Since 1983, the LWV of the United States has had a public policy position that supports a person's individual right of privacy to make reproductive choices. Over the ensuing decades, whenever states tried to restrict access to abortion, League has turned to advocacy and education to maintain this basic human right. In 2021 alone, about 560 restrictions were introduced all over the country, many of these pointedly aimed at the functioning of Planned Parenthood clinics.

Since September 1, 2021, most people in Texas have not been able to get an abortion due to a new Texas abortion restriction law (SB 8). This law has had a significant impact on nearby states that continue to offer abortion services. And by the date of our January briefing, the Supreme Court will have heard the arguments about the egregious Mississippi law that bans abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy. Meanwhile, Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains will have served over 92,000 people in its four states with basic health care such as

contraceptive services, cancer screenings, STI testing, well-woman exams, HIV treatment, and gender-affirming care as well as abortions. A significant majority of Planned Parenthood's clients are low income and people of color who may have no access to medical insurance coverage.

Our January briefing, "Preserving Accessible Reproductive Health Care," featuring Vicki Cowart, CEO and President of Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains, couldn't be more timely. Please join us at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 18. We have asked Ms. Cowart to address such topics as:

- The impact on Colorado of changes to reproductive rights laws in other states
- PPRM's priorities for our state, including addressing possible legislative proposals here
- What is at risk next and how can our local Leagues advocate and act for change?
- What is the future of telehealth reproductive care and access to the "abortion pill"?

Sue Stark, Program Committee

League Advocacy

LWVD sent this letter by email December 1 to each Denver City Council member regarding support for Denver Decides.

Dear Denver City Council Representative,

We wish to bring to the attention of City Council that for the first time in 18 years, Denver 8 TV did not budget money for the production of candidate and ballot issues forums for Denver voters.

Since 2003, when John Hickenlooper first ran for mayor of Denver, the League of Women Voters of Denver and the Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation, both non-partisan groups committed to the education of voters, have collaborated with Denver 8 TV to present candidate and ballot issue forums. In every election cycle since 2003, our groups have worked with Denver 8 TV to present in-person and televised forums, including school board elections, even when these were held at a different time of year. These forums have provided a unique opportunity for voters to see and hear candidates respond to questions posed by impartial presenters, and to attend in person or to watch at a variety of times.

Historically, our two organizations have sponsored these forums with full cooperation from Denver 8 TV. Their leadership was strongly in favor of fulfilling their mission of government access and public education. However, in more recent years, this cooperation has been less reliable. In spite of our working in good faith to institute many cost saving measures to accommodate Denver 8's budget, we now find that Denver 8 has pulled back its support, which has led to our inability to present candidate forums for the current school board election and the possible cutting back on the depth of presentations on ballot issues.

Given the current political climate; the attempts, many successful, to politicize school boards; and the proliferation of deliberate misinformation, this is especially regrettable. It is too late to change this decision, but we are appealing to you to assure that this will not happen again. We are initiating this conversation with the City Council now to ensure that Denver 8's budget includes adequate funding for the production and telecast of municipal election forums for 2022 and, to the extent that it is possible, for future municipal elections as well.

The best path forward seems to be using the PEG income as it was intended. Since the first cable franchise was granted in Denver in the mid-1970's, cable subscribers have paid this fee, which is money set aside for Public, Education and Government access. This money is meant to be used for voter education and oversight and is key to the purpose of Denver 8 TV.

You may have other ideas as to how the League of Women Voters of Denver and the Inter Neighborhood Cooperation can work with you and Denver 8 to ensure this programming. As Denver grows in size and complexity, we must provide accurate information and vehicles for community education and dialogue. We look forward to working with you in these efforts.

Sincerely,

Nancy Ulrich, LWVD Voter Service Candidate Video Coordinator
Loretta Koehler, President Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation
Anne Duncan and Jeanette Scotland, LWVD Voter Service Co-Chairs

Highlights from the Colorado State Demographer Briefing

Elizabeth Garner, Colorado's State Demographer for over 25 years, provided an information-packed briefing on November 16. A [tape](#) of her remarks and a link to her [slide deck](#) appear on our web page.

Here are some of the highlights of the trends she noted based on the 2020 Census:

- Both nationally and statewide, population growth is slowing. Where there is growth in Colorado, it is concentrated in the Front Range/I-25 corridor. From 2010-2020, 95% of the state's growth was in this area versus 78% in the previous decade.
- Colorado is the 5th youngest state, while at the same time the 6th fastest aging state.
- Colorado's population is now over 5.77 million.
- Colorado's birthrate is slowing (it peaked in 2007), which significantly impacts K-12 education, higher education and the future labor force. The population under 18 increased only 38K in the last decade, a total of 5% of the total growth versus 17% in the previous decade.
- Colorado has seen the largest slowdown in teen pregnancy in the nation!
- We saw the largest growth in absolute numbers in the 65+ age group, most of whom are not workers. Our continually aging population will impact jobs and occupations – growth in the healthcare and service industries,

mainly low-wage jobs. Housing needs for this age group may give rise to an increase in the remodeling industry and building congregate living.

- The tight housing market can be traced to a mismatch between the new housing created and the estimated household growth. To attract and retain new workers, Colorado will have to create housing that fits the jobs people are filling.
- Diversity: For the first time, the 2020 census allowed people to select “two or more races.” While Colorado in 2020 is 65% white and 22% Hispanic, there has been a significant decrease in the population under 18 that identifies as “white.” With our younger population increasingly diverse, there is a risk that if we do not reduce the achievement gap, our labor force will have difficulty attracting and retaining workers.

I have only skimmed the wealth of information that Ms. Garner provided. Her entire presentation is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6b2FkwfW79s>. Though it is jam-packed full of data, Elizabeth makes that data understandable and relevant as she relates the demographic “story” of Colorado in 2020.

Sue Stark, Program Committee

Denver League Donates Bulbs

Because we buy our bulbs in bulk and because we have a Beautify Denver option for donations on our bulb sale order form, we donate bulbs each year to non-profits who are willing to plant them. Those bulbs almost always go to Denver Parks, an obvious recipient, and because they allow us to use the City Park Greenhouse each fall to distribute our bulbs.

This year, the number of bulbs they could plant was going to be limited due to staff shortages. Therefore, we donated some bulbs to St. Thomas Episcopal Church at Leaguer Peg Oldham’s request since they were totally redoing their courtyard at 2201 Dexter St., very near our office. Then Leaguer Kathleen “Katie” Brennan reached out to Frank Rowe, Executive Director of Denver Park Trust, which he founded in 2019 with Councilwoman Kendra Black, to “improve and add new parks in neighborhoods that needed them.” He sent the following summary and pictures describing the planting.

Marty Sloven, Bulb Sale Co-Chair

On Monday November 15, 2021, thanks to the generosity of the League of Women Voters and its contribution of bulbs to Denver Parks and Recreation, a team of volunteers from the Urban Egg Cherry Creek, the League of Women Voters, and the Denver Park Trust planted over 150 daffodil bulbs in Alamo Placita Park.



Frank from Denver Parks Trust, Rachel and Cassidy from Urban Egg Cherry Creek, Katie Brennan LVWD, Kase and Trace, Parks Horticulturists

Each year the League of Women Voters donates daffodil and tulip bulbs to be planted in Denver parks. This year,

due to city staff shortages, there was a chance that some bulbs might not get planted, a risk that was avoided thanks to teamwork between Denver Parks and Recreation's horticultural team and the volunteers. The contribution of bulbs and the volunteer help in planting and caring for our parks will ensure a more colorful bloom this upcoming spring.

Frank Rowe



Rachel and Cassidy from the Urban Egg Cherry Creek plant Spring Gold.

Our Local League Position on Cable Television

After a couple of months off to focus on election issues in the last two *Voters*, we will again look at one of the positions in the League of Women Voters of Denver program book. This month we will look at our position on Cable Television which reads as follows:

Support for strong, representative citizen involvement in planning a cable TV franchise with the goal of protecting citizen interests. Following the grant of a franchise, the terms of the franchise should be monitored to ensure the continued protection of citizens' interests. (1973, amended 1991)

In 2007, members felt the Cable TV position was so out of date that it should be dropped. Nancy Ulrich, who had been our representative on media issues, felt this was a mistake and asked our members to reinstate the position at our Annual Meeting in 2009. Her explanation at the time in on page 14 of our program book. Her recommendation was approved. However, I asked Nancy to address what has happened to cable since that time. Her present thinking is below.

You can find all our local [Positions in Brief](#) on our website under [Advocacy](#). We also have the entire [Denver Local Program 2015](#), listing many of the briefings and subjects we have studied since the 1930s, available as a link at the bottom of the Advocacy page.

Marty Sloven, Past Director of Program

Statement Regarding League of Women Voters Denver Position on Cable Television

Cable television service started in Denver in approximately 1973. A League committee carefully studied cable television in Denver, including public access. Many years later, the original position was out of date and temporarily dropped. However, to drop the position would mean a committee would have to start all over with an update.

The thinking when the updated version was submitted to the Annual Meeting was that cable and internet would merge. That has not happened. Instead, streaming and streaming services have proliferated. The result is that television viewing has options beyond cable access. Now cable companies make streaming services pay fees to them to use their airways.

However, the public also can purchase their streaming services on an individual preference basis.

It may be that at the League's 2022 Annual Meeting, we will officially delete our Cable Television Position. While the cable franchise will be up for renewal every ten years, the public may have less influence in the negotiation process.

Nancy Ulrich

Interested in the 2022 Elections? Join the new Voter Service Committee

Voter Service works to implement the mission of the League of Women Voters: Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy. Here is what we do and we hope you will join us.

Our first meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 12th at 4:30 p.m. via Zoom.

Voter Registration will be focused in the schools and jails and around National Voter Registration Day on September 20. Thanks to our partnership with the Clerk and Recorder's Office, we will have access to high school programs encouraging youth to register and talk to their peers and eligible voting friends and family members. To find out how – join our new committee. We are already established as the legally required civic non-partisan organization that assists the County Sheriff with voter registration. In 2020, we did in-person voting in the jails. We train all voter registrars (circulators). Those interested in serving in the jails need background checks and safety training done by the jails.

League produces the **Pro and Con pamphlets** too. We need people interested in researching the issues, contacting supporters and opponents of issues, and writing the findings for the pamphlet we will produce. We will also need people to help with distributing the pamphlets. That includes making a list of locations, getting permissions if necessary, and organizing the actual delivery of the precious documents in both English and Spanish. This all takes time. We want to get started ASAP in 2022.

VOTE411.org is our on-line voter guide. We need people who can develop neutral questions for candidates to answer. The candidates enter their responses themselves. We need members to call the candidates to remind them to enter their information for voters to see.

Perhaps you like public speaking. If so, join the **Speaker's Bureau**. That includes getting trained by us on the issues and speaking to organizations that request non-partisan speakers. It may also include working with youth in the high schools.

Participation with **Denver Decides** involves planning and producing forums for candidates and ballot issues. Denver Decides, a coalition of the LWVD, Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC), and Denver 8 TV, informs the community on the general election. Nancy Ulrich leads this effort for League along with Pearlanne Zelarney, Fran Coleman, and Anne Duncan. They will need additional help this year as the League and Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation may have to do the job themselves.

Through **partnerships with other non-partisan community groups**, we expand our efforts and assist those organizations to fulfill their goals. Committee members can help us to reach out and be receptive to other such groups.

Join us on Wednesday, January 12 at 4:30 p.m. for our first meeting of 2022. Contact Jeanette Scotland at jscotland@gmail.com or Anne Duncan at anned47@msn.com for a zoom link.

Jeanette Scotland and Anne Duncan, Voter Service Co-Chairs

Climate Action and the League

Editor's Note: I have been an inactive (listening only) member of the LWVUS Climate Change Google group, receiving emails for the last couple of years. This group is "a network of over 300 League members across the country who are interested in and/or working on climate-change related issues. It is a collaborative forum where all are welcome to share information about climate solutions, ideas of effective ways to address climate change, and experiences with climate action at the local, state, national, and international levels." When I read the following post summarizing the COP26, I immediately thought others in the Denver League might enjoy it too. With Lora Lucero's permission, I have reprinted it here. To see more about climate change, see the LWVUS Toolkit for Climate

Action here: http://participate.lww.org/c/9217/p/salsa/web/common/public/content?content_item_KEY=3766.
Pearlanne

My take-away from COP26 in Glasgow

I'm not going to summarize the final COP26 agreement or its many deficiencies, nor regurgitate what the media coverage is sharing. If you check out the [Irish Times](#), the [New York Times](#), the [Guardian](#), the [Financial Times](#), and many more, it's clear that COP26 didn't live up to expectations. I also recommend these opinion pieces: [Christiana Figueres](#) was head of the UN climate change convention that achieved the Paris agreement in 2015, and [George Monbiot](#) calling for civil disobedience. While in Glasgow at COP26, I was following several groups who provided excellent coverage of COP26, including regular reports from [Architecture 2030](#), [Interfaith Power & Light](#), and [EESI](#). There's a lot of information for anyone who wants to get into the COP26 weeds. (See [here](#) for the official COP26 outcomes.)

Sitting in a youth hostel in Edinburgh after COP26 finished, I met a man from Normandy (33 years old) visiting on a lark for the weekend because he found a roundtrip air ticket for €10. He works in international shipping, scheduling exports and imports. He understands the urgency of climate change but doesn't believe we can repair the damage already done. "It's only going to get worse, and leaders aren't going to do anything fast enough because of their love of power and money." He gave me concrete examples.

I passed a group of young girls (teens?) sitting in the park in Edinburgh and asked to take their photo. I told them I had just come from the climate meeting in Glasgow. It wasn't the right time and place to engage with them on climate change; they were more excited about being seen and recognized on my Instagram account.

Communication is my take away from COP26. You and I know the science, and the urgency with which a profound transformation must occur if we're going to leave a planet that our children and grandchildren can safely call home with confidence of a bright future. My new grandchild (expected in Spring 2022) will be my age in 2090; this is very personal for me. We have only a decade, or perhaps two, to avoid the catastrophic consequences of fossil fuels.

We must meet people where they're at and arm them with the information which spurs them to act. We must engage in every venue where we believe we can make a difference. Some of us will engage with the politicians in Congress, state Capitals, and city halls pressing leaders to act consistent with the climate reality. Others will engage with students and audiences in different venues. Some will write. Others will protest and engage in civil disobedience. Perhaps the most important communication will occur one-on-one with our neighbors and family. None of these will be sufficient on their own, but each will lead us to the critical threshold where public engagement will tip the scales.

I didn't see any strong presence of the fossil fuel industry at COP26 but they had the [largest delegation](#) there, and likely had better access to decision-makers than many others. Listening to many different voices (online and in person at COP26) about what we must do, I was particularly sensitive to the cacophony of ideas often not connecting with each other. (At one point I actually broke down in tears because of the cognitive dissonance.)

People ask me if I'm an optimist or pessimist about the future. I'm neither. I consider myself a "possibilitarian." The path we're currently on is bleak, but I believe we can take another path towards a much better outcome, a future that looks very bright. This possibilitarian understands that switching to that new path could happen very quickly, but it will require (1) more people aware of the dangers of the current path and deciding to change course; (2) new and more effective ways to communicate about the dangers and possibilities; and (3) new leadership. The most encouraging part of COP26 was observing the youth inside and out pushing the status quo, making the leaders "uncomfortable." I believe the old farts have to step aside or be removed, and the youth need to take the reins of power. They will certainly make mistakes, but don't we all? I witnessed their true leadership at COP26.

The 33-year-old from Normandy needs hope; the teenagers need to experience life free of fear; and the fossilized leaders in many countries need to feel the heel of our boots. Communication is the key.

Thank you for joining me on this COP26 journey!
Lora

Lora Anne Lucero
League of Women Voters Central New Mexico

The League of Women Voters of Colorado's Climate Emergency Task Force

Right here in Colorado, you can join a LWVCO Climate Emergency Task Force. See more information on the LWVCO website under [Climate Emergency](#). On the website they say they are not a study group; they are dedicated to action. There are six different areas of focus and the contact information if you are interested in joining. On December 1, 50 people from around the state attended a League-sponsored Zoom forum with three legislators from Colorado to inform us on what legislation is proposed this year on climate issues. Consider joining!

Marty Sloven, Program Committee

Board Member Highlight

Frank Bennett, Board Member

Editor's Note: This is the fourth in a series of articles highlighting Board members. We thought you'd like to know a little more about their backgrounds and what League means to them. We've also asked them for recommendations on books, movies, or activities.



My involvement with the League of Women Voters goes back about 70 years because my mother was an active member and an occasional Unit Chair when I was in elementary school. I came home from school to eat lunch each day, and it wasn't unusual to find the house full of active, eager Leaguers.

My wife Carla joined the League when we lived in Madison, New Jersey, and she quickly joined the Denver League when we moved to Denver in 1976. In those days, it was not possible for men to join the League.

I started getting involved in the League as a chauffeur. Carla was going through chemotherapy in 2007, and she didn't always feel up to driving to the Legislative Action Committee meetings. I drove and attended the meetings with her. Since I had been a clinical psychologist for 35 years before I retired in 2006, I began to take an interest in mental health legislation and follow that area. It must have been somewhere in there that I joined the League.

In 2009, I agreed to take Leslie Chomic's place as editor of the Legislative Letter, but I always saw myself as more of an assembler than an editor. (To keep the cost of postage down, the Letter had been limited to 8 pages, but I received permission to expand it to 10 since that would cost the same. It continued to expand, as we mailed fewer and fewer copies and sent most by email.)

I have presented Pros and Cons for a few elections to various audiences and have worked on the Pros and Cons brochures a couple of times.

What has always impressed me about the League and what has kept me involved is the incredible knowledge of various Leaguers in their area of expertise. With the coming of term limits, it is common for Leaguers to know more about a legislative issue than the legislators who are voting on the laws.

I grew up in the Washington, D.C., area, got a B.A. at the University of Toronto, and a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Columbia University. I worked in New Jersey for five years, and then joined the new Aurora Mental Health Center in 1976. Carla and I married in 1968, and we have three children and four grandchildren, all of whom live near us, which we really enjoy.

Since I retired, I have spent most of my time with my family – the children, the grandchildren, various siblings and cousins. I have become less and less involved in mental health issues as my expertise becomes more and more outdated. I play a good deal of pickleball, traveled a fair amount before COVID made that scary, and enjoy birding both locally and when traveling. Occasionally we go cross-country skiing, but that is less frequent as we age.

For those of you who enjoy racquet sports, competition, and exercise, I heartily recommend pickleball. For those of us who are too slow or immobile to play reasonable tennis anymore, it is an excellent substitute. For those who are more contemplative, I recommend *Trooper*, the story of a Bobcat who lives with a family for many years. (I have read a good many more serious books lately, but they have tended to focus on one form of plague or another, and I can't conscientiously recommend those out of concerns for everyone's mental health.)

Membership - It's About All of Us

We are lucky to have new members who are engaged in Denver League and Colorado League! We welcomed Laura Baker, Carol Bodin, Gretchen Vaughn, Debbie Fox, and Wendy Macklin, who participated in the New Member event hosted by the LWVCO on Zoom, Thursday, November 4. This event included members from around the state and membership leaders in the state's local leagues. The one hour meeting included introductions, which allowed for participants to share a little about themselves. There was plenty of time for questions and comments on how to become more involved. One participant suggested that members volunteer in an area of League work that is your passion!

We, the Membership Committee, are here to support all new members, returning members and current members as we volunteer in areas which may include our passions or may intrigue us into saying to ourselves and others, "I have a purpose in this new area!"

Please contact us and let us know how we might better support you as a local member.

Joan Friend, Chair Membership Committee
303-596-1022
jfriendrd@gmail.com

Safeway Gift Cards...



The perfect gift for every occasion!

A new supply of 50 cards is in place. The cards are \$10.00 and can be purchased by sending a check to LWV Denver at 1980 Dahlia Street, Denver, CO 80220.

Please contact Nancy Ulrich, 303-359-1484, with questions.

Welcome New and Renewing Members!

Laura Baker aurabaker87@gmail.com
Robin Pittman robinpittman@yahoo.com
Nancy Reid nanr@att.net
Joann Taylor joanntaylor819@gmail.com

Please Renew Your Membership or Become a Member

If you received this email and are not a member, please consider joining us. If it's time to renew your membership, consider doing it on-line. Follow this [link](#) to join or renew at one of our membership levels. Membership dues are tax deductible.

Regular Individual Membership	\$60
Sustaining membership (includes an additional donation)	\$125
Two regular members at the same address	\$90
Two sustaining members at the same address (includes an additional donation)	\$150
Member needing assistance with paying dues	\$5
Part or full-time student	\$10

Members: Forward this *VOTER* and encourage your friends and neighbors to join!

Happy Holidays!

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Done