

The Boulder County Voter

League of Women Voters of Boulder County * December 2017 – January 2018



Influence of the Pharmaceutical Industry on Health Care

By Mary Anna Dunn, Health Care Team

Big Pharma, Market Failure

December 4, 2017
7:00 PM
Frasier Meadows, 4th Floor
350 Ponca Place, Boulder



Our LWVBC Health Care Team, in collaboration with People to People, is offering an informative program about the pharmaceutical industry. This documentary, “Big Pharma, Market Failure,” was created by a small business owner who was faced with skyrocketing prices in providing healthcare coverage for his employees. He explores drug pricing, market forces, research and development of drugs, and effects of TV ads. It’s a compelling story from a citizen – and a call to action.

The LWVBC Health Team’s focus on mental health concerns, including addiction, relates closely to this topic, as well as to health care in general. The affordability and availability of drugs strongly affects all of us. The current opioid crisis is part of the whole mix as well. Being *informed* citizens helps us to be *active* citizens. Join us for this film and discussion of what we can do to improve the situation.

This showing will be on Monday, December 4, 7:00 pm at Frasier Meadows in Boulder. We plan additional showings in Longmont and Louisville in early 2018, details to be determined.

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December - January Events Calendar

Dec. 4: [Health Care Team: Big Pharma](#)

Dec. 5: [RCV Colorado Event \(p. 6 for details\)](#)

Dec 8: [Holiday Party](#)

Dec. 17: [Social Policy Team](#)

Jan. 8: [Program Planning](#)

Jan. 15: [D&D on Constitutional Convention](#)

Jan. 17: [Program Planning](#)

Jan. 25: [CC on Freedom of the Press](#)

Jan. 29: [LWVCO Legislative Conference](#)

President's Letter: Election Past, League Future!

As we approach the end of 2017, I am reflecting on results of the recent election, as well as focusing on program planning for LWVBC in 2018. First, I have been observing the press coverage of the latest elections in Boulder County. There is some controversy about New Era Colorado and their success in getting CU students to register and vote in Boulder's election about municipalization. You may recall that one of the speakers for our Fall Kick-off Meeting was Molly Fitzpatrick from New Era Colorado. Their organization is committed to getting young people registered and engaged in our democracy, which sounds like cause for celebration to me! Kudos to New Era, and I hope we can work as partners in the future to meaningfully engage youth in the democratic process.

More concerning to me, was the report about the extremely low turnout in Boulder County. According to the County Clerk's office, only 43.6% of Boulder County's active registered voters cast ballots this year. Turnout was only about 42% in the Longmont mayor's race and on Boulder's municipalization issue, both of which were very close races. VOTES MATTER!

That brings me to our local League work: what will we do in 2018, to build on our voter service and issue advocacy work, to engage more Boulder County residents? In January, LWVBC members will have a chance to help decide what specific next steps League will take to "Make Democracy Work for All." We will have **Program Planning meetings on January 8 and January 17**, and I hope you can make it to one of them to share your perspectives and thoughts. One of the great aspects of LWV is that our Program Planning meetings not only affect what actions we take on the local level, but also the state and national level. That advocacy alignment, at all levels of government, positions our organization well for addressing critical threats to our democracy, including money in politics; voter disenfranchisement; district mapping; and more. This year, we are focusing on the local and national levels.

In addition, we are planning educational events for January and February, some in preparation for lobbying at the state legislature; the state legislative session begins on January 10. Since we won't have a January Voter newsletter, I urge you to check our website periodically to see what new events are coming up as we continue our goal of Making Democracy Work for All.

Till then, I look forward to seeing many of you at our Holiday Party on December 8th, and hope you have a wonderful New Year.

To reach LWVBC President Peggy Leech, you can email her at president@lwvbc.org

Donate Your Car to League! Donating your old vehicle to LWVBC is a convenient, easy way to support our voter service and advocacy work. It may also qualify you for a tax deduction.

To find out how, visit the [LWVBC website](http://lwvbc.org) to fill out an online form, or call 1-866-628-2277 and we'll take care of the rest.



LWVBC Holiday Wine and Cheese Party



Season's Greetings

Food, wine, music, an interactive presentation, and fellowship
with League members and new friends!
Join in the fun: [RSVP today!](#)
Member admission: \$30 Guests: Free!

Friday, December 8, 2017, 6:00 ~ 8:00 PM
Louisville Center for the Arts
801 Grant Ave. Louisville, CO



Thank you to everyone who participated in the Social Policy Team (SPT) “Hunger and Democracy” events in November. Join our next SPT meeting on December 17th, 1:30 at Frasier Meadows to debrief and determine our next steps on hunger and food policy issues in Boulder County.

In Case You Missed It:

Listen to LWVBC Intern Rossanna Longo Better's interviews on KGNU, on important topics to League and our community, and other League commentary:

- [Driver's Licenses for Immigrants](#)
- [Hunger & Democracy: Farming and Crops, Civic Engagement and Hunger, and Hunger Assistance](#)
 - [Food Security](#)

No More Lesser-of-Two-Evils: Alternative Voting Methods Are Closer Than You Think

By Linda Templin and Celeste Landry, Voting Methods Team

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) is a simple, yet powerful change we can make to give voters a stronger voice in our elections. Currently, when more than two candidates run in an election, someone can be elected without a majority of the vote - or - there is an expensive, low-turnout runoff. In either case, people are afraid that votes will be split between two similar candidates so they vote for the lesser-of-two-evils.

RCV frees voters to rank candidates in order of choice - first, second, third, and so on - instead of picking just one. All first choices are counted, and if a candidate has a majority, then they win. If no one has a majority, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and those voters have their ballot instantly count for their next choice. This process continues until one candidate remains and is declared the winner.

RCV allows voters to be more expressive than the widely-used plurality voting method. University studies show that ranked choice voting rewards candidates for running more positive campaigns and focusing on the issues.

Ranked choice voting is used in communities across the country as a means to empower voters and foster better elections. More and more cities are adopting it to allow voters to participate in a single decisive election, and avoid the high costs and low turnout associated with runoffs.

Under the 2008 Voter Choice Act of Colorado, municipalities can opt to use RCV. The town of Telluride has successfully conducted two of their mayoral races RCV. For larger cities, the prospect of hand-counting so many ballots has been daunting...until now. New elections software has been approved to count RCV ballots. The same vendor that supplies software for most Colorado counties will be running an RCV election in Santa Fe, New Mexico in March 2018.

Cities in the San Francisco Bay area and the twin cities of Minneapolis & St. Paul have used RCV in multiple election cycles. This has demonstrated that voters understand how to use RCV and that incumbents enjoy the same advantage as in non-RCV races. As more is learned from other cities about the benefits of RCV, more Colorado cities will adopt it.

There are single-winner RCV elections, sometimes called instant-runoff or IRV elections, and multi-winner RCV elections, sometimes called single transferable vote or STV elections. Most RCV elections in the U.S. are IRV elections, but Boulder used STV for its city council elections from 1917 to 1947 and the city of Cambridge, MA has used STV for its elections since 1941. Our League's very own Celeste Landry spent 3 weeks in Cambridge in October experiencing the campaign season and researching how the city came to adopt STV. ***

To learn more, join RCV Colorado:

“Multi-Winner Ranked Choice Elections: Cambridge Since 1941”

Tuesday, December 5

1:30 - 3:00 PM

Denver Press Club, 1330 Glenarm Place, Denver CO 80204

Featuring Celeste Landry of LWVBC Voting Methods Team, and Rob Richie of FairVote Voter Services

Supporting Redistricting Reform in Colorado

Following is excerpted from the LWVCO November 2017 Voter

In January 2017, LWVCO passed a motion to add redistricting reform to their goals. An initial group was formed of current Board Members and staff based on this strong Board approval. To further our efforts, the group joined the Fair Districts Colorado (FDC) committee when it was first formed. Over the spring and summer, the group met and reports were given at each Board meeting. It has been stated that League is a valued as part of the FDC committee because of our reputation for fairness, non-partisanship and thoroughness. Being part of the FDC allows the League to leverage our work and to have a direct impact on actions in our state.



LWVCO is confident in the work of the FDC as they are using the League's Program Positions to formulate their initiatives along with their stated Principles. In October, the LWVCO Board reconfirmed their support of the work being done by the FDC with a vote of confidence.

Recently, FDC submitted three different ballot initiatives with the CO Title Board. The ballot initiative process is a long and difficult one. LWVCO believes that the ballot initiatives are a positive step forward in reforming Colorado's redistricting laws. LWVCO will update Local League Leaders of any pertinent developments and post the latest redistricting reform news.

More information may be found at LWVColorado.org on the HOME page. Please feel free to send any questions or concerns about the League's work on redistricting to the state League office. An LWVCO Board and/or a FDC Committee member will respond to your inquiry. Thank you for your support of this effort to Make Democracy Work.

The Principles of FDC:

- Redistricting should be done by an independent commission consisting, to the extent possible, equally of Republicans, Democrats, and Unaffiliated and non-major party members. It should reflect Colorado's geographic and racial/ethnic diversity. Both parties should have equal input on the composition of the commission, and processes should be put in place to ensure that neither party can gain control over the non major party members.
- The commission should be required to obtain a supermajority in order to pass any map.
- Maps should be drawn by nonpartisan staff, instead of political insiders.
- The commission and its staff should be guided by neutral, fair, good-government criteria in drawing maps, such as U.S. Constitutional requirements, the Federal Voting Rights Act, county and city integrity, compactness, communities of interest, and competitiveness. Districts should not be drawn for the purpose of favoring or disadvantaging any political party, candidate or incumbent.
- The commission should be subject to transparency measures, such as citizen participation, open meetings and open records laws, sunshine laws, and adequate notice and timelines for participation.

[Read LWV positions on redistricting at <http://lww.org/content/impact-issues-online-edition> and <http://lwwcolorado.org/lww/lwvco-positions-on-issues/>]

A Tribute to Vera (Vickie) Winston

By Gretchen Winston May and Ruth Stemler

LWVBC has learned of the death of life member Vera (Vickie) Winston at the age of 95. We extend our sympathy to Vickie's daughter, Gretchen Winston May, and their extended family.



Vickie joined the Boulder County League of Women Voters in 1958. She was a valued 59-year member. Originally from Springfield, MA, Vickie moved with her husband Paul Winston to Boulder in 1952 when he began teaching in the CU Biology Department. Vickie attended Mt. Holyoke College for her undergraduate studies and received a Master's in Social Service from Smith College. Before getting married she was a social worker with Rockland State Hospital outside of New York City.

Vickie attended her first League meeting when Mary Maslin, wife of another CU Biology professor, phoned her and said "I'm coming to pick you up and we're going to a meeting of the League of Women Voters." Gretchen May, Vickie's daughter, stated that before she went to elementary school she remembers attending League meetings with her mother. For many years Vickie participated in the Uni. Hill Unit meetings. Gretchen remembers that her mother was very active in a study on water issues in the 1950's and in study, education and advocacy on transportation issues in the 1970's. Vickie was dedicated to the League's goals of informed voter participation and the importance of women participating in the political process. She participated in voter registration drives as well as collecting signatures on LWV sponsored petitions. Gretchen commented that being a member of the League was part of her mother's identity.

Vickie was dearly loved by many at Frasier where she lived for more than nine years. Though no longer a Unit Leader at Frasier, Vickie still attended all League events there. Fellow residents of Frasier describe her as a positive, friendly, and lovely lady.

**LWVBC is advertising for our part-time Administrative Assistant position!
If you, or someone you know, might be interested, you can check out the
job description at lwvbc.org.**



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