

# Beverly Wallace: If you're a voter, you are my hero

Local | October 28, 2018



**Beverly Wallace**

Not all heroes wear capes and if you're a voter, you are my hero. Voting is your live connection to government, to express your will, and your voice on the direction this nation and this state should go. Voting is to democracy as sacraments are to the church — important actions that express belief and responsibility.

Voting is democracy's most fundamental right and sacred duty. It is a shared value uniting us as Americans. Many people have put their lives at risk both here and abroad, and have given their last full measure of devotion to insure your right to vote is protected.

Unfortunately, we also have those who will try to interfere with or suppress our right to vote, and in effect dilute the influence of various people. If you don't think your vote counts, you are wrong. Why else would these forces work to suppress, manipulate and discourage you from voting, if it weren't important and powerful?

Be a hero! It's not too late to stand up, step up and be counted, because the opposite of freedom is not tyranny, but apathy. Evil flourishes when good people do nothing. Bad candidates are elected by people who don't vote. So, vote for good ones. If you want to see change in this country, this state, or this county, be the change. Please believe that you and your vote make a difference.

These mid-term elections will be the most important elections in years in terms of how they will affect you locally, and personally. In the last mid-term election in 2016, only 37 percent of

eligible voters voted. According to Votebuilder.com, more than 7,000 people in Weld County have not voted at all since 2008. If you are an unaffiliated voter, you don't have a pass to get out of your responsibility to vote. About half of all registered voters in the state 25 years old or younger are unaffiliated. Sadly, national voter mid-term election turnout in 18-29 year-olds has been at just 20 percent. This must change!

So, if you haven't voted recently, you should be certain you're registered to vote. Go to [govotecolorado.com](http://govotecolorado.com) to check your registration, and register to vote. You can register and cast a ballot up through Election Day by appearing in-person at a voter service and polling center during the early voting period, or even on election day. If you want a mail-in ballot, you need to register on-line eight days or more before the election or by October 29. That is also the mail-in deadline if mailing your ballot. If you have a felony conviction, you can vote as long as you are no longer on parole; probation is acceptable to be able to vote. You must be 18 years old on Election Day, or before to vote, but you can register to vote at 16 years-of-age, even if you can't vote until you are 18.

If you don't know the issues, or anything about the candidates, get informed. Most candidates have websites. Another good place to start is at [ballotpedia.org](http://ballotpedia.org). If you put [ballotpedia](http://ballotpedia.org)/(any candidate's name).org, it will show you everything you need to know that's available about a candidate. You can also look up information about ballot issues; there are a lot of them.

Ballots are in the mail on Oct. 15, 2018. You have until Oct. 29 to return mail your ballot postage is 73 cents. You can also drop it at a ballot drop-off location, or vote in person at an early voting polling place or on Nov. 6. Don't neglect this sacred responsibility, it's the most American thing you can do.

*— Beverly Wallace is a Greeley native and retired fifth grade teacher. She comes from a long line of history and social studies teachers. Although she would have trouble voting on the best pizza place or nail salon in Greeley, or on which Kardashian is the prettiest, she has no hesitation on voting in the mid-term elections. Make your choice and use your voice.*

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**Barbara Kopp Niebauer**

Thanks for a well written piece.

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