LWV LEHIGH COUNTY VOTER

League of Women Voters of Lehigh County

December 2018/January 2019 Volume 67, Issue 4

Inside this issue:

Membership	2
Voters Guide Committee	2
Board Notes	3
Final Candidate Forum-7th District	4
December Hot Topics Luncheon	5
AAUW Panel Discussion	7
Redistricting Town Hall	8
November Hot Topics Luncheon	8

Mark your calendar:

Jan. 14 Hot Topics Luncheon "Electoral College and Electoral Reform" at the Superior Restaurant, Emmaus

Jan. 26 Running for Local Office Workshop at DeSales University 7:30 a.m. to noon

Feb. 11 Hot Topics Luncheon "Election Trends" at the Superior Restaurant, Emmaus

Feb. 21 Redistricting Town Hall at Muhlenberg College

President's Message

Dear League Members:

We had no problem with filling the pages of this issue with exciting content because our members and partners are so active.

Running for Local Office Workshop

Thanks to local Leagues, potential candidates in our area will have had plenty of opportunity to learn how to how to qualify and run for local office. On Saturday, November 17, the League of Women Voters of Northampton County sponsored a workshop at Kiva Hall, Northampton Community College.

The Lehigh County League is pleased to announce that its "Running for Local Office Workshop" is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday, January 26, 2019. The date is well in advance of the first day to circulate petitions, February 19, 2019. League members Ann Bartholomew, Ken Mohr, Jan Little and Doris Glaessmann recently reviewed the timeline and responsibilities with Assistant Professor of Political Science at DeSales University Dr. Kellen Gracey who has involved many of his students. League members who wish to do the same are welcome to contact Jan Little.

The event will be held in the DeSales University Center, 2755 Station Ave. Center Valley. At the check-in desk, registrants will receive a binder with everything they need to know, complete and submit in order to run for office well in advance of the first day to circulate petitions.

Information about registering will appear soon. Not running for office? Register to learn more about this process in Lehigh County.

January is a big month for Gracey's involvement in our League's initiatives. There is more information in this issue about the presentation he is giving, "Electoral College and Electoral Reform," at the Hot Topics Luncheon on January 14, 2019. There will be more information about that presentation in the next issue of The Voter.

Hot Topics Luncheons

As we hold monthly luncheons from September through April, a "double monthly" issue like this will include information about the luncheons in November, December and January.

Continued on Page 2

January Hot Topics Luncheon

The League of Women Voters of Lehigh County will present Assistant Professor Dr. Kellen Gracey speaking about "Electoral College and Electoral Reform," at its January 14 Hot Topics Luncheon.

Kellen Gracey joined the DeSales political science faculty after receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. His research interests include religion and politics, electoral systems, and political behavior in both American and comparative contexts. His recent work examines the consequences of adopting preferential voting reforms and compulsory voting laws, the role of emotions in shaping attitudes about candidates and how subnational variation in religious diversity shapes politics in the states.

Continued on Page 2

President's Message (continued from Page 1)

The banquet room was filled with more than 50 attendees to listen to Bill White, former Morning Call columnist, speak about "Election Results" on November 12. Many members of our League and the public attended. Members of the Northampton County League also attended. We appreciated that one of these, Julie Swan, wrote an article about the presentation for The Lehigh Valley Press. This article appears elsewhere in this issue and as a post on our Facebook page. It also formed the basis of a press release Kaitlyn Moyer and Erin Ondush sent to the media a week after the luncheon. Thank you, Julie.

At the Hot Topics Luncheon on December 10, attendees learned about "The State of Lehigh County" from Lehigh County Executive Phillips Armstrong. Thanks to Mary Erdman, a piece about the presentation is inside along with Mary's many pieces about redistricting reform. Many of these are about educational events featuring Mary!

Legislative Interviews

This month, we will contact the local offices of our nine state legislators to schedule interviews using questions about current issues recently received from the state League. Written reports are due to the state League in early March, so the appointments need to take place in January and February. If you would like to join the team of members interviewing your legislator, please contact Jan Little.

Hot Topics Luncheon (continued from Page 1)

The public is invited! Bring friends, family and colleagues! The luncheon will be held 11:30 a.m. January 14 in the Banquet Room at the Superior Restaurant, 102 State Road, Emmaus. If you need assistance using the stairs, we will help you.

To make a reservation, please contact crizzy49@yahoo.com or call 610-432-1456 by Thursday, January 10. The buffet luncheon cost is $11 payable at the door or attendees may listen to the presentation without lunch.

Membership

November was the month we began our membership renewal. Just like last year, members will receive the membership booklet after returning the renewal form. Members who have a new email address should include it with the reply. Members who did not receive a renewal letter should contact me.

We also welcome suggestions on speakers or topics that may be of interest for our Hot Topics Luncheons.

As of December, we now have 81 members. We had two new members, Donna and Charles Barker, of Emmaus, join our League last month. The League website and Hot Topics Luncheon have really been a great help in bringing in new members.

Welcome Donna and Charles!

Margie Dunn, Membership Chair

Voters Guide Committee Openings

The Voters Guide is a widely respected non-partisan publication produced by the League before each election. Although The Morning Call prints the guide, it is the League which gathers the information from candidates and prepares the copy to send to the newspaper for printing. And, by "League" we mean the Voters Guide Committee.

We are looking for a member to serve as editor of the Voters Guide in addition to several members who would like to serve on the committee to help the editor. The job entails gathering candidate responses to predetermined questions, asking members to edit them according to the newspaper's specifications and organizing the edited content in a set format to send to the newspaper for layout and printing.

Continued on Page 3

Voters Guide Committee Openings (Continued from Page 2)

Contact with the candidates is done primarily via email so an ability to work on the computer is necessary. Previous Voters Guide editors are available to help you with learning the job.

If you are organized, detail-oriented and like being on the inside track, you might enjoy this job. The committee will probably meet in February to plan for the Voters Guide for the Municipal Primary Election taking place on May 14, 2019. Contact President and current Voters Guide Editor Jan Little for additional information.

November and December Board Notes

The Board of the Lehigh County League of Women Voters met November 8, 2018 and December 13, 2018 at the Rittenhouse Village of the Lehigh Valley. Here are highlights of the two meetings.

Barbara Williams, treasurer, reported a treasury balance of $17,080.21 for the month ending October 31, 2018. There was no report on figures for the month of November.

Jan Little, president, reported on the work she and Kaitlyn Moyer, board member, have been doing to update information for the 2019 Government Directory. Jan sent a letter to staffers in 45 offices located in municipalities, school districts and county government asking for updated information; she was pleased to report that 33 percent of the municipal offices had responded within two weeks of her request. Kaitlyn has been keeping the information current on the League website.

The board is considering a proposal to publish a “full” 2019 Government Directory instead of the abbreviated supplement traditionally produced on the off years.* It was reported four sponsors responded to our fall mailing campaign which requested donations to pay the printing costs of the directory. The amount raised so far has been $600. The deadline for sponsorship recognition is January 31, 2019. All sponsors will be recognized on the website as well as the printed directory.

There was discussion at the two meetings about how to handle gathering information for the 2019 Municipal elections. A concern is that VOTE411 will not work as well for local elections in that not all candidates are comfortable with the Internet. Jan Little reported on a VOTE411 Webinar given by the LWVUS she had participated in recently. The main takeaway was that VOTE411 provides a procedure for candidates who are uncomfortable with the Internet.

Molly Faust, secretary, and Margie Dunn, membership, reported on the first meeting in early November of the “Meet and Greet” planning committee. The group is considering a date in April 2019 but no final plans have been set yet.

Margie Dunn reported on the 2019 membership drive. She said 12 members have renewed so far; letters were sent out in November and the deadline to renew is January 31, 2019. The updated membership booklet will be printed and distributed after the membership drive is over.

Molly Faust, Secretary

*A week later, the board voted "yes" to publish a “full” 2019 Government Directory. There will be more information in the next issue of The Voter.

November Hot Topics Luncheon - Fake News

The increased access to information on cable news and social media is great in some ways, but also dangerous, Bill White, former columnist with The Morning Call said Nov. 12 in a talk at the LWVLC Hot Topics luncheon. “Journalists used to be gatekeepers” who determined what news was factual and newsworthy, he said, but “there’s no longer gates.”

White talked about some of the questionable posts he’s seen on social media. For example, after Christine Blasey Ford went public with her accusation against Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, Facebook and other sites were almost immediately flooded with hateful allegations about her.

“People are willing to spread information they know is false,” he said.

“Urban legends can spring up instantly,” he warned. He talked about debunking some questionable medical information by citing sources

Continued on Page 4

November Hot Topics Luncheon (continued from Page 3)

like the Center for Disease Control and the American Medical Association, and still being challenged by someone who didn't believe him.

White contended President Donald Trump has "created an atmosphere where lies are spread freely" and cited the editorial about health care published by USA Today under Trump's byline which he said was filled with inaccuracies.

But it's not only Trump, he said. Cable news is often slanted by anchors who "are in the business of persuading, not reporting. The focus on personalities overlooks what's really important."

This climate means "the stakes are much higher for journalists" who want to report accurately.

White urged his audience to find responsible sources for news and "consume information responsibly."

Julia Swan

Final Candidate Forum for the 7th Congressional District seat

A candidate's forum for the 7th Congressional District seat was held October 25 at Gracedale's Chapel in Nazareth. The forum was co-sponsored by both the Lehigh and Northampton County Leagues and featured the three candidates: Democrat Susan Wild, Republican Marty Nothstein and Libertarian Tim Silfies vying for the District seat. The candidates appeared in front of a full house and answered questions submitted by League members as well as the many constituents in attendance. John Kincaid, Lafayette College professor, moderated, asking the candidates questions on numerous current issues.

The 90-minute forum started with a question on healthcare and went on to include the candidate's views on Infrastructure, the Affordable Care Act, Social Security, veterans' benefits, sanctuary cities, abortion, gun violence, opioids and climate change.

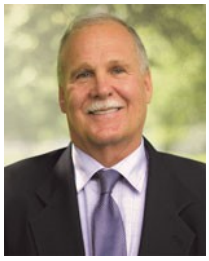
On veterans' healthcare, all agreed the federal government should meet the physical, mental and housing needs of our vets. Silfies went on to say we should stop unnecessary wars so there would be less veterans. When asked what to do about Social Security funds which might be depleted in 2034, Wild felt the wage cap should be raised so people pay according to income, Nothstein wants to repeal tax on Social Security and Silfies felt the retirement age should be raised. On border security and sanctuary cities, Nothstein was against sanctuary cities stating we should secure our border and respect the rule of law; Wild felt we should have safe secure borders but families should be kept together. Silfies wants to streamline the immigration process because newcomers are good for our economy. He also feels our border patrol should handle our current situation rather than sending the military.

On tax cuts, Wild felt one percent of U.S. corporations benefit the most so the tax code should be overhauled to benefit the middle class. Nothstein disagreed saying middle class families and business are doing better because of the cuts and they should be made permanent. Silfies said the cuts are good but our debt is increasing and the federal government needs to cut spending. Nothstein pointed out that Lehigh County has the eighth highest death rate in Pennsylvania and Northampton County the 15th highest death rate caused by opioids. There was agreement by the candidates there needs to be more federal oversight of drug manufacturing companies and more funding for treatment. The forum ended with the candidates asking each other a question which led to some accusations and drew reactions from the audience.

The British Broadcasting Corporation, as well as other media outlets, including an independent filmmaker, recorded the event. The BBC felt the Lehigh Valley was a microcosm of other similar size areas across the U.S. with tight Congressional races.

Barbara Williams, Voter Services Chair

December Hot Topics Luncheon



The December Hot Topics Luncheon was an opportunity for attendees to become more knowledgeable about the projects, programs and goals for Lehigh County as we approach the new year. Lehigh County Executive Phillips Armstrong, who took office in 2017, gave a very interesting and fact-filled update. His desire to share knowledge about Lehigh County is based on his view that taxpayers deserve to know what is going on in the Lehigh County and how their tax dollars are being spent.

Armstrong talked about the modernization and new construction which will begin shortly on Cedarbrook Nursing Home which was built in the 1920s and last updated in the 1970s. He explained Cedarbrook has a five star rating in four areas and a four and a half star rating in another area - which only one other county-owned nursing facility has throughout the state of Pennsylvania. He is very proud of the staff that has enabled Cedarbrook to earn this high rating.

Armstrong said the county is addressing the growing drug and alcohol problems and the efforts to cut down on the number of overdose deaths from opioid use. The county created the “Blue Guardian” program whereby a recovery coach and a member of the police force will visit the home of a patient recovering from an overdose and offer them help and support in seeking treatment for their substance use disorder. He said the overdose deaths have been so numerous that the county coroner had already depleted his entire budget for the year by June. Other programs are “in the works,” and efforts to obtain state and federal grants are underway. Attendees with family members in danger were encouraged to visit one of two sites in the county this week to obtain a free dose of Narcan which is used to revive those who have overdosed while calling 911 to get them to a hospital.

Armstrong also explained how the cost of running the criminal justice system is an ongoing issue and that the county is seeking funds to do more training to enable those who are leaving incarceration to be prepared for the work force. Skills training is an essential part of helping the local economy fill jobs that are lacking in the number of skilled applicants at the present time. Training which enables the completion of GED programs, is robust and growing for the prison population.

The county executive also explained that at any given time the county deals with approximately 350 children in foster care due to abuse in their homes. The county also assists the Allentown School District which faces a high number of students who are homeless.

He also explained how the county sought a $200,000 grant to provide and assist in a warming station for the county homeless during the cold winter months. Additional funding is being sought to help homeless women with children.

Armstrong said when the county is developing budgets and tax increases, he views this not as a “partisan issue,” but as an “issues based” situation. He explained his rationale for suggesting a small tax increase now instead of a much higher tax increase later that will be needed to support the many programs offered by the county. He said he hopes the tax increase will not be used as campaign slogans, but to satisfy the many needs of county residents.

The county owns 44 bridges and the cost of repairing and replacing those bridges is heavily dependent on infrastructure funds disseminated every five years by the federal government. It has now been seven years since the county has received those necessary funds due to the lack of Washington completing the funding program under this new administration and this situation has put more financial pressure on the counties to upkeep these structures.

On a positive note, Armstrong announced Lehigh County ranks fourth in the state in the number of acres which have been preserved as farmland. He also stated 184 miles of trails have been added to the Rails-to-Trails project connecting Allentown to points north, all which contributes toward an appealing “quality of life” in Lehigh County. Trails have been added to the Trexler Game Preserve lands as well. And, Armstrong announced a new and dynamic executive manager has been added to the Velodrome.

He fielded many different questions from the attendees about topics such as county programs for children with autism, the rise of warehouse construction, the rising costs in the criminal justice system and local zoning and runoff issues. He did explain the present zoning allows for these warehouses and attempting to change zoning is both very, very costly with little chance of change.

Continued on Page 6

December Hot Topics Luncheon (continued from Page 5)

It was a pleasure hosting Lehigh County Executive Phillips Armstrong, who did a wonderful job of informing us about the many topics affecting Lehigh County. His passion and love of this area was very apparent during his presentation. Our attendees left with a great deal of information about many positive programs fostered by our tax dollars in Lehigh County.

This luncheon was very well attended with over 36 attendees including local politicians state Rep. Jeanne McNeill, D-133rd, and Lehigh County Commissioners Amy Zanelli and Dan Hartzell.

Mary Erdman

Coming in January … unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot ...

Pennsylvania's Better Path Coalition officially launched its Article 1, Section 27 campaign on Election Day when our volunteers gathered signatures at their polling locations on the petition we'll deliver to every state legislator and Governor Tom Wolf in January. One of our volunteers spent 11 hours on her feet in the rain to collect 336 signatures. Another collected 11 pages of signatures. And they were among the many volunteers who asked if they can keep collecting signatures in their communities

Article 1, Section 27 is our state's environmental rights amendment. Pennsylvania is one of only two states to have one, yet it's been largely overlooked since it was adopted in 1971. In recent years, thanks to an historic ruling by our state Supreme Court, the amendment is playing an important role in the courts, but it is still largely ignored by our elected officials who swear to uphold our constitution, not just parts of it, when they take office.

It's time for that to change.

Information and links about the plans for action starting now and culminating over two days of action and events in Harrisburg on January 27-28, 2019 are posted in the Environment=>Special Interests section of our website. Those dates are soon after the beginning of the new session when all our legislators will be sworn in and just a week after the Governor's inauguration.

Karen Feridun, Berks Gas Truth

What happened to Pennsylvania's environment in the past 10 years?

Posted: 11 Oct 2018 10:17 AM PDT

Isn't the weather we've been having rather…different?

Thanks to a report forwarded by Mark Szybist, senior attorney and advocate, Climate and Clean Energy, Natural Resources Defense Council to the USDA Climate Hub, we may learn about the many answers to that question.

The report appeared as a blog by David E. Hess* about a program on WITF's Smart Talk Program on Thursday, October 11, 2018. This report, complete with links to more information may be found on http://paenvironmentdaily.blogspot.com. You can listen to the program to find out how former Sen. Franklin Kury (the 27th serving from 1973 to 1980), and author of the Environmental Rights Amendment, answered the question below.

Below is the blog, without links. The link to the blog, complete with links, may be found on Shale=>Special Interests on our website.

**David E. Hess served as Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection from 2001 to 2003, Executive Deputy at DEP from 1995 to 2001, as staff to the PA Senate Environmental Committee and various positions in the former Department of Environmental Resources, working on environmental issues for over 40 years.*

We're on the Web!
www.lwvlehighcounty.org

We can stop partisan gerrymandering in Pennsylvania for good by changing the redistricting process.

AAUW panel discussion looks at the recent election

The Allentown and Bethlehem branches of the American Association of University Women combined their efforts in sponsoring a panel discussion about the recent election entitled "What Now?" The event was held 10 a.m. November 10 at the Wesley Church in Bethlehem.

The participants were: Bill White, former columnist with The Morning Call, Dr. Megan Monahan, professor of history from Cedar Crest College and Mary Erdman, representing both the League of Women Voters and Fair Districts PA. The event was very well attended and the questions asked by the moderator, as well as the attendees, were thought-provoking and led to very interesting discussions.

I was very proud to briefly describe the lawsuit brought by the League of Women Voters which changed our consistently lopsided Congressional delegation from 13 Republicans and five Democrats (after three Congressional elections) to the results which were arrived at on Election Day. Pennsylvania's 18 Congressional seats more fairly reflect the voting results of our PA citizens; there is now an even split of nine Democrats and nine Republicans going to Washington in January. Even though this was a victory for democracy, I made it very clear that gerrymandering still exists in many of our state legislative and senate districts. It was also important that people knew that this fix of the Congressional districts will last only until the results of the 2020 U.S. Census and the next reapportionment process begins to take place.

Monahan gave an interesting background of the voting history of women throughout the years, some interesting facts about the suffragette movement and the wonderful results which are sending more women to Congress in record numbers this January. Our general area between the Lehigh Valley and Philadelphia, will be sending: Susan Wild, Mary Scanlon, Chrissy Houlahan and Madeleine Dean to the U.S. Congress! Monahan said there will be roughly 100 women going to Congress next year.

White was asked about the local state elections and he repeated his frustration that many incumbents were sent back to Harrisburg without earning that right because of lackluster accomplishments. He explained how unprofessional it was that many Republican incumbents refused to answer the questions posed by The League of Women Voters for The Morning Call Election Guide and also refused to debate the candidates running against them. He did not think it was fair to the voters, or the League whose task it is to inform voters before elections. I explained in many instances these same candidates did not answer emails or phone calls requesting information and the chance to debate. Monahan encountered the same response when she attempted to have Republican candidates visit the campus of Cedar Crest College. She never received an answer from local or state Republican officials as she tried to present a balanced slate to the students at the college.

There were many questions about gerrymandering and the chances of creating legislation that would even the playing field, as the lawsuit and work of the PA Supreme Court did for Congressional election. Many of those in attendance did sign the petition and joined Fair Districts PA and it was very exciting to see their enthusiasm. The frustration of not getting much done in Harrisburg, especially with property taxes and fair school funding, seemed to be at the top of their lists of concerns.

White reminded the attendees that when the Democrats ruled Harrisburg, those party leaders also pulled some of the same "stunts" that we see happening now in Harrisburg, and he drove home the idea that for the sake of all citizens, gerrymandering has to end if we ever hope to solve many of the state's issues.

The panel discussion and Q & A session was seen as a success because whenever you can educate the electorate on issues and events, it makes us all better citizens.

Continued on Page 8

Hot Topics Luncheons

September 10, 2018
"Russia – Its Impact on U.S. Elections and Politics"

October 8, 2018
"Fix it Healthcare - At the Tipping Point"

November 12, 2018
"Election Results"

December 10, 2018
"The State of Lehigh County"

January 14, 2019
"Electoral College and Electoral Reform"

February 11, 2019
"Election Trends"

March 11, 2019
"The Work of the Wildlands Conservancy and its Impact on the Local Environment"

April 8, 2019
"The Latest from the Delaware River

AAUW panel discussion looks at the recent election (continued from Page 7)

Special thanks to Judy Smullen who was the moderator and to Allentown Chapter member, Jeanne Ring who facilitated this event so well. I do believe that we all came away much more informed.

Mary Erdman

Redistricting Town Hall February 21, 2019

Muhlenberg College, in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Political Science Association and Lehigh Carbon Community College Department of Political Science, will host a statewide Redistricting Town Hall. This will also be a live-streamed event in cooperation with The League of Women Voters and Fair Districts PA.

This will be conducted in three parts. At 6 p.m., there will be a livestreamed panel discussion with Pennsylvania lawmakers and representatives from Fair Districts PA, The League of Women Voters and the PA Political Science Association. From 7 to 7:45 p.m., there will be a panel presentation and/or Q & A session at Muhlenberg College. From 7:45 to 8:15 p.m., there will be a Q & A with the original panelists and all participating colleges and universities. This will be followed by a short survey to see how we did.

Please put this on your calendar and plan to attend to show support for this movement. Invite your neighbors as well as your state representatives. This should prove to be an interesting and informative evening.

Mary Erdman

Election results mixed, local columnist tells attendees

Former columnist with The Morning Call Bill White says he hoped for two outcomes from the recent midterm election. He hoped voters nationwide would repudiate President Donald Trump, and that Lehigh Valley voters would "boot out" their local state representatives, who he called "a bunch of do-nothing chair-fillers."

"I didn't get everything I wanted," White. "I declared the evening a draw."

White spoke before a full house at the Hot Topics luncheon in Emmaus on Nov. 12. The appearance by White, who has worked in various capacities at The Morning Call for decades, has become a post-election tradition at the League luncheon, with an informative and often humorous take on the results.

He said the "blue wave" that had been predicted by pundits before the election initially "didn't amount to much more than the usual midterm election pushback" against the president's party. However, as results from close elections trickled in over the next week, "it became a bigger wave," generated to a great extent by the unprecedented number of women running. Locally, Susan Wild, who won the election in the newly created 7th Congressional District, was a part of that phenomenon, he said.

Continued on Page 9

For membership information and other great resources check out our *new* website:
lwvlehighcounty.org
Or email us at: **email@lwvlehighcounty.org**

Election results mixed, local columnist tells attendees (continued from Page 8)

However, on the local front, White was disappointed that most incumbents in state races, even those who refused to debate their opponents, were re-elected.

He tied what happens in the state legislature to the issue of redistricting reform, which he, and the League, has strongly supported. He praised Fair Districts PA for doing a great job of educating voters about the need for reform, even though they failed to get a constitutional amendment adopted in time for the 2020 redistricting.

But he said the good thing about the publicity surrounding redistricting reform means people will be paying attention to the process the next time.

While the redistricting in 2010 in Pennsylvania heavily favored Republicans, White stressed that it shouldn't be a partisan issue. "Democrats do the same thing," he said. "We need to take it out of the hands of politicians."

He said the two Congressional elections that took place in parts of the Lehigh Valley (one for the two-year term in the new 7th District and the one to fill the two months remaining on Charlie Dent's term in the old 15th District) were a perfect example of the impact of gerrymandering. The 15th District was redrawn in 2010 to include more Republican voters, but no longer included the entire Lehigh Valley, while the 7th District designed by the state Supreme Court is more compact and once again includes the entire Valley. Wild won the 7th District seat by a fairly comfortable margin, while her Republican opponent, Marty Nothstein, was leading in the 15th District race, although the result wasn't final at the time of White's talk. (A few days later, it was reported that Wild won that race as well, although by a much closer margin).

White called the way Trump behaved in the run-up to the election disheartening. He was "more interested in shoring up his base" than in supporting his party, he said.

He said he "sees conservative values being abandoned" in the direction Trump and his supporters are taking the Republican party.

When asked if he could think of any positive things the Trump administration has done, he couldn't come up with anything other than the strong economy, and he argued that started before Trump took office.

He said he knows former Ohio governor John Kasich is thinking about a primary challenge to Trump in 2020, as is former Arizona Senator Jeff Flake.

He also said he favors a number of reforms in the way elections are run, such as open primaries, term limits, making Election Day a holiday, measures to make voter registration easier, not harder and allowing voters to rank their preferences in primary elections.

Fair Districts PA motivated with "Reclaiming our Democracy Town Hall"

On December 1, in The State Museum of Pennsylvania, located right across the street from the Capitol building in Harrisburg, about 250 people gathered to listen to three different panel discussions covering topics such as voter reform, redistricting reform, campaign finance reform and finally, reform of the House procedural rules.

There were three different panels which covered these topics: electoral reform, state wins and new strategies for creating real redistricting reform and reforming the procedural rules of the House, which begins on January 1, 2019.

Members of the first panel included: Micah Sims of Common Cause, Jill Greene of The League of Women Voters, Peter Ouellette of Represent US Pennsylvania and Rabbi Michael Pollack of March on Harrisburg.

This panel made us very aware that without reform, Pennsylvania will continue to fall behind other states in ease of voting, poor turnout and that our legislature will continue to be influenced by special interest monies more than the needs and desires of the citizens of Pennsylvania.

Continued on Page 10

League of Women Voters of Lehigh County

P. O. Box 3275
Allentown, PA 18106
610-432-1456
LWVPA Hotline: 1-800-692-7281

President: Janet Little, 610-398-7228
610-442-1733 (cell)
Membership: Margie Dunn, 610-298-8946

League of Women Voters of Lehigh County

2018-2019 Officers

President – *Janet Little*

Secretary – *Molly Faust*

Vice President, Program – *Vacant, Acting: Janet Little*

Vice President, Action – *Mary Erdman, FDPA Liaison*

Vice President, Voter Services – *Barbara Williams*

Treasurer – *Barbara Williams*

Fair Districts PA motivated with 'Reclaiming our Democracy Town Hall'

(continued from Page 9)

The second panel included: Patrick Beaty, part of the legislative team for FDPA, Yurij Rudensky of the Brennan Center of Justice and Sam Wang of the Princeton Gerrymandering Project.

Beaty explained the two-fold approach to creating an independent redistricting commission for redrawing both the Congressional districts by statute, and for using that same commission, through a Constitutional Amendment by early spring 2021 (before the May 2021 primary) to redraw senate and legislative districts in the state. Although the window is narrow, Beaty does think it is possible if there are enough politicians who have the "will" to see such reform occur.

Rudensky and Wang explained successful reforms in other states and how they stand ready to support reforms in Pennsylvania. They are quite willing to pass on their background knowledge and specific research into the topic of ending gerrymandering in Pennsylvania.

The final panel was composed of: Bill White, formerly of The Morning Call, former legislators, Republican Ken Lee, Republican Dave Steil, Democrat Allen Kukovich and present day legislators: state Reps. Steve Samuelson, D-135th and Pam DeLissio, D-194th.

White said the reluctance for reform has been found in the leadership of both parties over these years. He has also been impressed, however, with the positive effects that FDPA's grass roots campaign has had thus far.

The legislators on the panel discussed specific issues and reforms in which they were involved over the years and how frustrating reform has become. DeLissio gave some recent examples of how the present rules allow for good bills to not be heard, debated and brought to the floor during a session and are allowed to die; just as all of our potential bills for redistricting reform did at midnight on November 30, 2018.

Kukovich was quite passionate in his support of Fair Districts and discussed how impressed he was with the tremendous grass roots support that has been amassed throughout the state.

Each of the panel discussions is available on Youtube, www.youtube.com - under these three video names: Session One: Electoral Reform for Expanded Representation; Session Two: State Wins and New Strategies in Redistricting Reform and Session Three: Reforming the Rules to Ensure Representation.

Contact your local representative and senator and become involved with FDPA in some way. Reform cannot happen without the people speaking truth to our politicians. Please ask our speakers (members): Mary Erdman and/or Terry Schettini to speak to your civic, service or even a private group in your home of about 10 or so attendees. You can also follow the work of FDPA by going to the website: www.fairdistrictspa.com.

Look for information on an upcoming FDPA town hall to be held at Muhlenberg College on the evening of February 21, 2019.

Mary Erdman, Action Chair and FDPA Liaison

CAMERAS, PHOTOS & KNOW-HOW

$10 OFF
ANY PURCHASE
OF $20 OR MORE

Dan's. One offer per customer. Not valid on Nikon MVP, Canon MAP or Sony Sure Products. Not valid with other offers, Studio orders or School Photo orders. Redeem in stores only. Exp. 3/30/19

DAN'S
EASTON: 610.829.2313
ALLENTOWN: 610.434.2313
DANSCAMERA.COM

NICOS C. ELIAS
FUNERAL HOME, INC.
1227 Hamilton Street Allentown, Pa. 18102
at the Historic General Trexler Estate
610-433-2200

Green and Eco-Friendly plans

Nicos C. Elias, Owner & Supv.

www.eliasfuneralhome.com

When patronizing our sponsors, please let them know you saw their ad in the **LWV Lehigh County Voter**

McNabb's Service & Repairs
Automotive Excellence since 1958

McNABB'S AUTOMOTIVE REPAIR

4948 Hamilton Blvd.
Allentown PA 18106
610-398-1324 610-395-0444
www.McNabbsServiceCenter.com

McNabb's Service & Repairs

State Inspection and Emissions Test	A/C Service	Alignment
Brakes	Steering and Suspension	Engine Repairs
Exhaust	Preventive	Oil Change

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

League of Women Voters of Lehigh County
P.O. Box 3275
Allentown, PA 18106

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEHIGH COUNTY

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Membership dues include membership in the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) and the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania (LWVPA) and a subscription to the local and state *Voter*.

League dues and contributions are not tax-deductible as a charitable donation.

Contributions to the LWV Education Fund (LWVEF) are tax-deductible.

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all citizens. Voting members must be at least 16 years old.

ANNUAL DUES 2019

$70.00 individual $105.00 household $25.00 full-time student

Contact membership secretary Margie Dunn for details of prorated dues amounts.

Please make check payable to LWVLC and mail to:

LWVLC
c/o Margie Dunn
8411 Carpet Road
New Tripoli, PA 18066