LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEHIGH COUNTY

Volume 68, Issue 7

League of Women Voters of Lehigh County Voter

Hot Topics Luncheon	1,4,7
Board Notes	2
Voter Registration	2
Fair Districts PA	3
Zoom	5
Instagram	6
Open Positions	6
Voters Guide	7
Running for Local Office Workshop	7
Shale Oil	8

President's Message

Dear League Members,

We certainly live in interesting times. COVID-19 has forced all of us to change the way we live our lives – and the League of Women Voters is no exception. As an organization, we have had to find new ways to reach out to our members and our voters.

I had never heard of Zoom six months ago. Now we use that platform for all of our board and committee meetings. My first attempt at setting up a virtual board meeting was a dismal failure in that I could not access my own meeting. Somehow I had misplaced the link required for admittance and then I panicked when all of the board members were on-line waiting for me. With practice, I have become more proficient in running virtual meetings. Although I still prefer in-person gatherings, I am grateful that a platform like Zoom exists so that we can continue our work.

As you know, our Hot Topic Luncheons are being held on Zoom. We have had a good member turnout for our first two sessions. If you haven't already attended, I hope that you take the opportunity to join us. It is a chance to see some of your fellow league members, in addition to hearing an interesting program.

I am proud of the creativity of our board members in carrying out their work using virtual platforms. The Registration/Tabling Chair Barbara Connolly has put together a presentation on voting which she will give via Zoom to interested audiences in senior centers and library programs. In an effort to reach out to younger voters, Voters Guide Chair Michele Graupner has created an Instagram account for our league. (Another virtual platform new to me.) Read the reports in this newsletter and see how our league is adapting. We are resilient, if nothing else, in these interesting times.

……Yours in League,
Molly Faust, President

November Hot Topics Luncheon

What does it take to keep an entire city safe, healthy, and informed?

We will learn how the Allentown Health Bureau Director, Vicky Kistler, directs this bureau to carry out their mission: "to prevent disease and injury and to protect and promote the public's health."

The November Hot Topics Luncheon will cover the work of the Allentown Health Bureau from childhood immunizations, communicable diseases, lead exposure, food and nutrition services, an impressive volunteer program, and of course, the management of COVID-19 in the third largest city in Pennsylvania.

You will be surprised to see all that the Allentown Health Bureau does to manage the constant state of health of our population, how they develop policies, and how they make sure that all citizens of the city have access to public health services.

Vicky's work at the Health Bureau has been complicated by the presence of the Coronavirus, and her tasks, in the absence of a County Health Department, really can impact all of us in Lehigh County.

Continued on Page 2

Mark your calendar:

- **Monday, November 9**- Hot Topics Luncheon – Allentown Health Bureau
- **Monday, December 14**- Hot Topics Luncheon— Chris Borick, Election Trends

Board Notes

The Board of the Lehigh County League of Women Voters met twice since the last issue of The VOTER, on September 10 and October 8. Due to COVID-19, the meetings were held virtually. Here are highlights of the two meetings.

- Barbara Williams, Treasurer, reported that the League has a balance of $15,573,02 in assets for the month ending September 30.
- Terry Purdy has headed the League's transition from in-person to virtual for committee meetings, board meetings, and Hot Topic Luncheons
- The Board approved the establishment of a communications committee to look at the types of information that the League should be providing to the members and the public; the various modalities to do so (website, email, social media, and the like); and the skills needed to maintain the modalities.
- The Board is looking into use of Paypal and other online payment systems to make payment of membership dues easier during the next membership year. There will be an online payment option for the "Running for Local Office" Workshop.
- Charles and Donna Barker distributed 450 copies of the "Voters Guide" to community libraries, college libraries and student centers, Career Link, YMCA, Jewish Community Center, and senior living communities.
- The "Running for Office" Workshop will be held January 30, 2021 @ 8:30 AM-12:30 pm on Zoom. The speakers will be finalized shortly.

Just a reminder to all of our members, Michelle Graupner established an Instagram account for the League. Our Instagram handle is @lwvlehigh. The League has 409 followers to date. Michelle is looking into ways to provide more interaction for our followers. Please follow us on Instagram.

Rochelle Kaplan, Secretary

November Hot Topics Luncheon (continued from page 1)

We hope you will attend this Zoom to learn of all the beneficial work being done by Vicky and her dedicated staff. Vicky Kistler is a vibrant and informative speaker. Hope to "see" you on Zoom on November 9th. Please sign-in at 12:15 p.m. so we can visit before the program begins at 12:30 p.m.

Please contact us at email@lwvlehighcounty.org if you still need help getting on Zoom or instructions on how to watch this presentation on YouTube a day or so afterwards. Look for a link to the presentation on the Hot Topics Luncheons section of Upcoming Events section of our website.

Mary Erdman, Program Chair

Voter Registration and Tabling

During the months preceding the General Election in November, we have been busy with voter education initiatives. Our local League had numerous requests from community organizations throughout Lehigh County to partner in these efforts.

Cheryl-Winters Tetreau and Barbara Connolly participated in a voter registration and tabling event at the Bethlehem Rose Garden Farmers Market on Saturday, September 12th at the invitation of Christine Roysdon, Market volunteer.

Attendees asked many questions about mail-in ballots, reflecting voters' confusion regarding drop boxes and their potential locations. While some voters' voting decisions were not final at the time of the event, we were able to provide some direction by sharing the most up-to-date information from the local county Voter Offices. We also distributed postcards that provided information about mail-in ballot applications and how to find candidate information at www.vote411.org, a web-based service provided by the LWV Education Fund.

We have benefitted from joining Zoom meetings held weekly on Wednesdays led by Kerry Sautner, Vice-President of Voter Services of LWV of Pennsylvania. Named the "Voter Services Group", it is made up of colleagues from local Leagues in Pennsylvania. There, we learned about a grant called the ***Mailing the Vote Project*** that provided local leagues with postcards**.** Designed for different voting groups, the postcards detailed information about mail-in voting and VOTE411.

In addition to the Bethlehem Rose Garden, we were able to distribute the postcards to a variety of community groups including the Allentown Public Library, Parkland Community Library, and Emmaus Public Library, as well as the Jewish Community Center,

Continued on page 3

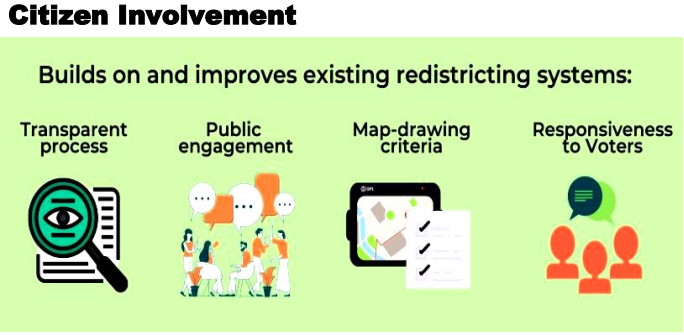
Ending Gerrymandering in Pennsylvania
One Last Valiant Attempt by FDPA

Fair Districts PA (FDPA) lost the battle to create an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission even though there was overwhelming citizen and legislative support. We saw time run out for HB22 and HB23, while the leader of the House State Government Committee was busy trying to create frivolous, partisan bills that often appeared in a few days and had no grass roots support or legislative support at all. It was a vivid display of how power corrupts.

We cannot change the process, but now we have one more opportunity to at least open the process to our citizens. Right now redistricting maps are drawn by five men, behind closed doors with no citizen input in a very non-transparent process. This redistricting becomes an exercise in power plays with little concern for geography, culture, gender or fairness to the voter. We are making one last attempt to bring this process into the light.

The LACRA bills, The Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act (HB2638 and SB1242), open the process of legislators drawing districts. It is a sensible bill which calls for transparency, citizen engagement, a review of the criteria and a process of review by citizens before and after the maps are prepared for final approval.

This makes common sense: to hold these meetings as public meetings, live-streamed so citizens can watch and be engaged in the process. It is the fair and the right thing to do to check both political parties. This holds legislators responsible to draw districts which are fair to the voters, and, to not draw districts that unfairly protect incumbents.



It is time to hold our local legislators' feet to the fire. We need them to push for transparency in this process to ensure that our votes count. We need to end extreme gerrymandering for the good of our citizens and for the future of our state. And we need to remember how legislators vote on these bills (if a vote is allowed) the next time we cast our ballots. This is far too important for half-hearted promises and empty sponsorship before final votes.

This is our mission: "Defending Democracy - Empowering Voters." With our mission in mind, please go to the Fair Districts PA website, www.FairDistrictsPA.com, click on "Take Action," then click on letters to your senator, to the Speaker of the House, and to the Chairman of the House State Government Committee. Please do this today! If these bills are not passed by November 30th, there is only a small window in the new year to get this done before reapportionment and redistricting begins.

We encourage you to write letters to the editor stating your feelings about these bills as well. Remember, if we don't change the process now, the next chance will be ten years from now!

Mary Erdman, Vice-President, Action & Programs

Voter Registration and Tabling (Continued from page 2)

Lincoln Technical Institute and the senior communities of Phoebe Allentown Health Care Center, Luther Crest, and Parkland Manor.

The Unitarian Universalist Church in Bethlehem volunteered to assist with the postcard project by addressing and mailing 250 postcards to Lehigh Valley voters. Thank you to Patricia Herring, a member of our local League, for coordinating this initiative. We were also able to partner with Scott Tobey of the Catasauqua Presbyterian Church and Susan Jordano, of the Lehigh Valley Meeting of Quakers for their September voter registration and information events. Ms. Jordano is also associated with POWER Lehigh Valley's working group to end mass incarceration.

Rochelle Kaplan and Barbara Connolly participated in a Zoom program, *The Importance of an Informed Vote,* sponsored by the Parkland Community Library. Aimee Grillo, Adult Services Librarian Trainee, provided much support in planning and coordinating the presentation.

We have developed strong relationships with the leaders of these events and initiatives.

Barbara Connolly, Voter Registration and Tabling Chair

September Hot Topics Luncheon

September 14th saw the return of our Hot Topics presentations. This year, because of COVID-19, we are holding the events "virtually" on Zoom. Who better to begin our season than a League favorite, Mr. Bill White, who presented, "You'll Miss Us When We're Gone".

Bill's talk centered on the role of the local journalist and several personal stories that he shared about his emotional involvement with many aspects of our local community.

Besides the obvious loss of local journalists covering the numerous municipal meetings and issues that often affect our properties, our lifestyles and our general community, Bill spoke about covering and becoming part of local community events. We have all enjoyed Bill's coverage of the food at Musikfest, the numerous Christmas lights articles, and his yearly foray into pet peeves and writing contests. He has kept politicians on their toes, kept issues, including Fair Districts PA, in front of the community, and shared with us many warm and generous actions of various community leaders.

We found out that Bill White not only loves to write about his community, but feels deeply about helping his community and caring for those, like the homeless, who can always use our help. His career as a local journalist has also enabled him to reach out and help many less fortunate citizens of our Lehigh Valley.

Bill's talk was informative, inspirational, and a strong argument for never allowing local journalism to disappear from the scene. Both Bill and his faithful audience are glad he is back writing twice a month for The Morning Call. This great decision by the newspaper to bring him back gives us a positive view of the future. We thank Bill for his talk, as well as his challenge to use our talents to do good things for our community.

Mary Erdman, Program Chair

October Hot Topics Luncheon

Mary Erdman provided an entertaining and informative presentation, "Can We End Gerrymandering – What is Next for Pennsylvania?", on the important topic of gerrymandering and the efforts of Fair Districts PA to bring gerrymandering to an end. Mary is a busy woman. She is a retired educator, the liaison to Fair Districts PA for our League, a member of the leadership team of Fair Districts PA for Lehigh and Northampton Counties, a speaker for Fair Districts, a member of our local League board, a member of two other boards, and an enthusiastic Eagles fan.

Fair Districts is a non-partisan coalition, led by the League of Women Voters, and formed in 2016 to create a process to end gerrymandering through redistricting in a manner that is both impartial and fair. Gerrymandering is the practice of defining electoral boundaries to favor one party or class. The term "gerrymandering" was coined in 1812 when the Governor of Massachusetts, Eldridge Gerry, created a partisan district in Boston to favor his party. Gerrymandering is a problem because it enables the legislators in power when boundaries are redrawn every 10 years to choose their voters, rather than allowing the voters to choose their legislators. Modern data mining and mapping techniques have exacerbated the problem by allowing greater granularity of information to be used to define districts beneficial to the party in power.

The Constitution of Pennsylvania requires that all elections shall be free and equal (Article I, Section 5), that districts shall be compact and contiguous (Article VII, Section 9), and that no County, incorporated town, borough, etc., shall be divided unless absolutely necessary (Article II, Section 16). Mary provided us with examples of how the requirements of the constitution are not being met because of extreme gerrymandering. One example of extreme gerrymandering is the 2011 district map in Delaware County, nicknamed "Donald kicking Goofy", because of its anastomosing, labyrinth-like shape. A metric used to measure gerrymandering is the seats-to-votes metric, which compares vote percentages cast per party to seats won per party. In the 2012 Pennsylvania Congressional election the number of votes between Democrats and Republicans were about equal, however, due to gerrymandering, Republicans were awarded 72% of the Congressional seats and Democrats were awarded only 28% of the Congressional seats. When looking at a large array of metrics, Pennsylvania is determined to be one of the most gerrymandered states in the country. The upshot is that the top issues for Pennsylvanians (e.g.,

Continues on page 5

October Hot Topics Luncheon (continued from page 4)

healthcare, the economy, property taxes, the environment, development/infrastructure) remain unresolved because gerrymandering results in the reluctance for the parties to collaborate with one another.

Mary also informed us about the history of bills, starting in the early 1990s, intended to correct the issue of gerrymandering that have failed to pass the legislature. The greatest success was won in 2017 when the League of Women Voters of PA and *Common Cause Pennsylvania* won a lawsuit in the state Supreme Court that resulted in a redrawn congressional map that is more compact and has fewer split municipalities and counties. The resulting map was in effect for the 2018 election. (There is a link to this map in our website on the Election 2020 section). So there has been some success from all the effort exerted by the state League and Fair Districts PA, but the fight is far from over. The same process that resulted in the original congressional map and current state legislative district maps remains in place. Currently, a set of bills has been introduced in the State House and Senate (HB2638 and SB1242) called the Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act (LACRA). They are our last chance to impact the next round of redistricting taking place next year using data collected in Census 2020. More information about these bills appears in Mary's FDPA report that appears elsewhere in this issue.

Terri Purdy, Special Projects

Zoom: Updates on Virtual Meeting Platform

Due to *COVID-19*, many League of Women Voters of Lehigh County (LWVLC) activities have been occurring via the Zoom platform. We have been using Zoom for hosting virtual Hot Topics Luncheons as well as for internal board meetings and planning sessions.

Over the past two months we held two Zoom *practice sessions* to get members of our local League comfortable with Zoom prior to the first virtual Hot Topics Luncheon. All of our Hot Topics Luncheons presentations are recorded and posted to YouTube. Following the meetings, we email links to the recordings to our members so those who are unable to attend have the opportunity to view the event. You can also find the link to these posts on the Hot Topics webpage in the Upcoming Events section of our website.

The working level meetings we have held using Zoom have included our LWVLC board meetings, planning meetings for our Instagram account (which is now live and very active at #lwvlehigh) and planning meetings for the "Running for Local Office" (RFLO) Workshop.

Continued next column

The RFLO Workshop will be virtual only; we are NOT holding it at a venue as we have before. The current plan is to run the Workshop on Saturday, January 30, 2021 via a Zoom Webinar. The Webinar function will enable attendees to register and pay for the Workshop on line.

The Zoom platform is easy to use and has provided us with the ability to continue to meet the League's mission and goals during the challenges presented by COVID-19.

Terri Purdy, Special Projects

Membership

November is the month we begin our membership renewal drive.

You will be receiving a renewal letter in the mail. Our dues remain the same at $70 for individual membership and $105 for household membership. I will be mailing out the membership booklets in February.

I hope you have been enjoying our virtual Hot Topic Presentations. Your contributions to the Education Fund will help offset the cost for this arrangement.

Many of you have given generously to the Education Fund. We hope you will continue your contribution in the form of a separate check from your dues renewal. It is also tax deductible.

As of October, we have 83 members. We had 2 new members join our League last month. Heather Harter lives in Coopersburg and Becky Hite lives in Orefield. We welcome them to our League.

Margie Dunn, Membership Chair

Instagram Venture

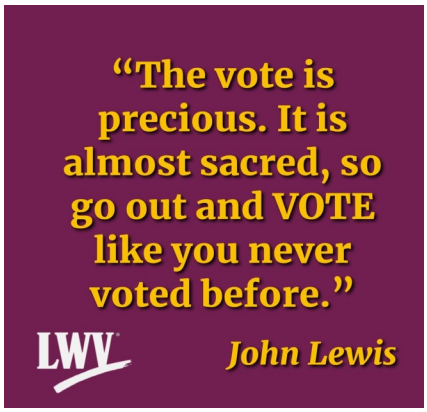
Instagram is a social media platform designed to share photos with many defining it as an online photo-sharing social web service. It was created in October of 2010 by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger. In 2012, Facebook became intrigued by this social media platform, and they acquired Instagram for $300 million in cash and 23 million shares, which amounts to a total purchase price of nearly $1 billion dollars.

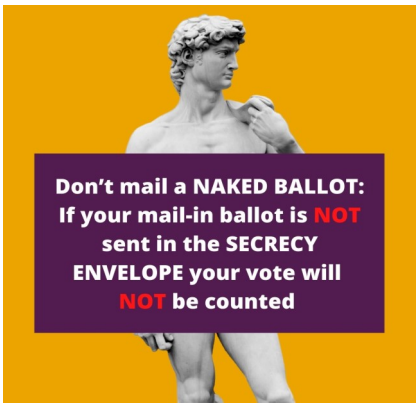
As of 2018, Instagram has 1 billion users with more than 500 million of them using Instagram daily.

Board members introduced the idea of creating a business Instagram account for our local League with the hope of increasing our online presence. The account was created on August 14th, 2020 and has roughly 420 followers. We post relevant voting information such as mail-in ballot instructions, deadlines, court rulings, and motivational voting quotes and also emphasize our community involvement by promoting VOTE411, our Voters Guide and Government Directory, and Fair Districts PA.

The Instagram app is free and can be found on any smartphone through its app store by searching Instagram. Check out sample posts below and follow us by searching our name, lwvlehigh, on Instagram!

Sample Instagram Posts





Help Wanted Ad

The Voter Newsletter
Editor and Layout Editor Positions Available

Jan Little is willing to train one or more members now to serve as Newsletter Editor during the next membership year.

As you know, there are six bimonthly editions. The Editor oversees the entire process of creating the newsletter on a timely basis. Members can access the final draft on our website or receive a printed copy. Many of our supporters and local legislators receive the paper copy by mail. Molly Faust is willing to train a Layout Editor to design the newsletter. We are fortunate members Donna Barker, Ann Bartholomew and Jan Landis proofread the drafts.

Please email Jan Little or Molly Faust Please email Jan Little Or Molly Faust at::at :email@lwvlehighcounty.org if you would like more informationabout the positions or would like to help with the December/January edition.

Margie Dunn, Nominating Chair

Vote November 3, 2020

Fall 2020 Voters Guide

The Voters Guide for the general election was released in collaboration with The Morning Call on October 1st, 2020. Those who subscribe to The Morning Call were provided with the Voters' Guide in their newspaper delivered on Thursday, October 1st.

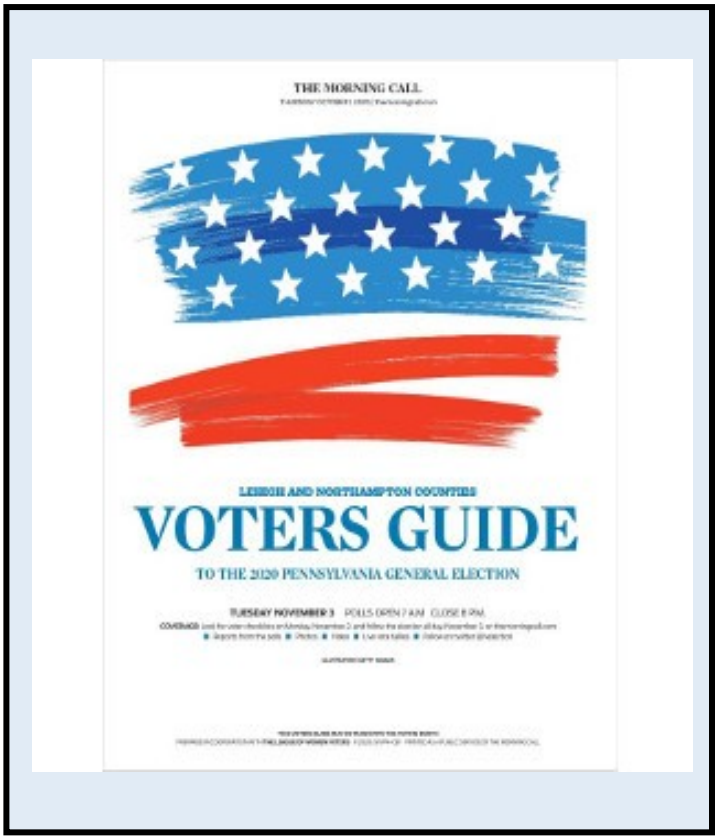
The Guide included state and federal races covering Northampton and Lehigh County. Those races included US President, Attorney General, Auditor General, State Treasurer, US House of Representatives 7th District, and State House Representatives for the following districts: 22, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 183, and 187.

The information provided in the Voter's Guide was derived from candidates who participated in the online questionnaire on VOTE411.org.

The questionnaire required biographical information and answers to current concerns the country and state are facing such as balancing the effects of COVID-19 on public health and the economy, election reforms, and priorities each candidate may have if elected to office.

Links to the Guide can be found on our website under Current Election. Links to the Guide may be found also on our Facebook and Instagram pages!

Michelle Graupner, Editor, Voters Guide



DECEMBER VIRTUAL HOT TOPICS LUNCHEON

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2020

SPEAKER, CHRIS BORICK

"ELECTION TRENDS"

Voters Guide Distribution

The Morning Call supplied the LWVLC with 450 copies of the Voters Guides. League volunteers distributed the copies to our donors, as well as to local institutions.

Charles and Donna Barker, volunteers from our local League, delivered copies to twenty-one locations in the county, starting with the Allentown Public Library. This main library made sure all public libraries in the county received copies.

Students at LCCC Allentown at the Donley Center, Cedar Crest College, DeSales University, and Muhlenberg College have access to copies.

Residents of Phoebe Allentown Health Care, Gross Towers Senior Community Center, Luther Crest Senior Living Community, Sacred Heart Senior Living, and Cedar Village Apartments also benefit.

PA CareerLink® Lehigh Valley, the Allentown YMCA, and the Jewish Community Center can make copies available to clients and members.

Finally, the Voter Registration Office received copies.

Donna and Charles Barker, Distribution Chairs

2021 Government Directory Donors Welcomed

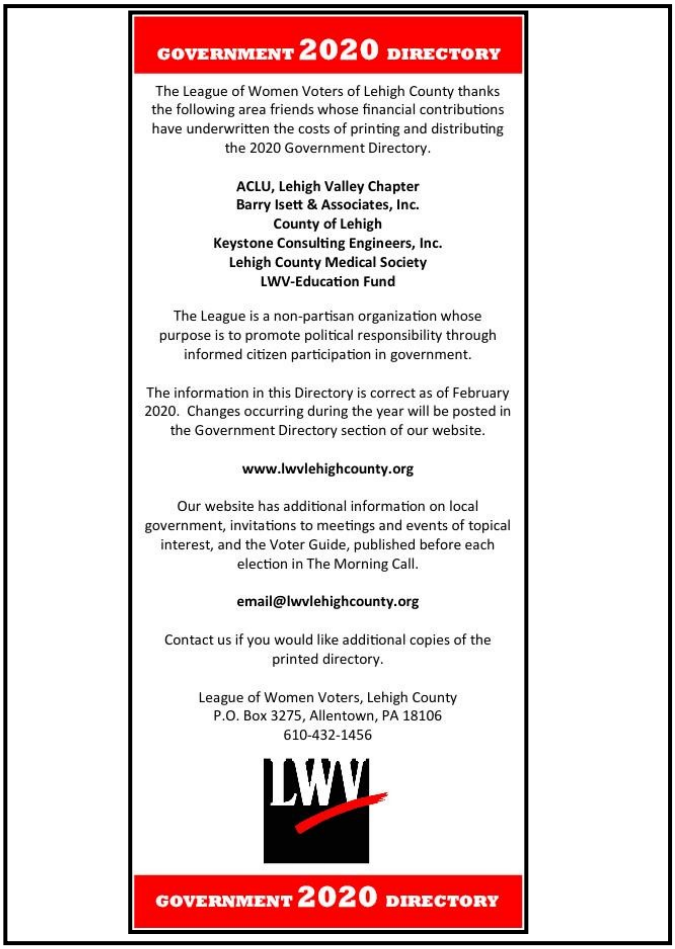
We have been soliciting donors and sponsors to underwrite the cost of printing the 2021 Government Directory. If you are interested in becoming a donor or sponsor, or know of a business or organization that would be, please contact Cheryl Winters-Tetreau at email@lwvlehighcounty.org.

We welcome donations of any amount. Please help to make this effort a success by mailing your tax-deductible contributions, made out to LWV Education Fund, to: Barbara Williams, Treasurer, League of Women Voters of Lehigh County, P.O. Box 3275, Allentown, PA 18106.

Companies, organizations, agencies, and private citizens who make donations in the amount of $150 or more by January 31, 2021 will be listed as sponsors in the next printed directory as shown in the image to the right and online. Sponsors will receive copies for their use. We will also credit you as a sponsor in our newsletters, and create a link to your business website on the Government Directory section of our web page.

There, you will see the logo and a link for Keystone Consulting Engineers, Inc. Thank you to members Bill and Mary Erdman for soliciting a donation from this long-time sponsor.

Cheryl Winters-Tetreau, Government Directory Co-Editor



The Eighth Annual Shale & Public Health Conference

will be held as an online conference over two days

Tuesday November 17, 2020
&Wednesday, November 18, 2020
from noon to 4:30 p.m. EST

The conference is presented by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania and hosted by the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health.

The conference is free but YOU NEED TO REGISTER.

Go to the Shale > Special Interests section of the League of Women Voters of Lehigh County website and click on the link to the online form.

More information and videos from past conferences are available at www.shalepawlv.org/events A Project of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund Straight Scoop on Shale 1-800-617-4253 shalemarcella@gmail.com

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

League of Women Voters of Lehigh County

P. O. Box 3275
Allentown, PA 18106
610-432-1456
email@lwvlehighcounty.org

President: Molly Faust, TBA
Membership: Margie Dunn, 610-298-8946
LWVPA Hotline: 717*234-1576

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 Maintenance	Oil Change

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF LEHIGH COUNTY

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

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF LEHIGH COUNTY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEHIGH COUNTY

Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

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 <u>not</u> tax-deductible as a charitable donation.

Contributions to the LWV Education Fund (LWVEF) <u>are</u> 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 2020

$70 individual $105 household $25 full-time student

After July 31:

$35 individual $52 household $25 full-time student

Please make check payable to LWVLC and mail to:

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