LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEHIGH COUNTY

April/May 2021 Volume 68, Issue 10

League of Women Voters of Lehigh County VOTER

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President's Message

Dear League Members,

This will be my last message to you as President. My two year term ends in late May when I pass the baton to a new president who will be voted in at our annual meeting. By the time you receive this VOTER, the nominating slate will already have been announced. I am thrilled that Mary Erdman has agreed to be our new president and pleased with the members who have agreed to serve on the board of directors.

We are in a period where the work of the League of Women Voters is especially important. State legislatures across the country are proposing bills to put additional restrictions on voting, thereby limiting access to the ballot box. We should be encouraging the vote, not suppressing it.

Additionally, our state legislature will be drawing up new voting districts based on the results of the 2020 census. The current process has allowed for a much gerrymandered map. Through the years, the Pennsylvania Legislature has successfully blocked efforts to put together a mechanism to redraw voting districts in a fair manner. Leagues throughout Pennsylvania are working with other organizations to keep the public engaged in the redistricting process. You can read more about the League's advocacy in these areas in this VOTER edition.

I have enjoyed being your president and will stay on the board for the next two years to help with projects. I look forward to the day when we can meet in person and conduct our work face-to-face.

Yours in league,

Molly Faust

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

One of the initiatives that came out of the 2020-2022 National Convention was a determination that Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) would be included in the League's mission. LWVPA put together a committee to study the matter and to determine how to best incorporate it in our local Leagues. All local Leagues were invited to participate – presidents were asked to be involved, as well as any interested members.

The monthly meetings began in January and are over the Zoom platform. I have attended all of the five sessions. The meeting begins with a reminder that we are inhabiting the land that had been settled

Continued on page six

You are Invited!

League of Women Voters of Lehigh County

Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 22, 2021 at 10 am

Due to the pandemic, the meeting will be virtual. Items requiring your approval include updated bylaws, 2021-2022 budget, nominating slate and local program.

Pour yourself a cup of coffee and join us.

An invitation to register for the meeting will be emailed in May. A link will be sent upon registering.

Board Notes

The Board of the Lehigh County League of Women Voters met twice, on March 11 and April 8, since the last *VOTER*. Due to COVID-19, the meetings were held virtually. The following are highlights of the two meetings which are not being addressed in other articles in the newsletter.

- Barbara Williams, Treasurer, reported that the League has a balance of $18,033.05 in assets for the month ending March 31. She also reported that the third quarter report shows $9,282.54 in income and $6,624.31 in expenses. The yearly budgeted income and expenses are $10,250.00.
- Molly Faust, President, reviewed the 2021 LWVPA program planning report form with the Board. Board members provided feedback and suggested revisions. This report form will be used by the state league to develop their programs.
- At the March board meeting, Mary Bongiorno, Chair of the Budget Committee, presented the 2021-2022 budget. Budget committee members are Mary Bongiorno, Chair, Doris Glaessman, Molly Faust, and Barbara Williams. The membership will be asked to approve the 2021-2022 budget at the May 22 annual meeting.
- Molly Faust, Chair of the Bylaws Committee, presented revised bylaws for the board's approval. The last time the bylaws had been revised was 2016. The bylaws committed members are Molly Faust, Jan Little, and Rochelle Kaplan. The Board approved the revised bylaws and the membership will be asked to approve the revised bylaws at the May 22 Annual Meeting.

Rochelle Kaplan, Secretary

High School Voter Information Program

Many graduating seniors are eligible to vote for the first time in the May Pennsylvania Primary. Municipal elections present high school teachers with the opportunity to call attention to the importance of local government, encourage students to register, and familiarize students with various methods of researching offices and candidates.

In keeping with the LWV mission of registering voters and providing voter education, we have developed a High School Voter Information Program to provide teachers with resources to connect young people to voter registration information. The 2021 program can be accessed in the Voters Services section of our website and includes multiple downloadable resources for students and teachers.

We mailed an explanatory letter to public and private high schools in Lehigh County. All resources or potential incorporation into their current curriculum were attached. We hope this information connects with new voters and encourages life-long voting and civic engagement.

We encourage league members to explore this program and share with those friends and family members working with students.

The LWV of PA Voter Services group has planned an awareness project to coincide with the LWVUS National Day of Action on April 29, 2021. Postcards and media communications will emphasize the importance of local elections, how to research ballot questions, and why redistricting matters. Remember that although Pennsylvania has a closed primary, all voters, independent and third party, are eligible to vote on ballot questions, available on www.vote411.org.

Contact Barbara Connolly at email@lwvlehighcounty.org for information about the work of voter registration or have ideas about future tabling events.

Barbara Connolly, Chair, Voter Registration & Tabling

Membership Report

As of April, we have seventy-nine members in our League. This has been a difficult year, but we were able to gain six new members since January.

The state League's decision to reduce dues for members thirty-five years of age or under from $70 to $35 was an attraction. We had four members take advantage of this discount. Hopefully this fall, we will be able to meet again in person for our Hot Topics Luncheons.

If you did not receive our 2021 Membership Booklet, please contact me at email@lwvlehighcounty.org or my phone number listed in the booklet. Also, please contact me if there are any changes in your phone number, email or address.

Margie Dunn, Membership Chair

Honoring Martin Luther King, Jr. Followup

The League of Women Voters of Lehigh County participated in the Allentown Art Museum's annual *Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration* in January. Barbara Connolly, Mary Erdman, and Jan Little were among the "Hometown Heroes" whose photos were accompanied by a short explanation of why they volunteered for the organization.

The museum created a video commemorating the celebration. Barbara Connolly appears at the 2:55 minute point of the 3:40 minute video. A link to the video appears under *Honoring Martin Luther King, Jr.* in the Voters Services section of our website.

Jan Little, Public Relations Chair

The League of Women Voters and Fair Districts, More Important Than Ever!

We are all fully aware that our democracy has been tested these past few years in many ways. The work of these two, related organizations, Fair Districts and LWV, is proving to be critical in protecting our representative democracy in Pennsylvania. We are all very busy and as a result, we need your participation at the grass roots level to promote the message of our mission: "Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy." More than ever we need YOU!

This year, the United States Congress will reapportion congressional districts throughout our nation and Pennsylvania will most likely move from 18 to 17 congressional districts. Our state Legislative Redistricting Commission will be redrawing not only our congressional districts, but also every single Legislative (203) and Senate District (50) throughout our state.

This has always been a process that has taken place behind closed doors. But, this year, we are strongly supporting **HB 22 and SB 222** which will basically allow this process to be much more transparent and allow for citizen engagement. There are also certain criteria that will be included in an attempt to keep the process fair. These bills, as you have heard before, are referred to as LACRA - the Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act. HB 22 and SB 222 are critical to a fair and open process. We are asking you to keep up the good work of contacting your state senator and representative to support these bills and keep writing those letters-to-the-editor. Yes, we are beginning to make a difference in Harrisburg!

We are also very concerned that we stop what is called, "Prison Gerrymandering." This is an unfair process whereby prisoners are counted by the district in which the prison is located, giving these districts an unfair, increased population for representation, while diluting the numbers of residents and, therefore, representatives from their home districts. We want to see this practice ended. Prisoners are used to increase these representation numbers, yet these representatives do not treat them as constituents, leaving the inmates without adequate representation. It is a sad situation. And, Pennsylvania is the *only* state in our region in which this is still permitted. Every other state around us has ended prison gerrymandering. For more information, go to: www.fairdistrictspa.com and click on "News and Events."

West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and New York have ALL ended this unfair practice. And this year, before new districts are drawn, we should end prison gerrymandering as well. House Minority Leader, Representative Joanna McClinton, has sponsored **HB 706** in an effort to end prison gerrymandering. we strongly suggest that you contact your State Senator and Legislator to support this bill as well.

We strongly suggest that you contact your state legislators about these issues. Why now? The work we do now and the impact of our grass roots actions, will affect the quality of the redistricting process. Remember, the results of redistricting will last until 2031! Let's work at letting our legislators know that we finally want fairly drawn districts and an end to unfair prison gerrymandering.

We are also watching the possible progression of **HB 38,** which is the bill creating gerrymandered judicial districts. The bill has been tabled for now; but, if the leadership thinks they have the votes to pass it, they may quickly call for a vote in late spring. If this happens, we would need to spring into action. This is a poorly written bill which attempts to solve a *judicial* election process with a purely *political* process which will certainly suppress votes of our citizens when electing state-wide judges.

We hope you will share this information with family and friends and let Harrisburg know that our mission of "Empowering Voters" could not be any more important than it is this year. Let's get to work!

Mary Erdman, Vice President, Action & Programs

Day of Action—April 29, 2021

2021 Government Directory Update

Printed copies of the 2021 Government Directory have been distributed to all local government offices, secondary schools, libraries, and senior centers. We also mailed copies to the donors listed on the back cover. We appreciate the following sponsors for donating to the LWV Education Fund for the 2021 edition: ACLU, Lehigh Valley Chapter, Barry Isett & Associates, Inc., County of Lehigh, Keystone Consulting Engineers, Inc., Lehigh County Medical Society, and the LWV Education Fund.

The printed directory is also available on our league's website for downloading and printing. You can access the online directory using the sub menu found under the Government Directory section of the website. We will update the information found online as we receive changes during the rest of the year. For example, the Parkland and Allentown school districts will have new superintendents starting the next school year. Look for a new manager of the Borough of Macungie. Please email us at email@lwvlehighcounty.org if you know of any similar changes in your community. Ultimately, these changes will appear in the printed directory for 2022.

Work on the 2022 Government Directory will begin formally early next year. However, we look for donors to help to underwrite the cost of printing the next directory on an ongoing basis. If you are interested in helping, click on the Solicitation Letter for the 2022 edition on the Government Directory webpage that you are welcome to personalize.

Cheryl Winters-Tetreau, Government Directory Co-Editor
Donna and Charles Barker, Publications Distribution

GOVERNMENT 2021 DIRECTORY

2021
GOVERNMENT DIRECTORY
of LOCAL, STATE, & FEDERAL OFFICIALS
for Lehigh County in Pennsylvania
Compiled by the League of Women Voters

ELECTION CALENDAR FOR VOTERS:

Municipal Primary:

May 3 Last day to REGISTER before the primary

May 11 Last day to APPLY for an official Absentee (Ausencia) or Mail-In (Por Correo) Ballot

May 18 Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted mail-in and civilian absentee ballots (must be received by 8:00 P.M.)

May 18 MUNICIPAL PRIMARY

May 19 First day to REGISTER after primary

May 25 Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas absentee ballots (submitted for delivery no later than 11:59 P.M. on May 17)

Municipal Election:

Oct. 18 Last day to REGISTER before the November election

Oct. 26 Last day to APPLY for an official Absentee (Ausencia) or Mail-In (Por Correo) Ballot

Nov. 2 Last day for County Boards of Elections to receive voted mail-in and civilian absentee ballots (must be received by 8:00 P.M.)

Nov. 2 MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Nov. 3 First day to REGISTER after November election

Nov. 9 Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas absentee ballots (submitted for delivery no later than 11:59 P.M. on November 1)

Note: Dates in this calendar are subject to change without notice.

Lehigh County Voter Registration Office — 610-782-3194

GOVERNMENT 2021 DIRECTORY

2021-2022 LWVLC Budget

With COVID restrictions in place limiting in person gatherings, the Budget Committee met and developed the 2021-2022 via a Zoom meeting on March 2. Committee members included Mary Bongiorno, Chair; Molly Faust, President; Barbara Williams, Treasurer, and Doris Glaessman. The Budget was presented and approved at the March 11th Board Meeting.

Currently, it is posted on our League's website under the April/May issue in the Newsletter section for members to peruse before the Annual Meeting. Printed copies will be sent to those members who receive printed copies of the VOTER. A vote for final approval will take place at the Zoom Annual Meeting on Saturday, May 22nd. Many thanks to the Budget Committee members for their contributions for this yearly task.

Barbara Williams, Treasurer

Snapshots—League in Action

Charlie Barker & Molly Faust distribute copies of the 2021 Government Directories

County Exec Armstrong & Mary Erdman at Draw the Line event at Liberty Bell Museum

Update on the Legislative Reapportionment Commission

In the last VOTER, the role of the Legislative Reapportionment Commission (LRC) in the redistricting process was addressed. This article will discuss the latest information on the formation and activities of the LRC.

In mid-March, the leadership of both parties announced the names of their representatives on the LRC. They are House Majority Leader Kerry Benninghoff, Senate Majority Leader Kim Ward, House Minority Leader Joanna McClintock, and Senate Minority Jay Costa.

On March 25, these individuals announced the application process for the fifth member and chair of the LRC. With this announcement, all four leaders emphasized their commitment to a fair, open, and transparent redistricting process. They also voiced a commitment to the selection of a chair who is committed to these principles and can be a neutral arbiter of the redistricting process. Selection of the chair should occur on or before April 20.

Because the role of the chair is essential to the credibility of the process, the League and Fair Districts Pa have been advocating for the adoption of the following criteria for the chair. The chair shall be a Pennsylvania citizen who has:

- Voted in two of the last three elections
- Not registered (or has a spouse registered) as a lobbyist the past five years
- Not been nominated (or has a spouse nominated) as a candidate the past five years
- Not served (or has a spouse) as staff or officer of a political party the past five years, and
- Has not served (or has a spouse) as staff of an elected official the past five years.

Once selected, the chair must complete and file a financial disclosure report prior to taking office and one year after leaving office.

Senator David Argall introduced legislation, SB 441, adopting these criteria. SB441 has been voted out of the Senate State Government Committee; however, it is unlikely it will become law before the April 30 deadline. That said, the League is advocating that the LRC adopt this selection criteria, even if it does not become law.

If you want to follow the work of the LRC go to its website: https://www.redistricting.state.pa.us/ Currently, the website includes statewide maps dating back to 1906 showing the evolution of redistricting over the past 100 years. The League, Fair Districts Pa, and Draw the Lines Pa are working to convince the LRC and the General Assembly to use this website as a clearing house for the public to submit maps and make comments on any proposed maps.

Rochelle Kaplan, Secretary and Member of LWVPA Advocacy Task Force

Press Release Results in WDIY Interview

We have sent quite a few press releases about our activities and services to local media this year. One announcement was about the success of the "Running for Local Office" Workshop we hosted in January. Marcie Lightwood, a reporter for WDIY news radio, responded by asking if we would be interested in being interviewed about the workshop. Of course, we agreed!

Marcie Lightwood interviewed Mary Erdman, Workshop Co-Chair, and Zach Cohen concerning the workshop. Zach Cohen attended the workshop and is running for Judge, Court of Common Pleas.

The interview was not live; it was conducted on the phone on March 23rd, recorded, and then edited. The story will air at 5:44 PM on Monday , May 3, on NPR's "All Things Considered" on WDIY 88.1 FM or WDIY.org. "All Things Considered" starts at 4:00 PM and ends at 6:00 PM. We appreciate that Marcie Lightwood has planned to include the interview in this program.

The station will post the recording on their website https://www.wdiy.org on "Local News" under "NPR/News" within 24 hours of the broadcast. Also, a link to the actual recording will be found at the top of the “Running for Local Office” Workshop 2021 section of our website.

Jan Little, Public Relations Chair

Instagram Report

We currently have 663 followers of our Instagram account @lwvlehigh.

We started the venture a little over six months ago. Our intention is to continue to encourage community engagement and appeal to citizens in Lehigh County.

If you have not checked us out, please do so and tell your family and friends!

Michelle Graupner, Instagram Coordinator

Primary Ballot Initiatives

On the May 18, 2021 primary ballot, voters will be asked to vote on three initiatives to amend the Pennsylvania Cconstitution. Voters will be asked to decide what branch of government -governor or legislature- has the power to declare, extend and terminate emergencies, and whether equality of rights based upon race and ethnicity should be included in the constitution. The League of Woman Voters of Pennsylvania has not taken a position on any of the ballot initiatives. However, it has provided guidance on the three constitutional amendments. The guidance includes the plain English statement of the initiatives, what it means to vote yes or no on the initiatives, the background behind the initiatives, and the arguments for and against the initiatives. The full guidance can be found on https://www.vote411.org/ballot. Below is a much edited version of the guidance.

Ballot Question 1 Article III Section 9 Pennsylvania Legislative Resolution to Extend or Terminate Emergency Declaration Amendment

If you vote **YES,** you agree to give the Legislature, by a simple majority vote, the sole power to take away the governor's existing authority to make disaster emergency declarations and coordinate with relevant Pennsylvania agencies.

If you vote **NO,** you disagree with giving the Legislature, by a simple majority vote, the sole power to take away the governor's existing authority to make disaster emergency declarations and coordinate with relevant Pennsylvania agencies.

Ballot Question #2 Article IV Pennsylvania Emergency Declarations Amendment

If you vote **Yes,** you agree to change existing law to limit any governor's disaster emergency declaration - no matter the severity - to 21 days (from 90), unless, and until, the Legislature votes by a simple majority to extend the disaster emergency declaration; and take away the governor's authority to manage new emergency and disasters situations.

If you vote **No,** you disagree with changing the existing law that provides any governor with the power to issue emergency declarations without a 21-day limitation or a simple majority vote by the Legislature; and any governor retains authority to act in emergency and disaster situations.

Ballot Question #3 Article I Pennsylvania Equal Rights Regardless of Race or Ethnicity Amendment

Shall the Pennsylvania Constitution be amended by adding a new section providing that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged because of an individual's race or ethnicity?

If you vote **Yes,** you agree that all levels of Pennsylvania government, entities, and institutions be prohibited from discriminating against individuals because of their race or ethnicity.

If you vote **No,** you disagree with changing Pennsylvania law since current state and federal laws, including the Pennsylvania Constitution and the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, already provide protections against discrimination by all levels of Pennsylvania government, entities, and institutions.

NOTE- There will be a fourth ballot initiative on the May 18 primary ballot providing loan eligibility to certain municipal fire and emergency companies. At the time of publishing The Voter, the League of Women Voters of PA had not yet released guidance on this initiative. Please go to www.vote411.org for more information.

Rochelle Kaplan, Secretary and Member of LWVPA Advocacy Task Force

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion-cont. from page 1

before us by Native Americans. In these sessions, we have explored the history of systemic racism, tackled readings on diverse subjects, and discussed the diversity in our own Leagues.

There has been discussion about steps that individual Leagues can take to diversify. As a first step, our League has added the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy to our bylaws, a change which will be voted on at the Annual Meeting. At later sessions, we will explore further what local Leagues can do to partner with other organizations and to expand our base.

The end goal of these meetings is to prepare a report on the state of DEI in the Pennsylvania Leagues which will be presented at the 2021 Convention in June.

Molly Faust, President

March Hot Topic: Professor Borick on Facts about Climate Change and Public Policy

One of the most popular speakers at our Hot Topic events, Professor Chris Borick, spoke to us about a topic that was new to us, but has been at the heart of his academic research for many years. The topics of his research combine: the knowledge of climate change and the environment, the public acceptance of climate change, and the successful development of public policy addressing climate.

Professor Borick has used The National Survey on Energy and the Environment (NSEE) and tracked results since 2008, along with his research partner from the University of Michigan. They have polled citizens twice a year, surveying nearly 20,000 citizens since 2008. He has also relied on statistics from the Pew Research Center.

As a result of his ongoing research, Professor Borick has compiled a number of interesting facts about where Americans stand regarding our changing climate. First of all, the polls indicate that there is an acceptance rate of 70% to 75% that climate change is here and it is real. Opinions as to the likely causes of environmental change range from the belief that these changes are the result of ongoing natural occurrences to theories that human behavior is directly responsible.

Political partisanship plays a role here, in that more Republicans believe that a natural process is occurring, while Democrats tend to believe that climate change is highly based on human activity. Regardless of this dichotomy, public policy is beginning to address the effects of our changing climate. For example, coastal communities are seeing the need for building higher roadways and, creating better stormwater systems, as well as the building of sand dunes to prevent flooding. These needs all tend to bypass partisan politics.

Other questions Professor Borick raised included the importance of climate change to legislators, the strength of this issue during the 2020 election, and how important it ranks to the public at the present time.

During the 2020 Presidential Election environmental change was one of the lowest priorities. Climate change ranked below the economy, COVID-19, healthcare, crime, violence, and infrastructure concerns. It was at the bottom of the list of Republican issues. Professor Borick's research illustrated that there is a gap of 57% between Democrats and Republicans, with Democrats seeing it as 78% important, and Republicans seeing it only at a 21% rate of importance.

Professor Borick finished by explaining how climate change would most effectively become a salient issue in the development of public policy. In a nutshell, he explained that most changes will likely take place through regulatory actions. These will tend to be moderately accepted if these policies focus on clean and efficient use of fuels, and the interest in developing renewable sources of energy. He discussed that the business community looks at these changes from a marketing viewpoint. This explains how companies like Tesla and Ford have committed to electric cars, not so much out of a strong desire to improve the environment, but instead, with an eye on what will sell.

Finally, he discussed the use of a carbon tax and said that this would be most widely accepted if citizens knew that the revenue will be specifically used to create and develop renewable sources of energy. The second most popular use of the carbon tax among citizens surveyed would be the lowering of personal income tax levels.

Professor Borick explained that even though climate change is becoming more accepted, it continues to be subjectively viewed by our politicians in Washington, depending upon their political affiliation. He sees any legislation to be a very difficult lift for President Biden from a Congress and Senate which is experiencing some of the most hyperpartisan times in history. Therefore, most changes will be a result of Presidential Executive Orders.

A recording of this presentation is available on our YouTube channel, LWV of Lehigh County. You can also find a schedule of all of our programs on the "Hot Topics" web page in the "Upcoming Events" on our website. You may click on any title in blue font color to go to its recorded presentation posted on YouTube.

We are so grateful to Professor Borick for enlightening us, not only about climate change, but also about the many political factors that we must consider when looking to the future and the reality of legislative action on this important issue.

Mary Erdman, Vice President, Action & Programs

2021 Legislative Interviews: Representative Schweyer

This year our legislative interviews are just as challenging as they were last year, yet just as important. COVID is still a factor in scheduling "virtual" interviews with the legislators and senators in the Lehigh Valley. Additionally, we are combining some of our interviews with Fair Districts PA. This is happening because FDPA is in the middle of the "March to Transparency" Campaign which is attempting to visit the same legislators regarding the passage of HB 22 and SB 222. Our League questions cover these same two bills as well as HB 38, Judicial Gerrymandering, and the reforms first created by Act 77.

Other questions cover topics such as: procedural rule changes that would lessen the power of a few legislative leaders, the idea of the popular vote versus the Electoral College, open primaries, and the control of greenhouse gases. Although some of our legislators have been visited, we still need to schedule a few more visits and find more of our members who are willing to do a virtual visit with a Lehigh Valley legislator.

Mary Erdman and Barbara Williams interview Representative Schweyer via Zoom.

These interviews serve many purposes. First of all, we get to develop a relationship with our legislators which helps us to carry out our programs and educational projects. Secondly, we get the chance to thank our legislators for their work, and to explain why we support various good government policies. Finally, the LWVPA uses this information as a basis for lobbying our legislators for bills that support our mission of "Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy." Most legislators welcome a chance to explain their views and we learn a great deal from their comments and explanations.

Remembering that our legislators work for the people of their district in Harrisburg makes it a little easier to be involved in the interview and to ask about their work for our residents. It is amazing how much we can learn while conducting these interviews.

If you have a chance, offer to meet with your legislator. It is one of the most important projects we do, and one of those with which the LWVPA needs our assistance. We could conduct more of these interviews if our members would be willing to participate. You will never have to do an interview by yourself, and it is not as difficult as you may think. Our legislators welcome our members and are often anxious to discuss their own legislative ideas. Rarely are we turned down for an interview. Only one of our legislators has declined to meet with our League members this year, which is unfortunate as we were anxious to discuss the choice and wording of questions which he legitimately raised last year.

We will shortly list the legislators that still need to be interviewed, and we hope our members step up to help. Please help us finish this task. There are very important issues to be discussed this year.

Mary Erdman, Vice President, Action & Programs

2021 Nominating Slate

President (2021-2023) – Mary Erdman

1st Vice President- Program (2021-2023) – Chris Herbener

Secretary (2021-2023) – Rochelle Kaplan

Nominating Committee (Chair chosen by committee members)

Cecilia Birdsell

Margie Dunn

Pat Swan

Directors:

Membership (2021-2023) – Margie Dunn

Website (2021-2023) – Terri Purdy

2021 Voters Guide

The 2021 municipal primary election Voters Guide is set to be printed and published by The Morning Call on Thursday, April 29, 2021. The primary election will be held on May 18, 2021.

The Guide will consist of fifty-nine races from the state level down to the township level with almost 200 candidates running in these races. It will include the biographical information and responses to an online questionnaire by candidates in contested races while those in uncontested races will be listed underneath the elected position for which they are running.

All information provided by candidates who participated in the online questionnaire will be available at vote411.org.

Michelle Graupner, Chair, Voters Guide

New DRBC Regulation Prohibits High Volume Hydraulic Fracturing (HVHF) in the Delaware River Basin & Wastewater Importation and Water Exportation Rule Amendments to be Proposed

Citizens have rallied outside DRBC meetings calling for a permanent ban on fracking for ten years.

Clean Water Action reported in early March, "We have some incredible news to share! The Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) has voted to permanently ban fracking throughout the Delaware River Watershed region in NJ, NY, DE and PA."

The five Commission members are the governors of the basin states (Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania) and the commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' North Atlantic Division, who represents the federal government.

However, Brigadier General Thomas J. Tickner, Commander, North Atlantic Division, United States Army Corps of Engineers abstained from voting as the transition from the Trump administration to Biden's is not complete. (Brigadier General Tickner serves as the Commission's current vice chair.)

This vote is the result of a 10-year effort made by a coalition of environmental groups and citizens; LWV members have attended and testified at meetings and hearings held by the Commission. You can read DRBC's press release about this decision made on February 25, 2021 on the Shale webpage in the Special Interests section of our website.

In a separate action, the Commissioners directed the executive director to propose amendments to update the Commission's rules concerning importation of wastewater from outside the basin and exportation of basin waters no later than September 30, 2021. In recent years, there have been hearings concerning importation of wastewater from outside the basin and exportation of basin waters.

The primary goal of these amendments is making sure all 13 million citizens depending upon water from the Basin are protected.

Jan Little

April Hot Topic: TerraCycle-Eliminating the Idea of Waste®

Maame Mensah, US Account Director, Brand Partnerships, TerraCycle US was our April Hot Topic speaker. Speaking to us via Zoom, she explained the work of TerraCycle which is a social enterprise dedicated to eliminating waste. The company works in 21 countries and tackles the issue of waste from many angles.

Maame Mensah displaying some uses for hard-to-recycle materials.

It has determined that nearly everything we use can be recycled and so, it has set up nationally, first-of-their-kind recycling programs to collect what is usually considered to be non-recyclable items.

TerraCycle then works with leading companies to encourage them to take these hard-to-recycle materials (such as the ocean plastic which TerraCycle gathers in its collection program) and to turn the plastic waste into new products. Playground equipment is one use for this recycled plastic.

Maame stated that TerraCycle has developed a new Loop platform with the goal of changing the way the world shops. Part of this is encouraging companies to package their popular brands in refillable packaging designed with convenience and style. Another part is encouraging stores to consider setting up recycling stations in the store where customers can bin their recyclables to be collected and re-purposed.

Jan Little

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 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 2021

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

$35 if 35 years or younger

Please make check payable to LWVLC and mail to:

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