

The **VOTER**

Presidents Message,

Dear Members,

First, I, along with our entire board of directors, wish our members, legislators, and all our community partners a healthy and happy New Year! We are grateful for your membership and your interest in the programs we have held throughout this past year. We are looking forward to our 103rd year of existence (observed on February 14th) as we continue our mission of “Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy.”

As we begin 2023, I want to explain to all, the nature of the League, which has not changed over the years. Regarding political parties and political candidates: we steadfastly adhere to a non-partisan stance and will never endorse a party or a candidate. The best examples of this is the work we do on our online source, vote411.org, The Morning Call Voters Guide, and in our debates and forums.



Our mission also requires us to promote all policies that enable voter registration, voter access and methods of voting, readily available to all voters regardless of party affiliation. When we see legislation that in any way does not “empower” certain voters or is not “defending democracy,” we will stand up to such actions, regardless of which party initiates such policies. In this respect, we are political in staying true to our mission.

It is our deep desire to see that all citizens are treated equally and fairly under the law.

Our founder, Carrie Chapman Catt, said: *“Everybody counts in applying democracy. And there will never be a true democracy until every responsible and law-abiding adult in it, without regard to race, sex, color or creed has his or her own inalienable and unpurchasable voice in government!”*

Carrie Chapman also inspires us to “give yourselves,” in this work of democracy, and this year it is our goal to increase the number of our members involved in activities. When you see emails, notices, or social media asking for help, please try to step up and become involved, even if you only spend an hour a month. We need YOU to help promote our efforts. Looking forward to seeing and meeting each of our members this year. Thank you for your support.

Mary Erdman, President

Upcoming Events

- January 21, 8:30am - 12:00 pm. Running for Local Office Workshop
- February 13, 11:30am - 1:00pm. Hot Topics Luncheon - "News from the Zoo"
- March 13, 11:30am - 1:00pm. Hot Topics Luncheon - "The Amazing Work of the Cohesion Network"
- April 30, 11:30am - 1:00pm. Hot Topics Luncheon - "The Environment and the Lehigh Valley - Concerns and Successes"

VISIT <https://lwvlehighcounty.org/events/> for details

Time is getting short to REGISTER for the RUNNING FOR LOCAL OFFICE WORKSHOP

VOTE FOR YOUR NAME HERE

Workshop will be held on Jan. 21, 2023 at Penn State Lehigh Valley

For information and to register go to lwvlehighcounty.org/running-for-office-workshop/

Government Policy Committee Year-end Report

The past year was very active for the LWVPA Government Policy Committee. The committee tracked court cases and legislation that impacted voters' rights. The committee created talking points for local Leagues to use with their legislators, to educate voters, and to include in letters to the editor regarding these cases and bills. Moreover, the committee participated in the redistricting process.

Litigation

McKlinko vs. Chapman- The Pennsylvania Supreme Court holds that the mail in ballot provisions of Act 77 are constitutional.

Rivera vs. Lehigh County Board of Elections- Judge Thomas Caffery of the Lehigh County Common Pleas Court held that there would be no restrictions on the availability of drop boxes for voters, nor does there need to be additional supervision of the drop boxes.

RNC vs. Chapman- In a three-to-three ruling, the Pennsylvania's Supreme Court ordered counties to "refrain from counting" undated or misdated mail ballots in the November election. However, the ballots are to remain in a secure location for any future litigation.

Moore vs. Harper- This case arose out of the North Carolina redistricting process. The North Carolina State Legislature challenged a ruling by the State Supreme Court rejecting maps drawn by the legislature. The NC Legislature argued that the US Constitution prohibits state courts from reviewing actions of the state legislature that involve elections. The case was argued before the US Supreme Court on December 7. LWVPA joined the other 49 state leagues and the national in opposing the position of the North Carolina Legislature. A decision is not expected until late Spring 2023.

Legislation

SB106-This is a proposed constitutional amendment (1) stating that there is no right to abortion related services and public funding for an abortion; (2) imposing stricter voter ID requirements for all elections; (3) mandating the auditor general audit every election; (4) limiting the power of the executive branch to issue regulations; and (5) changing the way that

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LWVLC Book Club News

Attention All Readers!

Stretch your mind and get to know league members in an informal setting.

During 2022 two books were discussed at our recent meetings.

I'm Still Here - Dignity in a World Made for Whiteness

Austin Channing Brown

and

On Juneteenth

Annette Gordon-Reed

Our next meeting will be held in February-March
with the book still to be decided.

If you are interested in participating in the LWVLC Book Club
contact Barbara Connolly by email or phone.

blconnolly2@gmail.com

610-216-9448

Three Debates Inform Lehigh & Northampton County Voters

This past campaign season found six candidates willing to debate and share their views with potential constituents. Please know that *every candidate* running in a contested race was asked to debate by the League. All Democrats responded “yes”; however, only three Republican candidates chose to participate.

Our first debate was held at the Faith Community Hall in Whitehall on September 29. Debating that evening were Republican candidate Dean Browning and Democrat candidate Nick Miller for the new 14th State Senate District.

The second debate was between Democratic incumbent Representative Peter Schweyer and the Republican candidate, Brent Labenberg of Emmaus. These candidates were running for the redrawn 134th State Legislative District. The debate was held at the L.V. Active Life Center on October 6.

Our third and final debate was held in Center City at the Lehigh County Conference of Churches on the evening of October 10 for the newly created 22nd District. The candidates were Democrat Joshua Siegel and Republican Robert Smith.

A great team worked on the questions: Michelle Graupner, Terri Purdy, Barb Williams and Mary Erdman. We were able to cover most of the important topics which were on the minds of our Lehigh and Northampton County constituents.

We had guest moderators for the first two debates and finished our last debate with our own moderator, Barbara Williams, who did a magnificent job. Our timekeepers for all three debates were Rochelle Kaplan and Terri Purdy. Michelle Graupner was our videographer, and the debates have been posted on our YouTube site. Board members: Molly Faust and Ken Baumert, Charles and Donna Barker, Barb Williams, and Cheryl Winters-Tetreau also helped with these events.

A newly added feature this year was the inclusion of Allentown High School students who asked their own questions directly to the candidates. Two of our debates included three AHS Civics students, who asked thoughtful, challenging questions which contributed to the exchange of ideas. Well done to all who were involved.

The winners of each of those contests were:

PA Senate District 14: PA Senator Nick Miller (D)

PA House District 22: Rep. Joshua Siegel (D)

PA House District 134: Rep. Peter Schweyer(D)

Congratulations to all candidates and audiences for job well-done.

Mary Erdman, President



*The next Voter we will highlight each newly-elected or re-elected office holder and hear what their legislative goals are for 2023-2024.

Spotlight Addendum: Chris Herbener

Due to space constraints, we were unable to include some of the highlights of Chris Herbener’s service with the League in our last Spotlight. Please note that Chris distinguished herself while serving as the Voters Guide Editor, Finance Chair, and President (2 terms) of the Hazleton LWV. During her tenure, the Hazleton League expanded to become the LWV Greater Hazleton Area which followed the lines of the school district and helped bring better public transportation to the area. They also researched and wrote the book “Coal: The Burning Question” concerning coal use in Pennsylvania.

Chris later served on the LWVPA Board of Directors (2009-2015). During her time as a Director, Chris served as Membership Chair, organized the Eastern LWVPA Members Conference, and created the membership event at Muhlenberg College in 2015.

Government Policy Report (cont. from page 2)

Lieutenant Governor is elected. This legislation was passed by the House and Senate at the end of the session in a late-night vote. It has to be passed again in 2023, to be placed on the 2023 primary or general election ballot. The League opposes this legislation.

HB 38- This was a proposed constitutional amendment that sought to create judicial districts for the appellate courts. The legislation was not passed for a second time in the 2021-2022 legislative session. The legislation would have to be reintroduced and passed in the 2023-24 session, and then passed again in the 2024-2025 legislative session to appear on the ballot in 2025.

HB 1369- This bill would expand voting rights to the million-plus unaffiliated voters in Pennsylvania allowing them to vote in the primary election. The house state government committee held public hearings on the legislation, but no vote was taken by the house state government committee. LWVPA will be advocating to have it reintroduced and passed in the 2023-2024 session

SB 982- The bill was signed by Governor Wolf. It bans third-party funding of county elections operations but provides grants to county elections offices to defray the costs of elections. Counties receiving these grants may not start counting mail in ballots until 7:00 am on election day, and they must continuously count them, without breaks, until all the mail in ballots have been counted. The LWVPA will continue to advocate for continued funding for our state and county election offices.

HB 2207- This was a proposed constitutional amendment that eliminated the Legislative Reapportionment Commission (LRC) and replaced it with a commission of 11 individuals picked by the General Assembly and County officials. The General Assembly would have the final say on any maps approved by the commission. This legislation was not passed by the General Assembly in 2021-2022 session.

Redistricting

Our League and LWVPA played an active role in the redistricting process. Members submitted written testimony regarding maps, and some testified in person before the House State government committee regarding congressional maps and the Legislative Reapportionment Commission regarding state house and senate maps. The final maps that were approved created two new districts in Lehigh County, one in the house and one in the senate.

In 2023, the government policy committee will be working to support legislation that enfranchises voters and makes elections more accessible, including legislation to open our primary elections to all voters. On a national level, we will be looking to support the National Popular Vote Compact project. [Click here](#) to stay up to date on the advocacy work of the League of Women Voters-Pennsylvania.

Rochelle Kaplan, Member, LWVPA Govt Policy Committee



2022 Membership Report

This year has been a great year for membership. We now have 89 members. We lost quite a few members last January, but we have gained 13 new members. Our website, Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook accounts have gotten the word out about how active our League has been this year.

We had our second Meet and Greet this summer in Emmaus, and the turnout was great. Our Hot Topic Luncheons have been well attended and everyone loves the new location at Madeline's in Fogelsville.

The membership renewal drive is winding down with a due date of January 30th. A few people have been paying by credit card or PayPal. The electronic payment option has helped new and old members pay without the hassle of sending a check. Again, tell friends, relatives, and neighbors that you belong to the League of Women Voters and to check out our website. I think they will join, too.

Margie Dunn, Membership

Community Outreach Report

The designation *Community Outreach* continues to best describe our mission, goals, and activities. In keeping with the meaning of engagement, we have connected with diverse groups through voter registration opportunities, participation in city events, education programs, and our LWVLC Get Out the Vote postcard initiative. The support of collaborating partners has been key to our increased visibility and work in the community. The support of League members has also been instrumental and will continue to be throughout the coming year.

A wide variety of Lehigh County groups requested League presentations during 2022, ranging from those serving young people moving toward independent living, to senior citizen organizations. We were able to provide information on voting basics, changes in political districts due to redistricting, and in using the League's vote411 candidate information website.

Community groups requesting LWVLC presentations or forums included the Center for Independent Living Skills Lehigh Valley, Lehigh Valley Active Life, St. John's UCC, Allentown, and the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley, UUCLV. At the invitation of the Cohesion Network of All we attended Community Block Meetings in Allentown. The opportunity to share information at these meetings and network with other community groups has widened our outreach efforts and brought us in contact with many amazing and committed individuals.

Tabling events continue to be an important part of our commitment to the community.

Our first outdoor tabling event took place in March during the Lehigh Valley Book Festival held at the Bethlehem Area Public Library. We were also invited to the Grand Opening of Star Health Practices at St. Luke's Sacred Heart, Allentown. During the spring and summer months, we participated in a number of events in the city of Allentown including the Tilghman Street Bridge Block party, the Juneteenth Celebration at Cedar Beach, and the Blues, Brews and Barbeque Festival on Hamilton Street. We were brought back into the cold at the Community Outreach Day sponsored by the Lehigh County Office of the Public Defender in October. Just prior to the election, Ripple Community Inc. hosted an information and voter registration afternoon for clients and friends. At each of these events we were able to spread the word: Voting is Your Superpower!

Through the generous Local Democracy Defenders Grant provided by the LWVPA and supportive collaborators, we were able to reach many Lehigh Valley citizens both in-person at events and through our GOTV postcard campaign. Thanks to the members of the UUCLV and RAC-Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism for addressing and mailing postcards to over 700 Lehigh County voters prior to the November election. All hands on deck made a huge impact in 2022!

Barbara Connolly,
Vice-President, Community Outreach

LWVPA Equity Team

The LWVPA Equity Team (previously referred to as the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee) has been active throughout 2022. A highlight of this year's work was the creation and launch of 5 LWVPA DEI Learning Modules. This was the culmination of work done by an education subcommittee whose members researched and then put together an interactive modular learning series to be available through the LWVUS, the LWVPA, and local Leagues. It is designed to augment other DEI programming currently available. This brand-new series of 5 LWVPA DEI Learning Modules will be offered through the Speakers Bureau programming or directly to Leagues with facilitation support.

The Equity team will continue to work through 2023. It meets twice monthly via Zoom and League members are invited to participate in the Monday night webinars held the fourth Monday of the month.

Molly Faust, Past President & DEI Representative

LWVLV Website

The League website's primary focus is on voters, with a secondary focus on our local League. Our goal is to tell our story, expand our reach, encourage website visitors to take action, and advertise upcoming League activities. Our most popular pages provide easy access to the Voters Guide (<https://lwvlehighcounty.org/voters-guide/>) and the Government Directory (<https://lwvlehighcounty.org/new-government-directory/>) to both our members and the community. The website provides a voter toolkit (<https://lwvlehighcounty.org/voter-toolkit/>) with links to a wide range of election-related sites such as information about registering to vote, voting by mail, and how to locate your polling place.

Our Events Calendar (<https://lwvlehighcounty.org/events/>) keeps our League members and the community current with our League's activities, community activities that are relevant to voters, and election related dates. It provides the capability for website visitors to register online for League events, such as our Hot Topics Luncheons and our Running for Local Office Workshop. It also has the capability for visitors to subscribe to the Events Calendar so that events on our calendar are reflected in their own digital calendars. This keeps subscribers up to date on new events and any last minute changes made to events.

Our Action Alerts page (<https://lwvlehighcounty.org/action-alerts/>) lets our visitors know when there is an urgent need to take action to influence a public policy, such as a need to contact your legislators to vote yes or no on a particular issue. The page also provides links where interested visitors can find additional information on public policy issues.

Our website provides the capability to join the League online as well as the capability for members to renew their membership online. It also accepts donations online. We hope you will take the time to browse our website (<https://lwvlehighcounty.org>) to see the value the League provides to the community.

Terri Purdy, Special Projects

Voters Guide Report

We successfully released our Voters Guide online at vote411.org and in print through *The Morning Call* on May 5th, 2022 and October 27th, 2022 for both the primary and general elections. We received a total of 1,000 copies with 500 provided for each election. The copies of the Voters Guide were distributed to League members, libraries, community centers, and local colleges. The Guide has been the most effective way for citizens of Lehigh County to receive unbiased and direct information from the candidates running for the respective elected positions.

Instagram Report

Instagram is a social media platform that our League has used since August 2020 to reach our community. We use our page @lwvlehigh to update our members and Lehigh County residents on our work in the community. We consistently encourage individuals to join the League, provide information on tabling at community events, dates of upcoming candidate forums/debates, how to attend our Running for Office Workshop, and when and where the biannual Voters Guide can be viewed. Our account currently has 925 followers and counting, with the hope that in 2023 we will reach even more of our community!

Michelle Graupner

Local Issues Initiative

We are looking to form a committee to review and establish new positions on local issues. Some of the topics we are considering are local water issues, transportation needs, and environmental concerns, including climate issues. Anyone who is interested in joining this committee and contributing to the discussion is welcome. Please reach out to me at: cheryl.tetreau@gmail.com. We are hoping to hold an inaugural meeting sometime in January 2023.

Cheryl Winters-Tetreau, Co-Chair, Local Issues Committee

Hot Topics Luncheons

Please join us once again at Madeline's restaurant on Rte. 100 near Weis Market on January 9, 2023 when Lin Erickson, CEO and Executive Director of the Da Vinci Center in Allentown, will join us. Her resume is extensive and her experience with education is long standing. The Da Vinci Center is currently leading the development of a major new science center in downtown Allentown.

On February 13, 2023 Amanda Suhr, Lehigh Valley Zoo President and Executive Director, will be bringing us, "News from the Zoo."

Hot Topic Lunches so far this year have been wonderful and as interesting as ever. September's program, featuring Mary Hammond Liley-Thomson as Mary Starshine, brought us a bright fun program to "Lighten Up and Let Go."

Matt Turek, Allentown Mayor, spoke of the programs and hopes for Allentown's future in his "State of the City" remarks to our members in October.

November brought us Phil Armstrong, the vibrant and active Lehigh County Executive Director, who spoke of the "State of the County." During his presentation we heard of programs postponed due to COVID that have since been completed such as Cedarbrook's South Whitehall Township facilities. Mr. Armstrong also related his activities while serving on the National Association of Regional Councils Board of Directors.

The LWVLC calendar ended in December with Dr. Chris Borick, Professor of Political Science and Director of Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion, as our speaker. Dr. Borick's thought-provoking talks about the recent elections, candidate selection by the parties, and other political subjects couldn't have been more stimulating.

Chris Herbener, Vice President Program

The 2022 Government Directory

In 2022 we instituted a new process for updating and producing our Government Directory. It all went very smoothly, and the directories were picked up from Christmas City Printing on April. We distributed 3,000 printed copies, and the directory is also available at our website.

We would once again like to thank our sponsors, Barry Isett & Associates, the County of Lehigh, Keystone Consulting Engineers, and the LWV Education Fund. As always, we are looking for support from the community to help cover our printing and distribution costs. If you know of any individuals, company, or organization that would be interested in sponsoring the directory, please email Cheryl at lwvlehighcounty.org.

Cheryl Winters-Tetreau, Government Directory Chair

Publications Distribution 2023 Year Review

The Distribution Committee was very busy this year with four major distribution events, as well as six deliveries of The Voter newsletter. Last spring, five hundred copies of the Voters Guide were sent out to 33 recipients by 5 volunteers. In autumn 2022, 6 volunteers handed out five hundred Voters Guides to 25 locations.

In April, 3000 copies of the Government Directory were delivered by 16 volunteers to 119 sites, including libraries, government offices, businesses, and legislators. In early December, 4 volunteers distributed Running for Local Office flyers and handouts to 35 libraries and township offices throughout Lehigh County.

Deliveries of paper copies of The Voter newsletter have increased to cover 50 recipients, including donors, libraries, legislators, and members who have requested a paper copy.

Donna & Charles Barker



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 _____
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 2022

\$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