

# The **VOTER**

This edition contains the year-end reports of the various League committees and photographs from the May 15 annual meeting..

## President's Annual Report

Dear Members,



This year has been no different from other years in our LWV Lehigh County charter. We have enjoyed a wonderful, hard-working Board of Directors and volunteers who have accomplished a number of worthwhile events, debates, publications, and behind the scenes work that keeps us moving forward.

First, a sincere “thank you” to all Board members for your dedication, hard work, and support as we have completed another year serving Lehigh County. Your hard work and ideas are truly amazing!

**Molly Faust** - past president, longtime member, and DEI representative for our League who sits on the statewide committee steering DEI policies for the State League as well as local Leagues. Molly also does the layout for our bimonthly *The Voter*.

**Margie Dunn** - also a longtime member and our Director of Membership. She keeps our renewal of membership on a very timely basis. (**Ann Bartholomew** creates our handbook with information from Margie)

**Barbara Williams** - also a longtime member, who maintains our budget and watches our spending. Barb has kept us in great financial shape.

**Barbara Connolly** - our Community Outreach Director who covers our Voter Services and makes the necessary connections with our community partners to educate and guide voters. She also leads our League Book Club.

**Chery Winters-Tetreau** - who has the organizational skills for the Government Directory and is always willing to give a hand at almost *all* our events. Her efforts have streamlined the process and made the Directory more efficient to prepare. Cheryl has also taken the lead on our Local Programs project, which will be presented next year.

**Charles and Donna Barker** - have taken over the job of dispersing our Government Directories and the Voters Guide across Lehigh County. They have streamlined and added great partners to whom we distribute the Guide and Directory. Their work helps us to distribute our publications wisely and efficiently. Donna also is a contributing editor for *The Voter* for every issue we publish.

**Chris Herbener** - who valiantly struggled through a few surgeries to get the job of scheduling our HTL speakers done. Compiling their bios, sending our reminder emails, and introducing our speakers monthly are also aspects of this committee chair.

These last three Board members we shine a special light upon at this time; they have left or are leaving the Board and their contributions have been immense and will be sorely missed:

**Michelle Graupner** - has been our resident social media expert. She maintained our Instagram and has given me advice on Facebook and Twitter. But more importantly, she has organized and published many issues of the Voters' Guide over the last number of years. She has streamlined and made publishing the Guide much easier. Michelle has also updated and edited the handbook we give participants in our Running for Local Office Workshop. She left the Board in January to run for Clerk of Judicial Records, and we are extremely proud of her and wish her the best.

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**Rochelle Kaplan** - our Board Secretary, has been nearly perfect in her notetaking and production of the minutes each month. Rochelle has also been a Board member upon which we can always depend to step-up and help out, no matter what the job. She has kept us updated on what is happening at the state level because she has been elevated to the position of statewide Director of Voter Services. Make sure you check out the webinars and meetings Rochelle has arranged- especially the Ballot Box Basics (on our website and the state website) They are very helpful!

**Terri Purdy** – lastly, Terri has been the master of our wonderful website and has kept it meticulously updated with any information you need to know about our League and what is going on at the state level. All those wonderful graphics you see on our social media, our website, or in *The VOTER* represents Terri's mastery of Canva and her creative spirit. She is also the master of our Zoom Meetings. Terri is an ideas person who helps me “see” the benefits (or not) of some of my ideas!

We will miss these exceptional women and are still hoping to see people step up to help with their work. We thank them sincerely and appreciate all they have done. We hope to see them involved in many League activities during the upcoming year.

**Julie Ambrose** - we want to thank Julie for stepping up as the new editor of *The Morning Call's* Voters Guide. The April edition was Julie's first edition. It is a massive project, and it went extremely well. We appreciate Julie's take charge attitude for getting the job done and done well. So glad to have you onboard! Thanks to Michelle for her guidance along the way.

At this point, I would stress that the Board is very eager to get our members involved in any of our upcoming projects, whether it is a week, a day, or even a few hours during this upcoming year. This is collectively OUR League, and my goal is to see as many of you as possible actively engaged during the next year.

Just to show what you're missing, let me recap a few of last year's major activities. Kicking off last year, we held a summer “Meet 'N Greet” at the Emmaus Community Park. We had a pleasant evening and did get a few new members. It was truly a group project. We will be working on another activity, hopefully at River Rising Brewery later this summer.



*President Mary Erdman at 2023 Annual Meeting*

Another major project was the biannual **Running for Local Office Workshop**. We have a great template to follow and had a decent turnout. Speakers from *both* parties imparted their wisdom and advice to the prospective candidates. It took a group of us to make this a successful morning for all participants. Surveys of the last two RLOW's have been very positive and suggestions have been constructive.

We also held three **Debate/Forums** for those running in the new 22nd Legislative District, the newly drawn 134th district, and the new 14th Senate District. We had very good attendance, excellent questions, and the candidates came prepared and eager to share their views. We would like to hold forums for County Commissioners, and a few school district races, as they present voters with a unique challenge this election cycle. We will need your help preparing these forums. Finally, I have three major goals for next year which I want to share with all of our members:

1. Create a standard strategic plan for the future of our League.
2. Create events that will encourage younger voters to join our League.
3. Engage more of our members in the satisfying work of the League.

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*(President's Report continued from page 2)*

Achieving these goals and fulfilling our mission of: "Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy," will take more than just our Board members. We need you; we look forward to working with you. We also want to get to know all our members. We know that there is a lot of experience, talent, and passion among our members. These are difficult political times which demand more effort to advance our mission. Have a wonderful summer and watch for those emails and info about events. Also, don't hesitate to check out our website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter! Thank you all for your support and encouragement this year.

Yours in League,  
Mary Erdman, President

## 2022-2023 Annual Reports

### Program

The Annual Meeting was held at Madeline's Restaurant. It was well attended and as usual the food was outstanding. We decided to change the meeting from a Saturday lunch in May to a dinner at Madeline's, where we hold the Hot Topics Lunches. Speaker for the meeting was Christopher Baxter, the executive director and founding editor of Spotlight PA an independent, nonpartisan newsroom. Spotlight PA was founded to address a crisis in journalism in Pennsylvania: the rapid decline of corporate-owned news outlets, which has diminished access to trusted, contextual, and factual reporting across the state. To receive their newsletter their email is [spotlightpa.org](mailto:spotlightpa.org).



*Attendees at 2023 Annual Meeting*

New members elected to the board are: Ellen Iobst, who is Director of Environmental Policy. Mary Bongiorno will take over administration of the website. Julie Ambrose is editor of the Morning Call Voter's Guide.

Cheryl Winters-Tetreau, Local Issues Committee will review the LWVLC positions that were studied, and consensus was reached and voted upon in the past. They include Solid Waste Management, Local Water Consensus, and Transportation Needs in the Lehigh Valley. These positions remain current unless members of the League review them and determine they need to be updated.

Chris Herbener, Vice President Program

### Local Issues

This year we formed a Local Issues Committee to take a look at and update our current local issues positions, which were last updated in 2019. We've had several in-person meetings to determine what issues we would like to do more research on. We have decided to focus on the following Lehigh Valley issues:

Solid waste management

Local water issues

Transportation needs

Education

Prison reform

The members of the committee are co-chair Ann Bartholomew, Barb Connolly, Molly Faust, Ellen Iobst, Rochelle Kaplan, Merry Landis, and Cheryl Winters-Tetreau.

Cheryl Winters-Tetreau, Local Issues Committee Co-Chair

## Government Policy

Since the last annual meeting, the LWVPA Government Policy Committee has been busy tracking and submitting testimony on legislation and policy matters impacting voters. The committee also created resources to assist local Leagues in meeting with legislators, and held its very first lobby day.

### Listening Tour

At the beginning of the 2023-2024 legislative session, Speaker of the House, Mark Rozzi, created a bipartisan task group to work on rules of procedure. He held several meetings throughout the state, advertised as a “listening tour,” to hear from citizens and organizations on their concerns about the legislative process. Susan Gobreski, Government Policy Director, LWVPA, testified on the need to have rules to promote collaboration in the legislature so that important pieces of legislation can get a vote on the floor of the House. She also discussed the need to reform the constitutional amendment process.

### Meet and Greet Packets for meeting with legislators.

LWVPA encouraged all local League leaders to hold a “meet and greet” with their new and returning legislators. To help facilitate these meetings, the Government Policy Committee created a resource with guidance on conducting the meetings and discussing the legislative priorities of the State League. The goal of the meetings was to build and maintain relationships with the legislators and learn what was important to the legislator. Our League utilized this approach with our legislators to positive results. We met with four of our legislators and were able to obtain statements on the legislative priorities of those with whom we were unable to meet. We look forward to continuing our relationship with our state senators and legislators.

### Lobby Day

LWVPA held a lobby day in Harrisburg on April 26. The Government Policy Committee lead the planning for this event. Thirty members from local Leagues around the state attended. This provided local Leagues with an opportunity to meet with their legislators in person and to give the State League a presence at the capital. Meg Pierce, the Executive Director of LWVPA, and Susan Gobreski, held a press conference in which they discussed the legislative priorities of the State League. It is hoped that this will be a yearly event.

### Legislation

The legislation that the Government Policy committee paid particular attention to since the last Annual meeting is as follows:

- Open Primaries
- Election law reform
- Election reform that restricts accessibility
- Constitutional amendment to extend the statute of limitations
- Reforming the constitutional amendment process

The Government Policy Committee looks to you to become advocates. Write letters to the editor and contact legislators about election law reform that provides greater access to voters.

Rochelle Kaplan, Member, LWVPA Govt Policy Committee and Secretary

## Community Outreach

It has been a busy and rewarding year for our community outreach efforts. We have been able to reach out to residents of Lehigh County during voter registration events and education programs. Providing information regarding voting and ways to access accurate information about federal, state, and municipal offices and candidates has been a continuing focus.

During the past year, we have attended planned events in Allentown including the Juneteenth Celebration at Cedar Beach, the Blues, Brews, and Barbecues Festival on Hamilton Street, and Community Outreach Day held by the Lehigh County Office of the Public Defender. We are grateful to the city of Allentown and the growing number of organizations that have welcomed our participation in these events. The purchase of an LWVLC tent will give our efforts even more visibility and comfort this coming summer!

Check the events page of our website for information about where we will be and contact me if you would like to help at an event. I can be reached at [email@lwvlehighcounty.org](mailto:email@lwvlehighcounty.org) or at 610-216-9448

A variety of organizations invited the League to present programs, including the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Lehigh Valley (UUCLV), St. John's UCC, Allentown, and the Center for Independent Living Skills Lehigh Valley. In addition, we have been welcomed at meetings of The Cohesion Network in Allentown's 1st and 6th Wards, and at Franklin Park. Each of these groups presented unique opportunities for conversation and learning, especially regarding the challenges and needs of underserved communities.

Our afternoon at the Lehigh Valley Book Festival, held at the Bethlehem Area Public Library, brought us not only an opportunity to provide voting information, but also taught us a bit about the popularity of Bluey and the patience of kids and parents.

Thanks to the skills of Terri Purdy we have enlarged the scope of our voter information postcards, gearing them to a diversity of voters, including young voters, families, and newly naturalized citizens. Thanks also to the groups instrumental in our GOTV efforts, including members of the UUCLV and RAC-Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

Two generous grants provided by the LWVPA, the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Grant, and the Local Democracy Defenders Grant increased our ability to provide greater opportunities for community outreach. A great summer and fall are on the way!

Barbara Connolly,

Vice president, Voter Services and Community Outreach



*Photos from 2023 Annual Meeting . Christopher Baxter, editor of Spotlight PA, is the meeting speaker.*

## 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. It provides a voter toolkit (<https://lwvlehighcounty.org/voter-toolkit/>) with links 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 the 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, Director , Website

## Special Projects

**Zoom:** Our League uses a Zoom Pro account to enable us to host meetings longer than the 40 minutes available on a basic free Zoom account. We take full advantage of our account to hold our board meetings and planning meetings virtually throughout the year.

**Graphics Support:** Special Projects provided graphics support to our Community Outreach, Social Media and Program Directors over the course of the year by designing postcards, a tote bag, the Hot Topics Luncheon bookmark, posts for our social media accounts, graphics for The Voter newsletter, advertisements for our Running for Local Office Workshop, and trifold displays for our fall Meet and Greet Picnic. Special Projects also prepared the Legislators and their Legislative Goals addendum for the March-April issue of The Voter.

Terri Purdy, Director Special Projects

## 2023 Government Directory

We got a bit of a late start getting our Government Directory files to the printer this year because of all the changes to magisterial and voting districts. But it all went very smoothly, and the directories were picked up from Christmas City Printing on April 11. We are in the process of distributing the 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, Lehigh County Medical Society, 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 company or organization that would be interested in sponsoring the Directory, please email Cheryl at: [cheryl.tetreau@gmail.com](mailto:cheryl.tetreau@gmail.com).

Cheryl Winters-Tetreau, Government Directory Chair

## Membership

Our membership continues to grow! We now have 79 members in our local League. Eight new members have joined since January. Two new members joined us this month; they are: Nell Sokalski of Allentown and Christopher Caffyn, a student who lives in New Tripoli.

We would like to encourage more young people to become members. A student membership is only \$25 annually, and membership for those under 35 years is \$35. If you know any young people who might consider joining the League, please encourage them to do so. Our website has a wealth of information and links to activities and events which enable active membership. The League is also represented on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Margie Dunn, Membership Chair

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The State League's DEI Committee, now known as the Equity Committee, has completed its second year of existence. It meets twice monthly year-round. I have represented our League and attended the sessions which have taken place on Zoom.

During the year, we have continued to explore the history of systemic racism, tackled readings on diverse subjects, and discussed the diversity in our own Leagues. A highlight of this year's committee work was the design and completion of a five-part learning module to be used by local Leagues wishing to explore diversity in their own organizations.

Our local league has incorporated equity considerations in our organization's work. We have formed a book club which meets several times a year to explore diverse topics. We have made strides in extending our community outreach to underserved areas in downtown Allentown. Our VP of Community Engagement attends meetings of community groups in the 1<sup>st</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Wards plus festivals – all to expand the visibility of the League and the importance of voting. We have been thoughtful of those who are handicapped by moving our Hot Topics Luncheons to a building which is handicapped accessible. We also consider accessibility when organizing candidate forums.

Jennifer Hanf, who has led this committee since its inception, has completed her two-year term and is stepping down. A new chair will be chosen by the state nominating committee.

Molly Faust, DEI Representative and Past President

## Publications Distribution

Rounding out the year in publications distribution, 500 copies of the Voters Guide for the spring 2023 primary election were delivered by 6 of our members: Mary Erdman, Barb Connolly, Terri Purdy, Molly Faust, and Donna & Charles Barker. The 36 recipients included legislators, donors, libraries, and community centers in the Lehigh Valley. We were pleased to have received the Voters Guide 2 weeks ahead of the primary, giving mail-in voters sufficient time to use the Guide to research the candidates. Our thanks to The Morning Call for once again supplying the League's 500 copies free of charge.

Also in April, 3000 copies of the 2023 Government Directory were distributed to 123 recipients by 14 volunteers from our membership. Special thanks to all who drove to the libraries, legislative offices, businesses, community centers, colleges, school districts, and government offices in Lehigh County. These volunteers included: Doris Glaessmann, Mary Erdman, Barb Connolly, Pat Hudson, Penny Holman, Rochelle Kaplan, Molly Faust, Terri Purdy, Pat & Burke Swan, Michele Graupner, Barb Williams, and Donna & Charles Barker.

Paper deliveries of The Voter newsletter continue to be made to donors, libraries, legislators, and members who have requested such.

Donna & Charles Barker, Publications Distribution Chairs



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 2023**

\$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