LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF LEHIGH COUNTY

July/August 2024 Volume 72, Issue 1

The VOTER

President's Message

Dear Members,

I hope this issue of *The Voter* finds you enjoying this wonderful summer season. It is a great time to stop, take a breather and catch-up with family and friends. As I write this message, I am in Washington, DC attending the LWV National Convention along with two of our members: Lisa Dolan and Ellen Iobst. This is a time for us to see familiar faces from around the state and meet other League members across the nation and exchange ideas for new programs and activities.

What an exciting place to be during this election year. There is an excitement in the air as we discuss topics such as: Elections & voting, the importance of the press, the negative use of misinformation and disinformation, and many other relative topics.

We are looking forward to the beginning of a new season energized with a fresher perspective and new ideas. This is also a very important election year and we will be sending invitations to a number of candidates for candidate forums, and offering our *Running for Local Office Workshop (RFLOW)* in January, 2025. There is a lot to do to carry out our mission of "Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy." We are excited because we have reached the 100 member mark and are inviting *each of you* to find an interest, and get involved in any one of our many activities and projects. You will read about some of our needs in this edition.

Take the leap and please become an active member; we really need "all hands on deck!" We want to get to know our members and have fun along the way. We are a friendly group with a sincere interest in making our democracy work for all of our citizens.

Right now we need: Someone to be the new editor of our Voter, we need a TEAM to work on our website and file storage activities; we need more boots on the ground for our tabling events, volunteers for our RFLOW and, someone who wants to do public relations and marketing. And there are other activities still being planned. We are an active League respected for all we do; but we need to have more members involved. We need your help during this election season!

Please consider becoming an active member this year; you will never regret contributing to one of the most successful grassroots organizations in US history! Have a wonderful summer!

Yours in League,

Mary Erdman

Save the date.

Hot Topic Luncheon

Monday, September 9, 2024

Community Outreach Report

June marked the beginning of a busy summer for community events. League members attended two events in Allentown during the month, Movies in the Park at the Malcolm Gross Rose Gardens on Friday, June 7th and the Juneteenth Celebration at Cedar Beach on Saturday, June 15th.

Barbara Connolly and Lisa Dolan at Movies in the Park featuring the Barbie movie.

The *Barbie* movie was well-attended by families and kids, many dressed in pink and eager to check out the Barbie car. Numerous community groups participated in pre-movie activities sharing information and resources. With so many young people in attendance these summer movie events present unique opportunities to focus on our league message *"I Can't Vote, But You Can!"*

The Cedar Beach Juneteenth celebration is one of a number of events in the Lehigh Valley commemorating the end of slavery in the United States. Although President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863, it was not until June 19th that the news reached Galveston, Texas. Juneteenth became a federal holiday on June 17th, 2021 with the signing of the Juneteenth National Independence Act by President Joseph R. Biden.

There are a number of additional Movies in the Park scheduled during the summer and in September/October. If you are interested in helping with the pre-movie activities please contact me for additional information. Activities begin at 6pm and conclude before the movie start time at 8pm.

At this time, two September events are on the radar. Look under the event section of our website for additional information as we get closer to the dates.

Coopersburg Community Day - September 21, 2024

Constitution Day at the Bethlehem Rose Garden Farmers Market - September 2024

Please contact me with your ideas for potential community outreach events, to volunteer, or for more information. As always, thanks for your support and help!

Barbara Connolly, Vice President, Community Outreach

2024 Annual Meeting

The 67th annual meeting of our league was held May 13 2024 at Madeline's Restaurant. It was a luncheon meeting.

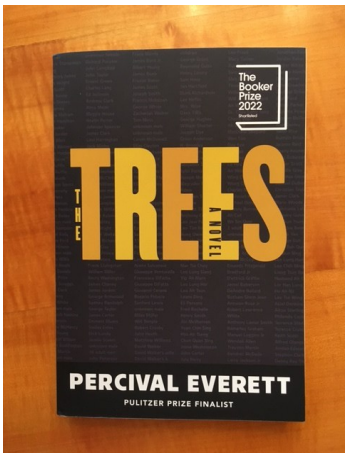
Business conducted at this gathering include approval of the 2024-2025 budget and approval of local issues.

The issues voted upon included Solid Waste Management, Local Water, Transportation Needs in the Lehigh Valley, Education and Prison Reform—Bail/Bonding. The local Issue of Tax Base Sharing was dropped.

LWVLC Book Club

The summer meeting of the LWVLC Book Club will be held on Wednesday, July 31, 2024. The selection for discussion is ***The Trees*** by Percival Everett, shortlisted for the Booker Prize 2022.

Percival Everett's ***The Trees*** is a page-turner that opens with a series of brutal murders in the rural town of Money, Mississippi. When a pair of detectives from the Mississippi Bureau of Investigation arrive, they meet expected resistance from the local sheriff, his deputy, the coroner, and a string of racist White folk. The murders present a puzzle, for each crime there is a second dead body: that of a man who resembles Emmett Till.(*See Amazon.com for a complete description).*



The Trees is described as a bold and provocative book. Interested in joining our discussion? We meet on Wednesday, July 31, 2024 @ 1:30 pm.

Contact Barbara Connolly for information and directions.

blconnolly2@gmail.com

610-216-9448

Government Directory Distribution 2024

The Publications Distribution Committee has been busy delivering new Government Directories to county libraries, school districts, nursing homes, community centers, legislators, businesses, and government offices. Seventeen League volunteers visited 130 recipients throughout Lehich County beginning on June 7. Nearly 3000 directories have been handed out, with some held in reserve for future events such as Naturalization Ceremonies and Meet & Greets.

Many thanks to the wonderful volunteers: Kim Grobeski, Trudi Egan, Lisa Dolan, Cheryl Winters-Tetreau, Molly Faust, Penny Holman, Mary & Bill Erdman, Margie Dunn, Barb Connolly, Lisa Dolan, Nell Sokalski, Lucy Piggott-Prawl, Doris Glaessman, Caryn Schoenthal. and Donna & Charles Barker. A number of new members helped with distribution and expressed an eagerness to be more involved in our League projects. One volunteer said," It is really good to have something to do to help."

Well done, everyone!

Donna & Charlie Barker, Publications Distribution Chairs

Membership

I am pleased to announce we now have 100 members in our League. We had a banner year for new members. Since May of 2023 we have had 35 new members join our League! Our website has been extraordinarily successful in bringing in new members. The following people joined in May and June: Charlotte Safrit of Allentown, Stacey Mondschein of Macungie, Roberta Whitcomb of Macungie, Barbara Janoski of Allentown, and Iris Lehrich of Allentown.

I would like to thank Ann Bartholomew for editing our membership booklet. It has basic information about our League as well as our members list. Few Leagues have a membership booklet as informative as ours.

Our big push this year is to recruit new members under 35. Our first Happy Hour Event was attended by over 50 people. We need young people who may have a fresh perspective on our programs and events so we can continue and grow.

As always, invite family, friends, and colleges to our Hot Topic Luncheons.

Margie Dunn, Membership

Spotlight

Caryn Shoenthal

Caryn Shoenthal and Presiding Judge Anna-Kristie M. Marks after the Naturalization ceremony.

Caryn Shoenthal, a longtime member of our league, will be retiring from her off-board position handling the Naturalization portfolio. She has managed this portfolio for the past 24 years. There are four Naturalization ceremonies a year in Lehigh County and Caryn made sure that our league was present at these events to welcome the new citizens and to distribute voter registration information. Her last Naturalization ceremony was June 13th.

Caryn is not sure when she joined our league (some time in the early 90's) but she knew about the league from an aunt who was a league member in Staten Island. In addition to the naturalization portfolio, Caryn had been editor (and printer) of the VOTER newsletter. She was employed at PPL and printed the VOTER at work.

Caryn will be moving to Leisure World in Maryland to be closer to family members. She states that she will be joining the league there.

Allentown Movies in the Park

Date/Location/Movie

July 12/Mack Pool/ Jaws

July 26/Valania Park/Space Jam: A New Legacy

August 2/West Park/ Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny

August 9/Irving Pool/Elemental

August 23/Keck Park/Kung Fu Panda 4

August 30/Lehigh Parkway/Hunger Games

September 6/StevensPark/ Blue Beetle

October 18/Arts Park/Hocus Pocus

Barbara Connley arranges for voter registration tables at some of these venues. It is a good way to get out into the downtown community, an area that has low voting numbers.

CLASSIFIEDS

THE VOTER
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

We are seeking an editor for The Voter, our League's bimonthly newsletter. The duties will involve soliciting newsletter articles and editing the submissions. Layout is not included in the editor's role. If you are interested, please contact:
maryc.erdman@gmail.com

NATURALIZATION

We are looking for someone to represent our League at the Lehigh County naturalization ceremonies. The role involves distributing a package of helpful materials to new citizens. If you are interested, please contact:
maryc.erdman@gmail.com

RUNNING FOR LOCAL OFFICE
COMMITTEE CHAIR

We are in search of a chairperson for our Running for Local Office committee. The role involves overseeing the committee's activities in planning, organizing and running the 2025 Running for Local Office workshop. If you are interested, please reach out to us at
maryc.erdman@gmail.com

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

We are seeking volunteers to assist with our community outreach efforts, which involve voter registration, voter education, and get-out-the vote campaigns that target groups that have not traditionally voted. Stay updated on specific opportunities by checking notifications in The Voter newsletter and on our website. If you are interested, please reach out to
blconnolly2@gmail.com

WEB TEAM

We are seeking several individuals to manage and enhance the League's website. Prior website experience is not required. Training will be provided. If you are interested, please reach out to
maryc.erdman@gmail.com

Our league is growing! We have reached 100 members which makes us one of the larger leagues in Pennsylvania. We have many opportunities for those of you who want to be active. You can choose your level of commitment from helping at a voter registration event to filling an open job position. The opportunities are listed in the classified ads section. Please consider participating.

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 2024

$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