

LEAGUE LINE

A Bulletin of The League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area
Vol. 62, No. 6; March 2018

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear League Members,
As you are no doubt aware *FairDistricts* coalition led by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania prevailed in their appeal to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court to overturn the current Pennsylvania legislative districts. This is an enormous victory for the Pennsylvania League of Women Voters. However, I have been concerned because I have had several people comment to me that they thought the League was supposed to be non-partisan. This was clearly a Democratic victory. All of the plaintiffs in the lawsuit were Democrats. The problem is the only way to attack gerrymandering is by opposing whatever party has controlled the state legislature when the gerrymandered districts were created. In Pennsylvania that happens to be the Republicans; in Maryland it is the Democrats. However, this victory is simply a skirmish, and happens to be a partisan skirmish, a skirmish to get rid of the current system so we can move on to reform. The main goal is NON-PARTISQ. We must all now concentrate on urging Fred Keller and Gene Yaw to vote for House Bill 722 and Senate Bill 22. These bills will create a non-partisan commission with four members from the Democratic Party, four members from the Republican Party, and three Independents. Such a commission would prevent us from needing to have these fights over gerrymandering every ten years and would be the embodiment of the slogan of the National League of Women Voters which is "Empowering Voters, and Defending Democracy", clearly a step toward a non-partisan solution leading to fair representation for all citizens.

Mary Zimmerman, President

NOTICE: SEEKING NOMINEES

The League is currently accepting nominations for its 2 most prestigious awards, the Jill Reynolds Service Award, and the Judy Anderson Community Service Award. If you know of a LWVLA member who consistently takes on tasks to fulfill the organization's goals, that member could be a nominee for the Reynolds Award. If you know of a LWVLA member or an individual or organization in Union County that has made a noteworthy contribution to the community, that person or group would be eligible for the Anderson Award.

Criteria and nomination forms can be obtained by contacting Mary Zimmerman, at 570-205-1035 or nvzimm@gmail.com.

MARCH FORUM

The next forum will be held Tuesday, March 20th at 11:30am at La Primavera Restaurant. Our speaker is Rolfe Peterson, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Susquehanna University. His presentation is titled "The Integrity of US Elections." Lunch will be served at a cost of \$13. Those with gluten allergies may order a special meal by

contacting me at 570-523-7961 or emailing me at peltier@bucknell.edu. Doors open at 11:30. Our speaker begins at noon.

Cynthia Peltier, Forum Committee chair

FEBRUARY FORUM

Barb Jarnoska, from the Responsible Drilling Alliance, delivered the Forum talk on March 20th entitled "Natural Gas, Unnatural Consequences." It was a very dense, fact-packed presentation. We urge League members to go the website of the Responsible Drilling Alliance to obtain complete information:

www.rdaPA.org

Given below is only a sampling of the material that Ms. Jarnoska covered.

Ms. Jarnoska lives in Lycoming County on rural property that has been in her family for five generations. Her property abuts Loyalsock Creek; she is in an area of great natural beauty, and extensive natural gas drilling.

She began by discussing failures in the regulatory environment on both the federal and the state level. There are five federal environmental laws that are waived in the natural gas extraction process. One of those laws is the Clean Water Act. By waiving this law, the remainder of the fracking water cocktail produced as a drilling byproduct, is classified not as hazardous waste, but simply as residual waste. Drilling for natural gas is also exempt from the Superfund Cleanup Act and the Environmental Policy Act. Ms. Jarnoska also cited examples of five separate pending state House Bills that would further weaken regulations within Pennsylvania.

There have been 944 cases of water pollution in Pennsylvania's fracking industry, including one just last month. There are serious health concerns about water and air pollution due to the natural gas extraction process. During the current legislative session, due to the continuing danger of water and air pollution, the Responsible

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Please place the following events on your personal calendar.

Monday, March 5th, 4:00pm

BOARD MEETING

East Buffalo Township building

Tuesday, March 20th, 11:30am-1:00pm

LUNCH FORUM

Rolfe Peterson, Assistant Professor
Political Science, Susquehanna
University

"The Integrity of US Elections"

La Primavera (Lunch \$13)

Tuesday, April 17th, 11:30am-1:00pm

LUNCH FORUM

Preston Boop, John Showers, and John
Mathias,

*Update from the County Commissioners
La Primavera (Lunch \$13)*

Drilling Alliance tried to get the set-back regulations for wells changed from 500 feet to one mile. Their attempt was unsuccessful.

In addition to dealing with numerous other immediate consequences such as the impact on wildlife, Ms. Jarnoska discussed some of the long-term problems. Wells are sealed in cement. The estimate is that 60% of those cement casings will fail within 20 years. Eventually all of them will fail. Fracking brings a boom and bust economy to small towns from which it is very difficult for them to recover. To date: 300,000 acres of forest have been disturbed by drilling sites with only ten percent of that acreage being reclaimed, ninety percent remaining an industrial site.

These above paragraphs are intended only to give a flavor of the presentation and are in no way comprehensive.

Mary Zimmerman, Forum Committee member

MAUCH MILLENNIAL PROJECT UPDATE

The Mauch Project reports several exciting developments:

1. **LEADERSHIP:** Ruth Burnham has agreed to take over for me as chair of the Mauch Committee as I transition into my new role as Treasurer. Georganna Kresl has also agreed to join the committee. Thanks, Ruth and Georganna!
2. **YOUNG PROFESSIONALS:** Several Mauch Committee and other League members provided the Keynote presentation at the Leadership Susquehanna Valley's "Local Government Day" on February 15th. Thanks to Mary Beth Clark for spearheading our participation in this event, including putting the presentation together and recruiting the League presenters.
3. **HIGH SCHOOL:** The Lewisburg High School is allowing the **entire** 9th grade to participate in our trip to Harrisburg on March 19th. Nice going, Linda, Janice and Liv, and thanks also to Mr. Gessner and the High School!
4. **BUCKNELL:** Thanks to Pat Longley's excellent suggestion, we are kicking off the next Fall 2018 round of the Bucknell Mauch Fellowship Program this spring. Announcement of the fellowship opportunity has already been publicized to the students. Pat, BU Prof. Scott Meinke, and I will be interviewing students this month; those chosen will begin to plan their fall activities before leaving campus for the summer.

As our Mauch Committee members continue to work on this project, they continue to achieve impressive results—the success of this project reflects brightly on our local League!

Susan Warner-Mills, MMP Advisory Committee

VOTER SERVICES REPORT

Facts for Voters

Thanks to Priscilla Stowe who has researched, written and completed her last *Facts for Voters*. Priscilla has been working for the last 4 years as the *Facts* Editor. Our designer, Dawn Maneval, continues to create the finished product. By the time this article is published, *Facts for Voters* should be distributed. Thanks, Priscilla and Dawn, for all your hard work. Thanks also go to the distribution team for all their efforts.

Voters Guide

Editor Sheri Stayton and her staff, including Liz Clement, Carole Madle and Sue Travis, have already started the process to create our Spring Voters Guide. May 15th is the date of the US/State Primary Election. Look for the Guide by the beginning of May.

Candidates Night

Candidates Night will be held in May, 2018. More definitive information will be forthcoming. Check our local League Web site.

Voter Registration Campaign

We will start-up voter registration sites at local libraries, social service agencies, and retirement communities. We enthusiastically welcome any and all members interested in being part of our efforts. Contact me at 267-337-5986 or lsb413@hotmail.com with questions or for further information.

Important Dates

- Last day for withdrawal by candidates who filed nomination petitions: March 21st
- First day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot: March 26th
- Last day to REGISTER before the primary: April 16th
- Last day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot: May 8th
- Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots: May 11th
- GENERAL PRIMARY: May 15th

Linda Harris, Voters Services chair

LWVLA BOOK CLUB

The League of Women Voters Book Club met on Wednesday, February 21st at 11am, at the Public Library of Union County, in the large conference room. The book discussed was *White Working Class: Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America*, by Joan C. Williams.

LEAGUE LINE MAR. 2018

League Line is published monthly by the **League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area**. Deadline for submission of articles is the 15th of each month.

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All are welcome to join the discussion whether you have read the book or not. If you have any questions contact Mary Beth Clark at moffa5@comcast.net.

Mary Beth Clark, Book Club chair

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

2018 Membership Count

We reported to LWVUS that as of January 31st, 2018, we have 147 members, the largest total in our League's history! All in all, we had 33 new members during 2017. It is wonderful that we are continuing to grow, thanks to all of you who are sharing the League with your friends and inviting them to join us. It is working!

Welcome to New Members

Since January 31st, we have had two new members join:

Elaine Hopkins:
elaine.hopkins@icloud.com

Kathy Martin:
kathleenmartin47@hotmail.com

So our total as of this writing is 149 members!!

Annual Dinner

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! This year's Annual Dinner is May 9th at the Lewisburg Hotel. Because of price increases by the Hotel, the cost per person will be \$30 for the dinner. More information will be mailed to you this spring as we get ready for this important meeting, when we elect new officers and board members, adopt a budget and program, and honor members and community leaders. This is a fun, social evening so please plan on attending.

LWVLA Dues

Background

As some members may be aware, PMP stands for "per member payment". PMP is adopted at state and national conventions by the delegates. Our membership total is reported to LWVUS by January 31st of each year. This year we will be paying PMP for 147 members.

There are always questions about PMP: why is it so high?, what do we get for our money? Our PMP payments support our state and national organizations, staff, lobbying, materials for state and local Leagues as well as a presence in state and national capitals.

The state League has just recently had a major victory on reapportionment. Our PMP helped make that happen. At the national level our PMP is supporting League efforts to protect voters' rights and help make voting accessible for all. So our League has an important role in supporting those efforts—by paying our PMP. PMP is adopted by the delegates to the state and national Conventions. One reason why it is so important that we send delegates to these Conventions is so that we can be part of this decision-making process.

Dues Increase

For many years, our dues have stayed at \$50. Currently our "per member payment" (PMP) is \$32 per member to LWVUS and \$20 per member to LWVPA. As a result, we have had to pay LWVUS and LWVPA an additional \$2 per member to make up the difference between our \$50 dues and the \$52 PMP we owe to them. The Membership Committee recommended to the board that our dues be raised at least enough to cover PMP.

Specifically, the board is recommending that at the LWVLA May Annual Meeting, the members adopt a slight dues increase for the 2018-19 budget:

Dues for single membership: \$55

Dues for household: additional \$25 = \$80

Dues for students: \$25

A motion to this effect will be presented for adoption at the Annual Meeting. This issue will be on the agenda at the Annual Dinner for adoption. Members will be able to discuss and even amend the motion to adopt a dues increase at the meeting. The new dues amount would take effect when our 2019 renewal letters are sent out this fall.

The Membership Committee and board welcome your input on this issue and look forward to discussing it with our members at the May meeting, or anytime between now and then.

Spring Dues Rate

Once again we will be offering a special rate this spring for new members to LWVLA. If you are new to LWV, you are eligible to join the League for the prorated dues of \$25.00 from February 1st, 2018 until May 31st, 2018! You will then be asked to pay full dues of \$50, due in September with the rest of our members.

Thanks to all of you for what you do to keep our local League strong and active in our community.

Marilyn Brill, Membership chair

LWVLA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & RENEWAL FORM February 1, 2018 – May 30, 2018

Mid-term membership dues: Individual \$25. Dues include membership to the local, state, and national League, and information and notifications from all three levels (*League Line, Pennsylvania Voter and National Voter Online*).

I/We wish to join or renew my/our membership the League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area.
Name/s _____

Address _____

Phone (cell, work or home) _____ Email _____

I am interested in participating in the following League activities:

____ Voters Service ____ Study Groups ____ Community Forums ____ Special Events

Enclosed is my check for \$ _____ (Please make your check payable to LWVLA)

Mail your check and form to: LWVLA Membership, P.O. Box 206, Lewisburg, PA 17837. For more information, phone 570-522-9254 or email mfb@dejazzd.com. Thank you!

Marilyn Brill, Membership chair