

LEAGUE LINE

A Bulletin of The League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's been an unusually active summer with lots of excitement. Personal highlights include attending the PA State League Convention in Reading with four other members, a "soft launch" of the Lewisburg Children's Museum Voters Booth, reflective discussions with many Board, Committee and General Members, and of course activities associated with two Special Elections.

In late May, Fred Keller won the 12th Congressional District seat vacated by Tom Marino. The consequent vacancy in the PA 85th District seat, and decision by the Speaker of the House to call an August special election had us scrambling to help voters become better acquainted with the candidates at a time when the League is typically "quiet".

This unique situation presented the chance to cultivate partnerships, so we initiated a collaboration with the Greater Susquehanna Valley Chamber of Commerce (GSVCC), *The Daily Item* and the Central PA regional business community. Together with GSVCC, the League co-sponsored a first-ever morning "Coffee with the Candidates" networking event in the heart of the 85th District, at the location sponsor, Shade Mountain Winery near Penns Creek, Snyder County. At the time the format was negotiated, the parties hadn't nominated their candidates and write-in candidate Clair Moyer had not yet announced his candidacy.

Topics and questions were jointly selected and written by our League Voter Services Committee and the GSVCC Legislative Affairs Committee, and submitted to the candidates in advance. About 90 pre-registered attendees heard Democrat Dr. Jennifer Rager-Kay and Republican David Rowe address a number of topics. The structured event was moderated by news media partner Bill Bowman (Managing Editor at *The Daily Item*). The schedule was maintained by League timers. It was variously broadcast live, recorded and shared on social media by WKOK, the Chamber, *The Daily Item* and of course our own League website. We were treated to coffee by the Chamber and to wonderful pastries by the League Social/Members Committee. In my view, it was a win-win activity in that attendees learned about these candidates, and the League got good exposure as well.

These many extraordinary events caused Voter Services to propose a review of our League processes relating to the *Voters Guide*, Vote411.org, Candidates Night and voter registration events. Beyond the obvious relevance to our Strategic Planning efforts, the evaluation is essential to our core focus on voter services. The Board will be discussing the Committee findings.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Please place the following events on your personal calendar.

Monday, Sept. 9th, 4:00pm

BOARD MEETING
*East Buffalo Township Building
589 Fairground Road, Lewisburg*

Monday, Sept. 16th

First day to request absentee ballots for Municipal Election, November 5th

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

LUNCH FORUM
Bob Garrett, President and CEO Greater Susquehanna Valley Chamber of Commerce
"Economic Development in the Valley"
La Primavera (Lunch served at 11:30; \$13)

Tuesday, Sept. 24th, 5:00-7:00pm

*MEMBERSHIP SOCIAL
*(Optional Tour 4:00pm, \$7:
reserve by Sept. 9th)*
Mifflinburg Buggy Museum
598 Green Street, Mifflinburg
**See membership report*

Monday, Oct. 7th, 4:00pm

BOARD MEETING
*East Buffalo Township Building
589 Fairground Road, Lewisburg*

Monday, Oct. 7th

Last day to register before Municipal Election, November 5th

Thanks to all who have kept us so actively moving this summer, and those who join us for an even more vigorous fall season. And thanks for the President's Message which allows me to brag about our amazing organization.

Teri MacBride, President

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Twenty League members gathered August 19th to learn about our strategy research. Over 3.5 hours, the group heard feedback from external stakeholders – individuals outside the League interested in our community health and effective governance. League members also saw results of last autumn's demographic survey and reviewed the rich comments from member Focus Groups.

One of the most discussed concepts was 'nonpartisanship' – the definition, the widely subjective understanding of the word's meaning, and how our League's behavior has or hasn't reflected it. Another surprising area was the incredibly generous amount of volunteer hours and nearly non-existent budget for planned local programs and services. Simultaneously, 'in-kind' donations are only loosely tracked, so the true cost of League activities is unknown.

A theme which surfaced from both member and external stakeholder input was the health of LWVLA. We are not

'broken' and our strategy work builds on a strong, respected organization – across Pennsylvania and in our community. In fact, both members and other organizations want more collaboration. There are marvelous opportunities ahead, most of which will require hard decisions, additional energy, and trade-offs.

At an upcoming meeting, the Board will determine how and when the Core Team will reconvene, moving from research to the visioning phase. More to come!

Becky Perez, Strategic Planning coordinator

CONVENTION REPORT

Five delegates from LWVLA attended the June 2019 LWVPA convention in Reading, PA. Liz Clement, Linda Harris, Teri MacBride, Becky Perez and Mary Zimmerman took part in different breakout sessions during the 2-day event, compiling information learned at these sessions and providing input/feedback at the state and national levels.

Liz concentrated on **Vote411 and social media discussions** as well as **financial management practices**. Linda was concerned with PA's vulnerability in **Election Security** and how we can encourage a more inclusive and diverse membership. She also took part in informal discussions about transparency, concerning policies governing League events being shared with the public.

Becky thought we might learn from the success of Philadelphia Leagues in **attracting younger members**. She was pleased to see LWVPA recognizing the need for improvement to their website, but disheartened by the lack of resources, digital expertise and local League engagement being devoted to the project. Becky also believes our members should hear about the consensus process used for development and confirmation of our Program at convention, since our local League activity, including our strategy work, is affected.

Mary was particularly interested in the **Fair Districts** presentation regarding their efforts to pass a constitutional amendment establishing an independent commission to create districts. Much like the fight for women's suffrage, they are targeting individual senators and representatives who may be persuadable. Teri saw the presidents' breakout session as an opportunity to share **best practices** and was happy to discover that LWVPA leaders are newly focused on the health of the organization.

It was clear to the delegates that LWVLA is seen as a model local League. That being said, Becky summed it up best: "LWVLA is asking itself harder questions and is challenging itself - a sign we recognize who we are and a sense that we want to be more."

Liz Clements

SEPTEMBER FORUM

The September 17th Forum will be a presentation by Mr. Bob Garrett, President and CEO of the Greater Susquehanna Chamber of Commerce. He will be speaking on economic development in the Valley. Lunch begins at 11:30am at a cost of \$13.00 and the program begins at noon.

Questions were raised at the focus groups about why forums are always held at LaPrimavera. The forums are held at LaPrimavera because they have parking and because do not require a number of participants in advance.

Mary Zimmerman, for the Forum Committee

VOTER SERVICES REPORT

The Voter Services Committee (VS) has been meeting monthly every 4th Wednesday, beginning in September 2018. Since the Annual Report presented at the Annual Dinner in May, the VS Committee members have hosted 3 Candidates Nights, published, distributed and placed *Voters Guides* in the community and at all polling places for two special elections. The *Voters Guide* editorial staff have uploaded candidates' information to www.VOTE411.org, which is the LWVUS national website. Becoming a member of this website allows sharing candidates' and election information, making it accessible to all and especially appealing to people who primarily use the internet to access information. VOTE411.org also allows voters to create a personal ballot which can be printed through email or texted to cell phones.

We have created a new committee within VS that is addressing how VS can become more transparent. It is being facilitated by Kandy Duncan. We are taking a look at why we do what we do on Candidates Night.

A second project is to provide assistance to the Union County elections office and offer events to familiarize our community with the new voting machines that we'll be using in the November Municipal Election.

If you are interested in being part of any of these initiatives, contact me at Lsharris323@gmail.com, or cell phone 267-337-5986.

Linda Harris, Voter Services chair

LEAGUE LINE SEPT. 2019

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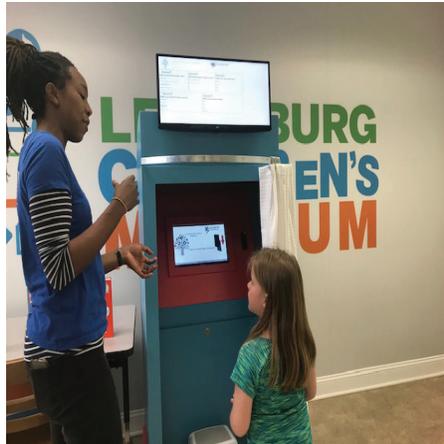
Facebook Page

[facebook.com/lwvla](https://www.facebook.com/lwvla)

Website

lwvlewisburgarea.org

MAUCH PROJECT REPORT



The LWVLA/Mauch project sponsored voting exhibit at the Lewisburg Children's Museum opened on May 19th, 2019. The exhibit teaches children the basics about voting and encourages families to share their experiences with civic participation. Since the voting exhibit opened, 7,846 guests have visited the Children's Museum and had the chance to learn about voting in a fun way.

Marian Marchiori, the director of the Children's Museum, says that the voting exhibit, "seems to be a hit with children ages 5 and up. I hear a lot of great conversation about how it is very similar to how parents vote as well as great questions from children about their parents' voting experiences. Children LOVE the 'I voted today' sticker!"

We are very grateful to Jim and Rebecca Mauch who have made educational projects like this possible!

Imanni Wilkes Burg, for the Mauch Project

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members since the last *League Line*:

Kendra Aucker
Margaret Devolld
Nancy Frazier
Rosaria Gabriele
Benita Kolmen-Solomon
Clair Moyer
Lisa Tranquillo

Welcome to the League!! Lisa and Benita, welcome back!!

Membership renewal time is approaching. Letters go out at the end of August with a form for your 2020 renewal information. Dues for 2020 are \$55 individual, \$80 household, and \$10 student.

Membership Social

Thanks to the creativity and hard work of the Membership Committee, this year's fall Membership Social will be at a new venue and open to all members and friends. Join us at the Mifflinburg Buggy Museum, 598 Green Street in Mifflinburg. Save the date for Tuesday, September 24th, 5-7pm. Beverages and light hors d'oeuvres will be provided.

An optional tour of the museum will be available at 4pm for a fee of \$7. There will be a reservation/response form on the invitation you'll receive in your membership renewal mailing. Pre-registration is requested for the tours so that the Museum can provide sufficient staff. A response is requested for the Membership Social because it is open to all members (and friends) and we want to be sure to have the refreshments you enjoy so much in good supply. Your pre-registration **must be reserved by September 9th**.

The fall Membership Social is a great time to bring along a friend who might be interested in joining the LWVLA. No pressure, this is an opportunity for friends to meet members and learn more about what we do.

Ruth Burnham, Membership Committee chair

LWVLA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & RENEWAL FORM September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020

Yearly membership dues: Student \$10, Individual \$55, Household \$80; Dues include membership to the local, state, and national League, as well as information and notifications from all three levels (*League Line*, *Pennsylvania Voter* and *National Voter Online*).

I/We wish to join the League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area.

Name/s _____

Address _____

Phone (cell, work or home) _____ Email _____

I/We have interest in participating in the following League activities:

____ Voter Services ____ 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 570-5232-8311 or email rburnham@bucknell.edu. Thank you!

Ruth Burnham, Membership Chair