

# LEAGUE LINE

A Bulletin of The League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area  
Vol. 62, No. 7; April 2018

## IT'S A BLOG! IT'S A BLOG!

A *blog* is a way for people to come together online to share experiences, views, and resources. You can blog (write) about topics that will be of interest to other League members and the public. A blogger named Blue Jacket has been giving legislative updates on our BLOG. It will be well worth your time to check this out.

To blog away go to:

<http://lwvlewisburgarea.wordpress.com>

While you are checking this site out, don't forget our Facebook page: League of Women Voters, Lewisburg Area, and our website:

<http://lwvlewisburgarea.org>

## APRIL FORUM

The next forum will be held Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am at La Primavera Restaurant. Our speakers are the County Commissioners, Preston Boop, John Showers, and John Mathias, presenting a county update. 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](mailto:peltier@bucknell.edu). Doors open at 11:30am. The program begins at noon.

*Cynthia Peltier, Forum Committee chair*

## MARCH FORUM

Assistant Professor Rolfe Peterson from Susquehanna University addressed the issue of "social media and electoral integrity" at the League's forum on March 20. Dr. Peterson surveyed trolls' use of social media in the last election and provided a political scientist's view of the effect of fake news on the voting public.

Dr. Peterson argued that social media have the potential to enhance the power of ordinary citizens, allowing an opportunity to organize social action. However, they simultaneously remove the gatekeepers, which screen truth from fiction, thus, making them excellent platforms for trolls. Targeted campaigns of fake news employed by the Russians in the last election emphasized emotional wedge issues (immigration, jobs, and race) that political science would suggest may not have changed attitudes toward the candidates. However, the campaigns may have activated/suppressed participation and reinforced voting preferences while sowing discord among regional and religious groups. He speculated that these efforts might have made a difference in the electoral outcome in states such as Michigan, where the race was close.

Dr. Peterson also noted the problematic presence on social media of "bots," automated accounts, without real users, that automatically spread messages. Some 9-15% of Twitter accounts are bots and some 20% of conversations on Twitter are generated by bots. The effect is to magnify certain messages, and increase the noise to which the user is exposed. Dr. Peterson argued that the effect of the deluge of messages

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

*Please place the following events on your personal calendar.*

**Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4:00pm**

BOARD MEETING

*BILL Office, 115 Farley Circle, Lewisburg*

**Tuesday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 11:30am-1:00pm**

LUNCH FORUM

Preston Boop, John Showers, and John Mathias,

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

**Monday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 4:00pm**

BOARD MEETING

*BILL Office, 115 Farley Circle, Lewisburg*

**Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 5:30pm**

LWVLA ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER  
*Lewisburg Hotel (see Membership Report)*

**Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>**

GENERAL PRIMARY

is to diminish the deliberation upon which democracy depends.

The solution to the invasion of fake news on social media is two-fold. First, we could empower people via education, awareness and fact checking. In effect, we could inoculate the voter with information literacy. The weakness of this approach, Dr. Peterson surmised, is that our reasoning tends to be motivated, rather than value neutral. "Fake news finds a receptive audience." Second, we are likely to expose ourselves selectively to information that reinforces preexisting dispositions, choosing media for ideological reasons. Alternatively, Peterson suggested we could change the structure of social media platforms by altering the algorithms used. Facebook might, for example, take into account source credibility.

Dr. Peterson ended the talk by cautioning that while we do know that Russia introduced fake news to social media to stoke social tension and support Trump, we do not know for sure whether those efforts made a concrete difference in electoral outcomes.

*Pat Longley, Forum Committee member*

## RIDE SHARE PROGRAM

The League wants all members to be able to attend programs, meetings, and social functions. The Board has become aware of the attendance problem some members are having because of no longer being able to drive. I have volunteered to co-ordinate a program to set up ride-sharing to get all members to the various events. First, I need to know which members need to be driven. Then I need to know which members will volunteer to do the driving. I hope to operate basically by email, but I will use the phone for those who don't email. Optimally, I would like each person needing a ride to notify me three days prior to the event of the need for a ride. I will attempt to match with a driver who will notify the rider of details for

pick-up. If no match, I will let the rider know. Prospective riders and drivers should send the relevant information as outlined below to: Martha Donahue, 570-522-9604 or [mdonahue@windstream.net](mailto:mdonahue@windstream.net).

*Prospective Riders:* Name(s), address, phone number(s), email address, and need for ride at all times or evening only

*Prospective Drivers:* Name, address, phone number(s), email address, area will cover (i.e., only Lewisburg, only Lewisburg east of US15, up to x number of miles out of Lewisburg), and entire day or only daylight hours.

## MAUCH MILLENNIAL PROJECT UPDATE

The Mauch Project reports several exciting developments:

*LEADERSHIP:* Ruth Burnham is now taking over as chair of the Mauch Committee.

I will transition into my new role as Treasurer, and will remain active with the Committee, as treasurer and working with Pat Longley and Scott Meinke on the Mauch-Bucknell Fellowship Program.

*YOUNG PROFESSIONALS:* Committee members have followed up with those participants of Leadership Susquehanna Valley's "Local Government Day" who expressed an interest in the work of the committee and in that of LWVLA as a whole. Thanks to Mary Beth Clark for spearheading our participation in this event and ensuring follow-up.

*HIGH SCHOOL:* The entire 9th grade of the Lewisburg High School participated in our successful and exciting trip to the PA State Capitol in Harrisburg on March 19th. Committee members Janice Bigelow, Linda Harris, Georganna Kresl and Mary Zimmerman joined students and a host of chaperones touring the capitol, visiting with LWVPA Executive Director Suzanne Almeida, and debating in the House Caucus Room several bills currently in front of the PA legislature. This will be a day that students will long remember! Nice going, Linda, Janice, Liv, and Mr. Gessner who planned the high school end of the event! Special thanks to State Rep. Fred Keller, Ben Ranck, and the rest of his staff for arranging the logistics and for being there with the students as they debated the bills they had prepared.

*BUCKNELL:* This month, Pat Longley and I joined Bucknell Political Science Professors Scott Meinke, Chris Ellis and Atiya Stokes-Brown to interview and select our two Mauch Fellows for 2018. They are seniors Elizabeth Gray and Midge Zuk. Professor Ellis will work with them this spring as they plan fall activities aimed at engaging fellow students in issues related to the fall 2018 general election.

*Susan Warner-Mills, MMP Advisory Committee*

## VOTER SERVICES REPORT

### *Facts for Voters*

The 2018 *Facts for Voters* has been completed and distributed. Kudos to Priscilla Stowe for obtaining and preparing the information. Priscilla has resigned as editor and we acknowledge her hard work over the last 4 years. We welcome Jane Mitchell who has agreed to assume the role of editor for next year. Congrats to Dawn Maneval for presenting the information and creating a more user friendly document for our Web version, which you can see on our LWVLA web site. Webmaster, Janice Bigelow had it uploaded to the website before the hard copy was available for distribution! You have to love the new technology. Many thanks to Janice.

I also want to thank Phyllis Dyer for organizing the distribution of the *Facts for Voters*, and the following people who distributed copies around the Lewisburg area: Ann Grundstrum, Ann Longanback, Carol Crichley, Carol Madle, Carol Thomas, Diane Meixell, Janice Bigelow, Keay Hathaway, Marilyn Brill, Marilyn Murphy, Marion Brown, Mary Zimmerman, Pam Mauger, Patty Johnson, Phyllis Dyer, Priscilla Waggoner, Susan Warner-Mills and Theresa Bzdil.

### *Voters Guide*

The state League (LWVPA) is expanding *vote411* ! Editor Sheri Stayton and her staff, Sue Travis, Carole Madle and Liz Clement are busier this year due to changes in the process of creating the *Voters Guide*. The *vote411* expansion will include not only statewide races, but all candidates in the federal and state legislature. Candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives and the PA Legislature will provide information directly to *vote411* instead of to our League members. Our partnership with LWVPA will allow the *Voters Guide* editor to access the information as candidates provide it. We will encourage candidates to provide their information to *vote411* and follow up with reminders. Questions to candidates will be decided by the state League, but we will have the option to submit additional questions to local candidates in the future. We will still provide our printed guide in Union County, but *vote411* will include more candidates than it has in the past. Online users will be able to select candidates and compare their responses side by side. It is possible that candidates who miss our deadline for being included in the printed guide can make their

## LEAGUE LINE APR. 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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### Website

[lwvlewisburgarea.org](http://lwvlewisburgarea.org)

information accessible on [vote411.com](http://vote411.com) closer to the election.

It is unknown if *vote411* will expand further in the future. We'll continue to update you as changes take place. The PA state League has been very appreciative of the input from Sheri and her staff. *Voters Guides* will be distributed one week prior to the May 15<sup>th</sup> primary.

Further, Susan Warner Mills deserves thanks. To see if we needed to print as many *Voters Guides* in the future, I had asked *Voters Guide* distributors to return to their drop-off sites after election day to count remaining copies. Susan reviewed the information and updated our distribution numbers, which was a tedious task and was very much appreciated!

### Candidates Night

The Board has approved a policy change to the "Empty Chair Policy."

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *The full text of this policy change was unable to fit into this issue of League Line. However, you can find the information in its entirety in the News section on the League website: [lwvlewisburgarea.org/News.html](http://lwvlewisburgarea.org/News.html).*

If you have any questions about the new policy, feel free to contact Linda at: [lsb413@hotmail.com](mailto:lsb413@hotmail.com).

Linda Harris, *Voters Services chair*

### FINANCE DRIVE

Letters for the annual Members and Friends Finance Drive went out at the beginning of March. Many thanks to those who have already contributed! If you have not yet made a donation, please consider doing so. Our Lewisburg League is dependent on contributions from members, friends, and businesses to fund our many local efforts.

Carole Madle, *Members & Friends Finance Drive, chair*

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

### *New Members*

We are pleased to welcome the following new member:

Linda Piercy:  
[lpiercy65@gmail.com](mailto:lpiercy65@gmail.com)

### *Annual Dinner*

Our 2018 Annual Meeting will be Wednesday May 9<sup>th</sup> at the Lewisburg Hotel. This is a fun, social evening, so please plan to come. Spouse, partners and significant others are most welcome to attend. Cost of the dinner is \$30 (please note the new price). An invitation and information about the meeting will be mailed to you in early April. This is a very important meeting when we elect new officers and board members, adopt a budget and program, and honor members and community leaders. Many thanks to Carol Crichley and the Ridgecrest "Stuffergists" for their help in getting the mailing out to you. This mailing will include the proposed budget, dues increase information, and nominating committee report, all items to be voted on by members. We will need to receive your reservation by April 27<sup>th</sup>, so when you receive the mailing, please send your meal choice and check to the League's PO Box as soon as possible. We look forward to seeing you there!

### *Lycoming County*

Susan Warner-Mills and I are privileged to be "coaches" to a group in Lycoming County trying to start a new local League. As many may know, there was a League in Williamsport for many years and it disbanded a number of years ago. Now a new group is trying to get started again as an MAL Unit (the first step in becoming a full fledged League). They have 10 members, a president and vice president. We will be meeting with them in mid-March to help draft a non-partisan policy and discuss possible activities for the group, including membership recruitment.

### *New Member Orientation*

We had a membership orientation for new members on Monday March 19<sup>th</sup>. All of our members who have joined since the beginning of 2017 (40+) were invited and several attended. For those who are interested but were not able to attend this meeting, rest assured we will have another session over the summer or early fall.

### *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 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018 until May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2018! You will then be asked to pay full dues for 2019 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](mailto:mfb@dejazzd.com). Thank you!

Marilyn Brill, *Membership chair*