



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF CONCORD-CARLISLE**

P.O. Box 34 Concord MA 01742 • www.lwvcc.org • league@lwvcc.org • 978-254-1598

Making Democracy Work

August 2018

Fall Newsletter from President Diane Proctor

As we reconvene this fall after a remarkably busy and productive summer—with important respites for quiescent thought and personal renewal—it is time to focus on the myriad opportunities that await us. But before we look ahead, I want to take a moment to share some of the highlights of the League of Women Voters National Convention in Chicago, in late June.



The LWVUS Convention

Eight Concord-Carlisle League members* attended the LWVUS 2018 Convention -- on the weekend when citizens across the country -- including LWVCC members -- were demonstrating against ICE policies that separate families on our borders. So, the atmosphere was charged both inside and outside of the Convention hotel. Thanks to an extremely generous grant from an anonymous donor, registration and room fees were covered for all 8 participants...a gift we can never take for granted.

The main convention hall of the Chicago Hilton -- a replication of the Titanic Ballroom, holding over 1000 delegates from 762 Leagues representing 49 states,



LWVCC Board Member Stephan Bader at LWVUS

plus the District of Columbia and U.S. Virgin Islands -- shook as raucous applause greeted one galvanizing speaker after another. [Alas, I have no idea which state was missing.] We were introduced to the new Chief Executive Officer of the LWVUS, Virginia Kase. Chris Carlson, the LWVUS President, decried the "daily assaults on our democracy," and warned us the work

ahead is hard, yet "we all have to play a role" in ensuring democracy. She intoned the new LWVUS focus on DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION -- values we heard expressed repeatedly during the convention. While Toni Preckwinkle, the 35th President of the Cook County Board of Commissioners, warned: "*Democracy is both the best and most fragile form of government because it requires an active, informed, and engaged citizenry,*" others treated us to personal stories about their history and motivations to serve as voter activists.

Two speakers--Rosie Rios [the first woman and the 43rd Treasurer of the United States, appointed by President Obama] and Elaine Weiss [author of *The Woman's Hour: the great fight to win the vote*] -- particularly motivated the gathering.

Rosie Rios has initiated **Empowerment 2020**, an effort to make women more visible. She noted there are few statues of "real" American women anywhere to inspire young Americans. [For example, the Statue of Liberty is not, she argued, a



LWVCC Member Launa Zimmaro at LWVUS

"real" woman.] Thanks to her effort, in the summer of 2020, we will begin seeing a new \$20 bill, featuring a woman: Harriet Tubman. She will be only the second real woman to appear on the front of our country's paper currency: Martha Washington was pictured on a one-dollar silver certificate in the 1880s and 1890s.

Elaine Weiss presented Saturday evening's dramatic keynote address. Vividly characterizing the final days of a seven-decade fight to achieve the vote for women, she took us to Nashville, Tennessee, where in August 1920 the 36th state would dramatically vote to ratify the 19th Amendment. Her speech, enhanced with pictures, made this battle seem personal to each of us.

In the main hall, as Launa Zimmaro noted, "filled with far fewer white-haired women than in the past," it was wonderful to see the diversity midst national league membership. As debate about resolutions commenced, many of us were glad to be accustomed to the Town Hall style of government, for we were far more appreciative and tolerant of challenges from the floor, petitions, and local activism than many other attendees. In the end, clear commitments were cemented in the form of resolutions, confirmed by floor votes:

The LWVUS make gun control, gun safety, and gun ownership limitations a priority in its lobbying efforts.

The LWVUS support an emphasis on the Equal Rights Amendment this year and every year until the ERA is ratified.

The LWVUS urgently reaffirm its long-held position that the Electoral College should be abolished.

The LWVUS stand united with, and in support of, efforts to price carbon emissions, whether cap-and-trade, carbon tax/fee, or another viable pricing mechanism. The League does not have a position on how the revenue generated is to be used. We do not espouse any single method of carbon pricing over another. We will evaluate all proposed methods based on their effectiveness to abate emissions and whether the method can be successfully implemented.

The LWVUS reaffirm our commitment to the constitutional right of privacy as an individual to make reproductive choices.

The LWVUS support a set of climate assessment criteria that ensures that energy policies align with current climate science. These criteria require that the latest climate science be used to evaluate proposed energy policies and major projects in light of the globally-agreed-upon goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees C, informed by the successful spirit of global cooperation as affirmed in the UN COP 21 Paris agreement.

There were also Amendments to the League By-Laws that addressed, most specifically, protocols for withdrawing recognition of leagues that are not in



LWVCC Board Member / LWVMA State Board Member Judy Zaunbrecher at LWVUS



LWVCC Board Member Nancy Beeuwkes at LWVUS

compliance with LWVUS expected behavior. From the Florida Leagues we heard vigorous support for gun control and the use of the National Popular Vote Compact -- the direct election of the President through a national vote. Each of these principles requires diligence and complicated political research before action can be effective, but the spirit in Chicago was strong!

Our fundamental priorities were reaffirmed and remain:

- Expanding voter access
- Reducing money in politics
- Redistricting along equitable lines
- Fighting voter suppression
- Opposing the US 2020 citizenship question

If you have questions, I hope you will speak with any of the attendees to learn more. We are fortunate to have a league so deeply committed to our work.



*Stephan Bader, Nancy Beeuwkes, Ardis Bordman, Nancy Cronin, Diane Proctor, Julie Rohwein, Judy Zaunbrecher, and Launa Zimmaro attended LWVUS

What lies ahead this Fall

Wednesday, September 12th Opening Membership Meeting

We begin with our opening Membership Meeting at Concord Greene on September 12th. Bring your checkbook (unless you have already gone online to renew) and hear three dynamic speakers address: *Criminal Justice: What's new? What's Next?* Judge John C. Cratsley will address the state of the judicial process; Di Clymer will tell us about the important work of The Communities For Restorative Justice; and Colleen Kirby, the LWVMA Criminal Justice specialist, will summarize the good work the League has done in this area and help us to understand what efforts remain. We live in a community with two prisons, yet we do not always fully appreciate their needs, including (for non-felons) the right to vote.

Social time commences at 9:00, and at 9:30 the speakers shall begin. By 11:30, following audience Q&A, there will also be a time to join committees in which you are interested or to learn more about their focus for the coming year. We should all have a chance to speak informally together and eat the last of the good food, all before heading home around noon.

September 25 and/or 28...Book Group

Tuesday, September 25, from 7-8:30 PM, or Friday the 28th from 9-10:00 AM join a LWVCC book group discussion of Steven Levitsky's & Daniel Ziblatt's book: *How Democracies Die* and Timothy Snyder's brief primer: *On Tyranny*. These are terrific works to prepare us for the first major forum of the fall, featuring Cass Sunstein. The reading group meetings take place in the Main Concord Free Public Library.

Sunday, September 30th--Fall Forum--6PM [stay tuned for location and details]

Cass Sunstein, an eminent Concord citizen, addresses two pivotal questions: *Can our Democracy Fail? If so, what can we do?* If the rule of law is in jeopardy, what recourse do we have?

Cass is a highly respected American legal scholar, who specializes in the fields of constitutional law, administrative law, environmental law, and law and behavioral economics. He served as the Administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Obama administration from 2009 to 2012. For 27 years, he taught at the University of Chicago Law School. He presently serves as the Robert Walmsley University Professor at Harvard Law School.

He has written about and thought importantly about our present political condition. We anticipate that this will be a lively evening. All are welcome. (His recently published book, *Can It Happen Here?*, may be available for purchase.)

Friday, October 5th - First Friday program - Concord Town Manager Selection

Our October 5th First Friday program will feature guest speakers who will explain the process by which the Town of Concord will be selecting its next Town Manager. The program will be held 9:15 - 11:00 a.m. in the Fowler Library, West Concord, and light refreshments will be provided.

Monday, November 5th—Barbara Berenson [stay tuned for details as to time and location]

In collaboration with the Concord Museum, Concord Bookstore, and the Concord Library's Festival of Authors, we welcome the author of *Massachusetts in the Woman's Suffrage Movement*. Barbara spoke eloquently and engagingly at the LWVMA Conference last spring, and it is exciting to welcome her to Concord.

Ongoing opportunities for voter registration, throughout the fall, leading up to the November 6th election, remain a central focus of our important work. Please volunteer to help whenever you can by contacting Judy Zaunbrecher at VoterService@lwvcc.org.

As you can readily discern, we have a stimulating year ahead. This newsletter only marks the beginning. Should you have comments, suggestions, ideas, concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully,

Diane C. Proctor
President, League of Women Voters Concord-Carlisle
dpdproctor@gmail.com

**League of Women Voters of Concord Carlisle
P.O. Box 34
Concord, MA 01742-0034**

**Presrt STD
Non-profit
Organization
US Postage Paid
Concord MA
01742
Permit #41**

TO:

**3rd Congressional District Candidates Forum
Chelmsford High School Performing Arts Center
Monday, August 27 7 to 8:30 p.m.**

The League of Women Voters of Acton-Area, Chelmsford, and Concord-Carlisle with the help of other town leagues in Middlesex County will hold a Candidates Forum for the 3rd Congressional District. The League of Women Voters has invited all candidates whose names will appear on the September 4 ballots to participate.

The forum will be held in the Chelmsford High School theater, 200 Richardson Road, Chelmsford on the evening of Monday, August 27, 2018, from 7-8:30 p.m. We plan to record the program for re-airing on Chelmsford TV and other local public access TV stations. This venue has a seating capacity of 1000.