



**LWVSC**

**LWVUS MISSION STATEMENT**

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS**

For additional information go to [www.sussexlww.org](http://www.sussexlww.org)

**June 13, Monday 10:00 AM**  
**LWVSC Board Mtg. C. Ward's**

**June 24, Friday 12:00 noon**  
**Fun Lunch, Bay Leaf, 200 Broadkill Rd**  
**(Route 16) Milton**

**July 5, Tuesday 1:00 PM**  
**Redistricting Committee Mtg. Bethany Blues**

**July 11, Monday 10:00 AM**  
**LWVSC Board Mtg. C. Ward's**  
**(new Board orientation, 9:00 AM)**

**July 25, Monday 12:00 noon**  
**Fun Lunch Bethany Blues**  
**Coastal Hwy. Lewes**

**August 8, Monday 10:00 AM**  
**LWVSC Board Mtg. C. Ward's**

**August 12/13 Friday/Saturday**  
**"AFRAM Festival" Voter Registration**  
**Contact C Ward for details**

**August 26, Friday 12:00 noon**  
**Fun Lunch Location TBA**

**August 26, Friday**  
**"Women's Equality Day" TBA**

**September 12, Monday 10:00 AM**  
**LWVSC Board Mtg C. Ward's**

**Sept. 26, Monday 12:00 noon**  
**Fun Lunch, location TBA**

**Undertakes Major Redistricting Project**

The LWVSC held a public forum on redistricting in November 2010. Representing Sussex County, Deputy Administrator Hal Godwin described the process used by the Council in 2001 and implied that same process would be used again. At that time, Council delegated the job to the County Attorney who hired a consultant to draw a map. The Attorney then wrote an ordinance implementing the map. The map was posted in the Administration Building and on the Internet; a hearing was held and Council voted to adopt the plan the same day as the public hearing. At the forum, Local League members expressed concern that the 2001 process was totally inconsistent with LWVUS principles established in conjunction with several other national public interest groups. Those principles called for transparency and civic participation in the redistricting process. As a result, the LWVSC established a committee to focus on redistricting in Sussex County.

As one member of the committee, recently elected LWV state president Carol Jones, put it: "The public should be able to elect their representatives rather than elected officials selecting their constituents." The Committee, which has over 20 active members, has been working since November to educate the public and to bring sunshine and public participation into the process in the Sussex County Council.

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## Sussex League Holds Annual Meeting

The Board and members of the LWVSC met at the Center for the Inland Bays for their Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 17. Following a potluck dinner, the group heard a presentation from Ed Lewandowski on the activities of the center. President Esther Shelton reviewed the activities of the LWVSC in her annual report (on page 3). Following the discussion of the Treasurer's Report, those present voted unanimously to increase the dues to \$50/individual and \$75/family.

Proposed programs for 2011/2012 included a focus on the operation and financing of local government and on presenting forums on local education. Our local league will also participate in the LWVUS study on the federal role in education for grades preK through 12; the study is to be limited to issues of equity, funding and standards assessment.

The proposed slate of officers was accepted by acclamation and the elections were unanimous. The following officers were elected: Cathy Ward, President; E. Anne Riley, Vice-President; Sheila Zanine, Secretary; Valerie Driscoll, Treasurer; and Jo Klinge, Chair of the Nominating Committee. Bios of Board members are on p. 6.

## Sandy Spence Recognized

Sandy Spence was recognized by the News-Journal as one of Delaware's 50 Heroes. These are individuals who have made a positive impact on the lives of people in this state. Congratulations, Sandy!

## 2010 – 2011 Annual Report - Esther Shelton, President

This has been a gratifying year for the Sussex League. We have worked hard and have been rewarded with recognition as a force for transparency and honesty in government. The recognition has come in comments that citizens have made to us about our forums, Observer Corps, and Voter Services, as well as in editorials in The Cape Gazette, our biggest local newspaper, the latest of which pointed out the importance of our work on redistricting.

### 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment: Chair Susan Mathe

Our year began in August when we marked the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment that gave women the right to vote by hosting a screening of "Iron Jawed Angels" at the Milton Theater. It is a contemporary film which tells the story of a small group of suffragists who fought for women's right to vote. Because we had to hire the theater for the occasion, we were worried about

breaking even, but the turnout was amazing and we filled the theater and made a nice profit. We were helped to achieve this by friends who wrote letters to the editor about the importance of the occasion the film celebrates, and also by a couple of candidates running for office who also wrote in. We followed up by ordering copies of the film and selling them at our forums, making another small profit.

### Membership: Chair Valerie Driscoll

Helped by public interest in our forums, the Sussex League added 27 members in the first six months of 2010, and the growth has not stopped. Interest in issues that impact the quality of life in Sussex County, like Redistricting and Sea Level Rise, added another 17 men and women to our membership bringing it to 94 in May, 2011. Our League isn't growing because it makes people feel comfortable: it is growing because it tackles difficult topics, makes them understandable, and gives people ways to work toward solution or resolutions.

**Program: Chair Sandy Spence**

Normally our forums would have begun in September, but because of the upcoming 2010 elections, September and October were dedicated to candidate forums, our program forums began in November with Edward Ratledge, the director of the Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research at the University of Delaware, who explained the significance of the information the Census would provide and how we could use it. We were interested in this because we wanted to be able to use this information when we began work on informing the public about the importance of citizen participation in Redistricting, which was to be the second, but most important focus of our year's program.

The first focus was the Sussex County Economy, which was in a terrible slump due to the financial crisis. Our first speaker was Edward Simon, the authority on economic data at the Delaware Economic Development Office and previously at the Department of Labor. He outlined the drivers of the local economy from the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, and also explained how spin-offs from a typical Sussex industry can have an unrecognized positive impact on other sectors. Julia Wheatley, Director of Economic Development for Sussex County outlined basic principles of economic development and trends in the Sussex County economy.

On February 9<sup>th</sup> we presented the second forum on the Sussex County Economy where Alan Levin, Secretary of the DE Economic Development Office and former owner of *Happy Harry's*, discussed his agencies work on a strategic plan to guide Delaware's economic development over the next five years. A panel of county business leaders engaged in a conversation with Secretary Levin after his presentation, and members of the audience also had many comments and questions. The first of our forums on Sussex County Redistricting took place on April 13. It was preceded by several months of intense study which began back in 2010 by the Redistricting Committee, chaired by Sandy Spence. Interest in this issue has been great as the 20 member committee attests. The goal of the committee was to be prepared with our own alternative Redistricting maps in case the County Council followed the same course it did in 2001, when the Redistricting map was drawn by

the County attorney and a hired consultant with little or no input from Sussex citizens.

The format for the forums has included a panel of LWVSC members who have immersed themselves in redistricting history, procedures and possibilities: Paula Schneider, Carol Jones, Susan Mathe, Joan Stern, Valerie Cloutier, and Sandy Spence. They also present current information about how the Delaware House and Senate are proceeding. The audience response has been rewarding.

In May the Redistricting Committee continued its presentations on redistricting in two additional public forums, and also made presentations to nine civic groups including the Republican Women's Club, the Democratic Women's Club, the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, the Delaware Manufactured Home Owners Association, the Education Coalition of the NAACP, and others.

**Observer Corps: Chair Carole Somers**

As the "eyes and ears of the League," the importance of the Observer Corps cannot be over emphasized. Before the observers began watching them, the County Council and its boards and commissions often operated in a manner that ignored the codes they were supposed to be following and more than a few FOIA regulations. They did this because of citizen apathy, which let them go on "the way we've always done it." They were occasionally called to book on specific issues, but no one was watching them on a regular basis and could point to patterns of behavior. The Observer Corps has changed this. We watch them and what we report gets media attention, which is essential in getting politicians to listen to you. When Carole Somers presented the Corps' annual report, which includes recommendations for improvement to the County Council, it was not only supported by a big turnout of League members for the meeting, but also coverage by the Cape Gazette. The Board of Adjustment is a case to which we can point with pride. It was the reports of our observers that showed that the Board was ignoring the code and procedure they were supposed to be following, and that the County Council was not doing its job in giving them guidance. Our testimony at County Council and our letters to the editor gained media coverage both locally and statewide with the result that the County Council was forced to do something about it. The BOA is now following the code.

Our observers have also brought attention to various potential FOIA issues, e.g., the selection process for the new county administrator, appearance of meetings outside of public venue, and repeated failure to conduct meetings so that the public can see and hear important information. Whatever has been accomplished, we still have a long way to go. To succeed in this we need more volunteer Observers. This is important.

**Voters Service: Chair Barbara Mullin**

In preparation for 2010 elections 14 League members received Voter Registration Training, good for two years, given by Debbie Grier from the Delaware State Board of Elections. Volunteers from this group worked on voter registration for two nights at DelTech Night School and on another night at the American Legion Voter's Forum. They also attended the Hispanic Festival, Nanticoke Pow Wow, Afram Festival, Alzheimers Walk, and Coast Day where they registered voters, passed out They Represent You booklets and talked about League projects, programs and issues with the people who stopped by.

Barbara also worked on getting our League's Reminder Vote slide up to date with VOTE411 information and into the Midway Theaters. She also organized the LWVSC Candidates Forum in Lewes on Sept. 29. Two other planned forums fell through either because the co-sponsoring group would not agree to our rules, or because they failed to make decisions in time for us to get the candidates to come. A better experience came when we co-sponsored the Milton Candidates' Forum with the Milton Chamber of Commerce in a recent city election. We received positive comments on how the League managed the debates for which Carol Jones was Moderator. As big a job as all of these were, the biggest was gathering all the information needed for the 2011 - 2013 edition of They Represent You, a directory for Sussex citizens which includes County officials, Sussex state Senators and Representatives, as well as Sussex town officials, school board members and other useful numbers, including voting information. This takes meticulous work to get it right, and Barbara has accomplished this. She also organized the distribution of the pamphlets, which go to the County Council offices, all the Sussex town offices, 14 county libraries, and the Sussex Board of Elections.

**Lobbying:** We have three lobbyists working with the LWVDE Action Group: Charlotte King, Sandy Spence, and John Sykes. They drive up to Dover, sometimes several times a week, to lobby legislators while they are in session. They very much appreciate League member response when an Alert is sent out that asks all our members to get in touch with their Representatives or Senators for or against a bill.

**Great Decisions: Chair Martha Keller:** Designed to inform participants about foreign policy problems that face our nation, the group meets once a month for eight months to study and discuss a different issue each month.

**The LWVSC VOTER:** Editor Jo Klinge publishes four editions a year.

**AND THERE IS MORE.**

**Mediation:** In August, the LWVSC was contacted by Vince Robertson, a local lawyer representing the Cinderberry Home Owners Association and asked us to participate in managing an election because it had split into two factions and the residents suggested that the election be run by the League as an organization they would trust with their votes. We were happy to help and all went smoothly.

**Fun Lunches:** We have sponsored monthly Fun Lunches all year long which give us time to get to know each other in informal settings with no prescribed agenda. These are usually at the end of the month at different restaurants around the county so that at some point they are near where different members live. As we do for all meetings, we try to save energy by car-pooling.

**Return Day Parade:** On November 4<sup>th</sup> we took part in the Georgetown Return Day Parade at which candidates are supposed to bury the hatchets they used on each other during the elections. The weather was miserable, but those who participated had a great time and we won a prize for our "float."

**Sea Level Rise in Sussex County:** This was actually organized by NCC's Peggy Schultz, but so many of our members attended that I am including it here. On Jan. 24, we met at the Prime Hook Education Center where we heard a lecture by Michael Stroeh on the problems of sea level rise in this area. Following that he took us on a tour of Fowler Beach and Prime Hook which showed how the sea has crept up so close to those two communities that the roads leading to them flood easily and leave them isolated. After the tour we had lunch at 1776, where Sandy Spence had

arranged for Dr. Wendy Carey, who is doing research on sea level rise in Sussex County, and especially in the Lewes area to speak to us. This was a real learning experience. It is one thing to know that this may happen, but to see isolated houses and a bird viewing tower built just six years ago, which cannot now be used because it is surrounded by water brings the reality home to us.

**Consensus Meetings:** On March 9 we met with members of the LWVDE Energy Committee who presented findings of their two year study of climate change, sea level rise and greenhouse gasses, followed by discussion and consensus on issues raised by the Committee. Then on April 18 a second consensus meeting was held on more issues raised by the state Land Use and Transportation Committee.

**Reviving the Dead Ladies:** Organized by Valerie Driscoll, this program introduces some of the memorable ladies who attended the first Woman's Rights Convention which met at Worcester, MA, in 1850. Each lady is introduced in turn and comes forward to speak, thereby showing the various arguments for women's rights that were made at the conference. Nine volunteers took part, dressed in long dark skirts and hats approximately of the period, and with Miki Mathe, husband of Susan, as moderator, they performed for the Ocean View Historical Society. The "Ladies" had all studied their

Characters so that they could respond to the questions and comments from the audience, and this went very well. The performers had a good time and have been invited to do this for another group.

## **New Members – Second Quarter 2011**

Susan Ebbitt  
Mitch Crane  
Teresa Iris  
Eli Ramos  
Sandra Ware  
John Workman

## **Voter Services – Summer 2011**

Over the summer, Voter Services will be attending various Sussex County Summer and early Fall Festivals hoping to increase our contact and membership. Here we will be available to do Voter Registration and to give out our pamphlet "They Represent You" or to just chat and talk about our programs, issues or mission. LWV volunteers will be needed for any arrangements we make. An email will go out to ask for your help. So far we have arranged for the Eastern Shore Afram Festival in Nutter Park in Seaford for August 12 and 13, 2011.

## **State League Convention Elects Officers**

Delegates from the three Leagues of Sussex, Kent and New Castle met in Dover on May 21, 2011, to elect officers, conduct annual business and attend workshops. The LWVDE officers for 2011-2013 are Carol Jones (SC), President; Charlotte King (SC), First Vice-President; Lester Stillson (KC), Second Vice-President; Carole Walsh (NCC) Secretary; Valerie Driscoll (SC), Treasurer. For information on programs and actions in which the state league is involved, refer to the LWVDE website ([www.de.lwv.org](http://www.de.lwv.org).) Congratulations to Carol, Charlotte and Valerie!

## **Biographies of new Board members**

### **Catherine Ward - President**

Cathy is a community outreach nurse with the Sussex County disparate community. Recently she became a part time employee. She has been a member of the Beebe Medical Center's Bioethics Committee for ten years. Her interest is affecting health care policy, working toward equity in access to health care for all members of the community. Her interest in the LWVSC was peaked when she observed, first hand, their competent, effective approach to open and just governance. She has been a full time resident in Sussex County for 16 years and a part time resident for 30 years.

### **E. Anne Riley, PhD – Vice-President**

Anne has lived near Fenwick Island since 1983, where she has seen psychotherapy clients in her home for over 22 years. She is only in Delaware Friday through Monday afternoon. Her mother was a LWV member in Montgomery County, MD. Anne joined LWV in Prince George's County, MD in the 60s for a few years but shift work as a DC police

woman interfered. Anne has testified in Annapolis and before the DC council. She lobbied in Annapolis and for years on Capitol Hill as a member of the National Association of Social Workers and the Mental Health Association. She sends quick emails to both Delaware and Maryland congressional representatives but now votes in Delaware as a liberal and feminist. She has forensic and courtroom testimony experience as well as mental health expertise. Her interests include water and other environmental issues.

### **Sheila Zanine - Secretary**

I was born in Philadelphia and attended 12 years of Parochial school. Right after high school, I was hired by The Prudential Insurance Company of America. In 1974, I transferred to the Prudential Property and Casualty Company, a subsidiary of Pru that handled auto and homeowner claims. When I left, in 2005, I was a unit manager with a staff of 45. I married my husband Jack in 1983. Jack worked for USPS for 47 years, he retired in 2003. In 2006, we moved from Huntingdon Valley PA to Lewes, DE. It was one of the best decisions we made. My husband and I cared for 6 foster children in 4 years. We started out with a precious little 6 year old boy and were very sad when that ended. His dad took him, his 4 brothers and a sister back after finding employment. I enjoy reading, mostly fiction, mystery novels. I love gardening and spend most of my free time working on the yard. It wasn't until 1994 that I became very interested in the government and politics in general. That had to do a lot with President Clinton and the controversy surrounding him. I'm still very interested in our political parties and when I'm not gardening, I'm watching the news.

### **Valerie Driscoll- Treasurer**

Valerie has been a resident of Delaware for forty years dividing the time between northern New Castle County and Sussex County. The first ten years were focused on raising her children and volunteering in a variety of roles. For the next twenty years, she worked in positions that invariably had financial responsibility which led to her becoming a financial planner with IDS (American Express Financial Advisors.) In 2003 she became a full-time resident of Sussex County and joined the LWV a couple of years later. She became the LWVSC treasurer in 2008 and currently serves as treasurer of the LWVDE and the LWV of New Castle County.

### **Jo Klinge – Chair, Nominating Committee**

Jo has been a member of the LWVSC since 2008, when she made the permanent move from Wilmington to Rehoboth Beach. As a LWVSC member she edits the Sussex Voter and serves on the Observer Corps and the LWVSC Board. As a founding member of Women in Process, she designed and led professional and personal development workshops for women (and, eventually, for men) in businesses and non-profits in the US and Canada. Jo is an active member of the Interfaith Coalition Building Blocks for Wilmington, a non-profit which works with faith leaders and residents of West Center City Wilmington; the journey from Rehoboth to Wilmington is a familiar one. Other interests include reading, cooking, connecting with friends and family.

## **Redistricting** *(cont. from p. 1)*

At a public forum on April 13 six members of the Committee presented results of the study they had undertaken in the intervening months. Paula Schneider explained the relevance of the Census and why redistricting is important: it affects elections and who will represent you for the next ten years. Carol Jones outlined League principles that we advocate for redistricting: openness rather than back room deals and public participation in the process. They also explained the concept of “communities of interest,” a principle widely respected by courts that ensures that groups with common concerns are kept together so that they can be adequately represented by their elected officials.

Susan Mathe discussed her role in an “experiment” in New Castle County 30 years ago when then Council President Karen Peterson set up an independent commission to redistrict that county’s council – now a requirement for that county, under state law. [Kent County now has a similar independent commission.] Joan Stern compared political

characteristics of Montgomery County, MD, that were similar to Sussex and explained how she had advocated for better representation of her part of the county in redistricting 20 years ago, resulting in that Council adopting a map she drew on her dining room table.

Attorney Valerie Cloutier described the process Sussex County used in 2001 and explained why she thought it was inappropriate. She also outlined an Attorney General's opinion that denied a Freedom of Information complaint about that process and explained why she thought the opinion was deficient. Sandy Spence explained the current status in which Mike Vincent's district is significantly short of the population needed given the 2010 Census and Joan Deaver's district is too large. (see note at end of article.) She outlined the committee's plans to hold similar public forums throughout the county and, based on results, to develop a possible map or maps to present to Council.

The speakers also outlined criteria the committee would use in developing the map(s):

1. Respect communities of interest.
2. Protect municipal boundaries as much as possible along with other unincorporated communities and subdivisions.
3. Be as compact as possible.
4. Accomplish this in a manner that meets all state law requirements: contiguous boundaries; equal population (plus or minus 5% of average population per district); lines along traditional boundaries such as roads, streams or other natural boundaries; and drawn so as not to unduly favor any individual or political party.

Attendees were invited to suggest what communities of interest should be protected in any maps developed for the Council.

Following the initial forum, Committee members held two other public forums, one in Seaford and the final one in Georgetown. They also made presentations to nine civic groups including the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, the DE Manufactured Home Owners Association, the Republican Women's Club, the Democratic Women's Club, and others. At each meeting, the audience was invited to suggest communities of interest that they felt should be protected.

Communities of interest identified at the meetings included the "Cape Region" extending from north of Lewes through Dewey Beach and west toward Love Creek; both sides of Long Neck Road where there are numerous manufactured home communities; the city of Georgetown with its significant Hispanic population; Cool Spring Road where there is an African American community along both sides of the road; and the entire city of Seaford.

At the final meeting in Georgetown, John Sykes explained the objectives and priorities of the project and Sandy Spence presented a series of possible maps. One showed why it did not make sense to draw lines horizontally across the county to create five districts, as some had suggested; another showed that it would not be feasible to increase Council districts to seven with three districts on each side of Route 113 and one at-large member, since the population west of 113 is insufficient to justify more than two districts. Finally, she showed a map that started with Georgetown in the center, respected the Cape Region as well as the "Quiet Resorts" in the southeast corner of the county; created a district in the southwest of the county including Laurel and Seaford; and finished with a district representing the more rural areas in the north from Greenwood and Bridgeville to Slaughter Beach. Sykes and Spence also explained why prisoners in the Sussex Correctional Institution should not be counted and said that many counties across the country had voted to exclude prisoners, a practice that has been found to be legal by numerous courts, because it "distorts democracy."

Meanwhile, the committee had requested specific information from the county including their timeline for redistricting that by state law cannot be completed prior to the legislature completing its redistricting (required by June 30); a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a consultant to draw the maps; and the budget for the project. On March 22, Council President Mike Vincent responded to the League's public request for this information, indicating that the council had not had any meetings about redistricting so they had no answers to these questions. He then asked the

County Attorney and County Administrator to develop a memo outlining requirements and procedures. A report was presented to Council by Administrator Baker at its June 28 meeting. At press time, the League had not seen a copy.

Council members had been invited to each of the public meetings. Joan Deaver attended the first forum when plans were presented but no other members attended any of the meetings.

The Committee intends to develop one or two additional possible maps and will present them to Council. Members will continue to monitor Council action until redistricting is completed.

*Note: Sussex County now has a total population of 197,092, approximately 25% more than it had in the 2000 Census. Accordingly, the average number for each District must be 39,418, plus or minus 5%, for a range of 37,447 – 41,389. Two current Council districts fall outside that range. District 1, represented by Mike Vincent, has only 32,637 while District 3, represented by Joan Deaver, currently has 44,533. Should prisoners at the Sussex Correctional Institution not be counted, the range would be a little lower.*