



League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh

VOTER



Volume 27, No. 2

October 2020

PROGRAM by Chris Beuger



Our next meeting, Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2020 at 7:00 pm will focus on Voter Suppression. A panel will discuss the ability of everyone to exercise their fundamental right to vote without barriers and intimidation. Through the panelists' education and guidance on this issue, we will be prepared to identify various types of suppression and be prepared to take action before and on election day. Watch the Blast for an RSVP link to register and receive the Zoom link to the program.

Thank you to all the members in making our Kick-Off Meeting in September a success (see photo page 9). I hope our conversation with County Councilwomen and Allegheny Elections Board Member, Bethany Hallam was able to address your questions about what our County is doing to ensure the access, the security and the integrity of the upcoming election. If you have any questions or issues that were not addressed please email me at program@lwvpgh.org. I would like to thank Ms. Hallam for her time in speaking with us.

I would also like to thank Judy Clack, Voter Service Chair and the Voter Service Sub-Committee Chairs: Amy Kleissas, Voter Resources and High School Outreach; Paula Hopkins, College and Universities; Kathy Herbst, Food Pantry; Heather Wechter, Poll Worker Recruitment; Ellie Siegal (for Jan Harrison), Religious Institutions; Linda Schneider, Senior Subsidized Housing; and Emily Ferri, Social Media for summarizing the voter education and voter outreach projects they have been tirelessly working on. If you are searching for voting materials to share with your friends, family, contacts and other organizations in which you belong, they all can be found on the "Voter Resources" tab on our website.

NEWS FROM STATE AND NATIONAL by Carol Walton

The main focus of **LWVUS** currently is election information and VOTE411.org. Related topics are also highlighted on their website (lwv.org): fighting voter suppression, money in politics, and redistricting. The website also offers a link to sign a petition supporting statehood for the District of Columbia.



LWVPA has been active in several court cases. We (along with the Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh, Campaign Legal Center, and two individuals) filed a lawsuit against Secretary of the Commonwealth Kathy Boockvar challenging the lack of a uniform process to let voters fix signature-related issues with their mail-in ballots. Election officials use a voter's signature on the outside of ballots to verify their vote, but the Commonwealth provided no guidance requiring county election officials to provide notice and an opportunity to fix ballots set aside for rejection due to signature verification issues.

In September, Secretary Boockvar issued such guidance to establish uniform processes across counties for counting mail-in ballots. County boards of elections can no longer reject a ballot based solely on an election official's belief that a signature does not match the signature in the voter's file. With that action by the Secretary, the lawsuit was withdrawn.

Continued on page 9

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A TIME OF CHANGE



The recent death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg made me reflect on how much of our political landscape has changed over the years due to her efforts and so many others who stood alongside of her. Her work made possible

the 1974 passage of the Equal Credit Opportunity Act that meant that women could apply for bank accounts, credit cards and mortgages without a male co-signer. I remember proudly informing a department store credit manager that she could no longer legally ask me for my husband's information when I applied for a credit card. And, I got that credit card!

There are so many other things that we take for granted these days, like athletic programs for women and the equal right to serve on juries that would never have happened without the persistence and resilience of so many others like Justice Ginsburg. Doors that once were closed to women are open now because of her. And, of course, many other doors are open because of the work of the suffragists and the League of Women Voters. As Justice Ginsburg once stated, "Real change, enduring change, happens one step at a time."

We continue to take that one step each and every day. In a year of turbulence and controversy with a pandemic and an uncertain political landscape, LWVPGH remains steadfast and focused. Volunteers have picked up the pace to ensure that voters have

reliable, easy to understand information. Check out the Voter Resources section of our website where there is information about why it's important to vote, how to register, how to apply for a mail-in/absentee ballot as well as some eye-catching and informative infographics. Refer your friends and neighbors to the site: <https://sites.google.com/lwvpgh.org/lwvpgh-voter-resources> as well.

The pandemic has made it extremely difficult to register voters since we are no longer holding in-person events. However, League members have found ways around this by partnering and reaching out to other groups like the Junior League, the Jewish Community Center, local colleges and universities, religious organizations, subsidized housing facilities, and food banks. LWVPGH has provided digital and print materials to all groups in an effort to make sure that everyone who is eligible to vote can vote. Our Voter Service committee will continue all their outreach efforts including attempting to schedule candidate forums during October. We continue to believe that it's critical that voters hear from candidates so they can make informed choices.

Lots of changes have occurred this year, some good, some not so good. The League of Women Voters nationally and locally will continue to, as Justice Ginsburg counseled, "Fight for the things you care about. But do it in a way that will lead others to join you."

Maureen Grosheider

Volume 27, No 2

October 2020

Published monthly except January, June and August by

League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh
436 Seventh Ave., Suite 350
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-261-4284

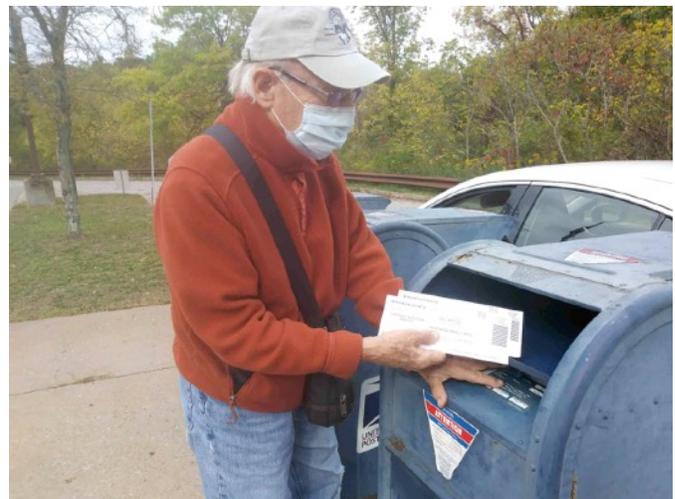
The League is a nonpartisan organization whose purpose is to encourage the informed participation of citizens in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.

VOTER Editor: Sue Broughton

Email: info@lwvpgh.org

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Moe Finder mailing his and Laryn's ballots. To the right is a picture of Mo's watch showing date and time. Annette Shimer would like us to keep track of the date we mailed back our ballots so that we may be able to tell how long it is taking the post office to deliver them.



LWVGP Officers / Executive Committee		Local Area Meeting Chairs	
Co-President	Maureen Mamula	Pgh. Central 412-477-7572	Martha Raak
Co-President	Maureen Grosheider	North Hills 412-364-7329	Nancy Mott
V.P.1 Development, Gun safety	Nancy Naragon	South Hills 412-760-9642	Maureen Mamula
V.P.2 Program	Christina Beuger		
Secretary	Heather Wechter	Interest & Service Area Specialists	
Treasurer, Funding, Gun Safety	Preston Shimer	PR, Communications, Blast	Eileen Olmsted
		Gov. relations, Outreach	Jackie Dixon
Directors		Environment	Don Naragon
Election Security, Voting Mach.	Ron Bandes	Education	Phyllis Dreyfuss
Voter Service	Judy Clack	Website	Kathleen Farrington
Membership, Naturalization	Judy Diorio	Transportation	Barbara Simpson
Evening meetings	Emily Ferri	National / State Program	Carol Walton
Education	Joan Franklin	VOTER Editor	Sue Broughton
Voter Service	Terrie Griffin	Health, Water	Shirley McIvried
Civic Education	Amy Kleissias	Book Club	Judy Donohue
Program, Debates, Vote411	Annette Shimer	Housing	Adelaide Smith
		Legislative Interviews	Michelle Zmijanac, Kathy Nagle
Staff			
Community Information Center	Manager: Barbara Simpson	Marcellus Shale Grant	Manager: Heather Harr
League Phone Numbers, Websites, and Social Media			
Greater Pittsburgh	412-261-4284	lwvpg.org	
Pennsylvania	717-234-1576	palw.org	
National	202-429-1965	lwv.org	
Facebook	www.facebook.com	Search: League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh	

NEW MEMBERS

South Hills:

Lisa Slepki
Household with Debra Crivellaro
lslepki@comcast.net

Lisa Sweeney
lpsweeney@gmail.com

Linda G. Debor
ldebor5@yahoo.com

North Hills:

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Bonnie Poole
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Allan Willinger
Household with Jo Schlesinger
allanwillinger@yahoo.com

Standing Meetings

Board Meetings

- ✓ **Second Monday** of the month. Lunch at 11:30 a.m., at Einstein Bagels in the Koppers Building. Meeting: 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the LWVGP CIC (office) conference room at 436 Seventh Ave., Suite 350

Local Area Unit Meetings

- ✓ **Pittsburgh Central:** 2nd Friday, 1:30 p.m. at the Squirrel Hill Public Library, 5801 Forbes Ave., Pgh. PA 15217. Contact Martha Raak at 412-477-7572 or marbiker1@gmail.com
- ✓ **North Hills:** 3rd Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. at St Paul's Methodist Church at 1965 Ferguson Road in Hampton. Contact Nancy Mott at 412-779-3089 or namott001@gmail.com
- ✓ **South Hills:** 1st Thursday, 12:30 p.m. at the Mt. Lebanon Public Library, 16 Castle Shannon Blvd., Pgh, PA 15228 (unless otherwise announced). Contact Maureen Mamula at 412-760-9642 or mamula159@hotmail.com

Other Ongoing Meetings

- ✓ **Education Committee**
4th Wednesday, 1 pm. Contact Joan Franklin at 412-422-7909, education@lwvpg.org or Phyllis Dreyfuss, 412-808-6028, lpdrey@verizon.net.
- ✓ **Voter Service Committee**
1st Tuesday, 12:30 pm. Contact Judy Clack at 512-731-0280 or voterservice@lwvpg.org.
- ✓ **Gun Safety Committee**
Dates TBD. Contact Nancy Naragon at 412-366-2446 or development@lwvpg.org
- ✓ **Non-fiction Book Club**
3rd Friday, 10:15 am. Contact Phyllis Dreyfuss, 412-224-2395 or lpdrey@verizon.net

OCTOBER - NOVEMBER CALENDAR

October	
6 Tue	Voter Service Committee, 12:30-2:30pm by videoconference
12 Mon	Board meeting by Zoom, 12:30 pm
14 Wed	Program meeting by Zoom, See article on page 1 for details
16 Fri	Non-Fiction Book Club, 10:15 am
20 Tue	Voter Service Committee 12:30-2:30pm by videoconference
28 Wed	Education Committee Meeting, 10:00 pm
November	
3 Tue	Election Day
9 Mon	Board meeting by Zoom
17 Tue	Voter Service Committee, 12:30-2:30pm by videoconference
20 Fri	Non-Fiction Book Club, 10:15 am
25 Wed	Education Committee Meeting, 10:00 pm
26 Thu	Thanksgiving

NON-FICTION BOOK CLUB

In October, we are reading books about the midwest and farming. Several books that members are reading are:

- *This Blessed Earth: A Year in the Life of an American Farm Family* by Ted Ginoween.
- *American Harvest: God, Country, and Farming in the Heartland* by Marie Mutsuke Mockett
- *Methland: The Death and Life of an American Small Town* by Nick Reding

Watch the blast for the meeting location, possibly on Zoom.

NON-FICTION BOOK REVIEW by Barbara Jones

Recently we discussed Melinda Gates, *The Moment of Lift*. In these difficult times it offers suggestions, strategies and successful ways to implement change.

The book is fundamentally about women's empowerment and the ongoing effort to achieve it whether that be in a remote African village or in corporate America. Gates realizes what a delicate balancing act it is to bring cultural change to a non-western country. Cultural practices such as female genital mutilation have been practiced for centuries in many African countries.

In the West a hierarchical male dominated approach to power has been the standard corporate culture. Slowly these practices whether in an African country or in the USA are changing. In revealing much about her own marriage and the adjustments made for more equity between herself and Bill, we learn more about our own culture and its gender limitations.

The stories from Africa and India are heart-wrenching but also empowering. Her own story— an American story—is a prescription for equity in male-female partnerships.

100 YEARS OF CHANGING AND EVOLVING

by Nancy Naragon with additions by Maureen Grosheider

Both the League of Women Voters in Pennsylvania and the League in Pittsburgh have existed since the beginning! The local LWV in 1920 was called the Allegheny County LWV, and was populated by the wives of many of the influential business and industrial leaders in the area.

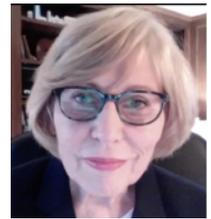
In the 1950s, the national LWV decided that their voice would be more influential if the national League and all the state and local Leagues spoke with one voice when addressing national issues. Prior to this decision, individual Leagues often reflected their local viewpoints in contrast to national's position.

The Allegheny County LWV, a feisty group, vigorously debated whether they should affiliate with the nation's other Leagues, or remain independent. Indeed, they sometimes had actually endorsed candidates. The result of that debate was that the Allegheny County League split into two Leagues—the Allegheny County LWV, which did not affiliate, and the Pittsburgh LWV, which did.

Over the years other local Leagues developed in the County. At one time there were seven local Leagues, a County Council LWV (which was a collaborative group comprised of all the local LWVs focused mainly on county issues), and the Allegheny County LWV. The AC LWV was legally entitled to the name because they had used it first. As I understand it, they operated independently in the County, issued voters' guides, and were a force in the community—the wives of the major business executives stayed with this group and were able to provide substantial financial support. The other Leagues operated throughout the county as well, but it was always necessary to explain the differences among them, which was confusing to the public and affected fund raising. Aside: when I (Nancy) arrived here in 1985, someone told me to get the voters guides from the Allegheny County League because they told you who to vote for...

By 1985 there were only six affiliated Leagues in the county: Pittsburgh Central, Mt. Lebanon, Bethel Park, Upper St. Clair, and North Hills, plus the County Council. Two trends began developing. One was that increasingly the issues that the League studied and testified about were city and countywide issues, and we began to see that we would be more effective if we were a countywide League. The other was that every spring, it was necessary to fill positions on six boards of directors, while more and more members were working full time. There was lots of agony in filling those positions, but it usually resolved by the Annual Meetings. During the agony, the subject of becoming a county League often came up, but was dismissed as the boards were mostly filled.

In 1992 we finally developed a committee to explore the county League idea. Research was done, other Leagues around the country were consulted, and a lot of local meetings/discussions were held. Emotions ran high, as many members wrestled with the practicality and financial imperatives of such a merger, while wanting to maintain the friendships and shared activities that each local LWV had experienced. Even more significant were discussions about what to do with current local League positions on local issues, their local funds, and how meetings would be done. After much discussion we landed on this: each of the local Leagues became a unit of LWV of Greater Pittsburgh, maintaining its separate identity in their community; each unit would have a chair (also a board member of LWVGP board) and a membership and program person; each unit would maintain control over its funds for 3 years, after which any remaining funds would be folded into the LWVGP treasury; each unit would maintain its local action positions to be used for local activism as warranted; after 3 years all positions would be re-evaluated and become part of LWVGP's program; each unit would be in charge of its own meetings and collaborate with LWVGP for all-League meetings (Annual Meeting, Kickoff, fund-raisers, etc.). Finally, we voted to approve the merger and, in 1994, we became the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh. (If you are wondering what became of the Allegheny County League—over the years its membership dwindled and they finally disbanded).



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The merger has been a real success, giving us a much stronger voice in the community as well as in the state—we are the largest League in PA and the only one with an office! With our multitude of members, we are able to be really active and effective in such vital areas as Voter Services and elections, as well as when addressing public issues, such as gun safety, education, and healthcare. That merger made us officially the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh, or in our shortened version LWVGP.

As we've shown through our 100 years of history we've changed and evolved as events warranted. And that's true this year as well. The pandemic has made LWVGP more heavily reliant than ever on technology and our website. In August, the Board had a lengthy discussion about our official LWVGP acronym and the confusion it was causing both to members and non-members. It seems that if you are searching online and use the acronym LWVGP, up pops the web page of the League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria, not Greater Pittsburgh! That certainly doesn't help when people are trying to find all that great information that we have on our website. As our need to do more digitally increased, we came to rely more heavily on our web address, which is lwpvgh.org. That's consistent with our other social media as well.

In addition, all Board members now have Gmail addresses that end in lwpvgh.org. As with many other organizations we have had to make some accommodations due to the digital world. And like many other regions of the country, lots of people use the city name to designate a region rather than only the city. So, for all those reasons, the Board decided that from now on, the acronym we'll use is LWVPGH. Look for that change in this issue of The Voter and moving forward.



Collating materials to be distributed to 1,000 Action Housing residents are Linda Schneider, Lena Andrews, Carol McCullough, Maureen Grosheider, and Karen Lightell. Missing in the picture is photographer and hostess, Kathy Herbst.

We received the heartfelt thank you note below from Lena Andrews of Action Housing.

Hello Everyone,

I wanted to write to thank the League of Women Voters (and all of you personally) for taking the time on Sunday to put together 1,000 voter information bags for ACTION-Housing tenants. Thank you also for hosting me – I enjoyed meeting all of you, it was a more rewarding afternoon activity than watching the Steelers!

As an organization that houses over 2,000 of Pittsburgh's most vulnerable residents, it is wonderful to have support in sharing information that will enable our tenants to participate in democracy. The League of Women Voters is an incredible resource and I am thankful that we have the opportunity to work together to make sure that everyone who wants to vote gets the opportunity to do so.

We are going to distribute the bags to our tenants this week. If there is anything we can do to support the League in the future, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Lena
Lena G. Andrews, AICP
Director of Real Estate Development
ACTION-Housing

VOTER SERVICE

by Judy Clack, Voter Service Chair



Candidate Forums

The Voter Service Committee has been hard at work attempting to arrange TEN candidate forums prior to the General Election. To date, only one of the ten has been confirmed. Candidates from the 18th Congressional District have agreed to participate: incumbent Congressman Michael F. Doyle, Jr. (D) and Luke Edison Negrón (R). The forum will be recorded at noon on Friday, October 9 and then uploaded to the at 8:00 pm on Saturday, October 10 to the League's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/lwvpgh>. Thereafter, it will also be uploaded to the League's YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/c/lwvpgh>.

The committee has been frustrated in their multiple attempts over weeks and weeks to set dates for candidate forums for these other nine contests. We have tried many times by phone, by email, and by posts on their campaigns' Facebook pages. We have received NO RESPONSE of any kind.

- 17th Congressional District: Conor Lamb, D, (**Yes**) and R. Sean Parnell, R, (**No response**);
- 37th Senatorial District: Pamela Iovino, D, (**Yes**) and Devlin Robinson, R, (**No response**);
- 21st Legislative District: Sara Innamorato, D, (**Yes**) and John F. Waugh, R, (**Maybe**);
- 23rd Legislative District: Dan Frankel, D, (**Maybe**) and Jay Ting Walker, Green, (**Maybe**);
- 28th Legislative District: Emily Skopov, D, (**Yes**) and Robert W. Mercuri, R, (**No response**);
- 30th Legislative District: Shulman, Melissa Geiger Shulman, D, (**Yes**) and Lori A. Mizgorski, R, (**No response**);
- 36th Legislative District: Jessica Lynn Benham, D, (**Yes**) and Adrian (AJ) Doyle, R, (**No response**);
- 40th Legislative District: Sharon Guidi, D, (**Maybe**) and Natallie Mihalek Stuck, R, (**No response**);
- 44th Legislative District: Michele Knoll, D, (**Yes**) and Valerie Gaydos, R, (**No response**)

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

If you are a constituent in any of the above districts, **please reach out to these NO RESPONSE candidates** and say:

- I'm a constituent in your district who will be deciding between you and your opponent in this election.
- I have heard that you have not responded to participating in a candidate forum sponsored by the League of Women Voters.
- I'm contacting you to ask you to participate for the following reasons:
 - o You are applying for a job. A candidate forum is a job interview
 - o Learning about your positions influences my voting decision
 - o The forum questions are submitted by constituents, so these are issues that matter to me and to my neighbors

If you would like to participate, contact Judy Clack, Voter Service Chair, League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh, 512-731-0280.

Voter Resources Website and HS Voter Outreach Committee

Amy Kleissas, Chair

Outreach Coordinators: S. Duncan, S. Fair, J. Moore, R. Quint

Things are happening so quickly it is hard to keep up!

Voter Resources Website

In March, all of our committee's outreach shifted from in-person to digital. We began creating digital documents, infographics and tutorials. In this time of rampant misinformation, we realized that our documents had value for not only young people, but for all citizens.

Unfortunately, our League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh website was not flexible enough to maintain all of the documents we were creating, which would need to be continually updated in response to changes in voting and election information.

Under Preston Shimer's leadership, the Board of Directors began using G Suite—a package of Google products. With the help of our webmaster, Kathy Farrington, and our G Suite administrator, Preston Shimer, the solution presented was to create a G Suite website that would be linked to our LWVPGH website as "**Voter Resources**" in the top left-hand menu.

In a short period of time, the Voter Resources website was created and 25 documents, infographics, tutorials and videos were uploaded. Through the Blast, we will ask our membership to push out in emails these four timely infographics, to friends, family, and faith communities. They can also be found on the Voter Resources website:

"Make a Plan to Vote in Your Polling Place," "How to Complete and Return Your Mail-in Ballot," and "Democracy Time!" that helps voters understand that it is democracy in action when elected officials *take the time* needed to count every vote.

"Secure Ballot Return at Allegheny County Satellite Offices" is an infographic to help voters understand the location, date, and hours of the pop-up Satellite Offices, where voters can quickly return completed Mail-in/Absentee Ballots. Voters will also have the option of **"Over the Counter" Voting**. (This has been previously described as "In-person Absentee Voting.") This option is for a voter who hasn't already applied for a Mail-in Ballot. Once the Mail-in/Absentee Ballots are available, a voter can go to their County Election Office, complete the Mail-in Ballot application, have their application approved and printed, and complete and return their ballot, all in one visit.

Synchronous Virtual Classroom PowerPoint Presentations for Colleges/Universities:

Duquesne University (September 21st, 23rd and 25th), **Duquesne University** (one-credit online course), **PittVotes** (as part of "Civic Action Week"- October 6th), and **Point Park University** (planning is underway).

LWVPGH contacts from the College/University Committee have referred college/university personnel to the High School Outreach Committee when there was an expressed interest in scheduling virtual presentations. From these contacts, we were able to share virtual presentation information and the Voter Resources website with individuals at Carnegie Mellon, CCAC, and Penn State Allegheny County.

Scheduled Synchronous Virtual Classroom PowerPoint Presentations for High Schools with Underserved Populations:

We have sent emails to 40 high school contacts to inform them of the opportunity for virtual visits and student voter registration, in addition to the resources available through our new website. Because the fall has been extremely uncertain and challenging for high schools, we don't expect to schedule many virtual lessons until winter and spring semesters.

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Using the Heinz Foundation grant funds allotted to our committee, we created 1000 “Ready—Set—VOTE!” bags of Printed Materials for youth and for the community. Joanne Moore did a terrific job leading this effort! In our collaboration with GOTV coalitions, we continually heard the plea to provide materials for the many citizens in our community who do not have access to technology. COVID-19 seems to have exacerbated what was already a reality in our community. On September 11, Ready-Set-VOTE! bags were distributed to the Campaign for Power (200 bags), the JCC coalition (200 bags) and to a community member in Westmoreland County (200 bags) who found them homes in New Kensington, Arnold and Lower Jeanette. We will also offer printed materials to the schools we visit virtually for students who have limited access to technology.

These activities represent hundreds of hours of dedicated, volunteer service on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh, under the umbrella of Voter Service. The costs have been covered, in part, by a Heinz Endowments grant and by donations from our members. The reward will come on November 3rd if we see that thousands of voters have voted, many for the first time, as evidence that our educational efforts helped get them to vote.

News from State and National, continued from page 1

LWVGP (along with the Black Political Empowerment Project, Common Cause Pennsylvania, Make the Road Pennsylvania and three individuals) filed a friend-of-the-court brief in a suit brought by the Pennsylvania Democratic Party seeking clarification of several provisions of vote-by-mail processes in Pennsylvania, including the use of drop boxes for mail-in and absentee ballots and extending the deadline for receiving mail-in and absentee ballots.

On September 17, the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania ruled that county bureaus of elections are allowed to set up drop boxes and satellite offices to accept mail-in and absentee ballots. The court also found that the requirement that all mail and absentee ballots must be delivered to the county elections office by 8 p.m. on Election Day is unconstitutional during the Covid-19 pandemic and because of problems documented with the postal service. Ballots that arrive by 5 p.m. on Friday, November 6 will be counted provided there is no evidence that the ballots were mailed after Election Day.

In a separate lawsuit filed in late June in U.S. District Court, Western District of Pennsylvania, the Republican Party and the Trump campaign have challenged the option of depositing mail-in ballots in drop boxes. LWVPA and other groups and individuals have moved to intervene as defendants in the case. As of this writing, the court previously delayed the case pending the outcome of the Democrat’s lawsuit in state court (above).

Photo of the attendees at the Kick-off meeting held on Zoom.



VOTING CONCERNS by Sue Broughton



For the last several weeks I have been trying to follow and collect in one place the changes to voting procedure both due to the legislation passed last fall that created the mail-in ballot and due to recent court decisions. Several organizations have asked me for this information as have individuals in the retirement community in which I live who have discovered that I am their “local expert” on voting. Judy Clack asked me to put it in the VOTER, so here it is.

- The legislation that created the no-excuse required mail-in ballot also eliminated the option to vote a straight-party ticket with a single vote. Voters must now vote for individual candidates.
- There will NOT be polling place consolidation for in-person voting as there was in the primary. All previous polling places that have been used in previous years will be used in November (except for a few that have become unavailable but will be replaced). It is a good idea to bring your own black or blue pen to the polling place.
- A voter who requested a mail-in or absentee ballot will be marked in the polling place list as having voted by mail whether or not the ballot was voted and generally will not be allowed to vote in person. However, such a voter who still has the unused mail-in ballot may bring the ballot and the envelopes to the polling place where they will be spoiled, and the voter will be allowed to vote. A voter who does not have the unused ballot may vote only by provisional ballot, but should do so because it will likely be counted after election officials have determined that the mail-in was not returned.
- Voters requesting mail-in or absentee ballots will receive the ballots with two envelopes so that the secrecy of the ballot can be maintained but election officials can also determine that the ballot is from a registered voter and is not a duplicate. Officials will check the signature on the outer envelope to determine that the voter is eligible to vote. The secrecy (inner) envelope containing the ballot will then be separated from the outer envelope and sent to the counting area. Ballots that are received in only the mailing envelope without the secrecy envelope will NOT be counted.
- The time for counting mail-in and absentee ballots has been extended. Ballots that are postmarked by 8 p.m. on November 3 and received by 5 pm on November 6 will be counted (more detail in next article). Also note that the address on the envelope to which voters mail their ballots is not the Elections Division office on Forbes Ave. Ballots are counted at a large warehouse on the northside that can house the necessary machinery (some of which has been updated since the primary for greater speed in counting), so the address is that warehouse.
- Allegheny County is creating several Elections Division satellite offices that will be open and staffed on three weekends in October. Voters who have received and filled their ballots and have enclosed the ballot in the secrecy envelope and enclosed the secrecy envelope in the outer envelope, which they have signed, may drop off those ballots at one of these locations. A voter may drop off ONLY their own ballot, not a ballot for another person. I believe that there will also be a staffed drop box in the lobby at the Forbes Avenue location, but I have not been able to determine the hours that it will be available. Two graphics that show the hours and locations of the satellite offices are attached to this email.
- At the Elections Division office and the satellite locations, voters may also do “in-person absentee” voting, also known as “over-the-counter” voting. A voter who has NOT applied for a mail-in ballot but now wishes to vote by mail may apply, wait while the balloting materials are approved and printed, then mark the ballot and return it, all in one visit. The voter will need to provide ID and bring a mask. A voter who wishes to use their own pen should bring a blue or black pen. This process may take a little longer than voting in person – 10 to 15 minutes.

There is some duplication of information on voting procedures among several articles in this VOTER. I decided not to try to edit out the duplication and take a chance on leaving something out completely. Better to see information twice than not at all.

EDUCATION ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORT

Phyllis Dreyfuss, Joan Franklin
Co-chairs of the Education Advocacy Committee

As schools across our nation are grappling with mandatory closures and/or partial openings and virtual learning, concerns about school funding remain in the forefront of our discussions. Although our Education Committee has not met since the lockdown, we have continued to follow closely the developments of Governor Wolf's proposed legislation for Charter School reform. He advocates that we need increased oversight, accountability, and transparency in our charter schools, especially regarding budgets. Our Pennsylvania charter school documents were created two decades ago, and they have not been revised since then.

There are a couple of updates, however, that we would like to share with you. Over these months, we have written to all the legislators in Allegheny County urging their support for reform. We also have joined in the statewide effort to encourage school boards to endorse Governor Wolf's proposal. We have written to the Post-Gazette, Public Source Website to urge their support, and we have circulated petitions.

Charter Schools, whether they are Cyber or Brick and Mortar, are an integral part of the public education system. Because they are funded by taxpayers, it is critical that their books are open to the public for review and evaluation. At present, this is not required for Charter Management Companies. During this time, The Auditor General, Eugene DePasquale, has been investigating and noting what seems to be excessive dollars in the reserves of Charter Management Companies, focusing particularly on Lincoln Learning Solutions. This is another area of funding that must be evaluated since much of its finances are not transparent.

We believe all entities whether they are local Boards of Education or Charter Schools must be held accountable and transparent for how our tax dollars are being used. In 2019, the Pittsburgh Public School district paid \$95,129,023 to charter schools. In the proposed 2020 budget, new district projections increase the amount by \$7,021,421. In addition, local taxpayers have provided funding to the charter schools for special education costs that seem to be excessive for the services provided. Payment for special education students is complicated and difficult to evaluate, and the Education Voters of Pennsylvania has just completed a detailed study of this problem.

We have also been following the efforts of Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, to use CARES (the federal grant program) for private and parochial schools. Judge Daney Friedrich, the Trump appointee US District Judge for the District of Columbia, this month became the third federal judge to halt DeVos's plans to direct additional CARES money to private schools. This ruling, the most decisive of the three, is important for not only imposing an injunction but issuing a summary judgement against the Secretary.

The issue was this: Congress set aside some CARES relief money to be distributed among public and private schools based on the number of students from LOW INCOME families. DeVos issued, first a guidance, then a ruling that the fund to private schools should be based on TOTAL enrollment, rather than just the number of LOW INCOME student enrollment. This would have had the effect of steering CARES funds away from public schools and toward private schools – a long time DeVos goal.

Our committee will continue to keep current of the issues, but will wait until after the election to resume our advocacy activities.

LWV The Straight Scoop on Shale

A Project of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund

Eighth Annual Shale & Public Health Conference Tuesday November 17, 2020

&

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

from noon to 4:30 p.m. EST

The conference is presented by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania and hosted by the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health.

The conference is free, but you need to register!

More information and videos from past conferences: www.shalepalwv.org/events

www.ShalePALWV.org

Featuring new research presented by national experts on shale and public health impacts, and practical applications.

The conference will feature five topic segments. Each includes a panel discussion led by a top researcher offering framing remarks.

- Novel Methods of Assessing Air Exposures & Public Health
 - Nicole Deziel, PhD, Yale
- Unconventional Oil & Gas, Community Impacts & Environmental Justice
 - Lara Cushing PhD, UCLA; Jim Fabisiak, PhD, U Pittsburgh
- New Research on Birth Outcomes
 - Lisa McKenzie, PhD, U of Colorado Anschutz
- New Research on Other Health Outcomes
 - Seth Shonkoff, PhD, PSE Healthy Energy/UC Berkeley
- Climate Change, COVID 19, Fossil Fuels and Plastics
 - Brian Schwartz, MD, Johns Hopkins

There will also be a networking session on Tuesday from 3:45-4:30pm.



NEW Pittsburgh Courier

VOTE

A VIRTUAL VOTER ENGAGEMENT FORUM

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 8, 2020
6PM-7PM

TUNE INTO THIS NON PARTISAN EVENT TO GET IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON VOTING AND HOW TO DO SO SAFELY

FORUM PARTICIPANTS:



ANGELA FORESHAW-ROUSE,
Manager of State Operations and
Community Outreach,
AARP Pennsylvania



KENNETH L. HUSTON,
President,
NAACP Pennsylvania
State Conference



TIM STEVENS,
Chairman & CEO,
Black Political Empowerment
Project



DR. TERRIE GRIFFIN,
Co-President,
League of Women Voters
of Pennsylvania



DR. WILLIAM SIMMONS,
Past President,
Gateway Medical Society



MODERATED BY: CHRIS MOORE, AWARD WINNING HOST

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THIS FORUM IS POWERED BY AARP PENNSYLVANIA

