



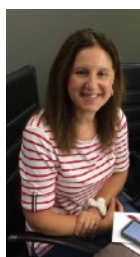
League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh



Volume 27, No. 1

September 2020

PROGRAM by Chris Beuger



Last month a programming survey was sent out to all League members in the our weekly email Blast. The survey asked members to tell us their top 3 “Hot Button” issues. The results of the survey will guide our programming for the upcoming year, targeting topics that are most timely and most important to us, locally and nationally.

40 people, with one being an expat in China, responded to the survey with 60% of respondents concerned, not surprisingly, about our Elections – Voter Turnout/Registration/Representation – and 42.50% concerned about the Safety/Integrity of the our elections. Fair Districts – Gerrymandering – and the Environment, Climate Change/Fossil Fuels/Air and Water Quality, were tied with 40%.

These issues were followed by Criminal/Social Justice Reform, 30%, and Healthcare Reform – Medicare for All, 22.50%. If anyone is interested in having the complete report of the the survey results, please contact me and I will forward to you.

Because of the importance of the next election and the latest events that threaten our democracy and our fundamental right to vote, our next two League meetings will focus on Elections and Voting. The continuing pandemic does not allow for us to meet in our usual fashion, therefore for the rest of the year, we will be meeting over Zoom. South, Central and North Unit meetings will be combined into one Zoom meeting in October and November. And, although we look forward to meeting over dinner and socializing every September for our Kick-Off, we will have to wait until next year!

Please check the Blast in the upcoming weeks for the date and list of speakers for our September Zoom Kick-Off meeting.

FAIR DISTRICTS PA UPDATE by Maureen Grosheider

The time for enacting legislation to create an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission and meet the other deadlines required to change the state Constitution has gone by.

So, FDPa has turned its attention to a transparency and criteria bill – LACRA (Legislative and Congressional Redistricting Act, HB2638 and SB1242). Both bills are in their respective State Government Committees. The goal is to get both bills out of committee in September and passed on the floor before the November election.

The focus for the moment will be on the Senate State Government Committee, with a lesser focus on the House State Government Committee. Senators in our area on SGC are Lindsey Williams (D–North Hills) and Pat Stefano (R–Westmoreland/Fayette/Somerset).

FDPa may be working on scheduling Zoom meetings with interested constituents in both Senator Williams’ and Senator Stefano’s districts.



CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TIME TO DOUBLE CHECK YOUR VOTER RECORD



The 2020 presidential election will be here soon — November 3rd to be exact. This is a good time to check your voter record. Check to see that you are registered and where your polling place is. Please help those you know who may be new at this (Hurray

for first time voters of all ages!) and those who may have moved to a new address to be sure their record is correct. Voters (and want-to-be-voters) in Pennsylvania need to register by October 19th. If you are helping someone to register or update information, including an address or a name change, an easy way is to go to www.votespa.com. The voter can sign up online with a PA driver's license or PA state ID card. The person can sign up and the required signature will be loaded from the signature that is on the state file for the person's PA driver's license or PA state ID card. If the person does not have either of these forms of ID, the website has additional instructions for submitting a signature.

Check your address. Have you moved, but forgot to change your voter record? Correct it now! Again, you can use www.votespa.com to correct your address.

Want to vote by mail? Guess where you can go to request your ballot? You got it — www.votespa.com. Allegheny County will send you an email confirming that your application was submitted. If you provided

an email, the County will send you an update when your ballot is being sent to you. The time frame for your ballot to make it to the County Elections office is very specific — it must be there by 8 pm on November 3rd — whether delivered by the post office or delivered by you. The County also sends an email when your ballot is received, due to the unique barcode on the return envelope.

Do you have a student in your household who will not be at home on election day? She or he can follow the steps above to request a mail-in ballot and be sure it is returned on time.

Family member or friend who probably should not stand in line for what may be a long time? Suggest the mail-in ballot option, and help them complete the application. No excuse is needed any longer in Pennsylvania, so someone does not have to be disabled or expect to be away from home on election day to vote by mail.

In the primary, I requested and voted via a mail-in ballot because I wanted to see how it would work. It was a good experience, and I plan to do it again. I have already requested my ballot for November. On November 3, I expect to be working at my polling place, but will have already sent my vote in — carrying on the right I gained as an 18-year-old when I voted in the 1972 election.

Thank you for being an always voter — and remember that your Vote is Your Voice!

Maureen Mamula



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NON-FICTION BOOK CLUB By Phyllis Dreyfuss

The Book Club is continuing our look into racism for September with no particular book.

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 McIlvried
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	lwvpgh.org	
Pennsylvania	717-234-1576	palwv.org	
National	202-429-1965	lwv.org	
Facebook	www.facebook.com	Search: League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh	

The LWVGP was one lead organizer of an interfaith, non-profit, non-partisan county-wide effort, *Vote! By Mail or In Person*, to encourage voter registration and the use of mail-in ballots by people less likely vote. Here's a photo from a Zoom meeting about this effort.



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@lwvpgh.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@lwvpgh.org.
- ✓ **Gun Safety Committee**
Dates TBD. Contact Nancy Naragon at 412-366-2446 or development@lwvpgh.org
- ✓ **Non-fiction Book Club**
3rd Friday, 10:15 am. Contact Phyllis Dreyfuss, 412-224-2395 or lpdrey@verizon.net

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER CALENDAR

September

1 Tue	Voter Service Committee, 12:30-2:30pm by videoconference
14 Mon	Board meeting by Zoom
15 Tue	Voter Service Committee, 12:30-2:30pm by videoconference
18 Fri	Non-Fiction Book Club, 10:15 am
23 Wed	Education Committee Meeting, 10:00 pm

October

6 Tue	Voter Service Committee, 12:30-2:30pm by videoconference
12 Mon	Board meeting by Zoom
TBD	Voter Service Committee 12:30-2:30pm by videoconference
16 Fri	Non-Fiction Book Club, 10:15 am
28 Wed	Education Committee Meeting, 10:00 pm



League members are preparing to pack 20,000 voter-information rack cards and 20,000 voter registration forms for all families served at Allegheny county's food pantries in September: Kathy Scheuble, Heather Wechter, Kristin Henson, Eileen Brennan, and a Junior League volunteer.

See the Voter Service Report on page 6.

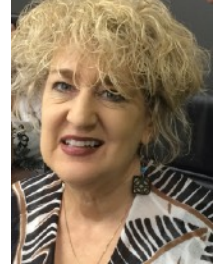
HIGH SCHOOL VOTER OUTREACH: SEPTEMBER 2020

Amy Kleissas, Chair

Outreach Coordinators: Susan Duncan, Susan Fair, Joanne Moore, Ruth Quint

It has been an extremely productive July and August for our team:

- A new **Voter Resources Website**, published mid-August, is now linked from the “Voter Resources” tab on the left-hand menu of the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh’s MyLO website. These new Voter Resources pages contain all of the **original infographics, tutorial PDFs with active links, student handouts, videos, and other documents in shareable formats** that have been created by our dynamic team to empower voters of all ages.



Each member of our team has made key contributions to this effort. Imaginative new infographics, created by team member Ruth Quint, have been especially popular on LWVPGH social media.

- **We invite you to explore this website and help us spread this link far and wide!**
<https://sites.google.com/lwvpgh.org/lwvpgh-voter-resources>
- Our committee will kick-off our fall, *all virtual* classroom visits with a return to Dr. Patricia Sheahan’s Social Justice class at **Duquesne University**. We will present our updated “**Voting Made Easier**” PowerPoint to her students during three Zoom sessions (September 21st, 23rd, and 25th), which will include question and answer sessions and voter registration.
- On September 22, we will make a virtual visit to **Parkland Community Library in Allentown, Pennsylvania**. Our PowerPoint will be presented to 5th through 12th graders in the library’s after-school program.
- Individuals have contacted the LWVGP from **Carnegie Mellon** and **Pitt Universities** in search of reliable, nonpartisan materials. Shareable documents and the new website link have been shared with them. A separate College/University Outreach committee is actively extending outreach with many more contacts.
- Beginning August 17, the new Voter Resources website link will be shared in emails to all of our high school, college and community contacts.

Exciting news from Linda Capozzoli, Brentwood High School counselor. Following our March 2nd visit, Brentwood applied for the **Pennsylvania Governor’s Civic Engagement Award**. Last month, Linda notified us that **Brentwood High School** was one of the Pennsylvania recipients and the only Allegheny County school to be awarded the **2020 GOLD Award!**

One other school we visited, **Elizabeth Forward High School**, was awarded the **Silver Award** along with two other Allegheny County schools. This year, only 24 Pennsylvania schools earned the Gold level (at least 85% of eligible students registered to vote) and 18 earned the Silver Level (between 65% and 84% of eligible students).

There was even more exciting news after Linda shared the **WQED “Campaign U” video** with the PA Department of State, which highlighted our visit along with the inspiring Brentwood student interviews.

<https://www.wqed.org/campaignu>.

Linda Capozzoli, representing Brentwood High School, and Amy Kleissas, representing the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh, were invited to participate in an **August 20th Department of State webinar**. The webinar promoted best practices in youth voter empowerment and engagement for high school personnel across Pennsylvania.

VOTER SERVICE by Judy Clack, Voter Service Chair



Community Outreach

Since early July, six new and one continuing committee(s) have formed within the Voter Service committee. They had to develop new ways of reaching multiple constituents during COVID-19. Each committee has between six and twelve League members attending their remote meetings and doing their tasks. I am so thrilled to see the energy, enthusiasm, and commitment of all these League members as well as the leadership shown by their chairs. Here is the list of committees, their leaders, and how to contact them to volunteer to help.

- College and University Committee, Sue Ellen Ganz and Paula Hopkins; sebganz@comcast.net or ph@paulahopkins.com
- Food Pantry Committee, Judy Clack, voterservice@lwvpgh.org
- High School and College Education Committee, Amy Kleissas, civic.education@lwvpgh.org
- Poll Worker Recruitment Committee, Heather Wechter, secretary@lwvpgh.org
- Religious Institutions Committee, Jan Harrison, jmharrison@aol.com
- Senior Subsidized Housing Committee, Jane Butler, jbutler.mac@mac.com
- Social Media and Video Committee, Emily Ferri, social.media@lwvpgh.org

Candidate Forums

Nine candidate forums are being planned by the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh prior to the November 3 General Election. Since voting by mail-in or absentee ballot is encouraged, dates for the forums will be earlier than usual. We are inviting candidates from the following jurisdictions to participate, each in their own forum: 17th and 18th U. S. Congressional Districts, 37th PA Senatorial District and the 21st, 28th, 30th, 36th, 40th, and 44th PA Legislative Districts. Each forum will be recorded on Zoom and then posted in its entirety on the LWVGP Facebook page within 24 hours of the recording. Announcement will be made in advance of when each forum will be posted.



Voter Registration Forms Distribution

The PA Department of State shipped us 12,000 voter registration forms to be inserted in every family's bag or box of food from an Allegheny County food pantry in September.

LWVGP Co-Sponsors Elections Webinar

162 community members attended a live webinar on August 26, "Vote! By Mail or In Person," co-sponsored by the LWVGP and 13 other community organizations. The program featured David Voyer, Director, Allegheny County Elections Division, who answered many current election questions. Judy Clack spoke for several minutes about the League's 20+ documents posted on the website thanks mostly



Second shift of League volunteers counting out voter registration forms to go to 158 food pantries in Allegheny County in September: Kathy Herbst, Cynthia Cominsky, Annette Buranosky, and Christine Peters.

Continued next page

to the work of the Civic Education crew led by Amy Kleissas. You can see the 45-minute video at this link:
<https://jccpgh.org/event/vote-by-mail-or-in-person/?cflk=1&fbclid=IwAR38UccibVh3hKxUBdnBFkAzjppXFuyXVKjufaqjPcZvITYbC8qwr62EvM8>

DEI Training

Our LWVGP Board attended the first of a series of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) trainings led by Terrie Griffin, LWVPA co-president and LWVGP membership chair. The training was conducted on Zoom. DEI T-shirts were distributed in advance to be worn for the training. A photo of the Zoom screen was taken. The yellow outline around Terrie's box indicates that she was speaking at the time.



NEW MEMBERS

South Hills:

Karen Lightell
karenlightell@gmail.com

Al Scheimer
alscheimer@aol.com

North Hills:

Lydia Hatcher
lydiahatcher1@gmail.com

Jennifer Martin
Jlmartin76@me.com

Peggy Schmiedecke
pschmiedecke@comcast.net

Jennifer Stewart
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Catherine Wagner
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Pittsburgh Central:

Karen Bolden
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Patricia Carey
chrisdotcarey@gmail.com

Rhoda Eligator
rselector@comcast.net

Nettie Glickman
nettieglickman@hotmail.com

Ellen Guise
 Household with Tawna Loutzenhizer
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Peggi Habets
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Janet Jain
janet.jain@gmail.com

Mark O'Connor
moconnor@mckasd.net

Gabrielle Snyder
ggsnyder15@gmail.com

Roye Werner
 household with Reid Andrews
roye.werner@gmail.com

Marvelous Members Wise Women (and Men) of the League

by Amy Kleissas

We have many outstanding members of the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh, and as we are inclusive, some of them happen to be men! Here are the reflections of a truly “Marvelous Member” of our League – Preston Shimer, Treasurer

1. Describe your early years: I was born in New York City and raised in Scotch Plains, New Jersey. My dad was a public health engineer and an early researcher in air pollution for the New Jersey State Health Department. My mom was a professional bassoon player and teacher. I grew up with my mom operating a music studio in our living room. I started to sing in my church’s choir of men and boys as a first grader and have sung in church choirs ever since. My mom needed an oboe player for her woodwind quintet, so I started the oboe in the 4th grade.



2. Tell us about your educational background: I went to public schools in Scotch Plains and then continued in the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. Later, I earned an MBA at Penn State in State College.

3. What is your professional or work history? I have worked in the hotel and restaurant industry, public accounting, large corporations and non-profits. We came to Pittsburgh when I was hired as Corporate Records Manager for Rockwell International in 1977. When Rockwell wanted us to relocate to Los Angeles, we decided to stay in Pittsburgh. Initially I worked as a records management consultant, then joined a company that sold records management software and ended up serving as the administrator of a non-profit foundation.

4. Why and when did the League become important to you? Annette joined the League in Montclair, New Jersey in 1969 and I became a League spouse. It has been a part of our lives ever since!

5. Who was a notable or first League mentor to you? Annette is a constant mentor. However, I have had many, many league people help me grow in wisdom and understanding over the years.

6. What was your League “portfolio”, including offices you held? I have served as Treasurer of LWVGP since 2013. I also served as VP of Administration for LWVPA from 2014 -2017. I have continued to support the LWVPA off-board, with support for budgets, technology and administrative support.

7. What do you feel are the most important things you accomplished for the League (and our democracy)? Supporting the office staff with ever-improving uses of technology and enabling the League to accomplish a great deal with limited financial resources and with an all-volunteer membership. The most recent migration to Google Suite will, I think, in the long term be the most significant. I think I had a major impact as a member of the “Living with Guns” program which was a major initiative for the League several years ago.

8. What are your concerns and/or hopes for a post-pandemic America? That we will take this opportunity to reshape our economy focusing on climate change industries and solutions; that we will learn from the current administration and codify limits on the President’s powers; and that we will solve gerrymandering and campaign finance damages to our democracy.

9. What are your wise words for the rest of us? Be open minded, curious and playful when you have the opportunity to learn new technology.