



***League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford®
2015-2016 Annual Meeting
May 3, 2016***

Rockledge Golf Club, Angelo's on Main

Welcome

Dinner

Guest Speaker

Luke Bronin

Mayor of Hartford

Topic

Future of the Capitol City

Business Meeting

Announcements

Annual Report

Treasurer's Report

Proposed Budget

Adoption of Consensus Positions

Proposed Program

Nominations

Other Business

Adjournment

<u>Board of Directors</u>		<u>Term Ends</u>
President	Carole Mulready	2017
Vice-President	Deb Polun	2018
Secretary	open	
Treasurer	Mary Everett	2017
Membership Records	Elizabeth Swietek	2017
Director, Voter Service	Karen Licht	2018
Director	Gail Frahm	2017
Director, special projects	Jean Blair	2016
Director, at-large	Sarah Hambrick	2017

Credentials Report

Number of members present _____

There is/is not a quorum _____

Minutes

The minutes of the 2015 Annual Meeting were approved
by the Board at its meeting of September 2015.

League Events and Programs

Pot Luck

September 29th was the annual pot luck, a time for sharing our culinary delights as well as having an interesting speaker to start the League year off. League members gathered at the Community Center of Saint Thomas the Apostle Church in West Hartford. **Juliet Kapsis** made the arrangements for this year's speaker, Melanie V. Sinche, NCC. Ms. Sinche is Director of Education at The Jackson Laboratory for Genomic Medicine. The Lab is next to the UCONN Medical Health Center and is focused on human cancer genomics; genome biology; quantitative cell biology; and computational biology and analytics, all centered on developing approaches to precision medicine. Melanie explained her role in recruiting and supporting faculty for the Lab. She also talked about the efforts to reach out to the community and provide opportunities for area students to be involved in offerings for high school and college students. Members had lots of questions. It proved to be a most interesting and informative evening.

Fall Conference

LWVCT and American Constitution Society presented *Voting Fraud/Voting Suppression: Myths and Realities* at UCONN Law School in Hartford on November 7, 2015. CT League President Gloria Bent welcomed the attendees. Four excellent panelist with broad and varied experience on elections and public policy made presentations; Erin E. O'Brien, ass't professor and chair of political science at College of Liberal Arts, UMASS, Boston; Douglas M. Spenser, ass't professor of law and public policy at UCONN Law; Paul S. Herrnson, Professor of Political Science, UCONN Storrs; Christopher M. Mattei, attorney in private practice who was previously at the U.S. Attorney's office overseeing federal criminal investigations and prosecutions in the State of CT; **Carole G. Mulready**, President of LWVGH served as moderator. The program addressed the following questions: Is voter fraud widespread? What is voter fraud? How are laws protecting election integrity challenging voters' accessibility? What is the end result for our democracy? An excellent video tape of the LWVCT program is available by contacting Carole Mulready at cgml@mulready.biz

Communication

LWVGH is on Facebook and Twitter

Pay PAL- We are pleased to add PayPal as an option for our Finance drive. Regular contributors, as well as casual observers to our website and Facebook pages will be able to donate to the League with the click of a button.

Election 2015.



LWVGH moderated several debates. One of our newly trained moderators, **Libby Swietek**, did well in her first debate in Canton sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Canton. Good going Libby! She is shown here at Canton High School Auditorium with the candidates for first Selectman.

LWVGH assisted West Hartford Community Television with post – election reporting. **Deb Polun** served as moderator of the program on West Hartford local election returns with Dennis Swanton representing the Republican party and Jason Jakubowski for the Democrat party. Deb and the contributors provided interesting information and anecdotes on the candidates and the election process. Deb Polun's experience as an excellent moderator has been helpful to LWVGH and WHC-TV in providing this non-partisan public service.





The Hartford Mayoral Race was very interesting with several competing candidates from different parties. League members **Gail Frahm, Jean Blair, Marlene Wenograd** and Carole Mulready served as timers for the debate co-sponsored by Connecticut ACLU, Law and Government Academy at Hartford High School and the League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford at the Mark Twain House auditorium on September 8.

The League worked with ACLU to assure that appropriate and well phrased questions were prepared for the candidates Luke Bronin, Ted Cannon, Pedro Segarra, and Joel Cruz. Some questions were also developed by the Law and Government Academy at Hartford High School. The debate was moderated by Al Terzi of Fox Connecticut.

Wine and Cheese Reception

Elected Officials Reception (Wine and Cheese) was held in November 22 at the home of **Ilze Krisst**. Officials from Hartford, West Hartford and Bloomfield were present and the event was attended by many League members. Members and elected officials enjoyed the opportunity to speak with each other informally. Delicious appetizers and desserts provided by League members contributed to the comfortable ambiance. **Jean Blair** coordinated the food and beverages and **Marlene Wenograd** sent invitations to members without email. As always, Ilze was the perfect hostess.

Pictured in the foreground are Rep. Brian Becker and Nan Streeter. Behind them newly elected W.H. councilman Chris Williams and Libby Swietek.



Legislative Breakfast

The Legislative Breakfast was held on Saturday, January 9 at Trinity Episcopal Church, Hartford. **Carol Hamilton** again provided a perfect continental breakfast. State Representatives David Baram, Bloomfield, Ed Vasquez and Matt Ritter of Hartford, Mike Dimicco of Farmington and Senator Beth Bye attended and discussed issues which they expected to come up during the 2016 legislative session. Discussion focused primarily on the state budget and projected debt. Legislators thought that transportation and tolls would be topics this session. After a question from a member, the legislators were quite unanimous in doubting that proposals for assistance in dying would come up this session. League members presented their thoughts about issues of concern. There were questions about campaign finance, the proposed natural gas pipeline expansion vs. renewable energy, and education. Many thanks go to **Deb Polun** for moderating the event. The summary of the discussion was sent to LWVCT for the Public Issues (PI) team to use during the 2016 legislative session. All officials indicated that email is the best way to reach them. The one exception for making an impact is when they receive a handwritten letter on an issue. One can “google” the officials by name to get to the home page of each and to find their home addresses for “snail” mail.

Annual Dinner- May 2015

The Pond House in Elizabeth Park

The annual LWVGH dinner meeting was held at The Pond House at Elizabeth Park. This is an important meeting at which the budget for the next year is presented and approved by the membership. The agenda also includes approval of LWVGH positions, program for the year and the vote on the slate of officers. Prior to the meeting, a cocktail hour allows members to catch up with fellow members and meet new friends and guests being introduced to the League. Shown here is Juliet Kapsis, LWVGH secretary with guest Marisa Lindsey.



Jonathan with Laura Hastings & Alice Kugelman

Your League was honored to have as its dinner speaker

Jonathan Harris, Connecticut Commissioner of the Department of Consumer Protection (CTDCP). His presentation started with a listing of the broad range of responsibilities of the office including regulation of casinos, lotteries, prescription drugs, food standards, fraud, liquor control, licensing services (occupational and professional), product safety, real estate, weights and measures, and more. Mr. Harris focused part of his presentation on how consumers can ensure that contributed funds go to legitimate charities and suggested that members make use of the DCP website. The Medical Marijuana Program, though new in CT, is going forward smoothly according to the Commissioner. Stigmas are being broken down and many people are getting help. Identity theft was a significant topic of discussion with a number of questions from the members during the Q & A period. The Commissioner emphasized that there are a lot of scams going on and advised vigilance and scrutiny of all bills and credit card statements. One specific piece of advice offered was to be sure not to leave bills in your mailbox. Thieves are always on the lookout for ways to get your private information.



Presentation of 2015-2016 LWVGH Board: (L to R) Carole Mulready, Juliet Kapsis, Deb Polun, Sarah Hambrick, Mary Everett, Gail Frahm, Jean Blair, Libby Swietek, Urania Petit and Karen Licht.

Poll Reporting for Associated Press

LWVGH members and volunteers participated in Poll reporting again in 2015 for the Hartford mayoral race. AP paid the League to call in results from a number of assigned precincts and town voting headquarters to get early and accurate voting results that are better than exit polls. We participated in both the August 2015 primary and the November elections. Each report generated a donation to LWVGH, a great fund raiser for us! Thanks to: **Vicki Albert, Jean Blair, June Rosenblatt, Mary Everett, Carol Hamilton, Juliet Kapsis, Joe Mulready, Carole Mulready, Karen Licht, Deb Polun, Libby Swietek, Sandy Fry and Janet Willits.**

Voter Service

Election 2015

The 2015 August session of question preparation for voters' guides and debates was hosted by **Karen Licht** at the Somerset Complex. **Deb Polun** acted as scribe using large easel pads so revisiting the suggested questions was very easy. She also sent off the first draft to be commented on by the attending members before being finalized and approved by the Board. This was a Local election year, rather than state. Priorities of the Greater Hartford LWV were part of the consideration when drafting the questions.

Deb Polun coordinated the debates for West Hartford and surrounding communities. Moderators for Council and BOE West Hartford were **Leta Marks** and Deb Polun. We were fortunate to be able to host, with WHC-TV. During the entire election season moderators were aided by a contingent of League timers- **Vicki Albert, Margo Callahan, Nan Streeter, Karen Licht, Kathleen Keegan, Libby Swietek, June Rosenblatt, Juliet Kapsis, Mary Everett, and Jean Blair.** A special thanks to Jennifer Evans, executive director of WHC-TV.

West Hartford's Voters' Guide was published by *West Hartford LIFE*. **Karen Licht** contributed in a number of ways on the path to publication. She negotiated an excellent position in the newspaper as well as a reasonable price. Many thanks go to Karen for her persistence and dedicated hours. **Sarah Hambrick** coordinated all communication with the candidates for election in Bloomfield and was successful in getting the candidates to submit their information in time for publication in *The Journal*. Thank you, Sarah! **Deb Polun** was the go to person for getting West Hartford candidates' information and responses to questions for the voters guide and getting it in time for deadlines! Many thanks to all of you who made this a successful year in voter service.

Membership Report



Our member totals for 2015-2016 are 80 members, including 16 Lifetime Honorees. **Frances Thompson**, shown in the photo to the right, was awarded her 50 year Lifetime certificate by Carole Mulready and Marlene Wenograd.

Welcome to **Rosalind Hoffman** as a new member.

We sadly bid farewell to **Helen Pearl**. Helen was an activist and leader. She was active with the League of Women Voters for many years, serving as president of the New Britain Chapter for 12 years. When she moved to Bloomfield, she immediately joined LWVGH and became a leader of election related activities at Duncaster. Helen was most proud of two of her particular feminist achievements: 1) "Founding Mother" of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women 42 years ago for which she helped draft the statutory

language and 2) the successful campaign to establish a state constitutional amendment prohibiting discrimination on account of sex.

