

LEAGUE LINE

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been a year!!! A year of quarantine, masks, social distancing, a year of missing graduations, holidays, sports events, and sadly, funerals. I think the most impactful thing for me is the absence of hugs. Don't get me wrong; I hug and get hugged everyday but only by one person....for a whole year!!! Hugging goes to so many basic needs that are essential for my mental health: hugging to greet, hugging to show happiness, hugging to comfort. For me the list is long.

I also miss something as basic as shaking hands and talking to people in person. I am grateful for Zoom. I'm not really sure how the League would have survived without it but I am confident that somehow, it would have. The League has stayed busy fulfilling its mission protecting and educating voters. It has continued with work on voter registration, voter access, redistricting, and fighting voter suppression, to name a few. This is not to say that it has been easy. The League remains unapologetically nonpartisan in a hyper-partisan world.

Who would have believed that the pandemic would continue for over a year and unfortunately, for the foreseeable future? When we have been vaccinated and are finally safe to meet in person, we will plan a party, an End to COVID party! I hope to be able to give you all a big hug!

Kandy Duncan, President

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Each year, LWVLA recognizes two leaders in our community. Please respond to this call to nominate individuals for awards to be announced at the May 27th Annual Meeting. This is another good reason to attend our annual gathering!

The Judy Anderson Community Service Award

The Judy Anderson Community Service Award is presented to an individual or organization in recognition of noteworthy contributions to our community. This LWVLA award honors local service and commitment to making life better for all.

Award Criteria:

- Service in the Union County community
- Resident of Union County for at least five years, who is older than 21 years
- Significant amount of time to one or more organizations/projects

Exclusions:

- Service supporting a political candidate/issue
- Involvement in religious activities, unless designed to benefit the entire community (E.g. a fund-raiser for church or synagogue would not be considered, but leader of a church team for the Crop Walk would)
- Service given as part of a paid job

Award Application Form:

For the application form for the Judy Anderson Community Service Award, [click here](#).

WHAT'S HAPPENING

The following events are current as of publication date, March 1st. Coronavirus containment measures may cause delays or cancellations. Please check our website, LWVLewisburgArea.org, frequently for the most current updates.

Monday, March 1st, 3:00pm

BOARD MEETING

Via Zoom, video conferencing tool

Tuesday, March 16th, 12:00-1:00pm

FORUM

Susan Mathias, former CEO of Transitions of PA "Domestic and Sexual Assault During the Pandemic"

Via Zoom, opening at 11:30am

Please see Forum article about registering for the meeting.

Monday, April 5th, 3:00pm

BOARD MEETING

Via Zoom, video conferencing tool

Tuesday, April 20th, 12:00-1:00pm

FORUM

County Commissioners

Via Zoom, opening at 11:30am

Tuesday, May 18th

PRIMARY ELECTION

Thursday, May 27th, 7:00pm

ANNUAL MEETING - Save the date!

Friday-Saturday, June 18th-19th

STATE CONVENTION

JANUARY FORUM

Dennis Lyons, Editor of *The Daily Item*, spoke to the LWVLA on January 19th via Zoom about "Real News When We Need It Most." He noted some changes in things that we used to take for granted: the paper is published 6 days a week; online readership has increased; after the November election, on a given day, 35% of voters did not believe the person elected president had won. There always have been satire and propaganda; "fake news" was used as a term as early as John Adams. Today it is used by some people for anything with which they do not agree.

The Daily Item focuses on local news, uses reliable sources like the *Washington Post* and the AP for national and international news, then adds local context. The First Amendment does not mean a requirement to publish letters without verifiable facts. All letters to the editor must be signed. Staff training emphasizes avoiding terms that reflect bias in reporting.

Breakout session discussions, led by Susan Jordan and Karen Carr from the Central Susquehanna Valley Mediation Center, focused on how to have constructive conversations with people with whom we have differing views.

If you missed this Forum and would like to view the presentation, go to [WHAT'S HAPPENING/What You Missed](#) on our website. The video is under **January 16, 2021**.

Barbara Kolmen, Forum Committee

FEBRUARY FORUM

Nicole Peterson, Union-Snyder Community Action Agency Food Security Coordinator, spoke at the February 16th LWVLA Forum on, "What is food security and how do we reach sustainable food security in our region?" The USDA defines food insecurity as "lack of access at times to sufficient nutritious food." Based on 2018 figures, 21% of Northumberland, Snyder, and Union residents fall into that category; a 5% increase is projected due to the Covid pandemic. Some factors that play into food insecurity include: chronic illness (i.e. 50% of Union County's food-insecure have high blood pressure; 30% of food-insecure families include one person with diabetes); lack of health insurance; senior populations; limited educational levels; and lack of other government assistance, despite 80% of families with one member working qualifying for SNAP food assistance. Exacerbating problems can include lack of transportation and affordable housing; inadequate kitchen facilities, nutritional information, or budgeting skills. Ms. Peterson explored some of the solutions local coalitions are working on such as food pantries, community gardens, farmers' markets, and school meal food distribution for non-school days. Local food hubs like the one established at the Miller Center are promising innovations.

Breakout sessions led by Mary Beth Clark and Mary Zimmerman discussed topics

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and options used in other communities. To view the entire presentation, go to [WHAT'S HAPPENING/What You Missed](#) on our website. The video is under **February 16, 2021**.

Barbara Kolmen, Forum Committee

MARCH FORUM

PLEASE NOTE: All Forums until further notice will be held via Zoom, and will require registration.

Susan Mathias, former CEO of Transitions of PA will speak on “Domestic and Sexual Assault During the Pandemic; Turbulent Times for Victims and Survivors,” from 12 noon to 1pm on Tuesday, March 16th. She will describe the challenges Transitions, our local victim-services center, is addressing and reasons for hope on a local, state, and federal level, even during the increased isolation of victims due to COVID-19. After the presentation and question period, participants can join optional breakout room discussions from 1-1:30pm.

The Zoom room will open at 11:30am. All participants must register in advance by emailing LWVLAForum@gmail.com or clicking on the link below:

[us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/
tZUpdeihpZgiHdwF8krIGOGCLtTvmYa4ZRIx](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/?ZUpdeihpZgiHdwF8krIGOGCLtTvmYa4ZRIx)

Instructions and unique links will be sent to registrants. The registration deadline is Sunday, March 14th.

Mary Zimmerman, Forum Committee

VOTER SERVICES REPORT

Voter Education

Carole Madle, Dawn Maneval, and Linda Harris are working on updating the League’s Website. To view the most up-to-date information about our voter education efforts, please visit the website:

LWVLewisburgArea.org

Facts for Voters

The *Facts for Voters* is available on the LWVLA website as a downloadable document. We thank Coldwell Banker for their support of this publication. Due to the pandemic, we continue to make information available to the community only online. We hope to return to printing and distributing paper copies next year.

Coordination with PA League

Sheri Stayton, Liz Clement, and Linda Harris continue to participate in PA state Voter Services meetings in order to coordinate voter-education strategies and tools, including Vote411.

The Voters Guide

The Board has approved the candidate questions for the spring *Voters Guide*. The gathering of local primary candidate information continues through March. By the time mail-in ballots are available to voters, we hope to make information available on **Vote411** and in an online, printable version of the *Voters Guide*. We hope to add additional sponsors to Vote411. (More information to follow.)

**LEAGUE LINE
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OF THE LEWISBURG AREA.**

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Union County Election Office Meeting

Voter Services members met virtually with Director Greg Katherman and his staff, Glenda Radel and Kathy Reedy, on February 3rd, 2021. We discussed the past election process and future process issues, and offered our assistance for future elections.

Ballot Questions in the Primary Election

The Spring 2021 Primary Election will contain several ballot questions:

- PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT – ARTICLE III, SECTION 9 : Termination or Extension of Disaster Emergency Declarations
JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2021-1 proposes to amend the Pennsylvania Constitution to provide a new exception to traditional legislative procedure by allowing the General Assembly to terminate or extend a disaster emergency declaration or a portion of such declaration without needing the Governor’s approval.
- PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT – ARTICLE IV : Disaster Emergency Declaration and Management
Shall the Pennsylvania Constitution be amended to change existing law so that: a disaster emergency declaration will expire automatically after 21 days, regardless of the severity of the emergency, unless the General Assembly takes action to extend the disaster emergency; the Governor may not declare a new disaster emergency to respond to the dangers facing the Commonwealth unless the General Assembly passes a concurrent resolution; the General Assembly enacts new laws for disaster management?
- PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT – ARTICLE I : Prohibition Against Denial or Abridgement of Equality of Rights Because of Race or Ethnicity
Shall the Pennsylvania Constitution be amended by adding a new section providing that equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged because of an individual’s race or ethnicity?

For a video explanation of the ballot questions, **view the first 25 minutes** of the program sponsored by the Harrisburg League of Women Voters, “Constitutional Amendments, Judicial Districting, Rules, and Gerrymandering” by:

- Go to: bit.ly/2NPXJu2
- Enter the passcode: z!xf*mE9

The remaining hour of the video addresses judicial gerrymandering and HB 38, which is not a ballot question this election.

To **read** about the ballot questions: go to Ballotpedia.org and, from the left column, choose **2021 Elections**, then **Ballot Measures**; then in the center of the window, scroll down to **May 18th**.

Voter Services will be discussing the above ballot questions and the best way to educate our community. We want to educate and encourage all voters to participate in the May primary, regardless of party affiliation, especially Independent and 3rd-party voters, those registered with neither major party who often forego primary elections. We will also discuss our concerns over the potential rollback of election rights through the 14 legislative bills introduced by the current majority in the PA House of Representatives.

Linda Harris, Voter Services chair

FINANCE DRIVE

In early March, you will receive information about the annual Members and Friends Finance Drive. LWVLA is dependent on contributions from members, friends, and businesses to fund our many local efforts. Please read Paul’s note below and consider making a donation to this year’s drive.

Some supporters of the LWV Education Fund have chosen to make their contributions directly from IRA required minimum distributions because of tax advantages that may offer.

Carole Madle, Members & Friends Finance Drive chair

BUSINESS CAMPAIGN

It is the season for fundraising for LWVLA. Over 60 business establishments have been contacted regarding supporting the *Voters Guide*, *Facts for Voters*, and **Vote411**. Additionally, we have had to adapt to a technically oriented world. Technology is wonderful but there are costs. Please consider that as you decide on contributing to the future of the League.

Paul Mauger