



League of Women Voters-Central Delaware County

VOTER

February 2021

County Council Gathering — Feb. 16

Last year it was a luncheon. This year, it's on Zoom. Our annual get-together with Delaware County Council is happening Feb. 16, starting at 1 p.m. Make yourself a sandwich or a bowl of soup, log on and come along.

Come listen as Council Chair Brian P. Zidek, Vice Chair Dr. Monica Taylor, and Council Members Kevin M. Madden, Elaine Paul Schaefer and Christine A. Reuther tell us about all the exciting things they've been working on in the past year.

The members will describe their roles on council and issues of importance to

Delco voters and taxpayers. Delaware County Executive Director Howard Lazarus will also describe his role related to county services and operations.



Council from left: Dr. Monica Taylor, Brian Zidek, Elaine Paul Schaefer, Christine Reuther and Kevin M. Madden

The local Leagues — Central Delaware County and Radnor, as well as the Delaware County Inter-league — have been working with or closely monitoring

election procedures, the about-to-be-born county public health department and the transformation of the county's privately run prison to a publicly run county jail.

The program is free but you must register to receive the Zoom link.

Register [here](#) and submit any questions you may have beforehand. You will also be able to ask questions on chat during the program.

The League also will also celebrate its 101st birthday, Feb. 14, at the gathering. Sorry but you'll have to bring your own cake.

League 101 New Member Orientation Feb. 10

The Central Delaware County LWV has had so many new members sign up since September that the Membership Committee is holding a League 101 new-member orientation Feb. 10, at 1 p.m. to tell them about the League and how they can get involved. New members and not-so-new members are welcome to come. They'll hear a little bit about the League history, how the Leagues — local, state and national — are organized and they'll meet various committee chairs. New members can also get involved by signing up for the committees or activities that most interest them. Olivia Thorne will contact new members, and if you want to attend, contact her at olivia.thorne@verizon.net. A Zoom link will be sent to you before the event.

LWV-CDC Officers 2020-2021

Barbara Amstutz, President

swhmdi53bwa@outlook.com

Anne Mosakowski, 1st V.P.

amosakowski@gmail.com

Jane Brennan, 2nd V.P.

brennanbj@aol.com

Denyse McCurdy, Secretary

denyseccurdy@gmail.com

Carol Smallwood, Treasurer

camas1951@gmail.com

Board Members

Patricia Cimino

Viola Crawford

Kate deRiel

Joyce Ellis

Marita Green

Rosemary Kesling

Joe Lesniak

Rose Marie Lord

Denyse McCurdy

Joanna Nealon

Dora Preston

Gloria Rabinowitz

Olivia Thorne

Cathy Yungmann

Voter Editor

Jodine Mayberry

jodinemayberry@comcast.net

Visit our website(s)

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You can find us online at <http://www.LWV-CDC.org> or on Facebook by clicking [here](#). Or go on Facebook and search League of Women Voters of Central Delaware County. Then click "like," post a comment, send us pictures.

By the way, our umbrella organization, the Delaware County League of Women Voters, has a new website too. Check it out [here](#).



President's Message

We hope you all are coping with the uncertainties of this pandemic. Some of our members are sharing that they have received, or at least have appointments to receive, their Covid-19 vaccinations so that is encouraging. We will get through this!

As we watch the ongoing political developments since the inauguration, there is a new emphasis on public health, social justice and environmental awareness in the national conversation. It is interesting to note that these areas are the same major priorities for National, Pennsylvania and Central Delaware County LWVs.

An important 2021 organizational priority for CDC is to focus on getting LWV-CDC members involved in active committees. A new committee organization update is now available on lwwcdc.org. We will be holding several programs for new members to introduce League working committees and encourage your participation.

We have the pleasure of hosting the new executive director for LWVPA, Meghan Pierce, at our next Board Meeting on Feb. 26. She is visiting Leagues across Pennsylvania on a listening tour. Stay tuned for more information about LWVPA's specific priorities and their advocacy work in Harrisburg.

Having conducted our CDC programing in 2020 by Zoom, we have the ability to evaluate impact data on levels of participation for our candidate forums and Hot Topics events. This data is available on our website for your review. Most impressive, the data shows as high as 73 peak live stream watchers and 856 views of recorded candidate forums.

Looking ahead, keep your eye out for some additional thought-provoking programs in February on redistricting with Carol Kuniholm for Fair Districts PA and the annual County Council gathering with the new executive director, Howard Lazarus. The entire County Council and Lazarus have accepted our invitation this year. This is a great time to ask questions and meet your local government. The Hot Topic event March 19 features the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact with Brett Dolente of LWVPA.

Save the date for the LWVPA 2021 Virtual Convention on Friday, June 18, and Saturday, June 19. Stay tuned for more information about registration.

The next LWVPA Diversity, Equity and Inclusion webinar, Session 2, will be held on Monday Feb. 22, 6 pm-8 pm. All members are invited to join. Register in advance for this meeting [here](#).

Please check out a wonderful video presented from the first session, The Danger of a Single Story by novelist Chimamand Adichie, which tells the story of how she found her authentic cultural voice – and warns that if we hear only a single story about another person or country, we risk a critical misunderstanding. Watch the video [here](#).

Stay safe and warm and please connect with each other,

Barbara Amstutz

Sign up on **VotesPa.com** to vote by mail again. Even if you applied for and received mail-in ballots last year, you have to do it again. If you want to continue voting by mail. The county election board will be sending you a card, but you can save them and yourselves a couple of clerical steps by going to **VotesPa.com** to apply for the 2021 elections.

General Election Survey Results are in!

The Delaware County League of Women Voters has completed its survey of voters in the Nov. 3 General Election. Some 217 participants took part in the survey and nearly 150 of the respondents were not members of the League.

The survey asked voters about their voting experience either voting by mail or in person at the polls. Here's what we found out:

About 130 respondents voted by mail, 65 voted at the polls and roughly 22 voted early by going to one of the three voter service bureaus. The League is thrilled to say that more survey participants found out about the mail-in ballot option and procedures from the League's website and voter education outreach efforts (16% each) than any other single sources of information.

More than 70 survey takers applied for their mail-in ballots on [VotesPa.com](https://votespa.com). Of those who obtained mail-in ballots, well over 100 returned them in person to a voter service center in Media, Chester or Upper Darby or used one of the 40 drop boxes installed at municipal buildings through out the county. Only about 35 entrusted their ballots to the U.S. Postal Service.

Participants asked the League to keep educating voters that voting by mail is safe and secure, about the process itself and on the different ways to return ballots, including drop box locations.

Of those who voted in person, some said that poll workers need better training on how to handle surrendered ballots and provisional ballots, and that the Election Bureau should return to the original, pre-pandemic polling places.

Nearly everyone found that the new paper ballot marking and scanning process was very easy.

One suggestion the League will be taking up this year will be to create a "Voter 101" course to educate voters on election laws, voting options and best practices. This action has to wait until the Pennsylvania Legislature decides whether or how it wants to change Act 77, the 2019 election law that created the mail-in ballot system. It is impossible to summarize the all of the survey results here, so to see all the results, go to [LWV CDC.org](https://lwvcdc.org) and take a look at the excellent slide presentation prepared by Anne Mosakowski.



Discover Your Roots

Two League members, Olivia Thorne and Jodine Mayberry, will present a one-hour program about basic genealogy and demonstrate the most popular tools for documenting your family history at 2 p.m. March 3.

A donation of \$10 is requested to support League operations, to help fund Vote411 and monthly licensing for Zoom. Entire proceeds will go to LWV-CDC to help fund the cost of these services.

Olivia and Jodine each have more than 25 years experience researching their family trees. Let them show you how to discover your roots and share your family history with future generations.

You will be able to register for this program soon. Keep checking "events" on the website: lwvcdc.org.

February-March Events

Feb. 10 (Wednesday) — League 101 new member orientation 1 p.m. on Zoom Olivia Thorne will lead.

Feb. 16 (Tuesday) — County Council Virtual gathering, with all five County Council members, 1 p.m. on Zoom.

March 3 (Wednesday) — Genealogy program via Zoom, 2 p.m. Donation of \$10 requested.

March 19 (Friday) — Hot Topic: National Popular Vote Interstate Compact. Noon on Zoom. Brett Dolente of LWVPA.

Will PA Agree to Bypass the Electoral College?

Most of us have had it with the Electoral College, that relic of the 18th century that gives less weight to populous states and more to those with a lot of land and few people. But what can we do about it when a constitutional amendment would be impossible to get by two-thirds of those same states?

Brett Dolente of the LWVPA will explain the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact to us at a Hot Topics Zoom webinar March 19 at noon. A bill has been introduced in the Pa. House of Representatives to join the NPVIC. You will be able to register for the program soon. Learn what you can do to encourage the Pennsylvania Legislature to join other states in bypassing the Electoral College and making it irrelevant.

Urgent: Tell the Legislature No to HB 38

An amendment to change the Pennsylvania Constitution to elect appellate court judges from regional districts is making its way through the Pennsylvania Legislature. Our highest courts have long been essential guardians in the fight against voter suppression. HB 38, the judicial district bill is an attempt to undermine that role. We oppose the bill because it would require the election of Supreme Court, Commonwealth and Superior Court

judges, who are currently elected statewide and make decisions that affect the lives of all Pennsylvanians, to be elected by geographical districts.

This would guarantee the election of more Republican judges from less populated areas of the state and fewer Democratic judges from more heavily populated areas. LWV advocates for merit selection of judges and believes that judges should be neither Democratic nor Republican but rather nonpartisan interpreters of the law. It opposes this amendment as even more regressive than the current system of statewide election.

Constitutional amendments need to pass in two consecutive sessions then go to public referendum, so last session's HB 196 has been reintroduced in this new session as HB 38. It was voted on in the House Judiciary Committee on Jan. 13 with less than 24 hours' notice.

If the bill passes both chambers by early to mid-February it could be on the May primary election ballot. That could mean that a very small percentage of Pennsylvania voters would end up deciding to add this amendment to the constitution.

Fair Districts PA reports that the measure was tabled so it does not appear that it will be on the May ballot. It may be on the November ballot.



County officials get ready to cut the ribbon on the new wellness center in Darby Jan. 28. The center will house the county health department, but first it will administer COVID vaccine.

Celebrating New Members and Mourning a Long-time One:

LWV-CDC is very happy to welcome these new members: Joan Spiegelman, Deborah Tancredi, Heather Bickley, Paul Monaghan, Frances Pierce, Gloria Beam, Lisa Carpenter, Doris Landers, Elizabeth Ann Gittelman, Jean Holveck, Russell Lavery, and Lisa and Paul Jacobs. Sadly, long-time member Robert Post, who recently turned 100 and was born the same year as LWV, died Jan. 29. We join his family in mourning his passing.