

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.



'tis the
SEASON



*Join the League of Women Voters of New Castle County for a
Virtual Holiday Wine Toast on zoom*

[Register to attend – click here](#)

Thursday December 10, 2020 at 6:00 pm

Music • Holiday Trivia • Scavenger Hunt

Prize Drawing

To enter the drawing, purchase one of our custom League stemless wine glasses
<https://my.lwv.org/delaware/new-castle-county/event/virtual-holiday-wine-toast-statewide-lwv-celebration>

*Every wine glass purchased qualifies you for the \$200
drawing of premium wine and great cooler.*



Total Wine
& MORE



A big shout out to **Total Wine & More** for donating 30% of the cost of this lovely wine prize to LWNCC.

REDISTRICTING

By Sandy Spence, Chair



People Powered Fair Maps Redistricting Campaign

Interested in learning how to make maps? Volunteer with the LWVDE People Powered Fair Maps campaign to join with other volunteers and partners to learn how to use Dave's Redistricting App (DRA), free mapping software to make a map of legislative districts. The LWVDE Redistricting Committee has a tutorial sponsored by LWVUS and led by Dave himself.

Volunteers are encouraged to draw maps to suggest to the Redistricting Committee and its partners as we join the LWVUS Fair Maps 50-state plus DC project aimed at eliminating Gerrymandering and supporting transparency and fair practices in the decennial redistricting using 2020 Census data.

While we wait for the updated 2020 data that is expected to become available around April 1, 2021, we will be practicing with 2018 data from the Census' American Community Survey. We plan to buy Maptitude, the software the legislature will be using. Practice maps from DRA can be imported into Maptitude when we get the Census data. The cost is half the normal \$10,000 price -- \$5,000 for non-profits; \$2500 is budgeted from our grant from LWVUS. The rest is projected to come from additional grants or contributions.

Currently, the Committee is conducting Zoom meetings with prospective partners aimed at building a broad and representative partnership that will help us identify communities of interest and advocate for fair maps when the legislature begins its work.

The LWVDE Committee is comprised of Denise Davis, our new Redistricting Coordinator, and Kyra Hoffner, Jack Young, Nancy Lopez, Maren Bertelsen, Letty Diswood, and Sandy Spence, Chair. Mitch Crane and Jack Young have developed a draft redistricting/transparency bill and we will seek sponsors to pre-file the bill in December.



We are also seeking League and Partner volunteers to make presentations to civic, community, and other groups on redistricting and building support for People Powered Fair Maps. To volunteer, contact FairMapsDE@gmail.com.

ACTION NETWORK

By Kyra Hoffman, Advocacy Techie

With our current situation the League of Women Voters of Delaware is still hard at work. Our new normal has taken us away from in person lobbying of our elected officials. With moving our efforts to Action Network we will be able to communicate with our elected officials on matters that are important to us. Nothing compares to in person conversation with our legislators, but time and in person restrictions prevent us from doing so in the near future.

- Action Network allows us to send letters to our representatives with a one click. We are also able to encourage our friends and other activists to also take action all virtually to keep us safe. This online organizing tool will allow us to continue to have our voice heard; having more of the community members participate will make our voice louder.
- We will be able to see the progress of our actions in real time so that we can adjust our message for a bigger impact. Giving us the opportunity to tailor our messages to the members who want to be involved. Action Network is a powerful system that allows organizations like ours to measure our return on our efforts.

ADVOCACY CORPS PLANS VIRTUAL LEAGUE DAY 2021

by Linda Barnett, Chairperson, Advocacy Corps



In light of current circumstances, our **annual League Day** is being re-envisioned to take place in virtual form via Zoom.

No one wants to sit at the computer for hours at a time, and it is unhealthy to do so. Thus, we will be creating several short programs to be held at varying times. So actually, **we will be hosting League DAYS, rather than the prior League DAY!**

The specific issues we will address in these programs are being finalized, but as always, we will focus on key issues facing our state – hoping to stimulate viewers to address critical problems facing Delaware in new ways and to offer new approaches to solve them. We also plan to hold one session in which some of our new legislators can introduce themselves to the public.

The specific dates and times for these sessions have not yet been set, but our target is during March and April. As a deviation from prior practice, we will not be charging a registration fee to view these programs, although there will be some expenses. Thus, we will be suggesting that donations would be welcome to help cover costs. An opportunity to make a donation to the memory of someone or in someone's honor will be included. Organizations, as in the past, will be invited to serve as co-sponsors, to have their name and logo included in program materials and on the League website – for a contribution. This is a way to help cover costs and spread awareness of the event.

Watch your inbox in January for the 'save the dates' email!

IN THE SPOTLIGHT: CANDIDATE FORUMS HELD DURING COVID RESTRICTIONS

By Ellen Wasfi, Chair

LWVKC/DE held five Candidates Nights in October 2020, via Zoom. LWVKC sponsored the forums for State Senate, State Representative and Kent County Levy Court and Clerk of the Peace. LWVDE sponsored one debate for U.S. Senator and U.S. Representative and another for Governor, Lt. Governor and Insurance Commissioner. Organization cosponsors included AAUW, Dover Branch, NAACP Central Delaware Branch #2028, The Alumni Council of the National Pan-Hellenic Council and Restoring Central Dover. Some questions were submitted via e-mail and some were borrowed from the League's Vote 411 website. Dr. Phyllis Edamatsu and Carylin Brinkley were timekeepers for all five debates. Our technology experts, Dr. Mary Ann Coe and Chandra Owens managed the virtual forums from beginning to end.

The Phone Calling Committee comprised of Jean Bauer, Gwen Elliot, Mary Merritt, Gale White and Dr. Mary Kay Eggers began contacting the candidates in September when the Delaware Department of Elections published the list of candidates qualified to be on the ballot for the November general election. Invitations and debate guidelines were sent out via e-mail along with the Agreement to Participate, which the candidates had to sign and return. Beverly Jackson collated these responses. Joan and Fred Breukelman formatted all the documents and e-mailed them to the candidates – a Herculean task!

Some of the challenges encountered were:

- 1) Having to make multiple phone calls to candidates to get a firm commitment to participate in Candidates Night. This has been an ongoing issue even before the advent of "virtual" debates. (Continued on page 4 *Forum*)

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- 2) Some candidates indicated they did not receive the invitations. One reason may have been that the e-mail addresses they supplied to the Department of Elections were not in current use. Another possibility could be that the documents were sent from the Breukelman's e-mail address and may have been deleted because the recipient did not recognize the sender. Several invitations had to be resent after follow-up phone calls. In the future, we should use an LWV return e-mail address.
- 3) We encountered a unique situation wherein a candidate for U.S. Senate made an appearance just prior to the start of the debate and then abruptly departed. She had previously submitted the signed Agreement to Participate. The League had no choice but to inform her lone opponent that he would not be able to proceed because of the “Empty Chair” rule. He was gracious in expressing his understanding of the League’s policy. LWVDE did send him an explanatory letter apologizing for the inconvenience.
- 4) A decision had to be made on whether to livestream the debates. There was a concern about how to manage incoming questions and the chat room. The Committee decided to record the Candidates Nights for later viewing. In the future more training could be offered during the planning process so that League volunteers will feel at ease with the livestreaming technology.

The five virtual Candidates Nights for 2020 sponsored by LWVDC and LWVDE were successful overall, despite multiple challenges, and lessons were learned on how to plan for future debates. It was a concerted team effort that won praise from several candidates and enabled grassroots democracy to flourish in Delaware.

Ellen O. Wasfi, Chair
LWVDC/LWVDE Candidates Night Committee
November 12, 2020



ROUNDUP – WHO HAS BEEN DOING ALL THE WORK AND HAVING FUN.

Kim Wells, 2020 Delaware VOTE411 Coordinator

The VOTE411 online voter guide covered four Delaware elections in 2020: The Presidential Primary and statewide school board elections in July, the Sept. 15 state primaries, and the Nov 3 general election. VOTE411 helped millions of voters nationwide and thousands of voters here in Delaware prepare to vote in 2020.

In addition to general election information (which was a difficult task to keep current as voting dates and rules kept changing due to COVID-19 in 2020), VOTE411 features personalized ballot information including candidate profiles and side-by-side responses to LWV-posed policy questions, in each candidate’s own words.

A huge shout-out to the dozens of League and community volunteers who helped create and spread the word about VOTE411 in 2020! Here is a partial list of our project volunteers (I’m sure I missed some):

LWVUS

- **Megan Brown** – Megan spends countless hours each year supporting VOTE411 in all 50 states.

Delaware Statewide

- **Kim Wells** – project management.



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- **Kim, Susan King, Sheila Mensch, Carol Jones, Sue Claire Harper, Pat Newcomb, Suzanne Hain, Marge LaFond** – grant seeking.

New Castle County

- **Kim Wells** – team lead; coordination & promotion work.
- **Philippa Sunnergren** – VOTE411 admin interface (data entry).
- **Liz Carlisle** – PR / press releases.
- **Jill Itzkowitz, George Stewart** – radio PSA.
- **Liz C, Callye Morrissey, Sheila M.** – writing tasks (elected office descriptions).
- **Jenn Wells** – graphic design.
- **Ryan Wilson** – video editing.
- **Nancy Lopez** – Spanish translations.
- **Linda Barnett, Letty Diswood, Judith Feinson, Janice Heinssen, Sharon Kwiatkowski, Susan Mitchell, Callye M, Eugenia Nichols, Alan Evantash, Jill, Philippa, Kim, Nancy** – candidate calls.
- **Sarah Bucic, Lia Naselli, Sarah Matthews, Melissa Sanchez, Jenn W.** – school board mock election.
- **Susan M, Shaniya Lewis** – planning for student ambassador program.
- **Alan E, Patti Christopher, Dini Silber, Karen Barker, Ivonne Antongiorgi, Eugenia N, Janice H, Judith F, Kim** – yard sign placement and/or voter registration outreach.
- **Karen Stanley, Susan K, Nicole Cerqueira, Maren Bertelsen, Sallie Reissman, Judy Taggart** – misc. promotional (OLLI newsletter, UD women’s films, postcards, car magnets, libraries).

Kent County

- **Anne Parker-Dockins, Dr. Amystique Church, Stephen Cassese** – coordination and promotion work.
- **Erin Gordon** – internship fall 2019; P.R. and marketing plans.

Sussex County

- **Suzanne Hain** – writing tasks (elected office descriptions).
- **Lori Yadin, Denise Davis** – team leads; coordination & promotion work, candidate follow-up.
- **Pat Makos** – advisor, arranged Midway theater preview ad.
- **Kathleen Baker** – bought & distributed car magnets.
- **Jane Lord** - provided media contacts.
- **Connie Jones** – coordinated an underserved voters’ registration / VOTE411 postcard campaign.
- **Teri Sullivan, Sandy Nalio** – helped to affix VOTE411 messaging to thousands of postcards that we distributed to Meals on Wheels, the Cheers Center in Georgetown and some small eateries in several of our surrounding towns.
- **Beth Kopicki, Teri Sullivan** – poster distribution and high school registration calls.



Community Partners

- Grant Officer **Erin Samarasinghe** went above and beyond helping us with our movie-related Delaware Humanities grant request early in the year.
- **Donors** – modest project grants were received from **Delmarva Power, New Castle County (NCC Cares grant)**, and the **Walmart in New Castle**. Individual donors: **Pat Todd, Sallie Reissman** (NCC car magnets), **Kathleen Baker** (Sussex car magnets) and the **IHB yard sign brigade: Alan Evantash & Peggy Lubin, Anne Powell, Dini Silber, Moira Donoghue, Donald Drane, and Mr/Ms Levinson**.

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(Continued from page 5 **Vote411**)

- **Colleges** – UD Women & Gender Studies **Marie Laberge** promoted VOTE411 at her Women's History spring film series. ACE Coordinator at DSU Wilmington, **Dr. Judith Stang**, with helper **Kelsey Keeling** worked with us on a film screening before COVID shut down those plans.
- **Food Bank of Delaware** – Community Relations Director **Chad Robinson** arranged to distribute VOTE411 bookmarks in their meal boxes and hand VOTE411 cards to drivers at mass food distributions in September and October, reaching roughly 11,000 people.
- **Libraries** – **Judy Taggart, Pat Birchenall, Diana Brown, and Marlene Esposito** were all extremely helpful with VOTE411 initiatives in New Castle County. Lewes Library Development Director **Rebecca Lowe** was instrumental in helping distribute bookmarks with the Vote411 information on it to all book borrowers at Lewes and Seaford Libraries, and Librarian **Hilary Welliver** distributed bookmarks for us to multiple libraries in Kent County.
- **Schools** – William Penn High School teacher **Alex Odren** agreed to be club advisor for the VOTE411 Student Ambassadors (before COVID-19 derailed that plan). **Tina Gary** from the State Office of Volunteerism offered valuable advice regarding student volunteers, as did Appoquinimink social studies curriculum specialist **Mario Tiberi** regarding state civics standards.

On behalf of myself and the county team leads, **I wish to thank all of these partners and volunteers** for all their assistance. With their help, we were able to make light work of these multiple activities and make a significant impact.

I'd also like to **thank the Delaware candidates across the political spectrum...** 60% of Delaware general election candidates, 80% of primary candidates, and 66% of school board candidates... who returned their candidate questionnaires for the VOTE411 guide. Thank you for this valuable service to the voters of Delaware. Please plan to participate again in 2022! --Kim Wells, 2020 Delaware VOTE411 Coordinator

ELECTION COMMITTEE – HIGHLIGHTS

By Jill Itzkowitz, Chair

Election turnout in Delaware increased from 65% to 72% during the 2020 election, and we hope that efforts by the LWVDE Election Committee contributed to the increase. Members of the LWVDE Election and Voting Committee (Kim Wells, Alan Evantash, Patti Christopher, Karen Barker, Connie Jones, and Jill Itzkowitz) hosted 20 webinars to over 500 diverse participants. We reviewed how to vote during COVID with corporate groups like JPMORGAN, civic groups like AAUW and the rotary club, libraries, and senior centers. We discussed the importance of voting with students from Delaware Tech, University of Delaware, the GED program, and Wilmington Job Corps. We also sent several emails to our membership explaining the rules for voting this year. We also participated in the national voter registration day and voter registration activities during the Delaware Art Loop. Watch our YouTube video <https://youtu.be/8MqSqHuwz2k>.

We sent letters and emails to the Governor, members of the Legislature, and the media to ensure our 2020 elections were safe during COVID. This resulted in Delawareans being able to vote by absentee or by mail. The committee looks forward to working on passing a permanent vote by mail bill during the next legislative session. We meet the first Tuesday of each month at 11am. If interested, please contact Jill Itzkowitz at jillitzkowitz@gmail.com.

Recently retired Delaware Election Commissioner Elaine Manlove and her husband were killed in an automobile accident. The obituary <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/delawareonline/obituary.aspx?n=mary-elaine-manlove&pid=197051086>.



2400 W 17th Street, Clash Wing, Room 1
Lower Level, Wilmington, DE 19806
lwvde@comcast.net

<https://my.lwv.org/delaware>

November 2020

Dear Members and Friends,

With your help and involvement, we had a terrific 2020-100th Anniversary of the founding of LWV and adoption of the 19th Amendment! Thank you.

2021 is a once-in-a-decade year when the U.S. Bureau of the Census provides data from the 2020 Census for redistricting of our State House and Senate as well as county and many localities. We have received a grant from the LWVUS to fund Delaware's role in the national "People-Powered Fair Maps" project to address redistricting. But our League has developed an ambitious project which requires at least \$4,000 more to cover essential software to assure that this 2021 redistricting process is truly fair and representative.

Our Advocacy Corps has already been busy developing additional priorities for 2021 including such urgent issues as climate change, working with the Smart Justice Coalition and helping develop more productive solutions to the challenges related to policing, while keeping our communities safe.

Although, we keep a tight fist on our expenses, grants cover specific activities and do not pay for the basics required just to keep the organization operating – rent, telephone, computers, office equipment, insurance, and our new website: <https://my.lwv.org/delaware>.

As of June, 2019 the League of Women Voters of Delaware and the LWVDE Education Fund merged into a single 501c3 entity, so all donations are now tax deductible. And a provision of the 2020 tax bill allows up to \$300 in charitable donations even if you don't itemize. Checks or Pay Pal are happily accepted. Our donation page is attached.

We'll share with you what we find, and thank you in advance for supporting our efforts,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol D. Jones".

Carol D. Jones, President

The LWV of Delaware Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) corporation. No goods or services were provided in exchange for this gift.

P. S. If you're thinking about a legacy donation, please email us and let us know how to contact you. We'd like to open a discussion.

Here is the link to make a donation online: [Donate to LWVDE Using a Credit Card](#)
[Donate | MyLO \(lwv.org\)](#)

Delaware's Fines & Fees System - Panel Discussion



Submitted by [New Castle County](#) in November 2020.

Event Date:

Nov 16 2020 - 7:00pm

Event Location:

(virtual event)

The video of this panel discussion is available here: [Delaware Campaign to End Debtors Prisons - November 16 Webinar](#)

[League of Women Voters of New Castle County](#)

[November 20 at 10:38 AM](#)

20201119 LWVNCC Hot Topic - Green Jobs: Mobilizing the Workforce for the Great Green Shift **Link:** [\(20+\) Watch | Facebook](#)

CALENDAR

Tuesday, December 1, 2020, 11 a.m. - noon	ZOOM meeting	ELECTION COMMITTEE MEETING. Contact Jill Itzkowitz for details (302-650-6862) jillitzkowitz@gmail.com
Wednesday, December 9, 2020, 10 am - noon	ZOOM meeting	LWVDE ADVOCACY CORPS Meeting. Regular 2nd Wednesday meeting of the LWVDE Advocacy Corps (legislative lobby group) in Dover. For details or to attend, contact Advocacy Chair Linda Barnett
Thursday, December 10, 2020 6-7 pm	ZOOM meeting	<i>Virtual Holiday Wine Toast on zoom</i> Register to attend – click here
Wednesday, December 16, 2020 4-6 pm (cancelled)	ZOOM meeting	LWVDE BOARD MEETING regularly scheduled board meeting.

League of Women Voters of Delaware, Inc

2400 W 17th Street,
Clash Wing, Room 1, Lower Level
Wilmington, DE 19806

(302) 571-8948

lwvde@comcast.net

lwvdelaware.org www.lwv.org