

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

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

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is both an honor and a privilege to be chosen to lead the League of Women of Delaware as president over the next two years. I appreciate your confidence in, and support of, me taking on this role. But I did not get here alone.

Let's not forget the leaders who paved the way—the shoulders on which we stand. Keep in mind League giants Sandy Spence and Joann Hasse, who discovered the path to us, becoming a successful organization. Know that we are guided by the skilled and dedicated officers Kathleen Baker, Linda Barnett, Marjorie C. Johnson, and Jill Itzkowitz. I pledge to carry on the work of my predecessors and move the League forward.

Immediately after my election, I scheduled an orientation for LWVDE's newest board members. Please welcome our new directors: Abigail Frelich, Charlie Garlow, Chandra Owens, Melody Taylor, Lori Schulman Yadin, Denise Davis, and Erica Novak. Each individual on this team is talented, committed, intelligent, and ready to bring new energy and enthusiasm to our League. We are also grateful for, and appreciative of, Jack Young and Sue Claire Harper, who agreed to serve another term as LWVDE board directors. Their wisdom and experience serve as a complement to the board and its mission.

During July and August, I had the pleasure of having a one-on-one with each LWVDE board member. We discussed the League's strengths and weaknesses, and I took to heart suggestions about continuing to build on our foundation while developing strategies for a new direction. Each member, through his or her unique perspective, shared a plethora of creative and innovative ideas. This can only mean that it will be an exciting year.

One initiative for this year is already underway: the formation of a committee to develop a strategic plan that will address issues such as retaining, engaging, and promoting membership; collaborating with other nonprofit entities; and building and sustaining Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs. This initiative is under the leadership of Jack Young. We welcome your input.

I began my duties as president by attending the 2021 National Council Virtual Meeting, held June 24–26. Along with 192 League leaders, I was eager to listen as Dr. Deborah Turner, LWVUS board president, opened the session and spoke to the future of LWV and our role in the democracy space as a powerful nonpartisan and century-strong organization.

During the meeting, the Council focused on two significant concepts: DEI and nonpartisanship. Each aligns with three key themes: Building Our Power as Individuals, Building Our Power as An Organization, and Building Our Power with Our Communities.



Presentation of Awards and Tributes to Sandy Spence who has retired from the LWVDE Advocacy Corps, and Joann Hasse for her long service to the LWVDE as lobbyist and advocate at a luncheon.

(Continued on page 2 President's Message)

(Continued from page 1 **President's Message**)

Council staff's presentation of Building Our Power as Individuals emphasized the fact that diverse leadership has both strengthened the League and stressed the importance of mentoring and supporting the vision of emerging leaders.

The Building Our Power as an Organization presentation focused on navigating our nonpartisan policy during hyper-partisan times. Council staff explained how to maintain the League's nonpartisan policy while unapologetically carrying out our work in service to the voters.

The presentation of Building Our Power with Our Communities affirmed our work through a DEI lens. Council staff summarized the League's programmatic work of the past fiscal year, including the People Powered Fair Maps™ redistricting program and the signature campaign for Making Democracy Work®.

Overall, the meeting was informative, addressing many of the challenges ahead. Dr. Turner and LWVUS CEO Virginia Kase Solomón discussed the state of voting rights, **the intersection of voting rights with racial and social justice**, and the power of our nonpartisan stance during hyper-partisan times.

Finally, I hope you will join me in moving the DEI conversation forward because it is not a spectator sport. I welcome any ideas, comments, and questions regarding improvement and promotion of the program.

I am inspired by LWV of Tennessee's participation in such a powerful DEI program, as shared in its success [story](#). With your help, we can keep the conversations alive and moving forward, and maybe we can be the League's next DEI success story.

The mission and goals set forth by LWVUS and the LWVDE are clear, and I believe that together we can make a difference. With preparation and determination, we can accomplish anything.

Gwendolyn Miller, President
League of Women Voters of Delaware
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DE League's First President Honored with Pomeroy Marker



Photo caption (l-r) Chandra Owens, LWV Delaware, Rep Blunt Rochester, Beverly Jackson, LWV Kent County, Gail Wagner, suffragist. Credit: Kathleen Baker

On June 26, 2021, a gathering of Dover citizens, Kent League of Women Voters members, Marsha White of the National Votes for Women Trail, Susan Del Pesco of the Pomeroy Foundation, the Historian Anne Boylan, Ph.D., and descendants of Mabel Lloyd Ridgely joined The Honorable Lisa Blunt Rochester to dedicate the first Pomeroy Historic Marker in Delaware at the Ridgely home across from the Old State House and The Green.

Mabel Lloyd Ridgely (1872-1962) was President of the Delaware Equal Suffrage Association, and first President, in 1920, of the League of Women Voters of Delaware. She was inducted into the Hall of Fame of Delaware Women in 1982, and the research room of the Delaware State Archives is named in honor of her work in historic preservation

Dr. Boylan gave a brief overview of the suffrage struggle in Delaware, highlighting the contributions by Equal Suffrage Study Club members and Ethel Letitia Cuff, teacher of history at

Dover's State College for Colored Students (now Delaware State University). Congresswoman Blunt Rochester connected early suffrage work with the continuing struggle for voting rights in our time in a stirring call to action.

The Pomeroy suffrage marker project will honor Delaware women in Lewes, Georgetown and Wilmington in the coming months.

REPORT BY THE ADVOCACY CORPS ON

THE 2021 Session of the 151ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY July 2021 (pages 3-6)

What is the League's Advocacy Corps (AC)?

The AC is a group of League members who are interested in public policy and who wish to take an active role in advocating for the League's policy positions.

How does one become a member?

Membership is open to all League members. The only other real 'requirement' is attendance at AC meetings. Anyone interested in attending a meeting should contact the League at: lwwde@comcast.net

What are the specific activities of the AC?

The AC monitors the activities of the Delaware Legislature as it conducts the state's business. We also track administrative actions conducted by state agencies.

We support or oppose legislative and administrative proposals in accordance with policy positions approved by the State Board and offer testimony in person at hearings, when possible, and electronically when necessary.

The group meets monthly, either in person in Dover or via Zoom to discuss bills, providing participants with the opportunity to express their views pro or con so that a consensus can be reached. Between meetings, members stay abreast of legislative and administrative actions using websites and through interaction with other like-minded non-profit organizations.

As members become knowledgeable about the workings of the General Assembly and develop expertise in specific areas, they may be appointed to serve as official lobbyists for the League. Only such individuals are authorized to offer testimony or interact on behalf of the League with legislators and state officials. As a lobbyist, the individual must register with the Public Integrity Commission and comply with all of its reporting requirements.

The policy positions we focus on are clustered around topic areas which are referred to as "Portfolios." See below for a review of key bills addressed thus far in the 151st General Assembly. Unless otherwise noted, the bills described were passed by the Legislature. And for further information about any of these areas, contact the League at: lwwde@comcast.net

REPORT BY PORTFOLIO:

CLIMATE CHANGE/ENERGY – Peggy Schultz, chairperson



Delaware's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) is set at 40% of the total energy generated by Delmarva – to be achieved by 2035 (SB 33), legislation which was a big win. Although the League was hoping for 50%, that might happen in the second half of this session, beginning in January. The LWVUS supports a goal of reducing carbon emissions as measured in 1990 by 50% by the year 2030, and by 90% by the year 2050. This position gives the LWVDE authority to move forward in support of an RPS of at least 50% by 2035.

Solar energy will be accessible to residents without roofs, without *suitable* roofs, and/or without the resources to buy their own solar panels. (SB 2). However, it will only put a very small dent in supplying the total electrical power Delawareans need.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE – Lori Yadin, chairperson



Criminal Justice was a major focus of the General Assembly, with 22 bills filed that fell to the team for consideration – 7 Juvenile Justice, 5 Gun Reform, 7 that Impact Individuals Accused of or Convicted of a Crime, and 3 Police Accountability/Transparency Bills. Thirteen of these bills were passed into law, 8 will be addressed when the General Assembly reconvenes in January, and 1 (SB 149 / Police Accountability) was pulled by the sponsor to be worked on over the summer and reintroduced. Regarding the latter, the Criminal Justice Portfolio Team stands in support of this bill and will be working with the sponsor to get it passed. Given the tensions between the public and the police and the dissolution of relational trust, this legislation is imperative to providing needed healing and trust between law enforcement and citizens.

A few highlights of bills that passed:

HB24 / Gun Reform prohibits a person who is the subject of a Protection from Abuse Order from purchasing, owning, possessing, or controlling a deadly weapon or ammunition for a firearm. Also prohibits the subject of an outstanding arrest warrant, active indictment or information related to a felony or misdemeanor crime of domestic violence from purchasing a weapon.

SB111 and SB112 create an automatic expungement process and expand the eligibility for mandatory expungement of adults and juveniles.

EDUCATION- KATHLEEN BAKER, chairperson



Major strides in extending much-needed education opportunities to Delaware’s children and youth were made, consistent with the Education Equity Lawsuit Settlement, an agreement that requires provision of education services for children from low-income families, children who are English language learners, and children with basic special education needs through funding and legislation (SB 56 - the Codification of Opportunity Funding, and HB 86 -extension of Special Education to Grades Kindergarten through 3)

Mental health programs in elementary schools are authorized. (HB 100).

Modernization of Education Funding, moving the focus of funding toward the needs of the child and mandating transparency in financial reporting of education monies. (HCR 24)

Early Childhood Education measures approved include developmental screening for children (HB 202), moving early intervention services from Department of Health and Social Services to Department of Education (SB 136), and requiring inclusion of “science of reading” in teacher preparation programs. (SB 133)

Youth aging-out of foster care are given full support to attend one of the four Delaware Universities. (HB 123)
In the area of Education Leadership, the term of School Board office is modified from five to four years (HB 92), and qualifications for an individual to serve on a district School Board or the State Board of Education are enhanced. (SB 78)

In the area of Civic Education, students in grades 6 through 12 are authorized to have an excused absence for a civic engagement activity by request of the parent. (HB 175)

ELECTIONS AND VOTING – Jill Itzkowitz, chairperson



Although a dozen voting bills were initiated during the first session of the 151st General Assembly, only a few passed the House and the Senate. SB 5 allows for automatic voter registration at the DMV and other social service agencies. The other bills leverage the Department of Elections database for certain municipality elections, eliminating the need to register twice.

The biggest disappointment this session was the failure to pass HB 75, which would eliminate the restrictive absentee language from the Delaware Constitution. Since this bill modifies the constitution, it requires a 2/3 majority to pass and

needed two Republicans in the House to vote yes. Unfortunately, no Republican House members did. We are hoping for passage next year.

GOVERNMENT/FINANCE/TAXATION- Jack Young, chairperson



Eligible recipients may choose the most beneficial credit to be applied to personal income tax. (HB 16)

In December 2020, LWVDE wrote to Gov. Carney urging a return to pre-Covid funding levels. Funding was restored, with additional increases. (HB 242-Bond bill; HB 250 -The Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations Act; HB265-Grant-in Aid)

HEALTH CARE – Joann Hasse, chairperson



Pharmacists are authorized to administer and dispense oral as well as injectable hormonal contraceptives under a Standing Order from the Division of Public Health (i.e. without a prescription from a provider). Regulations for doing so are to be developed by DPH. (SB 105)

The Health Care Commission is directed to monitor compliance with value-based delivery models and develop, and monitor compliance with, alternative payment methods that promote value-based care. Requires insurance carriers to spend a certain percentage of their total costs on primary care. Spells out in some detail the duties and authority of the Office of Value-Based Health Care. (SS1 for SB 120)

A Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program for new primary care providers (not just doctors) working in underserved areas or areas of need; must accept Medicare and Medicaid. Hospital sites must provide matching grants. (HB 48)

LAND USE / TRANSPORTATION- Peggy Schultz, chairperson



Several small bills came before the Legislature this half session, all nickel and diming at reducing carbon emissions from vehicles in one way or another. The most important is HB 18, a bill tweaking and increasing the applicability of the earlier Complete Communities Enterprise District (CCED) legislation.

In spite of all the amazing advances in car efficiency since 1990, transportation-induced emissions have increased by 22%. That's because vehicle miles traveled have increased by 50%. Only by changing land use patterns, getting people to live closer together so they can walk or bike or take buses to do routine shopping and business, will we substantially reduce transportation-caused carbon emissions. CCEDs will do that.

MONEY IN POLITICS – Chris Asay, chairperson



Concurrent resolution in support of an amendment to the US Constitution to reverse the 2010 *Citizens United* decision of the US Supreme Court; garnered significant sponsorship in both houses but was never brought up for a vote. (SCR 16)

Candidates for political office are authorized to use campaign money to pay for childcare while the candidate attends a political activity. (HB 90)

NATURAL RESOURCES – Charlie Garlow, chairperson

Authorizes funding amounting to \$50 million, to be matched by \$30 million from the federal government, to make \$80 million available for clean water projects. (HB 200)

Regulates the “forever chemicals”, a family of toxic chemicals such as PFCs, perfluorinated compounds, PFOs, PFOAs, etc, used in making Teflon and other consumer



L-R Gov. John C. Carney, Charlie Garlow, Rep. Longhurst.

products. They almost never degrade or break down in the environment, causing continuing harm, especially harmful in water supplies. The U.S. EPA has not regulated these poisons, so it falls to the states to do so. (HB 8)

Requires both large and small stores to eliminate plastic bags unless they are reusable, which definition increases the thickness of bags to 10 mils from 2.25 mils to qualify for the exemption for “reusable” bags. (HB 212)

Bans the release of helium balloons, making such release subject to littering prohibitions. (SB 24 with SA 1)

REDISTRICTING – Kyra Hoffner, chairperson



Deadline for the General Assembly to reapportion and redistrict the State after each federal decennial census moved to within 120 days following receipt of the federal decennial census; passed both chambers without public comment. (HB 245)

Procedures specified which are necessary to ensure that incarcerated individuals who were residents of Delaware immediately before their date of incarceration are counted for reapportionment and redistricting purposes at their last known residence. This will be the first time in Delaware history that prisoners will be counted in this manner. (SB 171)

House Concurrent Resolution providing for an open redistricting process that allows for public participation in the 2021 redistricting process. Calls for specific guidelines that the House and Senate should follow during their redistricting processes and sets November 7th as the final deadline for the redistricting processes to be completed in order to provide new legislative boundaries one year before Election Day 2021. The redistricting team and coalition partners have sent a letter asking for dates for public comment. (HCR 32)

SOCIAL POLICY – Linda Barnett, chairperson



Minimum wage to be increased in increments from the current \$9.25/hr to \$15/hr as of January 2025. (HB 15).

Constitutional amendment explicitly declaring that protection against discrimination based on race, color, and national origin is one of Delaware's fundamental rights (language added to § 21 of Article I). (SB 31)

Clarification to Delaware law which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, making clear that race includes such traits historically associated with race as hair texture and hairstyle, including braids, locks, and twists. (SB 32)

Discrimination against any person because of religion declared illegal under Chapter 45 of Title 6, the Delaware Equal Accommodations Act. (SB 72)

Juneteenth (June 19) established as a State holiday, commemorating the emancipation of the last enslaved African Americans in the United States. (HB 119)

Public schools ordered to add instruction to grades K through Twelve that teaches students about Black History, to be implemented during the 2022-2023 school year. (HB 198)

Save the date! SUFFRAGE MEMORIAL DEDICATION * OCTOBER 13, 2021
Legislative Hall, Dover
Time to be announced
Reception to follow Dedication

RECOGNITION AND TRIBUTES TO LEAGUE MEMBERS DEFENDERS OF DEMOCRACY

On July 14, 2021 two members of the Advocacy Corps were honored with a luncheon and given awards in recognition of their dedicated service as lobbyists and advocates to the LWV over many years. They also were presented with TRIBUTES by Delaware Representatives the Hon. Valerie Longhurst, Paul S. Baumbach, Kendra Johnson, Bill Carson and Sen. David Sokola in recognition of their outstanding service to the community and the LWV.

SANDRA SPENCE

Received the Mary Ann Sorden Stuart Advocacy Award, July 2021

The namesake of this award - Mary Ann Sorden Stuart - is strikingly similar to our honoree.

Ms Stuart was a fast and persistent talker, reportedly able to talk 10 hours a day at the rate of 200 words a minute. She was the Delaware vice president of the National Woman Suffrage Association.

She testified in favor of woman's suffrage before the U.S. Judiciary Committee in 1878; and three years later, along with Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, addressed the Delaware General Assembly in an effort to have the Delaware Constitution changed to grant the right to vote to women.

Link to tributes: <https://my.lwv.org/delaware/article/sandy-spence-honored-delaware-house-representatives>



LWV AC Awards Luncheon L-R Sen. David Sokola, Rep. Paul Baumbach, Rep. Kendra Johnson, Sandy Spence, Rep. Valerie Longhurst, Rep. Bill Carson.

JOANN HASSE

Received the Mabel Lloyd Ridgely Advocacy Award, July 2021

The namesake of this award - Mabel Lloyd Ridgely - is strikingly similar to our honoree.

Ms Ridgely's suffrage work included a term as president of the Delaware Equal Suffrage Association. Along with others, she interviewed fifty-two legislators and other "influential men" regarding their stance on women's suffrage. She made a statement to the State Democratic Committee on January 22, 1920, and won over their support. Ms Ridgely served as the first president of the Delaware Chapter of the League of Women Voters.

Link to Tributes: <https://my.lwv.org/delaware/article/joann-hasse-honored-delaware-house-representatives>



LWV AC Awards Luncheon L-R standing Sen. David Sokola, Rep. Kendra Johnson, Paul Baumbach, Joann Hasse, Rep. Valerie Longhurst, Rep. Bill Carson.



After a two-year Study, the League of Women Voters of Delaware (LWVDE) has achieved a consensus Position supporting ranked-choice voting for Delaware.

As part of a broader Action Position on Voter Representation and Electoral Systems, the new Position states: "*The League supports the implementation of Ranked-Choice Voting in elections for representation at all levels of Delaware government, including school board, municipal, county, state, and national, for both primary and general elections.*"

You can read the entire Position, and some background on the League study, here:

<https://my.lwv.org/delaware/article/alternative-voting-methodologies-study-2019-2021>

➤ VOTE411 Update

The LWVDE VOTE411 project has a new coordinator for this year: Jill Itzkowitz. Jill managed the statewide school board elections in 2021, and Kim Wells ran a pilot project in New Castle County covering municipal elections on VOTE411 for the first time. Jill will be the main VOTE411 contact going forward: jillitzkowitz@gmail.com.

In 2021, for the school board elections:

DelawareOnline.com heavily promoted Vote411

- There was a 20% increase in Vote411 users from the school board period last year (3,687 site visitors)
- Red Clay district had 9% turnout (which is high for a school board election) and 20% of Red Clay voters used Vote411
- 66% of school board candidates participated statewide

As part of our emphasis on collaboration with other groups, we worked together with Delaware PTA and First State Educate to raise awareness of VOTE411 and the school board elections this year.

The VOTE411 municipal pilot had widely varied results in 2021, with 5 of 10 elections canceled for lack of candidates and some other cities/towns opting out of VOTE411 entirely. We did have good candidate participation in two towns: Middletown in March and Townsend in May.



Missed some Hot Topics lately? The LWVNCC held following Hot Topics:

- ✓ The April Hot Topic (**housing in DE**) video is available here: <https://my.lwv.org/delaware/new-castle-county/event/lwvncc-hot-topic-housing-delaware>
- ✓ The May Hot Topic (**legislative update**) video is available here: <https://my.lwv.org/delaware/article/video-legislative-update-may-18-2021>

LWV of Sussex County DE Bus Trip to Women's Suffrage Historic Sights Saturday, September 18, 2021 – 7:00 a.m. to 6:45 p.m.

The League of Women Voters of Sussex County, DE is pleased to invite you on a bus trip to historic women's suffrage sights to celebrate the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote.

Join us as we visit key places in VA and D.C where history was made.

This special trip was delayed a year due to Covid-19 but it is now set to go on **September 18th**. *The bus is limited to 56 passengers so do not delay signing up!*

Here is the exciting schedule:

- **7:00 AM:** Meet fellow passengers and board the Jor-Lin charter bus at Lewes Transit Center on Coastal Highway near Five Points.
- **7:15 AM:** Bus departs Lewes.
- **10:00 AM:** Bus arrives in Occoquan, VA, at the [Turning Point Suffragist Memorial](#).
- **11:00 AM:** Visit [Lucy Burns Museum at the Workhouse Arts Center](#)
- **12:30 PM:** Lunch at Occoquan Regional Park. Bring your own, or purchase a box lunch from the Brickmakers Cafe to eat in the park (you'll receive an email offering the box lunch following receipt of your registration).
- **1:45 PM:** Leave for [Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument](#) in Washington, DC. The home of the National Women's Party (NWP) for more than 90 years, it became a national monument in 2017. *Monument currently closed, if not re-opened by September, you will be notified.*
- **4:00 PM:** Bus departs for Lewes.
- **7:00 PM:** Bus arrives at Lewes Park Transit Center.

Tickets are \$50, not including lunch. If you have any questions, please contact [Martha Redmond](#).

Please note that according to the CDC, masks should be worn on public transportation, so please bring your mask.

Space is limited! Checks must be received by August 20, 2021. Online payments must be submitted by August 30, 2021.

For information on how to register for this trip, go to the LWVSCDE website event

page: <https://my.lwv.org/delaware/sussex-county-delaware/event/lwvscde-bus-trip-women%E2%80%99s-suffrage-movement-historic-sights>

find us on 

follow us 

Twitter provides a quick digest of the nation's leading headlines, while Facebook gives us an open forum where we discuss the important issues of the day. All posts and points-of-view are welcome as long as our nonpartisan and inclusive policies are being respected.

To join Facebook, go to www.facebook.com and follow the instructions. Once you join, search for the League of Women Voters of Delaware and send us a "friend request." To join Twitter, go to www.twitter.com and follow the instructions. Once you join, search for @lwvde and "follow" us!

LWVDE COMMITTEE SUMMER SCHEDULES AND STATE BOARD MEETINGS

- **Election Committee** meets the first Tuesday of the month at 11 a.m. will not meet during the summer, and will skip September due to Labor Day and vacation schedules, and will meet again 11:00 a.m. Tuesday, October 5, 2021. Jill Itzkowitz, Committee Chair.
- **Climate Change and Energy Committee** will be meeting during the summer. They usually meet the first Friday of the month at 10 a.m. committee chair Peggy Schultz. contact schultz_peggy@yahoo.com
- **Land Use/Transportation Committee** will meet in the summer to plan a forum for September, they usually meet second Monday of the month at 10 a.m. contact schultz_peggy@yahoo.com
- **Justice Committee** will be meeting during the summer fourth Wed. 10 a.m. Lori Yadin, Chair 4hoping@gmail.com.
- **Advocacy Crops** meets the second Wednesday, 10 am-12 noon usually by Zoom.
- **LWVDE Board meeting schedule for September - June 2022**
- **State Board Meetings for the FY 2021-22.** All dates are for the fourth Wednesday unless otherwise indicated. Time 5 – 7 pm with check in starting at 4:45 p.m.
 - September 22, 2021 from 5-7 pm, in person, Green Turtle, 391 North DuPont Highway, Dover, DE 19901
 - October 27, 2021 by Zoom.
 - November 17, 2021 by Zoom. Note week earlier because of Thanksgiving.
 - January 26, 2022 by Zoom.
 - February 23, 2022 by Zoom.
 - March 23, 2022 by Zoom.
 - April 27, 2022 by Zoom.
 - May 25, 2022 in person.
 - June Council/ or board meeting to be determined.



Joann Hasse at awards luncheon



Awards luncheon L-R: Seated Mitch Crane, Esq., Sandy Spence, Julie Price, Marjorie Green, standing: Kyra Hoffner



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