

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

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

CO-PRESIDENTS' NOTES – Sue Claire Harper & Carol Jones



Sue Claire Harper and Carol Jones welcomes Charlie Garlow.

Our 2020 celebration year honoring both our League's 100th Birthday as well as the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment commenced with our festive birthday celebration at the Rehoboth Beach Museum. Many thanks to Sandy Spence for securing Governor Carney's and the House of Representatives tribute to our League on the occasion of our 100th birthday. The announcement of a similar tribute from the Senate is pending.

Unfortunately, although an array of events had been scheduled to follow, the onslaught of the COVID-19 has forced us to postpone or cancel a number of events, with more likely to follow. As of March 13th, Governor Carney ordered the cancellation of any non-essential event where more than 100 people are expected to attend. Given the rapidly changing efforts by public officials to contain this virus, we urge everyone to check our MyLO websites regarding the status of our [19th Amendment Celebrations](#).

Our annual League Day in Dover, previously scheduled at Dover Downs for March 26th has also been postponed until March, 2021. We regret these postponements but feel it's imperative for all organizations to be pro-active in trying to mitigate the spread of the disease. *Stay tuned for new dates!*

On a very positive note, we are pleased to announce the \$10,000 endowment gift bestowed on our League from the estate of the late LWVDE board member Roberta Ray, a dedicated advocate for the League's educational programs. A portion of this generous gift will be distributed to all 3 Leagues to support current and future programs which echo Roberta's life-long interests.

The Alternate Voting Strategies information sessions organized in all three counties by Kim Wells and Jill Itkowitz received rave reviews from all who attended. Audience participation in very creative ballot demonstration exercises left attendees with a working understanding of the concept. These presentations were in preparation for the June 2020 LWVUS National Convention when the Concurrence Position on Electoral Systems is expected to be finalized. This too is subject to cancellation or postponement.

Under the capable management of Kim Wells our **VOTE411** [website](#) is poised to be just a click away for all your voting information... check it out!

In conclusion, we urge all to implement the health practices outlined in [DPH Coronavirus Portal](#) and the [CDC Coronavirus Portal](#)

Sue Claire Harper

Carol Jones

Pictured at right: LWV 100th Anniversary League of Women Voters officers gather with speaker Dr. Cynthia Newton for a photo. Shown are (l-r) Newton, Delaware Co-President Sue Claire Harper, Co-President Carol Jones, Sussex County President Gwendolyn Miller, past Sussex County Presidents Jane Lord, and Martha Redmond.



We're counting on DE Leaguers to help friends and neighbors "*Be Aware. VOTE Aware*" with VOTE411.



Inform
the Vote.
Shape the
Future.

Delaware 2020 VOTE411 go-live dates: March 31 for Pres. Primary, April 6 for school board elections.

School board elections will be held on May 12 in New Castle County (Appoquinimink, Brandywine, Christina, Red Clay districts), Kent County (Caesar Rodney, Capital and Milford districts) and Sussex (Laurel, Woodbridge and Indian River nominating district 4)

VOTE411 Ambassador Action list

Here's what you can do to help voters get informed at www.VOTE411.org

Starting April 6, 2020 (when the spring voter guide has data) ...

1. If your county League has them... put a VOTE411 magnet on your car.
2. Facebook...
 - a. Add a VOTE411 frame to your Facebook profile picture
 - b. Share posts from the "VOTE411 - Delaware" page
 - c. Change your cover photo to the one from that page (the green one with election dates & deadlines)
3. Distribute VOTE411 handout cards at your neighborhood HOA meeting or legislator's constituent coffee.
4. Drop the little table tents in places where people sit and wait:
 - a. Magazine table in the waiting area at the hair salon
 - b. Doctor's offices, dentist offices, medical clinics, blood bank
 - c. On the tables or bulletin board at neighborhood café's
5. Write a simple letter to the editor. You can just say... *Voting is important! And it is easy to find election and candidate information on VOTE411.*



The week before each election...

6. Make a post on Nextdoor.com "*Remember to vote on <date>! <etc.>*"
7. If you own a business with a signboard, or know someone who does, have them post a simple message: e.g. "**VOTE on <date>. Election info at VOTE411.org**"

Here is a link! Watch the video which shows you how to vote on the new voting machine:

<https://my.lwv.org/delaware/article/how-vote-video-new>

RESPONSE TO CENSUS IS CRITICAL.

by Sandy Spence, LWVDE Chair for Census & Redistricting

"The 2020 Census is your census, and its success depends on you," explained Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham. "It's a once-in-a-decade chance to inform how billions of dollars in funding are allocated for critical public services like hospitals and health care clinics, schools and education programs, roads and bridges, and emergency response for the next 10 years."

The federal government uses Census data to distribute more than \$675 billion annually for public programs, including Medicaid, SNAP, Head Start, unemployment benefits, housing vouchers, programs for seniors and veterans with disabilities, school lunch programs, and disaster relief.

The data will also be used to redistrict Congress, our state legislature and local government councils as well as Levy Court in Kent County.

Letters to addresses throughout the U.S. were expected to be received beginning March 12 through the 20th. They will urge you to respond by telephone or mail – and for the first time – digitally. Your letter will include a code to enable you to get into the Census portal and the Census Bureau is hoping that 55% of us will respond in that manner. This will save the government an enormous amount. And, given the COVID-19 pandemic, may help get a complete count.

After two letters without a response, Census will send a paper form. There are only 9 questions and it does not take long to complete. One form per household/address is all that is required. Maybe I was able to answer more quickly than most because of my familiarity with the process, but I was able to answer all the questions in less than 5 minutes.

In case you didn't know, there is NO Citizenship question and it is illegal for the Census Bureau or *any* of its employees to provide information about individuals to anyone or any agency outside the Census Bureau. The penalty is \$250,000 and 5 years in prison for every violation during the rest of their lifetime. Data from this census CAN NOT be released to the public for a period of 72 ears.



Picture above: L-R Sandy Spence and Gwendolyn Miller view the Women's History puzzle.

LWVDE is a Proud Partner of the 2020 Census and we are working to help the Bureau and other partners achieve a complete count in Delaware.

We get about \$3 billion a year in federal grants to the state, local governments and non-profits. But for every person not counted, we lost over \$2,000 per year after the 2010 Census, totaling between \$100 to \$140 million for the decade.

Help us get a complete count! Respond digitally if possible and tell your friends and neighbors to respond as well.

Question? Go to www.2020Census.gov. Or, call me at 302-841-2882 or email sandyspence325@gmail.com.

Watch our own Connie Jones and Jack H. Young, LWVSC members discussing the importance of participating in the census on Blue Coast Talk. <https://www.facebook.com/BlueCoastTalk/videos/2923690544424328/> Video on demand direct TV and Audio shareable hyperlink link parked on Facebook for convenience.

<https://bluecoasttalk.buzzsprout.com/> Podcast website (Audio only for folks who like to just listen in the car. (They can dial in on their smart phone at their favorite podcast provider i.e., Apple, Spotify, etc.)

UPDATE ON SENECA FALLS TRIP

- *We are still planning the bus trip to Seneca Falls on May 1-3 but it, too, is subject to cancellation or postponement.*
- *The registration form will be sent to you in a separate email. While the form requires a \$50 non-refundable deposit, you should know that this will not apply in the event we cancel because of the corona virus.*

ADVOCACY CORPS UPDATE - MARCH 2020

by Linda Barnett, Chairperson, Advocacy Corps



The LWVDE Advocacy Corps meets monthly in Dover, where we monitor activity in the General Assembly as well as key administrative initiatives – particularly the state budget.

In the Fall, state agencies presented their budget requests for the upcoming fiscal year budget (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021). Our advocates directed their attention to several specific departments, including the Auditor of Accounts, the Department of Education, and the Department of Health and Social Services. The actual testimony delivered during hearings can be found on the website of the State League: <https://my.lwv.org/delaware/testimonies>

Once the Governor's Recommended Budget was unveiled in late January, we testified at several Joint Finance Committee (JFC) hearings on the Governor's proposals for various state agencies. Again, the texts of these presentations can be found at the State League website. Testimony was presented on the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Health & Social Services, and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Control.

As is our normal path, we had spent considerable time during the summer planning for League Day in Dover 2020. Our planned theme was "Financing the Needs of the State: A Look to the Future." A particularly exciting part of the agenda was to be a presentation by the Governor on his ideas regarding ways to make sure Delaware is positioned to thrive in the years ahead. We are severely disappointed that this event had to be postponed.

A variety of legislative proposals were, and are, on our radar as the legislative session got underway in January. Testimony was presented at hearings on the following:

- SB208 - which bans the intentional release of helium-filled balloons.
- HS1 to HB200 – which sets out procedures and a funding mechanism to improve the quality of the state's water supply and waterways.
- HB257 (now HS1 to HB257) – which creates a student loan repayment program to encourage primary care providers to set up practice in Delaware.
- HB277 – which bans ghost guns, those created with the use of a 3-D printer, and those without serial numbers.

The text of these presentations can be found on the State League's website: <https://my.lwv.org/delaware>

Numerous other proposals are on our radar. If testimony is not possible, we reach out to the bill sponsors to let them know of the League's position. When hearings are scheduled, every effort is made to testify, making the League a visible force in Legislative Hall. The following are among the many introduced since the beginning of 2020 that we support:

Education: HS1 to HB238, which permits a January student unit count, in addition to the current count in September (note: the money for schools is based on this count). Under the current system, with many students moving from school to school after September, the receiving school is deprived of necessary resources.

- **Finances/Taxation:** HB248, which grants a personal income tax credit up to \$500 for interest paid on student loans.
- **Government:** HCR69, which provides for live streaming (audio and video) of General Assembly sessions.
- **Health:** HC263, which limits out of pocket expenditures for insulin.
- **Land Use/Transportation:** HJR10, which directs DelDOT to work with the Solid Waste Authority to produce a report that “compares the financial and environmental impacts to Delaware of the current uncoordinated trash collection system in New Castle County to the impacts of a coordinated system with one vendor collecting all of the trash and recycling in an entire neighborhood.”
- **Social Justice:** SB191, which adds language to the Delaware Constitution to prohibit discrimination based on race, color, or national origin.

We are always looking for additional volunteers to work with us, to study issues, prepare position papers, write letters to the editor, etc. Please contact Linda Barnett to learn how you can get involved: luvchocdog@hotmail.com

ELECTION AND VOTING COMMITTEE UPDATES

By Jill Itzkowitz, Committee Chair

BILLS

1. HB73 No excuse absentee voting - This bill overwhelming passed the house but needs one more vote in the senate. We met with Sen. Cloutier and Delcollo - moderate Republicans. We also sent emails to Sen. Lopez. Sen. Cloutier encouraged Sen. Lopez to vote for the bill. The Bill passed with Senator Lopez changing his vote. We thanked Sen. Lopez and Cloutier.
2. HB39 Same Day Registration - This bill allows for registering to vote on Election Day. It was voted out of committee in the house but never came to a vote. The bill sponsor, Rep. Viola, added an amendment to require a government issued ID when registering to address concerns about fraud.
3. HB175 Vote By Mail - This bill allows for vote by mail. Brady added an amendment on 1/30/20 that ballots must be dropped off to a polling place by noon on Election Day.
4. HB41 Primary Date Change - This bill changes the state primary date to April to coincide with the Presidential primary. On 1/15/20 an amendment was attached to the bill to change the effective date to 2024. The bill was voted out of committee in the Senate on 1/15/20.

VOTER REGISTRATION

1. LWVNCC received a \$700 from LWVUS for youth voter registration. Besides providing supplies to LWVNCC, this grant will allow for all groups to utilize Signup Genius to manage volunteers at voter registration and other events. The new Sign Up genius was used to organize over 20 library and school registration events in NCC.
2. We are working to set up an emergency absentee ballot program for hospital patients in Delaware. This is a program that was piloted in Pennsylvania by Jefferson medical students. The Justice Department is currently reviewing the new procedures.
3. The ACLU and the DE Center for Justice, have teamed up with the LWV to implement an absentee ballot and voter registration process in the prisons. We are currently creating a White Paper on requirements and implementation strategies. The Justice Dept. recommendations for hospital voting will be leveraged here.

DELAWARE APRIL PRIMARY- currently there are no changes to the Delaware primary scheduled for 4/28/20. Please note the following:

Voters may request an Absentee Ballot via our Voter Portal (<https://ivote.de.gov>) or by completing the following form: https://elections.delaware.gov/pubs/pdfs/absentee_ballot_application.pdf

The last day to request an absentee ballot by mail is Friday, April 24th, 2020.

New Castle, Kent, and Sussex County offices also offer extended hours for voting absentee in person. The last day to vote absentee in the Dept. of Election offices in each county is at noon on Monday, April 27th.

OPTIONS FOR SHOPPING AND HELP FUND THE LWVDE

LWVDE Merchandise (hoodies, t-shirts, mugs and totes) is available at cafepress.com/decauseshop. Click the "LWV" logo within the DE Cause Shop to reach our page. Here is a sampling:



If you shop on Amazon.com, consider going to Amazon Smile instead (smile.amazon.com), and designating "League of Women Voters of Delaware Inc" as your charity of choice.

If you have a Amazon Smile Account, the *AmazonSmile* Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. As a 501c3, our League of Women Voters of Delaware Inc (<http://lwvdelaware.org/>) is now eligible to receive these funds if you list us as your designated charity. If you don't have an Amazon Smile Account, please consider opening one, as it costs you nothing. Follow these steps:



1. Go to smile.amazon.com on your computer or mobile phone browser and sign up for an account. Then follow the prompts to list LWVDE as your designated charity.
2. If you already have a Smile Account, sign on, then under the search box at top of the page, if you currently support another charity, click in the drop down box "Supporting" select option "Change".

Brush up your CIVICS! Our video series on the US and Delaware Constitutions and 19th Amendment is on You Tube. Click on this link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiaEJ_2n3fmqJwi9MnvSLcg Segments last 2—30 minutes.

CALENDAR- please check LWV Delaware and the local League websites for updates for meetings and activities. They are being rescheduled or cancelled because of the declaration of emergency.

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