

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

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

LWV of Delaware Biennial Council Wednesday, May 22, 6-8 p.m. by Zoom

Are you ready for the upcoming elections?

Business Meeting:

- **Agenda: Introductions**
- **Accept Minutes of Council 2022**
- **Financial Report**
- **Board Position Changes**
- **Changes to bylaws**



Focus: Get Out the Vote

Delaware ranks 5th for voters registered, and 20th when it comes to Delawareans casting their ballot. 2024 is an important election year with many offices in Delaware up for reelection.

Come to hear how you can help get out the vote at this year's LWVDE Council 2024 meeting, which will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, May 22 from 6-8. Topics and speakers include:

- **Discussion of getting young people to vote with Vienna Cavazos from Generation Vote Sussex**
- **How to help the elderly and disabled vote if permanent absentee voting is repealed with Joann Kingsley from Delaware Legal Aid**
- **Review of what other Leagues are doing to get out the vote**
- **Listing of get out the vote events from Delaware's local league members.**

Hope to see you there!

Registration in advance for this free meeting:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcqceqsqz4iH9CeBtv-kebPh4g_oThwUMug

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

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Framing our Future LWV Membership Changes A Summary of Upcoming Changes Prepared for Members of the League of Women Voters of Delaware

In 2025, LWVUS will implement significant changes to League membership and dues structure, which will **require certain changes for LWVDE’s By-Laws. These changes will be proposed at the May 22 Council.**

This document summarizes the changes for LWVDE members and provides context for the Board’s recommendations.

- These changes will have greater operational impact on Delaware’s three Local Leagues,
- The changes proposed will not go into effect until January 2025.

Specific Changes to Be Made

- Article III Membership: Section 2: Removing the Student Membership Category
- Article VIII Administration:
 - Section 3: Budget — Removing references to the Per Member Payment (PMP) process of determining how and how much Local League Member Dues are to be sent to LWVUS.
 - Section 5: Complete rewrite of this section to remove former language relating to the Per Member Payment System and replace with language that conforms to LWVUS Membership By Laws
- Article X - Convention: Section 5 - removal of “and per member payment”

For additional background on the rationale for these changes and details about where this action fits into a larger LWVUS Transformation Timeline, please contact Pat Newcomb-- pan.lwv.sc@gmail.com.



I would like to take the time to let all our volunteers know how much you are appreciated! Whether you volunteer at the State or Local League level (or both!), you are an invaluable asset for the League to continue its mission of empowering voters and defending democracy. It’s truly an honor that you choose to share your time, energy, and talents with the League of Women Voters! Please know that you truly do make a big difference to our small state. You are valued and you matter!

Thank you for everything that you do!

Tiffany Lydon, President

President's Message – Tiffany Geyer Lydon



Spring has sprung in this crucial election year! As we urge everyone to take advantage of the civic privilege (and duty) of voting, take a moment to think about how we got here and why we continue to strive for a better democracy. That vision should be one that does *not* look like what a few colonial white men pictured, but rather one that reflects the best parts of where we are now in our beautifully diverse country. It's time to jettison the melting pot idea that everyone should assimilate to one narrow idea of what an American is, and embrace and celebrate the distinct and disparate ethnicities, cultures, backgrounds, and viewpoints of all, while also respecting and remembering that many different

indigenous peoples inhabited this land long before Europeans arrived. If you're interested in discussing the history and future of our democracy, please join the summer book discussion (details in this newsletter)!

Let's strive for the democracy we want and need. Get out there and spread the word about the vital importance of voting and be sure to emphasize the value of the VOTE411 resource! In 2020, **more than 6 million people** found nonpartisan voting resources on VOTE411, including 2.2 million Spanish speakers.

I also like this blurb from LWVUS to use as a response when someone asks why they should bother voting:

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

- It determines your access to affordable healthcare.
- It lifts up the voices of those most affected by climate change.
- It ensures that we're all represented in our government, not just those of us with greater wealth or systemic advantages.
- It promotes immigration reform, including family reunification and political asylum.

**With the help of LWV Sussex member Jack Young, LWVDE joined the ACLU's amicus brief filed in the Delaware Supreme Court in support of Delaware's early voting and permanent absentee voting statutes. For more information: <https://www.aclu-de.org/en/cases/early-voting-permanent-absentee-amicus-brief>

**Please join me in welcoming our awesome new State Board members: Ashley Carson and Ceil Tilney!

What's Your Legacy?
Remember the League of Women Voters...

1. In your will
2. As an account beneficiary
3. Using required minimum * distributions from your IRA

LWVDE is a 501(c)(3) organization, so all donations are tax deductible to the extent of the law. Remembering the League is an easy way to make a difference and preserve democracy for those who come after us. Legacy donations may be sent to:

LWV of Delaware
PO Box 7224
Wilmington, DE 19803

Addressing one of the Crucial Issues of our Time

The League confronted the issue of Mis/Disinformation at League Day in Dover 2024. This event, held in-person for the first time since the Covid 19 pandemic, provided the opportunity for League members to gain an in depth understanding of an issue that is widely discussed and debated around the country – and around the world.

Attendees were exposed to the thinking of six panelists providing their insights into what is happening in Delaware and around the nation when false information is deliberately amplified with the intention to deceive.



Panelists L-R: Rep. Cyndie Romer, State Representative for the 25th District; **Ralph Begleiter**, Rosenberg Professor of Communication Emeritus at the University of Delaware; **Sen. Bryan Townsend**, represents the 11th Senatorial District; **Tom Byrne**, News Director for Delaware Public Media (DPM); **Rep. Bryan Shupe**, represents the 36th District; **Andrew M. Goretsky, Ed.D.**, the Regional Director for the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) Philadelphia office; **Linda Barnett, LWVDE Moderator.**

The panelists, shown in the accompanying pictures, addressed questions such as:

- What do we need to understand about the current environment wherein disinformation/misinformation is flourishing on the national and international levels?

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- How can/should citizens respond to disinformation/misinformation when they see it? Why are people so receptive to it?
- What are the challenges posed by the need to control disinformation/misinformation while ensuring the right to free speech? Indeed, are dis/misinformation “controllable”?
- What more needs to be done in our state and who needs to take ownership to ensure that needed steps are taken?

An illustration of disinformation being distributed in Delaware is contained in the following analysis of disinformation pertaining to Wind Power prepared by League member Peggy Schultz:

According to the Caesar Rodney Institute, “Our Delaware beach community urgently needs your attention and support to safeguard our coastline, economy, and marine life from a pressing challenge. This issue impacts everyone who cherishes and visits Delaware’s beaches each summer.

“Our Governor and local leaders are on the brink of a decision that could have severe consequences for our beach community. The proposed Maryland-based offshore wind project, intended to bring power ashore in Delaware, poses substantial risks to our economy, property values, and marine environment. (NOTE: This is a Maryland project; power should come ashore in Maryland.)”

The previous statements were contained in a solicitation received by League of Women Voters members, asking for donations to the Caesar Rodney Institute’s legal fund. These statements contain information that is misleading and/or incorrect. The analysis below addresses those statements, as well as others contained in the solicitation.

THE MISLEADING ISSUES AND THE FACTS:

- **Issue:** Giant industrial wind turbines close to Delaware beaches will change our pristine view and lead to lost tourism and lower property values.

Response: Several visual simulations prepared by US Wind for its Marwin /Momentum projects show that the wind turbines are visible from Bethany Beach, but because they are white in color and the seascape is also pale blue to white, the turbines do not have an obtrusive appearance.[<https://www.boem.gov/renewable-energy/state-activities/appendix-visual-simulations>] Lower property values because of offshore wind is undocumented; the assertion that offshore wind causes a devaluation in home values is discussed below.

- **Issue:** There is the potential to lose an estimated 24% in tourism revenue, costing Delaware’s economy millions and risking jobs.

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Response: A 2020 study by the University Of Rhode Island shows that the 5 wind turbines just 3.8 miles from Block Island have **added** slightly to tourism in the area.

[\[https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1104&context=enre_facpubs\]](https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1104&context=enre_facpubs)

- **Issue:** A University of Connecticut report estimates a first-year loss of up to 11% in property values.

Response: A 2014 University of Connecticut study finds no evidence that off shore wind turbines negatively affect home prices or sales. [\[https://today.uconn.edu/2014/01/no-evidence-wind-turbines-depress-property-prices/\]](https://today.uconn.edu/2014/01/no-evidence-wind-turbines-depress-property-prices/)

No further University of Connecticut studies were found. We did, however, locate a 2023 article published in *Energy Policy*, that uses “11%” in relation to turbines, though this article discusses onshore wind, and not offshore. Study results show that properties within a mile of a proposed *onshore* wind project experience an average decrease in value of 11% following the announcement of the project, compared to properties located three to five miles away, though the difference fades away after a few years. Could this have been the research to which the writer refers? If so, it not only deals with *onshore* wind, but the turbines are only three to five miles from the homes. This research is not applicable to an offshore wind project.

[\[https://insideclimatenews.org/news/21122023/inside-clean-energy-wind-farms-property-values/\]](https://insideclimatenews.org/news/21122023/inside-clean-energy-wind-farms-property-values/)

ADDITIONAL CONCERNS:

- **Issue:** Power cables will enter Delaware instead of Maryland, which is the state that is sponsoring this project.

Response: It is correct that the power cables will enter Delaware. However, benefits to Delawareans include cleaner air and other community benefits described briefly below.

- **Issue:** Empty promises have been made by the developer regarding lower electric rates and free energy credits.

Response: It is unclear why these promises are “empty.” Such benefits are often required by law in Europe, but in the U.S. they are voluntary. No evidence has been found, and none has been offered by those who oppose this project, to suggest that developers do not follow through on their community benefit promises. Ratepayer costs are written into the contract between the developer and the off-takers, so the developer is obliged to follow the terms of the contract. The ratepayers for this US Wind project are residents of Maryland. In the case of the US Wind proposal to Delaware, US Wind has offered to the state 150,000 Renewable Energy Certificates annually, worth an estimated \$76 million over the life of the project. US Wind says they will spend \$200 million to upgrade the grid, a distinct advantage for Delaware when it solicits bids for its own offshore wind project. US Wind has also agreed to pay the state a lease rental fee of \$350,000 annually for the privilege of making landfall at 3 Rs Beach.

[\[https://news.delaware.gov/2023/12/19/delaware-to-negotiate-with-us-wind-over-benefits-for-state/\]](https://news.delaware.gov/2023/12/19/delaware-to-negotiate-with-us-wind-over-benefits-for-state/)

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- **Issue:** There will be a negative impact on the Carl N. Shuster, Jr. Horseshoe Crab Reserve and other marine life.

Response: It is true that the two US Wind Maryland projects overlap the Horseshoe Crab Reserve. US Wind reports that turbines for their Marwin and Momentum projects off the southern-most coast of Delaware will be a mile apart. Each turbine will take up a circle 45 feet in diameter. There will be 77 turbines in both projects, for a total of 217,679 square feet, or almost 5 acres devoted to turbines. The entire area is 46,970 acres, so that leaves about 46,965 acres undisturbed. Ideally, clean energy from offshore wind would be totally without an environmental cost, but 5 acres (.01%) out of 46,970 seems not a big price to pay in exchange for adding 1,056.5 MW of clean electricity to the grid, capable of powering 285,000 homes. [<https://www.iberdrola.com/sustainability/offshore-wind-turbines-foundations>]

BOEM, NOAA, and the Marine Mammal Commission all agree that there is no evidence linking whale deaths to offshore wind development activity. Examination of dead whales shows evidence of entanglement in fishermen's nets and collisions with fast-moving cargo ships as major causes of whale mortality. [<https://mdcoastdispatch.com/2023/03/02/commission-joins-agencies-in-whale-death-dispute/>]

There is some potential of harm to whales during construction, but great care is required during these operations to keep whales safe. Mandatory professional whale watchers are onboard whenever there is a possibility of harm to whales. These whale watchers are empowered to halt all construction activity if a whale is sighted. BOEM also requires bubble curtains to ensure that sounds emanating from construction activity do not harm the whales. Furthermore, the law prohibits offshore wind construction during whale migrations. [<https://www.noaa.gov/news-release/noaa-boem-announce-final-north-atlantic-right-whale-and-offshore-wind-strategy>]

Research from the University of Rhode Island shows that the offshore wind turbine foundations provide habitat for Black Sea Bass and Atlantic Cod, making the turbines fruitful fishing grounds for sports fishermen. [<https://www.providencejournal.com/story/sports/outdoors/2022/04/13/fishing-report-wind-farms-popular-hangout-fish-study-shows/9497184002/>]



Pictured L-R: Peggy Schultz, Letty Diswood, Marjory B. Green, Jill Itzkowitz, Linda Barnett, Gov. Carney, Mary Douglas, Marjorie Johnson, Charlie Garlow, Anna Quisel.

LWW members met with Governor Carney in his office after League Day in Dover's morning program March 20, 2024.

Leaders discussed LWW priorities with Gov. Carney and learned about his views on proposed legislation and issues the state is confronting in the short term and long term.



THANK YOU to all the volunteers who planned, organized, and helped to make our legislative League Day in Dover a success. That includes the Advocacy Corps, our webmaster and social media persons, the treasurer and of course our moderator Linda Barnett who also is the chair of the Advocacy Corps.

In addition, many of you also contributed to DoMore24, the day DE nonprofits raise funds virtually. We also want to thank the state board members and committee chairs for their time and talents including the volunteers who distribute the welcome folders monthly to new citizens at the naturalization ceremonies in Wilmington, especially Lorraine Botticelli, who coordinates volunteers. We cannot survive as a volunteer organization without your support. We depend on you for the organization to thrive.

Financial contributors since the last newsletter (winter edition): Elaine Butterfoss and Gail Gormley.

LWVDE Summer Book Club



LWVDE President Tiffany Lydon will be hosting a summer book club to discuss *Democracy Awakening* by Heather Cox Richardson.

We'll meet every other Thursday from 6:00-7:30 p.m. as follows:

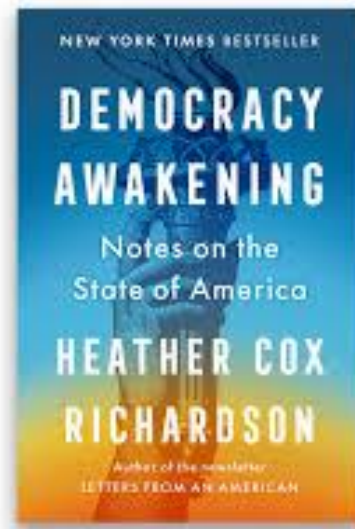
- June 13 – Chapters 1-6 (Zoom)
- June 27 – Chapters 7-11 (Zoom)
- July 11 – Chapters 12-18 (Zoom)
- July 25 – Chapters 19 -25 (Zoom)
- August 8 – Chapters 26- Conclusion (in person at Tiffany's home in St. Georges)

You can pick up the book at a local bookstore, Bookshop.org or your local DE library (over 20 copies are available to borrow).

Looking forward to a summer of meaningful dialogue!

Register in advance for these meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMucOqtqT8pHddUBDOtnHvDtMTmNdzCUXmF>



After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

SCHOOL BOARD ELECTIONS MAY 14



On April 15, 2024, LWVDE launched the VOTE411 voter guide for the May 14, 2024, Delaware school board elections. There are only 8 elections this year compared to the normal 16 due to the small number of candidates running.

These Delaware school districts will hold school board elections on Tuesday May 14th, 2024:

- New Castle County: Appoquinimink, Christina, Colonial, Red Clay.
- Kent County: Lake Forest, Woodbridge.
- Sussex County: Delmar, Indian River (nominating district 4 only).

Visit www.vote411.org to find your polling place and to learn about the candidates and where they stand on important issues.

If you need an absentee ballot, you need to request one. Here is the link.

https://elections.delaware.gov/voter/absentee/pdfs/absentee_ballot_application_school_elections.pdf

Read our joint press release with the ACLU and other members of the Delaware Voting Rights Coalition. [Joint Press Release](#)

Help us spread the word by posting to social media.

Download the League in Action Phone App!

Would you or someone in your family appreciate election reminder notifications on your phone? There's an app for that! LWVDE is currently trying out the Outreach Circle *League in Action* phone app to broaden our communications to a new generation. If you live and breathe by your phone, download the app and give us feedback about it during our trial!

Just go to the app store on your smartphone, search for "League in Action" and download the free app (it has the LWV logo). Open the app, search for "Delaware," and when you've found League of Women Voters of Delaware, join our circle.



We'll post League activities, voting reminders and more on the app. You can decide if you want push notifications, which we'll save for the most important announcements, or not. Try out *League in Action* on your phone today and encourage your family members to try it out as well.

Calendar

Wednesday, May 1, 2024 9:00 -11:00 a.m.	Zoom	LAND USE/TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING Contact Anna Quisel at annaquisel@gmail.com to attend and to confirm time.
Friday, May 3, 2024 3:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m.	Zoom	CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE MEETING. Contact Peggy Schultz, Co-chair at schultz_peggy@yahoo.com to attend and to confirm time. Contact Peggy to confirm.
Tuesday, May 7, 2024 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. cancelled	Zoom	ELECTION COMMITTEE MEETING. (statewide) Regular committee meeting contact Jill Itzkowitz, Committee Chair jillitzkowitz@gmail.com
Wednesday, May 8, 2024 8:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Zoom	LWVDE ADVOCACY CORPS (legislative lobby group) Meets the 2 nd Wednesday of each month. For details or to attend, contact Advocacy Chair Linda Barnett advocacylwvde@gmail.com
Saturday, May 11, 2024, 10:00 am – 11:30 a.m.	Zoom	TED TALK DISCUSSION “Violence Against Women - It’s a man’s issue.” Jackson Katz reframes how we talk about and represent violence that is happening to women. Registration link: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0tduyhqD0qGNxqBDno_hGuGb3g1NLXJ-2o
Tuesday, May 14, 2024 7 am – 8 pm		New Castle County: Appoquinimink, Colonial, Red Clay. Kent County: Lake Forest. Sussex County: Delmar, Woodbridge. Vote at designated district schools.
Wednesday, May 22, 2024 6-8 p.m.	Zoom	LWVDE BIENNIEL COUNCIL Contact Tiffany Lydon, President tgeyer5382@comcast.net (no board meeting – all DE members invited to Council).
Thursday, May 23, 2024 10-11:30 a.m.	Zoom	CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE Contact Chris Assay chrisasay@aol.com date change- moved to 4 th Thursday going forward.
Friday, May 31, 2024 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.	Zoom	HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE Contact Judy Butler: judyandhays@gmail.com
Tuesday, June 4, 2024 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.	Zoom	ELECTION COMMITTEE MEETING. (statewide) Regular committee meeting contact Jill Itzkowitz, Committee Chair jillitzkowitz@gmail.com
Thursdays, June 13, 27, 2024 6-7:30 p.m.	Zoom	LWVDE SUMMER BOOK CLUB - Democracy Awakening by Heather Cox Richardson. Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMucOqtqT8pHddUBDOtnHvDtMTmNdzCUXmF
Thursday, July 11, 25, 2024 6-7:30 p.m.	Zoom	LWVDE SUMMER BOOK CLUB - Democracy Awakening by Heather Cox Richardson. Register: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMucOqtqT8pHddUBDOtnHvDtMTmNdzCUXmF
Thursday, August 8, 2024 6-7:30 pm.	In person	LWVDE SUMMER BOOK CLUB - Democracy Awakening by Heather Cox Richardson. Last meeting at Tiffany Lydon’s home in St. Georges.



Note: The League has a new address. The phone number and email addresses remain the same.

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<https://www.lwv.org>

