

Lewisburg senior organizes voter registration drive

By Rick Dandes

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A Lewisburg Area High School senior organized a voter registration drive, signing up 30 students, with 100 more potential voters due to turn 18 by Nov. 3, the date of the general election.

Allie Mast intends to major in political science at Messiah College next fall. "It's so close to the state capitol. I'm hoping to intern there with a legislator."

Throughout high school, Mast developed an interest in politics through taking classes in social studies, she said. "I didn't really intend to get heavily involved in the (League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area) millennial project," she confessed. "I just wanted to learn more about the process of registering to vote. It just happened that I began to get involved."

The mission of the League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area (LWVLA) Mauch Millennial Project is to engage young people between the ages of 16 and 35 in the civic life of democracy in the United States in general and specifically in the LWVLA's service area of Union County, said Elaine Hopkins.

"We hope the project will instill in the young people involved a life-long passion for and engagement in the civic life of our democracy," Hopkins said.

Mast planned for two registration drives at her school — the first was March 10, but the second was cut short by the COVID-19 virus pandemic.

"What I did was to get in touch with the Democratic committee of Union County," she said. "I wanted to learn from them how to conduct a registration drive. I had meetings with them. I had meetings with the high school principal, and they all supported me along the way."

The League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area served as mentors, Mast said.

"We work with Lewisburg Area High School," Hopkins explained. "In the past we've planned trips down to the capitol, where students have learned what it is like to go through the legislative process."

"Allie contacted us out of the blue and said, 'I want to do this project to register voters. Can you help?'" Hopkins said.

It is a misperception that high school students are disinterested in voting, Mast said. "People are confused about how to register, but I think there is interest in this coming election. My hope is that the 100 or so seniors and some juniors from Lewisburg High and Sun Tech who are eligible to vote in November will register and will vote."

