

LEAGUE LINE

A Bulletin of The League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I sit here writing this message on the day before Thanksgiving, I have had the unpleasant epiphany that it will be the last one I write for 2023. With that in mind, it is hard not to reflect back on the year and wonder where the time has gone and whether we have used it to the best of our ability.

As far as the League goes, I think that we have had a pretty good year. We had to say good bye to Mary Beth Clark as head of the Book Club but have welcomed two new co-chairs, Wanda Clark and Linda McGann. Voter Services continues to blow me away with their energy and output while preparing the voting public to make informed decisions. We have enjoyed some of the best Educational Forums, and they can all be found on our website. The Mauch project remains active and productive with new Fellows from Bucknell. We have a new board member, Joanne Troutman who has agreed to take a lead in looking at our various forms of communication so that we can provide a unified front to our public information.

Additionally, we started a new project, Integrity of the Ballot. While it is in its infant stages, it looks promising to become a worthwhile activity to help the public understand all the mechanics of the voting process.

That is not bad for a year's work, especially considering we have more than a month to go!

Inherent in looking back at one's accomplishments is also the process of looking forward to the path ahead. The Lewisburg League will celebrate its 70th birthday in early spring. Imagine 70 years of work to help fulfill the hopes and dreams of the ladies that worked so hard to get the vote for women and to educate the public on candidates and issues. It's hard to imagine what the next 70 years will bring. Will there be some other President putting together their monthly thoughts? If I were a betting person, I would bet the house there will be! Issues and challenges will be different but the League will go on.

Kandy Duncan, President

INTEGRITY OF THE BALLOT TASK FORCE

The Integrity of the Ballot group has been diligently working on the formation of this new project. The scope of the project was presented to membership following the September Forum. The actual process of the election has been divided into modules such as "How do we Vote?", "Security of the Ballot", "Roles of the various election workers", etc. The vision is to compile all the completed modules into one place which may end up being a pamphlet, fliers, a video, or some yet to be decided plan.

The first two modules are included for your review at the end of this *League Line*, starting on [page 3](#).

Keeping in mind that the goal is to help the public understand all the workings of the election process, please read and give us your thoughtful comments on these two documents. All suggestions are welcome. Just send them to us at the League's email:

lwvlewisburgarea@gmail.com

Kandy Duncan, Representative

WHAT'S HAPPENING

The following events are current as of publication date, December 1st. Please check our website, LWVLewisburgArea.org, frequently for the most current updates.

Friday, December 8th, 10:00a.m.

CURRENT ISSUE FORUM

Thom Travis Emeritus Bucknell Professor of Political Science/International Relations
"Understanding the Israel-Hamas Conflict"
Union County Public Library
255 Reitz Blvd, Lewisburg

Thursday, December 14th, 1:00p.m.

BOOK CLUB

Union County Public Library and Zoom
(See article for Zoom option's link)

Monday, January 8th, 4:00p.m.

BOARD MEETING

East Buffalo Township Municipal Building
589 Fairground Road, Lewisburg

Tuesday, November 21st, 12:00-1:00p.m.

FORUM

Janet Tomkavage, Chief Nursing Executive, Geisinger
"What Does Value-Based Healthcare Mean and Why Is It Important?"
La Primavera, 2593 Old Turnpike Road, Lewisburg

to members and the general public. All are welcome. For more information, email LWVLAForum@gmail.com.

JANUARY FORUM

Plans are in place with spring speakers. We hope you'll make an effort to attend these presentations, typically at La Primavera, on Tuesdays from 12-1p.m. We also hope members with ideas and energy around Forums will get in touch with Teri at 570/309-7953 or pa2albania@yahoo.com.

For your planning purposes, please note:

January 16: What Does Value-Based

Healthcare Mean and Why Is It Important?, Janet Tomkavage, Chief Nursing Executive, Geisinger

February 20: What's Changing and What's Happening in Central PA Economic Development?, Kim Wheeler, Executive Director SEDA-COG

March 19: The Imperiled Nature of Public Education, Abe Feuerstein, PhD, Department of Education, Bucknell University

April 16: Union County Government Update, Jeff Reber, Preston Boop and Stacy Richards, Union County Commissioners
Teri McBride, Mary Zimmerman, Forum Committee Co-Chairs

NOVEMBER FORUM

At the November 22nd, 2023 Educational Forum, Lycoming College Professor Sarah Silkey spoke about the life of Ida B. Wells, famed African American journalist, and her anti-lynching crusade. Professor Silkey's research reveals how systemic racism created a self-perpetuating cycle of dehumanization of African Americans. To see and hear the talk or other recent Educational Forums, visit [What You Missed](#) on the League website.

Teri McBride, Forum Committee Co-Chair

BOOK CLUB

We invite you to explore the topic of Artificial Intelligence with us for our December discussion. It will be held December 14th at 1:00p.m., in person at the Public Library Meeting Room A, or via Zoom. There are two books we think may lead to interesting conversation. The first is *The Coming Wave: Technology, Power and the 21st Century's Greatest Dilemma* by Mustafa Suleyman. The second title is a mystery novella that was written using several AI tools entitled *Death of an Author* by Aiden Marchine. Watch an interesting conversation with the author [here](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JkPWHr7sTY>)

You do not need to have read the books to participate in the conversation.

Here is the Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81275780494>

Meeting ID: 812 7578 0494

Hope to see you!

Wanda Clark & Linda McGann, Co-chairs

COMMUNICATION REVIEW

Joanne Troutman and Kandy Duncan met with Eric Martin, Bucknell Professor of Management. He is excited to begin work with his February class to help take an in-depth look at the workings of the League. The League did a comprehensive strategic look at the organization 5 years ago. This time, we will be able to get another viewpoint from an outside entity.

The Project will run from late January to mid-April. The priorities of the plan will be to:

- Engage younger voters/members
- Encourage and engage a diverse voter and political base
- Conduct a comprehensive marketing material review (website, Facebook, League Line)
- Examine fundraising efforts

Joanne Troutman

SPECIAL CURRENT ISSUE FORUM

The League of Women of Women Voters of Lewisburg Area Educational Forum series presents a Special Current Issue talk, *Understanding the Israel-Hamas Conflict*, Friday December 8th, 2023, at 10:00a.m. at the Public Library for Union County. The speaker is Thom Travis, Bucknell University Emeritus Professor of International Relations and Political Science and founder of the international relations program, which he chaired for 26 years. The meeting is open

VOTER SERVICES

Thanks to many of you we celebrate another successful Election cycle!

VOTE411

Vote411 continues to educate more voters every year!

As you all know, our local League has been a member of VOTE411 since 2019. We use it to provide content for our local *Voters Guide*. *Voters Guide* Editor, Sheri Stayton, became the PA statewide manager of VOTE411 in 2020. She has worked tirelessly alongside *Voters Guide* staff member, Liz Clement, to track down non-responding candidates and encourage them to respond to VOTE411.

Here are the national numbers for VOTE411:

- Nationally, 2023 had the most candidates ever covered on **Vote411.org** in an odd-year election cycle. On November 7th, 2023, information about more than 40,000 candidates in 20,000 races among 35 states was published on **Vote411.org**. In 2019, the most comparable election cycle, there was information for just over 18,000 candidates from roughly 10,000 races. In 2021, there was information on just under 27,000 candidates from approximately 13,000 races.
- Nationally, more than 2 million users accessed **Vote411.org** in 2023. Pennsylvania had more than 100,000 users; our local area had more than 700 users.
- The VOTE411 candidate response rate from state-wide candidates in Pennsylvania was 100%! The candidate response rate for local candidates contacted by LWVLA was 82%. This gave us an overall response rate for our Union County *Voters Guide* of 84%.

Our Publications

Voters Guide

The Fall 2023 *Voters Guide* was distributed in October 2023 and remains [online on our website](#).

Facts for Voters

The editorial staff, including editor, Lisa Tranquillo, will be starting to gather information for the upcoming 2024 *Facts for Voters* after the new year. If you want a printed copy of the 2023 *Facts for Voters* or know of a site that could use more, let me know. You can view the *Facts for Voters* [online on our website](https://my.lwv.org/pennsylvania/lewisburg-area/voter-resources/facts-voters) (https://my.lwv.org/pennsylvania/lewisburg-area/voter-resources/facts-voters).

If you are interested in becoming part of the editorial/writing staff, please contact me:

Lsharris323@gmail.com

LEAGUE LINE

DEC. 2023/JAN. 2024

League Line is published by the
**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF THE LEWISBURG AREA.**

It is typically published from
September to April, and available
by the first of the month.

Deadline for submission of articles is
the 15th of each month.

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Additional LWVLA Website Updates

Thanks go to Dawn Maneval, Designer, and Carole Madle, Editor, for all of the Voter Services updates they provided to the Website. We appreciate the efforts of Bev Zorn, Website Designer, to implement the changes we suggested. To see these changes, visit our website, LWVLewisburgArea.org, where you will also find the most up-to-date information about our voter education efforts.

Linda Harris, Voter Services Chair

MEMBERSHIP

We are starting to wrap up the member renewal. There are still some members who have not sent in their dues.

There will be a "Holiday event" sometime after the first of the year. We will let you know the particulars as the details become available.

In Memorium: Owen Anderson

Longtime Lewisburg League member Owen Anderson passed peacefully in August. Owen was Judy's beloved husband. Together they worked tirelessly on building and sustaining our League, but Owen was a thoughtful contributor in his own right, well after Judy's death. With much gratitude, we share here some information about his dedication to sustaining LWVLA.

Owen was a director, an officer, a committee chair and a supporter, years before many men became members. A 2012 Jill Reynolds Service Award recipient, Owen worked behind the scenes as Co-Treasurer, holiday party historian, webmaster, photographer, Marcellus Shale Committee participant and the LWVLA Representative on the PA Department of Environmental Protection's Citizen's Roundtable for the North Central region.

Owen started and maintained our first website. Without his dedication and patience, we wouldn't have had a consistent local web presence so early on. Owen recognized the power of the internet for member and public facing information and issues. His actions in 2000 with the early PA League Democracy Network (DNet), placed information about Union County candidates on the internet for the public to review. This early web work, in addition to Owen's activism on behalf of numerous institutions, made him an important community foundation.

The passing of this kindly and effective man is a loss for us all.

Teri McBride

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF THE LEWISBURG AREA

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

September 2023 — January 31, 2024

MEMBERSHIP DUES:

Individual (1 year) - \$55; Household - \$80 (+\$25 for additional member)

35 years of age or younger - \$35; Student (1 year) - \$10

I wish to renew my membership in the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE LEWISBURG AREA.

NAME _____

2ND HOUSEHOLD MEMBER _____

ADDRESS _____

EMAIL _____

PHONE #'s (home, work or cell) _____

SPECIAL INTEREST:

Voter Services _____ Forums _____ Studies _____ Special Events _____

PAYMENT: Enclosed is my check for \$ _____
(Please make your check payable to LWVLA)

Mail your check and form to:

LWVLA Membership, P.O. Box 206, Lewisburg, PA 17837-0206

For more information, [phone 570-524-4439](tel:570-524-4439) or [email lwvlewisburg@gmail.com](mailto:lwvlewisburg@gmail.com).

Thank you!

Integrity of the Ballot: Election-Process Modules

HOW DO WE VOTE?

It's Election Day! The polls open in PA at 7:00a.m. and remain open until 8:00p.m. As long as you are in line at your polling place by 8:00 p.m., you will be allowed to vote.

At the Polling Place

You walk up to the desk with the poll workers. They verify that you are listed in the electronic poll book and ask you to sign your name. They compare that with the signature on file to complete the first step in checking you are eligible to vote. If it is your first time voting at this polling place, you will be asked to show appropriate identification. This can be a driver's license, passport, employee ID or several other acceptable forms of documentation. (Please see the state website for a complete list:

<https://www.vote.pa.gov/Register-to-Vote/Pages/Voter-ID-for-First-Time-Voters.aspx>).

Then you are issued a paper with a number on it which allows you to use the ballot marking device (BMD). Your number signifies only that you signed in to vote, not how you voted. In a primary election, your number allows you to vote for only one party.

You insert the paper with the number into the slot in the machine. This opens the BMD. You proceed through the screens marking your candidates individually as there is no longer straight party voting. Instructions on each page tell you how many candidates for each office you can select. At the bottom of each page, you must tap "continue" or "next" to proceed to the following page. This continues until all the offices and candidates have been presented. If there are referenda or constitutional amendments up for a vote, they appear at the end of the ballot. You are asked to vote yes or no on these questions. If you are registered as an independent, in a primary election, you may vote only on ballot questions.

A summary page showing all the choices you have made will then appear. If you wish to make any changes, this is the opportunity to do so. Finally, you are asked twice if your vote is complete, and you submit your ballot for printing. You receive a paper print-out of your ballot which you scan in a separate machine. Now you have voted. The paper ballot provides a back-up system of verification. All paper ballots remain in the sealed box. They will be checked for verification should there be any need to confirm the vote.

Mail-In Ballot

A second way to vote is by mail-in ballot. You must request a paper mail-in ballot in advance and no later than the Tuesday prior to Election Day. This can be done on-line, in-person or by written request. A paper ballot, including instructions on how to complete your mail-in ballot, will then be sent to you. You must follow all directions for your vote to be counted. After filling in the square by the names of the candidates of your choice, you must insert the ballot into the security (or privacy) envelope and seal it. You must not make any marking on this envelope. Then as a final step, insert this envelope into the pre-addressed outer envelope, seal it, sign the back and date it. Once your ballot is complete, you may return your mail-in ballot at any time, but no later than Election Day.

The several types of mail-in ballots – absentee, military and general mail-in, all work the same way, though they may differ slightly in appearance. Military ballots do have a longer period of time after election day to arrive at the Elections Office to be counted.

You may submit your mail-in ballot in one of three ways.

1. The first is by taking it to the Union County Elections Office yourself. The address for the Elections Office is 155 North 15th St., Lewisburg, 17837-8822. No one else may do this for you or your ballot will automatically be invalidated. The only exception is for disabled persons who submit the required form in writing authorizing a specific person to be their delivery agent. This form must be approved in advance and the official verification should be brought along with the ballot when your representative returns it.
2. Secondly, you may place your ballot in an official drop box used specifically for this purpose. (Currently, Union County does not use drop boxes.)
3. Thirdly, you may mail your ballot by stamping it and sending it through the US Mail. Because delivery may take several days, this should be done well in advance to ensure that your ballot arrives in the Elections Office by the required date. The postmark date does not count. It must be physically in the Elections Office by the close of election day.

Note: If there is any question of your eligibility to vote, you may still do so using a provisional ballot. Once your voter status has been verified, it will be included in the count. If you received a mail-in ballot and then decided you wanted to vote in-person, just take the entire mail-in ballot in its envelope as it came to you, and turn it in at your polling place. You can then vote in-person. If you have already returned or mailed in your completed ballot, you may no longer vote in-person.

PATTY JOHNSTON

SECURITY MEASURES OF THE BALLOT

Can your vote be manipulated (lost, stolen, changed)? Can voting machines be hacked?

There are several checks and balances built into the ballot and voting process that protect your vote. We will address some of these below. Ballots may be cast either by mail/absentee, or in person. Here are some of the protections that exist in our current voting system.

Mail-in/Absentee

To obtain a mail-in or absentee ballot, you must apply to the precinct in the county for a ballot to be sent to you. The application is approved if the applicant is a registered voter in the county.

Once a ballot is issued, mailed and has been received by the voter, it is the responsibility of the voter to return the ballot in a timely fashion.

The completed ballot consists of three parts:

1. The outer envelope contains a specific bar code which identifies the voter. The voter signature and date verify that the voter intends to vote absentee. The bar code confirms the voter's identity, and can be used to verify that ballot has been received.
2. The inner envelope is blank. This assures that once the ballot is processed, the voter's privacy is maintained. The ballot is contained within the inner envelope.

3. The ballot is your vote. On Election Day, it will be included in the overall vote count.

In-Person Voting:

Upon arrival at your designated polling station, you will:

1. Check in with a specifically trained and deputized poll worker, who will verify that you are registered to vote at the specified polling place.
2. Electronically sign the poll book, and your signature will be verified to confirm your identity. If the poll worker is not able to confirm your identity, (or it is your first time voting within the precinct) an ID can(will) be requested.
3. Then be issued a slip of paper with a QR code, which identifies your status to the BMD (voting machine). You scan the code to activate your ballot; make your selections; verify your selections; and print out your ballot.
4. Then feed your ballot into the counter which electronically documents and tabulates votes, and saves your paper ballot for later verification.

Results from both the individual printers and the counter are tabulated at regular intervals throughout the day and verified at the end of the evening to confirm that votes are neither

over or undercounted. Totals, by polling station, are submitted to the voting office, where specific race totals are tabulated.

Voting machines in Union County were developed by Unitys/Open/Elect, and are approved by the State of Pennsylvania. This system has undergone rigorous testing to address confidentiality, voter anonymity, integrity, availability and audit ability. Tests include:

Penetration Testing

Troubleshoots ways in which machines can be compromised. The intent of this process is to identify and correct any vulnerabilities that could: change the outcome of the election; interfere with voter's abilities to cast ballots or have ballots recorded correctly; or compromise the secrecy of the vote.

Accuracy and Logic Testing

Verifies that voting equipment properly displays ballots, collects votes, and tabulates results. Additional pre-voting steps include ballot preparation election programming, ballot installation, poll opening, and verification of ballots by a central scanner.

Each machine operates independently during the voting process. An air gap prevents any machine from being connected to the internet. Additionally, each machine produces a paper ballot that can be used to verify one's vote, and be used in possible audits. Electronic ballots are encrypted.

MARY LAHNER

(continued on next page)

Access Control

Physical Security: defines how machines are stored (locks, tamper-proof seals, security cameras); who and when authorized individuals can access the machines. Access is recorded in an Audit Log which documents (time/date stamps) for all interactions with the machine or system.

The mail-in/absentee votes are also tabulated, and are added to the in-person votes, and can then be released as Preliminary Results (usually on Election Night).

Once voting is completed, totals from each machine are collected and delivered (by an authorized individual) to a central vote counting location. Here totals are tabulated, (in person and mail-in) and if appropriate, Tentative Results can be released.

Paper ballots (identified by a corresponding number) are also delivered to a safe storage area where a Ballot Manifest is prepared. The ballot manifest records the number of paper ballots, and the machine from which they originated. Paper ballots are then stored in batches where they can be accessed for further audit.

Each county must perform a Post Election Audit. This can be either:

1. A 2% sample (or 2000) of each paper/computer ballot comparison;
2. An RLA (risk-limiting audit) which compares a random sample of paper ballots with totals reported on vote counting machines. The closer the preliminary result, the greater the number of ballots must be checked.

Only after the audit can Official Results can be released.