

# LEAGUE LINE

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

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

It seems that usually spring takes its good old time in arriving, sunny one day and snow the next, that goes on forever! Not this year! Today it arrived in full bloom. In one day, I saw the first robins (10 in my yard!), my forsythia bush is in bloom, there are buds on the lilac bushes and daffodils everywhere you look, and of course, the first dandelion. Along with all the colorful flowers, the birds are starting to put on their best outfits in preparation for the mating dance. Every once in a while, the sun makes an appearance and the wonderful warmer weather is a welcome change.

While all of that is pleasant, and uplifting, the other thing that raises its ugly head is the dreaded (at least by me) Daylight Savings Time! Who thought of that? It takes me a full week to get my body clock in sync with the change!

Another harbinger of spring is the Primary Elections. With a Presidential Election on the horizon, this year's primary is doubly important. But wait! How can that be? It seems that the candidates have already been chosen and the press has already all but predicted some outcomes. While the country needs major election reform, one of the broken pieces is the primary election process. I am not a good one to ask, or maybe I am. I don't get to vote in a primary as I am a registered Independent, but that is not the point that I am trying to make. I believe that all the primaries, particularly the Presidential primaries, should take place on the same day across the country just as the actual Presidential election does. Tune in to any news channel and they will be referring to the chosen candidates, and yet half of the country has not voted. Change can only take place by letting your Representatives know that we want election reform with fair districting and open primaries.

*Kandy Duncan, President*

## APRIL FORUM

The League of Women of Women Voters of Lewisburg Area Forum series will continue on Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup>. The Union County Commissioners, Preston Boop, Jeff Reber, and Stacy Richards, will give a government update for Union County. League members and the general public are invited to attend the presentation from noon to 1:00p.m. at La Primavera in Lewisburg.

An optional lunch is available beginning at 11:30a.m. for \$15.50. Reservations are requested, although not required, so we can provide the restaurant with an idea of the food needed for the in-person lunch. Please send an email by April 14<sup>th</sup>, if you intend to eat at the buffet to [LWVLAForum@gmail.com](mailto:LWVLAForum@gmail.com).

The meeting will be recorded and promptly posted after the event on the League website under [What You Missed](#).

*Teri MacBride, Forum Committee Co-Chair*

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

*The following events are current as of publication date, April 1<sup>st</sup>. Please check our website, [LWVLewisburgArea.org](http://LWVLewisburgArea.org), frequently for the most current updates.*

**Monday, April 1st, 4:00p.m.**

**BOARD MEETING**  
East Buffalo Township Municipal Building  
589 Fairground Road, Lewisburg

**Monday, April 8th**

Last day to REGISTER TO VOTE

**Tuesday, April 16th**

Last day to request a MAIL-IN or ABSENTEE BALLOT

**Tuesday, April 16th, 12:00-1:00p.m.**

**FORUM**  
Union County Commissioners: Jeff Reber, Preston Boop, and Stacy Richards  
"Union County Government Update"  
LaPrimavera  
2593 Old Turnpike Road, Lewisburg

**Tuesday, April 23rd**

**PRIMARY ELECTION**  
Polls open from 7a.m. – 8p.m.

**Monday, May 6th, 4:00p.m.**

**BOARD MEETING**  
East Buffalo Township Municipal Building  
589 Fairground Road, Lewisburg

**Thursday, May 30th, 7:30p.m.**

**ANNUAL MEETING**

**Thursday, June 13th, 1:00p.m.**

**BOOK CLUB**  
The Library for Union County  
255 Reitz Blvd, Lewisburg  
Or by ZOOM

## MARCH FORUM

*Dr. Feurstein requested that we not record his remarks. A detailed summary of his speech follows for anyone who missed the presentation.*

Dr. Abe Feurstein, Chair of the Bucknell University Department of Education, spoke at the League of Women Voters of the Lewisburg Area Forum March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024 on the topic of threats to public education in the United States. He began by discussing public education's long history toward the goal of creating an educated electorate. As early as 1787, Jefferson strongly supported public education, although with little success. In the northern states, a system of public education developed in which all children, male and female, were educated equally. Thomas Dewey further advanced the concept that public education was for the public good and a strong system of public education took hold. We have a tendency, however, to take this strong system of public education for granted.

In the 1960's, schools were consolidated in terms of race and economic background, largely due to housing patterns. When children attended school together, schools became part of the community, but there was an increasing move toward emphasizing personal gain as the goal of schools rather than creating a common community.

Based on the work of Milton Friedman, the Reagan administration argued that the marketplace should be used in determining where children went to school. There were several alternatives which were proposed for failing public schools. Rather than working out agreements within communities, there was a tendency toward alternatives that moved away from the public schools.

The values encouraged were school choice, equity, and efficiency. It was a different time with different values. In 1980, the emphasis had been on equality, but there was a shift to an emphasis on quality and choice. Milton Friedman argued that segregation would be solved if there were school choice.

Large amounts of money moved into conservative think tanks by people like the Koch brothers who were interested in changing educational policy. They advocated for less government regulation in all areas, including schools. They assumed that the marketplace was always preferable. School choice became the alternative posed to counter dissatisfaction with the public schools. In addition, public education became an easy target to blame for the large changes taking place in American society. A confluence took place between the fear of change and the neoliberal position of reliance on market forces. Instead of working through the differences in outlook and values, there was a shift to the creation of charter schools and then of vouchers.

Currently, charter schools, which are funded with public money, represent 7.4% of schools. While they do not have to follow the same rules as the public schools, most charter schools perform about the same as public schools. They serve many fewer students with disabilities. They are funded with money based on the per-student allocation from the districts of their students. In 2021-22, that amounted to 2.6 billion dollars. Cyber schools cost much less to run but they are paid at the same rate.

Vouchers are an idea which was proposed by Milton Friedman. Vouchers are given to families, who can spend it on the schools they choose, including those which include religious education. Originally the idea of vouchers was to help children in ghetto areas with poorer school systems. Over time, the concept has expanded to the point that, in Indiana, for example, one third of all children now receive vouchers. Pennsylvania's Governor Shapiro supports vouchers in his current budget bill.

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Despite these challenges to public education, there are glimmers of hope. One is that people really like their public schools because they help create cohesive communities. It should be noted that Democrats hold this positive view of the public schools more than Republicans. Two thirds of the school board candidates endorsed by the conservative group, Moms for Liberty, lost in the past year's school board elections. Dr. Feurstein also mentioned this year's increase in the number of Bucknell students pursuing teacher certification. Across the country, however, teachers are still retiring at a rate that exceeds the number of new teachers in the pipeline.

Mary Zimmerman, Forum Committee  
Co-Chair

## FINANCE DRIVE

Many thanks to those who have donated this year! If you haven't already done so, please consider making a contribution to the Members and Friends Finance Drive to support the important work done by our Lewisburg League. If you did not receive a letter about the drive, please contact me at [carolemadle66@gmail.com](mailto:carolemadle66@gmail.com) and I will send one.

**Please note:** While the self-addressed envelopes enclosed with the fund drive letters were addressed correctly, the address at the bottom of the donation form is incorrect. Our mailing address is LWVLA, P.O.Box 206, Lewisburg PA 17837

Carole Madle, Members & Friends Finance  
Drive Chair

## BUCKNELL PROJECT

The team that is working on analysis of the League processes is on spring break. Before they left however, they had put together a draft of their work to share with the Board. The work is very preliminary. It should be completed by the end of April.

## INTEGRITY OF THE BALLOT

The group is currently working with a designer to decide on a theme and a format for getting the word out about the process of voting. Stay tuned for further developments.

Kandy Duncan, Representative

## MEMBERSHIP

### Annual Meeting

The Board of Directors has chosen Thursday, May 30<sup>th</sup> for the date for the Annual Meeting. This year's meeting will actually be a Birthday Party for our 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! The place and time have yet to be decided. We will need some fun-loving people to help plan this event. We have had a couple of members volunteer, but remember: the more people working on it, the more and varied ideas we will have! If you would like to join in the planning, let me know. The first meeting of this group will most likely be in a week or so!

### New Member

We are pleased to welcome new member, Heidi Schultz!

## LEAGUE LINE

APR./MAY 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 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

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### Facebook Page

[facebook.com/lwvla](https://facebook.com/lwvla)

### Website

[LWVLewisburgArea.org](http://LWVLewisburgArea.org)

## AMENDMENT CONCERT



League members Linda Harris and Janice Bigelow recently participated in the Susquehanna Valley Chorale's concert, Amendment-Righting Our Wrongs. The theme of the concert celebrated the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment and honoring the 60-plus-year struggle for that accomplishment. It was a powerful vocal musical program that celebrated women's empowerment and resilience. Dressed in period costume, Linda and Janice marched into Stretansky Hall at Susquehanna University carrying signs that said **VOTES for WOMEN**, (as pictured above) and shouting, "Deeds not words is what we want. We demand the right to Vote!"

## BOOK CLUB

Here is our summer reading list for the Book Club.

Our next book discussion will be on June 13<sup>th</sup> at 1p.m. at the Public Library for Union County and on Zoom. We will talk about *Killers of the Flower Moon: The Osage Murders and the Birth of the FBI* by David Gran as well as *Yellow Bird: Oil, Murder, and a Woman's Search for Justice in Indian Country* by Sierra Crane Murdoch. Both books have either won or been nominated for numerous awards. The first title has been made into a film which is currently streaming on Apple+TV; rights to the second title have been sold to Paramount+ to be produced by the same creators as *Reservation Dogs* (a series currently available on Hulu). It is always interesting to explore why and how certain books are made into popular movies.

In July, we will read a collection of essays by women entitled *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis* by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson et. al. It has been named one of the best books of the year by Smithsonian Magazine and should provide us with lots of directions for discussion related to climate change. *Not the End of the World: How We can be the First Generation to Build a Sustainable Planet* by Hannah Ritchie is a more hopeful full-length book. Feel free to bring along other climate crisis related books you may have read to add to our discussion.

For August, we would like to read Tracy Kidder's latest book, *Rough Sleepers: Dr. Jim O'Connell's Urgent Mission to Bring Healing to Homeless People*, named "best book of the year" by NPR, Book Page and the Chicago Public Library, and was a NY Times bestseller. Receiving similar accolades, including one of President Obama's favorite books of the year, is a debut work called *Beautiful Country: A Memoir of an Undocumented Childhood* by Qian Julie Wang.

So read a little or read a lot, but please plan to join us to talk about these books. The July and August times and dates will be announced closer to the time, and we will make these meetings available on Zoom.

Wanda Clark & Linda McGann

## VOTER SERVICES

### Facts for Voters

The editor, Lisa Tranquillo, and her research staff, Mary Lotspeich, Helen Nunn, and Ann Longanbach, have completed the 2024 *Facts for Voters*. Printed copies have been distributed into our community. An online version will be available on our website in early summer.

### Voters Guide and VOTE411

By the time this April *League Line* is published, Sheri Stayton along with her amazing staff Liz Clement, Carole Madle, Wayne Baker and designer Dawn Maneval will have completed the Spring General Primary 2024 *Voters Guide* and distributors will have delivered them into our community. The online version of this *Voters Guide* should be available in our website in early April.

[VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org), the National League's website with candidate information, is online and once again it's time for our members to plant **VOTE411** yard signs. If you need a sign, contact me: [Lsharris323@gmail.com](mailto:Lsharris323@gmail.com), 267-337-5986. I'll have them on my porch for easy pick up.

### Mail-In Ballot Instructions

On the next page of this newsletter you'll find the official instructions for how to return a mail-in ballot.

Linda Harris, Voter Services chair



# Instructions – How to Return Your Ballot

For your ballot to count, you must follow all of these steps.



**1. Mark your ballot with a pen (black or blue ink), put it in the yellow envelope that says “Official Election Ballot” and seal it.**

**DO NOT** write your name, sign or put any other type of mark on the yellow envelope.



**2. Put the yellow envelope in the official return envelope with the purple-colored band and seal it.**



**3. Sign inside the box and put today's date on the return envelope.**

- Sign your name inside the box.
- Put today's date—not your birthdate.

If you have an illness or disability that prevents you from signing, make a mark inside the box and have your witness complete the witness section.



**4. Return your ballot right away.**

- By mail – Remember to include postage.
- In person – Bring your ballot to the county election office located in the Union County Government Center at 155 N 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Lewisburg, PA, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

***Deadline – Your ballot must be received by the Union County Board of Elections by 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 23, 2024.***

Track your ballot at [Vote.pa.gov/MailBallotStatus](https://Vote.pa.gov/MailBallotStatus)

- ✓ **If you deliver your ballot in person**, you must deliver it yourself. If you have a disability that prevents you from delivering your ballot yourself, contact us at the phone number below.
- ✓ **If you lose your ballot or make a mistake**, contact us at the phone number below.
- ✓ **If you receive a mail-in ballot and return your voted ballot by the deadline**, you cannot vote at your polling place on election day. If you are unable to return your voted mail-in ballot by the deadline, you can only vote a provisional ballot at your polling place on election day. But if you bring your mail-in ballot and the return envelope with you to your polling place, you can give up your mail ballot and vote in-person.

## Contact

Union County Elections  
155 N 15<sup>th</sup> Street  
Lewisburg, PA 17837  
570-524-8682  
Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.