

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Susan Carty <u>sc51446@aol.com</u> 610-692-2139

Thank you to all who attended our Annual Meeting! It is always a good thing to be able to spend time with each other in a different setting, with good food and excellent speakers. The stories of the major roles played by Chester County women in the abolitionist movement, the women's suffrage movement and the casting of the Justice Bell were fascinating! We thank Laurie Rofini and Holly Holst so very much! We know that we will see them again. And now, the next coming attraction will be the ---- PA State Convention - June 7-9, 2013 in Lewisburg, PA.

The LWVCC is proud to be sending 9 delegates to convention! Our enthusiastic representatives are ready to network, to learn about judicial reform, to attend workshops, caucuses, plenary sessions and more. Stay tuned for the next Voter to hear about their experiences. Or better yet, come to the Board Meeting on Saturday, June 29th to hear everything in person! We would love to see you.

Another huge Thank You! to Deb Gallek and Pat Horrocks for their heroic efforts transitioning our Voters Guide to SmartVoter format. The ups and downs were memorable. No doubt more kinks will need ironing for the November Election. Another set of hands or two would be gratefully appreciated to lighten the load for these two dedicated members! We also will need to continue spreading the word about where and how to tap into our Voters Guide.

On a serious note though, what can be done to encourage more voters to participate in the election process? Only 15% of eligible voters participated, while 36% of the candidates responded to LWV questions. Certainly, in a democracy, we have the freedom and right to participate or not. But, when citizens fail to participate, choose not to participate, what then? I couldn't resist this quote.



"Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters."

<u>Abraham Lincoln</u>

MEMBERS CORNER	2	AGRICULTURE	6
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL	3	VOTERS SERVICE	6
ENVIRONMENT	4	SEPR	7
CIVIL LIBERTIES	5	BOOK CLUB	8
FUNDRAISING	5	ODDS & ENDS	9

DID YOU VOTE ON TUESDAY MAY 21?

RUN DATE:05/21/13 PRIMARY ELECTION, MAY	Y 21, 2013
RUN TIME:11:45 PM CHESTER COUNTY, PA (STATISTICS FROM CHESTER COUNTY VOT)	ER SERVICES WEBSITE)
	VOTES PERCENT
PRECINCTS COUNTED (OF 226)	226 100.00
REGISTERED VOTERS - TOTAL	<mark>. 330,676</mark>
REGISTERED VOTERS - REPUBLICAN	
REGISTERED VOTERS - DEMOCRATIC	
BALLOTS CAST - TOTAL	
BALLOTS CAST - DEMOCRATIC	
VOTER TURNOUT - TOTAL	10.45
VOTER TURNOUT - REPUBLICAN	15.11 9.79

Another Pennsylvania Primary Election and again – **voter turnout was very disappointing.** Four years ago, the Chester County voter turnout in the 2009 Primary was 15%. Despite the fact that Independents cannot vote in the PA Primary, these numbers are terrible. (12.6%)

- We **MUST** and **CAN** do more to inform, educate and encourage <u>ALL</u> of our eligible citizens to participate in the political process and **VOTE**. If you have comments and ideas about how we can increase voter turnout, send them in to one of our board members.
- Our goal is to keep the lines of communications <u>OPEN</u> to and from all of our board members, committee chairs and <u>YOU</u>.
- Local elections affect us directly and the people we vote for determine our future.

We are the League of Women Voters and **VOTING** is our priority. HELP US FIND SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE VOTER TURNOUT.

SATURDAY, JUNE 29, 2013 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS BOARD MEETING

ALL members and their guests welcome.

West Chester Borough Hall 10am

MEMBERS CORNER

Meryle Rothman, Chair mgrothman@verizon.net 610-431-9986

CONGRATULATIONS on another great year (2012/2013) for the League of Women Voters. Our membership grew substantially which earned us an award and recognition from the LWVUS. Great job !!!!

Despite the many challenges that we faced this year, our new officers, board members, committee chairs and active volunteers accomplished a great deal. We could not do what we do without you. Thank you.

WHEN YOU RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP, THINK ABOUT JOINING A COMMITTEE TOO, AND HELP GROW THE LEAGUE EVEN MORE THIS COMING YEAR.

JOIN or RENEW YOUR LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MEMBERSHIP

www.palwv.org/chesco

OUR NEW FISCAL YEAR BEGINS JULY 1, 2013.

LWVCC Annual Membership **\$65** (make checks out to LWVCC) $(2^{nd} \text{ and } 3^{rd} \text{ person in same household } \$32.50)$ Student Membership **\$20** (FREE for the first year) League Tax-Deductible Contributions – LWVCC Education Fund (make checks out to LWVCC ED FUND) (Amount of your choice. Donate IN HONOR OF or IN MEMORY OF someone special.) MAIL YOUR CHECKS TO: LWVCC 719 Price Street West Chester, PA 19382 mgrothman@verizon.net 610-431-9986 Thank you for including the following information with your checks. (For gift memberships - include name and address of recipient.) Name _____ Address _____Zip Code_____ Township _____Email Address _____ Telephone_____Cell Phone_____ Interests New Membership _____ Renew_____ Gift Membership _____ Amount Enclosed______

DOUBLE THE IMPACT OF YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES by Cheryl Knoell

Many employers offer as a benefit a Matching Gift Program. They will donate to charitable, educational, or community-based organizations supported by employees.

For those members who are employed, it may be worthwhile calling your Benefits Department to ask whether this is available. A few minutes spent filling out a form could mean your annual dues or check made out to the LWVCC Education Fund could have a double impact.

CELEBRATING JUNE WILSON & THE CC HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S 45th ANNIVERSARY

What a wonderful day. On May 7, 2013, the Chester County Commissioners recognized former League member June Wilson and the Chester County Health Department for their outstanding contributions to the health and welfare of the people of Chester County. June and Gene Wilson's son Tom and granddaughter Jacky were presented with a citation along with Margaret Rivello, Health Department Director. Thank you League members for celebrating with us at a reception at the Health Department where additional citations were presented by Senators Dinniman and Pileggi's staff members. We love saying thank you to our League members who work so hard and make such a difference to improve the quality of life for all of us.

THANK YOU DOWNINGTOWN COUNTRY CLUB

Our League of Women Voters of Chester County Annual Meeting was outstanding this year....thanks to our members, guests and speakers, but especially to the DOWNINGTOWN COUNTRY CLUB. Sorry to those of you who could not join us, but plan to attend next June 2014, same place, for another wonderful League event.

FYI – Justice Bell Centennial Celebration Committee – Interested? Contact Laurie Rofini - <u>Lrofini@chesco.org</u>. <u>http://delco.palwv.org/delco/about/justicebell.htm</u>

ENVIRONMENTAL/CONSERVATION ISSUES AND ACTIONS

Alma Forsyth, Chair jalklforsyth@verizon.net 610-388-1361

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012 - 2013

The LWVCC Environmental Committee continues to promote an environment beneficial to life through protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest, and to promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporates principles of stewardship. (LWVUS Natural Resources Positions)

The main focus this year has been on monitoring the gas, oil and coal mining industry activities and taking necessary action to avoid impacts on the environment, health, welfare, and safety of the public. Monitoring includes – legislative actions, court decisions, false statements, collusion, corporate power, unfair and unjust settlements, public and organizational meetings, workshops, and conferences.

Further research, study is done in order to update material facts and beliefs and to understand the complexities of mining for fossil fuels and to explore the aspects of alternative energy.

We collaborate with scientists, physicians, ecologists, engineers, attorneys, legislators, municipal officials, conservation and economic development organizations.

We also focus on other conservation issues:

The effects of Climate Change on the natural resources.

Clean Water and Clean Air Legislation.

Municipality Rights to govern: planning and zoning to protect the natural resources to ensure public health, welfare and safety.

Environmental News from Around the Nation

Pipeline fight in (Texas) Legislature is 'battle of the titans'

Posted: 10:52 p.m. Thursday . May 9, 2013 By Tim Eaton – American-Statesman Staff (Excerpts)

Deep in the undercurrents of the 83rd legislature session, a storm is brewing that strikes fear in the hearts of many lawmakers. It may ultimately, force them to choose between disappointing private property rights advocates, or going against some of the powerful oil and gas interests that give generously to their political campaigns. It is a choice few want to make. Though the conflict has played out largely behind the scenes, two of the nation's richest family dynasties – the powerful Bass family from Fort Worth and the Koch brothers of Kansas and New York – are pitted against one another, with trial lawyers, environmentalists, farmers and ranchers thrown into the fray. "Its sort of a battle of the titans, said state Rep. Denni s Bonnen, R-Angleton. At issue are the legal powers given to energy companies to condemn and take private land for pipelines.

For years, pipeline companies have found it relatively easy to use the eminent domain process to acquire private property. Land owners have little choice but to give up their land, though they can haggle over price.

But to wield the power of eminent domain, pipelines must be considered "common carriers," meaning they allow other companies access to their pipes. Companies building pipelines for their own use face a more difficult – and often expensive – task in negotiating the necessary rights. To be a common carrier, companies have needed to do little more than check a box on a form at the Texas Railroad Commission , the state's oil and gas regulator, attesting that they are – or intend to be – a common carrier. But a 2011 Texas Supreme Court decision cast a cloud of uncertainty over the process. The ruling created a prospect for Texas landowners facing condemnation to file lawsuits in counties across the state challenging common carrier status . The result for engery companies could be years of expensive lawsuits in dozens of the state's 254 courthouses. The Basses essentially are involved because they believe passionately in property owner's rights. The Koch family – Koch Enterprises, a multi-national conglomerate with petroleum interests support new laws letting the Railroad Commission and Travis County courts handle all challenges to common carrier status.

<u>(Environmental News from Around the Nation continued)</u> 'Monsanto Protection Act': Chemical monopoly writes its own law

By Betsey Piette <u>www.workers.org</u> (Excerpts)

On March 24, the pro-Monsanto "Farmer Assurance Provision, Section 735" rider was quietly slipped into the Agricultural Appropriations provisions of HR 933, the Continuing Resolution spending bill designed to avert a federal government shutdown. Section 735 should have been labeled the "Monsanto Protection Act." Now law for the next six months after President Barack Obama signed HR 933 on March 29, it allows agribusiness giant Monsanto to promote and plant genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and genetically engineered (GE) seeds, free from any judicial litigation that might decide the crops are unsafe. Even if a court review determines that a GMO crop harms humans, Section 735 allows the seeds to be planted once the USDA approves them. Public health lawyer Michele Simon says the Senate bill requires the USDA to "ignore any court ruling that would otherwise halt the planting of new geneticallyengineered crops."



Jean Goerth, Chair jgoerth@parttimethecat.com 484-879-4024

In March our Civil Liberties Committee met with renewed interest in the *United v. Federal Election Commission* because of our growing perception of the political ramifications of that decision on our elections and the growing power of corporations. We were able to make contact with the Concord-Amherst, Massachusetts League who had studied the court decision for several years and who graciously sent us copies of background material with a power point presentation that they had used and were sharing with other leagues. This certainly would make our work easier. At our April meeting we divided up the questions for study and the bibliographic sources that Susan Fields had previously recommended. We hope to be ready with our own public event in the fall.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Cheryl Knoell, Chair caknoell@gmail.com 610-430-1444

Have you ever heard of Mira Lloyd Dock? She lived from 1853 to 1945, much of that time in Harrisburg. She developed interests in woman suffrage and the conservation of natural resources. She is described as forceful and an effective lobbyer; she founded Harrisburg's Civic Club.

The author of a biography ("Mira Lloyd Dock and the Progressive Era Conservation Movement"), Susan Rimby, will speak about her on June 12th, 5:30 pm, at the Athenaeum in Philadelphia. The cost is \$10, and details can be read at www.philaathenaeum.org/programs.html.

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

Carol Kuniholm, Chair <u>ckuniholm@verizon.net</u> 484-678-8061

While work continues on the national agriculture update study, our local agriculture committee will be hosting a caucus on agriculture at the PALWV convention on the afternoon of June 8. Brian Snyder, executive director of PASA (Pennsylvania Association of Sustainable Agriculture) will be the guest speaker, presenting "Jump-start Your League Ag Study: Sustainable Foodsheds for the Future."

Brian shares his expertise on food policy and sustainable foodsheds on his recently created blog: Write to Farm (writetofarm.com).

For the future, the committee hopes to partner with area famers and local food and farming organizations in events that build dialogue and awareness about local food systems. The committee is seeking host a fall farm tour, and considering a fund-raising event highlighting local artisan wines and cheeses.

Work on agriculture issues will continue when the national study materials are made available in the fall.

In the meantime, anyone interested in helping with a farm and food event, or interested in being on an advocacy update email list should contact Carol Kuniholm.

VOTERS SERVICE

Mary Lou Dondero, Chair 610-692-3299

The final weeks before the Municipal Primary brought three requests for Candidates Debates for School Boards. On May 5, the League sponsored a debate for the candidates in the West Chester Area School District. Jennifer Levy-Tatum acted as moderator, Anne Crowley was the timer, and Pam Gray, Cheryl Knoell, Cathy Palmquist, and Ginnie Newlin acted as screeners. On May 8, we visited Great Valley High School with Toni Keg as moderator, Joan Bergquist as time, and Michele Howard, Geri Joseph, and Barbara DeWilde as screeners. On May 5, we visited the Fred S. Engle Middle School in the Avon Grove School District with Charlotte Gosselink as moderator, Deb Gallek as timer, and Susan Rzucidlo, Carlotta Mannheim, and Pat Horrocks as screeners. Many thanks to all the League members who made these important events possible.

We are grateful for the Daily Local News for streaming live the West Chester Candidates Debates and for the excellent coverage of all three debates in the newspaper. Thank you Jeremy Garrard and Brent Glasgow!

In July, we will await the court's decision on the Voter ID law, and on August 2, we will register the new citizens following the Naturalization Ceremony. Through August and September, we will register voters at county libraries and the Exton Square Mall.

If you would like to help with any of these events or have ideas you would like to share, please give me a call.

P.S. We already have one debate on our fall schedule – East Fallowfield Supervisors. If you live out that way and would like to help, please get in touch!

"FRIENDS HELPING FRIENDS"

Once again, the League is partnering with the Boscov's Department Stores for their "Friends Helping Friends" fund-raising event for non-profit organizations. This year's date is Tuesday, October 22 when, with the purchase fo a \$5.00 shopping pass, shoppers will receive a 25% discount on virtually the entire store! Since the \$5.00 cost stays with the League, this is a great opportunity for the League as well everyone who shops at Boscov's on that day! If you have taken advantage of this opportunity in the past, I can assure you that you will not be disappointed! Shopping passes not only provide a great shopping experience for you but also for your family and friends! Please send me your order as soon as possible, enclosing your check made out to the League.

Mary Lou Dondero 769 Brettingham Court, West Chester, PA 19382

Sarah Caspar, Chair scaspar@comcast.net 610-873-1237

"SEPR has the potential to be the most valuable connection and form of communication between local Leagues. The people who participate are great people to work with and to know."

League of Women Voters of Southeastern PA ILO

Annual Meeting, Saturday, June 15, 2013 11 AM to 1:45 PM

Swarthmore Friends Meeting, Whittier Place, off Elm Avenue On the Swarthmore College Campus

The Meeting is within walking distance of the Swarthmore Media/Elwyn Line Regional Rail Station. For a campus map and driving directions go to <u>http://swarthmore.quaker.org/</u>.

This will be a business meeting to choose officers and a board, and adopt a program and budget. <u>All</u> members of the Local Leagues in the 5-county regional are eligible and encouraged to participate.

An optional box luncheon will be served at Noon. See details below. The Swarthmore College Campus is the home of the Scott Arboretum.

Come early or stay late and visit the Rose Garden which should be in full bloom.

WHAT IS SEPR AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

- LWVSEPR is the interleague organization consisting of all the local Leagues in the 5county Southeastern PA Region including Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery Counties and Philadelphia.
- Through SEPR these Leagues speak and act with one voice on regional issues including transportation, infrastructure and regional cooperation.
- SEPR gives a wider scope to local concerns and a regional scope to national and state issues.

Please respond by June 10th. Email or call Lora Lavin, 610.328.3746, <u>lavin@steuber.com</u>. A train arrives at the Swarthmore Station at 10:38am. If you want a ride to the meeting please indicate when you reply. Please provide the following information:

Name	Phone
Email	_League Chapter

The box lunch (optional) consisting of a half sandwich, side and a cookie will be less than \$10. Please indicate your choice of sandwich, bread and side below.

Tuna Salad	Roasted Turkey Breast	Egg Salad
White Bread	Whole Wheat Bread	Rye Bread
Fresh Fruit	Pasta Salad	Potato Salad

LEAGUE BOOK CLUB



FOOD FOR THOUGHT BOOK GROUP MEETING

MONDAY JULY 1, 2013*

10:30 am - Second Reading Book Store

Parkway Shopping Center, West Chester

ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN IN ON THE DISCUSSION!

BOOK SELECTION: <u>Plutocrats: The Rise of the New Global Super Rich and the Fall of Everyone Else</u>, by Cynthia Freeland

*No June Meeting

Book Group Update – Notes from last Book Club May 6, 2013 Carol Kuniholm

The League's new book group met on May 6 to discuss **The Parties vs. The People: How to Turn Republicans and Democrats into Americans**, by Mickey Edwards. Edwards highlights specific aspects of election law that have led to increasing partisan polarity, and suggests practical ways to reverse this.

The book discussion focused on aspects most pertinent to Pennsylvania: closed primaries that disenfranchise independent voters, and ballot access rules that make it difficult for independent or 3rd party candidates to appear on the ballot, redrawn districts that guarantee party control of most districts, and campaign finance laws that "permit political parties, and thus party leaders, to play significant, often decisive roles in congressional races, helping to create a Congress in which legislators not only feel a strong sense of obligation to party leaders but are aware that their future success may depend on not alienating these leaders."

The group's discussion focused on the first three of Edward's recommendations:

Step One: Take Away the Right of the Parties to Control Access to the Ballot Step Two: Take Away the Parties' Control over Redistricting Step Three: Reduce Spending, Increase Competition

PALWV has partnered with Common Cause PA on some of these issues, and has a strong statement on apportionment and redistricting. Pennsylvania is one of only 13 states with completely closed primary elections, and according to the Pennsylvania Ballot Access Coalition, "No other state puts such a heavy burden on its independent and third party candidates."

The next book group meeting will be on July 1, at 10:30 AM at the Second Reading II bookstore at 929 South High Street, West Chester. The book will be **Plutocrats: The Rise of the New Global Super-Rich and the Fall of Everyone Else**, by Cynthia Freeland, digital editor at Thomson Reuters. She has been a finance reporter for The Economist, The Washington Post, and the Financial Times. **Plutocrats** has been described as "the definitive examination of inequality in our time.

<u>ODDS & ENDS</u>

UWCHLAN TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY DAY

Lionville Park

Saturday, July 13, 2013

4pm-8pm Volunteers Needed for our League Table. Contact Jean Goerth to sign up. jgoerth@parttimethecat.com 484-879-4024

BROOKINGS Presents <u>SUBURBAN POVERTY SUMMIT</u> at Building One America July 18-19, 2013

Lora Lavin 610.328.3746 lavin@steuber.com



2013 Second National Summit

FOR INCLUSIVE SUBURBS AND SUSTAINABLE REGIONS July 18-19, 2013 Washington, D.C.

As we contemplate the future of LWVSEPR we might want to consider the implications for our region of the recently release Brookings Institution study "Confronting Suburban Poverty in America". Here is a link to information about the study<u>http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/05/23/poverty-is-now-growing-twice-as-fast-in-thesuburbs-as-in-the-city/</u>. The case studies do not include the Philadelphia region but that does not mean that we are not affected by this phenomenon. Below is information about a summit in DC in July. I am not suggesting that anyone try to go although it would be great if anyone could. The book identifies issues that have been the subject of SEPR program for years, including mass transit and suburban sprawl. The coming summit reminded me of an event I attended in Lancaster a few years ago (2010?) entitled "Building One Pennsylvania" which focused on school funding. I decided to Google it and found out it is still very much alive and hooked in to the DC event. Here is a link <u>http://buildingonepa.org/</u>. Lora

http://www.lwv.org/

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS National Website CLICK TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHO WE ARE.

Our history, mission, positions and priorities.....and so much more.

REDISTRICTING EFFECTIVE IN 2014 PA ELECTIONS

Pennsylvania High Court Upholds Redistricting Plan

http://articles.philly.com/2013-05-10/news/39144696_1_new-maps-districts-justices

The new detailed maps are not available yet. We will let you know how to access them at a later date.

MELTON CENTER CommUnity Day

Sunday, August 18, 2013

10am – 8pm

Contact Susan Carty for more information - sc51446@aol.com



STUDY PENDING LEGISLATION FROM HOME^{*}

NO TRAVEL required for this opportunity! It may even be HABIT FORMING. You can learn about legislation sponsored by your Representatives, Senators, Congressmen at home or in Washington, just by the click of a button on your computer. You can follow your chosen legislative item by # or title and receive alerts when the status is changing. What could be easier for those of us who want to be up-to-date on our favorite issues?

How can this be done with such ease? Just tap into the following site: <u>www.legiscan.com</u> to begin your trip. It will be time well spent.

There is a "FREE" member section and multiple "Paid Subscription" sections. You can follow legislation in Pennsylvania or you can follow legislation at the Federal level as well. It takes some time, but fear not! The more you click on tabs – the more you will learn.

Items we are following at this moment.

- SB37 Electronic Voter Registration <u>Status</u>: To House State Government Committee
- SB543 Voter ID Requirements <u>Status</u>: To Senate State Government Committee
- SB75 Human Trafficking <u>Status</u>: On the Table

HB683 Interference with Agricultural Operations <u>Status</u>: To House Judiciary Committee

(Gas well/fracking operations and/or components thereof are located on a high % of private farm land)



We appreciate all of the reports, summaries, announcements and comments that our Comm ittee Chairs submit for the monthly *VOTER*. This is what the *VOTER* is all about...sharing information with you. A special thank you to our members who send in their stories about "Why I Joined the League". We love hearing from you. <u>mgrothman@verizon.net</u>. Meryle Rothman *VOTER* Editor. Send <u>your</u> story in for the next *VOTER*. Your new *VOTER* Editor is Toni Keg – <u>akeg@verizon.net</u>.

DISCLAIMER – The League of Women Voters never supports or opposes candidates running for office or political parties. Any use of the League of Women Voters' name in campaign advertising or literature has not been authorized by the League.

June VOTER Contributors:

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Chester County VOTER

Horrocks 194 Phillips Mill Rd. Cochranville, Pa. 19330

FIRST CLASS MAIL



The League of Women Voters is a non-profit organization that helps citizens understand and participate in their government.

CALENDAR JUNE 2013 +

Wed. June 5 7pm 4CP Monthly Meeting
Fri-Sun June 7-9 PA League State Convention
Wed. June 12 5:30pm Mira Lloyd Dock Athenaeum in Philadelphia
Fri. June 14 FLAG DAY
Sat. June 15 11am SEPR Meeting
Sun. June 16 FATHER'S DAY
Sat. June 29 10am LWVCC Board Meeting Mon. July 1 10:30am LWVCC Book Club Thurs. July 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY Sat. July 13 4pm Uwchlan Community Day Mon. July 15 PA VOTER ID TRIAL BEGINS Fri. August 2 11:30am Naturalization Ceremony Sat. August 17 10am LWVCC Board Meeting Sun. August 18 Melton Center CommUnity Day Mon. August 26 Women's Equality Day

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS We mant to be part of the solution to better government.