



Chester County VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Chester County, PA

610-644-5960

www.lwvccpa.org

July/August 2015

Keep up to date with the League! Sign up for updates at: www.lwvccpa.org

Connect with us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/LWVofChesterCounty

President's Message

Susan Carty

sc51446@aol.com

Happy Summer to all! I must admit that it is my favorite time of year. Although, my visions of lolling on the beach or languishing by a lake have not be forthcoming. There's always the fall!

But...maybe not so either. Plans for our new year activities will be determined at the **League Reorganization Meeting, August 17th, 5:00 - 8:00 PM.**** Your suggestions and input are always welcome. The addition of new members to assist with our work is also encouraged and welcomed! Hands, hearts and minds are the tools for this work. Between the launch of the Criminal Justice Study and the Election Reform and Modernization position review and update efforts, we will have many opportunities for discussion, education and public events. More information regarding the study will be forthcoming from the state office.

First and foremost is our League support for Chester County voters. Elections are always "around the corner" with our presence at the polls welcomed and needed.

I was proud to participate in a commemoration of the **50th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act** in our state Capitol, but was emphatically reminded of the hard fought, often deadly violent history of barriers overcome. And today, the efforts to build new and unique barriers across this country **continue**. Discrimination is alive - but certainly not well. ***Our right to vote requires constant attention and protection: the job of the League.***

As we continue our efforts for Voter Registration, we will keep our eyes open for the possibility of a new, modern and very exciting method for voter registration to develop shortly. Stay tuned!

In the meantime, enjoy that lake or beach! You will need the rejuvenation in preparation for a new year!

Susan Carty

**** Reorganization meeting at the home of Susan Carty** You won't go hungry!**

Save the Date! September 19, 2015

League of Women Voters Chester County

Presents

"Our Government in Action"

Including a
Criminal Justice Discussion by PA Representatives

Luncheon Speaker: PA Senator Andy Dinniman

Chester County Commissioners' Forum on Affordable Housing

Don't miss this exciting, informative day!

10 am-3pm

Government Services Center

Buffet Lunch by Arianna's

\$25.00

More information to follow!

Voters Service

Mary Lou Dondero
610-692-3299

Many thanks to the League members who participated in our summertime events:

July 11 Uwchlan Community Day: Anne Suss, Barbara Nicolson

July 25 Brandywine Health Center Block Party- Coatesville: Pam Gray, Pat Schultz

August 7 Naturalization Ceremony: Mary Lou Dondero, Judi Bell

We will be visiting all the libraries in Chester County during August and September to register voters and provide voting information. If you can help at your local library, please let me know. Help will also be needed at the Exton Square Mall on September 12, any time between 11:00 and 3:00 pm. Several candidates' debates are also on the planning stages and League support will be needed for all of them.

**Shopping passes at \$5.00 each are available for Boscov's "Friends Helping Friends Day" on October 20.
Just give me a call.**

2015 Election: Important Dates to Remember

Last day to register for November election: October 5

Last day to apply for civilian absentee ballot: October 27

Last day for County Board of Elections to receive civilian absentee ballots: October 30

Municipal Election: November 3

First day to register after November election: November 4

Last day for County to receive military and overseas absentee ballots: November 10

Agriculture

Sarah Caspar and Mary Ciarrocchi, Co-Chairs

scaspar@comcast.net

Tues July 7 Chester County Ag Meeting at the Chester County Food Bank in Eagleview, Exton, PA

Present: Sarah Caspar, Mary Ciarrocchi, Jason Mesiarik and Ally Antonini (Administrative Support and Government Programs Coordinator Chester County Food Bank)

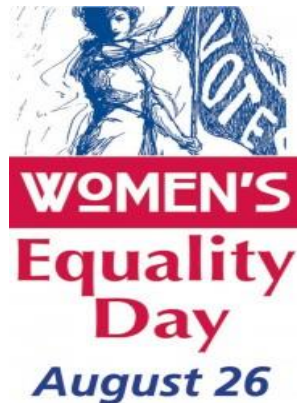
Ally explained to us what the Food Bank does, how many citizens are provided for by it, who the donors are and what its incredible facility does. It is amazing. The warehouse has both refrigeration and freezer. The kitchen has equipment any large scale cooking facility would die for. Sauces, vegetables, chilis and more are all prepared at the facility. The Food Bank enters the Chili Cook Off in West Chester annually. Storage space is almost unlimited.

While we were touring, one of the donors arrived with beautiful onions, lettuce and other vegetables. All organic. I could go on, but I encourage you to go and see for yourself.

When asked what we could do to help support the program, Ally responded that volunteers are needed, along with donations of 100% juice and meat products. Please help. This is a very worthy group.

The next meeting will be in September. Please join us. You will be glad you did. We invite your ideas and will put them into action.

PS: Natania Schaumburg was our speaker at our kick off meeting at Roots Café in West Chester. At the time, she worked for PA Association for Sustainable Agriculture. She is now working for the Chester County Food Bank supporting farmers markets in Chester County.



In 1971 the U.S. Congress designated August 26, the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, as “Women’s Equality Day.”

1971 Joint Resolution of Congress Designating August 26 of each year as Women’s Equality Day

WHEREAS, the women of the United States have been treated as second-class citizens and have not been entitled the full rights and privileges, public or private, legal or institutional, which are available to male citizens of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the women of the United States have united to assure that these rights and privileges are available to all citizens equally regardless of sex; and

WHEREAS, the women of the United States have designated August 26, the anniversary date of the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, as symbol of the continued fight for equal rights: and

WHEREAS, the women of United States are to be commended and supported in their organizations and activities,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, that August 26th of each year is designated as Women’s Equality Day, and the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation annually in commemoration of that day in 1920, on which the women of America were first given the right to vote, and that day in 1970, on which a nationwide demonstration for women’s rights took place.

Education

Toni Keg

akeg@verizon.net

PA State Board of Education Revises Cut Scores for PSSA

On July 9, the State Board of Education approved new cut scores for the PSSA to reflect the new rigor of the PA Core Standards. More information at: <http://www.stateboard.education.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx#.VckykfIVhBd>

PA House Education Committee Holds Public Meeting on Assessments

On July 29, the PA House Education Committee held a public hearing on state assessments. West Chester Area School District Superintendent Dr. Jim Scanlon and Oxford Area School District 4th grade teacher Linda Hicks were among the testifiers. Transcripts of all testimony available at:

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/cteinfo/index.cfm?Code=12&CteeBody=H>

US Congress and Senate pass versions of Elementary and Secondary Education Act Reauthorization

And now begins the work of sorting out the differences and coming to agreement.

On July 8, Congress passed the *Student Success Act* (218-213). Some highlights:

- States must test students in grades 3 through 8 in reading and math, and once in high school, plus science in certain grade spans, make the results public, and provide data to show how different subgroups of students, such as racial minorities, are doing relative to other students.
- Encourages states and districts to take a look at the number of tests they require and get rid of any assessments that are duplicative or low-quality.
- Parents could decide to opt their children out of tests without any penalties for their schools.
- States would be allowed to get out Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and the 2013-14 proficiency goals and develop their own accountability systems, and would have to consider overall school performance, and the performance of particular subgroups.
- States must set challenging academic standards in reading and math and the US Secretary of Education is prohibited from "coercing" a state to adopt a particular set of standards.
- States can, but are not required to, use federal teacher-quality funding to set up teacher evaluations. Eliminates No Child Left Behind's "highly qualified" teacher requirements and consolidates other teacher quality programs.
- Eliminates School Improvement Grant Program (federal funding directed at low-performing schools), allowing states to set aside 7 percent of their own Title I money for school improvement. States would have to intervene in Title I schools that are not performing well, but the bill does not dictate to them how to do so or how many schools to fix at a time.

- Merges programs aimed at migrant students, English-language learners, and neglected and delinquent children with a much larger Title I program for disadvantaged students. Districts could use the funds for any activity allowed under those programs. No money could be transferred out of Title I schools, but funds could go to other low-income schools.
- Eliminates or consolidates nearly 70 programs, some of which have not received federal funding in years.

For details on *Student Success Act*, visit: <http://edworkforce.house.gov/studentsuccessact/>

On July 16, the Senate passed (81-17) the *Every Child Achieves Act*. Some highlights:

- States must test students in grades 3 through 8 in reading and math, and once in high school, plus science in certain grade spans, must make the results public, and provide data to show different subgroups of students, such as racial minorities, are doing relative to other students.
- Encourages states and districts to take a look at the number of tests they require and get rid of any assessments that are duplicative or low-quality.
- States would be allowed to get out of AYP and the 2013-14 proficiency goals and develop their own accountability systems. State test results would have to figure into these systems, but states could decide how much weight to give to them.
- States must set challenging academic standards in reading and math and the US Secretary of Education is prohibited from using federal funding to entice states to adopt a particular set of standards.
- States can, but are not required to, use federal funding to develop teacher evaluation systems. Eliminates the definition of "highly qualified teacher", letting states decide what constitutes teacher quality.
- Eliminates the School Improvement Grant program. School districts would be in charge of figuring out how to fix those schools, with help from states. Federal government would be prohibited from telling states or districts how to fix struggling schools.
- States can allow students in low-performing schools to transfer to a better-performing school.
- Changes the formula for distributing Title I dollars for disadvantaged kids, so that there is less of an emphasis on population, and more on poverty. Maintains separate programs for disadvantaged students, migrant kids, English-language learners, and other special populations. The bill would eliminate some federal programs, but it would also create a new preschool program for the first time in ESEA.

For details on *Every Child Achieves Act*, visit:

<http://www.help.senate.gov/ranking/newsroom/news/senate-passes-alexander-murray-bill-to-fix-no-child-left-behind>

Environmental & Conservation Issues

Alma Forsyth
610-388-1361

jalkforsyth@verizon.net

Protecting Natural Resources in Pennsylvania is a major task for Municipalities and the Citizens of Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court has confirmed that Municipalities are empowered “to plan their development and to govern the same by zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances; planned residential development and other ordinances, by official maps, by reservation of certain land for future public purposes and by acquisition of such land.” (Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code – Act of 1968, P.L. 895, No 247 as reenacted and amended).

However, “We live in a state with very few rights for citizens about water and pipelines,” Senator Dinniman stated at a recent Public Meeting. “The (utility) companies can use eminent domain to do what it wants.” State and national conservation organizations and municipalities are working together to defend the right to protect the health, welfare, and safety of the citizens and encourage the public to organize and participate in supporting those efforts. Attend public hearings and support proposed Legislative Action.

Membership

If your goals are the same as our goals, membership will help you achieve them. Even if you haven’t the time for active participation, your membership will help strengthen our voice. And if you cannot join us now, consider supporting the League with a donation. Or, for someone special, a GIFT MEMBERSHIP in the League is a great idea, especially around the holidays.

Who Can Join? Membership is open to everyone. Men, women, students, non-citizens - anyone who shares our philosophy and goals can join.

Some of our newest members: Chester County District Attorney Tom Hogan and Victoria Silbey

Questions? Contact Patricia Schultz 610-436-9752 or pls@patriciaschultz.com

Annual membership is \$75. You can join by filling out the below form and return by mail to LWVCC at 1442 Pottstown Pike, #238, West Chester 19380 or join and pay online at www.lwvccpa.org

Donations Welcome! Any amount is greatly appreciated and will help us continue our mission. If you are able, please consider ‘rounding up’ your membership - just check the Donation box on the form for the extra amount. Thank you!

WHAT IS THE LEAGUE?

- A non-partisan political organization that does not support or oppose political parties or candidates.
- An activist organization that works to influence public policy on a variety of issues.
- An educational organization that encourages informed and active participation in government.

WHAT DOES THE LEAGUE DO?

Educates

- Researches critical and sometimes controversial matters of concern to our members.
- Provides information to members and the public about a variety of local, state and national issues.

Takes Action

- Reports results of studies to members, policy makers and the public.
- Lobbies government officials on League positions established by study, discussion and consensus of members.

Gets Out the VOTE !

- Encourages participation of citizens in the electoral process through voter registration, Voters Guides, candidate forums and the Internet.

HOW CAN YOU JOIN THE LEAGUE?

- Complete and mail this membership form along with the appropriate dues. A gift membership is a great idea for someone special.
- Or for more information:
 - Go to our website: www.lwccpa.org
 - Ask a League member for help.
 - Or call 610-644-5960.



WHO ARE LEAGUE MEMBERS?

- Men and women of all ages.
- Students and retirees.
- Homemakers and business owners.
- Legislators and community organizers.
- Teachers, doctors, lawyers and more.
- Membership open to all. Please join us.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

Personal Growth

- Meet people who want to support constructive change.
- Sharpen your skills or develop new ones in areas of management, communications and public speaking. Learn how to lead a meeting, moderate a debate or run for public office.
- Network as you enter a world of personal, professional and political opportunities.
- Develop personal friendships.
- Make a difference in your community.

Community Involvement

- Be informed about what is happening in government and politics at home, in Harrisburg and Washington.
- Get involved in the League's public service efforts, candidate forums, workshops, conferences and voter registration.
- Influence decision-making.
- Have an impact on governmental decisions that directly affect you, your family and your community.
- Work with other community groups.

___ Individual or Gift Membership
\$75.00

___ Second member in same
household: \$37.50

___ Student Membership \$20.00

___ Send VOTER by Email (members) or

___ Send VOTER by U.S. Mail (members)

___ Please send me information about the
League of Women Voters Chester Co.

___ I cannot join now, but am enclosing a
contribution to support League activities
in the amount of \$_____

___ Send information about advertising
and sponsorship opportunities.

Name (s)

Address

City

Township

State

Zip Code

Email Address

Telephone (s)

Checks payable to LWVCC and mail to:

LWVCC
1442 Pottstown Pike, #238
West Chester, PA 19380

Because we lobby at the local, state and national levels,
membership dues and other contributions to the LWVCC are not
tax-deductible. Contributions to the League of Women Voters CC
Education Fund are tax-deductible.

www.lwccpa.org

League Board Meetings occur on the third Saturday of the month. ALL members are welcome and encouraged to bring a friend. Board meetings are a great forum to introduce prospective members to the positive work of the League.

Location: West Chester Borough Hall, 401 East Gay Street, West Chester

Time: 10 AM – noon

League of Women Voters of PA: www.palwv.org 717-234-1576

League of Women Voters United States: www.lwv.org 202-429-1965



Newsletter of the League of Women Voters PA-CEF Water Resources Education Network

*A monthly Update from the Water Resources Education Network
a project of the League of Women Voters of PA - Citizen Education Fund*

<http://wren.palwv.org/wren/index.html>

The VOTER is published every *other* month during the year and relies heavily on committee chairs and members for reports, summaries, announcements and comments submitted to the VOTER – thanks to all for their contributions.

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.

Horrocks
194 Phillips Mill Rd.
Cochranville, Pa. 19330

FIRST CLASS MAIL

