



Chester County VOTER

The League of Women Voters of Chester County, PA

610-644-5960

www.lwvccpa.org

January/February 2016

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

Millions of Americans will head to the polls to vote in the primaries this season and the marathon of televised fanfare has begun. Deciphering truth vs. fiction, reality vs. unreality and envisioning the future relationship between new President and new Congress is quite a challenge!

State primary elections and party caucuses are a key part of the process to select the next President. They provide a crucial opportunity for voters to take control and to influence the process by selecting their top candidate. Voter turnout historically has been quite low, but there is now the thought, as evidenced already, that turnout for the 2016 primaries may change that dismal voter turnout history.

The League has its job to do with questions to answer and guidance to provide!

The most frequently asked question we hear is "*How Do I Learn About the Candidates*"? That is not a simple question to answer. We strongly encourage people to listen to speeches, interviews, commercials and ads. Research the candidates. Observe their behaviors, actions, reactions and interactions as they parade their campaigns through the various states.

[Candidate debates and forums are a core feature of U.S. politics](#) that help voters learn more about a candidate and his or her stance on key issues. Both the Republican and Democratic presidential candidates have been participating in a range of debates and forums since 2015. Additional debates and forums will occur throughout the primary and caucus season.

In addition to debates and forums, voters can learn about candidates through VOTE411.org, which includes upcoming events and other information provided directly from the candidates regarding where they stand on a variety of public policy issues.

Now, by the way, what about those **delegates**? And even better, those “**Super Delegates**”! Are you confused about the number, identity and impact of these influential participants in the nomination of a Presidential candidate? Take a look at the following explanation and see if it provides you with clarity:

*“In some presidential elections, **superdelegates** can play a major role in determining the Democratic nominee. Unlike delegates, **superdelegates** are not bound to represent the popular vote of a region at the Democratic National Convention; they are free to support any candidate for the nomination. The Republican Party does not have **superdelegates**.*

***Superdelegates** are not selected on the basis of party primaries and caucuses in each state. Instead, **superdelegate** standing is based on the status of current or former officeholders and party officials, including all Democratic members of Congress. **Superdelegate** is a term that arose in the 1970s.*

*In order for a candidate to win the party nomination for president, he or she must gain the majority of delegate votes. The purpose of **superdelegates** is for high-ranking Democrats to maintain some control over the nominating process. **Superdelegates** make up one-fifth of the delegates at the Democratic National Convention. So, 747 of the 5,083 delegates attending the 2016 Democratic National Convention can choose whichever candidate they prefer.*

*Out of 2,470 total delegates at the Republican National Convention in 2016, 437 are unpledged delegates who play the same role as **superdelegates**. Of the 437, 168 are members of the Republican National Committee.”*

Are you clear yet? I have to admit, I surely am not! But we can say for certain, the stage has been set and the show has begun. Participate and deliberate. And then, cast your vote!

In League,

Susan Carty, President

Criminal Justice: Upcoming Event

Join us to hear experts discuss our criminal justice system from various perspectives and areas of expertise. Panel discussion and opportunity for questions and participant discussion.

Moderated by Jennifer Levy-Tatum, Esquire

Sunday, February 28, 2016

1:30 PM – 4:30 PM

JusticeRain, Inc.

426 West Gay Street, West Chester

Find out more at: <http://justiceraininc.com/>

Voters Service

Mary Lou Dondero
610-692-3299

In this important election year, the League will be doing all we can to register voters and provide them with the information they need as they go to the polls. To those ends, we will be in touch with county high schools, retirement communities and senior centers. We will visit the Exton Square Mall on March 12 and register new citizens following their naturalization ceremony on April 1. We also may sponsor a candidates' debate prior to the Special Election on April 26 for the 9th State Senatorial District.

The League is now a part of a new coalition, the Center for Community Solutions, which associates non-profit organizations and regional government with experts from West Chester University to discuss community needs. Within this group, we will be encouraging the empowerment of women through their acceptance of leadership roles in the community and in political office. Being a part of this group offers the League many new opportunities for action throughout Chester County.

If you are able to help, please give me a call.

2016 Election Calendar

March 28: Last Day to register before primary

April 19: Last Day to apply for civilian absentee ballot

April 22: Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots

April 26: GENERAL PRIMARY

April 27: First day to register after primary

May 3: Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military/overseas absentee ballots

October 11: Last day to register before November election

November 1: Last day to apply for civilian absentee ballot

November 4: Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots

November 8: GENERAL ELECTION

November 9: First day to register after election

November 15: Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military/overseas absentee ballots

Chester County Voter Services

610-344-6410 or <http://www.chesco.org/156/Voter-Services>

Education

Toni Keg

akeg@verizon.net

Upcoming Event

The Radnor League of Women Voters, in partnership with the Radnor Township School District, is hosting: **Sleep and the Adolescent Brain, Sunday, February 21, 2-4 PM, at Radnor Middle School, 150 Louella Avenue, Wayne.** More at: <http://lwvccpa.org/radnor-lwv-event-february-21-sleep-and-the-adolescent-brain/>

Governor Wolf Signs Bill to Delay Use of Keystone Exams as Graduation Requirements

On February 3, Governor Wolf signed Senate Bill 880 into law. The law, now Act 1 of 2016, delays the graduation requirement associated with the Keystone Exams for two years until the 2018-19 school year. In addition to delaying the use of Keystone exams as a graduation requirement, the legislation also requires the Department of Education to investigate alternative methods for students to demonstrate proficiency for graduation beyond just the use of the Keystone Exams and present a report of its findings within six months to the majority and minority chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees.

More at: <http://www.media.pa.gov/Pages/Education-Details.aspx?newsid=209>

Senator Ryan Aument Assigned to Senate Education Committee

On January 19, Senator Ryan Aument (36th District representing northern Lancaster County) replaced former Senator (and current Delaware County Court of Common Pleas Judge) Dominic Pileggi on the Senate Education Committee. Senator Aument brings the experience of having served on the House Education Committee while a PA Representative.

Education Highlights from Governor Wolf's February 9th 2016-17 Budget Address

At his February 9th budget address, Governor Tom Wolf proposed a \$200 million increase to basic education funding, representing a 3.3% increase to the *assumed* \$377 million increase contained within the still incomplete 2015-2016 state budget. Highlights include:

Basic Education

- \$200 million (3.28%) increase above the assumed \$377 million increase in 2015-16, for a total of \$6.3 billion to be distributed using the funding formula created by the Basic Education Funding Commission.

Special Education

- \$50 million (4.56%) increase in addition to the assumed \$50 million increase in 2015-16, for a total of \$1.146 billion.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

- \$15 million in additional support for the establishment and expansion of high-quality CTE programs. Includes \$5 million for CTE equipment grants to support updating or purchasing new equipment used in the training of students.

Career Counselors

- \$8 million to help school districts offer college and career counseling in middle and high schools.

Assessment

- Funding for state and federal testing programs receives a 1.8% increase for a total of \$59.3 million.

Teacher Professional Development

- Level funded at \$7.46 million.

Early Childhood

- \$60 million (30.5%) increase for early childhood programs.
- Additional \$50 million for Pre-K Counts for a total of \$197.2 million.
- \$10 million more for a total of \$59.1 million for the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program.

The budget also proposes the following accountability initiatives:

- Current School Performance Profile (SPP) system will be revised to take into account student growth, opportunities for advanced study, industry benchmarks, and student behaviors, like attendance, that impact school success and will show less reliance on test scores.
- PA Department of Education (PDE) will devote full-time resources and supports to address the needs of the state's persistently low-performing schools and establish an Office of School Improvement (OSI).
- Implements the recommendations of the Special Education Funding Commission by adjusting charter school reimbursements to better reflect actual costs of educating students with special needs. This change will be phased in over the next three years and result in more than \$180 million in savings to school districts.
- Implements funding changes for cyber charter schools that would save \$50 million annually for school districts across the state.
- Eliminates the state portion of the reimbursement to charter schools for employer retirement contribution costs (makes no changes to the requirement for school districts to pay 100% of these costs for charters).
- Includes a requirement for an annual reconciliation where charter and cyber charter schools will refund money to their sending school districts if the charter school's audited expenditures are less than its tuition revenue.

Details on education budget:

<http://www.education.pa.gov/Teachers%20-%20Administrators/School%20Finances/Education%20Budget/Pages/default.aspx#.Vr-l2flrJ1g>

To view all the components of 2016-17 budget, visit:

<http://www.budget.pa.gov/PublicationsAndReports/CommonwealthBudget/Pages/2016-17-Proposed-Budget-Legislation.aspx#.VrqTB1grJ1g>

Membership in the League Makes a Great Graduation Gift!

Graduation season is around the corner and a League membership makes a unique and empowering gift to any high school or college graduate! Forego the greeting card and share a personal note with your gift of membership, providing details of how membership in the League has helped you become a more informed and involved citizen. Add a LWV bookmark and a copy of our 2016 Legislative Directory to the mix and send the graduate in your life on his/her way to creating true change in the world! Contact Pat (pls@patriciaschultz.com) or see more details in Membership section.

Environmental & Conservation Issues

Alma Forsyth
610-388-1361

jalkforsyth@verizon.net

Finalized Clean Power Plan Outlines Key Ways to Stop Climate Change

The League Update, February 4, 2016 (Summary)

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released the final version of the Clean Power Plan in 2015 – the first ever limits on carbon pollution from power plants. The plan takes the necessary steps to reduce this dangerous greenhouse gas, effectively protecting our children and future generations from the effects of climate change.

The EPA sought the public's involvement throughout the regulation process, which resulted in around the largest public engagement campaign the agency has ever conducted and over 4 million comments from the public, environmentalists, public health groups and industry officials regarding the proposal. The final rule reflects much of the feedback that the EPA received.

The Clean Power Plan is the biggest and most ambitious action the U.S. has ever taken to tackle climate change. A few key parts of the plan:

- Cuts Carbon Pollution from Power Plants.
- Provides State Flexibility to Meet State Goals.
- Invests in Renewable Energy.
- Protects Public Health.
- Paves the way for an International Climate Agreement.

U.S. Supreme Court Temporarily Halts Implementation of Clean Power Plan

The League Update, February 4, 2016 (Summary)

On February 9, 2016, the U.S. Supreme Court temporarily put the Obama Administration's Clean Power Plan on hold while challenges to the Plan will be heard. A lower appeals court is set to hear arguments in June and issue a ruling a few months later. That same court denied an identical request to stay implementation of the Plan that the Supreme Court granted.

Twenty-seven states and power industry officials are challenging the implementation of the Clean Power Plan calling it an overreach by the federal government. States have been tasked with formulating plans to meet the requirements laid out by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Because of the decision by the Supreme Court, many states have already stopped their work.

Under the regulation that finalized the Clean Power Plan, state implementation plans are due to the EPA by September 2016. States must use the common sense building blocks defined in the Clean Power Plan to meet state goals outlined by EPA. The Supreme Courts' decision to stay the rule while arguments are being held threatens the timeline of implementation and jeopardizes the life-saving measures outlined in the Plan for generations to come. It will save lives, improve health, spur growth and protect the environment. (The League has been working to push the Obama Administration to develop and implement this historic regulation for years. We will continue to work to ensure that the Clean Power Plan is implemented properly in every state and that these life-saving measures are enacted.)

Wolf says PA will move forward on Clean Power Plan

Excerpts from NPR reporting project State Impact

February 10, 2016 By Susan Phillips

The Wolf Administration says it will continue with plans to comply with new federal mandates to reduce the state's carbon emissions despite a decision by the U.S. Supreme Court which put a hold on Obama's landmark effort to combat climate change.

Pennsylvania is on target for coming up with its own implementation plan by the EPA's September deadline, and has held 14 listening sessions on the rules across the state. Governor Wolf's spokesman Jeff Sheridan says the Supreme Court's decision will not impact the state's ongoing efforts to comply with the CPP (Clean Power Plan). "Pennsylvania will continue planning and engagement with stakeholders on the Clean Power Plan, pending final decision of this issue by the Supreme Court," Sheridan wrote in an email to State Impact. "We will continue to closely monitor the ongoing legal process."

Membership

Patricia Schultz

pls@patriciaschultz.com

610-436-9752

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 during a Presidential election year!

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

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.lwvccpa.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.lwvccpa.org

February is Black History Month: Test Your Knowledge

Can you identify:

- an advocate for civil rights, a fund raiser for NAACP, and the first African-American person to sign a long-term Hollywood contract in 1942?
- the first African-American woman in the world to earn a pilot's license?
- a performer denied permission to sing in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) auditorium because of her race in 1939, but later became the first African-American to perform at the Metropolitan Opera in 1955?
- the first African-American president of an Ivy League University and the first female president of Brown University?

Explore and celebrate the accomplishments of more African-American women in history at:

<http://www.nwhp.org/resources/commemorations/black-womens-history-challenge/>.

PBS also has some great video links celebrating African-American women who have made a special mark on their communities and the world at: <http://www.pbs.org/black-culture/explore/black-women-in-history/#.Vr9KDvIrJ1g>

Answers to above: Lena Horne (1917 – 2010), Bessie Coleman (1892 – 1926), Marian Anderson (1897 – 1993), Ruth Jean Simmons (1945)

New Film, *Forward Into Light*, Highlights Inez Milholland

A group of California filmmakers hope to change the fact that most Americans have never heard her name. Inez Milholland is most famous for leading the 1913 Suffrage Parade on her horse, Gray Dawn, becoming an iconic figure for "Votes for Women". In 1916, at the request of the National Woman's Party, Inez traveled across the country, giving 50 speeches in 24 days through 9 Western states where women could vote. Fighting through exhaustion, anemia, dental infections and tonsillitis, she collapsed while at the podium at Blanchard Hall on October 23, 1916. **Her last public sentence, "President Wilson, how long must women wait for liberty?"** She was taken to hospital where she died about a month later at the age of 30. To watch the trailer and learn how you can support the making of this film, visit: <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1672365396/inez-milholland-forward-into-light>

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

The Chester County League of Women Voters thanks DG Design for their generosity in designing and publishing our LWV bookmarks. The bookmarks are a handy way of providing useful voter information and election dates and are a big hit at our voter registration events.



Policy News

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 – 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.

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.