



LWVUS MISSION STATEMENT The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

See Page 8 for Calendar of Coming Events

LWVSC ANNUAL MEETING

The annual Meeting of the Sussex League was held on June 21st at The Georgia House in Millsboro. At this meeting Lauren Mund was elected Vice-president to serve until June 2013. She fills the vacancy left by the retirement of Esther Shelton as Co-President with E. Anne Riley. A short bio of Lauren is included on page 7.

LWVSC GROWTH

The LWV of Sussex County has grown from 31 members in 2002 to 95 members in 2012. Wow!! It has tripled in size in ten years. The new members listed below have joined since that official membership count. Today we are 108 members proud!

What has accounted for the growth of the LWV in Sussex County?

- Variety of opportunities for involvement.
- Openness to exploring new ideas.
- Taking the time for fun.
- Educating ourselves as well as others.
- Relevance in the issues being addressed through the Public Forums.

New Member Betty Kirk described it this way: “I joined the League because this is an especially important election year.” **Betty** moved to Lewes five years ago after spending 35 years in Arlington, Virginia. She worked at the American Association for the Advancement of Science International Directorate where she organized international science and technology workshops and meetings. She holds a Ph.D. in international relations and enjoys teaching ESOL. ESOL is English for Speakers of Other Languages. It turns out that some English learners know more than one language.

Welcome New LWVSC Members

- | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Eva Cieniewicz | Patricia McCabe |
| Mary Beth Crafts | Ellie Menser |
| Carol DeCatur | Lauren Mund |
| Leslie Glenn | Tara Lynn Smith |
| Patricia Haddock | Barbara Vaughn |
| Sue Claire Harper | Marylou Dodge |
| Elizabeth Kirk | Rita Corbett |
| Jane Lord | |

DELAWARE DELEGATES ATTEND LWVUS CONVENTION

The League of Women Voters Convention was without doubt the most interesting and well-managed Convention that I have ever attended. It made me very proud to be a member of the League. All of the speakers and the caucus leaders were excellent. I came home invigorated and full of ideas.

I would like to share just one with you today.

Kathleen Hall Jamison, Professor of Communication at the Annenberg School and Director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center, University of Pennsylvania spoke of the Center's newest venture. They have launched a page designed to help viewers email local stations to urge them to insist on the accuracy of any third-party ads they air and make fact checking of political deception a regular feature of their news programming.

Even though, at this time, the stations listed for our area are all Pennsylvania and New Jersey stations, we should sign up to encourage this action. We also have been encouraged to pay attention to our local stations and, armed with the information on this site, let them know that we are watching. So please check it out. It contains a wealth of information and will answer many of your questions about political advertising.

Ms Jamieson pointed out that while TV and radio stations are required to air (and are barred from censoring) federal candidates' ads, no such requirement governs the messages of third party groups such as PACS. Stations have a right to insist on the accuracy of the 'independent expenditure' ads they accept, much as they do with product ads. Do they exercise this right? Not without pressure and that is our job. Please check it out. *Ann Nolan*

LWVUS BOARD APPROVES NEW POSITIONS BASED ON STUDIES

The LWVUS Board has approved a new position on Privatization at its June 2012 meeting. The position is based on responses received from the 227 Leagues across the country that participated in the Privatization Study, including ours. The full position, confirmed at the LWVUS Convention in Washington, appears at <http://www.lwv.org/content/privatization-position>.

Earlier, the LWVUS Board approved a new position on the Federal Role in Education. The position is based on responses received from the 377 Leagues across the country who participated in the Education Study, including ours. The education position appears at <http://www.lwv.org/content/federal-role-public-education-position>.

These positions give us a basis for advocacy at the state and local levels.

At the recent LWVUS Convention, delegates approved a new study to update the current agriculture policy that was adopted in 1988. That policy appears at <http://www.lwv.org/content/agriculture-policy>. The review is expected to investigate genetic

modification, consolidation in the food industry, money in the regulatory process and the consumer's right to accurate and comprehensive food labeling. Most of the Delaware delegation opposed this new study, based on a view that undertaking a new study would distract from other more urgent League activity at this time.

Convention delegates also adopted a new position on sentencing policy based on concurrence with a position of the LWVDC as follows: The LWVUS believes alternatives to imprisonment should be explored and utilized, taking into consideration the circumstances and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses. The Delaware delegation supported adoption of this statement because we have a state policy position that is even stronger.

Recognizing the urgency of action to address the impact of the Citizens United case, delegates also adopted a LWVUS Board-recommended comprehensive program to educate our members and communities on the issue of campaign finance in order to inform our education and legislative efforts. A separate motion called on the LWVUS Board to "advocate strongly for all appropriate, duly-considered measures which may include, but are not limited to, a constitutional amendment and which are consistent with our current positions on campaign finance reform and individual liberties; allow Congress and the States to set reasonable regulations on campaign contributions and expenditures; and ensure that elections are determined by the voters."

CONVENTION PANELISTS OUTLINE WAYS TO "FIX" THE SYSTEM

One of many informative and thought provoking programs at the recent LWVUS National Convention in Washington DC featured Eleanor Clift, Newsweek Political Reporter and The McLaughlin Group Panelist; former Congressman Mickey Edwards (R-OK) who is now Director of the Aspen Institute-Rodel Fellowships in Public Leadership and author of *The Parties Versus the People: How to Turn Republicans and Democrats into Americans* to be published in August; and Trevor Potter, President & General Counsel of the Campaign Legal Center, former Chair of the Federal Elections Commission and Counsel to Steven Colbert's PAC.

The panelists agreed on the urgent need for Congress to pass the DISCLOSE Act for starters in reforming campaign finance issues resulting from the Supreme Court decision that corporations are "people" in the Citizens United case. "The effect of negative ads is voter suppression. Attack ads are not created to change your vote, they are created to depress and disgust you so that you won't vote at all," Potter pointed out.

Potter also noted that the current Supreme Court is the first one in U.S. history in which no member has ever held elective office. He attributed three fallacies in the Citizens United decision to their lack of experience with the election process:

1. Corporations are "banned from speaking." This is "grossly overstated," he said.
2. Every Justice except Thomas believed that corporate speech would be fully disclosed. But that is not the case!
3. Finally, the Justices held that there is no evidence that independent expenditures would be corrupting. Therefore, Potter added that Congress should redefine "independence of expenditures."

Among the most urgent recommendations the panelists made was to push the White House to nominate appointees for the five of six commissioners on the Federal Elections Commission whose terms have expired and then make recess appointments.

Among other reforms the panelists urged LWV members to advocate were:

- * Get rid of the use of the filibuster in the U.S. Senate and push Congress on recusal where there are conflicts of interest.
- Fix the redistricting process to achieve neutrality in election districts by eliminating gerrymandering.
- Expand the electorate (for example register every citizen automatically – In Australia they fine people \$15 if they don't vote)
- Urge states to require shareholder disclosure of corporate political contributions, especially Delaware.
- Eliminate deceptive voting practices.
- Discontinue holding elections on a work day.
- Modernize the voting system, including elimination of single member districts and open primaries, automatic registration of all eligible persons and a procedure to move registration with citizens who move.
- Support public financing of elections.

Mickey Edwards summed up the panel's recommendations, saying "democracy is not a spectator sport" and urging LWV members to continue to press for reform.

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012: LWVSC

The League year began in June with some of our members going to the Council of the LWVUS in Northern Virginia, where those individuals received much needed training. While it was edifying, it was a lot to retain.

Fun Lunches: One of our hallmarks has been our monthly Fun Lunches held from Seaford to Milford. The latter was jointly held with the Kent County League. The other two DE Leagues have also begun to follow our fun lunch lead.

At April's lunch we hosted the newly established first DE NPR station WDDE-FM 91.1 (University of Delaware) with the "Weekend Edition Sundays," host of 22 years, Liane Hansen. Liane is part of their team and lives in Sussex County.

Great Decisions: Last year's Great Decision had a wobbly ending in mid-summer only to be revived quite successfully in the Spring of 2012. It was presented in co-operation with the Unitarian Universalist Church, our meeting location. We gained several new members as a result of this cross-fertilization.

Redistricting: The biggest feather in our cap was our huge effort led by Sandy Spence and committee on the redistricting of the county following the release of the 2010 Census. Maps were drawn and presented to the public and the Sussex County Council, emphasizing areas of "Communities of Interest." The testimony by Jo Klinge to the County Council on redistricting was a highlight. The committee was the largest in this League history. The media gave us a lot of good coverage. While our map recommendations were not followed, we certainly made an impact in that the process was changed to include more public input. Our next challenge is to establish an independent commission so that sunshine on the process is real before the next census.

Observer Corps. This is the third year of many league members contributing to transparency in

Sussex County by providing a presence at County Council, Board of Adjustments, two School Boards, and Zoning and Planning meetings. Chair Carol Somers delivered the Observers Annual Report to the County Council and they responded for the first time; the media coverage was significant. Freedom of Information (FOIA) issues have arisen several times this year and the County's response to such requests has improved somewhat.

Social Networking: In the Fall of 2011, per Sandy Spence, we were able to announce the birth of our excellent website, which was recognized by the Coast Press. It was accompanied by a presence on Facebook. With this, Tara Smith has been newly inducted as webmaster. Now, all we need is someone to take us to Twitter.

Reviving the Dead Ladies: This educational series of performances has added to our coffers, given us exposure, and allowed our actors to have fun preparing through costumed meetings and rehearsals. It gave historical appreciation of the past--the first Woman's Rights convention in 1850 at Worcester, MA. More presentations are planned in the fall.

Publicity: Ann Nolan has improved our Public Relations with her writing talents which have increased recognition of our accomplishments in the community.

Membership: Our members are up to 108 as a result of many members' efforts. Valarie Driscoll has endeavored to make personal contact with new members. Mentoring is a goal and the need to get members truly involved in League activities is ongoing.

Voter Services: Through Barbara Mullin's efforts, we have had a presence at Festivals and disseminated copies of her very professional edition of They Represent You. Janet Orlando also monitored a local election, as we were trusted to be non-partisan.

League Day in Dover: The State League, with many co-sponsors, had an excellent program: "Disclosure in Delaware: Follow the Money!" The information regarding the complexities of campaign finance and lobbying and the strategies employed was well presented and balanced. Critical was information about the Citizens United Supreme Court Decision and ALEC (American Legislative Exchange Council). Many of our members attended this DE State League presentation.

Our lobbyists work through the Advocacy Group.

State Retreat: A league training at our Center for the Inland Bays was helpful to many. The food and beach cottage overnights were an added attraction.

Finances: Valerie Driscoll has ably kept our balance sheet in order. We are in the black but could use additional donations. Gifts to the Education Fund are tax deductible. We receive a very generous donation from a long time member. Others who would be interested in including LWVSC in their will, as I am planning to do soon, can call Valerie for pertinent information. Her knowledge of LWV policies is invaluable.

The Voter: Our quarterly newsletter is on the website and is an excellent summary of our LWV world. We have Jo Klinge to thank for her patience, editorial skills, and institutional memory.

Program: The League of Woman Voters US underwrote a National Privatization Study for Consensus to be undertaken by the local Leagues. We chose to focus on the privatization of public services in Sussex County. In January, we began looking at the issues through public forums, beginning with, "Water/ Waste Water, Public or Private in Sussex Co.: Who Owns It? Should You Care?" Next, in February, we had "Who Owns Your Roads? Who Pays?"

In March, we tried to cover "Contracts: The Tie that Binds," but we could not get speakers willing to talk about it in public and so had to cancel it. We had good attendance at the rest of the forums.

The Education Study: "The Role of the Federal Government in Education" was alarming and interesting. In April, the Forum was on "Sussex County Schools, Public or Private: Should I be Concerned?" Panelists represented public, charter, and independent private schools. In May, the Consensus on Privatization was held

LWVSC Future: Four LWVSC members planned to attend the June LWVSC Convention in DC. Power the Vote Candidate Forums and Vote 411 will both be major focuses in summer and fall. The Cape Sub-Region Master Plan will continue to be followed.

Summary: We had a memorable year. The first five months was under different leadership and had many accomplishments. After the sudden resignation of our local President in November 2011, we recovered quickly by having co-presidents (Esther Shelton and myself) and moved forward. Most of the work is done by the Board members and our many member volunteers. We will need many more members however to become truly active. (See “Aunt Samantha” on page 8.) E. Anne Riley. President

VOTER SERVICES REPORT

A stack of Hispanic language LWV “This Way To The Voting Booth” forms were given on 5/4/12 to LWV member Eli Ramos. He and others were doing Voter Registration at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Roxanna, Delaware. Eli reports that this is the largest Hispanic Church in Sussex County. Eli Ramos is also assisting LWV state president Carol Jones in applying for a grant to assist Delaware Hispanic voters with forms needing translations into Spanish.

Barbara Mullin has resigned as Co-chair of Voter Services. We thank Barbara for her dedicated service. Janet Orlando will be working with the candidates’ forums and They Represent You, which Sussex County Council has agreed to fund in its new edition following the 2012 elections

ANNUAL REPORT OF LWV SUSSEX COUNTY OBSERVER CORPS FOR 2012

The Observer Corps, now in its fourth year, continues to keep watch on our County government through the presence of Observers at County Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Board of Adjustment meetings. Beginning in February of 2012, the Observer Corps expanded its activities to include Board of Education meetings. This new effort currently involves the Cape Henlopen and Indian River school districts with hopes to involve all of the districts. Between June, 2011 and May, 2012 there were eleven active participants, including both county government and school board observers. This number has changed very little in the past year. There has been some turnover in the group with new Observers replacing those who can no longer participate.

Highlights of 2011-2012 for the Observer Corps include:

- * The presentation of its annual report to County Council got excellent media coverage and, for the first time, a response from the county government, addressing several concerns.
- * The activities of the Observer Corps provided the impetus for improvement in the County’s response to freedom of information requests and highlighted problems with the Planning and Zoning Department’s ability to access information about projects that had been approved.
- * The Observers provided support to the LWVSC’s redistricting plan activities.
- * Following up on presentations about education this year, having Observers in attendance at school board meetings was begun. The LWV has few policy decisions related to local schools; however, openness and freedom of information are primary concerns.

- * Bringing attention to various potential FOIA issues, e.g. selection process for county administrator, appearance of meetings outside of public venue, repeated failure to conduct meetings so that the public can see and hear important information.

Goals for 2012-2013 include:

- * Continue to grow the Observer Corps: number of Observers, preparation of Observers, increasing the number of school districts with Observers.
- * Increasing the number of meetings attended, especially Planning and Zoning and Board of Adjustment.
- * Develop transitional leadership options for the Observer Corps.
- * Hold a workshop on FOIA for Observers in the fall of 2012.
- * Continue to promote open, responsible government by observing and reporting on issues interest to the League of Women Voters. *Respectfully submitted, Carole Somers, Observer Corps Coordinator*

Annual Report: Voter

The Voter was emailed to LWVSC members and selected others in September, December, March and June, usually during the last week of the month. Hard copies are mailed to those who subscribe for \$5.00 annually. Articles and photographs are contributed by members of the League. *Submitted by Jo Klinge, Voter Editor*

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: AUNT SAMANTHA NEEDS YOU! (AS IN "UNCLE SAM")

We have the need for each of you to consider the contribution you can make this year to keep our program great.

Ann Nolan needs someone to send out notices twice monthly to the newspapers about our programs. She has all the necessary information. Valerie Driscoll needs an Assistant Treasurer-in-training for a year; she can show how easy it is and with little time required to do

Janet Orlando needs a committee to work with her to re-publish the They Represent You, for which Barbara Mullin has provided a wonderful prototype. Janet also needs five members to volunteer, each heading a committee for one of five district political forums in the fall. These are the non-partisan meetings for which we are famous.

As I understand it, Vote 411 uses the marvelous new software enabling us to get the word out about the stands of the persons running for office. It has the election information that citizens need. This will help us enter the 21st century electronically. We will need a lot of you to help.

We ask each of you to consider attending annually at least one Tuesday day- time County Council, or evening Board of Adjustment and Planning and Zoning meetings for the Observer Corps that Carole Somers heads so wonderfully. Our emphasis this fall on public education calls for several members to attend any one of the Board of Education meetings in your respective district.

We are working very hard for you and need your support,,,,,E. Anne Riley, PhD

LAUREN MUND – OUR NEW VICE-PRESIDENT, LWVSC

Originally from New York, I moved to the Lewes, DE area in December of 2011 to take care of my elderly parents. After working for over a decade back in the '90s as a Technical Writer in Silicon Valley, CA, I changed my life and began what I affectionately think of as my 'second childhood.' Spending so much time in front of a computer without proper exercise or nutrition took a toll on my body. Eventually through yoga, meditation, acupuncture, massage, better eating habits and chiropractic, I took a new path toward greater wellness. As a result of this personal journey, I have myself become a practitioner of healing arts. I am now working as a yoga instructor while I move through the process of obtaining my acupuncture license in Delaware. (I am still a licensed acupuncturist and massage therapist in New York.)

TARA SMITH – OUR NEW WEBMASTER, LWVSC

Tara Smith was born and raised in Sussex County, Delaware. As an undergraduate she attended St. Lawrence University in Canton, New York where she majored in English Literature and an interdisciplinary major of Sociology and Philosophy. In 2011 she completed a graduate degree in Liberal Studies at St. John's College in Annapolis, MD. She hopes to begin a career that combines her interests in communications and philanthropy. She joined the LWV in the hopes of meeting like minded people in Sussex County. She currently works in retail and is an aspiring writer.

CALENDER OF COMING EVENTS

For additional information go to the calendar page at www.sussexlww.org, or email sussexlww@gmail.com

July 9, 10:00 AM

LWVSC Board Meeting
E. Shelton's; email for directions
All members are welcome at all Board Meetings

July 23, 12:00 noon

Fun Lunch, Cottage Café
33034 Coastal Hwy, Bethany Beach
Members and guests are welcome

August 13, 10:00 AM

LWVSC Board Meeting
J. Klinge's; email for directions

August 24, 12:00 noon

Fun Lunch, Abbott's Grill
Route 14, Milford

September 10, 10:00 AM

LWVSC Board Meeting
S. Zanine's; email for directions

September 12, 1:30 – 3:00 PM

Public Forum on Education
"Current State of Public Schools
Beebe Medical Arts Bldg,
Rte. 24, Rehoboth

September 24, 12:00 noon

Fun Lunch, Abbott's Grill
249 Ne Front Street, Milford

SAVE THE DATES: LWVSC Public Forums: Education in Sussex County

October 10, 2012 Educating for the 21st
Century

November 14, 2012 The Costs of Education
Time: 1:30 to 3:00 pm

REVIVING THE DEAD LADIES – The Pianist’s Perspective

The Sussex County League of Women Voters provides an historical program which connects audiences with female determination and power of the past. *Reviving the Dead Ladies* presents oral renditions of speeches delivered at The First National Woman’s Conference in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1850. It is directed by member Valerie Driscoll and presented by members who are aptly costumed oral impersonators.

At the May 16th Luncheon of the Lord Baltimore Women’s Club in Dagsboro, I provided period music on the piano for background during which I observed the reactions of many of the 88 attendees. Those contemporaries reacted with recognition and appreciation; particularly noteworthy, expressions of determination when a decision to follow their foremothers' example emerged. Other audience members expressed amazement at the prescience of speakers such as health reformer Paulina Wright Davis, Quaker abolitionist Lucretia Mott, and Abby Price who spoke on the unequal conditions of women and men.

These are women who changed the world and inspired current, responsive women to continue to generate progressive changes here and now. *Submitted by Aimee Wiest, Member LWVSC*

Why Be a Member of LWVSC?

At membership renewal time, it is so easy for people to think or say, “I’m too busy with X or Y or Z to be a member of the League this year. I’ll join again next year if I’m not as busy.” People’s lives are naturally busier at one time or another. Working with the League gives members the opportunity to step in for a period of concentrated work on one issue or activity and then step back for a while. Maintaining one’s membership during those less active times is always important.

Paula Schneider shared her special employment background, experience, and insights while working with the Redistricting Committee as the 2010 Census was being done. LWVSC was preparing to address the redistricting process in Sussex County. Paula said, “I am and will remain a member of the League because of its dedication to identifying and raising issues that might well be ignored by our governments if they were allowed to do so.”

Remember the line: “If you need something done, ask a busy person?” LWVSC members are presidents, Board members and volunteers for many of the Sussex County organizations that make this a strong community. What are those organizations? AAUW, GACHA (Governor's Advisory Council on Hispanic Affairs), CIB (Center for the Inland Bays), OSHER Lifelong Learning, AARP, Delaware Commission for Women and so many more. **John Walsh** said, “I am a member of the LWVSC because the League is working to make government, most especially County government, responsive to all the citizens of Sussex.”

That is the strength of the League of Women Voters of Sussex County. It is the organization that gives women and men – yes! men, too! LWV is **not** for women only – the time and place to bring those many ideas together to impact the community from a non-partisan perspective. It is no accident that the League of Women Voters is one of the most respected organizations in the United States.

LWVSC Membership Assistance Fund

Last April the LWVSC Board voted to create a Scholarship Fund – or *Membership Assistance Fund*. This is used to assist individuals with their annual membership dues, and it was seen as a way to encourage younger people who want to become active in the LWV of Sussex County to join.

Since its inception, five people have received membership dues assistance and two of them are actively engaged in the work of the LWVSC.

If you would like to contribute to the *Membership Assistance Fund*, please send a check made out to the **LWVSC** and designate **MAF** in the MEMO line. These checks will be deposited to the LWVSC Education Fund making them tax deductible. Mail to: LWVSC PO Box 474 Nassau, DE 19969

In 20 years, you will be more disappointed by what you didn't do than by what you did. (M. Twain)

League of Women Voters of Sussex County
Mailing Address: PO Box 474 Nassau, DE 19969
E-mail Address: sussexlww@gmail.com
Website: www.sussexlww.org

Membership Renewal Form
2012-2013

Yes! I want to RENEW my membership in
The League of Women Voters of Sussex County.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone #(s): _____

E-mail(s): _____

Individual Membership for 1 year	\$50.00
2- Person Household Membership for 1 year	\$75.00
For Each Additional Household Member	\$25.00
Student	\$25.00

Membership Assistance Fund Available

Would you like to have an LWV Sussex County Mentor? Yes No

I am interested in the following issues:

I also want to make a **tax-deductible contribution** to the LWV Education Fund for the work done on my behalf by the League of Women Voters in Sussex County.

Dues Amount: \$ _____ Ed Fund Amount: \$ _____

Make check payable to: **LWVSC**
19969

Mail to: **LWVSC PO Box 474 Nassau, DE**

Thank You!

