

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CLARION COUNTY

Volume 54, No. 8, April 2020

CALENDAR

Tuesday, April 21: Virtual Board Meeting, 5:30 PM

Wednesday, April 22: Celebrate Earth Day

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Here we are – in the middle of a gray rhino event. According to Michele Wucker's book *The Gray Rhino*, "A "gray rhino" is a highly probable, high impact yet neglected threat: kin to both the elephant in the room and the improbable and unforeseeable black swan. Gray rhinos are not random surprises, but occur after a series of warnings and visible evidence."

The question has always been when, not if, a global pandemic would run over us, creating a huge impact on everything. COVID 19 has driven everything to online formats at warp speed. Our League's March Board meeting was via Zoom. (Thanks, Ellen.) Here in PA, we were lucky to get no-excuse absentee ballots when Act 77 was signed into law on October 31, 2019. In other states, voters will need to risk anxiety and maybe their health or even their lives to vote. See our calendar for new dates impacting our vote.

While world-impacting events churn around us, we grapple with lesser questions. Our Bylaws state that "Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted" at the annual meeting currently scheduled for May 19th. If we are still practicing social distancing, how do we manage this required meeting? Besides Budget, and Nominee slate, we have an amendment to our Bylaws to consider.

The rhino is putting a heavy foot on other League interests too, from the redistricting reform of FDPA to Earth Day celebration. While the news cycles are full of deaths, empty shelves, homemade masks, and respirator shortages, all to a dirge of reprisal firings, gerrymandering and climate change are not lesser threats to our democracy and to our planet. So when you call your relatives for checkins, you might find that gerrymandering is a "safer" topic than masks. If you are talking about exponential growth, plastic waste as well as viruses fit that math.

Two months ago, I mentioned the effects of the Spanish Flu of 1918 and its contribution to women's suffrage. COVID 19 was already stalking our world but not yet on the radars of most Americans including me. What unforeseen impacts will this pandemic contribute? Can this crisis be used to reach some of our goals? Let's find out.

Stay safe.

In League, Catherine

NEW ELECTION DATES

The Pennsylvania Legislature approved and Governor signed SB 422 on Friday, March 27 which changes the date of the Primary Election from April 28 to June 2.

The new dates:



Mon. May 18 Last day to register to vote

Tues. May Last day to apply for an absentee OR mail-in ballot

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Tues. June 2 Primary Election Day: 7 am – 8 pm

Tues. June 2 Last day for County Boards of Elections to **RECEIVE** absentee or

mail-in ballots by 8 pm.

-- Submitted by Janice Horn

POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY: YOUNG MEMBERS

The 2019 LWVPA convention voted to establish \$35.00 per year membership for anyone 35 years of age or under. This membership category is now available for Members at Large (MAL) and for all local Leagues in Pennsylvania to offer to their membership if they choose. The membership category offers young members the opportunity to join the LWV at a reduced annual rate.

PER MEMBER PAYMENTS (PMP) WITH NEW LWVPA CHANGE

For local League members, Per Member Payments (PMP) are paid to both the national (LWVUS) and state (LWVPA) entities. These entities, in turn, provide support to local Leagues and to the LWV organization as a whole.

SUMMARY OF OUR MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES (if the amendments to our by-laws are approved at our May 2020 meeting):

<u>Primary Member - Any member over 35 years of age</u>
Annual primary member dues includes \$32 LWVUS PMP and \$20 LWVPA PMP

<u>Young Member: Member under 35 years of age</u> Young Member dues include \$32 LWVUS PMP and \$5 LWVPA PMP

Additional Member - A member of a Primary or Young Member's household Additional member dues include \$16 LWVUS PMP, \$10 LWVPA PMP

Student Member - Currently enrolled student

Annual membership dues for currently enrolled students, part time or full time in an accredited institution, is determined by the local Leagues. LWVPA PMP is waived for student members. LWVUS PMP for Student memberships is waived through 2021. We will be notified of LWVUS PMP payment structures for 2022 and beyond.

NEW LWVPA YOUNG MEMBER CATEGORY:

LWVPA requests that local Leagues provide a list of qualifying members including birthdates and charge \$35 dues for their members 35 years of age and under.

Local Leagues must update their Bylaws to reflect changes in membership categories when they participate, as required by LWVPA and LWVUS Bylaws. Our current practice permits membership dues to be on a sliding scale from \$30 to \$80 depending on what the member indicates they can pay.

Things to think about as you make your decision

- Will this help us recruit new members?
- Will prioritizing local retention of dues at the expense of state League funding be a benefit or a cost?
- Will we be able to keep track of this information in the future?

At our last board meeting, we agreed that we should propose this change. It would mean that we need to change our bylaws to add the new member category. This bylaw change needs to be published to the membership and voted on in May.

---submitted by Donna Poljanec

PROPOSED BYLAWS CHANGE

At our May 2020 annual meeting, we will consider the following changes to our bylaws.

Suggested new language appears in red. Language to be removed is struck out.

ARTICLE III. Membership.

Section 1. <u>Eligibility</u>. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. Types of Membership.

- a. Voting Members. Persons at least 16 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of local Leagues, state Leagues, and of the LWVUS. Without affecting voting rights, members shall be classified as Student Members, Young Members (defined by the State LWV as members under age 35), Primary Members, and Additional Members. Additional Members share a household with a Young or Primary Member. Those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be Life Members. excused from the payment of dues
- b. (1) those who reside outside of a local League may join that League or any other local League; (2) those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or shall be state members-at-large

b. Associate members. All others who join the League shall be associate members.

ARTICLE IX. Financial Administration.

Section 1. <u>Fiscal Year.</u> The fiscal year of the LWVCC shall be from July 1 to June 30 of each year.

Section 2. <u>Dues.</u> Annual dues shall be payable September 1 of each year. Any member who fails to pay dues within four months after they become payable shall be dropped from the membership rolls. <u>Dues shall be set by the Board; however, Young Member dues shall not exceed the amount set by the State LWV.</u>

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Jennifer Vinson, presents the following members for LWV Clarion County positions:

- Pam Hufnagel, Vice-President
- Tabby Shah, Treasurer
- Donna Poljanec, Board Member
- Mary Jo Rhode, Board Member
- Judy Gerzina, Board Member
- Judy Miller, Board Member
- Jennifer Vinson, Nominating Committee
- Patty Bell, Nominating Committee

FORMER LWVCC MEMBER VOTED IN 1920

Dorothy Whitehill was born in 1898, and although she was not a founding member of our League, she was a member for many years. She was eligible to vote in 1920 and did. She "had a continuous voting record from 1920 through 1995 when her eyesight failed her" as was stated in her obituary in August 1998. She died about four months short of her 100th birthday.

--Submitted by Janice Horn

CELEBRATING EARTH DAY AT HOME DURING A PANDEMIC

With the stay at home order enforced here in Pennsylvania, many Earth Day celebrations are now cancelled. My hope is that you may take some of your time at home to heed this Earth Day's call to action. The theme for Earth Day 2020 is climate action. Climate change represents the biggest challenge to the future of humanity and

the life-support systems that make our world habitable. The League has studied climate change extensively at the state and national levels and has taken actions based on these studies. Therefore, climate change is an

This April, take the

ACT FOR OUR EARTH

CHALLENGE

CONSERVATION



#ActForOurEarthPA

important issue that transcends politics.

Those who wish to continue honoring the spirit of Earth Day have some options to stay engaged. Home is the perfect setting to practice sustainability as this context establishes a routine of sustainable habits that we can carry with us in different contexts throughout our lives. The web site https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-challenge/ gives daily challenges that we can take right now to fight climate change from our own home in a 22-day series. Each challenge is posted daily on Earth Day Network's social media channels (@earthdaynetwork). Participants can get involved by following social media channels and adding their actions with the hashtags #EarthDay2020 and #EARTHRISE.

The first challenge assisted participants in completing a plastic audit in their homes to reduce plastic consumption. Plans are also underway to develop a major global event, coordinated across digital platforms to mark the fiftieth anniversary on April 22. Those wanting to keep informed about these events can sign up to receive email updates at their main web site www.earthday.org. Their webpage https://www.earthday.org/news-and-stories/ features interesting articles such as "Five Ways to Compost During the Coronavirus Pandemic" and "6 Lessons Coronavirus Can Teach Us About Climate Change." These articles are also posted on the Earth Day Network Facebook page.

In recognition of Earth Day, the Beyond Plastics initiative is inviting children ages 5-18 to participate in a poster contest to promote ways we can stem the tide of plastic pollution. The entry form for this contest can be found at the following web page: https://forms.gle/jXpvB6iyTzhzTwyX7.

Regionally, the Conservation Voters of Pennsylvania and PennFuture are co-sponsoring a month-long "Act for Our Earth Challenge" series which can be followed on their Facebook pages. Their first challenge encouraged participants to contact the EPA regarding its recent announcement to suspend its enforcement of many of our environmental protections.

Also, Pittsburgh's Earth Week events are going digital and plans are underway to turn their Youth Climate Strike (April 22 starting at noon for 24 hours) and Teach-In (April 19 at 1pm) into larger digital-scale programs. To join and get informed about these plans, on Facebook search for "Pittsburgh Earth Week Teach-In/ Youth Climate Strike" and click on "Going' or 'Interested.'

Whichever way you choose to mark this special and unique Earth Day, may you all stay healthy and safe.

--Submitted by Tabby Shah

EARTHDAY.ORG

FIGHTING GERRYMANDERING WHILE FIGHTING COVID-19

We have been promoting sending Fair Districts PA post cards to our state legislators, but now that is being discouraged due to health concerns. We can still get the messages on the cards to our legislators through email and fax messages. Although Carol Kuniholm suggests we put our advocacy on hold, we have messages ready for you to send:

- For thirty years, PA voters have been asking for redistricting reform. Restore our right to be heard. Pass HB 22/23, SB 1022/1023.
- When voters look at district maps, we see an assault on our right to be heard. PA voters want fair districts. Pass HB 22/23, SB 1022/1023.
- Gerrymandering undermines confidence in elections and diminishes trust in the legislative process. PA can't afford another decade of unaccountable government and partisan infighting. Pass HB 22/23, SB 1022/1023.
- Redistricting reform **will be** an election issue in 2020. Voters want an impartial, independent process. HB 22 and 23 create one. Pass those bills.

Virtual Map Day from the Committee of Seventy and Draw the Lines: On April 14 at 3:30 pm, there will be an award ceremony and redistricting reform update. Check out <u>Draw 'your own personal Pennsylvania'</u> to participate.



about how your own area would be best represented.

Carol Kuniholm and Fair Districts PA will start a Fair Maps Discussion Group on Thursdays at 7 pm, beginning April 23rd. Details will be provided later in messages from Carol Kuniholm.

You can also spend some time mapping. There is much to be learned from looking at census blocks, seeing how city boundaries impact districts and thinking

Go to <u>Drawthelinespa.org</u> to get to the link to draw maps – among many other activities that can take from a few minutes, an hour, or a day or two.

---Submitted by Janice Horn

VICTORY GARDEN REINVENTED!

The spread of COVID-19 worldwide had caused us to ponder both our food sources and pastimes. Penn State Extension Master Gardeners invite you to take a fresh look at the World War I and II "Victory Garden" tradition. Your garden can provide healthy food for your family in addition to benefiting your physical and mental well being.

Extension educators and Master Gardeners will provide upto-date, research-based information on best practices for growing vegetables in the ground, containers, and raised beds. This ten-week webinar series will be held on Tuesdays, beginning April 14 from noon to 1 p.m.



Topics include: Vegetable gardening basics: seed starting, site selection, soils, mulching, integrated pest management, weeds, and succession planting. Sessions will also cover cultural requirements and pest problems for specific vegetables and fruits.

To register for these free webinars, visit Victory Garden Reinvented!

---Submitted by Clarion County Master Gardeners

WHAT WOULD HEALTHCARE BE LIKE WITH IMPROVED MEDICARE FOR ALL?

Prior to this pandemic I had been pondering statements from people opposing Medicare for All, statements such as, "I like my health insurance provider" and "Don't take my union negotiated health insurance away from me."

At that time, I wondered why someone would want to continue contributing to the high insurance expenses of CEOs, advertising, etc. with 30% or more of their premiums going to non-care costs. Medicare provides care with no more than 5% overhead and offers more inclusive access.

As for union negotiated care, I thought contract negotiations would be less complicated with health care removed from the items included. To support that idea, I checked with

someone who had experience negotiating many contracts. He paused as he considered what I was asking, then nodded and agreed that, indeed, it would be much easier.

Now that we are experiencing the effects of this pandemic, with its dramatic increase in unemployment, people who had health insurance through employers are losing it when they lose their jobs. Without insurance, if someone requires extensive medical care because of COVID-19, it will mean facing medical debt and possibly bankruptcy. In addition, there are those who have (or had) no insurance through their employer, including medical personnel, first responders, and other essential employees – people we are all relying on to meet our needs.

There are many reports of the pandemic in England, South Korea, and Germany; yet in those countries and others that have universal health care, no one loses health coverage. To quote Robert Reich, "We are only as healthy as the least protected among us."

---Submitted by Janice Horn



PROPOSED BUDGET, 2020-2021

LWV - Clarion	2019-2020	2019-2020	2020-2021
	Operating	Operating	Operating
ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET	Budget	Actual, est.	Budget
CARRYOVER FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	\$22,169.54	\$10,949.61*	\$10,076.87
I. GENERAL INCOME	_		
A. DUES	\$2,320.00	\$2,465.00	\$2,650.00
B. CONTRIBUTIONS	\$2,320.00	\$2,403.00	\$2,030.00
1. MEMBERS	\$450.00	\$110.00	\$400.00
2. NONMEMBERS	3430.00	3110.00	3400.00
C. OTHER (was interest)	-		
II. INCOME FROM EDUCATION FUND	\$100.00		\$100.00
III. FINANCE PROJECTS INCOME	\$900.00	\$300.00	\$900.00
IV. GRANT	\$500.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
Total Income for year	\$3,770.00	\$2,875.00	\$4,050.00
I . EXPENDITURES	-		
A. OPERATING COSTS			
1. GENERAL SUPPLIES	\$60.00	\$40.00	\$40.00
2 . POST OFFICE BOX			
B. BOARD & ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES			
1. PRESIDENT	\$10.00		\$10.00
2 . SECRETARY	\$10.00		\$10.00
3 . TREASURER	\$10.00		\$10.00
4 . BOARD TOOLS & EXPENSES			\$10.00
A) LEGISLATIVE ACTION	\$100.00		\$100.00
5. ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEES			
A) FINANCE			
B) MEMBERSHIP			
1) MEMBERSHIP BOOK	\$15.00		
2) PUBLIC MEETINGS	\$100.00	\$355.00	\$300.00
3) OTHER			**
C) PUBLIC RELATIONS			\$50.00
C. DELEGATES, TRAVEL, WORKSHOPS			
1 . NATIONAL CONVENTION	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
2 . STATE CONVENTION		\$824.74	

3. WORKSHOPS	1		
D. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR LWV	1		
1.PMP - LWVUS	\$1,250.00	\$1,088.00	\$1,150.00
2 . PMP - LWVPA	\$790.00	\$1,280.00	\$990.00
E. CLARION VOTER			
F. EDUCATION			
1. PUBLICATIONS			
2 . PROGRAM			
A) NATIONAL			
B) STATE			
C) LOCAL		\$50.00	
3 . VOTERS SERVICE			
. A) VOTERS GUIDE	\$120.00		\$120.00
B) CANDIDATES MEETING			\$200.00
C) TO SCHOOLS & LIBRARIES	\$100.00	\$110.00	
4. PUBLIC INFORMATION			
G. POSITION SUPPORT	1		
II. EXPENSES FOR EDUCATION FUND	\$200.00		
III. EXPENSES FROM FINANCE PROJECT			
IV. EXPENSES FROM GRANT			
Total Expenses	\$3,765.00	\$3,747.74	\$3,990.00
TRANSFER TO CDs*		\$10,005.00	\$10,005.00
INTEREST INCOME			\$250.00
TOTAL CDs	1		\$10,255.00