



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

2018 SPRING NEWSLETTER

2018 marks a pivotal mid-term election year and as such, we are working to provide more frequent and better quality communication. This year we will use email updates, our quarterly newsletter, and update our website to notify you of upcoming events and current activities.

We hope these initiatives will inspire you to help make the League of Women Voters of Lancaster County stronger than ever. If your information is out of date, contact our Membership Coordinator, at info@lwvlancaster.org. I would love your feedback on the newsletter! Send your article ideas, comments, questions to ana.y.ayala@gmail.com.



LWVLC Board of Directors. From left to right, standing: Carrie McCullough, Susan Cortina, Charity Welch, Kathy Schmick, Kathy Gutierrez, seated: Fran Rodriguez, Jenn Orantes

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I attended the 30th Annual Crispus Attucks Community Center's MLK Breakfast on January 15th. Dr. Marc Lamont Hill gave a compelling keynote address on this year's theme, "And how are the children?" This question, a traditional greeting among Kenya's Masai tribe, acknowledges the importance placed on their children's well-being and safety. Naturally, the answer to this question would be "All the children are well," confirming peace and prosperity.

The Masai tribe's value of it's children reminds me of our own societal responsibility to engaging and preparing youth. I'm delighted to share news of our League's grant award to initiate the 2018 Youth Voter Registration Project, which aims to engage high school, community college and/or vocational school students in the electoral process. Throughout March and April, we will visit 6 local schools, including McCaskey High School, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster County Academy, HACC, Millersville University and Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology. The focus of our project is previewing "Selma: The Bridge to the Ballot," a true story of Selma's forgotten heroes, students and teachers, who achieved a significant civil rights victory - passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The compelling 40-minute documentary is narrated by Academy Award actress, Octavia Spencer.

The 2018 Youth Voter Registration Project will award 6 student LWVLC memberships. This will engage students to participate in upcoming League programs, including writing website blogs. In my opinion, we should honor the Masai tribe's tradition by constantly asking how we've invited youth and young adults in our local programs. It's time to create a path for our future leaders by inviting them to the table.

In League, Fran Rodriguez



THE IMPORTANT BUT OFTEN FORGOTTEN VOTERS

By Susana Cortina. Undoubtedly, many in society pine for minority groups' interests to be better represented in government. It would be difficult to argue that we should not aspire to a less divisive society, and yet, many continue to remain marginalized and uninterested or unable to vote. Their votes are essential for any kind of real progress, and yet, they are often left out of the picture in myriad ways.

Of course, gerrymandering –which the New York Times states has been “refined to a high art”-- and excessive requirements for voting, among others, have also led to that.

But things are changing. In recent elections in Alabama, a Democrat defeated a Republican for a Senate seat in what had been a staunchly Republican state. Many believe that the Democratic candidate won because of the high voter turnout of African American voters.

Of course, one could argue that the Republican candidate was mired in accusations of child molestation, but it is unclear whether that was the reason why the Democratic candidate won. What is undisputed is that a large number of African Americans voted.

But that win is simply not enough. We need to eliminate any barriers for all minorities to vote, be it a belief that they do not matter, or excessive identity requirements. Only then will minority groups be able to contribute what has sorely been missing in many discussions: everything they have to say, everything they need, and everything that they can teach us.



FOURTH ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL VIDEO CONTEST

For the fourth consecutive year, LWVPA is promoting a high school video contest inviting students to highlight the importance of voting. The theme this year is "What Makes Democracy Work?"

Confidence in democracy among Millennials is at an all-time low. This contest will invite students to think about the values and structures essential to a functioning representative democracy. Our goal is to remind students - and all who see their videos - that civic engagement and public attention are essential factors of a strong democracy.



As in the past three years, the videos will be 30 seconds in length and top entries will be used as public service announcements in future election seasons. The top prize will be \$1000, with a second prize of \$500 and third prize of \$250. Students can work alone or in teams. Any student between 13 and 19 currently enrolled in high school or an equivalent academic program in Pennsylvania is eligible. Winners will be announced on April 15. Past winners are available for view on our LWVPA Video Contest channel.

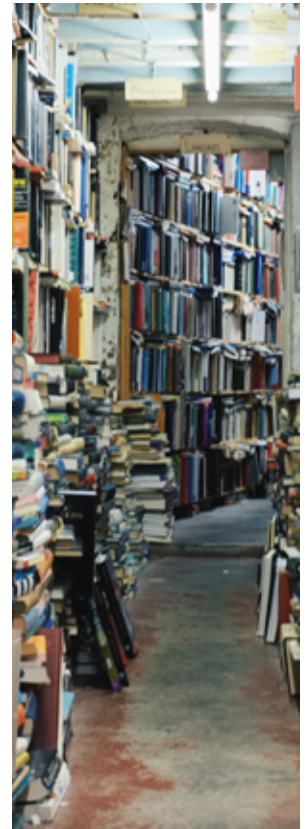
LIFELONG LEARNING FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

By Charity Welch. Lifelong learning has many benefits including improved quality of life for senior citizens. Upon retirement, senior citizens, no longer focused on learning for work promotions, pursue learning for more per motivation is self-fulfillment, increased knowledge, or to simply socialize with like-minded individuals.

Census data (2012) reveal that by 2029, more than 20 percent of the U.S. population will be over age 65. In 2016, senior citizens made of 17% of the population in Lancaster County. Still active, and no longer employed, these senior citizens are challenging institutions to develop programs that will satisfy their desire to learn. A growing number of senior citizens in Lancaster are taking advantage of tuition waivers to pursue coursework on college campuses without the stress of homework or exams.

One couple, in particular, James (Jim) Brener and his wife Jackie Martin approached Millersville University to develop the Millersville University Lifelong Learning Institute (MiLLI). Originally from Lancaster, the couple left the area for professional opportunities, but returned to Lancaster 25 years later. Now retired, they sought local education experiences but found few options. They envisioned a learning environment that would stimulate the mind, promote interactive discussions, and offer varied lifelong learning experiences. Senior citizens not only enroll in courses; many of the courses are taught by retirees from the surrounding area. Jim, now a MiLLI volunteer, describes the institute as a "triple win that provides education opportunities, in-depth education offerings, and increase exposure to downtown Lancaster and the Ware Center.

U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Population Estimates and 2012 National Projections



2017 HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

By Susan Leinberger. Forty-four members and friends of The League of Women Voters of Lancaster County attended the holiday luncheon on Thursday, December 7 at the Pressroom Restaurant. President Fran Rodriguez welcomed everyone to this annual event and introduced the program presenters.

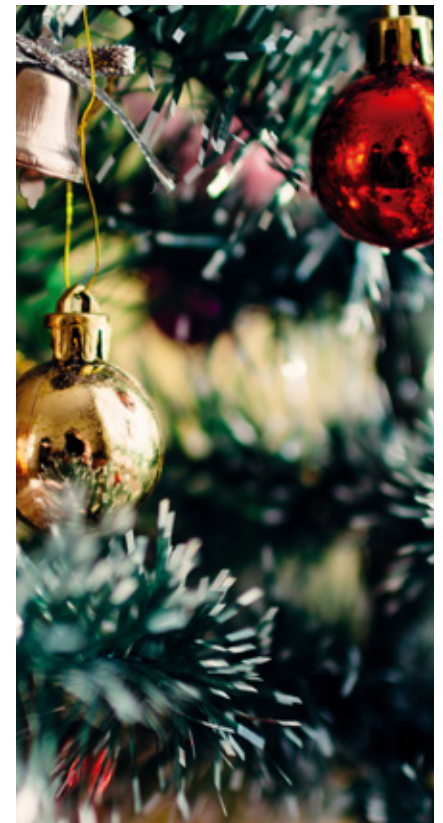
The program topic was "Redistricting 101: What every Pennsylvanian Needs to Know about Gerrymandering," and featured Dr. Carol Kuniholm, director, from LWVPA and FairDistrictsPA.

One of the largest gatherings for the holiday luncheon in recent years allowed both League members and guests to hear Kuniholm speak and demonstrate through her power point the impact of REDMAP in Pennsylvania and its effect on voters. Kuniholm spoke of the lawsuit filed by the LWVPA and 40 some individuals with the PA courts. In addition, she urged attendees to contact their legislators to encourage them to push House

Bill 722 and Senate Bill 22 out of committee.

"Gerrymandered district lines weaken the power of our votes—and politicians are working behind closed doors to keep it that way," said Kuniholm. "And we all pay the price," she added. After questions and answers by the audience, Rodriguez reiterated the importance of following up on voter education issues such as redistricting. She also spoke to the recent tragedies due to floods across the nation and islands such as Puerto Rico, whose voting culture is very strong.

Raffles for various holiday prizes netted \$240. for the League treasury, and Rodriguez concluded the program at 1 pm. A special thank to the League members who helped plan the event, Ellen Culver, Mary Hansen, and Molly Henderso



UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENT	DATE	TIME	PLACE
Kickoff Youth Voter Registration Campaign	Mar 7	7:00 pm - 9:30 pm	Franklin and Marshall College 415 Harrisburg Ave, Lancaster
NEA Big Read Book Discussion	Mar 8	11:30 am - 1:00 pm	Workforce Development Board 313 W Liberty St, Lancaster
Youth Voter Registration Campaign	Mar 20	11:00 am - 1:00 pm	Lancaster County Academy 1202 Park City Center, Lancaster
Gerrymandering: The Problem and a Solution	March 26	3:30 pm - 4:40 pm	Homestead Village 1800 Marietta Avenue, Lancaster
General Membership Meeting	Mar 29	5:30 pm - 7:00 pm	Location TBA

For more information on the NEA Big Read Book Discussion please contact
info@lwvlancaster.org
or visit <https://lancasterpubliclibrary.org/neabigread/>

Feel free to share League-related events and activities with Ana Ayala at ana.y.ayala@gmail.com

POSTAGE



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WOMEN VOTERS®

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