



League of Women Voters of Haverford Township Newsletter

February, 2012

Welcome to a new year and a new format for our newsletter! We are trying to simplify the newsletter since there are fewer people to put it together! If you can help, we can certainly use your expertise!

Be sure to check our website for photos and information: www.lwvhaverfordtwp.org. Thanks to Cathy Yungmann for creating this for us!

Issues for the League:

Redistricting – This is both a state issue and a local one for Haverford Twp. You may have read about the new plan to split the Township, moving Wards 1 and 9 to a district in Upper Darby. Every ten years, the new census data is supposed to be used to redistrict in PA (and every other state). New lines should be drawn only if the population numbers more than 61,000 per district. Our population is about 55,000, so the plan was objected to by local citizens, by the commissioners, and by our representative, Greg Vitali. The PA commission on redistricting approved the new division of the districts despite many complaints, but on January 23, 2012, the state Supreme Court threw out the new map and all the changes! This was the first time for the court to go against the political divisions since 1968. So it's back to the drawing board -- stay tuned! There won't be time to redraw the district borders before the primary in April.

Billboards – Lynne Caldarone has been closely watching the legal arguments and presentations at Township zoning board meetings. It was hoped that the closing arguments would be made in January, but now they won't be finished until February.

Marcellus Shale – The League continues to provide information and speakers on the drilling for natural organizations join the LWV's concern for the environment with the drilling, including hunting and sportsmen's groups, the Pennsylvania Forestry Association, and PennEnvironment.

Voter ID – A bill calling for photo IDs for all voters in PA has passed the House but not the Senate yet. The PA LWV has taken a stand against this bill, as it would make voting impossible for any resident who doesn't have a driver's license, is disabled, has no car to get him or her to the photo license center, and would cost the state more than \$13,000,000. With less than 4 cases of voter fraud in PA in the last 10 years, fraud doesn't seem like a big issue that would need to inconvenience millions of citizens to obtain some photo identification in order to vote.

Legislative Breakfast – At the Delco LWV breakfast on January 28th, we heard from several LWV members about the issues of major concern to us, mentioned above. We also heard about the continued need for a Health Dept. for Delaware County and why the County Council does not see the need for one. A doctor, Dr. George Avetian, has been appointed to be a contact person for the county, which is an improvement over the previous situation. As it stands now, each municipality in Delaware County has to staff its own health dept. But the fact is that we lose \$8 million in federal money by not having a county-wide Health Dept.

Upcoming – our new LWV Legislative Directories will be printed soon with all the contact information needed for our elected and appointed officials. Look for them soon and ask Kate deRiel (610-446-8383) or Rosemary Kesling (610-789-2680) for extra copies for your friends and neighbors.

Program Planning Brunch:

We had a productive and fun brunch at Stephanie Sayers' house to see if we concurred with National LWV positions. We approved all the positions and added some comments to some of them, which was sent to the USLWV.

USLWV positions-- This year we have two positions to consider:

Federal role in public education: On November 11th, we met at Cabrini College with Leagues from Philadelphia, Lower Merion, and Radnor to learn about the possibilities of national standards and national testing in public education. We also learned about past involvement by the federal government in education, notably in the Head Start program. We submitted our opinion to the LWVUS supporting some parts of national academic standards and possible testing, but we said that we want to see the testing results used more to identify individual student strengths and weaknesses rather than to rank or judge schools.

Privatization of some governmental assets, such as prisons and highways. We will be studying the use of government property and assets, and look at what is gained or lost by turning some of them over to private contractors, such as privately-run prisons and highways run by for-profit companies. We value your input as we study this important issue.

Calendar:

February 6	LWV Board Meeting	7:30 p.m., Cathy Yungmann's house
February 16	Consensus meeting	?? T.B.D.
March 5	LWV Board Meeting	7:30 p.m., Cathy Yungmann's house