

League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh

WE VOTER

Volume 23, No. 5

February 2017

WE MARCHED – IN WASHINGTON, PITTSBURGH AND LONDON



Above: Carol Emerson, Barbara Jones and Marcia Bandes in Washington.

LWVGP was everywhere!

Below: Eileen Olmsted, Barbara Simpson, Maria Malone and Maureen Mamula in Pittsburgh.

More photos and comments from LWV members on pages 2, 6 & 7.

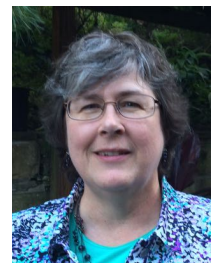


Above: Martha Raak and granddaughter Kelly Nash in London.

PROGRAM PLANNING by Maureen Mamula

We will be changing our schedule slightly in February and March. February will now be program planning, and March will be a continuation of the Pennsylvania Election Law review. The final part of the Election Law Review (Primaries) will be in the fall, since the date for the consensus has been moved back to December 1, 2017.

For Program Planning, we will be reviewing "Where We Stand" <https://www.palwv.org/where-we-stand-lwvpas-position-on-the-issues/> There have been some changes to this document, so please review it before the February meetings. The state convention this year will be considering recommendations from the units in the state to see what changes the membership would like.



Continued on Page 5

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

REFLECTIONS



Did you:

- Watch the inauguration?
- March?
- Call or write an elected official in the last month?
- Decide to run for office?
- Decide to assist someone who is running for office?

On Saturday, January 21st, I went to the Summit Against Racism.

28 workshops were offered covering in various ways many of the issues the League is facing: Living with Guns, Criminal Justice, Redistricting, Housing, Transportation, Education, Running for Office, Rights of Women. Titles for the workshops had a different bent. For example, I attended "Pittsburgh Against Discrimination: No Limits for Women," which highlighted in part CEDAW (UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women), <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/> a program that the League endorsed almost two years ago.

In December 2016, Pittsburgh City Council unanimously passed an ordinance reflecting the principles of the CEDAW. Next steps are for the city to hire a part time director to get the program going and to establish the Commission on Gender Equity. For more information go to: pgh4cedaw.org.

San Francisco passed a similar ordinance in the 1990's. One result is the absence of any domestic violence homicides for the past 44 months. On the other hand,

Volume 23, No 5

February 2017

Published monthly September-June except January by

League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh
436 Seventh Ave., Suite 350
Pittsburgh, PA 15219
412-261-4284

The League is a nonpartisan organization whose purpose is to encourage the informed participation of citizens in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.

VOTER Editor: Sue Broughton

Email: info@pgh.lwv.org

To unsubscribe from the VOTER, send email with subject "Unsubscribe"

Hard copy subscriptions are available for \$20 per year.

Allegheny County has the highest domestic violence rate in Pennsylvania.

We the people need to be really informed about domestic violence and recognize that judges we elect to the Court of Common Pleas need to understand these issues also. Seems like a question for the Voters Guide.

— Annette



Photo at Pittsburgh March by Eileen Olmsted

CONTEMPLATING GOVERNING

by Preston Shimer

Contemplating Governing is a 4-session course directed at people who are running for local office or just considering doing it. The course is offered online and in three classroom sessions.

The first class session, *Tackling Candidate Red Tape*, covers the requirements for getting on the primary ballot and is only available online. Here is the link: <http://localgovernmentacademy.org/2017-contemplating-governing/> The cost is \$5.

The initial step for all candidates is to circulate the petition to get on the ballot. Petitions can be circulated starting February 17 and must be filed with the Department of Elections by March 7. This and all other requirements are covered in the first session.

The remaining sessions will be scheduled soon and offered both in person and online. The topics include Local Government Organization, Structure and Taxation; Civility & Ethics; A Guide to Municipal Meetings; and the Freedom of Information issues. Click on the link above to learn more about the course.

LWVGP Officers / Executive Committee		Local Area Meeting Chairs	
President	Annette Shimer	Pgh. Central 412-802-7266	Martha Raak
V. Pres. Development	Nancy Naragon	North Hills 412-364-7329	Shirley McIvried
V. Pres. Program	Maureen Mamula	South Hills 412-760-9642	Maureen Mamula
Secretary	Leagha Courtney		
Treasurer	Preston Shimer		
		Interest & Service Area Specialists	
Directors		Housing	Adelaide Smith
Campaign Finance Reform	Kathie Breckenridge	Death Penalty	Hazel Cope
Voter Service	Louise Cannon	Education	Evelyn Murrin
Voter Service, Membership	Judy Clack	Legislature Reduction	Mary Larsen
Government Relations, Outreach	Jackie Dixon	City / Cty & Judicial Reform	Nina Helbling
Membership, Special Events	Judy Donohue	Non-Fiction Book Club	Judy Donohue
Education	Billie Girard	Transportation	Barbara Simpson
Development, Redistricting	Maureen Grosheider	National / State Program	Carol Walton
Civic Salon	Brianna Horan	Immigration	Caryl Beal
Health Care / Water Study	Shirley McIvried	VOTER Editor / Website	Sue Broughton
LWVPA Convention Chair	Eileen Olmsted		
Communications	Nyota Robinson	Staff	
Election Law Review	Michelle Zmijanac	Community Information Center	Manager: Barbara Simpson
		Marcellus Shale Grant	Manager: Heather Harr
League Phone Numbers, Websites, and Social Media			
Greater Pittsburgh	412-261-4284	lwvpgh.org	
Pennsylvania	717-234-1576	palwv.org	
National	202-429-1965	lww.org	
Facebook	www.facebook.com	Search: League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh	

Pennsylvania Interfaith Impact Network
 A diverse coalition of over 50 congregations and faith-based organizations acting together on our values in the community



- Public safety
- Worker organizing table
- Rate payer justice
- Education
- Civil rights for immigrants

564 Forbes Ave., Suite 808
 Pittsburgh, PA 15219
 412-621-9230 • office@piin.org • <http://www.piin.org>

Etched in Glass INC.
Unique Gifts & Awards at reasonable prices!
Over 1200 different glass & crystal items for every occasion

724-444-0808
 5424 Route 8, Gibsonia 15044
 www.etchedinglass.com • info@etchedinglass.com 

Standing Meetings

Board Meetings

- ✓ **Second Monday** of the month. Lunch at 11:30 a.m., at Einstein Bagels in the Koppers Building. Meeting: 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. in the LWVGP CIC (office) conference room at 436 Seventh Ave., Suite 350

Local Area Unit Meetings

- ✓ **Pittsburgh Central:** 2nd Friday, 1:30 p.m. at the Squirrel Hill Public Library, 5801 Forbes Ave., Pgh. PA 15217. Contact Martha Raak at 412-802-7266 or marbiker1@gmail.com
- ✓ **North Hills:** 3rd Wednesday, 10:00 a.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church, 311 Cumberland Rd., Pgh. PA 15237. Contact Shirley McIlvried at 412-364-7329 or howardmciii@comcast.net
- ✓ **South Hills:** 1st Thursday, 12:30 p.m. at the Mt. Lebanon Public Library, 16 Castle Shannon Blvd., Pgh, PA 15228 (unless otherwise announced). Contact Maureen Mamula at 412-760-9642 or mamula159@hotmail.com

Other Ongoing Meetings

- ✓ **Education Committee**
4th Wednesday. Contact Billie Girard at 412-531-6859 or billiegirard202@verizon.net
- ✓ **Voter Service Committee**
Dates TBD. Contact Annette Shimer at 412-221-5163 or ashimer@gmail.com
- ✓ **Gun Safety Committee**
Dates TBD. Contact Nancy Naragon at 412-366-2446 or nancynaragon@msn.com
- ✓ **Non-fiction Book Club**
3rd Friday. Contact Judy Donohue at 412-373-8697 or jrdono71@gmail.com

DECEMBER 2016-JANUARY 2017 CALENDAR

February	
02 Thu	South Hills Unit meeting: Program Planning
10 Fri	Pittsburgh Central Unit meeting: Program Planning
13 Mon	Board meeting
14 Tue	LWV Birthday – 97!
15 Wed	North Hills Unit meeting: Program Planning
17 Fri	Naturalization & voter registration, Federal Courthouse, 10 a.m.
17 Fri	Non-fiction Book Club, Squirrel Hill Library, 10:15 a.m.
20 Mon	Presidents' Day
22 Wed	Education Committee meeting, Squirrel Hill Library, 1-3 p.m.
March	
02 Thu	South Hills Unit meeting: LWVPA Election Laws Study
10 Fri	Pittsburgh Central Unit meeting: LWVPA Election Laws Study
12 Sun	Daylight savings time begins
13 Mon	Board meeting
15 Wed	North Hills Unit meeting: LWVPA Election Laws Study
17 Fri	Naturalization & voter registration, Federal Courthouse, 10 a.m.
17 Fri	Non-fiction Book Club, Squirrel Hill Library, 10:15 a.m.
22 Wed	Education Committee meeting, Squirrel Hill Library, 1-3 p.m.

LWV League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania

2017 High School Video Contest

Every Election Matters

Top Prize \$1000
30 Second Length
Deadline: March 1, 2017 Details at PALWV/org/videocontest

Icons: Schoolhouse, Car, House, Tree, Bus

MORE ON PROGRAM PLANNING *continued from Page 1*

Susan Carty, state President sent out the following reminder about program planning:

"Program is the heart and soul of the League. It is the basis from which we educate and advocate. Local programs are adopted annually. State and national programs are reviewed prior to their respective conventions. The program review process is used to introduce and reinforce what the League has done as well as spark interest in new issues that may be ripe for League study. It is also an opportunity to build institutional memory and reinforce our "one voice" advocacy.

If your local league believes a change or elimination is needed, please include a brief (300 words or fewer) explanation of your rationale. If your League is proposing a new study and/or update, please describe the issue thoroughly, including your rationale and, if possible names of members willing to serve on a state study committee and possible study funding sources."

A list of the review categories is attached-please use it to pull together your thoughts prior to the February meetings. We will be deciding for each program item whether to **retain**, **drop** or **suggest an update or revision**. If we are using a particular item for either local education or advocacy on an issue, please make sure we list that at the meeting you attend.

PROGRAM ITEMS

Government

Apportionment and Redistricting
Election Laws
Governmental Authorities
Initiative and Referendum
Judiciary
The Legislature

Natural Resources

Land Use
Marcellus Shale
Pipelines
Pooling

Social Policy

Child Health and Welfare and Juvenile Justice
Collective Bargaining in the Public Sector
Education
Family Issues and Laws
Fiscal Policy
Gambling

Marilyn Skolnick – Activist and Member of the League of Women Voters

Marilyn Skolnick taught me:

- how to give testimony
- to learn the names of the press and get to know them
- to review carefully and thoroughly a regulation, ordinance, study
- to dig for information and ask questions of staff
- to go to public hearings prepared with questions
- to sit in the front of the room so that you can be recognized
- to identify others involved with an issue and work with them
- to learn the language and vocabulary of an issue, and
- to keep yourself and the discussion focused on the issue



Marilyn in 1997, by P-G photographer Peter Diana
Copyright ©, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 2017,
all rights reserved. Reprinted with permission.

Transportation was one of the major issues for Marilyn: She was very concerned about the location of what is now I-279 North; the Mon-Fayette Expressway, particularly as it approached the city. She was a member of the Port Authority Board, GASP and the Sierra Club. Environmental issues were her hot button.

As you review our local League positions this month notice the positions on Transportation and Air Quality. Marilyn pushed us on these issues. Preston remembers sitting with her on the inaugural run of the "new" light-rail vehicles from Castle Shannon into town.

It was only infirmities that kept Marilyn away. Marilyn died December 16, 2016. We have been told that her will leaves a small legacy to the League.

— Annette

WE MARCHED, TOOK PHOTOS AND WROTE OUR THOUGHTS



From photos from Hazel Cope and Brianna Horan

Carol Emerson: Amazingly, Barbara Jones, Marcia Bandes and I ran into each other in the incredible crowd at the Washington Women's March. Barbara and Marcia came with a group on a bus from from Wilkinsburg, while I drove with my daughter and two granddaughters and we stayed with my niece and her family in Fairfax. The best part was sharing this historic democratic expression with my family and witnessing the support and camaraderie among women of all ages colors and creeds. My granddaughters, too had formative experiences that will shape who they are as adults in ways we can only imagine. It was a privilege and a blessing, even knowing there are those in our country and even in our families who are bewildered by our actions and opinions. I can only trust that we can work to understand and respect one another as we go forward.

Hazel Cope: It was thrilling when I got on the T to go downtown to join Saturday's Women's March and found it already full of people who cheered and applauded the new arrivals at each stop. The March was terrific: exciting, amusing, enervating, inspiring. The estimate is that there were over 25,000 marchers I'm so glad that it was held in towns and cities all over the nation and the world, and not just in a major city – as was the case with so many previous rallies. There were thousands of people in the Pittsburgh march who, I am sure, would not have been able to get to Washington because of financial, time, or physical restraints, or perhaps wouldn't even have thought of going there. But here they were, marching and chanting in Pittsburgh and realizing they were not alone in their ideals and aspirations for our future. I hope every single one will continue this activism in some way (See postcard writing party, page 8). We must make sure to distribute voter registration forms at every possible occasion.

Continued next page

We marched..., continued from previous page

Brianna Horan: I was hoping to participate in the Women's March in DC, but wasn't able to make it. At the last minute, I decided to head to the march downtown instead. When I got there I couldn't believe how many people were participating – official counts said 25,000. When I was approaching Fifth Avenue, I heard a number of chants from the crowd, and at one point the pitch of the cheers of support and solidarity reminded me of a battle cry. The energy was exhilarating, hopeful and peaceful all at once. For a while I walked against the flow of traffic on the sidewalk, keeping my eyes open for League signs. Sure enough, I spotted some and joined in on the trek to Market Square. Once the crowd made it there, the speakers and singers kept the momentum going, from Mayor Peduto's inspiring greeting, to Reverend B. DeNeice Welch's rally to boldly be yourself, finishing with AC Controller Chelsa Wagner's call to action: run for office! Lots of ages, genders, races and nationalities were present. My favorite sign read, "The Beginning is Near." The day did feel like the beginning of a revived and meaningful civic action on a large scale across America, and it was exciting to be part of.

Eileen Olmsted: It was a beautiful balmy day and the marchers were in a festive mood. There were very few overtly anti-Trump signs while most expressed support for myriads of causes. Some were hilarious, some were scatological, and many were clever and inspirational. "Make America Think Again," "Yinzers for Kindness," carried by a child, Our League signs expressed support for protecting voters rights and urged everyone to "Make Democracy Work for ALL." Barbara Simpson, Maureen Mamula, new member Maria Magone, and later Brianna Horan joined me as we walked to the march assembly point at the city/county building on Grant. The crowd was huge with many children and men and women of all ages, races, gender and creeds. Chanting at times, waving to friends, and shouting slogans we proceeded down Fifth Avenue to Market Square where we listened to great speakers & sang protest songs. It was very reminiscent of the 60's and I felt exhilarated and hopeful that if this kind of spirit could be channeled into civic "action" we could stave off attacks on the League ideals of protecting civil liberties including, but not limited to, voting rights, marriage equality, and freedom of reproductive choice. (Photo by Eileen)



Martha Raak: 50+ year-LWV member 82-year-old Martha Raak and her granddaughter, Kelly Nash, age 26, were at Kelly's first March in London UK. Kelly is teaching ESL in Cadiz, Spain for the year and Martha has been visiting with her. They flew over on Ryan Air on Friday, returning on Sunday. Amazingly, 100,000 persons showed with signs linking Trump's election with the disastrous Brexit vote.

From LWVPA President Susan Carty: What a weekend we have had! We proudly watched the soaring visions of non-violent marchers boldly demonstrating their power with their voices and feet! That massive sea of humanity was an outstanding example of shared resolve to reflect and call for the true spirit of Democracy. With channeled energy, resolve and outrage, the marchers conveyed their message demanding support for and protection of Equal Rights, Human Rights, Justice, Dignity, Honesty, Equal Access for ALL in this nation.

That message is our message.

We heard couched rhetoric from politicians responding to angry newscasters. We witnessed the historical transition of power clouded with blatant untruths accompanied and defended by the now infamous, new and alarming term...ALTERNATIVE FACTS.

Simply put, the integrity and future of our Democracy is under assault. The slippery slope of new, finely tuned terminology that muddies the meaning of Truth has begun. The warning flags have been raised.

We, the League, need to be ready to reach out to and accept those who are looking for their place in fighting for a stronger future for America. This fight cannot be won without them. The unspent human energy before us is a deep source of untapped power. Defending as well as clarifying that Democracy, as we just saw, "is not a spectator sport."

Let us generously and graciously reach out our hands and our hearts to the multitudes of women and men who will work together with the League to sustain our message and pursuit of "good government" on into the future. It will take an army to keep the light shining on the new truth!

VOTER SERVICE REPORT by Judy Clack, Co-chair, Voter Service

Candidate Forum Moderator Training

Would you like to be a League moderator for upcoming candidate forums? With 130 municipalities and 42 school districts potentially holding local primary elections on May 16, the League may be asked to moderate many candidate forums throughout the area. We need a cadre of trained volunteers to meet this need. **Carol Emerson** has volunteered to train League members to moderate forums following League of Women Voters guidelines. Contact Carol if you are interested in receiving this training: csemerson@comcast.net.



Questions for the Voters Guide

We need YOUR help in determining relevant questions to ask candidates for the LWVGP *Voters Guide* for the May 16 Primary election --- especially for the following offices: Allegheny County Council, Mayor of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh City Council, and Pittsburgh Board of Education. What are the main issues confronting each of these entities? Please email your questions for one or more of these offices to Barb Simpson at info@pgh.lvw.org. Candidates will be circulating nominating petitions from Feb. 14 – March 7.



LWVGP members Judy Donohue, Joyce Beard, and Susanne Fox registering voters at the naturalization event, Jan. 27, at the Heinz History Center. Maureen Mamula took the picture.

Voter Registration at High Schools and Naturalization Ceremonies

Heather Harr and **Joyce Beard** are leading our League's effort to register high school students to vote. Contact either of them if you are interested in helping with this endeavor: Heather Harr, heatherharr007@gmail.com; Joyce Beard, joyfulecb@verizon.net.

Aiden Kestigian, Minna Lunney, and Maria Magone, three brand new members of the League, assisted with November – Jan. voter registration events at naturalization ceremonies. Helping with voter registration is a great way for new members to get involved. Let me know if YOU are interested in assisting with voter registration events: jbclack@yahoo.com or 512-731-0280.

Also assisting at those naturalization ceremonies were Joyce Beard, Phyllis Bianculli, Louise Cannon, Linda Clautti, Judy

Clack, Judy Donohue, Phyllis Dreyfuss, Carol Emerson, Susanne Fox, Barbara Jones, Maureen Mamula, Lora Medwid, Eileen Olmsted, and Christine Peters. Thanks to each and every one of you.

NON-FICTION BOOK CLUB SELECTION

February Book Club selection: *The Boys in the Boat: Nine Americans and Their Epic Quest for Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics*, by Daniel James Brown

Book Club contact is Judy Donohue: 412-373-8697 or jrdono71@gmail.com.

Postcard Writing Party! – All are welcome!

February 8, 2:00-7:00 p.m., Home of Barbara Logan, 838 Valleyview Road, Pittsburgh PA 15243. Write cards to your Senators and Representative in Congress (sent to their local offices). There will be Planned Parenthood cards to write about Reproductive Rights and regular cards to write about that issue or any issue of your choice.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT by Evelyn Murrin

- We had 18 at our Jan. 25th meeting...lots of energy and enthusiasm.
- Jeanne Diana has an article in the Pennsylvania VOTER, winter issue on page 10, about ALEC (The American Legislative Exchange Council). It is well worth reading. There is also an education update by Toni Keg, LWVPA's new education specialist, beginning on page 2. You can find the Pennsylvania VOTER at <https://www.palwv.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Winter-News-Final.pdf>.
- A+ Schools will hold a public meeting on February 21st at Hill House Auditorium. A+ conducted a phone survey of Super Voters about their understanding/perceptions of Pittsburgh Public Schools. The results will be announced at the Feb. 21 meeting and will be used to craft questions for PPS School Board Candidates.
- Ron Cowell's EPLC (Education Policy and Leadership Council) is holding five education policy forums on Governor Wolf's 2017-2018 State Budget Proposal. Forum #1 is in Pittsburgh, Thursday, February 23, 2017 at Wyndham University Center, 100 Lytton Avenue, Pittsburgh (Oakland), PA 15213. Time is 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. You can register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/eplc-pennsylvania-education-policy-forum-in-pittsburgh-tickets-31417733286>.
- The Charter School Movement marks the 25th Anniversary of the Movement and the founding of the first Charter School in Minnesota. The book *The Charter School Movement – 25 Years in the Making* is excellent background reading for those following the "School Choice" debate, Privatization of Public Schools, and Charters. It is published by *Education Week*, and offered FREE as a pdf ebook. Link to request the book: <http://www.edweek.org/media/ebooks/charter-school-movement-edbook.pdf>.





**Restaurant
& Lounge**
Family owned and operated
since 1959
(412) 833-4099

**Open Daily Monday - Saturday 11:00am - 2:00am
Sunday 11:00am - 2:00am**

OPEN DAILY • LUNCHEON AND DINNER SPECIALS
EARLY BIRD SELECTIONS Sunday - Thursday 4:00pm - 6:00pm
HAPPY HOUR Monday - Friday 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Party and Banquet Rooms available for
Showers, Business Meeting, Sports Banquets
Holiday Parties, or any special occasion.

435 McMurray Road • Bethel Park
Visit us on the internet at www.alscafepgh.com

REPORT FROM LWVUS

From Carol Walton

The following information is excerpted from news releases posted on LWVUS website.

The REINS Act – LWVUS President Chris Carson issued the following statement after the House of Representatives passed the “Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny” (REINS) Act. The REINS Act requires Congressional approval for all major regulations, virtually shutting down the entire regulatory process:

“The League of Women Voters is appalled that the House passed such a destructive piece of legislation that will have harmful impacts on public health and consumer protections. Congress has a responsibility to protect Americans, not special interests and corporate donors. Supporters of this legislation claim it will check the overreach of the executive branch, when in reality the REINS Act would replace the strengths of agency rulemaking with the weaknesses of the legislative process. The League strongly opposes the REINS Act and hopes the Senate will reject such dangerous and unnecessary legislation.”

League announces partnership with Labor Talk Radio – The League of Women Voters will partner with “The Union Edge,” the only nationally syndicated labor talk radio program in the country. League leaders will participate in regular radio segments to discuss voting rights, public policy issues and advocacy.

The Union Edge is a four-hour daily live radio program out of Pittsburgh, syndicated on 33 stations nationwide and available by webstream, mobile apps and podcast. The local outlet is WKFB, 770 AM and 97.5 FM weekdays noon-3 p.m. League segments will air every first and third Tuesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. Free app can be downloaded at <http://www.theunionedge.com>.

“The League looks forward to reaching a diverse new audience of listeners across the country,” said LWVUS President Chris Carson. “The Labor Community has a strong record in elections, and we embrace the opportunity to have thoughtful discussions about issues that impact American voters.”

“We are excited to partner with the League of Women Voters for their strong commitment to voter engagement, voter protection and education,” said Charles Showalter, host and founder of The Union Edge. “Union members are Democrats, Republicans and Independents; all should have the unimpeded chance to vote their conscience. As a non-partisan organization, the League always brings a fresh perspective on the critical issues facing working people across the country.”

NEW MEMBERS

Kay Barry, household membership
with John Leathers
slinkay@aol.com

Jane Butler
jbutler.mac@mac.com

Gwen DiPietro, household membership
with Julia DiPietro
gsdipietro@gmail.com

Emily Kinkead, student membership
ekinkead@gmail.com

Rebecca Liput
rebeccaliput@texas.edu

Erin Malloy
erinmalloy@gmail.com

Roxanne Nitti, student membership
roxan2982@netscape.net

Kristina Ruane
kruane27@gmail.com