

League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh

W V O T E R

Volume 23, No. 1

September 2016

LWVGP 2016 Kick-off Meeting

September 14, 2016 • 5:00-8:30 p.m.

Comfort Inn Conference Center, 699 Rodi Road Pittsburgh, PA 15235

Cost is \$30.

RSVP to the CIC office at 412-261-4284 or send an email to info@pgh.lwv.org.

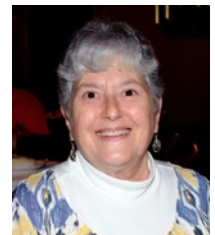
Registration and meet and greet starting at 5 p.m. with appetizers and a cash bar, followed by a buffet dinner.

Our speaker will be Fred Thieman, who will discuss the Criminal Justice system. Mr. Thieman is the former US Attorney for the Western District and currently holds the Henry Buhl Jr Chair for Civic Leadership with the Buhl Foundation. He is the recipient of a Good Government Award from the League in 2014 and is passionate about criminal justice reform. Come meet and mingle with fellow League members and listen to Mr. Thieman. It promises to be an informative and empowering evening!

Voter Registration Activities by Judy Clack, Co-Chair, Voter Service

Naturalization Ceremonies and the LWVUS Grant

In conjunction with our LWVUS Education Fund grant, LWVGP made a concerted effort to gain approval to attend administrative naturalization ceremonies in addition to the ones at the federal courthouse. In mid-July, LWVGP received permission from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS), a division of the Department of Homeland Security, to register new citizens at their weekly naturalization ceremonies near Monroeville. League members quickly jumped on the chance to participate. At each ceremony, about 50 new citizens were sworn in from 17 – 24 unique countries. Afterwards, League members helped an average of 20 new citizens complete a voter registration form each week.



As of August 27, 233 individuals were registered to vote this summer at various naturalization ceremonies and Produce-to-People food bank events. League members had their greatest day ever at the courthouse naturalization ceremony on Fri., Aug. 19 where 48 of the 52 new citizens were registered to vote! Congratulations to our League volunteers! This was followed by the “greatest day ever” at an administrative USCIS naturalization ceremony on Wed., Aug. 24 where 32 out of 54 new citizens were registered. Congrats also to those League volunteers.

Continued on page 5

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HELP!



What do you know about the candidates running for the 23 state House seats in Allegheny County? Only four have opposition and at this moment only seven are included in the Voters Guide. Are you going to

vote blind? Or not at all? We have a job to do in the next 10 weeks. That job is to get information about the candidates into our Voters Guide.

Take the time to contact your candidate; ask to meet with your legislator and perhaps to meet with some of your neighbors. And ask him to put his bio info into the Voters Guide. Let your candidate know you would like to see his picture, contact info and background in our Voters Guide. (The only female candidate running is Anita Kulik in the 45th House District.)

Candidates must provide the information directly. Their office staffs must not work on the campaign. So don't ask a member of the elected officials staff to submit information to Vote 411 or the Voters Guide. It is the politician who needs to add the info.

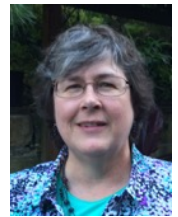
Personal contact with the campaign manager is the best way to go. Stop in the campaign office. Ask to see him or her personally. Help us help us all. For more information about the Voter Guide contact me at 412-221-5163 or arshimer@gmail.com.

Annette

Local is Good!! – County Positions

by Maureen Mamula

Members who attended the Annual Meeting received a list of our local League positions, and some members volunteered to look at these positions. We want to review them and bring that information back to the whole membership. It is heartening to see how many areas of civic life League members care about and have formed a position on.



This is also a good way for those who cannot attend local meetings for various reasons to be involved and make an impact. Please contact me at mamula159@hotmail.com or 412-760-9642 if you can help us review these positions. Some of them are definitely longstanding and may benefit from an update considering technology, changes in government controls, and changes in local demographics.

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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

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

NON-FICTION BOOK CLUB SELECTION

The book for September is *The Gunning of America* by Patricia Haag. Contact is Judy Donohue: 412-373-8697 or jrdono71@gmail.com.

NEW MEMBER

Katherine Keith
Katherine@keith.org

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
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Treasurer	Preston Shimer		
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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
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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

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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 howardmciiii@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

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2016 CALENDAR

September – No unit meetings in September

05 Mon	Labor Day – Office closed
07 Wed	Voter registration, 777 Penn Center Blvd., Bldg. 7, 12:30-3:30 p.m.
08 Thu	Voter registration, Produce-to-People, Duquesne, 5:30 p.m.
12 Mon	Board meeting
13 Tue	Voter registration, Turtle Creek Senior Center, 11-11:30 a.m.
14 Wed	Voter registration, Federal Bldg, 1000 Liberty Ave. 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
14 Wed	LWVGP Kick-off Meeting, Comfort Inn Conference Ctr., 5-8:30 p.m.
15 Thu	Voter registration, CCAC West Hills, 10:00 a.m.
16 Fri	Naturalization & voter registration, Federal Courthouse, 10 a.m.
16 Fri	Voter registration, Federal Bldg, 1000 Liberty Ave. 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
16 Fri	Non-fiction Book Club, Squirrel Hill Library, 10:15 a.m.
21 Wed	Voter registration, 777 Penn Center Blvd., Bldg. 7, 12:30-3:30 p.m.
24 Sat	Voter registration, Produce-to-People, UPMC South Side, 10:00 a.m.
27 Wed	National Voter Registration Day. Voter registration, Kraft Heinz Headquarters, One PPG Place, and Kraft Heinz Innovation Center, 1000 Ericsson Dr., Warrendale, 10:30 a.m.-1:00p.m. and Produce-to-People, Butler Farmer's Mkt., 4:30 p.m.
27 Wed	Education Committee meeting, 1-3 p.m. Squirrel Hill Library
30 Fri	Voter registration, 777 Penn Center Blvd., Bldg. 7, 12:30-3:30 p.m.

October

04 Tue	Voter registration, CCAC West Hills, 10:30 a.m.
06 Thu	South Hills Unit meeting: LWVPA Election Laws Study
07 Fri	Naturalization & Voter registration, Heinz History Center, 11:00 a.m.
10 Mon	Board meeting
11 Tue	Last day to register to vote
11 Tue	Voter registration, 777 Penn Center Blvd., Bldg. 7, 12:30-3:30 p.m.
14 Fri	Pittsburgh Central Unit meeting: LWVPA Election Laws Study
19 Wed	North Hills Unit meeting: LWVPA Election Laws Study
21 Fri	Naturalization & voter registration, Federal Courthouse, 10 a.m.
21 Fri	Non-fiction Book Club, Squirrel Hill Library, 10:15 a.m.
26 Wed	Voter registration, 777 Penn Center Blvd., Bldg. 7, 12:30-3:30 p.m.
26 Wed	Education Committee meeting, Squirrel Hill Library, 1-3 p.m.

Voter Registration Activities, continued from page 1

Twenty four League members registered voters in July and August at Naturalization ceremonies and Produce-to-People Food Bank events. Thanks to Barbara Bachman, Brack Barr, Sheila Barr, Phyllis Bianculli, Louise Cannon, Judy Clack, Marion Damick, Cynthia Grace Devine-Kepner, Carol Emerson, Laryn Finder, Heather Harr, Frank Hynds, Barbara Jones, Katherine Keith, Becky Kretschmann, Maripat Kwaczala, Maureen Mamula, Lora Medwid, Eileen Olmsted, Gloria Pasternak, Christine Peters, Martha Raak, Annette Shimer, and Barbara Simpson.

Volunteers Needed for Fall Voter Registration

League volunteers are needed to register new citizens at recently announced United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) naturalization ceremonies in Sept. and Oct. Can you help from: **12:30 – 3:30 pm** on **Wed., Sept. 21; Fri., Sept. 30; Tues., Oct. 11; or Wed., Oct. 26?** The location is **777 Penn Center Blvd., Bldg. 7, Suite 600, 15235, near Monroeville.** These are very moving ceremonies and it's a thrill to register new citizens.

Can you volunteer for any of these additional voter registration events?

Our League has also been asked to register employees at the **Federal Building, 1000 Liberty Ave., 15222** on **Wed. Sept. 14** and **Fri., Sept. 16** from **11 am – 2:30 pm.**

A special naturalization ceremony will be held at the **Heinz History Center (1212 Smallman Street, 15222)** on **Friday, Oct. 7 at 11:00 am**, and we will register new citizens thereafter.

September 27 is National Voter Registration Day. Our League will be conducting three drives then and needs volunteers for each:

- **Kraft Heinz Headquarters, One PGG Place, Pittsburgh, 15222, 10:30 am – 1 pm;**
- **Kraft Heinz Innovation Center, 1000 Ericsson Dr., Warrendale, 15086, 10:30 am – 1 pm;** and
- **Butler Farmers' Market, 205 S. Chestnut St., Butler, 16001, 4 – 6 pm.**

Please contact League volunteer coordinator Judy Clack at 512-731-0280 or jbclack@yahoo.com if you can help. Judy will provide detailed information to you. Or you can notify Barb Simpson in the League office at 412-261-4284 or info@pgh.lwv.org.

Voter Registration Deadlines and Information

Here is the best link to all voter registration information: <http://everyone.votespa.com>.

- Online voter registration
- Find your polling place
- Check voter registration status
- Absentee voter application

Tues., Oct. 11, last day to register to vote for the Nov. 8 election

Tues., Nov. 1, last day for receipt of mailed absentee ballot application

Fri., Nov. 4, last day the elections division will receive voted civilian absentee ballots

Tues., Nov. 8, Election Day, 7:00 am – 8:00 pm

College students can register at their permanent home address and complete an Absentee Ballot application. Or, college students may also register at their local college address, if they will have lived there for at least 30 days prior to the election.

PA Absentee Ballot applications can be downloaded, completed, and mailed to one's home county. Out-of-state students must request an Absentee Ballot application from their home state/county.

Election Reform Study by Kathie Breckenridge

The Pennsylvania LWV is preparing information for local LWV groups to come to consensus on updating the LWV positions on redistricting, registration procedures and voting procedures of Pennsylvania. Those materials are under development but should be very interesting to our LWV Pittsburgh members.

The League has joined coalitions with other groups such as Keystone Votes (<http://www.keystonevotes.org/about-us/>) to drive improvements in the voting process for our state.

An update on the topics under discussion:

Redistricting: To read up on the effect of redistricting on our Democracy, see this review by Elizabeth Drew in the New York Review of Books of David Daley's new book:

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2016/08/18/american-democracy-betrayed/>

From the LWV-PA web site, an article on the redistricting effort (3/16/2016):

- "As a member of Fair Districts PA (<http://www.FairDistrictsPA.com>), LWVPA is partnering with a growing number of organizations and individuals across the state which recognize the importance of reforming Pennsylvania's redistricting process.
- "Accordingly, LWVPA enthusiastically joins Fair Districts PA in endorsing companion bills Senate Bill 484 sponsored by Senator Lisa Boscola (D-Bethlehem) and House Bill 1835 sponsored by Representatives David Parker (R – Monroe) and Mary Jo Daley (D-Montgomery). These bills are designed to create a fair, impartial and open process for creating legislative districts in Pennsylvania."

Registration Procedures: On-Line Registration – Between August 2015 and February 2016 more than 100,000 PA residents used the new on-line registration – proof that efforts to improve ease of registration are worthwhile! About 60% were registering for the first time, and nearly two-thirds were voters under the age of 35. (Philadelphia Inquirer 2/18/16 -*Angela Coulombis*)

Voting Procedures: The LWV PA has joined with Keystone Votes (<http://www.keystonevotes.org/newsroom/>) to fight against efforts to make voting more difficult. When the Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights act three years ago, these efforts to restrict voting have proliferated throughout the USA.

- Requirements for Voter photo ID: The Brennan Center for Justice published an article on the requirement for photo IDs. Legally, states that require photo-IDs must supply them free of charge and with easy availability to all those seeking to register or vote. Their analysis of the constitutional and financial issues is at <https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/Democracy/Voter%20ID%20Cost%20Memo%20FINAL.pdf>.
- Quoting the Brennan study, the Pennsylvania Budget and Policy Center calculated that the cost to PA of the implementation of Voter Photo ID Requirement (May 10, 2011) would be at least \$11 million in the first year.
- Proof of Citizenship registration requirements: The courts have stated that the states implementing the Photo ID Requirement must also pay for the procurement of birth certificates required to obtain the photo ID. To require payment for obtaining the birth certificates in order to register would amount to a "poll tax" It seems possible that cost should also be borne by states implementing proof of citizenship requirements.
- Efforts to prevent voter registration drives: Some states have made it more difficult to conduct voter registration drives, requiring authorization for the organizations and their personnel. To date, Pennsylvania has not attempted that.

With Keystone Votes, the LWVPA is looking at methods to make voting easier and to improve voter participation:

- Optional Vote by Mail
- Youth Voter Preregistration
- In-Person Early Voting
- Same-Day Voter Registration

2016 SHALE & PUBLIC HEALTH CONFERENCE

November 16, 2016, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

University of Pittsburgh University Club, 123 University Place, Pittsburgh, PA 15260.

Presented by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania's "Straight Scoop on Shale" initiative and hosted by the Pitt Graduate School of Public Health.

Among the highlights of the conference: Brian Schwartz MD, of Johns Hopkins University and the Geisinger Center for Health Research, will present the study on fracking and asthma recently published in JAMA Internal Medicine (Journal of the American Medical Association).

More information on professional accreditation will be coming soon.

The conference itself is free. There is a \$14 charge for buffet lunch.

More Information and Registration at <http://shalepalwv.org>.

Or call 1-800-61-SHALE.

Photo: South Hills League member Debbie Larson shown setting up our display at the Greene County Fair. Debbie serves on the Shale & Public Health committee. She emcee'd the 2013 and 2015 Shale & Public Health conferences.





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COURT HOUSE NATURALIZATION, JULY 15 by Judy Clack

Fifty individuals from twenty-four countries became U. S. citizens at a Naturalization Ceremony on July 15. The new citizens came to the U.S. from Bhutan (11), Brunei, Canada, China (2), Colombia (2), Costa Rica, Haiti, India (10), Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Moldova, Nepal (3), Peru (2), Philippines, Poland, Syria, Taiwan, Tanzania, Thailand, Turkey, Venezuela, and Vietnam. (Thanks to Maureen Mamula for the list of countries.) Notable was the large number from Bhutan who settled in this area as refugees.



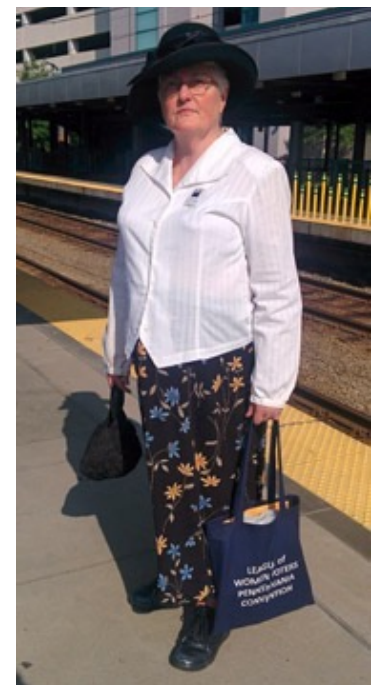
The Honorable Lisa Lenihan, U. S. Magistrate Judge, administered the oath of citizenship, presented their naturalization certificates, and encouraged each new citizen to have his/her photo taken with the judge by proud family members. The ceremony was held in the U. S. District Court of the Western District of Pennsylvania on Grant St. in Pittsburgh.

Our League participates each month in this naturalization ceremony with one League member giving a formal address and others assisting with the completion of voter registration forms. Maureen Mamula spoke to those gathered. She said, "I hope that you will register and vote, I hope you will listen to the candidates, study issues, and vote not on nationality, gender, race or religion, but for those candidates you believe will best serve the common good – for all of us. "



Five other League members assisted with voter registration: Louise Cannon, Judy Clack, Heather Harr, Becky Kretschmann, and Christine Peters. Thirty-four new citizens were registered and 19 requested follow-up LWVGP educational election information.

If you are interested in helping register new citizens on any third Friday of each month, leave your name with Barbara Simpson in the League office:



LWVGP participates in the Pittsburgh Bicentennial parade.

Annette Shimer on the way to the parade