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League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh

**VOTER**



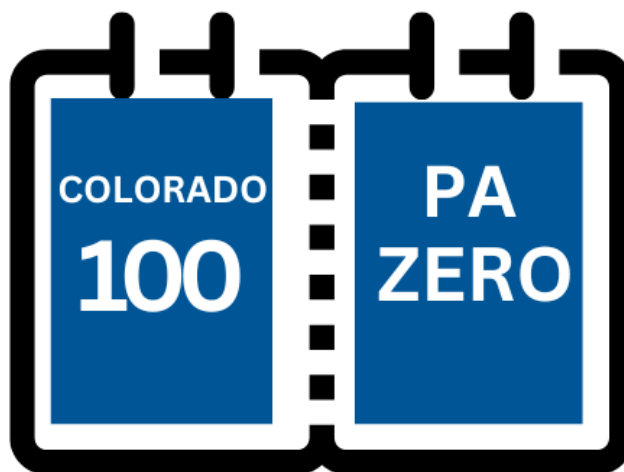
VOLUME 29, No. 3

NOVEMBER 2022

NOVEMBER PROGRAM – SIX GATEKEEPERS AND PA'S LEGISLATIVE RULES

## Legislative FAIRNESS Scores

*Did You Know??*



*Want to Learn More??*

League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh  
presents

**"Six Gatekeepers and PA's Legislative Rules"**

**by Suzanne Broughton**

**November 30, 2022**

**Virtual at 7pm**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



As the Supreme Court starts a new session, we will be carefully watching their reactions to the congressional maps which were recently drawn in Alabama. The question is, do these maps violate Section 2 of the Voting

Rights Act of 1965? We know that

Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act states that individuals may not be discriminated against because of their race in the practices or procedures of voting. We expect a decision later in June.

The Voting Rights Act has repeatedly been stripped of its power over the years, most recently in 2013 in *Shelby County vs. Holder* which saw polling places closed, voting rolls purged, and a slew of laws that protect voters altered. The League of Women Voters has been advocating for voter's rights for over 100 years, and we intend to continue to stand up for voters everywhere.

The Supreme Court is currently suffering from a low approval rating due to recent rulings that challenge long standing accepted law, some on the books for more than 50 years. Across Pennsylvania and in our Region, we have seen an uptick in voter registrations as well as an increase in our own membership.

You may ask, what is the League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh doing to help support voters

that may be discriminated against. We have been registering voters at more than 30 events this election season alone from college campuses to food pantries to outside a Steeler game, presented programs on election integrity open to the public, partnered with organizations in resilient communities to inform and register voters, collaborated with a coalition to educate returning citizens of their voting rights, updated our website to highlight voter's rights, and provided ASL interpreters on educational videos for voters.

The League consistently interacts with the County Election Division to assure that elections are fair and equitable by sending representatives to the verification process of equipment prior to the election. We question any perceived irregularities in the entirety of the voting process and pursue the answers to our queries, relentlessly.

The League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh speaks for our members and all the voters of the region, but we know that your vote and the vote of your neighbor, are your voices in the wider picture of the composition of the Supreme Court and our Federal, State, and Local Governments. We encourage you to not only vote but to nudge, bring, or help your neighbors, relatives and friends get to the polls on November 8th, 2022 to exercise their democratic right. Get passionate about protecting what we have now and in the future. Remember, when you vote, how you vote helps to determine what our country and planet will look like in 50 or 100 years.

Best,  
Michele Knoll, President

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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.

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Email: [info@lwvpgh.org](mailto:info@lwvpgh.org)

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

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

### Volunteers Needed for Short-term FDPA/Fix Harrisburg Activity

If you live in one of the following legislative districts: 20, 30, 33, 39, 40, 44, 45 and would be willing to contact the candidates in those districts to ask them to support Rules Changes in Harrisburg to ensure that bipartisan solutions get a full vote in the Legislature, please contact **Maureen Grosheider** ([past.president@lwvpgh.org](mailto:past.president@lwvpgh.org)) for more information.

## LEAGUE MEETING STRUCTURE

### Board Meetings

- ✓ **Second** Monday of the month..  
Meeting: 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.,  
currently by Zoom.

### Local Area Unit Meetings

- ✓ **Pittsburgh Central:** Currently not meeting. Contact Martha Raak at 412-477-7572 or [marbiker1@gmail.com](mailto:marbiker1@gmail.com)
- ✓ **North Hills:** Currently not meeting. Contact Nancy Mott at 412-779-3089 or [namott001@gmail.com](mailto:namott001@gmail.com)
- ✓ **South Hills:** Currently not meeting. Contact Maureen Mamula at 412-760-9642 or [mamula159@hotmail.com](mailto:mamula159@hotmail.com)

### Other Ongoing Meetings

- ✓ **Education Committee**  
1st Wednesday by Zoom.  
[education@lwvpg.org](mailto:education@lwvpg.org)
  - ✓ **Voter Service Committee**  
1st Tuesdays, 12:30 pm. by Zoom. Additional meetings occasionally added as needed.  
Chair is Judy Clack at 512-731-0280  
[voterservice@lwvpg.org](mailto:voterservice@lwvpg.org)
  - ✓ **Advocacy Committee**  
3rd Monday by Zoom.  
Chair Michele Knoll  
412-389-1387  
[advocacy@lwvpg.org](mailto:advocacy@lwvpg.org)
  - ✓ **Gun Safety Committee**  
Currently not meeting.  
Contact Nancy Naragon at 412-366-2446 or [development@lwvpg.org](mailto:development@lwvpg.org)
  - ✓ **Non-fiction Book Club**  
3rd Friday, 10:15 am. Meeting place determined each month, see calendar. Contact Joan Cucinotta, 412-708-2335 or [joancucinotta@gmail.com](mailto:joancucinotta@gmail.com)
- This column will be updated as in-person meetings become possible or changes in League programming are made.

## November-December Calendar

### November

1 Tue	Voter Service Meeting is <b>cancelled</b> .
1 Tue	<b>Last Day to Request a Mail-In or Absentee Ballot</b>
8 Tue	<b>Election Day</b>
14 Mon	Board meeting, 12:30 pm, on Zoom
Tue 15 & Wed 16	Tenth Annual Shale and Public Health Conference, noon-4:00 pm on Zoom. See <a href="http://ShalePalwv.org">ShalePalwv.org</a>
15 Tue	LWVPA Government Policy Update, 7:00-8:00 pm. Register to watch <a href="#">here</a> . Updates are held the third Tuesday of each month.
18 Fri	Non-fiction Book Club meeting, 10:30-2, Squirrel Hill Library
30 Wed	<b>Program: Six Gatekeepers &amp; PA's Legislative Rules, 7 pm, Zoom</b>

### December

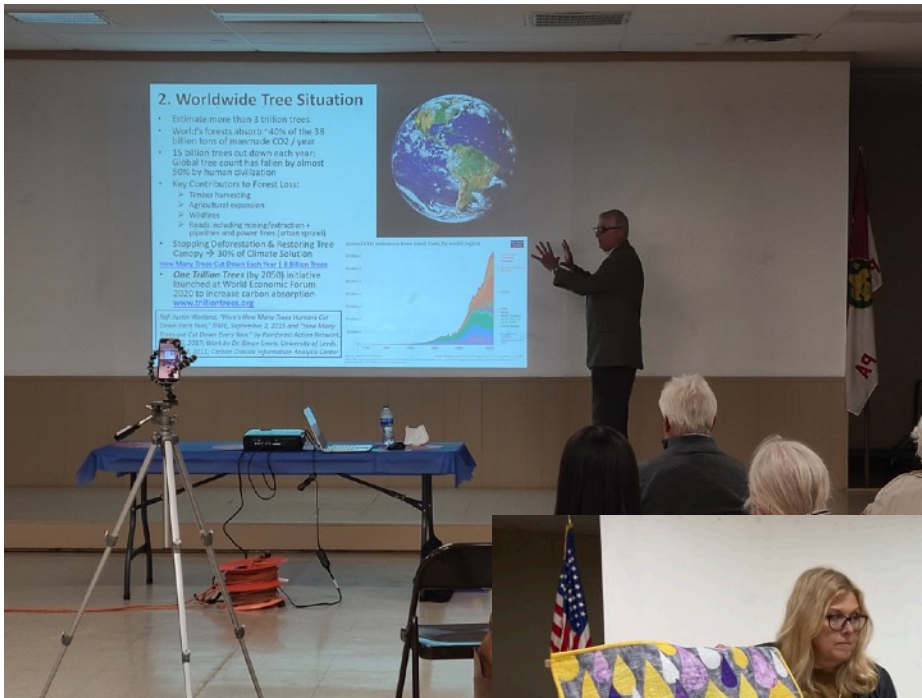
6 Tue	Voter Service Committee, 12:30-2:30 on Zoom
12 Mon	Board meeting, 12:30 pm, on Zoom
17 Sat	<b>Social potluck lunch get-together</b> , 11:30 am - 2:00 pm, Mellon Room in the Koppers Building, Members & friends invited

## District Maps for the PA Legislature Confirmed

On October 31, 2022, the United States Supreme Court denied the petition for a writ of certiorari that had been filed in the case of Benninghoff v. 2021 Legislative Reapportionment Commission. Mark A. Nordenberg, the Chair of the Commission, responded to that action by the Court by issuing the following statement:

"The entire Legislative Reapportionment Commission team is gratified by the decision of the United States Supreme Court denying the petition asking that the Commission's plan be subjected to yet another stage of review. We view this decision as a further validation of our committed efforts to ensure that the plan we adopted fully complied with the requirements of both state and federal law. This action of our nation's highest Court also can be seen as a validation of both the 4 to 1 bipartisan vote within the Commission itself to adopt the plan and the unanimous decision of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court upholding it."

## Photos from the Kick-off Meeting



**Left:** Ken Balkey from the Churchill Tree Committee kept our attention about the importance of trees during his talk at the Fall Kick-Off.

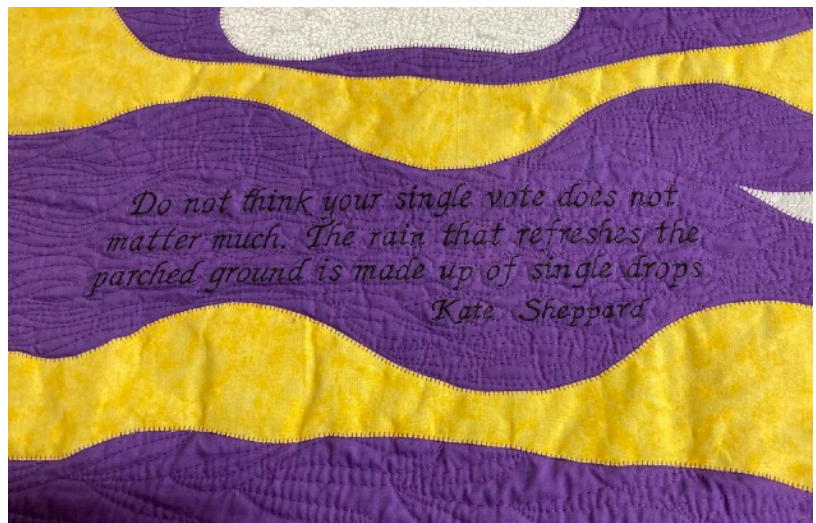
**Below:** Quilter and Fabric Artist Pam Bice donated her quilt to our League which is displayed by President Michele Knoll. The colors (purple, gold, and white) are those of the women's suffrage movement. Pam Bice was awarded a membership in the LWVPGH.



**Above:** Emilie Rzotkiewicz, the Stewardship Coordinator with the Allegheny Land Trust, speaks about the work the ALT is doing to preserve and protect green spaces.



**Right:** The inscription on Pam Bice's quilt was the inspiration for its design: "Do not think your single vote does not matter. The rain that refreshes the parched ground is made up of single drops." (Kate Sheppard, New Zealand's most famous suffragist.)



## **LWV The Straight Scoop on Shale**

A Project of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Education Fund

### **Tenth Annual Shale & Public Health Conference**

**Tuesday November 15, 2022**  
**&**  
**Wednesday, November 16, 2022**  
from noon to 4:00 p.m. EST

This is an online **ZOOM conference**. Login details will be provided closer to the event to all registrants.

The conference is presented by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania and hosted by the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health.

**The conference is free, but you need to register!**

**Register : [www.ShalePALWV.org](http://www.ShalePALWV.org)**

**Featuring new research presented by national experts on shale and public health impacts, and practical applications.**

- Synthesis of 10 years of research - what have we learned?
- New evidence: Researchers present their latest studies on the health impacts of shale gas development
- Environmental Justice
- Special guest speakers explore the relationships between research findings and government policy
- Community Voices

**League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania**  
Straight Scoop on Shale \* 1-800-617-4253 \* shalemarella@gmail.com

There is a list of conference speakers and a working registration link at  
<https://www.shalepalwv.org/2022-shale-public-health-conference/>

## **FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR** by Barbara Grabowski

Hello League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh members. I am the new Program Director for 2022-2024 and I am looking forward to developing the League's Positions and arranging educational programs. All members should have received a Survey (by email) in mid-October that asked you to tell us about issues and topics you want to know more about. If you haven't responded to the Survey, this is a kindly reminder! I will use your responses to determine the speakers and programs to hold in the coming year.

In January, we will be holding our annual program planning meeting. This is where we decide the particular areas to focus on with respect to advocacy. These are based on the League's Positions which have been adopted by the LWV of Greater Pittsburgh as well as the LWV of PA and the National organization. An explanation of the process we follow to develop our Positions and a list of our Positions can be found on our website at: [https://lwvpgh.org/content.aspx?page\\_id=22&club\\_id=554754&module\\_id=476816](https://lwvpgh.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=554754&module_id=476816). We are still working out the details of how we will conduct our 2023 program planning meeting: stay tuned for more details in the December Voter.

If you are interested in Programs and would like to be more involved in organizing speakers and presentations and Program planning, we would love to have you. Please contact me at [program@lwvpgh.org](mailto:program@lwvpgh.org).

## **CEDAW IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY** by Barbara Jones

CEDAW stands for the Convention to End All Discrimination against Women. It originated with the United Nations; all western countries except ours endorsed the Convention and its principles. Unfortunately, the United States, more than twenty years later, has yet to ratify the treaty putting us in the same company as countries with a dismal track record on gender equality. These include, among others, Sudan, Somalia and Iran. Of the 194 UN member nations, 187 countries have ratified CEDAW. Because CEDAW has not yet received the ⅔ vote of the US Senate needed for ratification, several American cities have taken matters into their own hands. They have acted locally to make things better for women.

More than five years ago LWVPGH member, Marcia Bandes, and a group of determined women from several organizations established the Pittsburgh for CEDAW coalition to advance women's rights significantly in the city of Pittsburgh. Now Pittsburgh is one of only a handful of cities that has succeeded in getting its own CEDAW ordinance passed by City Council and approved by Bill Peduto, our previous mayor. We also have established a Gender Equity Commission which has ten representatives from various non-profits who focus on extending and increasing equality for women and girls in the civil, social, and economic arena.

Our current project is to get Allegheny County to endorse and enact similar CEDAW principles for the County. We will be meeting with County Council members and doing presentations to them, asking them for support and action on CEDAW principles. We meet on Zoom once a month. The meetings teach us on the ground local politics, and we have had some success in affecting issues of equality for women and girls in Pittsburgh. Our first meeting of the 2022 year was October 12th. We will continue to meet monthly, the second Wednesday of each month at 7 pm. Interested League members can contact Marcia Bandes at [pgh4cedaw@gmail.com](mailto:pgh4cedaw@gmail.com) to get the Zoom meeting address. All are most welcome. We are actively looking for more members to join CEDAW. There is no fee.

## VOTER SERVICE REPORT by Judy Clack, Voter Service Chair

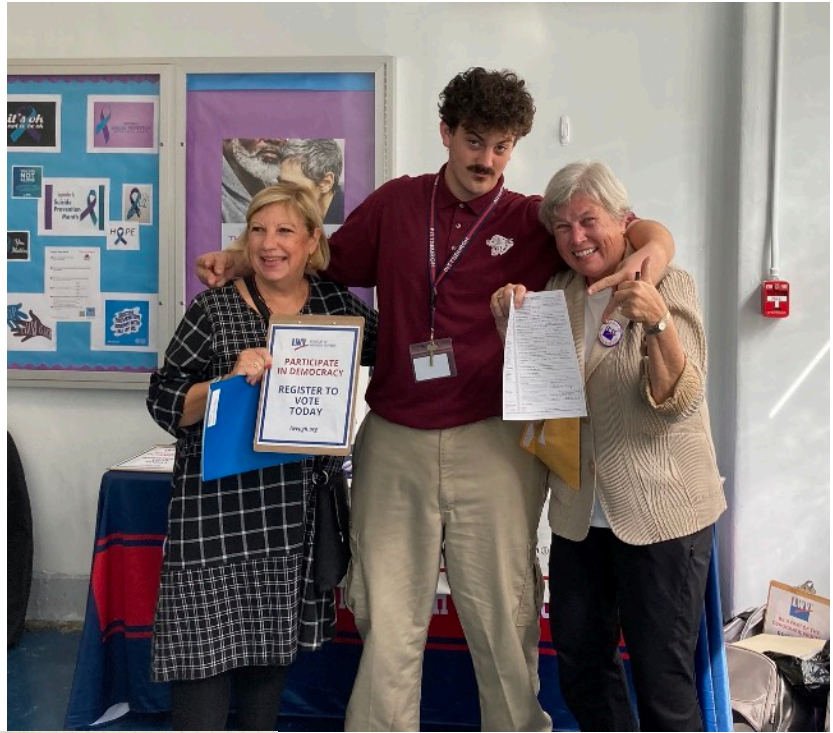


### Committee Meeting

There will be no meeting on Tuesday, November 1. The next meeting of the full Voter Service Committee will be on Tuesday, December 6, 12:30 – 2:30 pm on Zoom. Check the LWVPGH member calendar for the Zoom link. The following are photos from Voter Service activities in October.

### Voter Registration Events

After registering to vote, this student at **Pittsburgh Job Corps** is clowning around with LWVPGH volunteers Molly Taleb and Janet Squires. (Judy Clack and Nancy Mott are not pictured.) The Job Corps has invited Joanne Moore, a presenter from our Civic Education team, to provide educational information to a class prior to the election.



A happy crew of LWVPGH members prepare for the doors to open at the **Ross Township Senior Resource Fair**: front: Judith Kuperstein, Dorothy Valimont, Judy Clack; back: Stephanie Watson Haynes, Jim, and Cris Graham. Not pictured is Karey Kluesner. Most senior citizens were already registered, some completed mail-in ballot applications, but all appreciated receiving the LWVPGH postcard, Voting Resources You Need, with URLs to League websites.

*Continued next page*

### Repair the World at a Steelers Game:

Photos and captions from the Repair the World event in memory of Mel Wax who was murdered at the Tree of Life massacre. Here's a link to a wonderful article and other photos from the Post-Gazette.

<https://www.post-gazette.com/news/politics-local/2022/10/16/voter-registration-event-before-steelers-game-honors-fallen-in-tree-of-life-attack-acrisure-stadium/stories/202210160176>



Left: Three non-profit organizations joined forces to register to vote those attending the Steelers football game on October 16. Pictured here are front, Roy Blankenship, B-PEP; and back, Judy Clack and Julie Zavon (LWVPGH), Jionna Rodgers, Kate Mann and Maggie Feinstein (Repair the World).

Right: Gathering at the Fred Rogers statue after conducting voter registration are front, Jionna Rodgers (Repair the World), and back, Kim Mudd (B-PEP), Ruth Quint (LWVPGH), and Emma Duhamel (Repair the World).



### Meet the Candidates Part 1



Celebrating prize winner Alma Wisniewski (second from left and a LWVPGH member) for bringing the most guests to the Meet the Candidates Part 1 event are Tené Croom (mistress of ceremonies and LWVPGH member), Lorraine Cross (B-PEP officer and LWVPGH member) and Tim Stevens (B-PEP, CEO).



League members Judy Mancini and Doug Krings served as timers at Meet the Candidates Part 1, October 25 at the National Association of Letter Carriers Hall co-sponsored by B-PEP, Pittsburgh Higher Ground Ministry, and the LWVPGH.

## Meet the Candidates Part 2

Photos from Terrie Griffin at the B-PEP/LWVPGH meet the candidates night on Thursday, November 3 at Saint James AME Church. Lorraine Cook (League and BPEP member) and Yvonne Rainey spoke! Judy, Jessica, Ellie and Terrie represented the League. There were candidates from the Green and Keystone parties. Summer Lee was in attendance and spoke.



The New Pittsburgh Courier article was in this week announcing the event and encouraging everyone to vote. Judy Clack and Terrie Griffin are in the picture!! Great press!!

## BOOK CLUB REPORT by Joan Cucinotta

### NEXT MEETING

For our next meeting, we will focus on the idea of Fascism. You are encouraged to do a bit of reading on this on your own but here may be a couple of places to get started. (NB-these were suggestions. I have not read/listened to either source myself). Rachel Maddow details the tactics of a previous right-winged attempt at a takeover in the 1940s in a podcast here. There is also this audiobook *The War on Everyone* by Robert Evans which gives some historical and philosophical backgrounding on the topic. You can also read a copy of this audiobook here. **Our next meeting will be November 18 at 10:30 A.M. in the Sq. Hill Library.**

### FOLLOWING UP

In May, Book Club read *There is Nothing for You Here* by Fiona Hill, the former official at the U.S. National Security Council who testified in Trump's first impeachment hearing as a Russia expert. Yesterday, Carol Emerson, Judy Schryer, Martha Raak, and Joan Cucinotta had the chance to hear her lecture at the University of Pittsburgh. Photos below.



### BOOK COMMENTARY

From tea rations to dogfights over Dover, the delight is in the detail in Erik Larson's new book, *The Splendid and the Vile*. This book depicts a pivotal year for the United Kingdom. By 1940 France was falling to the Germans and Neville Chamberlain's appeasement policies meant that the United Kingdom was next. He was voted out as a prime minister, but it wasn't clear who could take on the towering responsibility and weight of the job next. Winston Churchill, drawn implacably to the task, welcomed the opportunity to lead his country through dark times. Larson, using his familiar formula of popular narrative history writing that so enlivened his noteworthy other books like *Devil in the White City*, *In the Garden of the Beasts*, and *Dead Wake*, has written *The Splendid and the Vile* to show how 1940 "was the year that Churchill became Churchill."

The great appeal of this book lies in Larson's entwining the broad grim realities of the war with the heightened personal engagements of daily life. There are riveting blow-by-blow accounts of the RAF outmaneuvering and out-blasting the swaggering and overconfident Luftwaffe with planes darting into clouds and waiting on the other side to attack or climbing above to zero in on a target below. Larson points out that for the RAF, the war was very personal. An examination of the target site patterns showed them that the goal of the Luftwaffe attacks was the destruction of the RAF itself. This was not to be the great land war. But before fogging the narrative with military technological details, Larson shifts to the anxieties of civilian experience, for example showing us the unfulfilled love life of John Colville, Churchill's private secretary, or Churchill's private family issues in having a son troubled by gambling debts and a failing marriage.

*Continued next page*

While the reader will already know the outcome of this story, Larson still has an uncanny ability to create a sense of rising tension. He accomplished this in *Devil in the White City* as the serial killer grew more brazen and in *The Garden of the Beasts* as the anti-semitism grew more virulent. In this book, the sense of an inevitable ending stalks the British and threatens their morale. At Dunkirk when 300,000 soldiers were saved (instead of the 50,000 thought possible) the elation turned dark as the British became aware that they had just demonstrated a foolproof method for a mass invasion in reverse. Having imagined an invasion with large craft, it was clear that an armada of small craft meant the southern shores were truly exposed. By balancing large-scale events like this with small-scale scenes, Larson creates a sense of slow-creeping fear akin to the atmosphere in 1940.

The thing that distinguishes Larson's Churchill is Churchill's gift of never giving up. Even when the French were defeated, his first thought was to ask them to hand over their fleet before the Germans got it. He wasn't going to give up and was going to snap up every bit of materiel he could get his hands on. Larson goes back and forth between the "vile" smug confidence of Goring and horror vision of Hitler with the "splendid" gift that was Churchill who never flinched in his efforts to tweak, change, invent, exhort, or soothe whenever it was needed. He would weep openly when he walked in the debris of the London bombing and talked to the people there and he would not accept "it can't be done" from his subordinates. Larson shows how at each turn of the war in 1940, Churchill rose to the challenge, and his energy and leadership were what garnered Roosevelt's assistance and bolstered the morale of the British.

It was impossible to read this during October and not think of the striking similarities which Churchill and the UK faced in 1940 with what Zelensky and Ukraine face right now. Both are democracies about to be swallowed by a superpower on a rampage, both appealing directly to the US specifically as the last best hope for democracy. The more Hitler assumed he could break the morale of the British public so he could finish them off, the more Churchill doubled down with rhetoric and appeals to Roosevelt for assistance that kept the UK afloat. The same is happening with the war in Ukraine. In the face of Putin's bombast, the Crimean Bridge was bombed, disrupting the main Russian artery into Crimea, doing so on Putin's 70th birthday...and trolling him with a photo of the collapsed bridge and Marilyn Monroe singing "Happy Birthday, Mr. President." Just as the German conquest of France and their radar technology advances created a sense of creeping dread for Churchill and the British, the Ukrainians are also seeing Belarus as a staging area and facing the new "kamikaze drones." Perhaps one day Eric Larson will write about this war too.

## NEW MEMBERS

### North Hills

Cristina Baraky  
Email: [cmb\\_350@yahoo.com](mailto:cmb_350@yahoo.com)

Lise Bilhaut  
Email: [lise.bilhaut@gmail.com](mailto:lise.bilhaut@gmail.com)

Terri Minor-Spencer  
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Susan D. Claus  
Email: [susan.davis.claus@gmail.com](mailto:susan.davis.claus@gmail.com)

### Pittsburgh Central

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Signora Hall Watson  
Email: [siggi.watson@icloud.com](mailto:siggi.watson@icloud.com)

### South Hills

Molly McCullough  
Email: [mollymc18732@gmail.com](mailto:mollymc18732@gmail.com)

<b><u>LWVGP Officers / Executive Committee</u></b>		<b><u>Local Area Meeting Chairs</u></b>	
President (and Advocacy)	Michelle Knoll	Pgh. Central 412-477-7572	Martha Raak
V.P.1 Administration	Preston Shimer	North Hills 412-779-3089	Nancy Mott
V.P.2 Voter Service	Judy Clack	South Hills 412-760-9642	Maureen Mamula
V.P.3 Development	Nancy Naragon		
V.P.4 Program	Barbara Grabowski		
Secretary	Kathy Herbst		
Treasurer	Preston Shimer		
<b><u>Directors</u></b>		<b><u>Interest &amp; Service Area Specialists</u></b>	
Membership, Naturalization	Judy Diorio	Election Integrity	Ron Bandes
Social media	Emily Ferri	Civic Ed: Harvard Study	Cris Beuger
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	Terrie Griffin	VOTER Editor	Sue Broughton
Pres emerita, Leg update	Maureen Grosheider	Book Club	Joan Cucinotta
Civic Education	Amy Kleissas	Gov. relations, Outreach	Jackie Dixon
Webmaster	Ruth Quint	Science and Environment	Don Naragon
Vote411 & Voter Guides	Annette Shimer	Blast	Eileen Olmsted
Budget	Ellie Siegal	Vote411 & VG assistant	Michelle Zmijanac
<b><u>Staff</u></b>			
Community Information Center	Manager: Charlesa Nelson Formally	Marcellus Shale Grant	Manager: Heather Harr
<b><u>League Phone Numbers, Websites, and Social Media</u></b>			
Greater Pittsburgh	412-261-4284	<a href="http://lwvpgh.org">lwvpgh.org</a>	
Pennsylvania	717-234-1576 Ext 0	<a href="http://palwv.org">palwv.org</a>	
National	202-429-1965	<a href="http://lww.org">lww.org</a>	
Facebook	<a href="http://www.facebook.com">www.facebook.com</a>	Search: League of Women Voters of Greater Pittsburgh	