



League of Women Voters
of Kent County

The VOTER

The Price of Liberty Is Still Eternal Vigilance

July ~ 2011

President - Christine Stillson, 697-8600, clstillson@verizon.net; Editor - Les Stillson 697-8600, lstillson@verizon.net; Website: lwvkc-de.org/

Calendar

- July 2011- No Board or Unit Meetings scheduled:
- July 14 - Great Decisions, National Security – Heritage, Dover ~ 10:00 to Noon
- July 15 - Fun Lunch – McGlynns Pub & Restaurant, Dover ~ 11:30 am (watch for Flyer with details)
- August 6 - Peach Festival- **Voter Registration** , Wyoming ~ 9 to 2 pm
- August 12 - Fun Lunch – Abbott’s Grill, Milford ~ 11:30 am (watch for Flyer with details)
- August 23 - LWVKC Planning Meeting –venue TBD ~ 6:00 pm
- August 31 - LWVKC Picnic - Ruth and Ralph Johnson’s Lakefront Cottage ~ 6:00 pm
- Sept 8 - Great Decisions –Topic and venue to be announced later
- Sept 21 - Annual Pot Luck Dinner and Program, Camden Friends Meeting House ~ 6 to 9 pm
- Sept 28 - LWVKC Board Meeting –St Paul’s Episcopal Church, Camden ~ 12:30 pm
- Nov. 30 - Consensus Response due to LWVUS

Annual League Picnic August 31st

The Annual League Picnic will once again be hosted by Ruth and Ralph Johnson at their lakeside home at 3052 Andrews Lake Road on August 31st. Festivities will begin at 6 PM. For Directions, call the Johnson’s at 335-4330. Come have a good time catching up with other Leaguers and their news! Ralph says to bring your swimsuit. He has a canoe and paddleboat available, but you can bring your own if you wish. Ralph will man the grill and provide the meats. Please bring a dish or dessert to pass, and your table setting hardware.

2011 DUES UPDATE - Please Send Now, But No Later Than October 1, 2011

Dues for the fiscal year---July 1, 2011 - June 30, 2012---are payable July 1 and are due by October 1. If you joined (or rejoined) the League between April 1, 2011 and June 30, 2011, the dues you paid include the current fiscal year.

Did you know that when you pay your \$45.00 annual dues the league sends \$30.00 to fund the National LWV and \$10.00 to fund the DE-LWV? Only \$5.00 remains to support the programs and activities of our Kent County LWV including help to defray the cost of speakers, rental fees for meeting space, and expenses for program materials, advocacy resources and outreach activities.

Your help is needed to continue the League’s educational and community programs. Please consider including a contribution with your 2010-2011 annual dues. Thank you for your membership renewal and your support.

We appreciate your prompt payment. Membership in the League of Women Voters is still one of the best bargains around.

Please note that there is a \$5.00 surcharge per individual or household for providing a hard copy of all VOTERS and Flyers to cover postage, paper and printing.

Please mail your check to: Beverly Jackson, Treasurer
LWV Kent County
130 Hitching Post Drive
Dover, DE 19904

----- (clip and send to Beverly) -----

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP - \$45.00	\$ _____
TWO MEMBER HOUSEHOLD - \$67.50	\$ _____
CONTRIBUTION TO LWVKC (Not Tax Deductible)	\$ _____
DONATION TO LWVKC EDUCATION FUND (Tax Deductible)	\$ _____
HARD COPY OF VOTER AND FLYERS - \$5.00/yr.	\$ _____

Total Enclosed	\$ _____
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President's Message – June 30, 2011

Greetings fellow League members ! Summer is upon us, and we usually take a short "break" from League meetings. Not this year !! We are continuing with the Fun Lunch calendar for July and August. We'll also be holding the Annual League Picnic at League hosts' Ruth and Ralph Johnson's home in late August. Look for details in this newsletter ! I hope you can make time for these events that help us get to know each other better, and a great way to meet new members !

Our Annual Meeting in May, held in the Gathering Place at Camden Friends Meetinghouse, was well attended and received rave reviews ! Thanks to our newly elected slate of officers for their commitment to leadership in the League: Phyllis Edamatsu as First Vice President, Jill Fuchs as Secretary, and Ellen Wasfi, Peggy Swygert and Betty Ipnar as Directors. The new officers and directors join Julie Price, Beverly Jackson, JoAnn Fields, Ruth Johnson and Lester Stillson to make up the full Board. Many thanks to the hardworking Nominating Committee: Peggy Swygert, Carol Reid-Grandfield, Ruth Ann Purchase and Lester Stillson. Following the Annual League report of activities, longtime League member Charlotte Hunt was commended for her work as Secretary to the League. Of course, she will continue to carry out her varied and valued League roles !

The program that followed was Part I of a hoped for series taking a look at Income inequality and its affect on political involvement. Speaker Anne Rhoads (Professor from DSU) provided a very interesting presentation on the Federal Budget and Deficit debates. You'll find details on the Annual Meeting and the President's Report in this Newsletter.

Looking ahead to the League year for 2011-2012, we hope to be following up with Part II of the Income Inequality series in addition to participating in two LWVUS driven Consensus topics: 1) the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education and 2) Privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector. LWVUS has already provided the "work" of researching the first of the two consensus topics and has constructed Consensus questions. We hope to commence the Education study shortly with a public forum inviting educators to provide insight into the topic. If you are interested in working with a team on this consensus topic, please contact Ellen Wasfi. MORE details inside..... (For those interested in helping to plan other programs for the coming year, please come to the planning meeting at 6 PM on August 23rd. (The venue to be confirmed at a later date.)

It is impossible to say enough thanks to League members for their very valued work in the League. The League is a great organization that makes me proud to be a member among so many thoughtful, articulate, hardworking and caring women—and men. I also want to thank you for your confidence in my remaining as President for another term. I look forward to working together as we head into another successful year!

Yours in League,
Christine Stillson

LWVKC BOOTH at WYOMING PEACH FESTIVAL– Volunteers Needed

League members are encouraged to visit the Wyoming Peach Festival on Saturday August 6th. Come before 9am to watch the traditional parade on Camden-Wyoming Avenue, take a walk through the displays, savor the delicious aroma from funnel cakes, hot dogs and sausages, pick up some fresh peaches, or some just picked corn-on-the-cob. This is a great opportunity to experience "small town America" at its best.

Spend some time at the LWVKC Booth and watch "the world go by" - 'till we bring in someone who wants to become a registered Voter. Then we do one of our most important tasks, as we ask the questions, obtain the information, fill in the form and get it signed and there we have a brand new VOTER REGISTRATION! A real thrill especially for the first time!

If you want to help staff the LWVWC Booth at the Wyoming Peach Festival, please call Charlotte Hunt 734-3268 or email Cmhunt2004@aol.com to arrange time on the schedule between 8:30am and 3pm. Our booth is located at the SE Corner of Camden-Wyoming Ave. and Railroad Ave.

If you want to actually register voters, you must attend a training class once a year. Call LWVWC Coordinator Charlotte Hunt 734-3268 or email Cmhunt2004@aol.com for more information on what to do. If you are not yet registered, please come anyway and pair-up with a trained member. Hope to see you there!

Implementing the Affordable Care Act – Jo Ann Fields, MD

Although the new health reform law, the Affordable Care Act (ACA), does not completely go into effect until 2014, a lot of work is being done in our state to implement it. The Delaware Health Care Commission, the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, and the Department of Health and Social Services are the three main working groups. A governing board for the new Health Benefits Exchange is being formed. The open issues are who should be on the Board, what will be its authority and duties, and how will they make the Exchange self-sustaining?

The Governor will appoint five members to the Health Benefits Exchange Board and leaders of the State Senate and House will appoint two members. We have an opportunity to provide the Governor and the leaders of the General Assembly our opinions on who should be on the Board.

I hope that the Board members will include several outstanding advocates for reform of private health insurance in the individual and small group market. A strong advocate would be someone who:

- Understands rate review, rate settings and new rules to protect consumers
- Understands cost trends, claims projections, and medical loss ratios
- Has in depth knowledge of the health insurance market in Delaware
- Understands actuarial review
- Advocates for a modernized rate review process
- Understands the purpose of the insurance exchange
- Advocates for creating a single risk pool for individuals and small groups. Knows the harm of having so many fragmented risk pools
- Understands how to use the mechanism of the Health Exchange to change how providers are paid
- Advocates for an All Payer database of unit costs paid by insurers to providers. Works on legislation to require insurers to disclose details of unit costs paid to specific providers or at least disclose these data to the Insurance Commissioner and the Health Care Commission even if the public cannot see it.
- Advocates for transparency, fairness in setting rates.

The nominee would be someone who is experienced in actuarial work and/or knows how brokers work and how health insurance companies work. He/she is someone from the University of Delaware, Delaware State University or Wesley College, from a major Business School, or from Widener Law School. The nominee should be someone who is well versed in the above issues, who has written extensively on these issues and is recognized as a policy leader and advocate for health insurance reform.

Please submit names of people who fit this description as potential nominees to Jo Ann.

Some Brief LWVUS COUNCIL Notes: June 17-20, 2011 by Sandy Spence, LWVDE

In 2011, the LWVUS Council changed its usual business-type meeting to focus on training. It was an outstanding experience for everyone who attended. The raining workshops had a heavy emphasis on exploring the role of New Media (Blogging, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and developing a good League visibility plan. There was also an excellent session on using tools to understand leadership styles to assist in team development and board management.

During the three-day program, each state delegation prepared a plan for a major "campaign" we would like to focus on in the coming year. **Our Delaware delegates developed a plan to advocate for serious campaign finance reform for the state.** The plan will be submitted to the Action Committee and Board to determine whether this is something they would like to take on.

During the relatively short business session, Council adopted a budget for the fiscal year starting July 1 through June 2012. In the future, two- year budgets will be adopted at the biennial Convention. **Next year's convention will be held at the Washington Hilton in D.C.**

Delaware had one of the largest delegations. Carol Jones and Sandy Spence were delegates from the state board. Letty Diswood, another state board member and office manager for the LWVDE and New Castle County, also joined the group along with Sussex League's new President Cathy Ward and VP Anne Riley.

Report on the Wine and Cheese Garden Party

Held at the home of League members, Carol and Ray Grandfield, the event took place on June 25th from 4-7 PM. With beverages, cheese and other hors d'oeuvres provided by members, this informal gathering provided a chance for members to socialize, review current events and chat about other topics of both general and political concern. Thanks to the Grandfields for providing the beautiful venue and the gorgeous gardens for this event! And thanks to all for the variety of wines and cheeses ! (See photos below. Left: Hannah McClennan and Hostess Carol Reid- Grandfield. Right: Phil Troxler, Ruth Bochnowski, John Bocknowski, and Bill and Gail Clemen's guest, Jewel.)



TAKE A LOOK AT US NOW! – Peggy Swygert, Membership Chair

The League of Women Voters of Kent County (LWVKC), a non-partisan political organization, has a mission to:

- ✓ encourage informed and active participation in government;
- ✓ work to increase understanding of major public policy issues;
- ✓ influence public policy through education and advocacy.

The benefits of having a membership in the LWVKC are many. Take a look at the variety of offerings.

Community Involvement: Voter Registration, Candidates Night with debates held prior to local, school and statewide elections, open forums/workshops on current and timely topics and Great Decisions - discussion group re: world issues - with a leader and study guide.

Resources for community distribution: bi-annually, a directory of legislators is published and distributed to

individuals and organizations in the State of Delaware. The directory is titled "They Represent You: A Directory of Elected Officials."

Members receive monthly newsletters, Membership Directories, the opportunity to identify, plan and work on issues or presentations that are of interest to them, attend and participate in monthly Board Meetings, attend an annual LWVKC Picnic and the LWVDE State Convention.

This year, an awesome Garden Party was held at the home of Carol and Ray Grandfield (instead of the annual Winter Tea). There is also an annual fundraiser at Spence's Bazaar, usually held in the spring.

Goals for the future:

- ✓ increase the visibility of the LWVKC, in the community;
- ✓ recruit new members;
- ✓ reactivate former members

NEW! AN INFORMAL MONTHLY FELLOWSHIP - Chat and Chew. This is an opportunity to just meet without an agenda, socialize and talk. The Fun Lunch in May 2011 was a lot of fun. Therefore, two more have been planned for this summer. Please mark these dates on your calendar:

- ✓ July 15, 2011 - McGlynn's Pub & Restaurant, 800 N. State Street, Dover, DE ~ 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- ✓ August 12, 2011 - Abbot's Grill, 249 N.E. Front Street, Milford, DE ~ 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
- ✓ September 21, 2011 - Pot Luck Supper (venue TBA), 6:00 p.m.

Reminder:

- ✓ membership dues are due in August
- ✓ membership is open to men and women

Spotlight on New Members - Peggy Swygert, Membership Chair

We are so pleased to welcome these New Members !

Dr. Marguerite A. Johnson (often called by her nickname "Peggy"), is a wife, mother of two and grandmother of three. She is a native Delawarean and worked for the Delaware Technical and Community College during her entire career, mainly at the Stanton and Dover campuses. She held several administrative positions and retired as Vice President and Campus Director. Peggy would like to participate in LWVKC by attending monthly Unit meetings/programs, helping with Voter Registration, and is interested in attending LWVDE ACTION Committee meetings. She is also interested in UN Programs, Global Energy issues, Children at Risk issues, Candidate Forums, Standards for Diplomas and Elderly Issues/Medicare. We look forward to Peggy's involvement with League issues!

Judith Goldhammer moved to Dover with her family 32 years ago. Judy taught Mathematics at Delaware Technical and Community College for the period 1979 – 1994. She has volunteered her talents as a "computer techie" for the local nonprofit RC&D Emergency Home Repair Project in Kent County and is currently active with Delaware Hospice. Judy likes to read, work Soduko puzzles, and enjoys music and films. Her League interests include Insuring the Uninsured and Elderly Issues/Medicare. We look forward to seeing her at the various League programs and activities !

Reclaimed Member !! **"Welcome back!!" to Jan Crumpley**, who took a short hiatus from the League !!

Spring Fund Raiser: By Ruth Bochnowski

Our Spring Fund Raiser, on June 3rd, at Spence's Bazaar was a big success. We had many donations and our sales totaled \$230.00. Thanks to all who helped to make the day so profitable: Ralph and Ruth Johnson, John and Ruth Bochnowski, Janis Greene, Gail Clemens, Julie Price, Jean Bauer and Charlotte Hunt. The beautiful weather was also a bonus, both to those working and the big crowds milling about.

League of Women Voters of Kent County Annual Meeting and Program, May 18, 2011

The evening agenda for the Annual meeting began at 6 PM and was held at the Gathering Place at the Camden Friends Meetinghouse. A buffet dinner was provided, with entrees from Franco's Restaurant and supplemented with additional entrees, salads, and desserts from League members. Following the dinner, the formal aspect of the Annual Meeting took place. Christine Stillson welcomed members and guests. Following the Treasurer's report, approval of the 2011-2012 Budget, and unanimous approval of the new slate of officers, Christine Stillson gave the President's Annual Report. Charlotte Hunt was recognized for her long years of being the League's very dedicated and efficient secretary. (See Photo)



Following the formal meeting, Julie Price introduced Guest Speaker Dr. Anne Rhoads, Assistant Professor of Economics at Delaware State University. Dr. Rhoads' presentation was entitled: *Understanding the Federal Budget Debates*. She discussed and provided a powerpoint presentation on the causes of the federal deficit, and some of the competing approaches to dealing with it. Components of the various plans ranged from increased tax rates to deep cuts in social programs. She provided an excellent presentation about what we need to know and how to evaluate various options. Dr. Rhoads' presentation was informational, thought provoking and engaged everyone present by responding to questions throughout the presentation.

Thanks very much to Julie Price for conceptualizing this Part I of a series on Income Inequality and its impact on the political process. Thanks to all the behind the scenes people who made this event successful. And thanks to League members for their gastronomic contributions.

President's Annual Report - May 2011:

The League of Women Voters is 91 years old this year—and still going strong. Its mission statement is as relevant today as it was in the distant past: *"The League is a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy."*

We are a multi-issue organization and we are challenged to find a balance in focusing our efforts on engaging on issues of local, state and national interest. The League of Women Voters of Kent County continues to carry on a strong tradition of thoughtful study, analysis, discussion, and engagement on issues of concern to its members and to fellow citizens.

Issues on which our League focused this year included the statewide study and consensus on the topics of Landuse/Transportation as well as the broad topic of Energy and Greenhouse Gases. Consensus was reached, and along with Sussex and New Castle County Leagues, a position has been established from which our statewide ACTION committee will be able to advocate. We can expect to be actively involved in these discussions for the foreseeable future. We have several members participating in the League's ACTION committee—Julie Price and Mickey McKay. Thank you both for your efforts in helping to promote League positions on issues as they arise at the State Legislature.

We also have continued to examine issues under the broad topic of Healthcare. Thanks to Dr. JoAnn Fields, a well attended program was presented on The New Health Care Law and End of Life Planning. The League will continue to focus on the issues surrounding Healthcare as it effects Delawareans.

A prominent activity this year was centered around Candidate Forums that took place in October, April and May. Thanks to the hard work of Ellen Wasfi and her team, the League provided citizens an opportunity to ask questions and hear candidates in a fair and unbiased format. Aside from our normal candidates for Legislature and the City of Dover, this is the second year that the Capital School District has requested the services of the League to moderate a "Meet the Candidates" night. Again, the League will continue to offer this valuable service to residents of Kent County.

The League has always been well known for its efforts to assure that citizens exercise their right to vote by providing Voter Registration opportunities to the public. Charlotte Hunt, Voter Service Chair, continues to work hard in assuring that members are trained to carry out that work. The Wyoming Peach Festival in August continues to be a great opportunity to register voters and to provide visibility of the League. Thanks to Charlotte and those who assist with voter registration.

The League has made some efforts to establish what is known by the League as an "Observers Corps." Thanks to Mickey McKay for continuing to take time away from her real passion (FOIA) to provide support for a developing Kent County Observer Corps. Thanks to Bob Bauer for his work as an Observer.

Other ongoing League activities include our well-attended monthly Great Decisions group led by member Ellen Wasfi. This discussion group covers a variety of topics of international concern. Great Decisions is a program of the Foreign Policy Association that educates citizens through a study guide and discussion format.

Another important and ongoing League Project is the Guide to Elected Officials in Kent County. A very big thank you to League member Linda Chick for providing the printing of this valuable publication. And a very big thank you to Jean Bauer and her diligent team for doing the updates biannually.

I'd like to mention here that the Kent County League is still very much involved with the LWVUS efforts to assist Leagues to promote membership. Delaware's Leagues have worked closely with National, first as a pilot project and now as a "veteran" of four years involvement. There is a strong component that is now focused on Leadership Development, assuring that there is continuity and opportunity for League members to take on positions of leadership. You will hear more about this at the State Convention this weekend. Thank you to Kent County's growing MRI/Leadership Team: Peggy Swygert, Carol Reid-Grandfield, and Julie Price. We will be looking to expand this team and I look forward to involving other members as we move forward.



One other activity that occurred during November of this past year was our 90th LWV Anniversary. A Gala celebration of League members from across the state took place at Dover Downs. A League member from each County was recognized for their accomplishments and continued work in advancing democracy through community activities. I am pleased to say that LWVCK's Ellen O. Wasfi received the Flame of Democracy for her longtime League and community efforts

FLAME OF DEMOCRACY AWARDEE at the The 90th Anniversary of the League Gala, November, 2010 ELLEN O. WASFI LWVCK

As in all organizations, it takes a lot of time and effort to carry out the work of the League. I want to thank all of our members who have worked so diligently to develop and organize forums, to provide their homes as meeting places, to produce and print our newsletters, flyers and member guides that keep our members informed (Jean Bauer, Mary Merritt and Les Stillson), to organize and update our League's website (Joan and Fred Breukelman), to reach out to potential new members (Peggy Swygert, Carol Reid-Grandfield, Mary Snyder, Ruth Johnson, Mickey McKay); to organize Spence's Bazaar fundraisers (Ruth and Ralph Johnson, Ruth Bochnowski, Ray Grandfield), to keep our books and finances in order (Beverly Jackson), and to do the behind the scene jobs that keep this organization strong and vibrant. Thanks to all who come out to attend programs, or attend meetings, and to those who make much appreciated financial contributions towards League activities and programs. Thanks very much to our League's board members and committee members for their commitment to the League. And thank you all for carrying out the hard hands-on work to safeguard democracy!

*Christine Stillson, President
League of Women Voters of Kent County*

All About Consensus 2011/2012

One of the decisions taken at the LWV national convention in 2010 was the approval to carry out a study on two areas of interest: 1.) The role of the Federal Government in Public Education, and 2.) Privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector.

So far, five study papers have come out of the Committee at LWVUS to help us with preparing to participate in the Consensus on the first topic. All local leagues are expected to participate in this consensus process, and we will need to hold the final consensus meeting in November in order to meet the deadline of November 30

for our responses. This will culminate in LWVUS aggregating the local League responses. From this a national LWVUS policy position will be crafted. Hence, the importance of our participation.

The Five study papers are available to read at the LWVKC website: lwvkc-de.org

Currently, League member Ellen Wasfi is working to locate a team to assist with examining the short study papers, and to locate possible speakers for a public forum on the topic. Inviting speakers who are educators knowledgeable about the realities of the issues within the public schools (K-12) will be a valuable asset in communicating about the topic. The intent is to hold a public forum with their input. Tentatively, the annual September Pot Luck Meeting will feature a forum of this type. Please watch your emails for an update.

Some helpful background information about the League process called "Consensus"

"CONSENSUS: Collective opinion of a substantial number of League members, representative of the membership as a whole, after objective study of an issue."

"Consensus is the process the League uses to reach member agreement on study issues. It is neither a simple majority nor unanimity; instead, it is *an overall sense of the group*. In other words, consensus results from answers to questions on which members can find common ground and agreement. Group discussion that allows an exchange of ideas and opinions is the preferred way to achieve consensus, but local Leagues may also choose to use questionnaires and email polls."

Although non-members may attend as observers or visitors, only League members may participate in the consensus process.

The moderator communicates discussion norms keeps the discussion focused, gives everyone the opportunity to speak, and recognizes member agreement and moves on, maintaining the recommended schedule.

The recorder is a League member whose purpose is to record participants' responses to questions and to take notes as a basis for comments, if needed.

The following list of discussion skills or norms will remind members that not everyone will have the same opinions. The goal is to identify the issues on which members can find common ground. Suggested norms include:

Listen thoughtfully

Keep an open mind

Do not interrupt

Speak in turn

Keep comments short – do not monopolize the discussion

Differ with dignity – no personal attacks

Stay focused – no digressions

No sidebar conversations

Copies of the Consensus Questions are provided to members prior to the consensus meeting.



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