



# Dover Voter

## *The Price of Liberty Is Still Eternal Vigilance*

League of Women Voters of Greater Dover ♦ Spring 2007

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### *Calendar of Events*

<b>April 17</b>	<b>City of Dover 2007 Municipal Election</b> — 7 a.m.-8 p.m. at the Elk's Lodge #1903, 200 Saulsbury Road. <i>Only</i> the First District Council seat is being contested in this election. Candidates are Kenneth L. Hogan and David A. Lewis Jr.
<b>April 19</b>	<b>Great Decisions: Global Warming</b> — 10 a.m.-12 noon at the home of Jeanine Kleimo, 79 Vining Run, Camden
<b>April 20</b>	<b>Energy Film Festival</b> — 7-10 p.m. at Delaware State University, U.S. Washington Cooperative Extension Center.
<b>April 21</b>	<b>Energy Film Festival</b> — 1-9 p.m. at Delaware State University, U.S. Washington Cooperative Extension Center.
<b>April 24</b>	<b>LWVGD Board Meeting</b> — 12:15-2:15 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Old North Road, Camden
<b>April 25</b>	<b>LWVGD Unit Meeting: PBS Documentary, <i>Global Warming – The Signs and the Science</i></b> — 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Camden Friends Meeting House, Camden-Wyoming Avenue, Camden
<b>May 2</b>	<b>LWVDE State Convention</b> — 4-8 p.m. at the Delaware State Archives, Dover
<b>May 10</b>	<b>Great Decisions: Mexico</b> — 10 a.m.-12 noon, venue to be announced
<b>May 22</b>	<b>LWVGD Board Meeting</b> — 12:15-2:15 p.m. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Old North Road, Camden
<b>May 23</b>	<b>LWVGD Annual Meeting and Luncheon: “Energy Use and Environmental Impact”</b> — 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., venue to be announced in upcoming flyer. Speaker: Nicholas DiPasquale, former DNREC Secretary, senior consultant for Duffield Associates, and Delaware Audubon conservation chair.
<b>May 29</b>	<b>Interfaith Service of Peace</b> — 7 p.m. at the Iglesia Maranatha, Dover. Jewish, Muslim and Christian representatives will give peace-related readings from their scriptures. Buddhist, Hindu, Baha'i and Native American worshippers will present a sacred readings on freedom of expression, freedom of worship, and freedom from want and fear. For more information, contact Jeanine Kleimo at 697-3363]

<http://go.to/lwvgd/>

## Great Decisions: Global Warming and Climate Change

Thursday, April 19, 2007, 10 a.m.  
Home of Jeanine Kleimo  
79 Vining Run, Camden

The basic question faced by global decision makers regarding energy or climate policy is, can short-term priorities such as securing economic growth and protecting the energy supplies that fuel it be reconciled with policies that embrace creating sustainable development over the long-term?

Questions must also be answered about how human activity aggravates negative weather patterns and extreme climate events, not to mention the ethical and moral implications involved in excessive greenhouse gas emissions being generated by wealthy nations. The ramifications of these issues will be the focus of this discussion. Join us.

### Directions From Dover and points north:

Go south on Route 13 and bear right after passing Rodney Village Shopping Center onto Alt. Route 13 (Old Camden Road). You will pass Brecknock Park on the right. Go to the first light and turn right onto Old North Road. Caesar Rodney High School will be on your right as you turn. Drive just past the high school property and turn right into "Pharsalia." You will be on Vining Run. We are at 79 Vining Run, on the right in the back of the development.

### From the south:

Go north on Route 13 past the Camden Wal-Mart. Turn left onto Route 10 (at the second light after the one at Wal-Mart). At the first light, turn right onto Main Street. Turn left at the next light onto Old North Road. Caesar Rodney High School will be on your right as you turn. Drive just past the high school property and turn right into "Pharsalia." You will be on Vining Run. We are at 79 Vining Run.

## LWVGD Unit Meeting: Global Warming

Wednesday, April 25, 2007, 11 a.m.  
Camden Friends Meeting House  
Camden-Wyoming Avenue, Camden

**Film: *Global Warming: The Signs and The Science***, produced by PBS

Over the last million years there have been countless successive ice ages and warming periods. So what is different now? The answer is that for the first time in Earth's history, humans are making a natural situation worse.



Human activities are provoking an unprecedented era of atmospheric warming and climatic change. We are seeing more drought, more wildfires, more flooding, bigger storms and more variable weather. Tropical diseases are moving north, childhood respiratory illness is skyrocketing, and in the last three decades over 30 diseases new to science have emerged.

*Global Warming: The Signs and The Science* takes viewers across America to meet people from every walk of life whose stories uncover the reality of climate change. It features scientists working at the edge of climate science whose findings are unsettling. It also offers options to participate in various initiatives aimed at reducing the impacts of climate change.

This program will serve as a worthwhile follow-up to the League's Great Decisions discussion of global warming to take place on April 19.

Please bring a bag lunch. We will provide beverages.

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## In Memoriam Marjorie Records

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The League of Women Voters of Greater Dover lost a treasured friend when Marjorie Records passed from among us on January 5, 2007. Her life exemplified devotion to family, community and the environment that surrounds us all. She participated in creating the junior board of Kent General Hospital, later serving as president. She was a foster grandmother at Central Middle and Fairfield Elementary Schools, and served as ombudsman at Green Meadows senior residence for ten years. She volunteered regularly at Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge and at the Dover Hospice.

In 1964, Marj became a founding member of the newly chartered League of Women Voters of Greater Dover and held the office of President, bulletin editor and chairwoman of several committees. Over the years, her beautiful home served as a favorite meeting place for League activities where members and community were always welcomed by her gracious hospitality. Though much of her recent League involvement was "behind the scenes," she always remained an important part of the organization. She was a cherished friend not only to those who knew her, but also to the earth and all its beautiful living things that she so dearly loved. We miss her every day, but will always be inspired by the legacy of service and compassion she left to guide us.

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## ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Approximately one year ago, the LWVGD formed a partnership with the Delaware Sierra Club, in order effectively to recruit municipalities for the Sierra Club's "Cool Cities" program. Carol Reid-Grandfield, a member of both the LWVGD and the Sierra Club, became co-chair with Ron Zink of the Sierra Club. At this time (April 2007) both Dover and Newark are seriously considering adopting the program, but neither has yet committed.

In September, 2006, Chad Tolman, a member of the New Castle LWV, was the guest speaker at our annual pot-luck dinner; his topic: Global Warming.

Meanwhile, the Cool Cities Committee has been planning and implementing several energy-related events. On April 20 and 21, the LWVDE, the Delaware Sierra Club and the Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources of Delaware State University will jointly sponsor a FREE Energy Film Festival at Delaware State University. The Festival will feature Al Gore's Academy Award-winning film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, along with more than 20 energy-related films from the BBC and the Sierra Club.

On May 5, during Old Dover Days, the Cool Cities Committee will sponsor a children's art exhibit on Legislative Mall. Each picture will illustrate what children can do to reduce their use of fossil fuels. June Satterfield, a Cool Cities Committee member, has updated the Sierra Club's traveling exhibit table with global warming information. The table will continue to appear at public events throughout Delaware.

At the Delaware State Fair, July 19-28, the Cool Cities Committee will have an energy booth, which will focus on what each of us can do to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. The booth will also include information from the League on how to register to vote and how to contact your legislators about your position on environmental issues.

To join the Cool Cities Committee, or just to offer to help at an event, please contact Carol Reid-Grandfield at (302) 284-4565 or e-mail [chrg302@aol.com](mailto:chrg302@aol.com).

– Carol Reid-Grandfield  
Director, Environment



# Membership Report 2006-2007

As of April 15, 2007, the League of Women Voters of Greater Dover has a total membership of 50, with one additional nationally recruited member. Nona McNatt rejoined the League. New members joining this year were Laura Kelly and Sandy Hendrickson.

MaryLou Bateman joins Lorraine Godshall and Martha Miller as Members Emeritus.

The second annual Mid-Winter Member Tea was held February 5, 2007, at the home of League member Sue Schmittinger. Nineteen members and guests attended this pleasant and informative event. Members shared some history of our local League and were given updates on current activities of the League. Members also shared when and why they joined the League. At the coldest and quietest time of the year, this gathering provided an opportunity for many League members to reconnect and reignite excitement about issues of importance. We appreciate Sue's providing her lovely home for the event and being a terrific hostess.

Political issues, both local and national, and League programs that resonate with local residents' concerns increase public awareness of the League and spurred some to become new members. Inquiries for information about the League and its activities indicate potential new members.

Member recruitment activities included placing brochures about League Membership at Voter Registration events, putting prospective members on the mailing list for several months, reaching out to targeted community members and informing them of upcoming programs of interest, and informing resident advisory councils about League activities.

We applaud the efforts of current League members who have also been active in recruiting members to the League. Thank you! Members are always encouraged to recruit new members

who have interests in the many topics under the local, state and national League umbrella.

– Christine L. Stillson  
Membership Chair

## Spotlight on New Members



### Sandy Hendrickson

Sandy stopped at our voter registration table in beautiful Wyoming on Peach Festival Day, picked up a League brochure, and the rest is history! Let me introduce her: Sandy retired from an human resources career in Maine and relocated to Tamarac in Camden, Delaware, in September 2005. She has a B.S. in business administration with a marketing major. She has been a recruiter, manager, director, and vice president within the health care, pharmaceutical, and health food sectors. She is an active volunteer and is involved with local organizations and with her church. She is particularly interested in civil/human rights, race relations, voter registration and is interested in attending the Great Decisions discussion group.

### Laura Kelly

Laura joined the League this past fall, recruited by non other than Ruth Johnson! Laura describes herself as a neophyte to Dover, having moved here in June of 2005. She is in involved with Dover Library and Biggs Museum book clubs, and Camden Friends. She is an avid birder. She is an enthusiastic reader, with a love for Victorian literature and James Joyce. In fact, she is a published writer of short stories, poetry and essays.

Welcome Sandy and Laura! We look forward to your sharing your knowledge and talents with us, and we welcome your active involvement in League activities!

**NOTE TO MEMBERS:** If you haven't picked up your 2006-2007 Member Guide, please call Christine Stillson at 697-8600. The 2007-2008 Member Guide will be available in September.

## Nominating Committee Report for 2007-2009

Nominating committee: Anne Norman and Jean Bauer, co-chairs, Peggy Swygert, Marian Boon.

### **Nominees:**

#### **Officers**

President – Christine Stillson  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President – Phyllis Edamatsu  
Secretary – Charlotte Hunt

#### **Directors**

Membership (2007-09) – Carol Reid-Grandfield  
International Relations (2007-09) – Ellen Wasfi  
Public Relations (2007-09) – Marlene Naylor  
Unspecified (2007-08) – Dorene Petrosky

#### **Portfolios**

Education (2007-09) – Mary Meritt  
Environment – Carol Reid-Grandfield  
Children at Risk – Peggy Swygert

#### **Nominating Committee – 2008-2010**

Peggy Swygert, Chair  
Ruth Bochnowski  
Gina Miserendino

– Jean Bauer, Co-Chair

## Proposed Bylaws Changes

On January 24, 2007, the LWVGD held a Bylaws and Policy Review and Program Planning meeting. Suggestions were made to amend the bylaws and policy by adding a mission statement mandated by LWVUS, and to modify one section of Local Program. These suggestions must be approved by the membership at the LWVGD annual meeting on May 23, 2007.

### **(1) Proposed Change to Local Bylaws:**

At the beginning, under the title, before any Article, add the following:

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The League of Women Voters, 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.

### **(2) Proposed Change to Local Policy:**

Under the title, Local Policy, add the following:

#### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The League of Women Voters, 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.

### **(3) Proposed Change to Local Program**

In the third item currently headed "Study Circles on Racism and Race Relations," omit the words "Study Circles on" so that the heading remains: RACISM AND RACE RELATIONS.

Change the wording of the next sentence by removing the word "project" and substituting the following:

"Study Circles on Racism and Race Relations and the work of Dover Human Relations Commission."

With the proposed changes the third item would then read:

#### **RACISM AND RACE RELATIONS**

Support the YWCA-sponsored Study Circles on Racism and Race Relations and the work of Dover Human Relations Commission to encourage community dialogue on racism and race relations with the goals of eliminating stereotyping and encouraging broad grassroots participation in the discussion of local issues.

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## Voter Registration

During the past year there have been 10 members of the LWVGD involved in voter registration activities. We have had tables set up at 9 different locations, such as: Wyoming Peach Festival, Acme Market, Super Fresh, Dover Downs, and Bayhealth Baby Fair. Questions were answered, and directions were given. Many leaflets and brochures were distributed; and 29 people were registered. Some people only had their addresses updated, but this is very important for election day. Since 2006 was not

a National Election year, there was not as much interest among the general public.

Any member of LWVGD can help with voter registration activities. However, to actually register a citizen, you must first receive proper training from the Elections Department, and renew each year. If you would like to be part of this special service to the public, please call the LWVGD Coordinator, Charlotte Hunt at 734-3268, or e-mail [cmhunt2004@aol.com](mailto:cmhunt2004@aol.com).



## Energy Film Festival at DSU April 20-21

“**The HOT Topic: The Use, Abuse, and Future of Energy**”— a *free* film festival—will be held at Delaware State University April 20-21.

The festival is sponsored by Delaware State University Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the Delaware Sierra Club, and the League of Women Voters of Delaware.

Twenty-four documentary films will be shown from 7-10 p.m. Friday, and from 1-9 p.m. Saturday, at the U.S. Washington Cooperative Extension Center at Delaware State University in Dover. Films on the use, abuse and future of energy will play continuously in multiple viewing rooms. *An Inconvenient Truth* will be shown on Friday at 7 p.m. and on Saturday at 2, 5 and 7 p.m.

For more details, check the Sierra Club website at [delaware.sierraclub.org](http://delaware.sierraclub.org).

## Correction System: Rehabilitation vs. Containment

### Report on League Day in Dover (Annual Legislative Day), March 21

The discussion by the three panelists and the audience participants focused on the need for more comprehensive rehabilitation and job training services for a large portion of the prisoner population in Delaware, most of whom are poor with debilitating physical and mental conditions.

Deep concern was expressed that the insufficiency and lack of coordination of these services has encouraged recidivism. Where such programs were in place, whether sponsored by public or private agencies, more successful reentry into productive community life was evident.

The first panelist, Commissioner of the Delaware Department of Corrections (and former Attorney General) **Carl Danberg**, pointed out that in-house prison drug rehab programs take 6 to 9 months to complete, and that those who are incarcerated on a pre-trial basis are not eligible to enroll in these programs because they have not yet been convicted of any crime. Since the average inmates have a sixth grade education, little job training and few skills, they not only require a substance abuse regimen, but also an educational and retraining program before reentering the community. Unfortunately, under current conditions, prison vocational training programs are insufficient to meet the needs of all in the correctional system who need them.

**Dr. Michael Owens**, Associate Secretary for Adult Education and Work Force Development at the Delaware Department of Education, informed the group that Prison Education was moved to the Department of Education from the Department of Correction in 2000. It was to be a model for community education programs. The program is funded with \$3.3 million from the state's General Fund and employs 43 staff members at four correctional institutions. 37 of the 43 are teachers, the rest are support personnel. The program also utilizes the services of 60 volunteer inmate tutors at all four institutions.

The Department of Education receives federal funding for post-secondary education to extend five years beyond release from incarceration. Some funds (about \$70,000) are made available from the Department of Labor under the Workforce Investment Act to provide apprenticeship training in such areas as heating, air conditioning, and plumbing. In addition to vocational training, educational programs focus on obtaining a high school diploma for an undereducated prison population whose grade level ranges from 0 – 8.9. The challenge is to get inmates to participate in the program, which is not mandatory under current sentencing guidelines. Once in the program the challenge becomes to maintain motivation and deter inappropriate behavior. Increased funding is needed to reach more inmates, expand vocational offerings and attract additional skilled personnel to work in the prisons.

**Sherese Brewington Carr**, Director of the Prison to Work Initiative at the Delaware Department of Labor, emphasized the need for collaboration between the Departments of Corrections, Education and Labor in areas of job training in order to provide a means for ex-prisoners returning to the community to find gainful employment. She noted that the Prison to Work Initiative began in 1999 and became a focus of her office when she was appointed in 2001. During 2005, almost 7000 individuals released from prison declared that having a criminal history was a barrier to employment (since these declarations were voluntary, Ms Carr estimated that the number was far higher).

Participants in the Prison to Work Initiative are recruited from work release centers and given skills and interview training within a week of entering the program. Ms Carr stated that much of the work at probation and parole sites has focused on the City of Wilmington and that there was a need for extension programs in Kent and Sussex Counties since transportation was an issue. She hoped to put in place a mobile RV unit to access participants statewide, especially in rural areas. She also indicated a need to involve prospective employers in discussions to allay their concerns about employing ex-offenders. Unfortunately, the Prison-to-Work Initiative is an unfunded mandate, which limits expansion of the program.

The question and answer period revealed several concerns about sentencing, educational and job training opportunities for ex-offenders, recidivism,

grievance procedures for families of inmates regarding inmate mistreatment, and inadequate funding for both in-house and post-release reentry programs. Commissioner Danby pointed out that unless participants entered substance abuse treatment and educational programs willingly, there would be minimal gain from the experience. He also cited the need to utilize more inmate tutors, and cautioned that becoming gainfully employed upon release was made more difficult by provisions of the Delaware Code, which ban employment of ex-offenders in certain jobs, such as cosmetology. The “Life-Skills” program, which provides substance abusers and felons with basic skills, such as how to use a savings account, is still not in widespread use and requires planning and pooling resources with other agencies working in the same area. Dr. Owens decried the lack of follow-up on outcomes of educational programs for ex-offenders and stressed the need to better utilize prison instructional staff, especially inmate tutors.

Commissioner Danby reviewed Department of Correction assessment and screening for mental health issues, such as aggressive behavior. These conditions affect about 60% of the prison population. All new prisoners are required to have physical and mental health assessments within eight hours of entry. The problem, however, is providing follow-up care for diagnosed conditions.

The discussion always returned to the need to coordinate efforts of different departments and agencies in order to develop a successful reentry agenda. This would involve pre-release planning and case managers to deal with the ex-offenders feeling of being overwhelmed by the reentry process. It was pointed out that the disconnect between the Department of Corrections and the Department of Labor often results in case mismanagement. There is also a need to engage community agencies in the reentry process but faith-based agencies, which have been actively involved in these activities, cannot receive state funding and must be recruited on a volunteer basis. The Criminal Justice Council is currently examining these issues. One audience member identified a new coalition formed to collaborate on reentry issues. The group is called the Delaware Reentry Consortium and can be contacted at [Paula@Relationalliving.org](mailto:Paula@Relationalliving.org).

Newly-elected Delaware Attorney General **Joseph “Beau” Biden III** addressed the group on his office’s focus on community policing, which entails police-neighborhood collaboration in fighting crime at the local level. He admitted that prison substance abuse treatment programs were limited by insufficient

funding. When members of the audience challenged his support of Minimum Mandatory Sentencing as a hindrance to judicial discretion, he explained that prosecutors used this technique to pressure low-level drug users to identify local drug pushers. Audience members reiterated the concerns expressed earlier in the meeting about inadequate reentry programs, including the plight of those on probation or parole who do not have access to transportation to meet the requirements of their release.



### **From LWVUS:**

#### **OPEN (Openness Promotes Effectiveness in our National) Government Act of 2007**

The League of Women Voters endorses the OPEN (Openness Promotes Effectiveness in our National) Government Act of 2007. The OPEN Government Act will expand the accessibility and accountability of the federal government by strengthening the Freedom of Information Act and making information more readily available to the public.

#### **LWVUS supports bipartisan public financing legislation**

League President Mary G. Wilson applauded the introduction of important bipartisan public financing legislation in the Senate by Senators Durbin (D IL) and Specter (R PA). The legislation would improve the federal election process by allowing qualified candidates to receive campaign funds from the Senate Fair Elections Fund instead of relying upon money from private interests

#### **“Check the Box” for public presidential financing**

Remember to “Check the Box” for public presidential financing when you complete your federal income taxes! Checking the box is important for our democracy because it funds the public financing system that allows Americans, not special interests, to control the outcome of the presidential election

#### **League Urges Senators to support electronic filing disclosures**

The League and other groups urged Senators to support S.223, the Senate Campaign Disclosure

Parity Act to require electronic disclosure of Senate campaign finance reports. The proposed legislation will require the Senate to operate with the same transparency in campaign filing that the President and Members of the House of Representatives are required to use. Currently, political parties, political action committees, Presidential candidates and candidates for the House of Representatives are required to file Federal Election Commission finance reports electronically. Only the Senate has a special exception to this requirement. This legislation will allow the public to quickly and easily access information about contributors to Senate campaigns in the weeks leading up to an election. S.223 was introduced by Senators Russ Feingold (D-WI) and Thad Cochran (R-MS).

#### **LWVUS Welcomes Two New Local Leagues**

At its recent Board meeting, the LWVUS recognized two new local Leagues: The LWV of Anne Arundel County (MD) and the LWV of Carroll County (MD). This spring, the LWV of Anne Arundel County will continue to study and educate the public about the issue of affordable housing. The LWV of Carroll County is also focusing on affordable housing as well as their study, “Equality of Opportunity: the Benefits and Burdens of Marriage Under Maryland Law.”

#### **DC Voting Rights**

Through its DC Voting Rights Education Project, the League of Women Voters is focusing national attention on the lack of voting rights in Washington, DC. The Project is a public education and outreach effort intended to build public awareness of the unique relationship between Congress and District of Columbia citizens, specifically their lack of full voting rights. It emphasizes that DC citizens pay federal taxes, yet are denied full voting representation in Congress. The more than half a million citizens residing in the District of Columbia have no say when it comes to shaping the important policies that affect their lives. Legislation is now moving through the House of Representatives that would take an important step forward by providing DC citizens a voting representative in Congress. The LWVUS position is that this inequity has gone on for too long and it's time for people to start getting educated about the issue.

# President's Annual Report 2006-2007

Our mission statement declares that the League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

I would add that League's purpose also is to promote inclusiveness in community political, economic and social life. Our efforts to accomplish these goals are three-pronged: voter service designed to expand involvement in the political process and empower the electorate; education wherein we inform ourselves about local, national and international issues; and advocacy through which we encourage legislators as well as the public to support positions that we have arrived at through education and consensus. During the past year, the members of the League of Women Voters of Greater Dover have been actively engaged in all three levels of action.

## VOTER SERVICE

**Voter Registration** — Voter Registration Chair Charlotte Hunt reports that during the past year 10 members of Dover League were involved in voter registration activities at 9 different locations. 29 people were registered while others had their addresses updated, which is critical to avoiding confusion on election day. [See Charlotte's Voter Registration report on page 5.]

**Directory of Elected Officials** — Jean Bauer has started editing the Dover League's current Directory of Elected Officials, a comprehensive compendium of office holder access information, for the 2007-2008 edition. She welcomes any assistance on the editorial process, which involves contacting the offices of elected officials for updated information as well as reviewing revised drafts of the publication.

**Candidates Night Debates** — In October 2006, the League again held two Candidates

Night debates in coordination with Boscov's Department store. Elections for Kent County Row Offices through United States Senate were covered. Both events were well attended by the public with audience questions covering a broad range of topics including transparency and efficiency in government, affordable housing, taxation fairness, health care access and the war in Iraq, among many other issues. The *Delaware State News* and the *Dover Post* reported on the events. The League is concerned that several candidates chose not to participate in the debates, leaving their opponents without the opportunity to have their views heard. We are grateful to all the Dover League members as well as Boscov's Public Relations Director Christina Kalp, who contributed to the organizational success of these events.

## Monitoring Resident Advisory Council Elections

— The League continues to honor requests to monitor Resident Advisory Council elections, which provide residents of public housing the opportunity to have a collective voice in improving their quality of life. Parts of the election process this past year were observed at Derby Estates in Town Pointe in Dover and at Silver Lake Estates in Milford. We thank Christine Stillson, Charlotte Hunt and Phyllis Edamatsu and Ellen Wasfi for working with these groups.

## ENVIRONMENT

The Dover League's new Environmental Chair, Carol Reid-Grandfield, has been enthusiastically organizing programs to inform the public about energy options and climate change. In September 2006, she arranged a presentation by Chad Tolman, founder of the Coalition for Climate Change Study and Action. Dr. Tolman outlined the manifestations of climate change brought about primarily by human activities and commented on the ethical and moral implications involved in excessive greenhouse gas emissions by wealthy nations. Carol also urged the League to network with the Sierra Club on the "Cool Cities" program to make local municipalities more energy efficient, and arranged for a League screening of the PBS production, "Global Warming – The Signs and the Science." [For more details on the League's

environmental outreach activities, see Carol's annual Environmental Committee report].

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Dover League has been involved in an ongoing investigation of affordable housing in the State of Delaware. Last year the focus was on the Kent County Comprehensive Plan and its shortfall in providing sufficient affordable housing and easy access to transportation for low-income families. This year we looked into the impact of the federal "Moving to Work Charter Program Act" on residents of public housing. Gina Miserendino, League member and Grassroots Policy Specialist for the Delaware Housing Coalition (DHC) expressed concern about the time limits and punitive actions against tenants embodied in the legislation. She also pointed to the lack of a formal mechanism in place to consult on an ongoing basis with tenants regarding their status and responsibilities under "Moving to Work."

On several occasions, the DHC has called on the Dover League to become involved in their efforts to inform the public about urgent needs in the area of affordable housing. We will continue to network with the DHC and other advocacy groups in gathering information on and promoting safe, decent, affordable housing throughout the state.

## **HEALTH CARE ACCESS**

We are truly fortunate to have Jo Ann Fields, M.D., as the Dover League's new Health Care Chair. As a primary care physician practicing in Kent County, Dr. Fields has become increasingly concerned about the widespread lack of access to affordable health care resulting from the exclusivity and lack of affordability of health insurance throughout Delaware. She has highlighted pending legislation designed to expand health care coverage to Delaware citizens who are currently uninsured or underinsured. She has undertaken the task of revealing the extent of the problem and advocating solutions. The first program presented in March 2007 was a panel discussion between a local physician and free clinic administrator, a state Medicare/Medicaid administrator, and the DE League's Health Care

Chair. Their comments on the current status of health care coverage in the state and the need for legislative remedies were supplemented by an appearance of the State Insurance Commissioner. [Please read a summary of that meeting in this *Voter*]. Dr. Fields hopes to deal with other health care issues and to propose additional legislative solutions in subsequent forums.

## **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**Great Decisions** — Our monthly Great Decisions discussions based on the Foreign Policy Association's annual publication on global policy issues entered its 26<sup>th</sup> year. We have grown from fewer than ten members to over 25 and counting. This year's topics covered Energy Policy, Brazil, Human Rights, China and India, Turkey, the Middle East and Global Warming.

**United Nations** — Ruth and Ralph Johnson represented the Dover League as delegates to the September 2006 United Nations Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Conference. They presented Dover League members with updated information on UN progress toward meeting the Millennium Development Goals. We thank all those who opened their homes as well as the Camden Friends Meeting House so that these discussion groups could meet in congenial surroundings.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Although the major form of energy that has produced the spectrum of League activities outlined above has been drawn from volunteer services, there are certain expenses which must be met, and fundraising is one of the means to accumulate some needed capital. We truly appreciate the efforts of Ruth and Ralph Johnson in organizing the annual rummage sale at Spence's Bazaar last June, and in bringing together the goods and the people to make the effort not only a success (with almost \$200 in earnings), but a lot of fun.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

None of the activities just summarized could have taken place without the ongoing dedicated involvement of League members. We wish to

express our gratitude to First Vice-President and Liaison to the State League Dr. Phyllis Edamatsu; Secretary, Parliamentarian and Voter Registration Chair Charlotte Hunt, Treasurer Betty Wagner, Membership Chair Christine Stillson and Publications Chair Ruth Johnson who, in addition to their official duties, monitored debates, observed resident advisory council elections and served in myriad other capacities. We thank our newest board members Carol Reid-Grandfield (Environment, Membership, and Historian) and Marlene Naylor (Public Relations) who have taken on their duties with great enthusiasm and commitment. Joan and Fred Breukelman deserve our deep appreciation for the many computer tasks they have performed for the League over the years, including keeping our website updated, handling correspondence and other clerical duties for candidates nights, and especially, producing our *Voter* newsletters and event flyers in such a reader-friendly format.

We also wish to thank all those who offered their homes to host various League functions, and especially to Ruth and Ralph Johnson who consistently opened the doors of the Camden Friends Meeting House to League members and guests. They and the organizations and individuals with whom we networked, including the Delaware Housing Coalition, the Statewide Association of Tenants, the Sierra Club, and Boscov's Department Store enabled the League to focus public attention on critical issues requiring public scrutiny. We owe them a debt of gratitude and hope to continue to expand our outreach in order to make our efforts more effective.

On a personal level, let me note that as my term as president of this organization draws to a close, I wish to express my deep appreciation to all the members of the League of Women Voters of Greater Dover who have made these years a time of enlightenment and engagement. The skills and knowledge one gains from working with this group constitute the equivalent of several doctoral and administrative degrees, and the commitment to human betterment and community involvement that the League's mission imparts is immeasurable. It has been an honor and a privilege to work with all of you

and to be a part of this ongoing grassroots endeavor to make ours a truly democratic society.

– Ellen O. Wasfi, President  
*League of Women Voters of Greater Dover*  
April 12, 2007

## Proposal for Study Group On Freedom of Information

I'd like to propose an issue study group under the existing League open government principle. The study group would be devoted to Freedom of Information in Delaware.

As I envisage this project it would require a committee devoted to the following:

- exploring the general concept of FOIA within the democratic model
- comparing various State FOIA laws
- examining the historical roots of Delaware's FOIA law
- understanding Delaware's FOIA law and its implementation statutes
- sponsoring public presentation of Delaware's FOIA with speakers &/or panelists.
- creating a FOIA speakers bureau

I'd like to explore possible grant sources to cover speaker, printing and venue expenses. I would be willing to chair this committee and devote my passion for FOIA to its successful operation.

– Dr. Margaret McKay

### **ATTENTION: DOVER CITY RESIDENTS!**

Mayor Speed needs to hear from you! Please telephone, write or e-mail him and tell him you support the City of Dover's participation in the Sierra Club's Cool Cities plan. To do this, he needs to:

1. Join the U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement to reduce global warming pollution.
2. Green the city's vehicle fleets with hybrid and other cleaner cars.
3. Modernize city buildings with money-saving energy-efficiency technology.
4. Invest in clean and safe renewable energy.

*Mayor Speed can be reached at:*  
Stephen R. Speed, Mayor 736-7004/ 7005  
P.O. Box 475 Fax: 736-7002  
Dover, DE 19903-0475 Cell: 222-5848  
email: [sspeed@dover.de.us](mailto:sspeed@dover.de.us)



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