



The VOTER

VOLUME 48 NUMBER 2

February 2009

Calendar (League activities in bold)

DATE	DAY	TIME	LOCATION	DETAILS
Feb 17	Tu	6 p.m.	16th Floor Courthouse, Camden	Freeholder caucus meeting
Feb 19	Th	7 p.m.	Lawnside Public School 426 Charleston Ave.	Freeholder Meeting
Mar 4	W	7 p.m.	Vogelson Library	LWVCC Board meeting
Mar 17	Tu	6 p.m.	16th Floor Courthouse, Camden	Freeholder caucus meeting
Mar 19	Th	7 p.m.	Cherry Hill Public Library	Freeholder Meeting
Apr 1	W	7 p.m.	Vogelson Library	LWVCC Board meeting
Apr 21	Tu	Morning	Sterling High School, Somerdale	Running & Winning
May 2	Sa	All day	New Brunswick	LWVNJ State Convention
May 16/23	Sa			Annual Meeting - Hold the date

Voter Highlights

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CAMDEN COUNTY

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"Now is the time to become an advocate and promote our own solutions to the economic crisis that face our country. The League of Women Voters of Camden County is the perfect vehicle to promote new ideas and solutions..."

President's Message:

Finally, the stimulus package has been passed, and we are all hoping that this will put America back on track economically. Many of us hope that the President and his new administration can work us out of this mess, however; there are still challenges that face us at the local level. As a result of this financial crisis, many states have been asked to cut back and reduce spending and it is a matter of time before we feel the effects of those cutbacks at the local level. I am still an optimist and believe that our leaders can turn this around. However, we as a people still need to voice our concerns and promote the causes that affect us locally.

Now is the time to become an advocate and promote our own solutions to the economic crisis that face our country. The League of Women Voters of Camden County is the perfect vehicle to promote new ideas and solutions that will get this country back on track. Your membership and participation in the League will ensure that your voice is heard. We need your membership today.

Sincerely,

Ann Saunders

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization of men and women, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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The VOTER is published ten times a year to keep the membership and public informed of the activities of the League of Women Voters of Camden County. For subscription or membership information call (856) 795-7878.



Getting there - Directions!

Bellmawr: James Mullen Community Center, 29 E. Browning Rd, Bellmawr. Take 295 to 168 South. Browning is in about 0.4 miles. Turn left. In about a block, the building is on the left. *The 400 bus runs up and down Route 168 from Turnersville hourly or more often evenings.*

Camden County Courthouse: Take 676 north to Mickle Blvd. Flow right at the fork (don't go on Campbell Place), then turn right onto 5th street in a few blocks. The courthouse is at 5th and Federal, a block up from Mickle.

Camden, Federal Courthouse: 4th and Cooper, but we generally car pool. Call 856-795-7878 if you're interested. *About 3-4 blocks from the City Hall PATCO station.*

Cherry Hill Library: On King's Highway, coming from Haddonfield, cross Route 70. The library is a half mile or so ahead, on your left. Before Chapel Ave.

Lawnside Public School 426 Charleston Ave. From the east, take route 295 south to the exit for Warwick Road south (toward Lawnside). Stay on Warwick Road for about 0.6 miles, then turn left at E Charleston for 0.7 miles. // From the west, take 295 north to route 30 south. Stay on 30 (White Horse Pike) for 0.8 miles, then turn left onto E Charleston for 0.8 miles. // From the south, you can come up route 30. About 0.5 miles past Evesham Road, angle right onto Warwick. Stay on Warwick for 0.2 miles, turn right onto E Charleston for 0.7 miles.

Voorhees: Vogelson Regional Library: Driving south on 30, turn left onto Somerdale Road, just above the Echelon Mall. Go under the train bridge in about a half mile, then turn right onto Burnt Mill. Soon turn left onto Laurel Road. The library

is on your right. Burnt Mill Road also crosses 544 (Evesham Road) north of the library and White Horse Road (an extension of Springdale) south of it. If you know where the Echelon Mall is, you're home!



Board Report

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At its Feb 4 meeting, the LWVCC board:

1. Approved the report of the ex-felon's voting rights consensus meeting, to be sent to the LWVNJ office.
2. Continued making plans for the Annual Meeting and *Running & Winning*.
3. Agreed to participate in the LWVNJ's Callathon. Save yourself a call -- donate now!
4. Appointed Lisa Castellani to serve on the nominating committee.
5. Accepted Lisa's offer to monitor the League Line (our voice mail number) for the next few months, while requests for moderators come in.
6. Made plans for a last attempt to reach non-renewing members.

Consensus Report, LWVCC



LWVNJ Study on Voting Rights for Ex-Felons

On Saturday 1-31-09, seven members of the LWVCC gathered at the Vogelson Library to debate and discuss whether convicted felons who are currently on probation or parole should have the right to vote. Audrey Miller and Winnefred (Winne) Rowell-Bullard talked attendees through the information provided by the LWVNJ and solicited discussion about the issues, and about the specific consensus questions. Our recommendations will be forwarded to the LWVNJ, which will combine them with recommendations from other local Leagues and see if there is a clear consensus that can serve as the basis for lobbying in the state house.

Our small group felt that the value of encouraging voting, especially among members of minority groups disproportionately affected by the justice system, justified granting voting rights to certain felons, but mainly those convicted of lesser crimes.

We recognized that certain sex offenses might be relatively minor (such as statutory rape due to confusion about the age of the younger partner) but we could think of no way to separate sex crimes into meaningful categories, so our basic recommendation was that parolees and probationers would have to meet 3 conditions to be granted the right to vote during their term:

1. Non-violent crime.
2. Non sexual crime.
3. A waiting period had passed after the beginning of their probation or parole.

The waiting period is simply to ensure that they are behaving properly, meeting their probation or parole officer, and so on. Asking them to show some basic responsibility is appropriate in someone trying to regain voting rights after losing them for a felony conviction.

Note that the recommendations of the LWVCC do NOT have any standing as a League position at any level, even locally. Only the combined statewide position to be developed by the LWVNJ will be suitable for lobbying and decision-making.

Audrey and Winne preparing to lead the discussion



Ann Saunders, Cecilia Lo, and Claudia Tucker-Keto (L to R) preparing to debate the issues.

From the LWVUS

LWVUS decides to discontinue the National Voter (temporarily, we hope)

At its winter board meeting, the LWVUS board decided "to suspend publication of The National Voter magazine (paper and digital) until the League's finances are healthier. Publication costs for The Voter are prohibitive in a time of budget cutbacks. The Board, the LWVUS staff and I are all committed to making lemonade out of this lemon by finding new ways to deliver information to you, our members and supporters. We will keep you informed as we move forward. You can help us do that by making sure that as many members as possible receive these weekly Updates." The quote is by Mary Wilson, President LWVUS.

Watch the LWVCC Voter for LWVUS information! You can also subscribe to the Leader's Update and other LWVUS electronic communications by visiting the LWVUS home page and signing into your member account (or creating one).

LWVUS 2009 Legislative Priorities

The LWVUS Board announces **Global Climate Change** and **Health Care** to be the top legislative priorities for the upcoming year. Top priority issues are ones on which major congressional action is expected and on which the LWVUS will seek to be an active player. Tier two priorities are **Election Reform** and **DC Voting Rights**. Tier two issues will be acted upon if significant success is possible, though top priorities will take precedence. Tier three issues could be subject for LWVUS action only if good opportunities present themselves, and there is no pressing action on top priority and tier two issues. Tier three issues we are watching are: Campaign Finance Reform; CEDAW (the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women); Civil Liberties; Ethics; and Redistricting. The LWVUS prioritizes legislative issues for advocacy in order to focus limited resources on those issues where it is considered the League can have a meaningful impact and there is member interest and opportunity for progress.

LWVUS doing a virtual Council this year

Again, from Mary Wilson, "The LWVUS Board voted to hold a "virtual" Council in June 2009 rather than an "in-person" meeting. The Board recognizes the drawbacks to this type of meeting. But, I hope we can all put aside the drawbacks and see the exciting possibilities this holds for the LWVUS and all Leagues around the country. It is a terrific chance to explore and experience new communications technologies that we can make use of in future projects to expand even further our ability to reach out to each other and to the public. It will also provide the opportunity for State Leagues to expand their members' participation in the Council meeting that otherwise would be available to only 100 or so members. The date will be Saturday, June 13, beginning at 1 pm (EDT) and last approximately four hours. Over the next few weeks, much more detailed information will be forthcoming to State Leagues as we work out the details and finalize a program. You won't have to buy any fancy new equipment in order to participate—a computer with high speed Internet access and a speaker phone are the basics!"