



The VOTER

VOLUME 49 NUMBER 9

October 2010

Calendar (League activities in bold)

EVENT/ACTIVITY	DATE	DAY	TIME	LOCATION
General Election	Nov 2	W	6 a.m. - 8 p.m.	Your local polling place. VOTE!!
LWVCC Board	Nov 3	W	7 p.m.	Gloucester Township Library
Program Planning/ Holiday Party	Dec 8	W	6 p.m.	Bobbie Porter's house (All members encouraged to attend!)

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Board Report

At its Oct 6 meeting, the LWVCC board:

1. Enjoyed a covered dish dinner and met two new members.
2. Heard about the many activities our members and leaders do.
3. Discussed voter registration efforts this fall.
4. Discussed plans for a spring forum co-sponsored with Camden County College,

Election 2010

All three levels of League have web pages with useful **voting and election information**.

Visit:

- The LWVCC web page (<http://www.lwvnj.org/camdencounty/>)
- The LWVNJ web page (<http://www.lwvnj.org/>) and
- The LWVUS web page (<http://www.lwv.org/>).
- On our local web page, see especially the section [Voting and election 2010](#) in the lower right.

League of Women Voters of Camden County

Co-Presidents' Message:



Hello Members,

With an important mid-term election only two weeks away, the League has been busy urging citizens to register to vote. We organized three voter registration drives: two at Camden County College campuses and one after the naturalization ceremony at the federal court house, and participated in one at the Deptford Mall, in collaboration with Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., South Jersey Alumnae Chapter. Now that the registration deadline has past, the next important step is to urge our family, friends, and neighbors to vote on November 2nd. Please remind them that with the whole House of Representatives and one-third the Senate up for election, this is a very important election.

All members are urged to join a committee. We really need your help, and most committees take very little commitment of time.

We also had fun socializing at our October 6th covered dish meeting. After enjoying a variety of delicious entrees and desserts, we welcomed two new members, Pauline Kohl and Erica Palmer, and offered an overview of our various committees and our yearly activities. All members are urged to join a committee. We really need your help, and most committees take very little commitment of time. We are especially

in need of people for our Membership Committee and our Publicity Committee, but if you're more interested in program planning or moderating, or our Running & Winning Workshop, you will be welcomed with open arms there, too. In fact, the Running & Winning committee is now actively meeting in preparation for the Workshop on April 13th, at Eastern High School.

PLEASE NOTE: We are also in need of a Treasurer.

We are now planning for our Holiday Party/General Meeting on December 8th, so please save the date. Our next board meeting is November 3rd and is open to all members.

Again, welcome to our new members.

VOTE ON NOVEMBER 2nd.

Yours in League,

Winnefred Rowell-Bullard, Harriet Snyder
Co-Presidents



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Getting there - Directions!

Gloucester Township: Library. 15 S Black Horse Pike (Route 168). Take Route 42 south to Route 168 (or take Route 168 from the Camden/Audubon/Bellmawr area south -- it is Mt. Ephraim Avenue then becomes the Black Horse Pike as you go south). About a mile below the 42/168 interchange in Blackwood, cross Church Road (534). The library is a half block later, on your left. From the south, come up 168, and when you enter the town area about 2 miles north of Sicklerville Road, just before Church Road (534), watch for the library on your right. From the east, take 534 to 168, turn left and look for the library a short distance further on your left. There is parking at the library, but it's a fairly small lot. You can also park in a municipal lot across the street.

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!

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.

The League of Women Voters of Camden County, LWVCC
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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.

From the LWVNJ

Ballot Question Analysis

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO DEDICATE ASSESSMENTS ON WAGES BY THE STATE TO THE PAYMENT OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Shall the amendment to Article VIII, Section II of the State Constitution, agreed to by the Legislature, which: prohibits collection by the State of assessments based solely on employee wages and salaries for any purpose other than providing employee benefits; dedicates all employer and employee contributions collected for any employee benefit fund, and all returns on investments of those contributions, to the purpose of that fund; and prohibits any transferring, borrowing, appropriating or using of those contributions or returns for any other purpose, be approved?

Interpretive Statement by the League of Women Voters of New Jersey

This proposed constitutional amendment prohibits the collection by the State of assessments based on employee wages and salaries for any purpose except paying employee benefits (or making other employee-authorized or federally required payments, in the case of the State's own employees), dedicates all contributions made to the unemployment compensation fund, the State disability benefits fund, or any other employee benefit fund, and all returns on investments of those contributions, to the purpose of that fund, and prohibits the use of those contributions or returns for any other purpose. The requirements of this proposed amendment do not apply to the gross income tax, which is exclusively dedicated by the Constitution to the purpose of reducing or offsetting local property taxes.

In New Jersey both the employer and employee contribute to an unemployment fund, a temporary disability fund (which includes family leave) and a workforce development program. Also in New Jersey most employers must have workers compensation: a "no fault" insurance program that provides compensation to employees who suffer job related injuries. Government agencies, such as the State, are required to provide workers compensation benefits, but they are not required to purchase an insurance policy. Government employers may maintain a separate appropriation, which in New Jersey is the Second Injury Fund. All of these various funds or any successor funds are the subject of this ballot question.

If this ballot question is approved, a new paragraph will be added to Article VIII of the State Constitution that will dedicate these wage-based employee benefit funds, and all returns on the investment of them, to the purpose of the fund. The Legislature and executive branch would not be allowed to borrow the funds nor use them for any other purpose. The cost of administering the funds will be paid from the funds. Legislation and regulation set the assessments for these worker benefit programs and the benefits provided. This question, if passed, only dedicates those funds to the purpose of each fund.

Not included in this amendment is the collection of the New Jersey income tax which is already dedicated by the Constitution to offsetting local property taxes. This amendment also does not apply to any tax collected by the United States or by the State of New Jersey on behalf of the United States, nor to any penalties or fines levied by the State in enforcement of State law. The impetus behind this ballot question is past diversions of moneys from these worker benefit funds. From 1992–2007, the Legislature, with the approval of the Governor, has passed laws 22 times to divert a total of \$5.4 billion from these funds. The majority was transferred to the Health Care Subsidy fund (\$4.7 billion) and the remainder to the State's general fund.

If the amendment passes then the dedication can only be changed by another citizen vote.

Reasons one might vote YES

- Passage will require that worker benefit funds be used for the purpose for which they are collected.
- Some of these worker benefit funds are currently in poor financial shape, in part because of the diversion of money collected for them. Passage would help avoid this problem in the future.

Reasons one might vote NO

- Passage will limit the ability of the Legislature to make decisions based on the State's financial needs at any given time.
- This ballot measure does not address whether the amounts currently collected for these programs are sufficient to support the programs into the future, or whether the programs themselves should be reformed.

From the LWVUS

October 15, 2010

LEAGUE CALLS ON MEDIA TO STOP SECRET POLITICAL ADVERTISING Supreme Court Erred, Decision Undermines Basic Pillar of American Democracy

Washington, DC – Today, the League of Women Voters called on television and radio stations to refuse political advertising paid for with secret money. The League also called for political candidates to repudiate campaign advertising in their races that comes from front groups and organizations that fail to disclose their big donors.

"We are seeing huge sums of money from secret sources going into campaign advertising, much of it the negative advertising that poisons the airways," said Elisabeth MacNamara, national president of the League of Women Voters.

"Millions upon millions upon millions of dollars are being spent secretly in this election and it threatens to drown out the voices of individual voters. Because of changes in the law brought about by recent Supreme Court decisions, ," she said. "Voters need to know who is paying – it is a vital part of their decision-making process in deciding whether to believe the ads," she said. "It's just wrong. Secret campaign cash should have no place in our American democracy," according to MacNamara.

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"That's why we are calling on media outlets and political candidates to act responsibly. The media should refuse these secretly-funded ads and candidates should repudiate the ads – even if they help the candidate get elected," she said. "Protecting our democracy and the vital role of informed voters is more important than any one election," MacNamara argued.

"We understand that political advertising is very lucrative for media outlets, but we believe the public would be better served in this election season if TV and radio stations required full disclosure of the funders of campaign advertising – and refused such advertising if the sponsor fails to disclose the major funders," she said. "It's not enough to know that an ad was paid for by 'Moms for Apple Pie,' 'Dads for Cherry Pie,' or some other innocuous sounding name. The voters need to know exactly who gave the big money to such organizations to pay for the advertising," MacNamara said.

The League of Women Voters has been calling attention to secret money being spent on political advertising for months, but the U.S. Senate has refused to act to require disclosure, even though the House of Representatives passed a strong disclosure bill which was supported by the League.

Because of ... recent Supreme Court decisions there are no disclosure requirements that let the voters know who is paying for the ads.

Though the Supreme Court recently changed campaign finance law, the Court approved of enhanced disclosure. It said that disclosure is important to "providing the electorate with information." It also supported disclaimer requirements "so that the people will be able to evaluate the arguments to which they are being subjects."

Now we are seeing the largest campaign expenditures in history even as organizations accept hundreds of thousands of dollars from secret sources. Essentially, these organizations are functioning as Political Action Committees but without having to follow the laws requiring disclosure of their donors. It should come as no surprise that they lobbied against the DISCLOSE Act in Congress, which would have stopped manipulation of elections by fly-by-night anonymous hit groups, and prevented the infusion of undercover expenditures.

"These activities are directly detrimental to our democracy. Voters deserve to know who is paying for election advertising. The League of Women Voters calls on all candidates to disavow secret advertising and asks media outlets not to accept ads unless the names of the true major donors are made public," MacNamara said.

If You Are Interested In:

- *Learning about government and the political process.*
- *Getting involved in the political process in nonpartisan ways.*
- *Meeting and working with other citizens who care about good government.*



Join the League Of Women Voters of Camden County

Call 856-795-7878 or send this form to: PO Box 245, Voorhees, NJ 08043

Annual membership is \$60 (plus \$30 for each additional household membership). To join, or for more information, send this form or call the number above.

I want to become a member of the LWV of Camden County: _____ (Check enclosed for \$ _____)

Please send me information on membership in the LWV of Camden County _____

Name _____

e-mail: _____

Address _____

Phone: _____

(Please include area code)

The



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