



League of Women Voters of Warren County
The Voter: Spring 2020

Happy Spring fellow LWVWC members and friends. It has been a long time coming but is so very welcome in all its glory.

As you can imagine there is not much news for the newsletter during this time of sheltering from Covid-19. The Board last met on March 2 when we reported on lots of plans for the coming months: Sunshine Week program, Annual Meeting, Voter Registration in the schools, Suffrage Centennial activities and more. However our last public appearance was March 15 when we heard Sean Silman speak about the Census(very informative and interesting.) Since then, voter registration in the schools has changed to passing out voter information when the seniors pick up their caps and gowns at the schools. Our Annual Meeting has changed to an Annual Report and a vote at home slate of officers. Suffrage Centennial activities are curtailed as well. No League gathering at Chautauqua for Suffrage week as their Season has been canceled. No Warren County Fair Suffrage activities as the Fair has been canceled.

The League and each of us individually has had to face

changes in our lives over the last two months. The oldest among us and others targeted as high risk in this pandemic are most likely looking at even greater and long lasting changes. But we persevere and we learn new ways of communication. In April the Board didn't meet - everything was too up in the air. But by May, Phyllis Wright said "There is this thing called Free Conference Call" So we learned to meet with our memories of each other and our voices and it wasn't bad at all. There is also this thing called the Zoom meeting which is an introduction to the main story in this issue of the Voter:

Meet Melissa Becker.



Melissa is a history teacher at Warren High School.

Last April the Board nominated Melissa to be accepted into the Harvard Case Study Method Workshop to be held at Harvard University. She wrote an essay and had an hour-long conversation with a member of the Case Study Team. She was accepted and was very excited to attend.

How did this come about - the long version.

The case study method of teaching has been used at Harvard Business School and other university MBA programs for some time. HBS professor David Moss, author of Democracy: A Case Study, thinks that this method of study can also be used to teach high school students about topics in history and democracy and further that it presents an opportunity to help reverse the decline in civic education and civic engagement in the US. Several years ago his team began trial programs in a few schools, in particular the high school in Greenwich, CT, in collaboration with the LWV in Greenwich. The program in Greenwich was very successful. The Harvard team decided to expand the program nationwide and sought collaboration with Leagues across the country. They agreed to make an all-expenses-paid 2 ½ day professional development workshop available to outstanding high school teachers of US History, Government and Civics who were nominated by their local League chapters.

This is when our League got involved, due to an announcement in one of the newsletters that comes to us

via email. We got in touch with the contact from the Greenwich league, learned the details, and decided that we would take on this project. We contacted Superintendent Amy Stewart who was very supportive of the idea. The Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Eric Mineweaser, notified qualifying teachers in the District. Only Melissa stepped up. She attended the workshop last August. There were about 80 teachers from about 30 states in attendance. The teachers learned so much from Professor Moss and his team and also from each other. Each participant agreed to teach 4 case studies from Professor Moss's book during the school year. Melissa was very excited to use her new skills in her classroom. She reported great success with her students. Interest level for the material was up, participation in class was up, retention of information was up and she loved the process. She began using the method with other topics from the history curriculum.

We met in early March to catch up on how things were going and to begin to finalize plans for her second obligation to the program. In cooperation with the local League, Melissa was to moderate a community case study method program, choosing one of the cases she had done with her students. Members of the community could register and take part in the discussion. We had a date set in late April, a plan for advertising, a venue....and then the uncertainties began: How long would the schools be closed? Would we be able to hold a public meeting?

Mid-April we realized the April community meeting could not take place. Still, our Greenwich contact told us that Harvard wanted these meetings to happen! At this point Zoom meetings entered the picture. We had the opportunity to join a Zoom community meeting with the Radnor, PA League and their teacher to see how it worked. And it worked pretty well. Currently Melissa is very involved with her online teaching responsibilities, but she is working on the details for our own Zoom meeting to be held, hopefully in June.

The topic for our Community discussion is: Democracy and Women's Rights in America: the Fight over the ERA. The material is very interesting and can be read in a morning, though you may want to go over it a second time. When and if we are able to finalize plans, there will be a registration process followed by a confirmation email that will include your copy of the Harvard Case Study. Meanwhile go to Zoom.com, download the app and begin to practice with your friends. If you have good internet, it is really a great way to see your friends and loved ones. This writer had a Zoom birthday party for my husband's birthday with his siblings and their offspring and our son and family. We don't have good internet so we have to make some allowances-like seeing the faces but having the conversation lag behind or not seeing the faces and using just the audio via the phone. But it is worth it. So, stay tuned; we hope to have more information for you soon.

The final story of this newsletter is a REMINDER TO VOTE in the Primary Election.

If you requested a mail in ballot, you are set - just remember to make sure it is returned by 8:00 pm on June 2.

If you are not voting absentee ballot, go to the polls between 7am and 8pm on June 2 with your mask and maintain social distancing while you are there.