



League of Women Voters of Warren County
The Voter: Spring 2019



Photo from Library of Congress

Hello League members and friends. Can you identify the women pictured above?

These women were monumentally important in American Women's struggle to get the vote.

Seated is Elizabeth Cady Stanton. As a young woman Stanton lived with her husband in Seneca Falls, NY. She, along with her friend Lucretia Mott and other area women, organized and convened the first Women's Rights Convention, July 19-20, 1848 in the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls. This was the beginning of the fight for women's rights that would culminate in the passage of the 19th amendment 72 years later.

Standing is Susan B. Anthony. From Rochester, NY, Anthony, labeled an old maid, was 5 years younger than Stanton and came from a very different background. She came to the women's rights movement by way of the temperance movement. She heard Stanton speak at a temperance convention in 1852 and admired her conviction and her eloquence. They became close friends and collaborators for the next 50 years until Stanton died. Neither woman lived to see the passage of the 19th amendment for which they had worked so long and so hard.

We hope to learn more about these women and others as we prepare for and celebrate 100 years of women's right to vote.

A Centennial Message from our League President:

It is hard to believe that it took 100 years of women picketing, being jailed, abused, ridiculed and treated like non-citizens before they finally got the right to vote with the passing of the 19th Amendment.

It is important that women don't take for granted our right to vote. The League of Women Voters of Warren County will be celebrating throughout 2019 and 2020 the Suffragette movement and the extraordinary women who led the movement. We will need the help of our fellow League members to make this celebration a success. There will be opportunities to be on committees, work on projects, attend programs and encourage others to attend. This can be an enlightening, educational and fun time. Susan Swab

Work on the Centennial Celebration has begun in earnest by the League Board and other community groups. Phyllis Wright is chairing the newly organized Suffrage Centennial Committee. The first meeting was January 29, 2019. The next meeting will be **Tuesday, March 26 at 6:30 in the Slater Room at Warren Public Library.** Phyllis submitted the following overview of the Suffrage Centennial Committee:

The League of Women Voters of Warren County is taking the lead on the "Suffragette Centennial – Women's Right to Vote 100th Anniversary" celebration in Warren County. The group has representatives from over 15 organizations including Warren Public Library, Daughters of the American Revolution, Warren County Historical Society, Leadership Warren, Girls Scouts, WCCBI, Lions, Lioness, Zonta, Delta Kappa Gamma, Indivisible, Women's Club, and Cray Art Gallery. Brainstorming ideas have been overwhelming and exciting.

- **Purpose** - to bring community persons together to plan ways to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution, Women's Right to Vote, and the suffragette movement.
- **Goals** - to educate the public about the history of voting rights, to encourage people to become informed voters and exercise their privilege and right to vote in our democracy.

- **Plan** - to join with current community organization events and programs and add content and activities relating to the suffragette centennial.

There are many ways you can help; some ideas so far:

Media promotion

Research on the internet, at our Library and at the Historical Society

Planning programs and events for community, school and civic groups

Suffragette information and displays at businesses and libraries

Parades with suffragettes marching

Helping with or acting in historical play, reenacting

Historical games for groups

Members and friends ... please contact Phyllis Wright, Jennifer Bliss, Michelle Gray, Susan Swab, Jane Dunshie or Debbie Haines (contact information listed at end of newsletter) if you would like to contribute in any way to the two year celebration.

AND...Phyllis wants to assure you it will be fun!

Another League member has been dedicated to researching and sharing all kinds of information about the Centennial. Jennifer Bliss discovered that the NCWHS (National Collaborative for Women's History Sites) has a project called The National Votes for Women Trail which is collecting sites nationwide into a database to tell the story of suffrage for all women in the US over time. Jennifer discovered a building in downtown Warren, Roscoe Hall, which, over 100 years ago, was the site of several local suffrage meetings that included well known suffragettes. She has submitted this site to the NCWHS. She has also researched local suffragettes and their gravesites. Jennifer is our eyes and ears for things going on regionally and nationally for the Centennial.

Michelle Gray, in her role at the Warren County Historical Society, applied for and received a Zonta grant and is working to bring a suffragette reenactor to Warren for a day of activities. There will be more on this as details are worked out.

Four bits of Suffragette lore from the March 3, 2019 Erie News Sunday paper, which made their way into my inbox via Phyllis and Jennifer. All are interesting because they pertain to our corner of Pennsylvania; these articles are definitely worth a visit. Since these links are available online, I am hopeful it was okay to print the links. The stories are interspersed with advertising so one must be a bit patient when reading.

The first is a story about Laura de Force Gordon, a remarkable woman of her time:

<https://www.goerie.com/entertainmentlife/20190303/women-in-erie-history-you-didnt-know-about-laura-de-force-gordon>

The second is about Susan B Anthony's home in Rochester, NY and the writer's response to being there:

<https://www.goerie.com/entertainmentlife/20190303/take-girls-getaway-to-susan-b-anthony-home>

Next is an article about the Suffragette movement in Erie and northwest PA:

<https://www.goerie.com/news/20190303/erie-women-fight-to-vote-look-at-suffrage-movement>

Finally is a collection of photographs, first from the national movement and then from PA:

<https://www.goerie.com/photogallery/PA/20190303/NEWS/303009999/PH/1>

Learn More

If you would like to learn more about the Suffragettes, the stories, the facts...the history behind the American woman's right to vote today, there are many ways to learn. There are books and a video available at the library. A few key words like "suffragettes" or "19th amendment" or "Alice Paul" typed into google can lead to a rainy day afternoon of internet wonderment. If you would like your own book for a quick read and a ready reference you might want to try Founding Sisters And The Nineteenth Amendment by Eleanor Clift. Phyllis discovered it in paperback at Amazon Books. And think about a trip to Seneca Falls; the history feels very real there.

Announcements

Government Directories

The 2019-2020 Government Directories are printed and ready for distribution to various groups and locations in the County. Sally Eaton and Jane Dunshie worked together to compile the updated directory and to rework the front cover to showcase the 100 year anniversary of Women's Right to Vote. If you would like multiple copies you can contact Jane at 723-6111 or jdunshie@atlanticbb.net

Breakfast with our State Representatives

In recent years, the League has had difficulty getting our state legislators to attend our Legislative Luncheons. In lieu of the luncheon, we are hopeful that some League members might attend the **Warren Matters Breakfast at the Conewango Club on March 29 at 7:30 am**. Senator Scott Hutchinson and Representative Kathy Rapp will be speaking and will accept questions after their presentations. It is \$15.00 to register through the Hi Ed Council at 814-723-3222 or online @ <https://www.hi-ed.org/events/warren-matters-breakfast/>

Commissioner Candidates Forum

On Tuesday, May 7th, 6:30 pm, inside the Main Court Room at the Warren County Court House the League of Women Voters of Warren County will hold a COMMISSIONER Candidates Forum. At the time of writing this, there are 8 individuals who have filed with the Court House – 5 Republicans and 3 Democrats.

Please let Jennifer Bliss know via call or text at 814-730-2488 or email

JenniferBliss92Gold@gmail.com if you are able to help with any of the duties below.

Volunteers should plan to be present by 5pm. Room setup will be earlier. Forum begins at 6pm and will last approximately 90 minutes.

Candidates Contact & Letter/Invites – Jennifer Bliss

Moderator - Susan Stout

Time Keepers – Susan Swab & Debbie Haines

Publicity – Michelle Gray

Script – Susan Stout & Barb McGuinness (tent.)

Banners/Room Set-up – at least 4 people needed

Question Veters – 2 people needed

Supplies – Barb Tubbs (tent) & 2 more needed

Runners – 4 needed

Greeters – we are in need of at least 4

LWV Convention

If you are interested in attending the Pennsylvania League State Convention, registration is now open. It will be held June 21-23 in Reading. Check out the details at www.palwv.org

Crary Art Gallery Invitation

Women's groups, including LWV have been invited to the opening of a show, "Musings" by Marie Hines Cohen on April 4. Cohen's show interprets mythology stories through the eyes of women, using multimedia, including paintings, sculptures and sound.

League members will meet inside the gallery at 5:30. Find more information at www.craryartgallery.org

Census 2020

The 2020 Census is in need of volunteers. A recent Warren Times article described the need for a "Complete Count Committee" to be sure all persons are counted. This is especially important in our rural areas where population count is tied to qualifying for grants. Contact the Warren Commissioners office for details. This is a good project for LWV members.

Issues and Updates

Gerrymandering/Fair Districting

Two bills are currently before the PA House - HB 22 and HB 23. Both call for the creation of an independent redistricting commission for legislative redistricting. HB 22 would amend the PA Constitution and would have to be passed in both the 2019-20 and early in the 2021-22 legislative sessions. Then voter approval would have to occur in a May 2021 referendum. The Commission created in this timeline would not be in place for drawing maps for the 2022 election. However HB 23 is a statute that would amend the PA election code to create the independent commission and can be passed during the 2019-20 legislative session. In this way the Commission can be in place when the constitutional amendment is passed. Too read a more complete explanation of the bills visit the Fair Districts PA website.

<https://www.fairdistrictspa.com/updates/two-bills-one-commission>

Sunshine Week Event

Jennifer Bliss organized this year's Sunshine week event as she has done for three years now. She provided the following report on the meeting:

On Thursday, March 14th, at 1:30pm, at the Department of Public Safety building, the League of Women Voters of Warren County and members of our community gathered to celebrate Sunshine Week for the 3rd year in a row! Speakers included Commissioner Ben Kafferlin, Detective Brian Zeybel, Assistant District Attorney Cody Brown, Sheriff Ken Klakamp, and Ken McCarrison of the 911 Center.

Commissioner Kafferlin mentioned a few James Madison quotes including some readings from "The Federalist" where he explained and defended the checks and balances system in the Constitution. Each branch of government is framed so that its power checks the power of the other two branches; additionally, each branch of government is dependent on the people, who are the source of legitimate authority.

There was an open discussion with the responsibilities of a detective, sheriff and District Attorney and the accountability not only of our government but the media. Discussion included what you have to disclose and what you don't have to disclose when it comes to protecting the rights of informants and public safety. Examples where confidentiality

is important include: Drug Task Force work, Homicides, HIPPA, ongoing general investigations, firearm permits, etc.

While touring the 911 Center, Ken McCorrison showed attendees the meeting room which is the meeting place of FEMA on the local level and would include other officials in cases of emergency. The New Radio System was discussed including how new encryption would be used by responders. Sunshine Week occurs each year in Mid-March coinciding with James Madison's Birthday and National Freedom of Information Day – March 16th. The Freedom of Information Act was signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1966 and went into effect the following year. The Sunshine Act – enacted in 1976 – is a law passed that affects the operations of Federal Government, Congress, Federal Commissions, and other legally constituted federal bodies. It's one of a number of Freedom of Information Acts intended to create a greater transparency in government.

Jane Dunshie commented that

“The Sunshine session yesterday was informative and very special since we were able to enter the 9-1-1 call center and see their impressive array of equipment. I always enjoy those types of programs! I forgot to ask if they were able to see the trees above me, and maybe me through the trees when I fell and broke my leg last year! Never even thought about that possibility! They can view the general area where someone making a 9-1-1 call is located on a grid as they plan who to send, and what is needed. Amazing, and I feel well served by all the technology at their fingertips.”

Phyllis noted that the presentations were excellent, but it was too bad there were not more participants.

SPRING 2019 PENNSYLVANIA ELECTIONS CALENDAR

First day to circulate and file nomination petitions	Feb 19
Last day to circulate and file nomination petitions	March 12
First day to circulate and file nomination papers	March 13
Last day for withdrawal by candidates who filed nomination petitions	March 27
Last day to REGISTER before the primary	April 22
Last day to apply for a civilian absentee ballot	May 14
Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted civilian absentee ballots	May 17
MUNICIPAL PRIMARY	May 21
First day to REGISTER after primary	May 22
Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas absentee ballots (submitted for delivery no later than 11:59 P.M. on May 20)	May 28