



The VOTER

VOLUME 55 NUMBER 9

October 2015

Calendar (League activities in bold)

EVENT/ACTIVITY	DATE	DAY	TIME	LOCATION/INFO
LWVCC Board meeting and "Changing the constitution" consensus	Nov 2	M	7-8:45 pm	New location: Haddon Township library. Please join us for this important consensus meeting
Election Day!	Nov 3	Tu	6 am-8pm	Your local polling place. Or vote by mail!
Voter registration	Nov 17	Tu	10 am	After the naturalization ceremony, Camden. Contact the League at lwvcc@hotmail.com or call 856-795-7878 if you are interested in helping register. We carpool to the building.
Program Planning & Holiday Party	Dec 2	W	6 - 8:45 pm	Porter residence. Mainly "Money in Politics" consensus, plus some program planning, and a PARTY!

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Board Report October 5, 2015

1. Mailing for renewals sent -- soon we start calling!
2. Running & Winning making good progress, planned for April 19 at the LEAP Academy in Camden.
3. Several new attendees at the Naturalization Ceremony -- they liked it, and the event went well. // Several other registration events went well also.
4. Board discussed participating in a Boscov's Day fundraising event.
5. Board decided against setting up daytime meetings. Interest does not seem to be there.

League of Women Voters of Camden County

Board Message

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Hi, fellow League members and friends:

Our League At Work:

Our League is off and running. We kicked-off in September with a well attended meeting and a lively speaker from Americans United for the Separation of Church and State. Some of our members went out and registered voters. Our Running and winning committee had its first meeting.

We are doing several consensus meetings at the LWVUS level in the next month or two. This coming Monday (Nov 2) we will have a consensus meeting on amending the constitution. Interesting discussion guaranteed, and we'd love a good showing. Please join us at the Haddon Township Library at 7.

In December we will be looking at "Money in Politics" as part of the holiday party/program planning meeting. Hopefully, some program planning to give the LWVUS a sense of our goals as well. You will hear more about that at our December get together, the annual holiday potluck party at Bobbie Porter's.

We are on our way towards another good year with interesting programs and opportunities for involvement and service to our community.

In League,
Myrna

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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Follow us on Twitter: @LWVCCNJ

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!

Haddon Township: Rohrer Library: Take 295 to Route 30 north. On 30, pass King's Highway. In about a mile after King's Highway, just after Nicholson Road on the left, you'll see Cuthbert Road on the right. Turn right onto Cuthbert from 30. Stay on Cuthbert for about half a mile. Just past Hopkins, turn right onto MacArthur. The library is at that corner. // This is the same Cuthbert Road that becomes Cuthbert Blvd further north at routes 70 and 38, so you could take it south from there. MacArthur is about 0.8 miles south of Haddon Avenue on Cuthbert Blvd.

Voorhees: Vogelson Regional Library: Driving south on 30, turn left onto Somerdale Road just above the Voorhees Town Center. Go under the train bridge in about a half mile, then turn right onto Burnt Mill (at the light). Soon turn left onto Laurel Road at a light. The library is on your right as you pass the mall.

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Freeholder Meetings

We encourage League members to observe Freeholder meetings when they are convenient for you. Just show up with a LWV button to let them know we are watching! Don't make any statements -- you aren't entitled to speak for the League (or even yourself after wearing a League button). You can ask a neutral/informative question, however. Meetings start at 7. It's good for Camden County!

The list for the year is online at <http://www.camdencounty.com/your-government/public-information/2015-freeholder-meetings>

The November meeting is Nov 12th at 7PM in Camden 520 Market Street. Take a look -- see when they are near you and observe the meeting!

LWVUS Constitutional Amendment Study

"Article V of the US Constitution provides two ways of proposing amendments to the nation's fundamental charter. Congress, by a two-thirds vote of both chambers, may propose constitutional amendments to the states for ratification. OR, the legislatures of two-thirds of the states (34 at present) may ask Congress to call a convention to propose amendments to the Constitution; this is commonly called an Article V Convention. Amendments proposed by either method must be ratified by three-fourths of the states, 38 at present.

Perhaps it goes without saying that the League of Women Voters believes it is right and permissible to amend the Constitution of the United States when circumstances demand. The League was born from the successful, decades-long effort to pass the 19th Amendment.

The question for us today is: what are the shared values and beliefs within the League – what consensus do we have – regarding the circumstances that might allow or compel the League to endorse a constitutional amendment or an Article V Convention?

We might support an amendment that was in concert with League positions, but we might not support every amendment that was in concert with League positions. In other words, having a position on the issue is necessary but might not be sufficient for the League to endorse a constitutional amendment."

Part I of the consensus is simply about when the League should agree that a change in the constitution is appropriate. *"In determining whether to support or oppose a particular constitutional amendment or the Article V Constitutional Convention process, the first and most important question is whether the League supports or opposes the subject of the amendment based on League public policy positions."* If it does not, then of course we would not support the constitution change. But even if we support the amendment's goals, we might not support the idea of an amendment. For example, the LWVNJ opposes constitutional dedication of taxes, because we don't want to tie the legislature's hands in how to spend tax money (among other reasons). So even if we thought a particular dedicated tax was in principle a good idea, we might oppose it if it involved amending the constitution. This same kind of reasoning may apply at the national level as well.

So, should we take an amendment as a rather extreme act to be used only for deep and abiding issues, or can we change the constitution for less striking reasons? How important is the likely effectiveness of the proposed change -- could we support a reasonable amendment even though it might not fully achieve its intended goals? Such an amendment may require more interpretation by the courts, which might be fine -- is it? Should we only approve amendments that make the system more democratic or extend individual rights (or could we amend for other kinds of issues)? If the issue could be resolved by legislation, is that a strong argument against amending the constitution, or should we consider both approaches sometimes?

Part II considers whether the League would support a constitutional convention, and if so, under what circumstances. For example, would we require that a convention be public and transparent (or might we accept the option for private negotiations)? Should the members be based on population or 1 state = 1 vote? Must state delegates be elected, or can they be appointed? Must the convention be limited to a specific topic? Of course, it is not clear that this is even possible! So one major question is whether the

League should oppose conventions in all cases because of the uncertainty about the powers of such a body. Should states be allowed to rescind their call for convention once made?

Part III asks some "balancing questions" like could we support an amendment that advanced a League position but had flaws? And how strongly do we feel about the process matters in Part II -- if we liked the amendment enough, might we support it even if aspects of the process were undesirable, such as how delegates to a convention would be elected or how open the process might be?

LWVUS main link: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/constitutional-amendment-study-guide>

Some specific interesting readings on those page:

This one argues against amending: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/synopsis-%E2%80%9Cconstitutional-amendmentitis>

This one argues that amending is fine: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/synopsis-%E2%80%9Cconstitutional-amendments-and-constitutional-common-law%E2%80%9D>

This one discusses issues in a Convention. It's fairly long, but there is a summary you can focus on on page 2: <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42589.pdf>

This is also on a convention. If you could read the section up to the Background (pages 1, 2, and part of 3) that would be good: <http://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/7-16-14sfp.pdf>



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. **First time new annual membership** is only \$25! This also applies to student and household members (for an entirely new household membership).

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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