



# The VOTER

VOLUME 53 NUMBER 8

October 2014

## Calendar (League activities in bold)

EVENT/ACTIVITY	DATE	DAY	TIME	LOCATION/INFO
<b>LWVCC Board Meeting</b>	Nov 3	M	7 p.m.	Haddon Township Library, Children's Reading Room.
Election Day!!	Nov 4	Tu	6 a.m. - 8 p.m.	At a polling place near you. Find your polling place at: <a href="https://voter.njsvrs.com/elections/polling-lookup.html">https://voter.njsvrs.com/elections/polling-lookup.html</a>
<b>Voter Registration</b>	Nov 13	Th	10 a.m.	New citizens. After the naturalization ceremony, U.S. Courthouse, 1 John F. Gerry Plaza, Fourth and Cooper Streets, Camden.
<b>Program Planning and Holiday Party</b>	Dec 3	W	6 p.m.	Porter residence. Members and prospective members welcome.

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### Board Report

#### At the Oct 6, 2014 Board meeting, the board:

1. Agreed that a known speaker might be a better drawn for a spring meeting. We will look for one at a price we can afford (Joe Friedman taking the lead).
2. Agreed to contact Prism about voter registration.
3. Decided to put up posters about the League. Ed Gracely will create one
4. Chose Dec 3 at the Porter residence for Program Planning. Ed will run the meeting
5. Considered some possible dates for the annual meeting.
6. Accepted Harriet Snyder's offer to Chair the November board meeting.

**League of Women Voters of Camden County**

## Board Message

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Dear League members and friends:

The October Board focused on ways to attract new members. Joe Friedman will try to locate a known speaker to attract an audience. We also need an interesting topic and speaker for our Annual Meeting. Please bring suggestions to our Program Planning Meeting on December 3rd at my home.

We are most successful at moderating as well as Voter Registration at the Naturalization Ceremonies held at the Federal Courthouse in Camden, NJ. The next Voter Registration is at 10 AM, Thursday, November 13, 2014. Please join us for this most inspiring event. Call me at 856-429-1415 if you need a ride or for more information.

In League,

Bobbie Porter, board member

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**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.

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## 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 **November meeting** is on the 13<sup>th</sup> at the Camden County College-Camden -- 601 Cooper Street

The **December meeting** is on the 18<sup>th</sup> at the Lawnside Community Ctr. 323 Charleston Avenue, Lawnside

The Freeholder meeting list is online at <http://www.camdencounty.com/government/freeholder-meetings/2014-freeholder-meetings>

## LWVCC Kickoff Meeting Dr. Gloria Post, NJDEP, Drinking Water Contaminants

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Harriet Snyder (standing) introducing our guest, Dr. Gloria Post

On Saturday, September 20, 2014, fourteen League members came together to hear Dr. Gloria Post, NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection, give an interesting and informative talk called "Learn about drinking water contaminants."

Dr. Post is a specialist on toxic water contamination, so her talk focused on that (rather than, say bacteria or other contaminants), but she covered everything.

There are a variety of federal laws that regulate drinking water safety, but New Jersey has its own, some of which are stricter than the national standards. The actual development of standards is complicated, because adequate data to truly assess a minimally safe level may not exist. Animal studies are part of the

picture, as are human studies of natural exposure and outcomes, but neither may provide a convincing answer as to what cutoff to use. In addition, you have to take into account how much water the typical individual actually drinks, what other sources of the toxin may exist, and the age of the consumer.

Basic standards are based on the likely outcomes from a lifetime of exposure. For cancer, the guidelines are intended to avoid even 1 new case per one million lifetime consumers of the water. For non-cancer risks, the goal is **no** harms over a lifetime, even if millions of people drank the water. The latter assumes a threshold for harm, which makes sense for many of these chemicals.

Few new regulations have come out in recent years, but there are always emerging contaminants of concern. Her interest at the present time is in perfluorinated chemicals that appear as a byproduct of production of Teflon and similar substances. How toxic are they? We don't yet know. But they last forever in the environment (they don't degrade) and the half life for removal from the body is measured in years. So they are a concern.

NJ is one of the few states that provides protections for private water sources such as household wells -- buyers and tenants must be informed about the quality of their water.

Dr. Post was asked about bottled water. While this is not her specialty, she commented that the quality of such waters is not reliably better, or more thoroughly tested, than public drinking water supplies. In fact, an entrepreneur can take water from a public source, bottle it, give it a fancy name and sell it as if it was a fancy special source.

Some useful online resources Dr. Post mentioned:

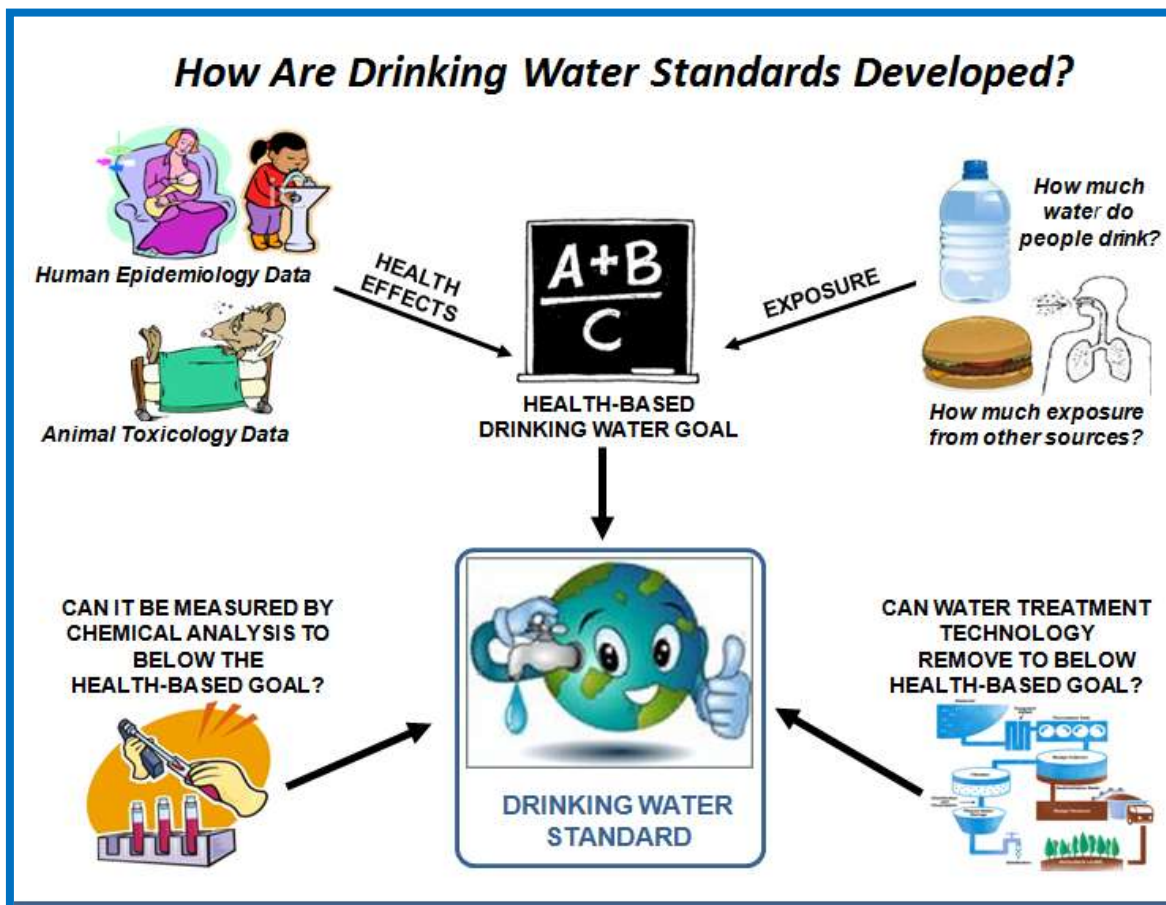
- **NJDEP water monitoring and standards:** <http://www.nj.gov/dep/wms/bwqsa/swqs.htm>
- **NJ Drinking Water Watch** [https://www11.state.nj.us/DEP/WaterWatch\\_public/index.jsp](https://www11.state.nj.us/DEP/WaterWatch_public/index.jsp) This site lets you find your water system and query it the site about testing done on it. There is a learning curve to using the site, but it seems valuable.

She also mentioned two books:

- **Protecting New Jersey's environment: from cancer alley to the new Garden State:** Thomas Belton
- **Toms River: a story of science and salvation:** Dan Fagin



Audience members paying close attention to Dr. Post's talk





## LWVNJ Fall Workshops

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The LWVNJ Fall workshops were very well attended. The League actually had to order additional food a few days in advance because so many people had signed up. Yay! We missed you if you weren't there...



**Keynote speaker:** The program started with a presentation by our keynote speaker, David Burstein, " a Millennial writer, filmmaker, and storyteller".

He described the Millennial generation as "pragmatic idealists" -- they have seen things done and know that productive change is possible. They have ideals, but want their efforts to be productive. Holding up a sign and calling for votes on this or that isn't quite the answer from their perspective. Government, businesses, individual values and habits, are all relevant. So, if government won't fix energy policy, why not create a new kind of energy company with different values? Others are working on government issues, although many are skeptical about its effectiveness (aren't we all!). Older generations have seen times when the federal

government worked fairly well. But this generation has never seen the federal government working at its best.

So, on the one hand we have a lot of new ideas and approaches to problems, but as the smartest and the best Millennials shift away from government, the ones who remain interested in it are less and less likely to make the system work better. We need the best and brightest to work on improving government!

We need to recreate the 1787 model. The founding fathers of the country created a novel system out of conflicting principles to develop a model that will last a long time. They gritted their teeth and compromised. The US has held up pretty well! Innovation , deep thinking to sacrifice in the short term for the long-term good, giving up some principles and making hard decisions to attain other goals are all part of what is needed.

In response to a question about technology, he commented that technology adds more to communications than it takes away. At one time (many years ago) someone said that telephones were terrible -- nobody would interact face to face anymore! Clearly that did not happen.

"Millennials will engage when a compelling messenger shares a compelling message".  
David Burstein

Obama was able to "connect" with young people. He made politics accessible and relevant. We need more examples of that sort. He said that authenticity is key. Millennials will engage when a compelling messenger shares a compelling message. Seems to me like this should be our mantra -- we need a compelling message delivered in a compelling way.

**Young Activists panel:** Four members of the Young People's Network then shared their views.

**Stacey Faella** (Chair of the LWVNJ Young People's Network) led off: She did focus groups with young people and found that economic justice was one of the hottest topics. These people were already interested in activism. Looking at polling and other research, a few take away points (1) Choose wording well. Consider "wage gap" -- this is ambiguous because there could be alternative explanations. "Wage

discrimination" is more likely to engage young people because it is unambiguous. (2) Make web content visual, engaging, something people will share with their peers. (3) Be sure there is a call to action with other content. (4) Talk about issues rather than politics. But emphasize as well that, "Politics is made up of the issues we care about - and we all care about something". We need to get young people to understand why political issues make a difference in their lives.



"Politics is made up of the issues we care about - and we all care about something". Stacey Faella

"Stop treating politicians like celebrities. These people work for you!"  
Nicole Scott-Harris

**Casey Olesko** (VP Public & Community Affairs, Planned Parenthood of the Mercer Area and former LWVNJ intern): Building strong relationships with young people and being sure they feel involved is very important. She has had strong relationships that influenced her. She always felt like part of a team with a meaningful role. Her advice, "Focus on fostering relationship with young people who show even a spark of interest in the movement."

**Nicole Scott-Harris** (Newark organizer of the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance): She was interested in politics while still in high school. You need to be authentic -- otherwise you get followers who aren't in it for the right reason. She issued a call to think about politicians differently -- "Stop treating politicians like celebrities. These people work for you!" And she emphasized that the state of humanity is intimately connected to the state of politics. You can't care about the one and not the other.

**Giancarlo Tello** (NJ DREAMer): He is very glad to see women in politics -- he doesn't want to see future history all written by rich white males. He was born in South America, brought here as a child and enrolled in grade school. When he went for a driver's license his mom told him he was "undocumented" and had no social security number. He finally got into college. When the federal law to provide a fast track to immigrants like him failed, he came back to NJ and started a campaign here for tuition equity, he and his fellow activists had to learn the ins and outs of elected officials and the system.

**Afternoon;** After lunch with opportunities to network, we went to different sessions in the afternoon. I went to the panel on youth and engaging Millennials, where I learned still more about these issues and picked up some good ideas! For example, we could use high school volunteers. Some groups have had a lot of success with some kind of fun activity/social hour combined with education. And, of course, we can partner with the Young People's Network locally as well as statewide. A very good and useful day!



**LWVNJ Analysis of Statewide Ballot Questions**

## QUESTION 1

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ALLOW A COURT TO ORDER PRETRIAL DETENTION OF A PERSON IN A CRIMINAL CASE

Question: Do you approve amending the Constitution to allow a court to order pretrial detention of a person in a criminal case? This would change the current constitutional right to bail.

The change to the Constitution would mean that a court could order that a person remain in jail prior to trial, even without a chance for the person to post bail, in some situations.

The amendment also removes language in the Constitution about bail eligibility for death penalty cases. The death penalty no longer exists in New Jersey.

**Citizens vote “YES” or “NO” on public questions on the ballot.**

The full text of the proposed amendment (of which the ballot question is a summary) may be found at [http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2014/Bills/SCR/128\\_I1.PDF](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2014/Bills/SCR/128_I1.PDF)

**Background:** Currently, the New Jersey Constitution states that all persons charged with a crime in New Jersey, except for those charged with capital offenses, are entitled to be released on bail, regardless of their past record or the threat he or she poses to society.

40% of the State's prison population are non-violent offenders with rights to bail, but lack the means to secure bail. They are incarcerated an average of 10 months before trial.

The new constitutional amendment would allow all persons, before conviction, to be eligible for pretrial release with or without posting bail, depending upon the decision of the court. A judge would have the authority to deny pretrial release if it is reasonable to determine that, if released, the offender would (1) be a threat to the safety of another person or the community, (2) would not appear in court for his or her hearing, and/or (3) obstruct the criminal justice process.

The new amendment would also make it lawful for the Legislature to establish procedures, terms, and conditions by law which are applicable to pretrial release and the denial thereof authorized under this provision.

The amendment would take effect on January 1, 2017 to allow any new laws to be enacted and their requirements to be established. In addition, the amendment would remove language in the Constitution about bail eligibility for death penalty cases (capital offenses), since the death penalty no longer exists in New Jersey.

**Reasons to vote “YES”**

- The courts would be empowered to deny bail to obviously dangerous individuals, repeat offenders, or probable flight risks who might not appear for trial.
- The current system is unfair—those with money can obtain pre-trial release and those without money go to jail until trial. This amendment would redress this disparity.
- The legislature is granted the option to set conditions that would flesh out and specify the application of this amendment in practice.

**Reasons to vote “NO”**

- Unless and until the legislature sets conditions, this amendment places the decision about whether to grant pre-trial release into the hands of a judge, who may in some cases be biased, unfair, or prejudiced in making that determination.
- Under current law, each person who is charged with a crime is considered bailable and is entitled to potential pre-trial release. This amendment would end that right.
- The constitutional amendment does not stipulate that a defendant would have a speedy trial if a judge denies the defendant's release prior to trial..



## QUESTION 2

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT DEDICATING STATE FUNDS FOR OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND, AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AND CHANGING EXISTING DEDICATION FOR WATER PROGRAMS, UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS, AND HAZARDOUS SITE CLEAN UPS

Question: Do you approve amending the Constitution to dedicate certain State revenues each year for environmental programs?

The Constitution now dedicates four percent of the money collected from the Corporation Business Tax to help pay for some environmental programs. This amendment raises the amount from four percent to six percent beginning on July 1, 2019.

The amendment also changes, beginning July 1, 2015, some of the programs funded by the current dedication. The new dedication would be used mostly to preserve and steward open space, farmland, historic sites, and flood-prone areas. Funds would also be used to improve water quality, remove and clean up underground tanks, and clean up polluted sites. Lastly, the amendment dedicates money received from leases and other uses of State open space lands to pay for open space, farmland, and historic preservation.

**Citizens vote “YES” or “NO” on public questions on the ballot.**

The full text of the proposed amendment (of which the ballot question is a summary) may be found at [http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2014/Bills/SCR/84\\_U1.HTM](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2014/Bills/SCR/84_U1.HTM)

Background from the LWVNJ:

The New Jersey Constitution currently allocates four percent of New Jersey’s Corporation business Tax to fund five environmental programs as follows:

- 1) 15% water quality.
- 2) 25% hazardous substance discharge remediation (brownfields and underground storage tank removal and cleanup).
- 3) 28% polluted site cleanup performed by the State.
- 4) 17% diesel air pollution control. This allocation expires after 12/31/15 and will be reallocated to improvement in parks and other preserved open space
- 5) 15% improvements in parks and other preserved open space.

In the most recent fiscal year, this four percent provided \$103.1 million for the above programs This amendment to the Constitution would reallocate the current four percent dedication of the corporate business tax to the following environmental programs:

- 1) 5% water quality
- 2) 10% hazardous substance discharge remediation (brownfields)
- 3) 9% underground storage tank removal and cleanup
- 4) 5% polluted site cleanup performed by the State
- 5) 71% preservation of open space (Green Acres), farmland, historic sites and flood prone areas (Blue Acres)

It would also raise the amount of the dedication of the corporate business tax in the constitution from four percent to six percent starting on July 1, 2019 and change the allocation of the six percent dedication between the five programs to increase the preservation of open space, farmland, historic sites and flood prone areas to 78% of the dedicated funds.

Traditionally, the funding for open space preservation programs has relied on borrowed money which is placed in the Garden State Preservation Trust Fund. All of those monies have been spent or allocated.

**Reasons to vote “YES”**

- This dedication will provide a source of stable and reliable long-term funding to ensure protection of the state’s valuable natural resources and sustain its quality of life.
- Without approval of this amendment, the continued preservation of open space, farmland, historic sites and flood prone area will cease as all monies have been spent or allocated.
- Continuing to borrow money for these needs is an option the State cannot afford to choose given its current condition of indebtedness.

**Reasons to vote “NO”**

- The expansion of the dedication from four percent to six percent will divert money that is currently available for the State budget. At a time of fiscal austerity this may mean either cuts in other state budgeted programs or a need for additional revenue sources.
- Approval will drain dollars from other environmental programs currently being funded by the dedication.
- Constitutional dedication of taxes ties the hands of the legislature, limiting their ability to use tax funds as needed at any given time.

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**

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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)



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