

League of Women Voters Of Wood County WV

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LWVWV www.lwvwwv.org LWVUS www.lwv.org

Voter

April 2017



Mark Your Calendar

Monday, April 26 7 p.m. Membership meeting
see below
Saturday, May 6 10:30 a.m. LWVWV State Convention
Monday, May 8, 12:30 p.m. LWVWC Board meeting
Wood County Library
Tuesday, May 16 7:00 p.m. "Why is WV so Poor?"
Judge Black Annex – see page 2

Membership Meeting What the Legislature Did (or didn't) Do Monday, April 26, 7:00 p.m.

Parkersburg City Building, Executive Board Room
2nd floor, near the walkway to the Judicial Building
Your guests are welcome

The recently concluded (almost) Legislative session considered a number of bills of particular interest to LWV members. Kathy Stoltz will review a selection of bills, the good, the bad, and the ugly, and their fate.

A total of 2496 bills were introduced; just over 10% actually passed. Some have already been signed; most are on Governor Justice's desk awaiting his signature or veto. A sampling of bills we'll talk about on April 26 is elsewhere in this Voter.

A budget bill for 2017-18 was passed by both the House and the Senate. The Governor may veto it, let it become law without his signature, or sign it, which most consider unlikely. If he vetoes, a special session will have to be convened to try to craft a document all parties can agree to, however reluctantly. In brief, the Governor's proposal was a budget that balanced by raising some taxes and cutting spending. The Legislature's version was balanced by more extensive cuts and taking more than \$90 million from the state's Rainy Day Fund.

This is a good time to invite someone to attend a meeting and ask them to join.

Welcome two new members

Julie Schleier and Kathy Moran.

LWVWV State Convention Saturday, May 6 10:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Comfort Suites, Mineral Wells

LWV Wood County is hosting the state board and delegates from local Leagues for our biennial convention. All members are welcome to attend either as delegates or visitors.

Lisa Diehl, Northern Regional Coordinator for West Virginians for Affordable Health Care, will be the guest speaker after lunch, talking about the implications for WV if we lose the Affordable Care Act.

Lisa began work with WVAHC in 2010. She has been an advocate and community organizer for over 30 years. Prior to coming to WVAHC Lisa worked at WV Citizen Action working and advocating for passage of the ACA in Congress. She is on the board of the Good News Mountaineer Garage, and co-founder and board member of WV Women Work.

The convention sessions include hearing from state board members about their work over the past year and some necessary business like electing officers and directors.

If you plan to attend, contact Charmaine Dotson at cdye62@suddenlink.net.



Our year runs from April 1 – March 31, which means that 2017-18 dues are now due. To renew yours, send a check payable to LWVWC to our treasurer at 1 Fox Hill Drive, Parkersburg WV 26104. Membership for one is \$45, for two or more at one address, add \$25 for each added member.

Special Dues Rate for New Members

Thanks to a grant from the state League, dues for **new members only** are \$25 for their first year of membership.

We sadly note the death of former LWVWC member Anne Kinney. Anne was a member until her health necessitated a move in 2008 to Morgantown where one of her sons resides. She was 97 and a woman of many interests and accomplishments.

Board news: In addition to the slate listed in the last *Voter*, the board has made two welcome additions to the LWVWC Board of Directors by appointing Karen Berry (returning) and June Rhodes (new) for one year terms.

A sampling of bills – more will be updated at April 26 meeting.

HB 2781, A bad bill that was amended into an acceptable one. It retains the liberal Voter ID requirements and the provision for automatic voter registration at DMV adopted last year. Passed by both Houses. Awaits governor's signature.

SB 60 & HB 2132 Imposed work requirements on some recipients of SNAP benefits (food stamps). LWV opposed this. Passed Senate, died in House Judiciary Committee.

HB 2506 LWV opposed this bill because it changes the way limits on discharge of toxins into waterways are calculated and allows more pollution. Passed and signed by the governor.

HB2744 LEEP (Local Energy Efficiency Partnership) is a funding mechanism commercial building owners can use to make their buildings more efficient and pay for the upgrades on their tax ticket. LWV supported this bill. The Senate passed it unanimously; the House Government Organization Committee rejected it after a committee member suggested some incorrect outcomes of enactment.

HB 2646 abolished the WV Women's Commission. Passed both houses. Awaits governor's signature.

SB 255 clarifies that a person appointed to fill a vacancy in an office must be from the same party as the person who vacated the office at the time it was vacated. Passed both houses. Awaits governor's signature.

Drug Take Back Day is April 29, 10 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. A link to search for local sites is available at:

www.deadiversion.usdoj.gov/drug_disposal/takeback/

The Vienna Fire Station (608 28th St.) is not listed, but also is a Take Back site. Details are on page 2 of 2nd quarter 2017 newsletter online at:

www.vienna-wv.com/portal/documents/newsletter/

Who knew? When the US entered WWI in 1917, one third of Americans were people born in a foreign country.

LWV™ LWV of Wood County
25 Lynnwood Dr.
Vienna WV 26105

Upcoming events:

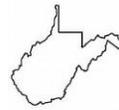
4/29 What the Legislature Did (or didn't) Do

5/6 LWVWV State Convention

5/16 Why is West Virginia so Poor?

Membership in the LWV is open to all.

To join the LWVWC, send a check payable to LWVWC for \$45 (plus \$25 for each additional member at the same address) to the LWVWC Treasurer, 1 Fox Hill Dr., Parkersburg WV 26104
Write "dues" on the memo line.



Why is West Virginia so Poor?

It's depressing to keep seeing West Virginia at the bottom of so many lists that rank states on everything from happiness to educational achievement. The lead domino that tips over many of the others is poverty. It's been true for decades and never seems to get better. No matter how they measure it, WV always seems to be down there in the bottom ten along with assorted states to the south.

To explore how the state got this way and what can be done to improve conditions, we've invited Sean O'Leary, a Senior Policy Analyst with the West Virginia Center on Budget and Policy, to speak in Parkersburg. This event will be open to the public and we plan to invite local office holders to attend.

Tuesday, May 16 at 7:00 p.m.
Judge Black Annex, Parkersburg
Across from the Blennerhassett Hotel

Since joining the Center in 2010, Sean has authored numerous reports on working family issues, economic development, and state and federal budget and tax policy, including annual reports on the state budget and the State of Working West Virginia.

We hope to raise awareness and stir some discussion about what decisions at every level have kept a state so rich in resources from providing a better life for so many of its residents.

Median household income in the US is over \$50,000. In WV it is about \$42,000. Wood County's is near that. Jefferson County's is more than \$60,000, McDowell County's, less than \$25,000.