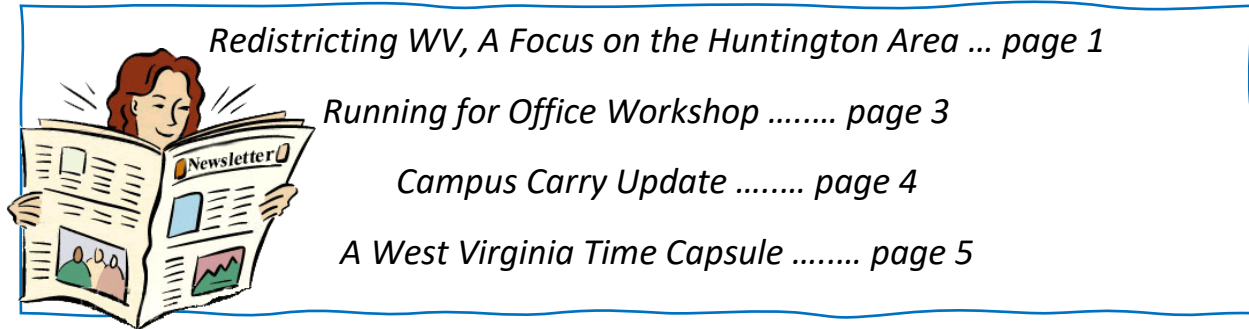


# LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup> OF THE HUNTINGTON AREA

## December 2021 E-mail Bulletin

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### ***Redistricting WV, A Focus on the Huntington Area***

By Nyoka Baker Chapman

The final 2020 census data was released on Sept 30th and the proposed WV House of Delegate Maps were released at virtually the same time. The maps were clearly not drawn overnight and opportunity for greater transparency and input during public hearings were clearly ignored. The new 100 delegate districts and the lastminute senatorial mapping that left larger counties divided brought a palpable despair to many.



Delegate district apportionment numbers were found to be at issue statewide. For instance, instead of giving the city of Huntington (population 46,667) at least two full delegate districts they packed as much of Huntington as possible into District 25, as you can see from the numbers, and then cracked the remainder into the surrounding districts.

The city of Huntington was divided at 20th street between District 25, population 18,791, and District 24, separating the Fairfield neighborhood. District 24,

population 17,052, runs east from 20th street all the way to the Huntington Mall in Barboursville. Delegate Sean Hornbuckle proposed an amendment to rejoin the Fairfield community, but the amendment failed passage by the WV Joint Committee on Redistricting (no amendments proposed by Democrats were approved).

Park Hills to the south of Ritter Park and North Blvd was added to District 26, population 17,355. This oddly shaped district runs all the way to Guyan Estates which is in Barboursville. What was the commonality to join these communities?

District 23, population 17,069, could have easily included the entire town of Barboursville, population 4,268. Why not? The drawing of the delegate maps left parts of the Barboursville Community in Districts 24 and 26. This totally defeated the purpose of going to 100 delegate districts, which in theory was to create better communication between elected delegates and the communities they represent.

The cities of Ceredo, population 6,705 and Kenova, population 3,027, were added into District 27, population 17,560. This feature created a panhandle to District 27 which then follows the Wayne County line on one side and District 26 on the other.

Viewing the WV delegate maps on Google Earth, it was difficult to find a city or town that escaped division. That WV municipalities have a permanent status of Home Rule as of 2019, as well as the fact that cities and towns are incorporated entities, leaves one wondering why those factors were not taken into consideration in the WV redistricting process. In an ideal redistricting model, mayors and county commissioners could be asked to participate as consultants to bring guidance into the process. Regional hearings could turn into real dialogues with authentic input. This may have been a path taken by an independent redistricting commission.

If the Freedom to Vote Act (a revised version of S. 1) achieves passage all states would by law be under uniform voting operations, which would include redistricting. See [TITLE V—NONPARTISAN REDISTRICTING REFORM](#). Nationwide though, it appears that many states with independent commissions are found failing to meet deadlines and unable to reach agreements. From Virginia to Washington, problems still remain unresolved and approval by legislatures are in some cases sending mapping issues to state supreme courts.

The LWVWV Fair Maps Committee will remain active and be taking a closer look at the impact of redistricting on counties and their municipalities by reaching out to local leaders statewide to build a foundation of input that could be pivotal to creating an improved redistricting process over the course of the next 10 years. Redistricting must become more than a politically manipulated cartography of

numbers and evolve into a process that respects of the character and needs of our communities.

The final Delegate maps tell the story. To view the House final map: [https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/redistricting/house/hse\\_prop1\\_sub\\_rev\\_book.pdf](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/redistricting/house/hse_prop1_sub_rev_book.pdf)

Though many smaller counties managed to remain intact in senatorial districts, larger counties were cracked and Cabell County was found divided between senate districts 4 and 5, right down the middle. To view the Senate final map: [https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/redistricting/senate/SENATE\\_MAP\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/redistricting/senate/SENATE_MAP_FINAL.pdf)

Congressional districts did fall into fair numbers with less than 1% deviation. Cabell And Kanawha County are now both in the southern congressional district. [https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/redistricting/house/consensus\\_congressional.pdf](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/legisdocs/redistricting/house/consensus_congressional.pdf)

### ***Running for Office Workshop***

By: Martha Woodward

The League is partnering with the W. Page Pitt School of Journalism Broadcasting Department to film a Running for Office Workshop November 30. Because we will miss

the deadline for the Newsletter with the connection information we will put that out by email and media after we have it. We expect to distribute the program across the state to encourage new candidates to run. Of course presentations such as this work best with an audience, but that is not yet possible. So, publishing it far and wide is our best option at the moment.




Topics and presenters are as follows:

- *Campaign Finance Regulations and Reports* with Cabell County Clerk Phyllis White and WV Secretary of State's Office Field Representative Lee Dean
- *Raising Money for Campaigns* with Political Activist and Community Volunteer David Tyson

- *Preparing the Message* with Former City Council Member & Mayor Joseph Williams
- *Reaching the Public* with Former City Council Member Jennifer Wheeler

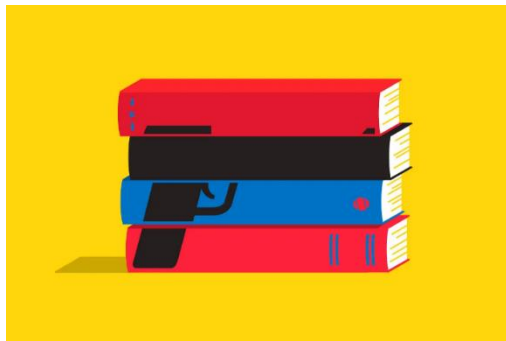
We believe that this is an important way of reaching out to those both confused and emboldened by the new redistricting maps and political atmosphere. This activity fulfills the mission of the League to educate voters and develop new informed participants in our democratic system.



2022  
RUNNING FOR  
OFFICE GUIDE

Candidates for political office can find more information about campaigns in a guide from the Office of the West Virginia Secretary of State. The Guide is available on-line.

<https://sos.wv.gov/FormSearch/Elections/Informational/Running%20for%20Office.pdf>



***Campus Carry Update***

By: Montserrat Miller

The 2020-2022 League of Women Voters of the United States *Impact on Issues: A Guide to Public Policy Positions* asserts that “the proliferation of handguns and semiautomatic assault weapons in the United States is a major health and safety threat to its citizens. The League supports strong federal measures to limit the accessibility and regulate the ownership of these weapons by private citizens. The League supports regulating firearms for consumer safety.” But as we know, gun policies are not set only at the federal level.

West Virginia Code §61-7-14 allows colleges and universities to regulate the carrying of weapons on campus. The right of higher education to protect their campuses is supported by a broad coalition of students, faculty, administrators, business, and other civic groups. As part of a national effort to broaden carry laws

at the state level, “campus carry” bills have been introduced in the West Virginia Legislature three years in a row.

The 2019, the 2020, and the 2021 attempts to pass campus carry failed, and, in 2020, all presidents of West Virginia’s colleges and universities, led by President Jerome Gilbert of Marshall University, signed a petition to the Legislature asking that regulation of firearms on campus remain under the domain of boards of governors. As we approach the 2022 session, The Charleston Gazette has reported that there are plans to introduce such legislation again. Citizens opposed to the proliferation of guns on West Virginia’s campuses should reach out to Delegates and Senators to express their views, prepare to testify at public hearings, and join with others in working to defeat changes in state code that would allow students, faculty, and staff to carry concealed weapons on our campuses.



### ***A West Virginia Climate Time Capsule***

By: Nyoka Baker Chapman, LWVWV

At a time when WV seems to be at the epicenter of the climate challenge debate, this project seemed quite fitting as a contributing activity by the LWVWV Natural Resources Committee in response to a Climate Rally call for activities from the WV Climate Alliance. For more than a year the organization has worked to convince Senator Joe Manchin and others to keep climate initiatives, particularly the Clean Electricity Performance Program, intact in the Build Back Better legislation.

Will WV be able to meet IPCC goals and transition to a new energy paradigm? If so, then no doubt the rest of the United States will have been able to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2050 as well. The 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties of the Paris Climate Agreement (COP26) met in Glasgow 10/31 - 11/13 and the US has declared commitment to nearly 200 countries to do its part. As WV is one of the top emitters of carbon and methane in the nation, our state is positioned to show the world how it is done and so, we find ourselves at the crux of this immense U-turn.

One wonders what versions of our climate history will survive once we get through these next decades as the necessary shift is in progress. The coming generation will



ask, “Why didn’t they do something sooner?” Well, against ridiculous odds ‘they’ the people have continued to try to do something and such is documented in the WV Climate Time Capsule. With contributions from citizens and organizations, there are not only hopes, prayers and wishes for the future, but also information on alternate renewable energy generation as well as documentation of current events in news articles of the ongoing struggles surrounding the resistance to climate change initiatives.

Cultivating change that will create a healthier climate future will be a multilevel effort that will involve the practical, the political and yes, the spiritual nature of humanity itself that we will be able to work together to preserve our collective right to call this beautiful planet our home.

The project is currently set for a formal transfer to the Marshall University James E. Morrow Library Special Collections Department on Earth Day 22nd, 2022 to be archived until opened in 2050. Details regarding the collaborative effort for that date are in planning.

