



Press Release

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League of Women Voters Congratulates Candidates who Participated in Forums to Inform Electorate *Over 3,000 Voters viewed LWV Monmouth County forums live or recorded*

Ocean NJ: This fall, the League of Women Voters affiliates in Monmouth County organized and conducted a dozen successful candidate forums for municipal, board of education, state legislative, and county government races leading up to the November 2 election.

LWVSMC President Evelyn C. Murphy commented, "We commend all the candidates who put themselves out there participating in our forums so their constituents would know who they are and what they intended to do for their communities."

Additionally, the Monmouth County Leagues (Southern Monmouth, Greater Red Bank Area and Western Monmouth) worked in collaboration with various civic organizations who sponsored forums to give voters the opportunity to make informed choices. These included local parent teacher organizations for school board elections and RAC, The New Jersey Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC-NJ), among others.

The forums included: *Monmouth County Commissioner and Surrogate; Board of Education for Ocean Township, Red Bank Regional Little Silver Representative, Neptune, Brick, Toms River, Middletown, and Manalapan/ Englishtown; Legislative District-13 State Senate and Assembly; municipal contests for Highlands Borough Council, Belmar Borough Council, and Tinton Falls Mayor and Councilmembers.* Two other forums were ready to go but cancelled by some candidates at the last minute. Our League's professionally trained moderators moderated three additional forums outside of Monmouth County.

In all, a total of 1361 people registered for the online forums; nearly 900 viewed live and at least 2,000 more watched the recordings on the League's websites and other cable TV channels. The forums were all virtual. The entire process was managed by a team of more than two dozen trained volunteers, including organizers, directors, question screeners, timekeepers and moderators.

Candidates and sponsors acknowledged the fairness and professionalism of the forums. The rave reviews for moderator, Anne Torre, following the Highlands Borough Council forum were typical.

Tinton Falls' municipal candidate Mitch Kulberg commented, "Everyone at the League of Women Voters, thank you so much for hosting tonight's forum. It was so well run and so professional and so un-dramatic, it was very refreshing. You do a great job..."

Stacy Goto of RAC-NJ commented following the Legislative 13 forum, "Kudos to all of the League members who helped put this together. It was a valuable session."

In addition to holding forums, the League of Women Voters educated Monmouth County voters on the changes to the voting process that included an introduction to early, in-person voting and a demonstration of the new e-pollbooks and voting machines. They delivered their webinar, "Election 2021: *What's New? What's Different?*", to the League of Women Voters membership, senior citizen residences, religious institutions and other private groups. Recordings of the webinar were posted and watched on League and other websites.

"Peggy Dellinger, who led the effort to develop and deliver the webinar, commented, "Our election offices distinguished themselves in how they handled the changes to the process. Results show Monmouth County led the state in early, in-person voting. I believe our efforts made a contribution to that success."

The League of Women Voters of Monmouth County also covered 94 races in its non-partisan online voters' guide, VOTE-411.com. In all, 345 candidates were invited to list their bios, platforms and answer League-posed questions.

Evelyn Murphy acknowledged, “All we accomplished for voters was made possible by the extraordinary efforts of our great volunteers. We welcome anyone to join us who would like to contribute to this important work.”

For more information on the Monmouth County League of Women Voters contact them at lwvsmcnj@gmail.com.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, grassroots civic organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to people 16 years and older of all gender identities. With 101 years of experience, the League is one of America’s oldest and most trusted civic nonprofit organizations.

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