



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF PENNSYLVANIA
CITIZEN EDUCATION FUND**
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**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF PENNSYLVANIA
CITIZEN EDUCATION FUND
NONPARTISAN VOTERS GUIDE
MUNICIPAL PRIMARY, MAY 17, 2011
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Polls open 7 A.M. to 8 P.M.

This Voters Guide may be taken into the voting booth.

FOR ELECTION INFORMATION

Contact your county Board of Elections. The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania Citizen Information Center also provides election information. CALL TOLL FREE: 1-800-692-7281

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The material in this Guide was compiled by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania-Citizen Education Fund. This material may not be altered or reprinted without the permission of the League. Each candidate's reply has been printed as submitted, except to use standard abbreviations and by editing from the bottom when a candidate's reply exceeded the word limit. The candidates listed are those whose names appear on the ballot as of March 23, 2011. They are listed according to their ballot order. Additional information about judicial candidates and voter information including "Polling Place Lookup" can be found by going to www.smartvoter.org and typing in your address and zip code. Allegheny, Delaware and Montgomery County residents will see additional information on local candidates at www.smartvoter.org as well.

PURPOSE AND POLICY OF THE LEAGUE

The purpose of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania-Citizen Education Fund is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League is nonpartisan: it does not support or oppose any political parties or candidates. Nothing in this guide should be construed as an endorsement of any candidate by the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania-Citizen Education Fund.

ABSENTEE VOTING

Registered voters who are ill, disabled, or will be absent from the municipality on Election Day may vote by absentee ballot. Completed applications for civilian absentee ballots must be received by the county Board of Elections by 5 P.M., Tuesday, May 10. Completed civilian absentee ballots must be received back at the Board of Elections by 5 P.M. on Friday, May 13, 2011. If an emergency arises (unexpected illness or business trip) after the Tuesday application deadline, call your county Board of Elections for information on emergency absentee voting. Proof of emergency may be required. An emergency application and ballot can be obtained and voted by 5 P.M. on Friday, May 13. Any disabled voter having questions regarding the accessibility of a polling place should consult the county Board of Elections.

WRITE-IN VOTING

Information for write-in voting will be available at the polling place.

ELECTION DAY PROBLEMS

If your right to vote is challenged at the polls on Election Day and the problem cannot be resolved at the polling place, the judge of elections at the polling place should telephone the county Board of Elections. The problem could be resolved by phone if your name appears on the county records. If it does not and you want to try to resolve the problem, then you can go in person to the county Board of Elections where a judge from the Court of Common Pleas will be on duty to resolve election problems. Alternatively you can ask for and vote by provisional ballot. If it is later determined that you were eligible to vote your ballot will be counted. You will be given instructions on how to determine if your vote was counted.

IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW VOTERS

If you are a new voter or if you are voting at a polling place for the first time then you must bring your voter ID card or a photo ID such as a driver's license, student ID or some other form of Federal or State government issued ID. Some forms of non-photo ID are also acceptable such as a firearm permit, current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, or government check. If you do not have any acceptable ID then you must be allowed to vote by provisional ballot.

ON-LINE VOTERS GUIDE

The Voters Guide and other useful information for voters can be found on the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania homepage: www.palwv.org

CERTIFICATION NOTE

As of the publication date of this guide, the slate of candidates listed below is accurate based upon the Pennsylvania Department of State's Bureau of Elections unofficial ballot.

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Superior Court is one of Pennsylvania's two statewide intermediate appellate courts. This court, which was established in 1895, reviews most of the civil and criminal cases that are appealed from the Courts of Common Pleas in the Commonwealth's 67 counties. The Superior Court consists of 15 judges who serve 10-year terms. The president judge of Superior Court is elected to a five-year term by his or her colleagues. A huge volume of appeals flow to Superior Court from the trial courts. Generally, appeals are heard by panels of three judges sitting in Philadelphia, Harrisburg or Pittsburgh. The court often is the final arbiter of legal disputes. Although the Supreme Court may grant a petition for review of a Superior Court decision, most such petitions are denied and the ruling of the Superior Court stands.

Term: 10 years—Salary: \$178,914

(Vote for 1)

QUESTION: Because of some public concern about the amount of money being spent on statewide judicial elections, would you support an amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution changing the method of selecting statewide judges to a merit selection process? Why or why not?

REPUBLICAN

Vic Stabile (Middlesex Carlisle)



Web site: <http://stabileforjudge.com>

D.O.B: 9.14.1957

EDUCATION: 1979, SUNY Stonybrook, B.A.; 1982, Dickinson School of Law, J.D.

OCCUPATION: Attorney

QUALIFICATIONS: Almost 30 years trial and appellate experience; Appellate Judicial Clerk; Deputy Attorney General; Partner, Dilworth Paxson LLP; Recommended by PA Bar Assn. based upon "solid" appellate experience and "strong intellect."

ANSWER TO QUESTION: Yes, if a true merit selection process would provide fair opportunity for well qualified people to be considered for judicial office. At present, neither election nor merit selection is a panacea for selecting judges.

REPUBLICAN

Paula A. Patrick (Ward 34 Div. 34, Philadelphia)



Web site: www.judgepaulapattick.com

D.O.B: 1.28.1968

EDUCATION: 1993, Thurgood Marshall School of Law, J.D. 1990, Bennett College, B.A.—Political Science *Magna Cum Laude*

OCCUPATION: Judge of the Court of Common Pleas—Philadelphia County

QUALIFICATIONS: Common Pleas Court Judge, 7 ½ years; Trial lawyer 10 years; former adjunct faculty at LaSalle University; former instructor at the Gerry Spence’s Trail Lawyers College; 2009

Woman of the Year Award by Coalition of Hope Inner-City Empowerment; 2009 Partner of Peace Award, 2002 Preserve the Heritage Award Commitment to Community Service

ANSWER TO QUESTION: No, I would not support it. I believe in a democracy—government by the people and for the people. All Pennsylvanians should have the right to vote for any public official, especially judges. If there is a “merit-selection” process for choosing judges, who decides on the judges selected? It would only be a select group of politically connected individuals with very little interest in diversity or fairness.

DEMOCRATIC

David N. Wecht, (Indiana Township, Pittsburgh)



Web site: www.wecht2011.com

D.O.B: 5.20.1962

EDUCATION: 1984, Yale B.A.; 1987 Yale J.D. *Summa Cum Laude*, Phi Beta Kappa. National Merit Scholar. Notes Editor, Yale Law Journal. Law Clerk, 1987-88, U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. Circuit.

OCCUPATION: Common Pleas Judge

QUALIFICATIONS: Judge since February 2003 (former Administrative Judge, Family Division). “Highly Recommended” by Pennsylvania and Allegheny County Bar Associations. Endorsed by Pennsylvania Democratic Party, Allegheny and Philadelphia Labor Councils, FOP Lodge 91, Professional Firefighters Local 1. Register of Wills, Allegheny County 1998-2003.

ANSWER TO QUESTION: Reasonable people disagree. On the one hand, appointment of judges would eliminate problems posed by campaign fundraising, especially large corporate contributions now permitted by the U.S. Supreme Court. On the other hand, our Constitution should not lightly be amended, particularly where amendment would disenfranchise Pennsylvanians. Those who would alter our Constitution carry a heavy burden. While I am not yet persuaded, I have an open mind and believe the issue merits candid and thoughtful discussion.

JUDGE OF THE COMMONWEALTH COURT

JOB DESCRIPTION

The Commonwealth Court is one of Pennsylvania's two statewide intermediate appellate courts. This court, which was established in 1968, is unlike any other state court in the nation. Its jurisdiction generally is limited to legal matters involving state and local government and regulatory agencies. Litigation typically focuses on such subjects as banking, insurance and utility regulation and laws affecting taxation, land use, elections, labor practices and workers compensation. Commonwealth Court also acts as a court of original jurisdiction, or a trial court, when lawsuits are filed by or against the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth Court is made up of nine judges who serve 10-year terms. The president judge is chosen by his or her colleagues for a five-year term. The court generally decides cases in three-judge panels and sits in Philadelphia, Harrisburg and Pittsburgh.

Term: 10 years—Salary \$178,914

(Vote for 1)

QUESTION: Because of some public concern about the amount of money being spent on statewide judicial elections, would you support an amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution changing the method of selecting statewide judges to a merit selection process? Why or why not?

REPUBLICAN

Paul P. Panepinto (Ward 34, Div. 34, Philadelphia)



Web site: www.judgepanepinto.com

D.O.B.: 6.25.1949

EDUCATION: 1971, Villanova University, B.A.; 1979 Villanova University, M.A.; 1976 Widener University, J.D.

OCCUPATION: Judge

QUALIFICATIONS: Received the highest recommendation from the Pennsylvania Bar Association. Served for 20 years as a judge handling all major complex litigation cases (jury and non-jury) as well as criminal and family court matters.

ANSWER TO QUESTION: Merit selection limits the involvement of the people to choose their judges. The present system gives everyone the chance to participate. This process has problems but I believe candidates should be able to run without raising money. They should do so on their own and with the support of the media and a public debate to spread the message to voters who would then be more informed about the candidates.

REPUBLICAN

Anne Covey (Upper Makefield Twp. New Hope)



Web site: www.coveyforjudge.com

D.O.B.: 11.04.1959

EDUCATION: 1981, University of Delaware, B.A. with Departmental Honors; 1984, Widener University School of Law, J.D. *Cum Laude*

OCCUPATION: Attorney, Law Firm Founder

QUALIFICATIONS: Extensive Commonwealth Court experience. Clerked for President Judge Craig. First woman Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board Member. Practice labor and employment law. Written extensively, including book *The Workplace Law Advisor*.

ANSWER TO QUESTION: I believe Pennsylvania residents should continue to have the right to select appellate court judges. There is no assurance that an appointive process will not include the kind of political negotiation and dealing most Pennsylvanians oppose. I have full confidence in the Pennsylvania voters to carefully consider each candidate's qualifications and make the best judgment. Pennsylvania need not replace elections with back-room deals, but rather rigorously enforce a strong code of ethics and conduct.

DEMOCRAT

Kathryn Boockvar (Doylestown Twp.)



D.O.B. 10.23.1968

Web site: www.boockvar.com

EDUCATION: 1993 American University, Washington College of Law, J.D.; 1990 University of Pennsylvania, B.A.; 1996 Lancaster Mediation Center.

OCCUPATION: Attorney

QUALIFICATIONS: Advancement Project, Senior Attorney, 3 years; Boockvar & Yeager, Partner, 11 years; Legal Services Attorney, 3 years; Only Democratic Commonwealth Court candidate recommended by the Pennsylvania Bar Association; Rising Star—Super Lawyer.

ANSWER TO QUESTION: Having spent the last three years working for the voters of Pennsylvania, I believe voters deserve a say in who represents them in every branch of government, including the judiciary. I support campaign finance reform, including limits and greater disclosure. I would also like to see a better system for educating the public about candidates, the courts, and why these courts matter in peoples' lives, and will affect the lives of their children and grandchildren.

DEMOCRAT

Barbara Behrend Ernsberger (Pittsburgh)

www.ernsbergerforjudge.com



D.O.B.: 8.16.1951

EDUCATION: 1973, University of Pittsburgh, B.A. *cum laude*; 1976, Duquesne University School of Law, J.D.

OCCUPATION: Lawyer

QUALIFICATIONS: I am a practicing attorney in workers' compensation, consumer, election and zoning law. (34 years). I have won landmark cases for injured workers and consumers. I was Commissioner, Pittsburgh City Planning, 4 years

ANSWER TO QUESTION: I would not support merit selection because elections involve the public and also educate the aspiring judge. When I ran for the Commonwealth Court in 2009, I learned about Marcellus Shale in Clinton County, public safety issues in Philadelphia, and concerns about bias in the Courts across the state. The participatory and educational value of the electoral process outweighs the public concern about the money being spent on Judicial Elections.