

# American women have voted for 90 years

Tom Joseph

Harrisburg: Ninety years ago, the 19th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, giving women in Pennsylvania, and across the nation, the right to vote.

Olivia Thorne, president of the board of the League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania, says the struggle to secure that right started some 90 years earlier.

Ratification was just one part of the work needed to make sure women got to the polls in 1920, she explains.

"They had to register 1 million people between Aug. 26 and November, for the November elections. It was a phenomenal amount

of work to get a million women an opportunity to vote."

Before the 19th Amendment was ratified, Thorne says, the thinking was that women didn't know enough about politics to vote.

"It was like, 'By God, if we're going to get the right to vote, we better darn well be informed so that we can make sure we know about an issue before we talk about it.'"

The League of Women Voters of Pennsylvania supports an unconditional absentee ballot, Thorne says, affording more women, and men, to have their say on election day.

"That would mean if you're busy that day, if you can't get back from work, or if you have to take your kids some place or your kids are

sick and you don't want to drag them to the polls, there is a way you can still vote."

The League of Women Voters had formed six months prior to the ratification, and some involved thought the group might disband within five years.

In 2008, nationwide, 73 percent of all voting-eligible women were registered.

Thorne says she still does not see the numbers of women she would like to see running for political office, and she points to the small number of women in the Pennsylvania Legislature as an example. Others say the state's closed primaries make it harder for maverick candidates to get elected.



Jim Hill, center, explains the use of the antique transit to Joyce Chasan of Lumberville and New York and Joseph Santoro of Carversville.

## Bridget Wingert: Happy to Be Here Works of art as much as tools

On the first Friday of August, Jim Hill brought part of his collection of surveying instruments to the Mercer Museum in Doylestown. He set up tables on the first floor in the center of the tiered space – under the boat and wagon and other large samples of workers' implements that are suspended aloft.

A collector since he was a teenager, Hill has gathered instruments that show the history of America. At the Mercer that night with his partner Kathy Hausman, Lumberville resident Hill displayed some of that history.

The earliest piece was the original document that describes the allotment of land for what was to become the state of New Jersey. In the document, that state is described as West Jersey on "The Neck." The properties were described by visual landmarks or topographic descriptions.

The first members of the Society of Friends (Quakers) – from Chorleywood, Rickmansworth and Buckinghamshire – sailed for America in 1677. Penn was among the investors in the West Jersey land, where they settled. In 1681, King Charles II, settled a debt to William Penn's father by granting the younger Penn a large tract west and south of New Jersey.

The document describes transactions with local Indian tribes, who were trading goods for land. The West Jersey Quakers sold their land holdings to other English settlers from 1683 to 1714 through Penn's deputy governor, Captain John Blackwell and the land was managed by James Nevel.

Along with the land transfer document Hill displayed a circa 1690 surveyor's compass made by Joseph Halsy in Boston. He believes it might be the earliest known mathematical instrument made in the colonies.

"By the mid-18th century, a number of artisans in America were making mathematical instruments, including surveying equipment," Hill explained in his display. "Anthony Lamb, an Englishman trained as a mathematical instrument maker, was transported from England to Maryland after being convicted of a felony.

From 1730 to 1776, he was a successful instrument maker in New York City." The display included a surveying compass, a New York account's rule dated 1745, a gauging rod used to measure wine in a barrel, and a field walking compass, all attributed to Lamb.

A native New Yorker, Christian Hurtin, made the surveying compass that was displayed in its original saddle bag. Used for field surveys in the wilderness, the compass is just one example of Hurtin's work in the legacy he left. Hurtin died in 1830.

Early in the time of Penn's land grant, he and Charles Calvert, Lord Baltimore, disputed the location of the Maryland and Pennsylvania border. Both had been granted land to the 40th parallel, which placed Penn's capital city, Philadelphia, in Maryland. Finally, the Crown ordered a new boundary in 1760.

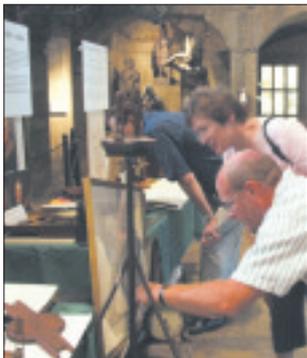
Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon sailed from England to Philadelphia in 1763 to survey the newly established boundaries for Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia. They determined the eastern border by 1768 but Indian uprisings prevent completion.

The survey resumed in 1784 overseen by Andrew Ellicott, Dr. James Madison, Robert Andrews and John Page, representing Virginia, John Lukens, surveyor general of Pennsylvania, Thomas Hutchins, John Ewing and David Rittenhouse representing Pennsylvania. Hills collection includes surveying instruments used by Rittenhouse and Ellicott.

Ellicott was acting surveyor general of Pennsylvania in 1803, when Meriwether Lewis and William Clark began their trek west to the Pacific Ocean. Lewis spent time in Philadelphia before the journey, acquiring his surveying instruments from Thomas Whitney and learning about celestial navigation from Ellicott. Hill's display showed navigational instruments made by Thomas Whitney – a surveyor's compass, a ship's binnacle compass, a sextant, an octant field walking compass and a protracting square for drafting.

At the end of Hill's display was a geodetic transit made by William Wurdemann, who established a business making scientific instruments in Washington, D.C. Wurdemann's transit was used in the 1872 survey of the northern border of the United States "from the lake of the woods to the summit of the Rocky Mountains," Capt. W.J. Twining was chief astronomer.

Wurdemann's instruments set new standards of excellence for such tools, Hill said. They are part of a collection of exquisitely formed brass and wood pieces, works of art as much as tools, and well worth seeing when Hill pulls them out again for all to enjoy.



Marvin and Arlene Eichlin of Nockamixon Township examine a map from Jim Hill collection of surveyors' equipment.

## Peggy Baker: Navigating Higher Education Don't visit colleges in the summer



My second college advising meeting with a family includes a list and descriptions of appropriate colleges divided into three categories: reach, likely and safety.

Each college has been chosen because the academic rigor, program, and campus culture are appropriate for the particular student. The first two criteria are easy enough to discern, but campus culture is a bit trickier.

After interviewing the family and student and reading the completed student's self-examination, I can narrow the list of appropriate choices to a manageable number, usually 12 to 14 colleges. I know which colleges have a heavy fraternity presence, which are academically intense, which prefer athletic kids, which have a history of legacy, and which tend to be politically or socially liberal.

My advice at the conclusion of the second meeting: Visit the campuses when the students are there. I should probably repeat that statement several more times since my advice is so often ignored.

Some families, however, decide that it would make good use of the summer to visit several colleges. As they stroll through the quiet

campuses they see some breathtaking architecture. Some colleges have made it a point to keep a similar genre throughout the campus; others have the occasional building with the awkward 1960s and 70s architecture. After listening to the information sessions, the family may detect a certain similarity among them.

Choosing a college just based on its campus appearance or the generic information session is foolhardy. What is the most important ingredient that is missing? The student population. The students make up the campus culture.

Unfortunately by fall, my advisee has decided that all the liberal arts colleges that were visited are boring. The campus greens are devoid of life.

True enough. The only campuses that have any life during the summer months are the big universities. They are so large that there are always plenty of summer school classes and graduate students on campus. The nurturing liberal arts colleges focus on the undergraduates and when summer arrives, those students go home to intern or to work.

I have fallen prey to the impulse to use my summer efficiently. Four summers ago I was invited to join the CRUSS tour in the state of New York. (You can guess the six New York colleges). All

expenses were paid by the host colleges: hotels, meals and the luxury of being shuttled from campus to campus.

I returned home disappointed. Not only did I have three tires blown on my little sports car (thanks to the potholes that pepper the Northeast), but also I was unable to get a sense for the life and culture of the campuses. What did the kids look like? How would I know which colleges would fit which student? When I visit a college, I look at the students and imagine what type of student would thrive there. I usually begin by thinking of my own children. I need the entire picture, one that includes the physical campus, academics, and population, to form an opinion.

*Peggy Baker is an educational consultant who lives and works in Bethlehem.*

*Studies have shown that students often limit their college choices to institutions that their friends attend or those with nationally recognized sports teams. Based on her experience in college admissions, financial aid, and career counseling, Peggy Baker encourages students to consider colleges that have appropriate campus cultures, academics and affordability.*

## Paul Grand: As I see it



### Blue Door/Red Dot:

Here is a tone poem to a narrow color palette of aesthetic, worn, old textured shapes. Highly sympathetic.

Paul Grand, a Buckingham resident, travels the world with his camera. paulgrandphoto.com