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Morris County Leagues Provide Expert, Nonpartisan Candidate Forums and Debates

As a service to voters of Morris County, the League of Women Voters (League) of the Morristown Area, Warren and West Morris Counties, and Mountain Lakes worked as a team to organize and execute nonpartisan candidates debates and forums for the November elections. Beginning in mid-August 2021, the team of three Leagues made a significant and sustained effort to bring together candidates running for State Senate and Assembly, County Commissioners, local municipal offices, and local boards of education.

We are pleased to announce that our concerted effort paid off. The League triumvirate sponsored an unprecedented number of candidate forums this election season in Morris County, many of which were co-sponsored by organizations that share the League's longstanding commitment to ensuring a nonpartisan arena for political engagement. All forums were live-streamed and are available for viewing on League YouTube channels.

Nonpartisan debates and forums are a time-honored and indispensable way for voters to learn about candidates and their platforms. The League strongly believes that voters deserve to hear from their candidates in all races, from the most local grassroots level to the national level. While many debates were arranged without contention, some events could not be scheduled due to candidates' resistance, non-response, failure to appear at pre-arranged debates, or inability to find a suitable date for all parties over extended periods of discussion. When an open and fair debate cannot be accomplished, the voters lose and democracy suffers.

The following is a list of successfully executed forums, their co-sponsors, and viewing links. We encourage constituents to view these debates for informed voting. Additional voting information and candidates' positions can be found at VOTE411.org.

10/26 Morris County Commissioners https://youtu.be/_fzJ9_sXoqY

Co-sponsored by **Morris County Chamber of Commerce**

John Krickus (R), incumbent

Thomas "T.C." McCourt (D)

Aron "A.J." Oliver (D)

Stephen Shaw (R), incumbent
Deborah Smith (R), incumbent
Dina Mikulka (D), unable to attend; opening statement was read
Ederle Vaughan (working Families Party), did not respond to the invitation to debate

9/22 Chatham Borough Council <https://youtu.be/vZjshAKnRPU>

Co-sponsored by **Morris County Branch of the NAACP**

Freddie Bicknese (R)
Carolyn Dempsey (D), incumbent
Jocelyn Mathiasen (D), incumbent

9/28 Chatham Township Committee <https://youtu.be/2HW9fOQgH2A>

Co-sponsored by **Morris County Branch of the NAACP**

Katherine R. Abbott (D), incumbent
Mark Lois (R)

9/28 Mount Olive Board of Education - 1-year unexpired term <https://youtu.be/jrMiPPHqY4I>

Amy Rubin
John Voli
Lisa Fenton, unable to attend; opening statement was read

9/28 Mount Olive Board of Education – 3-year term <https://youtu.be/PrUdFNYC7IQ>

Elizabeth Ouimet, incumbent
Anthony Strillacci, incumbent
Jennifer Aquino, unable to attend
John C. Petrie, unable to attend
Marc Orzillo, unable to attend
Danielle Fico Woelki, did not respond to invitation to participate

9/29 Morristown Council <https://youtu.be/5fsHeQe6wC4>

Co-sponsored by **Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., Morristown Alumnae Chapter**

Kristi Dimogeradakis (Restore Government Integrity)
Toshiba Foster (D), incumbent
Michelle Harris (Restore Government Integrity)
David Silva (D), incumbent
Nathan Umbriac (Restore Government Integrity)
John Thomas, Jr. (Restore Government Integrity), did not attend

10/5 Morris School District - Morris Township <https://youtu.be/tVTcRxRB-nA>

Co-sponsored by **Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated-Pi Theta Omega Chapter**

Kathleen "Katie" Cole
Linda K Murphy, incumbent
Dawn Teresa Parkot

10/6 Morris Township Committee <https://youtu.be/IK5RDLpCIEs>

Due to personal issues with 2 candidates who could not attend, only opening statements were read.

Mark Gyorfy (D), incumbent
Tara Olivo-Moore (D)
Sandi Garcia (R), unable to attend; opening statement was read
Joseph Calvanelli (R), unable to attend

10/7 Mount Olive Town Council <https://youtu.be/iwogE0ym7jc>

Jordan Bernstein (D)
John Ferrante (R), incumbent
Antoine Gayles (D)
Baramdai Sharma (D)
Nicole Spaldo (D)
Gregory Stewart (R), incumbent
Daniel Amianda (R), incumbent, unable to attend; opening statement was read
John Mania (R), incumbent, unable to attend; opening statement was read

10/11 Chester Board of Education <https://youtu.be/hO96LHysriI>

Simone Campbell
Sara Kalashian, incumbent
Dana Levens
Thomas G. Murphy
Sarah Schultz
John Barounis, unable to attend; opening statement was read
Carolina Rodriguez, declined to participate
Matthew R. Downs, did not respond to invitation

10/25 Chatham School District - Chatham Borough <https://youtu.be/wwGvzoxrx1Y>

Ann Ciccarelli, incumbent
Chris Delsandro, incumbent
Lara Freidenfelds
Brian Hargrove

10/25 Randolph Twp Board of Education <https://youtu.be/KHzzySHN5to>

Co-sponsored by **Randolph PTO Council**

Thomas Duffy
Michael Giordano
Peggy Kurtz
Michael LoCascio
Allison Manfred, incumbent
Yong Wang, incumbent

10/27 Mountain Lakes Board of Education Panel Discussion <https://youtu.be/siqjsV7pO7g>

Arun Don, PhD
Meghan Leininger, incumbent

We reached out to the candidates but were **unable to arrange forums** for the following races:

LD23 Senate and Assembly
LD25 Senate and Assembly
LD26 Senate
Montville Township Committee
Chatham School District - Chatham Township
Mendham Township Committee
Montville Board of Education
Hanover Board of Education