



Rochester/Metro League of Women Voters

Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Voter education is one of the League's most important functions, and the League encourages all citizens to register and to cast an informed vote.

The League does not support political parties or candidates, but does take stands on important issues after careful study and research.

Membership in the League is open to all citizens of voting age.

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Join Us! Increasing Voter Participation

January 12, 2012, 7-8:30 pm
Brighton Town Hall Auditorium

Presentation: Ways to Turn Around Voter Participation

Only 30% of registered voters went to the polls in Monroe County in 2011.

What will the number be in 2012?

Join us in a community conversation about changes in the voter registration process that will help increase voter turn out.

LWVUS Program Planning Meeting

February 9, 2012, 11:00 am. Bring bag lunch
Stage Conference Room - Brighton Town Hall

Current Priorities:

Educating Voters • Registering Voters

Improving Elections • Improving Government • Other Work

Members may obtain more information about these priorities by going to the LWVUS website at www.lwv.org.

Members should begin thinking about possible issues not covered by current positions well before the scheduled Program Planning meeting.

Members who are interested may join the LWVUS Convention Preparation discussion list, where members will be discussing and/or promoting issues and the Program Planning process.

Things to consider when evaluating possible issues:

Is there widespread member interest?

Is this a timely issue?

Is government action the most effective way to address the problem?

We can recommend dropping an item, expanding or restudy of an item, or a new item for study and consideration. You can find out more about other League items below:

- Climate, Energy & Natural Resources www.lwv.org/issues/climate-energy-natural-resources
- Global Democracy www.lwv.org/our-work/other-policy-work/global-democracy
- Health Care www.lwv.org/our-work/other-policy-work/health-care

Your League membership makes you a member of not only the Rochester but also the NYS and US Leagues. Please plan to participate – the League speaks for you!

From the President

2012 is a Presidential Election Year. The LWV/RMA is looking forward to a very active year of voter registration drives, get-out-the-vote campaigns and lobbying in Albany. This page of the Voter lists LWNYS legislative priorities. Go to lwny.org for more details, watch for e-blasts on pending bills and be ready to call your representatives when our issues are being voted on.

The League of Women Voters has earned a reputation for well researched, well thought out and well written nonpartisan positions. Our long standing positions on redistricting, health care, clean air and water, and local development corporations will be topics of conversations this election year. You can find our position papers at lwny.org and lwny.org. Many groups in the Rochester area ask us to speak on these issues and in the coming year we'll see a very busy schedule.

With regret, the LWV/RMA Board accepted Judy Dresnack's resignation as Secretary. Her family and teaching responsibilities do not presently allow her the time to continue her service. We thank her for her years of active participation in LWV/RMA and look forward to working with her in the future.

The LWV/RMA Nominating Committee, chaired by past President Sally Brown, has begun the process of selecting a slate of Directors and Officers for 2012-2014. President, Vice-President, Secretary and five Directors will be elected May 29, 2012. Please let members of the committee, Sally Brown, Brian Valenti, Gin Busack, Lois Winterkorn and Julie Johnson know if you are willing to serve a two year term in any leadership position. Sally can be reached at 671-6335. The league has training for new Directors and veteran leaders in Rochester are always willing to give a helping hand.

Katherine Smith, *President, LWV/RMA.*

What is a Shoebox?

As the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) fund distribution program does not provide for the direct release of federal funds to counties, in the overall scope of compliance with HAVA, a separate program needed to be created to enable the reimbursement of county funds that were expended in the name of either implementing HAVA, or furthering the goals and objectives of HAVA. For the purchase of privacy booths, the New York State Board of Elections created a Privacy Booth Reimbursement Program.

The purchase of other products and services related to the overall HAVA project which were not part of the vendor contracts themselves, needed to be accommodated. Thus an additional program was created and named Submission of HAVA Operations Expenses by Boards of Election. This program became known as the SHOEBOX program. The SHOEBOX Program expires 3/31/14 or when there are no HAVA funds remaining in the county's specific HAVA allocations.

From LWNYS State Board Report.

Steps To A Better New York 2012 LWNYS Legislative Agenda

Based on the responses we had from local leagues with suggestions for the 2012 legislative agenda, and consideration of both resources and legislative opportunities for the next year, the State Board adopted the following as the League's 2012 Legislative Agenda.

• Election Reform

Improve election processes to extend, encourage and protect voting, including paperless and Election Day registration, better ballot design, improved polling place management/ poll worker training, and measures to ensure the integrity of all ballots.

• Campaign Finance Reform

Support lower contribution limits, increased disclosure and public financing. In particular, support stronger and effective campaign finance enforcement with increased civil and criminal penalties for violations.

• Other Government Positions

Support structural reform to legislative redistricting; support effective ethics enforcement and open and transparent government processes; monitor impact of the property tax cap on localities and schools.

• Health Care

Support affordable and effective health care for all New Yorkers.

• Natural Resources

Support protection and management of New York's natural resources in the public interest.

• Other League Positions

The League also has positions on the Judiciary, State Finances, and Social Policy under which we can and do take action.

For more information on League positions, go to www.lwny.org and click on Advocacy Areas, then Impact on Issues.

If you know a league member who is not receiving their Voter by email, please tell that person to send their email address to:

pr@lwny-rma.org



Battery Reminder!

On December 5, 2011, a NYS law went into effect that made it illegal to dispose of rechargeable batteries in regular trash. Retailers that sell batteries are required to maintain recycling boxes for rechargeable batteries. This includes batteries for cameras, laptops, cell phones, rechargeable tools and appliances, etc. The law covers most rechargeable batteries using nickel-cadmium, sealed lead, lithium ion or nickel hydride and rechargeable alkaline batteries. Plain alkaline or zinc batteries may be disposed in the regular trash.

References: Monroe County.gov/electronics recycling and 12/2/11 Democrat & Chronicle.

League Happenings

Naturalization ceremonies for 2011 ended for this year on December 8th. Lois Winterkorn welcomed the new candidates at the Monroe County Office Building at 10 am. Sheila Abeling represented the League at the 1 pm ceremony at the Federal Building.

We have had a wonderful 2011, welcoming new citizens at various ceremonies in the county. These League volunteers have helped us meet our commitment with registering new citizens to vote: Barbara Hendry, Mimi Wilson, Marcia Eisenberg, Kathy Farrar, Lois Winterkorn, Sue Dambrowski, Beth Feldman, Kay Saunders, Joan Rosenthal, Sheila Abeling. Thank you!!!

On November 8th, Election Day, the League opened absentee ballots. A special thank you goes out to these people for helping us with this: Rod Vane, Sarah Liebschutz, Chris Burleigh, Barb Grosh, Barb Hendry, Lois Winterkorn, Kay Saunders, Shirley Eberly, Katherine Smith and Sheila Abeling.

The Fair Elections Committee of 2011 had a successful campaign. Between the Primary Election and the General Election, there were ten complaints heard by the Committee. The League and TIAR feel that we need to continue our campaign into 2012 to encourage candidates to run positive, issue oriented campaigns. Special and heartfelt thanks to our Committee members who volunteered their time this year: Jim Morris (Chairperson), Ralph Esposito, Lois Giess, Channing Philbrick, Kay Wallace, John Curran, Tom Frey, Jim Peters, Jim Turner, Tracy Logel and Sue Roberts.

The League is in the process of preparing a 2012 **Who Represents You**. Each year, with a grant from The Rochester Community Foundation, we are able to print a user friendly brochure for all citizens in Monroe County. This valuable brochure is a guide to your elected officials. We hope to have it ready for you soon.

Sheila Abeling, *VP Voter Services*



Next Year is Here!

There are quite a few openings for next year's LWV/RMA Board and the Nominating Committee is meeting in January to start the search. To paraphrase John Kennedy, ask not what the League can do for you, but what can you do for the League! The members of the Nominating Committee are: Sally Brown, Brian Valenti, Gin Busak, Lois Winterkorn, and Julie Johnson. Our task is to find members to fill the following positions:

President, 2012-2014
 Vice President, 2012-2014
 Secretary, 2012-2013 (finishing term)
 Five Directors

Anyone who has an interest in serving the League in one of these positions or has ideas about members that might be mentored for the Board in the future, please get in touch with me.

Sally Brown at 671-6335.

No, Special Interest Money Shouldn't Dominate Election 2012!

UPDATED December 01, 2011 by Elisabeth MacNamara

The U.S. House of Representatives voted this week to do away with one of the most effective deterrents to campaign finance corruption our nation has relied on since the Watergate scandal of the 1970s.

The legislation (HR 3463), proposed by Representative Gregg Harper (R MS), will repeal the presidential public financing system and terminate the Election Assistance Commission, a federal agency set up following the failed 2000 Presidential election to improve how we run our elections.

If we look at the scary developments in the 2012 elections so far, it is not hard to find the dominance of special interest money in the form of bundlers, Super PACs and the like. Shouldn't we be trying to repair the public financing system to keep our candidates from being indebted to deep-pocketed spenders right out of the gate? Also, unfortunately, elections in our country are still not well-administered, and we are concerned that many states and localities are not doing a good job ensuring federally-protected voting rights.

Let us not go back to the 2000 election but go forward, improving each election over the last. We know what needs to be done; now let us devote the resources to what should be done. The legislation is based on an ideological belief that there is no campaign finance corruption and that elections systems are just fine, thank you very much. In other words, this is a bill based in the sponsor's imagination and not reality.

For more information go to: www.lwv.org/tags/presidential-public-financing.

Report on Vote 411

Leagues took advantage of the voter guide system of www.VOTE411.org to post information about the candidates running for office and ballot issues. The www.Vote411.org website covered 535 races in New York State and 1032 candidates.

Here's a summary of how it went in Monroe County:

Races: 118 Candidates: 216

Candidates for whom I had no email address at all: 9

	Participated	Didn't Participate	Total
Democrats	46	41	87
Republicans	6	119	125
Total	52	160	212

Utilization

City	Visits	Pages/visit	Avg. time on site	% new visits
Rochester	819	9.75	3:22	76.68%
Pittsford	76	10.43	2:44	90.79%
Webster	65	7.54	2:17	81.54%
East Rochester	59	10.56	2:44	84.75%
Henrietta	55	12.22	3:16	72.73%
Fairport	53	10.83	3:54	56.6%
North Greece	46	5.33	1:21	80.43%
Honeyoye Falls	24	14.75	2:17	100%
Hilton	17	9.41	2:27	100%
Total Monroe County	1,214			
New York City	2,939			
Albany	574			
Buffalo	441			
Saratoga Springs	402			
New York State	12,292			



Statewide Monroe County is only about 4% of registered voters, yet we were around 10% of those who utilized Vote 411, so I think we did a fair job for the first time out.

Question Sets Presented to Participating Candidates

County Legislature

- What are your top 2 or 3 priorities for local economic development? Why?
- What are your budget priorities - where would you cut and by how much and where would you increase?
- Local Development Corporations (LDCs) appear to be employed to avoid some of the transparency provisions governing local government, including laws governing meetings, financial reporting and procurement. They have special powers that allow them to obtain property from municipalities without appraisal or bidding. Do you believe that LDCs are being used properly in Monroe County? Do you see a need for changes?

District Attorney

- What are your priorities for the office of the district attorney?
- How should the public defender be appointed?

Report on Vote 411 (cont'd)

Superintendents of Highways

What are your priorities for your department? Do you see the need to change budget line items?

Judicial Races

Candidate's Statement

Rochester City Council

- What are the most important issues the City Council currently faces?
- Do you believe the mayor should appoint the Superintendent of Schools? Why or why not?

Rochester School Board

- What are the top 2 or 3 priorities for the Rochester City School District? Why?
- Do you believe the mayor should appoint the Superintendent of Schools? Why or why not?

Town Supervisor

What are your top 2 or 3 priorities for the town and why?

Town Clerk

What do you see as the top priorities for the town clerk's office?

Barbara Grosh, Director of Action

Sunshine Corner

IRONDEQUOIT TOWN BOARD 10/18/11

A resolution was adopted calling for a public hearing on the matter of an update for the Town Comprehensive Plan. A resolution was adopted authorizing Town Supervisor to take legal action against Bersin Properties, LLC to enforce the rights of the town under the payment in lieu of tax agreement re the Medley Center.

POSSIBLE LEAGUE ISSUE: A member of the public commented on the site walk to the Legacy Project. She stated that members of the public who were present during the walk were not allowed to ask questions; only Board members were allowed to ask questions. She felt that it was a violation of Sunshine Laws.

POSSIBLE LEAGUE ISSUE: There continues to be concern over the financial support given to Sea Breeze Water Authority by the Town. Certain members of the public stated that the Town cannot loan money to a public corporation; Sea Breeze Water Authority is not a town entity and the loan was incorrect. Town Supervisor D'Aurizio is waiting for a financial report.

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE 10/11/11

All resolutions were passed unanimously.

After the resolutions were passed there were some heated exchanges among the members of the legislature.

Rep. Paul Haney made a proposal that Upstate Telecommunications, Inc. be investigated. Per roll call vote along party lines that proposal was defeated, 12-16. Rep. Haney said the Democratic Caucus sent many questions to the administration regarding Upstate Telecommunications, Inc on 10/6/11. The county administration stated that they were still working on a response and that there were many questions presented and that discussion was out of order.

Rep. Ted O'Brien and Rep. Haney asked when the 2012 budget information would be available. Discussion was declared out of order and President Jeffrey Adair stated that the legislature has the date the County Executive will reveal budget information.

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE 11/15/11

A public hearing on the Monroe County Annual Budget for 2012 and Establishing 2012 Monroe County Classification, Compensation and Salary Schedule for Monroe County Employees is set for Dec. 8 at 5:35 pm before the Ways and Means Committee.

All resolutions were passed unanimously.

Again there were heated exchanges among the members of the Leg.

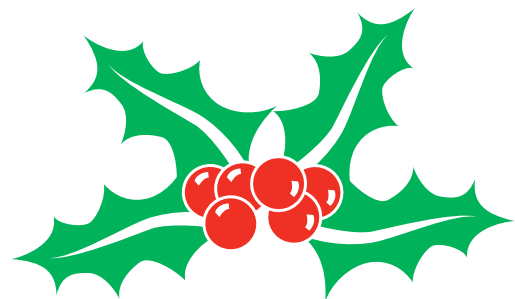
Rep. Vincent Esposito questioned why the minority members of the legislature had not received an invitation to participate in the ethics training presented by the county. He noted that all members of the majority had received the training. A Human Resource representative stated that all members of the legislature were authorized to take the course and that the minority should go to the site and they would be able to take the course.

Rep. Haney once again asked about the questions sent to the administration regarding Upstate Telecommunications, Inc. They were informed that the administration was working on their response and expected it would take several weeks to be completed.

HENRIETTA TOWN BOARD 11/16/11

Meeting held in an open and respectful manner per LWV observer; six members of the public spoke about their concerns regarding a proposed code limiting the number of unrelated people who may live in one residence. Also, the Town authorized the purchase of land at 3850 E. Henrietta Rd., currently known as Executive South Family Golf and Recreation Center.

Elaine Schmidt, *Observer Corps Chair*





Coming Events!



January

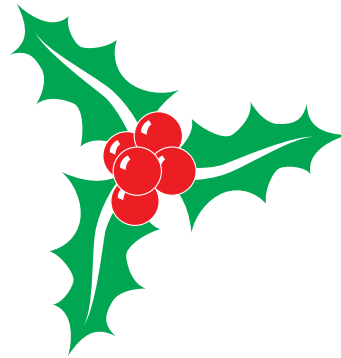
- 5** Local Government Committee, 10:00 am
- 6** Membership Committee, 1:00 pm
- 9** Nominating Committee, 6:00 pm
- 12** Increasing Voter Participation, 7:00 pm
- 19** Board Meeting, 2:00 pm
- 23** Nominating Committee, 6:00 pm

February

- 2** Local Government Committee, 10:00 am
- 3** Membership Committee, 1:00 pm
- 6** Voter Deadline
- 9** Program Planning, 11:00 am
- 16** Board Meeting, 2:00 pm



Dorothy Borgus, Moderator for Town Board Candidates for the Penfield Green Initiative and Robyn Miller, Penfield Green Initiative



Wisconsin Senator Lena Taylor at Making Democracy Work Luncheon



Making Democracy Work Luncheon



Gaynelle Wethers at Making Democracy Work Luncheon

Board meets at 2:00 pm on the third Thursday of each month.

Local Government meets at the Brighton Town Hall, Stage Conference Room. For details, call Beth Keigher 271-6694.

Membership Committee meets at Brighton Town Hall - Stage Room at 1:00 pm, first Friday of each month. For details, call Gin Busack 467-6131

10:00 am Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Monroe County Office Building, 39 W. Main St.

1:00 pm Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Federal Court House at 100 State Street

Forums are open to the public. Calendar information subject to change.

Board meetings of the LWV/RMA are open to membership.

For more complete information, consult our website at www.LWV-RMA.org, call 262-3730 or e-mail us at LWV/RMA@frontiernet.net

The Kyoto Climate Treaty

On November 28, 2011, diplomats around the world gathered in Durban, South Africa to determine the future of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to reduce emissions of climate changing greenhouse gases. 191 states and the European Union have signed and ratified the Kyoto Protocol. The first commitment period expires at the end of 2012. There were major problems with the Protocol. The United States refused to ratify the agreement; as a result our emissions (along with other non-signers) were not covered by the pact. Meanwhile, China has become the largest emitter of carbon dioxide; however, since it is considered a developing nation under the Kyoto Protocol, it (along with other developing nations) is not obligated to reduce emissions. Developing nations see the problem as one created by the industrialized nations who should assume responsibility. Meanwhile, participating industrialized nations are unhappy with the situation. On December 12th, Canada withdrew from the Kyoto Protocol. The European Union threatens not to renew their emission reduction pledges unless all countries agree to a new treaty that would require all countries (including the US and China) to reduce emissions. Currently, the pact governs less than 20% of global emissions.

BACKGROUND:

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC) is an international environmental treaty produced at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), informally known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro from June 3rd to 14th, 1992. The objective of the treaty was to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (an effect resulting from human activity) interference with the climate system. The treaty itself set no mandatory limits on greenhouse gas emissions for individual countries and contains no enforcement mechanisms. Instead, the treaty provided for updates (called "protocols") that would set mandatory emission limits. The principal update is the Kyoto Protocol, which has become much better known than the UNFCCC itself.

For more information go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/kyoto_protocol.

Jane Schmitt, *VOTER Editor*

Lobby Day 2012

January 18
Come Join Us!

The League of Women Voters of NYS will hold its annual Lobby Day on January 18, 2012. All members are invited to join us in Albany to learn about the League's positions, tour the Capitol, watch the Assembly or Senate in action, and possibly meet some key legislative staffers.

The day will start at 11:00 am with a workshop on how we develop our positions, what are our positions, what are the key issues this year, and how members can participate in the legislative process. After a short lunch, attendees will be given a tour of the Capitol and may stay to watch the legislative sessions (they are scheduled to be in session on this day, but no guarantees) and meet key staffers. The workshop, tours and introductions will be led by LWVNYS Vice President for Issues and Advocacy, Sally Robinson, and LWVNYS Legislative Director, Barbara Bartoletti.

The day is designed for any League members interested in becoming more active in our advocacy agenda or just interested in learning about our advocacy work. We cannot provide reimbursement for travel expenses, but we can arrange overnight stays at League members' homes, if people are interested. We will also arrange hotel accommodations, at your own expense, in Albany if you prefer that.

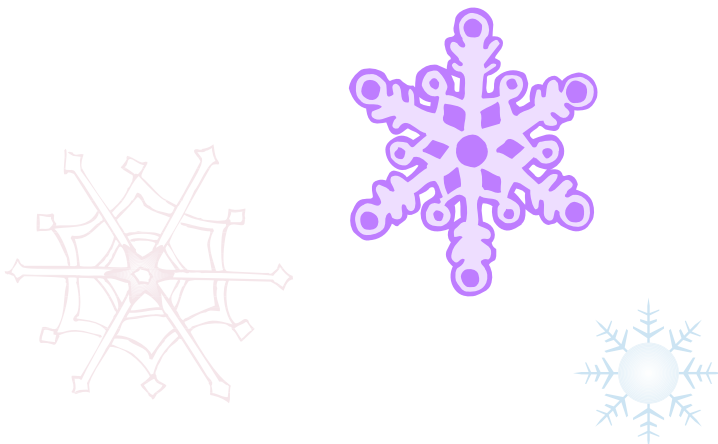
Come join the fun and see how you can make your voice heard in Albany!

If you want to register for Lobby Day 2012, please email Katrina at the state League office katrina@lwvny.org by Jan. 6 and let her know if you need overnight accommodations.

Welcome New Members!

Beth Feldman
75 Sylvan Glen
Fairport, NY 14450

Catherine L. Phelps
129 Olympia Dr.
Rochester, NY 14615





**Rochester/Metro
League of Women Voters**

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Rochester VOTER

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League of Women Voters/Rochester Metropolitan Area.

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- Sheila Abeling**
VP Voter Services
- John Schmitt**
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- Chris Burleigh**
VOTER Layout & Production

**March-April VOTER
Deadline is February 6!**



Goals of the League of Women Voters:

- To encourage informed citizen participation in government and politics
- To influence public policy through education and advocacy

Join the League Today!



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Check Amount: _____

Level of Membership: _____

Please send this form and your check payable to
League of Women Voters/RMA to:
LWV/RMA
PO Box 10573
Rochester, NY 14610

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

Individual/Associate	\$.75
Household	\$105
Susan B. Anthony/Frederick Douglass	\$150
Carrie Chapman Catt	\$200
Student (full-time/under 25)	\$.25
Low income, call office	Sliding \$cale