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. Non-citizens and those under 18 can be associate members.

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SEPTEMBER FORUM:
The Upcoming Elections

Are the issues being obscured by media focus on the personalities of the two major presidential candidates? What about the races that most affect us day-to-day? And what issues matter this year?

Join the discussion of these questions and others

Thursday, September 22
7:00 P.M.

Peace Theater in the Arts Center
Nazareth College
(parking in Lots A or B)

Presentation by

Dr. Timothy Kneeland, Chair and Professor of History and Political Science, Nazareth College

Q/A to follow the presentation.

Event co-sponsored by LWV-RMA and the National Council of Jewish Women.
Presidents’ Corner

Dear League Members,

The summer heat continues but the days are already getting shorter – it’s almost fall, and the League is in high gear!

There’s so much coming up this month. Here’s a brief overview:

On September 2, First Fridays resume at I-Square in Irondequoit. If you haven’t made time to stop by between 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. (or so), do consider making this your first visit. We feel certain it won’t be your last.

The Fair Election Practices Campaign is well underway (thanks to our new coordinator, Lynda Garner Goldstein). The Signing Ceremony will be held Wednesday, September 7, at noon at the County Office Building. If you’re able, please attend to show support for this important initiative.

Our first monthly forum of this new program year will be held at Nazareth College’s Peace Auditorium on Thursday, September 22, at 7:30 P.M. Dr. Timothy Kneeland will offer insight on the upcoming election. Be sure it’s on your calendar!

Also on the 22nd, the Rochester Area Community Foundation Philanthropy Celebration Luncheon will be held at 11:30 A.M. at the Convention Center. RACF funds our popular “Who Represents You” brochure. If you’re free for lunch, please sign up on our homepage (www.lwv-rma.org).

We’ll be celebrating National Voter Registration Day with the Susan B. Anthony Museum and House again this year, on Saturday, September 27, by registering voters at the house and canvassing the neighborhood.

Book Club will meet on Tuesday, September 27, discussing My Life on the Road by Gloria Steinem.

In addition, candidates for offices across the county are responding to our VOTE411 questionnaire. This wonderful resource offers detailed information on polling sites, ballots, and candidates. Visit Vote411.org often, and spread the word!

Please take note of all the voter registration events scheduled in September and October – most impressive! If you have time to volunteer, there are many different ways to help. Contact Gin Busack at ginbusack@aol.com for info.

In Board news, Mary Myers and Ernest DuBois have been appointed to one-year terms as members at-large. Welcome!

Finally, it’s time to pay our dues – literally! Don’t check your mailbox, though – we’ll be emailing a letter this month to as many members as possible, saving money and trees.

Thank you for all you do to keep our League in the forefront of voter registration, education and advocacy activities in the Rochester Metro Area. We are Making Democracy Work for All!

In League,

Mary Hussong-Kallen
mmhk@rochester.rr.com or 585-729-5193

Voter discrimination law overturned, as sought by LWV

A federal appeals court has sided with the LWV lawsuit against the state of North Carolina and overturned one of the worst voter-discrimination laws in the entire country.

This is an overwhelming victory—not just for the League but, far more important, the hundreds of thousands of voters in North Carolina whose right to vote had been imperiled by the new law.

The court barred North Carolina from requiring photo IDs and ordered the state to restore a week of early voting and pre-registration and maintain same-day registration and out-of-precinct voting. In finding that the new law would disproportionately impact communities of color, the judges noted in their decision that “we can only conclude that the North Carolina General Assembly enacted the challenged provisions of the law with discriminatory intent.”

Chris Carson, president of the League of Women Voters applauded that statement: “We are grateful to the Court of Appeals for seeing this bill for what it was: a race-based, chilling attempt to silence the voices of eligible voters.”

The North Carolina law was one of many passed in states across the country shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court gutted the heart of the Voting Rights Act back in 2013. Friday’s decision was the third major victory for voters’ rights in recent weeks, following similar decisions against anti-voter laws in Wisconsin and Texas.

Jeanette Senecal
LWVUS Senior Director, Elections and e-Democracy
September Forum: The Upcoming Elections

Are the issues being obscured by the media focus on the personalities of the candidates at the top of the two main parties’ slates? What about the down-ballot races – the ones that affect our day-to-day lives the most? And what are the issues that matter to us this year?

On Thursday, September 22, the League and the National Council of Jewish Women will co-sponsor a forum led by Dr. Timothy Kneeland, focusing on these and other important questions as we prepare to cast our votes on November 8.

Dr. Kneeland is Chair and Professor of History and Political Science at Nazareth College. He has been teaching and writing on American national, state and local politics for three decades and provides political analysis for local media. His publications include studies of Presidents and Radio, Millard Fillmore, Franklin Roosevelt, and George H.W. Bush. He recently completed a reference book on social policy differences between Democrats and Republicans (June 2016) and has a study of Richard Nixon’s natural disaster policy under consideration at Cornell University Press. Many will recall the excellent League forum he moderated last year, examining the age-old question, “Why Don’t We Vote?”

This forum is the first collaboration between the League and the NCJW, but we hope it’s opened a door to future projects. We have several members in common, and we share many goals and activities.

As always, check your email for a reminder – and an announcement on Dr. Kneeland’s pre-forum appearance on “Connections with Evan Dawson” on WXXI 1370AM.

See you at the Peace Theater in the Arts Center at Nazareth College (parking in lots A or B) on Thursday, September 22, at 7:00 P.M.

Design for Democracy
Designing Change

A TALK BY MARCIA LAUSEN

Tuesday, September 27 at 4:45 P.M.
RIT University Gallery, Level 2, Booth Hall

Use Parking Lot F

Free and open to the public

Using her work in election design reform for the AIGA Design for Democracy initiative, as well as case studies from Studio/lab and the University of Illinois at Chicago, School of Design, Marcia Lausen will demonstrate ways to harness the power of design to bring about positive change.

Design for Democracy is a project of AIGA, the professional association for design. Design for Democracy applies design tools and thinking to increase civic participation by making interactions between the U.S. government and its citizens more understandable, efficient and trustworthy. Since 2000, Design for Democracy’s ballot and election design project has worked to make voting easier and more accurate.

Every four years AIGA partners with the League of Women Voters to invite AIGA members to create nonpartisan posters and videos to inspire the American public to vote. You can see posters from this year’s Get Out the Vote campaign at http://www.aiga.org/get-out-the-vote and read more about the Get Out the Vote campaign and see past posters at http://www.aiga.org/vote/. Just a warning – looking at the posters can be addictive! Recalling that old potato chip commercial, “Bet you can’t click on just one!”

As part of the LWV-AIGA partnership, LWV-RMA will register voters at the event.

Judy Weinstein, LWV-RMA/AIGA liaison
LWVUS Convention exhilarating and exhausting

The LWVUS biennial Convention took place in Washington, D.C. from June 16 through June 19. Gin Busack and Judy Weinstein attended Convention as LWV-RMA delegates and Georgia DeGregorio attended as a Membership and Leadership Development (MLD) coach.

Convention can be summed up in two words – exhilarating and exhausting:

• Exhilarating because we spent three days in a meeting room with close to 700 League members from across the country all dedicated to Making Democracy Work for All and to having a convention where everyone got to present her (and, in some cases, his) views while everyone else listened and reevaluated her own position.

• Exhausting because days began with workshops and caucuses at 7:15 A.M., went through working lunches to workshops and caucuses that ended at 9:45 P.M.

The three of us attended 11 different workshops on topics such as voting barriers for transgender people, the League and the United Nations, the effects of climate change on our water resources, and a Q&A session regarding the proposed budget.

The Convention decision that will have the most impact on our local League is the bylaws change expanding full membership to persons who are at least 16 years of age, instead of the previous requirement of at least 18 years of age. Now, when League members present voting information to high school students they will be able to say “Learn about democracy first-hand – join the League”. Consider making a gift of League membership to your children or grandchildren as a 16th birthday present (student membership is only $25)!

The Convention adopted the national program of Making Democracy Work for All. Several resolutions were approved, including:

• strong support of statehood for Washington, D.C.

• support for restoration of funding for gun violence research at the Centers for Disease Control

• three resolutions related to environmental protection.

Delegates were reminded of the importance of never saying the League is nonpartisan without also saying the League never supports or opposes candidates or parties.

Recognition of various League leaders during the final plenary session included a shout-out to Georgia DeGregorio of North Carolina for her guidance as its MLD coach.

Finally, we are pleased to report that there will be no increase in the PMP (per member payment), which determines how much the local League pays the national League!

Gin Busack, Judy Weinstein, and Georgia DeGregorio – convention attendees
Sunshine Corner

IRONDEQUOIT TOWN BOARD, 7/21/2016, PER TOWN OF IRONDEQUOIT WEBSITE:

Two vacant properties in town were addressed. Owners of both properties have responded to the town’s order for demolition saying that they will correct the unsafe conditions. The town has given a short stay on the demolitions pending immediate corrections on the properties. (To view the full minutes from this and other meetings, please click here: http://www.irondequoit.org/)

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE, 7/12/2016, PER MONROE COUNTY WEBSITE:

COMIDA appointees were approved by the County Legislature along party lines. The annual work program for the Monroe County Legislature Agenda/Charter Committee was approved along party lines as well, with most of the minority voting in the negative.

A public hearing on resolution 251 entitled “Approving Monroe Community College’s 2016-2017 Operating Budget” was held on August 9. (To view the full minutes from this and other meetings, please click here: http://www2.monroecounty.gov)

WEBSTER TOWN BOARD MEETING 7/7/2016:

THIS MEETING WAS OBSERVED BY LOIS WINTERKORN WHO NOTED NO LWV ISSUES BEING DISCUSSED.

(To view the full minutes from these and other meetings, please click here: http://www.ci.webster.ny.us)

Elaine Schmidt, Sunshine Corner Chair
e.schmidt8@frontier.com

Amazon Smile

The state League has joined a program to help raise funds. AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support the state League every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com you’ll find the same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a 0.5% of the purchase price to the state League’s Education Foundation. To shop at Amazon Smile, simply go to smile.amazon.com instead of just amazon.com and search for the League of Women Voters of NYS as your selected charitable organization.

FEPC Up and Running!
Support our Fair Elections Practices Campaign effort.

The 2016 Fair Elections Practices Campaign (FEPC) has been up and running since August 15. Once again, Jim Morris will be chairing the Hearing Panel and will be accepting complaints regarding the Primary until September 12 from all State Senate, State Assembly, County Clerk, Town Supervisor and Town Board candidates.

Complaints will be accepted for the General Election until Noon on November 7.

Signed pledges have already started to roll in. The official signing ceremony will be at County Office Building at Noon on September 7.

Come support our Fair Election Campaign effort!

Lynda Garner Goldstein, FEPC Chairperson
lyndagoldstein@gmail.com
VOTER SERVICES

BREAKING NEWS:
The New York State Board of Elections has ruled that a person no longer must indicate sex on a voter registration form. Questions 6 (phone number) and 7 (e-mail address) have been optional. On new voter registration forms, Question 5 (sex designation) is now optional.

VOTER REGISTRATION STATISTICS:
For the first two quarters of 2016, our League was responsible for 980 voter registrations through our work with naturalized citizens (328), high school students (150), colleges (224) and our community collaborations (278). Our efforts in July added an additional 409, bringing our total through July to 1389. These numbers do not include those with whom our volunteers met, responding to a multitude of questions and issues while urging them to vote.

SUMMER 2016 INITIATIVES:
It’s been a busy summer with our volunteers working extra hard. Our efforts with other community organizations have really borne fruit.
Our volunteers through Rochester Voter Alliance touched our community 64 times in this summer – the equivalent of 128 hours of service principally at the Anthony Jordan, Brown Square and Woodward Health Centers and at the Tops locations at Upper Falls Boulevard and Lake Avenue.
Our Education Study Group met with students at East High School and Aquinas/Nazareth Academy just before the end of the school year, presenting our PowerPoint on the history and importance of our vote, and registering 85 eligible seniors. Our college initiative took us to RIT as part of their “Lighting the Way” program for incoming freshman women.
We also strengthened our community ties, growing our relationship with our old friends and building new ones. The summer found us sharing registration drives with Finger Lakes Donor Recovery, Mothers Against Gun Violence, St. John Baptist Church, the Beechwood Neighborhood Association/Teen Empowerment, The Susan B. Anthony Museum & House, The Finger Lakes Division of Self Advocacy/New York Developmental Disabilities, the American Red Cross and, for the first time, the PRIDE Fest.
None of this could have happened without our volunteers who make the League strong: Georgia DeGregorio, Ida Holloran, Betty Schaeffer, Scott Forsyth, Kathy Mock, Mary Myers, Donna Eggleston, Beth Feldman, Barbara Grosh, Elaine Schmidt, Gail Wilder, Liz & Pierce Webb, Lois Winterkorn, Hasana Martin, Dayle Bird, Beth Feldman, Chris Pryor, Judy Sternberg, Peggy Dempsey, Rachel Grosh, Ann Carmody, Camille Clayton, Kathy Smith, Joan After, and Judy Weinstein.

COMING EVENTS: IT’S NOT OVER YET AND WE NEED YOUR HELP!!
Election Local 1635: 9/9/16
Burmese Refugees: 9/10/16, 10:00 A.M. – 2:00 P.M., Lake Avenue Baptist Church
Arnett Library voter registration: 9/12/16, 2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Senior civics presentation: 9/13/16, 12:00 P.M. – 1:00 P.M., Lifespan/Maplewood YMCA
RIT Community Service Fair: 9/15/16, 11:00 A.M. -1:00 P.M.
Constitution Day: 9/16/16
National Voter Registration Day: 9/27/16, 12:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M. Susan B. Anthony House
AIGA at RIT’s Gallery Vignelli Center for Design Arts, Booth Hall: 9/27/16, 4:45 P.M.
Rochester Psychiatric Center: 10/5/16, speaking engagement time TBA
Center for Disabilities Candidate Forum: tentative 10/12/16
FR=EE Summit Workshop: 10/15/16
Rochester Federation of Women’s Clubs: 10/13/16, 12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.
Rochester Voter Alliance: 6/1/16 -9/30/16, multiple locations & times (at convenience of our volunteers)

RED CROSS EVENTS:
9/11 Commemorative: 9/7/16, Doubletree/Henrietta, 11:00 A.M. - 7:00 P.M.
Nazareth College: 9/14/16, 10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
SUNY Geneseo: 9/20/16, 10:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.
Mayor Warren commemorative at Keeler Street Apts.: 9/17/16, 10:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.
FingerLakes Donor Recovery
Monroe Community College: 9/19/16, 10:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.
Carter Street Recreation Center: 9/29/16, 11:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Whatever your passion, we have a place and a need for your help. Voter registration is not difficult and we typically work in teams.
Sign-up is easy…Just call or e-mail:
Gin Busack
585 467 6131 or ginbusack@aol.com
Naturalization Report

Thank you to Kay Saunders and Katherine Smith for attending the July 4th Oath Ceremony at the Genesee Country Museum. There were 41 new citizens naturalized that day, among them were twin boys, about the age of 1. A few days prior to the ceremony, I saw them at a local store shopping with their parents and grandmother for tuxedos. When I saw them being chased in the store, half dressed, I asked the salesgirl if they were in a wedding, and was told that they were being naturalized. Of course, I had to approach them and share what I knew about the ceremony. Once the parents knew what I did, their faces lit up. So excited and proud! The tuxes were adorable! If you haven’t attended a ceremony, please do so one day. It is so heart-warming.

On July 14th, Marcia Eisenberg met 50 new candidates for citizenship at the Monroe County Office Building.

The Monroe County Office Building hosted an Oath Ceremony on August 11th. Betty Schaeffer welcomed 50 new citizens. Also on that date at 1:00 P.M., at the Federal Building, 50 other candidates for citizenship were naturalized. Lois Winterkorn met them.

On August 26th, at 11:00 A.M. at the Seneca Falls Women’s Rights Museum, 20 more candidates were naturalized.

All are welcome to attend the Naturalization Ceremonies at all locations. Check the schedule on the League website, lwv-rma.org.

NEED TO ENCOURAGE VOTER REGISTRATION AND VOTING

As you are all aware, we are in the middle of an election year. It is vital that all eligible voters get out to vote this year. The next Primary Election is on September 13th and the General Election is on November 8th. Please encourage all you meet to be sure that they are registered to vote. Also, the League will open absentee ballots for both elections. We will need League volunteers. Contact me at sheiler162007@gmail.com or 585-223-6819 if you are interested in volunteering.

Sheila Abeling
Election Services

Pride Fest in July

Close to ten League members enjoyed the beautiful weather and mellow crowds at the Pride Fest on July 17 - 18 at Cobbs Hill Park. We registered to vote more than 50 people.

Equally important, we were able to share the League message about how important it is to vote in November. For those who were not sure about who was running in their district, we shared the flyer on Vote411.org and explained how to use it.

Georgia DeGregorio

New York Women’s Suffrage Centennial Conference

Friday, October 7, 2016
Holiday Inn Seneca Falls in Waterloo
9:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
Continue the conversation started last year as we prepare for the 2017 centennial of women’s right to vote in New York State.

SPECIAL PRE-CONFERENCE TOURS
October 6
Tour Auburn and Seneca Falls Historic sites including the Tubman Home, Seward House Museum, Seneca Falls Historical Society Museum, National Women’s Hall of Fame and Women’s Rights National Historical Park. Additional Information available soon.

Contact: info@nychtn.com or 315.521.3985 with questions
$55.00 for Network Members
$65.00 for Non-Members
To register, go to http://nychtn.com/rsvp/signup.php

Democracy is not a spectator sport.
Tag! You’re It!
Studies, Studies, and More Studies

Your Poverty Committee has remarked on how many studies have been developed...not only in this past year, but over the last decade...all analyzing and projecting ideas to address the high rate of poverty in our City of Rochester. The following is a list of the recommendations that were published in May 2016 from a survey initiated by the City of Rochester’s OISI (Organization of Innovation and Strategic Initiatives).

• Respondents identify mental and behavioral health as a major barrier to employment. All subsets of the sample want more counseling services available in their neighborhood.

• Identified barriers to employment include lack of work experience, skills, and education. Respondents would like to see an increase in complimentary services offered, such as job search assistance and job placement.

• Responses were not significantly varied among [4 surveyed] neighborhoods. Variation in responses is more attributable to demographics (i.e. the low income sample).

• There is a disparity between how long renters and owners stay in their neighborhoods; renters are almost twice as likely as owners to say they would move if they could. Housing is more a priority for the low-income individuals.

• There is interest in a neighborhood-based employment vanpool program.

The Committee has developed questions with which to follow up on these key findings. Anyone interested in working with us is most welcome. Our next meeting is September 9 at 11:00 A.M. at the United Way Building, 75 College Street, Rochester.

Georgia DeGregorio, Chair, Poverty Committee

Where were you on 9/11?

Brown Bag Lunch and Conversation

Friday, October 14, 2016

11:45 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

AAUW Perkins Mansion
494 East Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607

Where were you on 9/11? Come and join a conversation about that day in 2001. Bring your lunch, scan some information and share your thoughts and impressions 15 years later. Discussion will be moderated by Beth Garver of the AAUW and Mary Myers of the LWV.

Seating is limited to 16 and this is a free event.

Register with Mary Myers at marymyers@itainc.com by 10/10/16.

Seeking LWV-RMA Treasures

Specific items we’ve heard about but cannot find include a framed picture of Susan B. Anthony, a Carrie Chapman Catt doll, books donated to build a small lending library and a pamphlet of speeches given by Carrie Chapman Catt.

If you have any of these items – or other items which keep our League history alive for coming generations – please contact us!

Gloria (585-436-4476 or gloell@rochester.rr.com)
Mary (585-637-5183 or mmhk@rochester.rr.com)
Coming Events!

**September**

2  First Friday (11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., I-Square)
7  Fair Election Practices Campaign Signing Ceremony (Noon, Monroe County Office Building)
8  Naturalization Ceremony (10:00 A.M. at Monroe County Office Building)
8  Naturalization Ceremony (1:00 P.M. at Federal Building)
8  Naturalization Ceremony (3:00 P.M. at Asbury First UMC)
22 RACF Philanthropy Celebration Luncheon (11:30 A.M., Convention Center)
22 FORUM: Upcoming Election (7:00 P.M., Peace Auditorium, Nazareth College)
27 National Voter Registration Day (12:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M., Susan B. Anthony Museum & House)

27 Book Club discussion of *My Life on the Road* by Gloria Steinem (1:00 P.M. at Greenhouse Cafe)
27 Design for Democracy: Designing Change (4:45 P.M. at Booth Hall - RIT University Gallery, Level 2)

**October**

7  First Friday (11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., I-Square)
7  NY Women’s Suffrage Centennial Conference (9:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. Holiday Inn, Seneca Falls in Waterloo)
13 Naturalization Ceremony (11:00 A.M. at Monroe County Office Building)
13 Naturalization Ceremony (1:00 P.M. at Federal Building)
13 LWV-RMA Board Meeting (3:00 P.M., Asbury First UMC)
14 Where were you on 9/11 Conversation (11:45 A.M., AAUW Perkins Mansion)

**First Fridays**

Join League colleagues for lunch or a mid-day coffee break each First Friday of the month, 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M. at I-Square, 400 Bakers Park, at Titus Avenue, Irondequoit, NY 14617

First Fridays provide us all with an opportunity to know one another better. We can informally chat with other LWV-RMA members about anything. The work we love to do is more fun when we know one another better. We hope to see you on:

- September 2
- October 7
- November 4
- December 2
- January 6
- February 3
- March 3
- April 7
- May 5
- June 2
Goals of the League of Women Voters:

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

The Voter is a monthly publication of the LWV-RMA
Editor, Judy Wadsworth
Layout/Design, Chris Burleigh

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 Scale

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

or join us online at: www.lwv-rma.org/join.php

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