

TheVOTER

Developing a LWV Federal Judiciary Position

Wednesday,
April 9, 2025

6:30 – 8:00 pm

Third
Presbyterian
Church,
4 Meigs
Street

Join the consensus process considering brief statements about the federal judiciary. Help decide which proposed parts of the position we agree on and/or want changed.



At the Judiciary meeting (above) we will go through the consensus process to consider suggested position statements about the federal judiciary. We will decide which elements of the positions we agree with and also suggest nuances or caveats we feel are important.

The list of consensus questions is long and it is important that we come prepared. Every member is encouraged to watch the [video of the town hall](#), read the [study guide about how the consensus process works](#), look at the [study questions](#) and read one or more of the background papers, links to which are found on page 3. Come prepared to give substantive input to strengthen the League's process.

[Register Here](#)

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President's Letter: What Should We Be Doing Now?

In addition to the people who have been laid off, had federal contracts canceled, or who face deportation, many others are suffering acute distress from just reading the news. I find the headlines overwhelming and part of my current self-care consists of not reading most of the articles. Personally, I can't see any big strategy for resistance. I think it's just above my pay grade. The LWVNYS and the LWVUS are offering some programming aimed at resistance. Other groups in Rochester are organizing marches, writing postcards and such. I cannot take the leadership of that level of organizing, but if you'd like to, there's room to help position the Rochester League to do more. Speak up and volunteer.

So What Do We do?

There will clearly be a huge need for litigation. The LWV will surely do its share, probably with a focus on election issues. Other organizations will carry other burdens. Therefore donations to support litigation are productive. Please join the April 9 member meeting where we'll help formulate a policy which will enable the LWVUS to lobby for federal judicial reforms. (Graphic and detail on P.1; key terms on P. 3.)

Electoral results will be important. This year, we choose local officials who will either find ways to protect our most vulnerable neighbors from the impending threats, or not. Get involved. In other parts of the country there are key elections that could flip the House, decide governorships or state supreme court seats. Writing postcards to voters is an impactful action you can take. Last year we sent postcards to states where voter purges threatened Black votes. Turnout increased 7% among those who received such postcards.

In our local League we're doing the things we always do and they are more important than ever. Vote411 is crucial to helping local voters know who is on their ballots, something that they are unlikely to learn from the news media. I hope we will succeed in organizing many candidate forums. We are also reaching out to low-turnout neighborhoods in new ways. At our outreach meeting last week LWV-RMA recruited new members working in the Lyell Otis neighborhood. Plans are under way for mobilizing voters in that area. We will work with other organizations who are using multi-pronged strategies to improve the neighborhood.

We're also making plans to work closely with groups that work with new Americans to help them become better-informed and more likely to vote. Building an informed and engaged electorate is essential in any effort to combat repression, as it has been throughout the past couple of centuries. There is a meeting on Saturday April 5 to begin this initiative. See page 3 for details.

Democracy only works when we do our part. None of us are billionaires, but we can still mobilize voters, and in the end that matters a whole lot.

Barbara Grosh President@lwv-rma.org

New Committee: Outreach to New American Voters

Apr 5, 2025, 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM, Sully Branch of the Rochester Public Library

Every month for years we have attended naturalization ceremonies and helped new American citizens register to vote. However, we've also queried the Board of Elections database and discovered that most of the people we register don't actually vote. It is time to turn that around!

You are invited to join us as we put our heads together to see how we can help new Americans feel more motivated and more prepared to vote. We will discuss ideas such as retaining voter contact information so that we can keep them informed as elections draw close, holding informational "Meet Your Ballot" sessions at agencies and congregations that serve new Americans, and more. What's your idea? We want to hear it.

The Sully Branch library has plenty of parking. We will meet in the Story Time room. No registration required. Feel free to bring friends.



Judiciary Policy Briefs

Below are the links to the policy briefs that we will discuss at the consensus meeting on the Federal judiciary. The meeting will be held at the Third Presbyterian Church (4 Meigs Street) on Wednesday, April 9th at 6:30 P.M. Please come prepared to give substantive input to strengthen the League's process. [Register Here](#)

[Key Terms for the Federal Judiciary Study](#)

[Recusal](#)

[Financial Disclosure](#)

[Representation](#)

[Judge Shopping](#)

[Shadow Docket](#)

[Judicial Ethics and Enforcement](#)

[Stare Decisis and Binding Precedent](#)

[Legitimacy and the US Supreme Court](#)

[Structural Reforms for the US Supreme Court](#)

March Naturalization Ceremonies

March was a busy month for naturalizations in Monroe County. On March 11 at the George Eastman House, 93 people were naturalized. Tamara Minter, Margret Roberts and Katherine Smith represented the League. They helped the candidates register to vote, shared information about voting and the League.

On March 18 there were two ceremonies. In the morning 42 new citizens from 27 countries became citizens at the Monroe County Office Building. David Newman and Margret Roberts were at the ceremony for the League. The afternoon ceremony was at the Federal Building. 36 were naturalized. Marilyn Rosen and Margaret Supinski helped the new citizens register to vote. Pat Willis, another LWV-RMA member, attended for the first time. You can read her impressions of the ceremony below.

As always, it is an honor to participate in these Naturalization Ceremonies. If you are interested in volunteering to help at ceremonies, please contact Sheila Abeling at sheiler162007@gmail.com.

Submitted by Sheila Abeling



Attending a Naturalization Ceremony

As a member of LWV-RMA, I attended the Naturalization Ceremony for new citizens on March 18, 2025.

Everyone who came to be sworn in, along with their friends and family members, gathered in the District Court in the Federal Building in downtown Rochester.

Candidates for citizenship renounced their previous national affiliation and then affirmed their US allegiance. Each new citizen's name and country of origin was read and the person received their Citizenship Certificate from the judge. The new citizens were from everywhere imaginable: Philippines, Canada, United Kingdom, Australia, Cameroon, Eritrea, Iraq, Mexico, Germany, Ukraine and more. I was overwhelmed to see the diversity of people who have chosen to leave their homelands and to become US citizens.

LWV-RMA volunteers participated by encouraging and assisting new voters to register.

One of the new citizens led everyone in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. This was an unexpectedly emotional moment. To my surprise, I choked up during the Pledge.

Afterward, new citizens took pictures.

Submitted by Pat Willis

Voter Services Update

The first 2025 meeting of the Voter Services team was held via zoom on February 27th.

Some team members attended a press conference held by the Board of Elections to introduce the new voting system, Express Vote XL. Reviews were favorable and the new system should help address some of the confusion often seen in navigating the ballots. The machine creates paper copies of ballots, which is a key element in an auditable system.

The Board of Elections has posted information about the new voting system including voter education posters in English and Spanish and an example of the ballot screen. To counter possible mis- and dis-information about the new system, a list of Facts vs. Myths in both English and Spanish is also posted. These materials will be added to our tabling resources. See <https://www.monroecounty.gov/elections-voting-machines> for this information.

In anticipation of fielding questions on the new system during tabling events, we are working with the BOE to organize a training session that could be attended by other organizations registering voters. We hope to schedule a Saturday in either April or May. Stay tuned for the details.

Several other suggestions were made by team members. These included venues and process improvements for voter registration, get out the vote efforts and the need for education resources for voters.

The Voter Services team is engaged and looking forward to the month ahead. We invite anyone interested in hearing more about our work to contact Deb Gordon or Cathy Kane at voterservices@lwv-rma.org.

Submitted by Deb Gordon

LWVNYS Virtual State Study Discussion

During the LWV-RMA February Mini-Retreat, materials from two Process Studies were discussed and a consensus was reached on the related Position Statements. The topics were Rank Choice Voting Non-Partisan Primaries and Voting Systems Approval. The information from that meeting will be submitted as LWV-RMA's position.

If you were unable to attend that meeting, the LWVNYS has organized a virtual discussion, question and answer session on April 30 at 7 P.M. This is not a consensus meeting; however each participant will have the opportunity to return an individual response form by May 15, 2025. You must register to attend this virtual meeting.

Registration Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/mi3gmOMKS0Kwk3oKCDZArw>



Lyell Otis Community Association Meeting

On March 12, members of LWV-RMA and the Lyell-Otis Community Association (LOCA) met to discuss how the League and LOCA could work together on various initiatives including improving voter registration and turn out. Among the attendees were Evelyn Irons, President of LOCA, and Stephanie Watson who are members of both organizations. Barbara Grosh, LWV-RMA president provided registration and voting numbers for the area's districts. Some of the ideas discussed for improving the numbers were:

- The League will provide specific information on who is registered and voting in neighborhoods. This will then be used by LOCA during "Corner Connection" events where LOCA plans to set up information tables and meet with residents.
- The League can provide door hangers for distribution by LOCA. The hangers will provide information on voting dates, locations and Vote411.
- The League can provide materials to help LOCA communicate information about the right to vote by previously convicted felons.
- The League and LOCA can work together to provide and distribute information and promote voting where people congregate such as Church related events, neighborhood grocery stores, food pantries, shelters, schools, and Laundromats.



Barbara shared that under the new LWV structure membership can be as low as \$20, and that we hoped that would allow more of the community to join. One member joined us that evening and several others expressed interest.

The group agreed that they will continue to work together to promote registering and voting in the area.

Submitted by Mary Micket

Book Group

The LWV-RMA book club met on March 20 to discuss *"Gallop toward the Sun: Tecumseh and William Henry Harrison's Struggle for the Destiny of a Nation"* by Peter Stark.

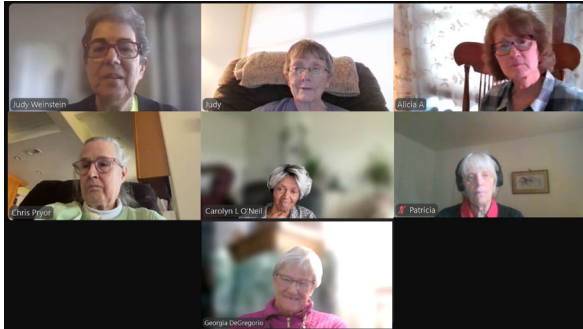
Members and non-members are welcome to participate. The group meets using Zoom on the third Thursday every other month. The remaining books in the current reading cycle are:

May 15: *"Art of Power"* by Nancy Pelosi

July 17: *"Distorting Democracy"* by Carolyn Renee Dupont

Send a note to bookclub@lwv-rma.org if you would like to attend a meeting.

Submitted by Judy Wadsworth



Join First Friday for social time at I-Square in Irondequoit at 11:30 A.M. each month. Come when you can, leave when you must. There's no agenda but we talk about everything League and discuss politics. Many great ideas originate at First Fridays and a lot of work gets done.



Calendar of LWV-RMA Upcoming Activities

The best way to be informed about various League events is to use the online calendar. You do not need to sign in to access the calendar.

The calendar is updated frequently; it is more current than a monthly newsletter can be.

On the calendar, you can click on an event to obtain information, you can add it to your personal calendar, and you can register for an event.

You can see future (or past) months' activities by easily using the < > buttons.

Access the Calendar [here](#).

PO Box 10573
Rochester, NY 14610
585-262-3730
www.LWV-RMA.org

NEXT VOTER DEADLINE:
April 15, 2025

League of Women Voters

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, political organization which encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

The League of Women Voters is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in principal and in practice.

League membership is open to any person who subscribes to the League's purposes and policies.

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

Board of Directors:

President	Barbara Grosh (23-25)
Vice President	
Treasurer	Constance Flahive (23-25)
Secretary	Michele Coxander (24-25)
Director	Cathy Kane (24-26)
Director	Tess McFarland-Porter (23-25)
Director	Mary Micket (23-25)
Director	Karen Morris (24-26)

Committee Contacts

President: Barbara Grosh
President@LWV-RMA.org

Book Club: Judy Weinstein
bookclub@LWV-RMA.org

Communication/PR:
communications@LWV-RMA.org

Naturalization: Sheila Abeling
Sheiler162007@gmail.com

Advocacy: Barb Murphy / Scott Forsyth
advocacy@LWV-RMA.org

Membership:
membership@LWV-RMA.org

Nominating: Mary Hussong-Kallen
nominations@LWV-RMA.org

Programs: Barbara Grosh
President@LWV-RMA.org

Vote411: Isobel Gillen
vote411@LWV-RMA.org

Voter Services: Deb Gordon / Cathy Kane
Voterservices@LWV-RMA.org

Join the League Today!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Check Amount: _____

Membership Level: _____

Please send this form and your check payable to the LWVUS to:

LWV-RMA,
PO Box 10573
Rochester, NY 14610

[Or join the LWV online by clicking here.](#)

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

Dues are payable to LWVUS. The link on LWV-RMA will direct you to the LWVUS site. A portion of your dues will be distributed to LWV-RMA and LWVNYS.

Suggested dues are \$75, but you may choose any amount of \$20 or more.

Choosing more than \$75 allows LWV-RMA to fund programs while subsidizing membership for those who cannot afford the full \$75.