

# TheVOTER



## September Engagement Meetings

### via Zoom

This issue is filled with ways you can help mobilize both current and future voters to help protect democracy.

We have scheduled Zoom meetings where you will be able to obtain more information about many of these activities, or bring up ideas of your own.

Please join us!

For Friday, Sept. 12 at 2pm [Register Here](#)

For Tuesday, Sept. 16 at 6:30pm [Register Here](#)

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## **President's Letter**

### **Teamwork Makes the Dream Work**

Some of my best memories in life are of working on a team that brought together very different types of people and collectively accomplished things that no single one of us had even been able to imagine beforehand. I think the LWV of the Rochester Metro Area is about to hit one of those moments.

We won an award from LWWNYS in June for fastest member growth in a large League. I was basking in the pleasure of the accomplishment when Board Member Mary Micket said, "Yes, we have a lot of members, but the same 30 people seem to show up when something needs doing." Thence was born our Engagement Drive.

How many of the wonderful new members who have paid their money and signed up can we engage in our mission-driven work? That's the goal of the LWV right now: to get 3.5% of the US population deeply engaged in defending democracy. LWV members are the natural place to start.

The board has spent a lot of time defining some jobs in ways that make it easier to sign up. We've defined the work, outlined when and how it needs to be done, and what skills are required.

- If you are a creative person with big ideas, we need you.
- If you are a worker-bee who needs a defined project with a finite commitment, we need you.
- If you are looking for meaning in your life, we need you.
- If you are outgoing, we need you.
- If you work best with spreadsheets and coffee and music on headphones, we need you.

You'll find lots of ideas for how to get involved throughout this newsletter. And on the website. And in emails. And on social media. The message is clear. We know you joined because you share our outlook. We need you. Get involved. Please join us at one of the Zoom calls in September to learn more. Register using links on Page 1.

We are perfectly happy to take money from those who just want to support us but cannot manage further involvement right now. But really, you're likely to feel better if you get involved.

Barbara Grosh

[president@lwv-rma.org](mailto:president@lwv-rma.org)

## **Programs to Ensure Voters are *Informed* Voters**

We have several programs to provide information to current and future voters. But we need more members involved to make them successful, including a Chair for each program. We have the tools but not enough hands.

If you enjoy knowing your efforts are helping voters make informed choices, please consider volunteering to join one of these efforts. Join us at one of the September Zoom calls to learn more about these opportunities. (See Page 1.)

### **1. Educational Forums Committee**

The goal is to organize 5-10 forums per year on topics relevant to the League, including broad topics about democracy and voting, as well as the many topics on which the state and national Leagues have positions. The committee will work with the LWV-RMA President to choose topics, find speakers, work out details including dates and venues / Zoom calls, and publicize the events. The work is throughout the year, and the time involved will depend on the number of team members.

### **2. Civics Education Committee**

The goal is to have a team who can provide information in various formats on topics that the public needs to understand better. Methods can include a speakers' bureau, informational flyers, webpages, and videos - both interviews and animation. We need people with a vision of what the public needs to know, writers who can make it interesting, and creative types to make it attractive. There is room for people with different types of commitments. Some people could write scripts for short videos, others could do camera work and others could do animation or editing. You can agree to do one project or a series. You could write content. This area needs a lot of volunteer energy, but it could be very fun and rewarding.

### **3. Vote411**

Before each election, we collect information from the candidates on the Vote411 website, which is a platform provided by the LWVUS. The greatest amount of work is tracking down the email addresses of candidates. This involves googling, searching social media, and sometimes tapping into our own social networks. We also write questions for the candidates for each office. Candidates input their own information on the website.

Contact: [Marla Miller](#)

### **4. Candidate Forums Committee**

The goal is to get candidates for each office to debate each other, in person or on Zoom. This requires setting up a calendar of the debates, inviting the candidates, keeping track of replies, reserving our Zoom account or a venue, preparing publicity materials, and recruiting debate moderators and timekeepers. Contacts for candidates should be available from the Vote411 team, but candidates may require repeated outreach. We have standard procedures for how debates are conducted and candidate agreement forms. Sample invitation emails are also available. The work is during the six weeks before each election in the spring and fall. The team size determines time required and the number of debates. There are usually more debates in local election years (odd years) than state election years (even years).



## Naturalization Ceremonies

In two ceremonies on August 19, we welcomed over 60 new citizens. In the morning, 42 new citizens were inducted by Monroe County Court Judge Julie Han. The Monroe County Board of Elections conducted the voter registration. LWV-RMA was represented by JoAnn Kane-DeMott. In the afternoon, Judge Frank Geraci administered the oath at the Federal Building and Congressman Joe Morelle welcomed the new citizens. LWV-RMA volunteer Margaret Supinski registered 14 new citizens.

We can always use more volunteers, so if you would like to represent LWV-RMA at a ceremony, please contact [naturalizations@lwv-rma.org](mailto:naturalizations@lwv-rma.org).

*Submitted by Margret Roberts*



## Videography: Making Information More Volunteer and Voter Friendly

LWV-RMA needs a **Videography team** to make educational videos. The team will work with committees to provide videos to be used for training of volunteers and voters, Google ads, forums and civic engagement. Some material is available in printed form, ready for conversion to video.

Some projects are as simple as trimming the beginning and end of Zoom recordings before uploading them to our YouTube channel, while others need team members willing to script videos, interview people, film the interviews, and edit them. We have access to various types of software for working with editing, and others for animating. We can help people learn to use them.

We expect 1-2 projects per month; perhaps more prior to elections.

If you enjoy trying to make a point, and if you ever enjoyed scrapbooking, you will find that this work scratches some of the same itches!

## LWV-RMA 501(c) (3) Determination Letter; Grant Manager Needed

In October 2024, LWV-RMA applied to the IRS to convert our non-profit status from a 501(c) (4) to a 501(c) (3). On July 22, 2025 the IRS issued a letter determining that LWV-RMA was reclassified as a 501(c) (3) organization effective April 25, 2025.

What this means for LWV-RMA:

- Tax deductible donations may now be made directly to LWV-RMA instead of the LWNYS Educational Fund.
- The funds held by the LWNYS Education Fund earmarked for LWV-RMA will be transferred to LWV-RMA, eliminating the need to request payments for specific expenses from the State fund.
- LWV-RMA will now be eligible to apply for grants from organizations that require 501(c)(3) status.
- The amount of money (not time) that LWV-RMA spends on lobbying for specific legislation or ballot measures must be tracked, and is limited to 20% of our total spending (which is above what we have traditionally spent). Within that limit, only 5% can be "grassroots lobbying."

Definitions and examples of Direct and Grassroots Lobbying:

- Direct Lobbying: When the League communicates with a legislator or legislative staff about a specific piece of legislation and reflects a view for or against that legislation. Specific legislation can include proposed legislation or legislation that has already been introduced in a legislative body.
  - *Example: A visit to Albany to lobby for specific legislation*  
(Note: costs would be reimbursed expenses incurred by members attending)
- Direct Lobbying: Encompasses any communication with the general public expressing a favorable or unfavorable view about a ballot initiative, referendum, bond measure, or similar procedure to be included on a ballot.
  - *Example: A flyer supporting a specific point of view regarding a ballot measure*  
(Note: cost would be expenses paid for design and printing of flyer)
- Grassroots Lobbying: Communication with the general public (including League members) that reflects a favorable or unfavorable view on specific legislation and encourages the public to contact their legislative representatives or staff in order to influence that legislation.
  - *Example: A flyer suggesting contacting representatives on a specific bill*  
(Note: cost would be payment for producing or printing the flyer)

Please be sure any costs that could be considered Direct or Grassroots Lobbying are identified when seeking payment or reimbursement from the Treasurer.

**Based on our approval to accept grants and donations we are asking for a volunteer to become our Grant Manager.** We need someone to develop and manage the processes, from requesting the grants/donations to monitoring and reporting on compliance. The work requirement will be limited by the number of grants/donations the volunteer is willing to manage.

Contact [Connie Flahive](#) if you are interested in this role.

## Make a Difference from the Comfort of Home! *(Digital Help Needed)*

These are roles that are critical for the organization but are less public-facing than things like voter registration. They can be done independently but will include interactions with other League members and will keep you “in the loop” of the League’s activities.

1. **Webmaster(s):** The LWV-RMA website needs to be updated to show League activities. It uses a Content Management System similar to Wordpress. You do not have to be a designer or html developer to do the job, but you should be comfortable with formatting Word or PDF documents and resizing and uploading images. It involves staying in touch with committee chairs and those planning events and getting all the relevant information on the website. They will set up a standard communication flow with you. Time estimate is 5-8 hours per month; training is available.
2. **Zoom Master(s):** Help organize our larger Zoom events. Make sure that the settings are correct for forums, assure that they are recorded, help guests log on, etc. This is a behind-the-scenes job so that the presenter or moderator can focus on the presentation. This is usually needed 1-3 times per month, more often prior to elections. If more than 1 person is recruited, work could be shared.
3. **Database manager:** Work with the Board of Elections voter database which is updated about 5 times a year and is used to do various queries. It includes the entire list of registered voters in spreadsheet form with about a half-million entries. This makes queries difficult. We need a member who can convert it to database form and answer our queries. Updates take an hour or so to complete. Only a handful of queries are needed each year.
4. **Google Ads guru:** We are eligible for Google grants, which is free advertising on Google. That means that the videos and Public Service Announcements (PSAs) we produce can pop up whenever a person looks something up. Managing ad campaigns on Google involves choosing keywords and territories, seeing what gets clicks, and tweaking the ad if necessary. We need someone who’s not afraid of some data analysis and is willing to engage with the Civics Education (CE) team to produce citizen education that gets viewers. There is training available, which may take 10-20 hours. Ongoing, there would likely be a meeting per month with the CE team and 1-5 hours monitoring and adjusting ads.

If you can fill one of these critical roles but cannot attend one of the Zoom calls, contact Barbara Grosh [president@lwv-rma.org](mailto:president@lwv-rma.org).

## Educate the Future Members of LWV-RMA

LWVUS launched a national partnership with Girl Scouts USA to help empower the next generation of civic leaders. LWV worked with Girl Scouts to relaunch their “Promote the Vote” national service project, which equips Girl Scouts and troop leaders to get ready to vote, then get out the vote in their communities as trusted messengers. “Promote the Vote” features a Girl Scouts-branded **VOTE411.org** page as its primary tool for voter engagement. It also provides collaborative guidance for local councils, troops and volunteers looking to work with Leagues to promote the vote, achieve new Girl Scout badges, host civic events together, and more.



The local Girl Scout Council has expressed interest. We need a League member to meet with the Council to find out what they are looking for and then work with League members to help.

## Voter Services Update

Despite the hot and humid weather, our volunteers stepped up and worked at several events. Our July activities began with a registration event at the House of Mercy, which is a shelter for unhoused people. The lead social worker opened the event by quizzing attendees about voter rights and election information. We're happy to report that everyone knew that a prior felony does not prohibit you from registering to vote. It appears that our efforts to correct misinformation on this topic are helping. Several people were registered to vote over the breakfast and lunch periods. We also tabled at the Bridging Communities - A Riverside Celebration on Driving Park Avenue, distributing Vote411 and Who Represents You palm cards.

During the first 2 weeks in August, we tabled at the Jordan Health Front Porch Festival, the Lyell-Otis Community Uplift, and South Wedge Fest.

Fall is approaching and is reflected in our upcoming activities. In preparation for the start of the school year, community organizations are hosting school supply giveaways. These are good opportunities to talk with adults and older students about voter registration and League resources. In addition, we will be participating in college and university orientation and student engagement events.

Twice yearly, Voter Services is asked to complete a survey for the LWVNYS. The survey is extensive and includes data tracking for voter registration, get out the vote, naturalization ceremonies, social media use, and more. Chapter responses are collated and help identify progress and future needs.



Former LWV-RMA president Judith Sternberg, Deb Gordon and Marla Miller

## Volunteering

Members receive an email notification each time a Voter Services event is scheduled. To volunteer, click on the link in the email and log onto the [LWV-RMA website](https://www.lwv-rma.org/voter_services.php). Click on the Volunteer tab, then on the Available Volunteer Sessions button and Sign Up. (Note: if you have not seen such emails, please check your Promotions or Spam folders.)

Here is a link that will help those who have not helped at registration events feel more comfortable:  
[Tips for Voter Registration Volunteers](https://www.lwv-rma.org/voter_services.php).

Non-members who wish to volunteer should become familiar with information here:



[https://www.lwv-rma.org/voter\\_services.php](https://www.lwv-rma.org/voter_services.php).

See new Voters Services initiatives on Page 8 and Page 10.

*Submitted by Co-chairs of Voter Services*

*Deb Gordon and Cathy Kane*

## Proposed New Outreach Initiatives for Voter Services (VS)

We need small teams, working in conjunction with the larger Voter Services team, to reach and help educate voters in preparation for the 2025 and 2026 elections. If you are interested in being part of these specific efforts to build an informed and motivated electorate, please join a VS Zoom meeting. They are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month from 5 - 6:30 P.M. Reach out to [voterservices@lwv-rma.org](mailto:voterservices@lwv-rma.org) to receive a link to the meeting or express interest in this role.

### 1. Electronic Sign Coordinator(s) for VS Committee

The Goal: Arrange for firehouses and schools (and any other organizations that use electronic signage) in low voter turnout areas to publicize info on early voting and Vote411, and potentially other messages.

The Plan: We need someone who can make phone calls to the locations, or stop by them, to request their cooperation and then forward our suggested messages.



Some Details: Once the initial list of locations and contacts is developed, this could be done via email requests made several times a year. Volunteers could work from home on this job and agree to cover their town or neighborhood only.

### 2. Library Program Team for VS Committee

The Goal: Work with libraries to have a display about voting and elections before each election pertinent to that location.

The Plan: Contact libraries and suggest they mount such a display. We could deliver current materials, such as our door hangers with early voting info, and Vote411 promotional cards. The library would be asked to set up a display of books relevant to the topic.

Some details: This activity would involve phone calls or visits to libraries, probably in the late summer or early fall for the general election and late winter or early spring for primary elections.

### 3. Supportive Housing Programming Team for VS Committee

The Goal: There are various buildings in Monroe County for low income and elderly residents, many located in areas with low voting turnout. We want to better support voting for people in these locations. That might include voter registration tables, posters with early voting information, arranging bus transportation for early voting, providing educational materials, working with the tenant association to encourage voting, etc.

The Plan: Continue identifying these buildings and who manages them (we have an initial list). Contact managers or (where suggested by managers) tenant groups to learn how we can support voting, then help make it happen.

Some Details: This would be a great project for someone interested in making long-term connections in our community. Some of it can be done on the internet, using email, and by making phone calls, but it will probably require site visits to get to know building managers and tenant associations too. Contacts can be established anytime during the year. Once the contacts are identified, some of the work can be done by phone and email.

## Advocacy Committee

On July 23, members of the LWV-RMA government Advocacy Committee met with NYS Senator Pamela Helming (R,C of the 54<sup>th</sup> Senate District) to discuss a number of topics of mutual interest, including rural electronics access, utilities costs, disaster relief, housing, healthcare, and public safety.



TOP: Committee co-chairs Barbara Murphy and Scott Forsyth, Senator Pam Helming, and committee members Katherine Smith and Judy Wadsworth.

BOTTOM: Included in the meeting were Senator Helming's Chief of Staff and Legislative Director Ryan Wilcox, who participated from the senator's Albany office. Seen with him are Senator Helming and committee co-chairs Murphy and Forsyth.

## Democracy Defenders:

### Election Reforms We Can Do in NY and Affect the Whole US Mess

**Presented by LWV-RMA President  
Barbara Grosh**

[View the YouTube Presentation Here](#)

**Join First Friday** for social time at I-Square in Irondequoit at 11:30 A.M. each month.

We gather in the space behind the partition (look for our sign), for lunch and discussion.

Come when you can, leave when you must. We share ideas for how the League can make democracy work and discuss the news to parse what it all means.

It's always comforting to be surrounded by League friends who are committed to empowering voters and protecting democracy. Join the fun!

### 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](#).



## Additional Voter Services Initiatives

In addition to the initiatives listed on page 8, the Voter Services team would like help in the following areas:

**Door Hanger Distribution:** Coordinate groups and individuals to distribute our door hangers with information on early voting. Actual distribution is about 2-3 weeks before primaries and general elections in the City of Rochester. We have contact information for a few groups and individuals who have done this in the past. It would be good to develop a larger distribution network.

**Distribution of Information to Laundromats:** We are hoping to find people willing to visit laundromats in the City of Rochester to learn their policy on posting and/or distributing voting information and obtain permission if needed. They would then determine best materials (posters vs. fliers, etc) and deliver the materials to the laundromats.

If you can help, please plan to attend the Voter Services monthly Zoom meeting 5-6:30 on the 4th Thursday of the month. Reach out to [voterservices@lwv-rma.org](mailto:voterservices@lwv-rma.org) to receive a link to the meeting or express interest in a role.

## Communications Committee:

The goal of the Communication Committee is to develop and implement a plan "to encourage informed and active participation of Monroe County residents in government, and to influence public policy through education." Those words may be familiar because they are part of the League's overall goal. To meet that goal we need members who are willing to help develop and spread a consistent message on all types of media, including but not limited to the LWV-RMA sites (Facebook, Instagram, Website, YouTube).

Join the September Zoom calls or send a note to [communications@lwv-rma.org](mailto:communications@lwv-rma.org) to learn how you could help.

## Town of Brighton Honors LWV-RMA

On August 27, the Brighton Town Board Meeting honored LWV-RMA while issuing a "Women's Equity Day Proclamation" which stated the following:

**WHEREAS**, the courageous and dedicated women who marched, advocated, and organized for the right to voter finally saw their efforts become a real ity on August 26, 1920, when the 19th Amendment was certified and the right for women to vote was realized; and

**WHEREAS**, Six months before women's right to vote became a reality, Carrie Chapman Catt founded The League of Women Voters to prepare, educate and inspire the 20 million new women voters in exercising their hard won right; and,

**WHEREAS**, over a century later, The League of Women Voters of the Rochester Metro Area continues to uphold the charge of being a nonpartisan, political organization which encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy by their membership of women and men; and

**WHEREAS**, Women's Equality Day reminds us that we must continue to fight for the esteemed value of equality and protect our constitutional rights, as they are stripped away, just as the constitutional right to abortion was eliminated, setting in motion a cascade of consequences leading many states to ban abortion; and

**WHEREAS**, While we herald the accomplishments of the litany of women who secured the women's right to vote, we are acutely aware that the great challenges still remain for women and girls everywhere.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED**, That I, William W. Moehle, Brighton Town Supervisor, and the members of the Council, call on all residents to observe Women's Equality Day each year on August 26. And do hereby applaud the ongoing work of The League of Women Voters of the Rochester Metro Area for their stabilizing, nonpartisan contributions to transparency and truth in politics, policy and that most sacred of American institutions, voting.

## Outreach to New Americans

Outreach to New Americans had three outreach events in August.

- On August 11, Evelyn Jennings gave a 15 minute presentation on the importance of voting and the steps to take to register and vote to an online citizenship class offered through Catholic Charities Family and Community Services.
- On August 14, we tabled at the Community Place community fair at their space at 145 Parsells Avenue, interacting with many community members in English and in Spanish. We helped several people register to vote and request absentee ballots and shared information about voting with Vote411 cards.
- On August 20, we tabled at the Ibero American Action League's Back-to-School event that was very well attended by local families.

We could use a few more volunteers for the committee. People with any language skills would be most welcome, as our new citizens are from all over the world. Folks who have connections to any organizations who work with people pursuing citizenship and/or with new citizens would also be most welcome.

Submitted by Evelyn Jennings, [newamericansoutreach@lwv-rma.org](mailto:newamericansoutreach@lwv-rma.org)



pictured is Vice President Julie Burns accepting the Proclamation along with Board Members Marla Miller, Donna Gardner, Pat Willis, and Stephanie Watson.

## Interested in New York State or National League of Women Voters Activities?

Both LWVNYS and LWVUS use committees made up of members from around the state or the country to channel our grassroots passion. This is a great way to meet other League members and to expand your impact on the League's missions. LWV-RMA members have participated in these activities previously and the representatives have enjoyed the experiences. You will be asked to provide information to the LWV-RMA Board Members periodically on the National or State committees that you have joined.

### New York State-Wide Committee Representation

This generally means a monthly meeting on Zoom, possibly some research on a topic discussed by the group, such as proposed legislation, sometimes helping the state committee to plan statewide programming (usually on Zoom). Statewide committees sometimes participate in coalitions of other statewide organizations to increase our impact. Serving on state-wide committees provides wonderful opportunities to learn deeply about an issue and the history of policy about that issue. You make new friends and come to understand how things look from different parts of the state. The workload is 2-5 hours/month, but there may be opportunities to take on more tasks and deeper involvement.

The current LWVNYS committees are:

- DEI
- Criminal justice
- Health
- Environment
- Rural Caucus

### National League Representation

Is there an issue you are passionate about? Climate change? Immigration/deportation policy? The shortage of affordable housing?

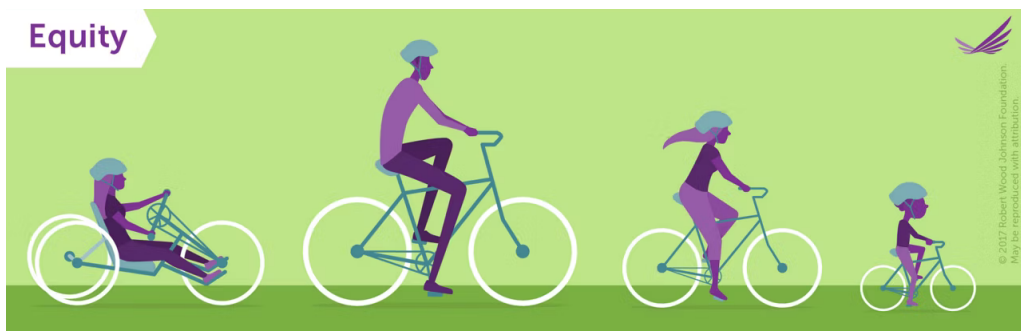
There are many LWV working groups that bring LWV members together across the whole country to learn about the issues and brainstorm how to work to make things better. For example, there is a LWV National Immigration Special Interest Group, which anyone is welcome to join. The work involves attending Zoom calls and reporting back to LWV-RMA. Name your interest and represent us. We'll look forward to learning from you what League members across the country are working on, and maybe you'll get good ideas for us to pursue, or at least an interesting educational forum we can organize.

If you are Interested in representing LWV-RMA at either the State or National level contact Barbara Grosh [president@lww-rma.org](mailto:president@lww-rma.org).



## Graphic Designer For Multiple Teams

We are looking for someone with graphic skills to make printed materials inviting and accessible. This is most needed at election time for posters and door hangers. You may also be asked to redesign flyers and provide images for our website and social media. You can use any software you like. We can provide a modest budget for buying the rights to use stock images and possibly for software license(s). Demand would be highest in September and April as we prepare for elections.



## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice Committee

As announced last month, a new DEIJ Committee is being formed with LWV-RMA Vice President Julie Burns as Chair. The committee will work to align initiatives with organizational goals, recommend professional development resources, and partner with other committees to embed DEIJ principles into all areas of LWV-RMA.

The committee will organize workshops, training events, and reflective dialogues that encourage self-awareness, deepen understanding of systemic inequities, and promote equitable practices. Members will also review organizational policies and practices to help identify barriers to equity and recommend strategies that build belonging and fairness.

The time commitment will vary depending on the number of members and initiatives, but generally will involve quarterly planning meetings and active participation in education sessions, events, and policy review throughout the year.

If you are interested in DEIJ, please consider volunteering to help set up this Committee for success.

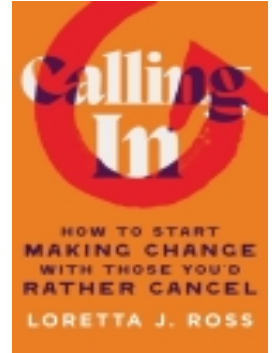
Contact Julie for more information and to join this Committee. [vp@lww-rma.org](mailto:vp@lww-rma.org).



## **Book Review: [Calling In: How to Start Making Change with Those You'd Rather Cancel](#), by Loretta J. Ross**

### **About Loretta Ross**

Loretta J. Ross is a nationally recognized activist, scholar, and public intellectual whose life's work has centered on human rights, reproductive justice, and racial and gender equity. A co-founder of the [SisterSong](#) Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collective, Ross has decades of experience in grassroots organizing and movement building. She is also an educator, currently teaching at [Smith College](#), where she inspires students to think critically about activism and justice through the lens of compassion and accountability. Her writing and speaking have positioned her as a leading voice on how we engage with one another across lines of difference.



### **Summary of [Calling In](#)**

In her book [Calling In](#), Ross offers a refreshing alternative to today's often polarized climate of "calling out" and public shaming. Rather than dismissing accountability, she reframes it: what if, instead of alienating or humiliating people when they make mistakes, we "call them in" with compassion, curiosity, and care? Ross argues that building inclusive, equitable communities requires us to engage others in a way that holds them responsible while still affirming their dignity.

The book blends memoir, scholarship, and practical advice, illustrating how "calling in" creates space for learning, growth, and healing—both for the person being challenged and for the wider community. Ross reminds us that social change cannot happen if we are constantly tearing each other down. Instead, the work requires patience, dialogue, and a willingness to connect even when it feels difficult.

### **A Call to Compassion**

Ross's message is not an excuse for injustice; it is an invitation to practice radical empathy in our daily lives. To "call in" is to believe in the possibility of transformation. It asks us to look beyond a single harmful act or word and see the whole person—their history, their struggles, their potential for change. In a world quick to cancel, Ross calls on us to choose compassion as a tool of resistance.

Her book is, ultimately, an invitation: to slow down, to listen, and to speak truth with kindness. It is a reminder that each of us has the power to create more humane, inclusive spaces by approaching conflict with grace instead of judgment. If we embrace her challenge, we not only become better allies and activists, but also more compassionate human beings—capable of building the just and loving world we long for.

*Submitted by Julie Burns*  
[vp@lwv-rma.org](mailto:vp@lwv-rma.org)

## **LWVUS CEO's Statement on Voting Machines and Mail-in Ballots**

President Trump unveiled plans on August 18<sup>th</sup> to sign an executive order claiming to “help bring HONESTY to the 2026 Midterm Elections.”

“I am going to lead a movement to get rid of MAIL-IN BALLOTS, and also, while we’re at it, Highly ‘Inaccurate,’ Very Expensive, and Seriously Controversial VOTING MACHINES,” Trump declared on Truth Social.

The League of Women Voters CEO, Celina Stewart, Esq., issued the following statement in response to President Trump's vow to eliminate mail-in ballots and voting machines:

“Free, fair, and accessible elections are the cornerstone of a healthy democracy. President Trump’s call to eliminate vote-by-mail is a direct attack on Americans’ freedom to vote.

“Vote-by-mail is secure, accurate, and trusted by millions of voters — including older adults, military members, rural communities, tribal communities, voters of color, and voters with disabilities. Vote-by-mail has proven to expand voter participation in recent elections.

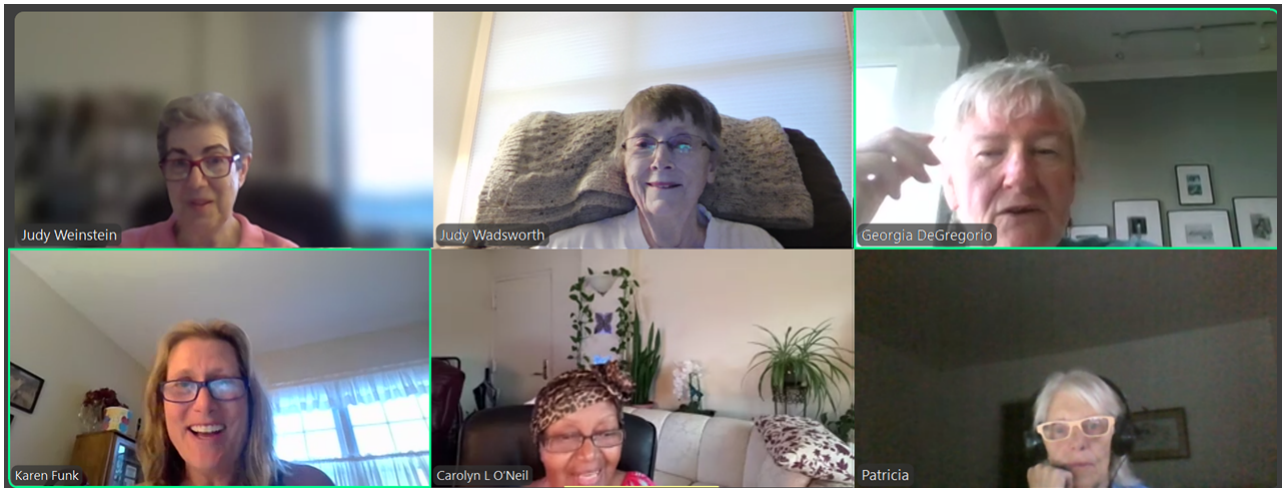
“President Trump has no constitutional authority to take this action. Under our US Constitution, the states have the power to run elections, and only Congress can step in to regulate those elections when needed. This move is yet another overreach by an unpopular president who seeks to silence the public to hold onto power.

“President Trump’s attacks on voting machines are similarly misleading and dangerous. Voting systems in the US already meet strict standards for security, accuracy, transparency, and accessibility, with paper ballots or audit trails to verify results. Scrapping machines in favor of hand counting would undermine election integrity and efficiency, not strengthen it. The League of Women Voters stands firmly for secure, modern systems that protect every vote and uphold public trust in our democracy.

“The President should get his facts straight: he does not have the authority to regulate elections, states have strong measures to ensure voting equipment is secure, and many countries successfully utilize vote-by-mail.

“The League of Women Voters will not stand by while politicians spread lies to limit democratic participation. We will be looking at the forthcoming Executive Order very closely and will use every tool in our toolbox to push back on these threats to our free, fair, and accessible elections.

“We will fight to protect vote-by-mail and every method that makes casting a ballot accessible. Our democracy is strong when every eligible voter can make their voice heard, whether at a polling place or through a mail-in ballot.”



Book club members meeting on August 12.

## Book Club Program for 2025-2026

Members of the LWV-RMA Book Club met via Zoom on August 12 to identify books to read during the 2025-2026 program year. Books selected will be discussed via Zoom on the third Thursday of the month at 4:30 P.M. If you would like to participate in a particular discussion, or join the Book Club, email [bookclub@lwv-rma.org](mailto:bookclub@lwv-rma.org). Selected were the following:

September 18: *The House is on Fire* by Rachel Beanland

November 20: *Abundance* by Ezra Klein and Derek Thompson

January 15: *Agent Josephine* by Damien Lewis

March 19: *How We Learn to be Brave* by Mariann Edgar Budde

May 21: *Children of the Land* by Marcelo Hernandez Castillo.

The group has left open the option of meeting on July 16 in case another book of interest is identified in upcoming months.

*Submitted by Judy Wadsworth*



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If you have comments, article suggestions or pictures to share please send them to [micketeditor@gmail.com](mailto:micketeditor@gmail.com)

## 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.**

## Join the League today!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Check Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

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.](#)

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### 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.