

TheVOTER

Deeds, Not Words

Saturday, February 28, 2026 - 10:00 A.M to 11:30 A.M.

Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs Street, Rochester, NY 14607

Presenter: Patricia Nugent, LWVSC

Patricia Nugent of the Saratoga County League will discuss how militant suffragists, under Alice Paul's leadership, took women's suffrage over the finish line in 1920 after a 75-year battle.

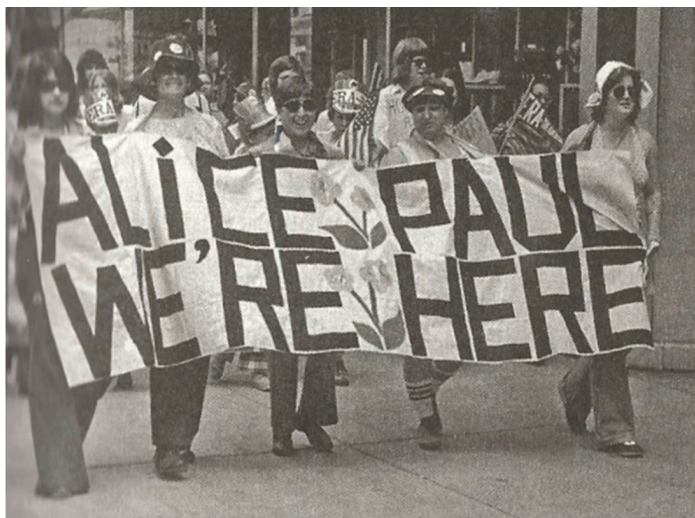
Everything was stacked against them – but their determination was underestimated. And so is ours! Hear what we can learn from them.

Register Here: [Patricia Nugent presentation](#)

Following a career as a school district administrator and adjunct communication professor, Patricia gives voice to those who might otherwise be silenced.

Feeling a deep connection to our foremothers, she authored the play "The Stone that Started the Ripple" about a modern-day reunion of the founding suffragists.

She chaired the Women's Rights Awareness Campaign for the Saratoga County League.



Citizenship Quiz

Immigrants wishing to become citizens must be prepared to answer 10 out of a possible 100 questions.

They must answer at least 6 correctly.

These are two of the questions. Can you answer them??

1. How many amendments have there been to the Constitution?
2. When was the Constitution written?

(Answers on P. 2)

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President's Letter

Electoral Reform in Rochester

We're doing it! We're going to try to get a charter amendment passed to bring Ranked Choice Voting and All-Access Primaries to Rochester. That was the consensus we reached at our annual advocacy meeting on Jan. 31. The task is daunting, but we decided that there is a lot of energy to do something to improve our democracy, so the time is right. Whether we succeed or not, we will make the issues better known and make legislation at the state level one step easier. If we succeed, we'll put Rochester in the forefront of reform in NY! Both Susan B. Anthony and Frederick Douglass worked for universal ballot access, so we felt inspired by our ancestors' examples to do something ambitious.

Our first step will be to nail down the language we will propose. We're looking at language elsewhere and getting input from our partners at UniteNY. On Feb. 11 we'll hold a webinar to look at what's in the charter now, look at the suggestions and maybe wordsmith. Invite your friends with legal language insight and an appetite for making change! Put the [webinar on your calendar](#).

Here's an outline of the process for the next year:

- Finalize language by mid-February
- Collect 4,107 signatures on petitions beginning by late February. We'll work to get political campaigns to pass our petitions while they collect signatures to get on the ballot, but we'll also think of ways to target voters not registered as Democrats, who have the most to gain.
- We'll need allies all over the city to help collect signatures and spread the word.
- We'll submit our signatures as soon as we collect enough, aiming for May. The signers must be registered voters who reside in Rochester.
- After we submit the petitions, the proposal will go to City Council. If they approve it, it will be placed on the November ballot. If they don't approve it, an additional 2,054 signatures will be needed to get on the ballot. The deadline is Sept. 1 to get on the November ballot.
- Keep publicizing until election day!

Barbara Grosh, president@lwv-rma.org

Quiz Answers (From P 1):

There are 27 amendments to the Constitution

The Constitution was written in 1787



Ranked Choice Voting and All-Party Primaries in Rochester Forum

On January 20, the LWV-RMA hosted a discussion on Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) combined with all-party primaries. We were joined by David Green, Organizing Director for Unite NY, a good-government non-profit the League has been working with on various electoral issues.

The LWVNYS last year adopted a position in favor of amending state election law to use RCV combined with all-party primaries to govern elections statewide. We'll be working towards that, but it could be a while before that comes to pass.

Home rule in NYS allows cities to amend their charters and change how *city offices* are elected. Unless towns, villages, or counties have specific election laws for their offices, the state laws govern. Therefore to change the voting processes in those areas either:

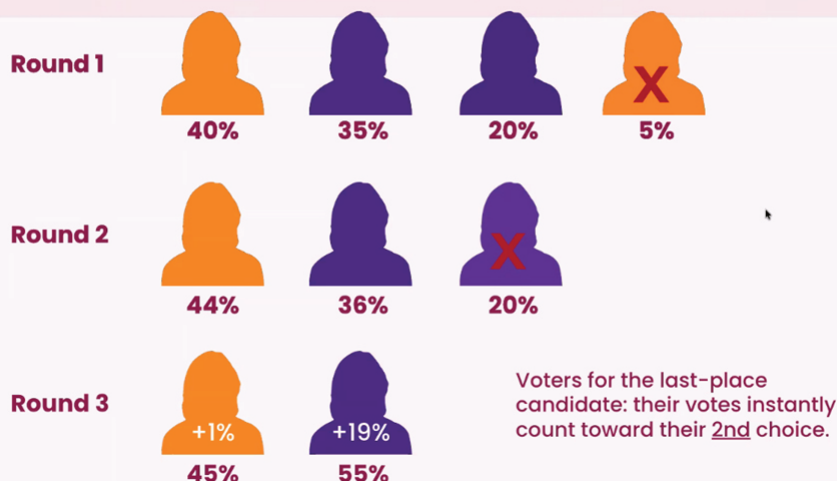
- The NYS Legislature needs to pass the changes which the towns, villages, and counties could opt out of if they wished, or
- Each town, village, or county needs to pass its own laws

Some Leagues in NY are moving ahead, proposing city charter amendments to bring those reforms to their cities. Rochester has been proposed as a logical city to do this. By implementing these changes for city offices first, it is hoped that more people would become familiar and comfortable with the process, therefore making it easier to change the state election laws.

The meeting covered how all-party primaries and RCV works and how they might affect the governance and politics in Rochester. The potential for eliminating primaries altogether and implementing RCV at the general election was also discussed. There would definitely be financial benefits for both the candidates and the city if that option is implemented.

To further understand the ongoing discussions on these topics, please view the January 20th forum on our YouTube channel <https://youtu.be/P1IV3M9FjxE>.

How are Ranked Choice ballots counted?



Why Schools Are Not The Answer

HAVE YOU EVER SELF-CENSORED OR AVOIDED CERTAIN CIVICS TO DUE TO FEAR OF PUSHBACK OR CONTROVERSY??

Response	Percentage
Yes	76.2%
No	19%
Unsure	4.8%

YOUR EXPERIENCE, WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY CHALLENGES TO TEACHING CIVICS TODAY?

Challenge	Percentage
Fear of controversy	66.7%
Lack of time in the curriculum	64.6%
W's feel safe discussing political topics	64.6%
Lack of administrative support	64.6%
Lack of budget/resources	64.6%
Lack of student interest	64.6%
Standardized curriculum or standardized testing	64.6%
Other	64.6%

TOP ROW: Dr. Cormack, her book, and reasons why schools aren't leading the effort.

BOTTOM ROW: Participants in the January 13th discussion.

Raising Citizens

League members met via Zoom on January 13 to discuss “Raising Citizens” with Lindsey Cormack, PhD, Associate Professor of Political Science, Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, NJ. and author of *How to Raise a Citizen (And Why it's Up to You to Do It)*. She also created and maintains the digital database of all official Congress-to-constituent e-newsletters, *DCinbox*, at <https://www.dcinbox.com/>.

Dr. Cormack noted that:

- * NYS is the fourth lowest state in the number of 18-24-year-olds registered to vote.
- * Most high school students taking the AP US Government and Politics course do not earn college credit.
- * The percentage of people voting increases as their age increases, so younger voters are not as well represented.
- * There is a tradition of not talking about politics in social situations.
- * Because of federal and state mandated testing programs, schools focus more on reading and math.
- * Court cases and parental pressure and threats of lawsuits have led K-12 educators to avoid any issues that might be deemed controversial.

Dr. Cormack offered a number of strategies to help raise active, contributing citizens:

- * Remember that raising a partisan is different than raising a citizen (like the difference between a fan and athlete).
- * Parents model behaviors that their children absorb.
- * Children do politics among themselves, and are capable of learning more.
- * No one likes playing games when they don't know the rules.
- * Practice is critical. Parents can provide experiences for direct involvement, taking children when voting, to government spaces and meetings, and to meetings with lawmakers.
- * Emphasize the good that the government does for the community (roads, water, snow plowing, fire prevention, and financing programs for health and education).

The presentation can be viewed on the LWV-RMA YouTube channel here <https://youtu.be/ZCF56OmiGZE>.

Submitted by Judy Wadsworth

Voter Services Update

The Voter Services team focuses on voter registration and education. We offer materials to address voting rights questions for people with past felony convictions, those attending college away from home, un-housed individuals. and people with disabilities.

Voter Services participated in the Rochester Museum and Science Center's event on January 18, 2026 to honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We offered voter registration assistance and educational materials as well as coloring sheets for children. We also took part in the Spring Engagement Expo on January 23 at Nazareth University. The Expo connects students with student groups on campus and also provides an opportunity for LWV-RMA to share volunteer opportunities and information.

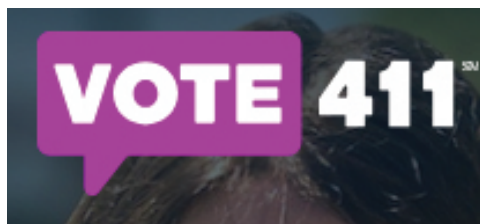
Information about candidates, registration status, and election dates are provided through our website VOTE411.org. As additional issues of concern arise for voters, we create content to address those issues. Teams within Voter Services provide services at naturalization ceremonies and outreach to new citizens.

The Voter Services team meets via zoom on the 4th Thursday of the month from 5-6:30 P.M. The agenda is sent out prior to the meeting and minutes are sent afterward. If you would like to join the group to learn more about our work, we invite you to attend one of our meetings. Please contact us at VoterServices@lww-RMA.org for information.

We look forward to welcoming you!

Deb Gordon & Cathy Kane

voterservices@lww-rma.org



Google Grants

Google offers grants for up to \$10,000 per month to 501(c)(3) non-profits for free Google "ads." It is easiest to think of it as a way to advertise LWV-RMA as a valid source of information. For example, if someone searches in Google, "In NYS how do I register to vote" one of the first results would be a link to our web page where there could be a video and words explaining the process. The questions and results can be targeted to specific geographic areas. The LWV-RMA Board of Directors sees this as another way to provide relevant information to voters and potential voters.

Elevation is a company that works with non-profits to apply for and utilize the Google grants. They provide guidance for structuring the "ads" and provide tools to measure the success of the program. The LWV-RMA Board has signed a one-year agreement with Elevation to help us implement this program. The new media team (*see page 6*) will be developing related materials for the website. If you are interested in participating in this new initiative, please contact Barbara Grosh at president@lww-rma.org.



"O.K., I'll put that on my calendar and we'll just keep an eye on the weather and the fall of democracy."

(From The New Yorker)

First Friday

Join First Friday for social time at I Square in Irondequoit, 400 Bakers Park, Rochester, NY 14617, at 11:30 A.M. on the first Friday of 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!



2026 Legislative Priorities

Let New York Vote is a nonpartisan, statewide coalition of grassroots networks, civil rights and civil liberties organizations, re-entry communities, good government groups, unions, social service providers, immigrant rights groups, and everyday citizens fighting to improve our elections by making registering and voting more accessible and equitable for every eligible New Yorker.

Priorities to Make Voting More Accessible

- [S440](#) - Sen. Myrie / [A2121](#) - AM Walker: Establish the election infrastructure to make voting accessible for all **those eligible to vote who are detained in jails.**
- [S2056A](#) - Sen. Webb / [A3954A](#) - AM Raga: Expand civic engagement practices for students by enacting a **Student Voter Empowerment Act.**
- [S5851](#) - Sen. Skoufis / [A7369](#) - AM Walker: **Move local elections to even-numbered years,** including city elections (requires a constitutional amendment).

Priorities to Improve Voter Registration

- [S5751](#) - Sen. Gianaris / [A2162](#) - AM Carroll R: Expand same day voter registration to every day of in-person voting through **amending the New York State Constitution.**

Priorities for Voter and Election Protection

- [S4602A](#) - Sen. Gounardes / [A5846A](#) - AM Gibb: **Extend time for polling place disruptions,** where an emergency or other disruption to voting lasts more than 15 minutes.
- [S3233](#) - Sen. Kavanagh / [A6354](#) - AM Walker: Require persons that challenge the validity of voter applicants to provide an **affidavit for the challenge.**
- [S7116](#) - Sen. Cleare / [A6287](#) - AM Cunningham: Ensure accessible use of paper ballot through the **voting integrity and verification act (VIVA) of New York.**

LWV-RMA Civic Education Committee Update

On January 7, members and non-members gathered to discuss how LWV-RMA could step up our Civic Education efforts. The 19 attendees discussed various channels that could be used to provide information and decided to focus their efforts on:

- Holding public forums, both in person and via Zoom
- Providing written information to local media outlets
- Developing videos and animations for social media and the LWV-RMA website

The group decided to work in two teams:

- Civic Education Forums, coordinated by Mary Micket
- Civic Education Media, coordinated by Barbara Grosh

As of January 20th one member, Connor O'Brien, had already made an arrangement with the Democrat and Chronicle to publish a monthly article from LWV-RMA on relevant topics. In addition, Connor and Hanna Brandt are working to identify local college students to assist with videos and film editing. If you are interested in joining these teams please contact Barbara Grosh at president@lwv-rma.org or Mary Micket at mcmicket@gmail.com.

Opportunity: Help LWV-RMA design and manage a new Website

Elevation, a company that provides web services to non-profits, has decided to award its annual free website design to LWV-RMA. Elevation will provide the Google grant services described on page 4, as well as working with us on improvements to our website.

Elevation developed a website for the St. Petersburg, FL, League several years ago, and that League gave Elevation high marks for their work. Elevation believes in the mission of the League of Women Voters and hopes they will be able to leverage the work they do for us to other Leagues.

This is an opportunity for LWV-RMA to design a website that 1) will allow for easy communication with our members and volunteers and 2) will be a tool to provide valuable information to the public in easy-to-use formats.

The team needs help with the design, testing, and implementation of the website. You do not need to be technically proficient, just have an interest in providing the League the best content possible and arrange it to be easy to use. If you are interested please contact Barbara Grosh at president@lwv-rma.org.

LWV-RMA Forum with ReConnect Rochester on Safer Streets

On December 10, two officials from ReConnect Rochester met via Zoom with LWV-RMA members to share the group's mission and recent initiatives. Co-Executive Director Cody Donahue provided an overview of ReConnect programs, including street makeovers, alternate transportation, and safe street advocacy.

Policy and Advocacy Coordinator Henry Litsky focused on efforts to reduce speed limits as a major step in controlling traffic accidents, especially those involving pedestrians. A video shown during the presentation demonstrated how community members near the intersection of Avenue D and Hollenbeck Street helped to identify changes to make that area safer and even created artwork on the street to help slow down traffic. The discussion was moderated by LWV-RMA President Barbara Grosh.

One of their main initiatives is to get cities and towns to lower their speed limits. Rochester and Brighton have already done so, and our members might want to work to get their towns to do so too. The ReConnect Rochester website has extensive data on where accidents happen, to give a sense of what might be gained by lowering speeds. Speeds on county- or state-owned and maintained roads are controlled by the county and state, so that would require a different campaign.

To learn more, visit the ReConnect Rochester website at <https://reconnectrochester.org/> or watch the recording of the presentation at the LWV-RMA YouTube channel at [LWVRMA ReConnect Rochester](#).

Submitted by Judy Wadsworth

Invitation to League of Women Voters National Convention

The LWV-RMA will send delegates to the LWVUS convention on June 25-28 in Washington DC. You could be one of them.

The national convention is held every other year. At the convention, we will elect national officers and board members, approve the program for the next two years, consider proposed new positions, and approve the budget and by-laws changes. There will also be great speakers and workshops on League issues nationwide.

Any member can attend, but we have three voting delegates. The LWV-RMA will pay the expenses for the three delegates (registration, lodging, and travel). If you are interested in attending as a delegate, please contact Barbara Grosh at president@lwv-rma.org.

LWVNYS Regional Training Workshop

The League of Women Voters of NYS invites all members to come to training workshops being held throughout the state. All members are invited to attend any or all of the workshops. Lunch will be provided and will allow for informal networking among the attendees. The workshop will be offered in Rochester on Saturday April 11 from 9:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs Street, Rochester, NY. More details to follow.



Naturalizations

Forty-one new citizens were naturalized at a ceremony at the Federal Building on January 20, 2026. Judge Elizabeth Wolford presided and LWV-RMA volunteer Margaret Supinski registered 21 new voters.

We encourage all members to volunteer and/or observe. Please contact Margret Roberts at naturalizations@lww-rma.org.

Ceremonies at the downtown Federal Building on State Street take place every 3rd Tuesday of the month. Ceremony check-in is at 1P.M. and ceremony at 2 P.M.

All special ceremonies will start at 11 A.M. with check-in at 10 A.M. (*exception noted below.*) The dates for 2026 are as follows:

- Tuesday, March 10, 2026; George Eastman Museum
- Tuesday April 7, 2026, RIT (check in 10:30 A.M., ceremony 11:30 A.M.)
- Tuesday, July 28, 2026: George Eastman Museum
- Thursday, September 17, 2026: SUNY Brockport
- Thursday, November 19, 2026: George Eastman Museum

Submitted by Margret Roberts

Governor Hochul Signed the League-supported ERIC Bill

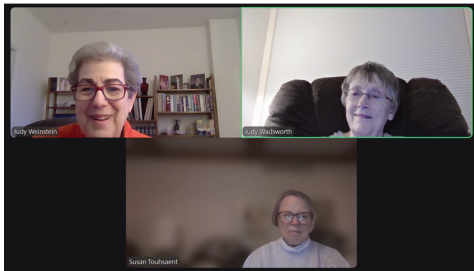
Governor Hochul has signed the ***Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC)*** bill (S1356A / A3649B). This will strengthen voter protection, election integrity, and election efficiency in New York State.

On December 8, 2025 LWNYS sent a letter to the Governor, signed by the State League and nearly all of our 40 local League chapters, including LWV-RMA, urging her to sign it as soon as possible. On December 9, the bill was delivered to her and she signed it! Here is an excerpt from the letter explaining the importance of this bill:

"New York's outdated voter list maintenance practices have led to serious consequences, including illegal voter purges, wrongful 'inactive' designations, and widespread issues at polling places. These failures undermine voter access and trust in a time when it's critically important."

ERIC offers a proven, secure, and nonpartisan solution. Already adopted by 26 states, ERIC uses data from state voter files, DMV records, the Postal Service, and the Social Security Administration to help election officials:

- Identify in-state and cross-state movers, duplicates, and deceased voters
- Maintain control of voter rolls and prevent wrongful purges
- Contact eligible but unregistered voters to boost civic participation
- Save time and resources by reducing undeliverable mail and affidavit ballots



Book Club Looks at Career of Josephine Baker

On January 15, a smaller group of LWV-RMA book club members met via Zoom to discuss *Agent Josephine: American Beauty, French Hero, British Spy* by Damien Lewis. This biography details the incredible life of Josephine Baker, the American entertainer who secretly became a spy for the French Resistance and British Intelligence during World War II, using her stardom in Europe and elsewhere as a cover for espionage missions against the Nazis.

The book club is scheduled to meet next on Thursday, March 19, at 4:30 P.M. via Zoom to discuss *How We Learn to be Brave* by the Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde, Episcopal Bishop of Washington (D.C.). The Rt. Rev. Dr. Budde came to national notice for her powerful message of mercy and compassion toward the marginalized during an interfaith prayer service in January 2025, attended by recently re-elected President Trump and other federal officials. If you'd like to participate, please notify Judy Weinstein at bookclub@lwv-rma.org to be placed on the list to receive the meeting link.

Calendar

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 it. The calendar is updated frequently. It is more current than a monthly newsletter.

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](#).

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The Voter is a monthly publication of the LWV-RMA
Editor, Mary Micket; Graphic Editor, Judy Wadsworth; Layout/Design, David Newman; Proof readers, Barbara Grosh, Pat Willis, Mary Hussong-Kallen
If you have comments, article suggestions or pictures to share please send them to 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, justice 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: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

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.](#)

A Monthly Publication of the
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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.