



## Editorial: This election season, here's to a fair fight

By Messenger Post editorial

Messenger Post

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Canandaigua, N.Y. — We see it at the national level, and we see it here in our community. As soon as the leaves start to fall, so does the level of political discourse. Come election season, the personal attacks and the finger-pointing begin in earnest.

Election Day this year is Nov. 8, and we can't know who will win but, sadly, we can guarantee one thing: that we'll be weary of **the negative campaigning** long before we reach the polls.

The Rochester chapter of the **League of Women Voters** refuses to watch as an ugly campaign season unfolds. Instead, each election season, the group takes action. Since the 1970s, the group has worked to promote civil election campaigns that focus on the issues, rather than personalities. Their Fair Elections Practices Campaign began this year in late August and was commemorated with a signing ceremony on Sept. 7.

The pledge asks of our candidates what we ask of our leaders: **That they are accurate and honest**, and that they not engage in personal attacks on their opponents' character. It also requires candidates to approve all materials concerning their campaigns, and to take responsibility for the conduct of their campaigns.

The pledge puts the onus on our potential leaders to maintain a civil discourse. That's as it should be. The league also establishes a committee to hear complaints from anyone who feels a candidate violated the pledge. The politically diverse committee is a valuable sounding board when local campaigns veer off track.

A fair, honest campaign is crucial. Without it, how are we to know who has the skills, experience and temperament to lead? Yet not everyone has signed the pledge. We urge those candidates who haven't to do so, immediately. And we applaud the number who have already taken part — or who campaign fairly and honestly even if their race does not fall under the purview of the Rochester chapter of the League of Women Voters, or some other such group. For while a mud-free campaign should be a given, in these tumultuous times that's often not the case.

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