



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.

Inside this issue:

Forum: School to Prison	1
President's Corner	2
February Forum	2
Capital Beat Blog	2
Advocacy News	3
Look for the League Wherever You Go!	3
Do You Tweet?	3
Meet Brian Valenti	4
Member to Member	4
Do You Have?	4
Sunshine Corner	5
Not Too Late to Celebrate Susan B!	5
Picnic in the Park Photos	6
Calendar	7
Leadership	8



LWV-RMA Education Study Group presents

School to Prison: Alternatives to Incarceration

An in-depth exploration of systemic patterns that place vulnerable youth on a track for incarceration, focusing on diversion programs for 15 to 18 year olds in the Crescent Area.

Our distinguished moderator:

Rev. Lawrence Hargrave

Our expert panel includes:

Shani Curry-Mitchell, Monroe County
Assistant District Attorney,

Elaine Spaul, Director of the Center for Youth

Monday, February 23, 2015

7:00 to 8:30 pm

Asbury First United Methodist Church

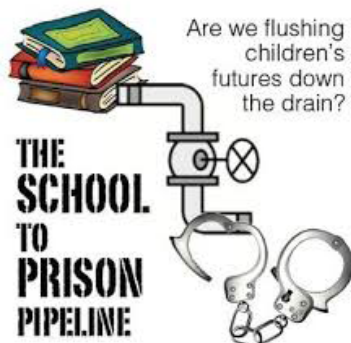
1050 East Avenue, Rochester NY

Handicapped Accessible/Parking in Rear

Pre-registration is appreciated:

585-262-3730

or www.lwv-rma.org



Presidents' Corner

Rochester winter is here in full force – but we in the League are not slowing down!

Were you able to attend the annual General Membership Meeting “Picnic in the Park” on January 10? If not, you missed some very informative presentations and an opportunity to meet and chat with some of our new and not-so-new members. Look for results of the discussions next month... Thanks to Georgia DeGregorio and her team!

Thanks also to Judy Weinstein, Elaine Schmidt and Gin Busack for their ambitious work on the December consensus on term limits and ballot access. Katherine Smith moderated lively discussions, and members who attended agreed to recommend against term limits and to continue our closed primary format. Judy, Elaine, Gin, Carole Hoffman and Patrina Freeman have already begun work on the next consensus and a fall forum on a possible NYS Constitutional Convention.

Please join us in welcoming our new Treasurer, Ida Holloran. Contact her at treasurer@lwv-rma.org.

Be sure to mark your calendar for our upcoming forums! On February 23, our Education Study Group will offer a look at possible solutions to the “School to Prison Pipeline” which affects so many city youth and the entire city. On March 23, the focus shifts to an examination of the Grand Jury system. The Grand Jury system has been in the news lately, but how much do we know about it? We’ll all know more soon.

And for those of you who find it difficult to make it to our monthly forums, we have exciting news: we’ll be recording and posting them on YouTube! Check out our November presentation on Child Care Subsidies in Monroe County at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAu1ojsSE64&feature=em-upload_owner#action=share. Thank you, Elaine Schmidt and Barbara Grosh.

Last but certainly not least, please start thinking about our Annual Meeting in May. This is the time when we elect board members, adopt a budget for the coming year, and celebrate the impressive work that YOU, the League’s dedicated members, have accomplished in the course of the year. We’re looking for your thoughts and suggestions!

In League,

Gloria Read (gloell@rochester.rr.com)

Mary Hussong-Kallen (mmhk@rochester.rr.com)

February Forum

Our Education Study Group is planning a forum for February 23, 2015 at 7:00 PM. The focus will be on the innovative programs that are being used to dismantle the “school to prison” pipeline here in the Greater Rochester area.

This forum has been “in the works” since League members Georgia DeGregorio and Barbara Grosh attended an October 28, 2014 presentation entitled “**What’s My Fate?**” showcasing Michelle Alexander’s book, **The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness**. After attending this discussion, the idea of hosting a community forum was discussed and planning began.

The forum will be held at Asbury First United Methodist Church on East Avenue and will be moderated by Asbury’s pastor, Rev. Lawrence Hargrave. The panelists include Monroe County Assistant District Attorney Shani Curry-Mitchell and Elaine Spaul, Director of the Center for Youth. These panelists will provide insight into the ways in which their programs are successfully helping to stem the tide of incarceration among Rochester’s most troubled youth.

The 90-minute forum will provide ample time for questions and answers after each panelist’s presentation. Issues such as job training, career readiness, alternatives to suspension programs, and many other current topics will help to make this a unique look at this complex issue and an interesting and hopeful journey. (Please note, this forum will partner with our March 23 presentation which will examine the Grand Jury system.)

Please mark your calendar and join us on February 23 as we begin to explore answers and solutions to a problem that has plagued our community and our country for many years.

Hasana Martin

Member, Education Study Group

Capitol Beat Blog

The LWVNY Capitol Beat blog has returned! As the legislative session ramps up, check in every Thursday for updates and musings from League Legislative Director, Barbara Bartoletti!

Please visit:

<http://www.lwvny-capitolbeat.blogspot.com/>

for this week’s post!

Advocacy News

UPDATE ON THE WEA

The New York State Senate passed eight bills of the Women's Equality Agenda on January 12, 2015. The votes were 62 to 0. The Assembly Speaker announced that the WEA vote in the other chamber would be one vote on the entire 10-point WEA package. During the Senate debate Senators Robach and Funke spoke in strong favor of each bill. The 2015 Senate bills cover fair pay, paid family leave, childcare, domestic violence, sexual harassment, pregnancy accommodation and human trafficking. The LWVNY website (<http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy/womens-issues/womens-equality-act.html>) gives the positions of the State League on these issues.

GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES SUPPORT OF "CIRCUIT BREAKER" FOR PROPERTY TAXES

Since 2006 the League has supported folding the entire STAR program into a real property "circuit breaker" plan. Additional state funds are necessary for using the foundation formula approach for education. LWVNY accepts the implementation of a tax cap only in conjunction with an entire change in financing education. After studying proposals for 25 years, we adopted these positions in 2006 after a year-long study. Additional funding required to provide all children with "a sound basic education" (as decided by the NYS Court of Appeals) should be provided by means of the state personal income tax, implemented in a progressive fashion. The circuit breaker program should be based on need and indexed to inflation.

HEALTH CARE SYSTEM IN NYS

LWVNY supports a single payer system for health care for all New Yorkers. Assembly Health Care Committee Chair Richard Gottfried held six hearings in the last two weeks of December 2014 on this issue. Co-President Mary Hussong-Kallen, 1st VP Katherine Smith and two LWV-RMA members, Sarah Liebschutz and Carole Hoffman, attended the Rochester hearing on December 8. Among the many benefits of this plan is the potential to lower real estate taxes because Medicaid expenses would be removed from county tax bills. In addition, using general state taxes would reduce administrative costs and aid coordination of regional planning.

View LWVNY health care testimony from December 16, 2014 at: <http://forum.lwv.org/document/official-lwv-nys-testimony-delivered-nys-assembly-health-care-committee-single-payer-bill-ne>.

Katherine Smith
Director, Advocacy

Look for the League Wherever You Go!

As many of you know, I've had the pleasure of being out west for the past three months. Of course, much of that pleasure centered around the care of my now-five-month-old grandchild. So much fun and so many memories! However, while I've been in Oregon, I'm learning more about the community.

On January 13th I attended a Media Luncheon hosted by the League of Women Voters PDX (Portland, Oregon). It was entitled "A Politicasting Pair (Hannah and Anna)." Hannah Hoffman and Anna Staver are reporters at the Salem Statesman Journal. They cleverly talked about Portland politics at the luncheon. Hannah and Anna often speak about the best and worst in Oregon politics. Marijuana, transportation, subsidized childcare, gun laws, school funding and the future of the printed newspaper were among the topics on that day. Interesting and entertaining! The luncheon was very well attended. Each January a similar luncheon is held involving the media.

Portland's LWV has a membership of approximately 200 members. All monthly meetings are held in their County Building Board Room at 7:00 PM. Unit meetings are held in various areas of the city, helping bring the membership closer together. The League has its own office in the downtown area. Everyone was very welcoming. I will be traveling back to Portland often and will continue to visit that League.

I would suggest to all of you that when you travel in the USA, if you have the time, contact the local League wherever you are. Try to visit/participate in one of their activities if you are there for an extended time. It's very interesting to meet other Leagues and learn how they function.

Sheila Abeling

2nd Vice-President, Naturalization & FEPC Chair

Do You Tweet?

If you use Twitter, consider following LWVNY. You'll find great information on many topics. Look for <https://twitter.com/LWVNY> next time you're online!



LWVNY recommends a video titled "This Won't Hurt a Bit" available online at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=syMjY0-cT9E>

Meet Brian Valenti

BACKGROUND

I was born and raised in Rochester - more specifically, West Irondequoit. I studied financial analysis at the University of Buffalo. I have parlayed this into a career in the financial services industry. I am currently an Associate Financial Consultant at Charles Schwab. My beautiful wife and I have been married for nearly two years, and my adorable son is nine years old.

WHY YOU JOINED LWV-RMA

A dear friend, Georgia DeGregorio, introduced me to the work of the League nearly five years ago. Her passion for the mission was contagious, and I quickly found myself dedicating time to civic engagement for the first time in my life. During my tenure with the League, I have learned so much about our community and feel honored to be a part of it.

LEAGUE ROLE/ACTIVITY

Currently I serve as the Director of Public Relations for our local chapter. This means I'm privileged to have the opportunity to educate others about the critical work the League does to educate our electorate and explore issues that affect us all.

QUOTE

If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.

Editor's Note:

In addition to serving as our Director of Public Relations, Brian has contributed his considerable expertise and wonderful common sense in many other ways! He's currently serving on our Board of Directors and has served as Vice-President and chaired our Budget Committee. He's a willing volunteer in Voter Registration, especially at Monroe Community College, and works with Sheila Abeling on our Fair Election Practices Campaign. You'll see him at our monthly forums and many League activities. When you read or hear about the League in the media, or receive those eblasts with news about upcoming events, you know that Brian has been busy. LWV-RMA benefits from all the ways that Brian makes democracy work!

We – all of us – are the LWV-RMA.

The better we get to know one another, the more we can accomplish together!

Member to Member

Well, we did it again – three years in a row! The weather cooperated and enabled us to have our Program Planning Meeting on Saturday, January 10, without a “weather event.”

Over 35 members brought their ideas for supporting or changing our program at the state level in preparation for the State Convention in June.

Our members did a great job in planning the program, with lunch, and moderating the table discussions, Thank you Phyllis Walker, Hasana Martin, Jeff Wagman, Gin Busack and Brian Valenti! (Unfortunately, on that day Lois Winterkorn, Michael Barbato and Ellen DeGregorio were laid low with the flu, but we appreciate their invaluable help in planning!)

Our local committee members enthusiastically shared what they are doing. We thank them for their conscientious preparation: Linda Howland and Larry Burnette for Energy, Judy Weinstein and Elaine Schmidt for Government, Hasana Martin and Camille Clayton for Education, and Anna Bundschuh and Lenore Youngman for Farm Worker Issues.

Returning to Membership Committee business, you may have wondered why we have been making last-minute phone calls to those who have buried their renewal envelopes under their holiday mail. We must pay a Per Member Payment (PMP) of \$50 for each active member to State and National Leagues for all they do for us. Our active roster as of January 31 determines the number of PMPs we must submit, so you can understand why we need to remove people who have moved or decided for personal reasons not to rejoin. With our record-keeping now current, we'll be sending out an updated member list to you soon.

For all your support and good work for the League, we thank you!

Georgia DeGregorio
Chair, Membership Committee

Do You Have...

Comments?

Suggestions?

News We Can Use?

Contact The Voter at:

lvrma-voter@rochester.rr.com



Sunshine Corner

IRONDEQUOIT WORKSHOP 12/11/14 OBSERVED BY PATRINA FREEMAN AND ELAINE SCHMIDT

Observers were cordially welcomed by Adam Bello. Meeting was run in an open manner. No LWV issues were noted.

IRONDEQUOIT TOWN BOARD 12/18/14 OBSERVED BY ELAINE SCHMIDT

Meeting was run in open manner. No LWV issues were noted.

Proclamations were made to the Irondequoit Pop Warner Football Team as NYS Eastern Regional Champs in Division 3 with a 13-0 record.

Proclamations also were made to the Eastridge Volleyball Team as Section 5 Champions in Class and the Irondequoit Football Team as Section 5 Champions in State semifinals in Class A.

Congratulations to all these fine student athletes!

In consideration of the members of the public who were present, Supervisor Bello gave a brief explanation of some resolutions about to be voted on and called upon department heads to provide brief background information on others.

The former East Irondequoit Library on Ridge Road will be put up for sale due to the pending move to the new Irondequoit Library on the town campus on Titus Rd.

Irondequoit will sponsor a Winterfest on 1/31/15 on the town campus from noon to 4:00 PM.

(To view the full minutes from this and other meetings, please click here: <http://www.irondequoit.org/>)

IRONDEQUOIT WORKSHOP 1/8/15 OBSERVED BY PATRINA FREEMAN

No LWV issues were noted. Agenda items for 1/15/15 Town Board meeting were reviewed.

IRONDEQUOIT TOWN BOARD 1/15/15 OBSERVED BY PATRINA FREEMAN AND ELAINE SCHMIDT

Meeting was run in open manner. No LWV issues were noted.

A skating rink has been created on the town campus. It operates from 8:00 AM-8:00 PM.

Several staff members have been promoted. An assistant to Supervisor Adam Bello was appointed. A Constituent Supervisor Coordinator has been hired to respond to any and all concerns of Irondequoit residents (the I-Help program). The town plans to improve property maintenance codes to deal with

abandoned properties and property maintenance issues.

(To view the full minutes from this and other meetings, please click here: <http://www.irondequoit.org/>)

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE 1/13/15 OBSERVED BY ELAINE SCHMIDT

The meeting was run in an open manner. No LWV issues were noted.

The new Legislature members were sworn in at the beginning of the session.

(To view the full minutes from this and other meetings, please click here: <http://www2.monroecounty.gov>)

Elaine Schmidt,
Member, Government Committee

It's Not Too Late to Celebrate Susan B. Anthony!

The Susan B. Anthony Luncheon is held each year in mid-February to celebrate Susan B. Anthony's February 15th birthday, to honor contemporary women who continue her legacy, and to raise awareness of the educational and inspirational programs offered by the Museum. The keynote speaker for the 2015 Susan B. Anthony Birthday Luncheon is Lynn Sherr, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and biographer.

LWV-RMA will have a table at the luncheon. Please join us on Wednesday, February 11 at the Riverside Convention Center! Tickets are \$60. Reserve your place at 585-262-3730 or www.lwv-rma.org and make your check out to LWV-RMA or use Paypal. This is fun for a good cause and a great way to begin the new year!



Picnic in the Park Photos - January 10th at Buckland Lodge





Coming Events!



February

- 6** First Friday, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM (1872 Café)
- 11** Susan B. Anthony House Annual Luncheon 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM (Convention Center)
- 12** LWV-RMA board meeting at 6:00 PM (location TBA)
- 12** Naturalization Ceremonies 10:00 AM (Monroe County Office Building)
- 12** Naturalization Ceremonies 1:00 PM (Federal Building)
- 23** Forum: School to Prison, 7:00 PM

March

- 6** First Friday, 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM (1872 Café)
- 12** Naturalization Ceremonies 10:00 AM (Monroe County Office Building)
- 12** Naturalization Ceremonies 1:00 PM (Federal Building)
- 12** LWV-RMA Board Meeting (BTH)
- 12** Rochester Federation of Women's Clubs Luncheon 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- 23** Forum: Grand Jury System 7:00 PM

Be sure to check your email and our website for other events as they are scheduled!

First Fridays

Are you free for lunch or a mid-day coffee break? If so, we'd like to spend it with you!

When: First Friday of the month between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM

Where: 1872 Café at 431 West Main Street (free parking across the street)

What: Chatting with other League members – topics are up to you

If you've wanted to get to know more members, here's an opportunity – because we think the work we love to do is more fun when we get to know one another better.

See you on:

Friday, February 6

Friday, March 6

Friday, May 1

Watch and Listen to our Forums on YouTube!

The League is trying something new, something that has had success in other cities - we are now recording our forums and posting the videos on YouTube for your viewing pleasure. Can't make the forum? Not a problem. Catch a 'replay' on YouTube!

To access the League's YouTube videos, please click on this link:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAu1ojsSE64&feature=em-upload_owner#action=share

Enjoy!

Board meets monthly on the second Thursday of each month. Board meetings are open to all members.

Government Committee meets monthly. For details, call Elaine Schmidt at 530-7414.

Membership Committee meets monthly. For details, call Georgia DeGregorio at 787-9692.

10:00 AM Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Monroe County Office Building at 39 W. Main Street.

1:00 PM Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Federal Court House at 100 State Street.

Forums are open to the public. Calendar information is subject to change.

For more complete information, consult our website at www.LWV-RMA.org, call 262-3730 or e-mail us at info@lwv-rma.org



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
ROCHESTER METROPOLITAN AREA

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

Rochester VOTER

A Monthly Publication of the
League of Women Voters/Rochester Metropolitan Area

**MARCH VOTER
DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 15!**



SPEAK UP, BE HEARD,
IF YOU DON'T SAY A WORD, EVERYTHING WILL STAY THE SAME WAY

Officers:

- Mary Hussong-Kallen**
Co-President
- Gloria S. Read**
Co-President
- Katherine Smith**
First Vice-President
- Sheila Abeling**
Second Vice-President
- Ida Holloran**
Treasurer

Board of Directors:

- Brian Valenti**
Director
- Gin Busack**
Director
- Barbara Grosh**
Director
- Ernest DuBois**
Director/Parliamentarian

Off-Board:

Georgia DeGregorio
Chair, Membership

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, Mary Hussong-Kallen
Layout/Design, Chris Burleigh*

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK! 
We know you'll "like" us!
www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

Join the League Today!



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Check Amount: _____

Level of Membership: _____

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

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