



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.

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The LWV-RMA presents

New York State Legislative Approaches to Fight Climate Change

OUR EXPERT PANEL:

Carole Camp, member of the Citizens Climate Lobby, will discuss A8372, the bill proposing a carbon tax in NYS

Sue Hughes-Smith, lecturer at RIT, will discuss A7497, the bill to require 100% clean energy by 2030

Barbara Grosh, member of LWV-RMA and Mothers Out Front, will discuss A7625, the bill relating to financial surety for major facilities, vessels, and railroads (Bakken oil)

Melissa Peterson, member of Mothers Out Front, will discuss A8011, the bill to require divesting the State's public pension funds from fossil fuels companies

OUR DISTINGUISHED MODERATOR:

Katherine Smith, member of LWV-RMA

Monday, February 22, at 7:00 PM

Brighton Town Hall Auditorium

2300 Elmwood Avenue, Rochester NY 14618

Handicap accessible • Free parking

Register now!

www.lwv-rma.org or 585-262-3730



Presidents' Corner

Welcome to 2016! As always, we're off to a busy start...

January brought us together for First Friday. We're glad to see so many becoming "regulars," and of course we're happy to meet the new folks who drop by. Whichever group you fit into, we'd love to see you on February 5!

Turnout for our annual program planning general membership meeting, Picnic in the Park, was wonderful. Thanks for all the work done by our Membership, Government and Energy Committees, and the Education and Poverty Study Groups!

Our upcoming forum on pending legislation on issues affecting climate change (see the article on the right) promises to be most informative and very timely. Please help us spread the word that this is not for members only!

Save the date: Saturday, April 6, when we join with other local Leagues in our area for annual LWVNYS regional training. This year, the gathering will be held in Buffalo. This is an opportunity to meet other Leaguers and share ideas. Focus areas this year will be: Get Out the Vote, Candidate Events, Action, Constitutional Convention, Women's Suffrage, and more. We'll keep you informed as plans develop.

Finally, while it's tempting to relax now that the elections are over, this is actually just the time for changing gears. Here are some examples: Katherine Smith (Advocacy) meets regularly with representatives to advocate for our League positions on issues. Carole Hoffman (Program) coordinates monthly forums to keep us informed on vital issues. Gin Busack (Voter Services) is already working with other organizations to register new voters and motivate them to get out and vote in the 2016 presidential elections. Beth Feldman and Gail Wilder schedule volunteers to visit high schools and colleges to register new voters and convince students of the importance of voting. Elaine Schmidt (Government) organizes the Observer Corps, members who attend their local government meetings and report on issues addressed and operating procedures. They all need help – your help! Please give these activities some thought and contact us if you have questions...

In League,

Gloria S. Read gloell@rochester.rr.com
Mary Hussong-Kallen mmhk@rochester.rr.com

February Forum:

NY LEGISLATIVE APPROACHES TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

The year is 2016, the level of carbon in the atmosphere is over 400 ppm, the world committed in Paris to make changes, the Pope has pontificated, and climate change is accelerating. What to do?

The answer is bound to be a mix of each of us doing what we can personally, with all of us doing what we can collectively.

On February 22 we will sponsor a panel to inform us about four different approaches to fight climate change which are under consideration by the NYS Assembly and Senate. Come and learn more.

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Carole Camp, member of the *Citizens Climate Lobby*, will discuss A8372, the bill proposing a carbon tax in NYS.

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Barbara Grosh, member of LWV-RMA and *Mothers Out Front*, will discuss A7625, the bill relating to financial surety for major facilities, vessels, and railroads (Bakken oil).

Melissa Peterson, member of *Mothers Out Front*, will discuss A8011, the bill to require divesting the State's public pension funds from fossil fuels companies.

Our own **Katherine Smith** will serve as *moderator*.

Mark your calendar and plan to join us at the Brighton Town Hall at 7:00 PM on Monday, February 22. Register now.

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/channel/UCjC9NCupn9AhZpH2k83m5_g

Enjoy!

Naturalization

Happy New Year to all!

Please check our 2016 Naturalization schedule on our website, www.lwv-rma.org. Consider observing a ceremony this year. I guarantee you that you will enjoy yourself and find it a very moving experience. You many even want to volunteer to help the League with future oath ceremonies. Please contact me at sheiler162007@gmail.com or 585-223-6819. We would love to have your join our volunteers.

On January 14th the League participated in two Naturalizations. In the Monroe County Office Building at 10:00 AM Mimi Wilson welcomed candidates. At 1:00 PM Lois Winterkorn met new citizens at the Federal Building. Thank you Mimi and Lois for volunteering!

Sheila Abeling

2nd Vice-President, Naturalization Chair

Voter Services Update

The mid-term elections are over, but your Voter Services Committee has stayed very active.

At the invitation of Estelle Norwood-Evans, Barbara Grosh spoke to her Political Science classes at Nazareth College on the topic of voting rights. We also continued to expand our college campus initiative with Katherine Smith responding to a request from the University of Rochester to participate in their Student Activism Expo. Our Education Study Group, under the direction of Beth Feldman, also extended its reach to East High, with Mary Olinger and Lois Winterkorn presenting our PowerPoint presentation on the history and importance of our vote and registering eligible students for their all-important first vote in the 2016 elections.

The new year promises to be very busy as we continue to focus not only on voter registration, but also voter participation. Prominent on our agenda is our continued co-sponsorship with The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester (TIAR) in the Voter Alliance of Rochester initiative. Active only in Presidential election years since its inception in 2004, The Voter Alliance works with many faith and community groups, encouraging voter registration and participation, with a focus on areas in the City with low voter participation connected to high rates of poverty.

Our student initiatives also appear to be going strong with a new invitation to participate in the RIT Spring 2016 Community Service Fair. Plans are underway for spring semester bookings at the city high schools for the Education Study Group.

The one common thread for all of these activities is our need for volunteers. We need YOU!!! Think about it: commitments can be long or short (whatever time you can give), training is always provided, and you never go alone. If doing good work in good company appeals to you, please contact Gin Busack at ginbusack@aol.com.

Gin Busack

Voter Services Chair

LWV Collaborates With Students at MCC

Georgia DeGregorio, Ann Carmody and Gail Wilder are working with the Monroe Community College (MCC) standing committee, **Rock the Vote**. We have registered new voters at summer orientation sessions and at the Constitution Day event held in September. One or more of us attend their regular meetings, and we offer support from the League and ideas for possible programs.

They have been offering pizza events on the nights of the national political debates and collecting a core group to offer more programs on campus. In the spring semester they are interested in an event centered on gun control, possibly including a discussion with James Shepard, Rochester's retired Chief of Police and new County Legislator.

We have provided them with contact information for the Board of Elections so they can pursue bringing voting machines to campus for demonstrations. At each event we provide voter registration forms and offer to take the completed forms to the Board of Elections. We have also provided *Who Represents You*, the 2015 Voter Guide, organ donation information and New Voter brochures.

Their Student Government President meets monthly with the other student government presidents of the local colleges and universities in our area, and he will propose the idea of working together to share ideas and political events.

In addition to our work at MCC, Voter Services Chair Gin Busack has spearheaded a successful voter registration drive at The College at Brockport, and we expect to return next semester to continue that work.

We are continuing to make connections with the area colleges and universities to determine how we can facilitate voter registration and share the expertise of LWV-RMA.

Gail Wilder

Voter Services Committee Member

Sunshine Corner

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE DECEMBER 8, 2015 OBSERVED BY ELAINE SCHMIDT

Dr. Dan Ross was one of eight speakers who addressed the Legislature. Dr. Ross expressed concern that Monroe County Child Protective Services would need increased staff to meet the County's responsibilities to county citizens.



A speaker from the advocacy group *Mothers Out Front* proposed that Emergency Response expenses associated with accidents including oil tankers in Monroe County should be paid by the private companies involved.

The County Budget was presented followed by several amendments by the minority party. The amendments included proposals for \$50,000 help fund a shelter for the homeless, an increase in child care monies and money to reinstate Sunday hours at the Central Library. All the amendments were defeated along party lines.

The Legislature voted to increase the Sheriff's salary. (To view the full minutes from this and other meetings, please click here: <http://www2.monroecounty.gov>)

WEBSTER TOWN BOARD NOVEMBER 5, 2105 OBSERVED BY LOIS WINTERKORN

The meeting was attended by 10 non-board citizens.

A public hearing was held to consider adoption of a budget with a property tax levy in excess of the limit established by General Municipal Law Sec 3-C. The tax cap is \$250,000; anticipated health care costs for 2016, however, are \$400,000.

(To view the full minutes from these and other meetings, please click here: <http://www.ci.webster.ny.us>)

The Observer Corps encourages all members to attend their local town board meetings or City Council meetings. If you are interested in reporting on meetings, or if you have questions about becoming an observer, please call Elaine Schmidt at 530-7414.

Elaine Schmidt

Observer Corps Coordinator, Government Committee Member



Money in Politics

The new federal budget bill passed by Congress in December and signed by the President contains two provisions regarding money in politics.

One provision blocks the IRS from creating rules to curb growing abuse of tax law used by "social welfare" 501 (c) 3 organizations from raising and spending money on political campaigns. Donors to these organizations are not required to disclose their contributions.

LWVUS opposes this provision.

The second provision bars the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) from finalizing rules requiring corporations to disclose their campaign spending to their investors, thereby ensuring the continuation of the status quo. Currently, no one, including shareholders, can determine how much a corporation is contributing to campaigns.

The LWVUS position states in part "...that the methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know..." Our federally elected officials appear not be interested in supporting this.

LWVNY will continue to support state legislation that supports money in campaigns being made public.

Katherine Smith

1st Vice-President, Advocacy Director

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Paid Family Leave

On January 13, 2016 Governor Cuomo announced in his State of the State message that Paid Family Leave (PFL) is one of his top priorities for passage this Legislative session. LWV-RMA has been following this issue and plans to hold an informational forum on April 18 at the AAUW House.

An Albany Lobby Day is scheduled for February 2 to promote a PFL plan. The statewide PFL coalition believes a plan will be passed this year. If you are interested in going to Albany, please call Katherine Smith at 334-3991 or the LWV-RMA office at 262-3730.

To hear an excellent summary of pros and cons of PFL, listen to the December 23, 2015 podcast of WXXI's "Connections with Evan Dawson" at <http://wxxi-news.org/term/paid-leave>. Evan interviewed guests who spoke on both sides of the issue.

Katherine Smith

1st Vice-President, Advocacy Director

October First Friday Photos



November First Friday Photos



January Program Planning Meeting Photos



Do You Tweet?

If you use Twitter, consider following us! You'll find great information on many topics. Look for [@LWVrochesterNY](https://twitter.com/LWVrochesterNY) next time you're online!

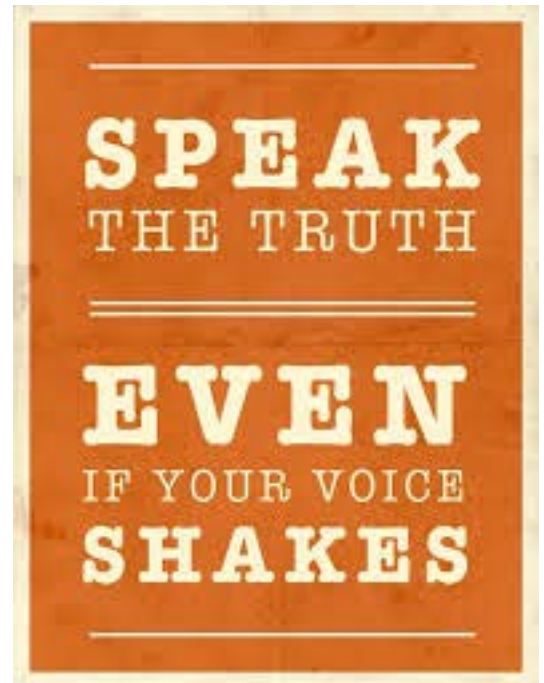


Advocacy Works!

Capitol Beat blog

From LWNYS

Capitol Beat blog by LWNYS Legislative Director Barbara Bartoletti and LWNYS Director of Program and Policy Jennifer Wilson is again live! You'll find the inside story on many NYS government news events here. If you haven't visited before, be sure to check it out, and then make it a habit when the Legislature is in session: www.lwvny-capitolbeat.blogspot.com/





Coming Events!



February

- 2 Board Meeting (6:30 PM – Asbury First United Methodist Church, East Avenue)
- 5 First Friday (11:00 AM – 1:00 PM at Corner Bakery Café)
- 10 Susan B. Anthony Birthday Luncheon (11:30 AM at Convention Center)
- 11 Naturalization Ceremony (10:00 AM at Monroe County Office Building)
- 11 Naturalization Ceremony (1:00 PM at the Federal Building)
- 16 Book Club: *The Age of Ambition: Chasing Fortune, Truth and Faith in the New China* by Evan Osnot (1:00 PM at Greenhouse Cafe, 2271 East Main Street, Rochester)
- 22 Forum: NY Legislative Approaches to Fight Climate Change (7:00 PM at Brighton Town Hall)

March

- 1 Board Meeting (6:30 PM at Asbury First United Methodist Church, East Avenue)
- 4 First Friday (11:00 AM – 1:00 PM at Corner Bakery Café)
- 12 Naturalization Ceremony (10:00 AM at Monroe Community College)
- 12 Naturalization Ceremony (10:00 AM at Monroe County Office Building)
- 15 Book Club: *Waiting for Snow in Havana* by Carlos Eire (1:00 PM at Greenhouse Cafe, 2271 East Main Street, Rochester)
- 21 Forum (TBA)

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 – and note our new location: the Corner Bakery Café in College Town!

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

Where: 1367 Mt. Hope Avenue (free parking behind)

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 5
- Friday, March 4
- Friday, April 1
- Friday, May 6
- Friday, June 3

FREE PARKING (ramp garage and open air lot) BEHIND THE RESTAURANT!

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK[®]



Board meets monthly on the first Tuesday 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
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585-262-3730
www.LWV-RMA.org

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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

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

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- Gloria S. Read**
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- Katherine Smith**
First Vice-President
- Sheila Abeling**
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Treasurer

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- Brian Valenti**
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- Judy Weinstein**
Director

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*

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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