

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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Save the Date for Our November Forum!

Do we concur with the Great Lakes Ecosystem Position of LWV Michigan?

November 8, 2012, 7-9 pm

Brighton Town Hall • Auditorium

The goal of our November forum is to provide information that will enable members to address this question. Distinguished Professor Joseph Makarewicz of SUNY Brockport will help us understand what impact this position would have in advocating for our own Lake Ontario as part of the Great Lakes system. All 8 state Leagues that share the Great Lakes shoreline are being asked to explore and then adopt this position.
(See page 4 for more information.)

As an added attraction, we will share with you the Watershed Demonstration, which the Natural Resources Committee has been presenting in schools.



The Agenda:

- 7:00 pm Watershed Demonstration
- 7:30 pm Presentation by Dr. Joseph C. Makarewicz of SUNY Brockport
- 8:30 pm Discussion & Reaching Concurrence

Visitors are welcome to attend. The information presented and potential impact of our actions are of great interest to our area and the entire Great Lakes region.



President's Corner



As I write this message, I find our League members in the midst of election activities: giving talks, handing out Vote411 flyers, answering phone calls, and preparing for our October 30th debate with Maggie and Louise. We will have 100 tickets for LWV/RMA members to attend the debate, so email or call or email info@lwv-rma.org if

you would like to attend. It will be held at Nazareth College at 7 pm.

Yes, we could use your help! Look through this Voter to learn about all the opportunities for reaching out to our Monroe County community, and then give the chairs a call.

Our September forum on Civil Discourse generated an ad hoc committee to address questions raised. In this Voter, we will address the questions asked regarding what other "first world" countries are doing about health care for its citizens.

We appreciate Judy Weinstein accepting the role of moderator for the October Forum on Campaign Finance Reform in NYS. I hope you were able to attend. We also added a "Know Your Vote411.org" feature that was explained by Local Government chair, Elaine Schmidt.

Soon you will be receiving our annual fund raising letter. This will give each of you an opportunity to support the outstanding work your co-members do. You have been generous in the past and I know you will all be equally so in this appeal.

Please remember that all our board meetings are open to our members and we hope you will take the opportunity to join us some evening soon.

Georgia DeGregorio
President

Advocacy Report

This fall LWVUS has been active in supporting the overturn of new voter suppression laws in AZ, FL, OH, PA, TX, SC and twenty other states. The 2012 rules in these states have tried to curtail voting by requiring Voter ID cards, shortening voting periods and purging registration lists shortly before Election Day. In NYS, contrary to the national trend, 2012 has seen an expansion of the voter registration list because obtaining a registration form online is now possible. Forms are available in English and Spanish at: www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html.

LWVUS has joined other groups in state and federal courts as we attempt to stop the national movement to discourage voting. We have been very successful, since many of these new restrictions violate the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Proponents of these rules claim their purpose is to protect the integrity of the vote, but have not been able to show one case of voter-impersonation fraud, so judges have been ruling against these attempted suppression measures.

With less than a month to go before Election Day, LWVUS continues to challenge these measures that are costly, unnecessary and undemocratic. We have worked for almost a century to expand the rights of every eligible citizen to vote. We'll continue to support legislation to protect and enhance these rights, which are fundamental to maintaining our form of democratic governance. The League, with your support, will continue to file court cases whenever legislators are not responsibly establishing voter registration and ballot-casting procedures that encourage everyone over 18 to meet their responsibility on November 6th.

Katherine Smith
Chair, Advocacy Committee

Look for us on Facebook!

We know you'll "like" us!

<http://www.facebook.com/lwvofrma>

Milestones

Look for this new feature to begin soon.

If you have League-related news about our members (recognitions, obituaries, etc.), please send info to LWVRMA-VOTER@rochester.rr.com and note "Milestones" in the subject line.



Civil Discourse Forum — Health Care Report

Your new ad hoc Health Care Committee has combined all the questions that were asked at the Civil Discourse Forum into four categories: Cost, Care Delivery, Quality of Care, and General/Other. Most questions focused on the cost of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). We are exploring these areas of concern as well as we can, since most presentations on this issue are light on hard facts, and resource materials are not neatly catalogued.

One question, however, is easier to respond to: *How does the U.S. compare to other first world countries in providing health care services to its citizens?* A very good answer to this question is found in a book written by T. R. Reid, **The Healing of America**. In all areas documented, the U.S. ranks well below most countries in providing essential care with the exception of one criterion: *"Health Expenditure as a Percentage of GDP, 2005."* (pg 9) We rank first with 15.3% of GDP. Switzerland, France, & Germany expend 10-11%; Canada and Sweden, 9%; UK and Japan, 8%; and Mexico and Taiwan, 6%.

Now that it is almost 2013, how has that changed? Interestingly, each country has its own version of health care delivery: some totally funded by the state, some a mixture of state and private insurances. This book is a good read and offers more details than is possible to provide in this short article.

We are also looking at the probable impact on Monroe County citizens when all components of the ACA are implemented. One of our researchers, Lillian Zhu, contacted the LWVNYS Health Care Specialist who forwarded us a map entitled *"Impact of Federal Health Reform on New York's Uninsured."* In our region, the 11% uninsured today would be reduced to 6% with 54,000 people gaining coverage. This leaves unanswered the question of who is still left out and why.

Want to join us? Email me at georgiatd1@gmail.com

Georgia DeGregorio
President

FEPC & Naturalization Report

Election Day is fast approaching. Please get out to vote! Check on a friend/family member and encourage them to vote. Getting our eligible voting citizens to the polls is a must!

ABSENTEE BALLOTS

The Monroe County Board of Elections and the League of Women Voters/Rochester Metro Area will be opening absentee ballots on November 6th, Election Day, at noon. We still need volunteers. Please contact Sheila at sheiler162007@gmail.com or 585-223-6819, if you are interested in helping.

FEPC

The Fair Election Practices Campaign (FEPC) continues through November 6th, Election Day. Our Committee has been busy hearing complaints. The FEPC is trying to encourage a fair, issue-oriented campaign. Special thanks go out to our committee members: Jim Morris (chairperson), Ralph Esposito, Tracy Logel, Channing Philbrick and Kay Wallace, as well as alternates John Curran, Tom Frey, Lois Giess, Michael Miller, Jim Peters, Sue Roberts, Dick D. Rosenbloom and Jim Turner.

NATURALIZATION

The League welcomes new citizens at the Monroe County Office Building on November 8th. Barb Hendry will represent the League at the Naturalization Ceremony. On November 9th, Sheila Abeling will meet our newest citizens at the Marines' Birthday Celebration at the Federal Building. Thank you to our League members for participating in oath ceremonies!

Sheila Abeling

Chair, FEPC and Naturalization Committee



Membership Committee Update

We are always looking for ways to make sure our members are recognized for the talents they bring to our League activities. Please make sure to note the request for member news in our new Voter feature, "Milestones". You are our treasure and it would be great to be able to share with everyone the great work that is being done.

Membership is responsible for sending out the bills for membership dues. You should receive yours soon after October 2nd – and certainly by the time you read this edition of The Voter. (If you use email, your bill will be sent electronically, so if you don't receive it please check your Junk Mail folder. If you still don't see the dues invoice, please contact me and I will resend.)

Payments may now be made through our website using our PayPal feature. Of course, payment can always be made by printing and completing our registration form and then mailing a check. If you have any questions about the bill you received, please contact me at etdegregorio@hotmail.com or my home phone (585) 473-3502. Be sure your voicemail message includes a good time to reach you.

We are adding a survey to the membership renewal so that we can better match members to our many activities. It is optional, but we would love to hear from you and would like to respect the level of commitment that makes you comfortable.

We will soon start planning the January League meeting which will focus on our next year's platforms. If you would like to help with the planning, please let me know.

We are also looking for people to help with the registration process at each of our events. This would be a commitment of one hour (at most) before an event. We're looking for you cheerful, social members who like to meet new people!

Thank you for all you do!!

Ellen DeGregorio
Director, Membership Committee



Proposal for New York State Great Lakes Ecosystem Concurrence

The Lake Michigan League of Women Voters has invited all 8 state leagues located within the Great Lakes ecosystem to work in coalition with one another to educate the public and legislators on the urgent needs of those lakes. In order to accomplish this multi-state lobbying effort, they are asking all of the Great Lakes State Leagues to pass by concurrence in 2013, the Great Lakes Ecosystem Position developed by the Michigan LWV.

Concurrence is a process by which the state league can adopt a stated position which has already been adopted, after advance study of the issues involved, by another state league. Local leagues evaluate the analysis behind the original adoption of the position and can concur or not concur with the position as stated.

THE ACTUAL PROPOSAL FOR CONCURRENCE STATES:

"The League of Women Voters of Michigan supports preserving and enhancing the environmental integrity and quality of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Ecosystem. We support the attainment and maintenance of high water quality standards throughout the Great Lakes Basin, with emphasis on water pollution prevention. Water conservation should be a high priority of all governments in the Basin."

Some of the components of the proposal include:

- I. Protective Measures (especially limiting uses of "fragile," historical, cultural and scenic shoreline areas and preserving wild and pristine areas)
- II. Threats to the Ecosystem (particularly inefficient or excessive water uses and destruction of marshes and other wetlands)
- III. Public Participation (relevant information should be readily available to the public)
- IV. Role of Government (including coordination of functions among various governmental agencies and elimination of unnecessary overlap)
- V. Research Priorities (effective, non-toxic control and removal of invasive aquatic and terrestrial species, as well as restoration of health to the overall resource)

The issue is timely, and the concurrence is an opportunity for us to join forces with other Leagues to accomplish what individual Leagues cannot.

Please join us on November 8 at 7 pm at the Brighton Town Hall to learn more about the Great Lakes Ecosystem, and our role (and indeed our responsibility) in protecting this natural resource.

Additional information can be found at www.lwvmi.org/positions/naturalResources/NatResources-Great-Lakes.pdf.

Voter Registration Recap

It's been so busy the past few weeks that a lady in my synagogue has been worried because she seldom sees me. I think she thinks I'm sick, or that my marriage is on the rocks, but in fact I've been out registering voters most Saturdays since mid-July, and this week the calendar lists 7 different voter registration events. Voter registration has taken me into parts of the city I've never been to, and I've met wonderful people everywhere I go.

On a recent Saturday, I attended a youth rally held at the Liberty Pole. The youth were supposed to march in from somewhere else, so I had a little time to kill before they got there. I took my clipboard and voter registration cards and joined the group of people waiting for buses. There I got quite a lecture from an older gentleman on how important it was to get young people to register. I enjoyed it because he explained my own views so clearly: voting is part of taking responsibility. They need to get jobs, they need to settle down, they need to pay attention, etc, etc. By the time he caught his bus and the youths arrived en masse, I felt that I was truly offering them the entrance to responsible adulthood!

Most of the people I talk with are happy and appreciative that I've taken the time to be there with my voter registration cards. They seem to agree with the older gentleman and me that it's an important step and they're eager to take it. They are all over the map as far as how prepared they are for the responsibility of voting. There are some for whom it's news that this is a presidential election year. Some don't know what a political party is, so I remind them about when Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton contended, and tell them that a person who wants to weigh in on that contest (the primary) should register as a Democrat, while those who want to help decide between Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich should register Republican. But some others are very knowledgeable – they know the important races, the candidates, the deadlines. They often enjoy discussing politics with me, and it's fun to hear fresh points of view.

What I really love about registering voters is that you're catching people at their best — they want to be responsible, to be part of something big, to help make tough choices. In the moment they register, they feel optimistic that their vote matters and that they count. They know they need to step up to do their part. It always feels good to help someone register.

Another pleasure of the summer has been working with other groups. In addition to our participation

in the Rochester Voter Alliance, we've worked with Rev. Fannie Etheridge-Reeves, who started a big ball rolling with the Greek-based organizations in Rochester. Originally she planned on organizing her own sorority, the Deltas, but when others heard what she was doing, they asked to participate and so she's been coordinating about a dozen sororities and fraternities all summer long. It's been a joy to meet with them from time to time to provide some of our materials, such as Who Represents You, and to answer

their questions. They've been targeting every church and many businesses in the city all summer long. What hard-working partners they are in building up the voter participation rate!

I'm pondering now how we can keep the momentum going after registration closes. If you have ideas, or would like to help, let me know (415-8251, barbara@grosh.net)!

Barbara Grosh,
Director, Voter Services



Did you know...

- that we're on Facebook? 

We know you'll "like" us!

Visit us at: www.facebook.com/lwvofrm

- that Elizabeth MacNamara, President of LWVUS, writes a blog? It's posted on the Huffington Post website www.huffingtonpost.com. Just type "Elizabeth MacNamara" in the Search box..
- that Elizabeth MacNamara, President of LWVUS, posts regularly on Twitter? If you have a Twitter account, follow and "tweet" her at "LWV of the US."
- that LWVUS maintains a blog on its website? For info on many topical issues, read (and then comment) at www.lwv.org/blog.



Sunshine Corner

HENRIETTA TOWN BOARD 9/5/12

Observer: Jane Schmitt

Our observer notes that there is still an acoustics problem at the town board meetings.

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

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE 9/11/12

Observer: Elaine Schmidt

The county continues to work on a new policy for county burial of people who apply for assistance for the burial of their loved ones.

More information on fracking waste water was presented by the group called R-CAUSE. The fracking industry has 7 health and safety exemptions from the health and safety laws. One of these exemptions is that at this time fracking waste water is not labeled as "hazardous" waste although from the information presented on the waste it is clearly hazardous!

Another observation: The Monroe County Water Authority Board has 7 members: 5 Republicans, an Independent and a Conservative. No Democrats.

Legislator Ted O'Brien challenged the composition of the Board stating that the law required minority and majority representation. The reply from the Republican side was that the composition satisfied the requirements of the law.

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

IRONDEQUOIT TOWN BOARD 9/18/12

Observer: Elaine Schmidt

Well-run, open meeting. No LWV issues. There will be a special town board meeting to authorize bond resolutions for the 2013 capital improvement projects.

(To view the full minutes from this and other meetings, please click here: <https://www.irondequoitrec.com/webink7/Browse.aspx>)

Reminder:

**BE READY TO VOTE
ON NOVEMBER 6TH!**

"Build Your Ballot" at

Vote411.org

All the information you need to be prepared when you go to your polling place!

VOTE411.ORG
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

**Your One-Stop Shop for
Nonpartisan Election Information!**

Find out:

How to register

Where to vote

**What candidates are on the ballot in your district
What some of their positions are**

**If any candidate is not providing information,
ask why not!**

**For Voters Guide information specific to New York,
go to www.lwvny.org and click on
[Vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org)**

For more information, contact:
League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street
Albany, New York 12207
Email: lwvny@lwvny.org
Tel: (518)465-4162
Fax: (518)465-0812

www.vote411.org





Coming Events!



October

- 25** LWV/RMA Board Meeting
- 30** Debate between candidates for the 25th Congressional District: incumbent Louise Slaughter and challenger Maggie Brooks at Nazareth College. Sponsored by LWV/RMA and WROC, channel 8

November

- 5** Voter Deadline
- 6** **Election Day**
- 8** Concurrence on Michigan's Great Lakes Consensus

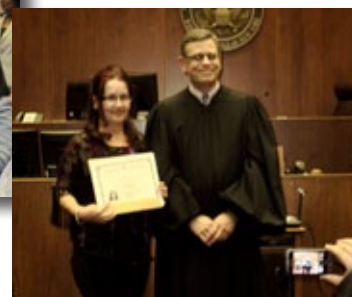
NOVEMBER CONTINUED

- 8** Naturalization Ceremony, 10 am
- 9** Special Marine Birthday Naturalization Ceremony, 1 pm
- 15** Local Government meeting
- 29** LWV/RMA Board meeting

January

- 12** Saturday Member Meeting at Buckland Park, 1341 Westfall Road in Brighton

Photos from this month's Naturalization Ceremonies



Board meets at 5:30 pm on the fourth Thursday of each month. Board meetings are open to membership. Local Government Committee meets monthly at the Brighton Town Hall, Stage Room. For details, call Elaine Schmidt 530-7414. Membership Committee meets monthly at Brighton Town Hall, Stage Room. For details, call Ellen DeGregorio 473-3502. 10:00 am Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Monroe County Office Building, 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 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



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League of Women Voters/Rochester Metropolitan Area

**Rochester/Metro
League of Women Voters**

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Goals of the League of Women Voters:

- To encourage informed citizen participation in government and politics
- To influence public policy through education and advocacy

**NEXT VOTER
DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 5!**



**Exercise
Your Franchise
and
VOTE!**

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