

Thevor

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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Join Us for Our March Event!

Thursday, March 14 6:00 pm

Networking and light refreshments available at 5:30 pm

RACE: Are We So Different?

Rochester Museum and Science Center

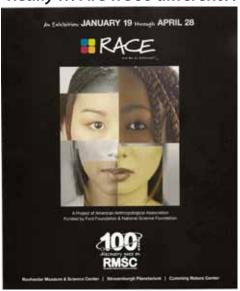
Thursday, March 14th at 6:00 pm

Group Rate Ticket \$6.00 per person

Join us for a docent-led opportunity to experience a new traveling exhibit at the Rochester Museum & Science Center.

The exhibit, developed by the American Anthropological Association in collaboration with the Science Museum of Minnesota, explores the issue of RACE through biological, cultural and historical viewpoints.

Really ... Are we so different??



To register for the event, call 262-3730 or visit our website at: http://lwv-rma.org/signup2.php



President's Corner



This is the time of the year when so much is happening at once, it's hard to keep up (and you thought that was only at election time!!).

I hope you thought the conversation on February 26th was valuable and thoughtprovoking. It was an assessment of possible League action related

to the impact on Rochester of the riots of July '64 and the subsequent efforts to provide equality of opportunity for our fellow citizens in Rochester. There will be a follow-up opportunity for you to attend a guided tour at the Rochester Museum Science Center on March 14th entitled "Race: Are we so different?" (For additional details, please see page 1.)

On February 5th I attended the Lobby Day training in Albany representing our League. The concerns we talked about on January 12th are outlined in the next column on this page.

Kathy Smith, our Advocacy chair, will be asking some of you to accompany her to one-on-one meetings with your own state legislator to help her by taking notes. This is our League doing what it is best known for: our grassroots effort to influence our representatives by sharing the positions we have on subjects being debated.

Governor Cuomo's budget is having an impact on groups which have depended on the state for funding. Many of their programs are being grouped into 6 larger groups which will be competing for diminishing funds in a competitive process. Two groups have contacted me, and I agreed to let them share their concerns with you on page 8. They are a natural fit with our state and national positions on "Meeting Basic Human Needs" which "support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families." (LWVUS Impact on Issues, A Guide to Public Policy Positions, 2010-2012)

In League,

Georgia DeGregorio President

Lobby Day - Albany February 5, 2013

Lobby Day was, as always, informative and energizing, as well as a great opportunity for networking. The key focus areas and presenters were:

ELECTION LAW by Aimee Allaud, Specialist **HEALTH CARE** By Sally Dreslin, Specialist **TRANSPORTATION** by Gladys Gifford, Specialist **EDUCATION** by Marion Bott, Specialist NY WOMEN'S EQUALITY by Barb Thomas, Specialist

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM by Sally Robinson, Specialist

Georgia DeGregorio has summarized the day's presentations – to review her summary, please visit http://lwv-rma.org/lobbyday.pdf

Be sure to check the LWVNY website regularly to see what testimony is being presented and follow specific bills and other actions taking place in Albany.

For additional information, please contact Barbara Bartoletti, LWVNY Legislative Lobbyist, at 518-465-4162.

Celebrate Sunshine Week

Help celebrate March 11-17, 2013 by getting to know your community better.

- Attend your county, city or town government meetings
- Join a League member in being an observer at legislative meetings (training will be provided).
- Pick up the 2013 edition of "Who Represents You" at a League forum or
- Go here:

Trivia Question: What President's birthday is being recognized by celebrating Sunshine Week? See page 7 for answer.

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Untold Truths: Immigration & You

During the January 28th press conference on the bipartisan Committee for Immigration Reform, Charles Schumer remarked "...For the first time ever, there is more political risk in opposing immigration reform than in supporting it..."

Our timing, then, could not be better for our April forum.

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE: MONDAY, APRIL 22,2013

UNTOLD TRUTHS: IMMIGRATION & YOU

A forum offered by League of Women Voters/RMA in collaboration with Greater Rochester Coalition for Immigration Justice, will be held at Brighton Town Hall Auditorium, 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Our speakers for the evening are Andrea Callan, a constitutional lawyer with the NYCLU; The Rev. Richard Witt, the Director of the Rural & Migrant Ministry and Rev. Chava Redonnet, Chaplain at Church of Oscar Romero at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. Ms. Callan will address state and federal immigration reform efforts, Rev. Witt will focus on the Justice for Farm Workers Campaign (JFW) and Rev. Redonnet will recount personal stories of the Wayne County migrant population she serves.

For background, may we suggest *Into the Beautiful North*, a novel by Luis Alberto Urrea.

Thanks to the Immigration Committee: Gin Busack, Sally Chamberlin, Lory Ghertner, Betty Schaeffer and Alison Wilder.

Gin Busack & Elaine Schmidt at Marketplace Mall. Valentines from the LWVRMA. 2/9/13 the Gov Committee hosted a table at Marketplace Mall in front of Bon Tons. Anyone who stopped by got a valentine with our next programs on it.



Women's Equality Agenda

LWVNY has joined a coalition supporting Governor Cuomo's NY for Women's Equality Agenda. Please call your NY Assembly Member and NY Senator NOW to express your support for this 10-point plan listed on the following pages!

Whenever a comprehensive program bill is presented or several bills are introduced, you'll receive an alert to contact them again. When the legislation is ready for a vote you may wish to speak specifically to a couple of points you know well, or you may opt to speak as a constituent to the League's position that all these areas of gender inequality need to be addressed in the 2013 session.

Information for contacting Monroe County Assembly Members and NY Senators :

Joseph Morelle: 467-0410 or morellej@assembly.state.ny.us

William Reilich: 225-4190 or reilicw@assembly.state.ny.us

Mark Johns: 223-9130 or

johnsm@assembly.state.ny.us

Harry Bronson: 244-5255 or

bronsonh@assembly.state.ny.us

David Gantt: 454-3670 or

ganttd@assembly.state.ny.us

Bill Nojay: 334-5210 or

nojayw@assembly.state.ny.gov

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Ted O'Brien: 223-1800 or obrien@nysenate.gov

Michael Nozzolio: 315-568-9816 or

nozzolio@nysenate.gov

George Maziarz: 637-5800 or maziarz@nysenate.gov

Patrick Gallivan: 716-656-8544 or

gallivan@nysenate.gov

Michael Ranzenhofer: 716-631-8695 or

ranz@senate.state.ny.gov

Thank you in advance for expressing your support!

Katherine Smith Chair, Advocacy

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK!







NY For Women's Equality

New York has long served as a model for equality and fairness on several issues including women's rights. At the 2013 State of the State Address, Governor Cuomo announced plans to advance a 10-Point Women's Equality Act that will break down barriers that perpetuate discrimination and inequality based on gender.

- 1. Protect a Woman's Freedom of Choice by Enacting the Reproductive Health Act: New York was a national leader protecting choice even before the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision. Governor Cuomo will continue to vigorously protect a woman's right to choose. Therefore, he will fight for passage of the Reproductive Health Act, which will protect the fundamental right of reproductive freedom and a woman's right to make private health care decisions. A woman facing an unplanned or problem pregnancy should have the opportunity to make the best decision for herself and her family, whether her decision is continuing the pregnancy, adoption, or abortion.
- 2. Achieve Pay Equity: Women in New York earn 84% of what men earn. This wage gap is even more severe for African-American and Hispanic Women, who earn 66% and 55% of that earned by non-Hispanic men in New York State, respectively. This amendment to the current law would ensure that women receive the wages they were always entitled to, as well as provide for an additional amount of liquidated damages equal to 300% of the back wages due. This new law would also tighten current exceptions so that pay differentials are only allowed when the employer can show that the differential is based on something other than sex and is related to job performance. Additionally, the proposal will prohibit employers from terminating or retaliating against employees who share wage information, a practice that enables wage disparities to persist undetected.
- 3. Stop Sexual Harassment in All Workplaces: Three quarters of the sexual harassment complaints filed in this State are filed by women. This amendment to the current law would protect workers from sexual and other forms of harassment regardless of the size of the workplace. Under the new law, an employee of any business, large or small, may file a complaint for sexual harassment.
- 4. Allow for the Recovery of Attorneys' Fees in Employment and Credit and Lending Cases: Over 75% of the employment and credit and lending cases in this State are filed by women. The current law states that an individual cannot recover attorneys' fees for employment and credit and lending discrimination cases even after proving discrimination at trial. As a result (a) many who are discriminated against never seek redress; (b) those who hire an attorney on a contingency



fee arrangement are not "made whole" for their losses because they must pay for their attorneys out of their recovery; and (c) some who cannot afford to hire an attorney, but who try to do so on a contingency basis, are unsuccessful because the case is either too small or too risky. This plan would amend the law to include a provision for reasonable attorneys' fees for successful litigants, and ensure that victims of employment and credit and lending discrimination – most of whom are women – have an opportunity to vindicate their rights.

- 5. Strengthen Human Trafficking Laws: Human trafficking is a crime that exploits vulnerable individuals through force, fraud or coercion. The victims of sex trafficking are almost always women. The plan strengthens the existing law to remove the requirements that "coercion" be proven when the victims are minors, increase penalties for trafficking and create an affirmative defense in prostitution prosecutions that the defendant's participation was a result of having been a sex trafficking victim.
- 6. End Family Status Discrimination: Women with children are less likely to be recommended for hire and promoted, and, in most cases,, are offered less in salary than similarly situated men. This proposal would amend the current law to prohibit employers from denying work or promotion to workers simply because they have children.
- 7. Stop Source-of-Income Discrimination: Many households suffer discrimination by landlords who are unwilling to rent to voucher holders. Female-headed households account for 76% of all housing choice vouchers issued, including section 8 vouchers. This amendment to the Human Rights Law will prohibit landlords from discriminating against tenants based on lawful sources of income.
- 8. Stop Housing Discrimination for Victims of Domestic Violence: Discrimination against victims of domestic violence is almost always discrimination against women 85% of domestic violence victims are women. Under current state law, victims of domestic violence have no protection from discrimination in housing, meaning landlords can evict victims of domestic violence under zero-tolerance policies. This amendment to the Human Rights Law would protect victims of domestic violence from discrimination when they attempt to purchase, rent, or lease housing. In addition, the new law would prohibit landlords from inquiring about domestic violence victim status, as well as create an eviction defense in housing court requiring judges to consider facts related to domestic violence in their decision-making.
- 9. Stop Pregnancy Discrimination Once and For All: In order to adequately protect the rights of pregnant workers, it is necessary to create a specific protection in the Human Rights Law requiring employers to provide a reasonable accommodation for pregnancy-related conditions. Once amended, New York State law will serve as a model for all other states in the nation seeking to protect pregnant women from discrimination in the workplace.
- 10. Protect Victims of Domestic Violence by Strengthening Order-of-Protection Laws: Women face too many obstacles in securing protection from their abusers. Requiring victims of domestic violence victims seeking an order of protection to be in physical proximately to their abuser in court may be traumatic, unsafe, intimidating, and may ultimately influence testimony. This amendment will ensure that victims of domestic violence will be allowed to provide all required testimony by video-conference.



Book Club Reminder!

Our new League Book Club will meet for the first time at 10 am on Saturday, March 2nd, at Rundel Memorial Library. Please bring your suggestions for books that we could read and discuss – just remember that they should connect to our League (local, state or national) positions, and they may be fiction or non-fiction.

Parking is available in the Court Street Garage, Level 1, which leads directly into the library. We'll meet in the Literature Study Room in the older building which is connected through the brightly-lit gallery tunnel.

Have a question? Call Georgia DeGregorio 787-9692 or email georgiatd1@gmail.com.

Who Represents You?

Each year the League publishes this brochure listing elected officials, from mayors and city council representatives to county legislators to our representatives in Albany and those in Washington. We're happy to announce that once again we've secured funding to do so thanks to the Rochester Area Community Foundation. The information has been updated, and this year we will publish an edition online so that if changes occur before next year, we can keep it updated.

Of course we will continue to offer a print version, and it will be distributed at many locations throughout Monroe County, especially public libraries.

If you need copies, contact Barbara Grosh at 415-8251 or barbara@grosh.net.

Barbara Grosh Chair, Voter Services

Capital Beat Blog: "Education, Election and Guns"

That's the topic of Barbara Bartoletti's recent post on Capital Beat Blog. And there's so much more! Are you following the discussions? A wealth of up-to-theminute insider information is as close as your computer. Here's the link:

http://lwvny-capitolbeat.blogspot.com/

Milestones

We are sad to report that long-time League member Claire Tuttle died on January 22nd.

Claire grew up in Flushing, Queens, and came to Keuka College as a 16-year old. She fell in love with the Finger Lakes--and with her husband, David, who grew up in Elmira.

After moving to Rochester, they raised four children, and she taught in an inner-city school. Later she became a business librarian at Rochester's Rundel Library and continued there as a volunteer after her retirement.

Claire was a member of the League for more than 50 years and was particularly active on the Project Positive Campaign committee (even keeping the large bus placards in her garage). She loved to read and enjoyed a rousing political discussion. She was a warm, friendly and giving person, always enthusiastic, knowledgeable and caring. We will miss her.

Shirley Eberly

If you have League-related news about our members to share (recognitions, obituaries, etc.), please send info to LWVRMA-VOTER@rochester.rr.com.

March 24, 1919

On March 24, 1919 Carrie Chapman Catt proposed the formation of a "league of women voters to 'finish the fight' and to aid in the reconstruction of the nation."

The occasion was the 50th Anniversary Jubilee Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, in St. Louis. In proposing a "fitting commemoration," Catt asked: "What could be more natural than that women who have attained their political independence should desire to give service in token of their gratitude? What could be more appropriate than that such women should do for the coming generation what those of a preceding period did for them? ... Let us then raise up a league of women voters ...; a league that shall be non-partisan and nonsectarian in character ..."

(courtesy LWV Duluth, MN)

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Naturalization

The Naturalization Committee met on January 11th and completed the 2013 Oath Ceremony Schedule. Many thanks to our volunteers: Lois Winterkorn, Mimi Wilson, Joan Rosenthal, Barb Hendry, Beth Feldman, Kathy Farrar, Marcia Eisenberg and Sheila Abeling.

On January 10th, Sheila Abeling met new citizens at the Monroe County Office Building and the Federal Building ceremonies.

February 14th brought Joan Rosenthal to the Monroe County Office Building and Lois Winterkorn to the Federal Building to greet the newest citizens.

The Naturalization Schedule for the remainder of 2013:

Mar. 14th – am & pm

April 11th- am & pm

May 9th – am

May – TBA

June 13th – am & pm

July 4th – am

July 11th – am

Aug. 8th - am

Aug. 8th – am

(Geneva does this one for us

at Seneca Falls)

Sept. 12th – am

Sept. 17th - am

Oct. 10th – am & pm

Nov. 14th – am & pm

Dec. 12th - am & pm

Sheila Abeling,

Chair, Naturalization and FEPC

ANSWER TO SUNSHINE WEEK TRIVIA QUESTION:

James Madison, born 3/16/1751, and known as the "Father of the Constitution."

Budget Analysis

The Children's Agenda, www.thechildrensagenda. org, has analyzed the impact on children & youth in Governor Cuomo's Executive Budget for fiscal year 2013-14, and offers a formal summary of its findings.

To view that report, please visit: http://lwv-rma.org/NYS-BudgetAnalysis.pdf

Save the Dates! April 25 & 26, 2013

Sierra Club - Rochester Regional Group to Host International Great Lakes Champion! For additional information, please visit:

http://lwv-rma.org/SierraClub.pdf

or contact:

Peter Debes, (585) 820-2018 or phdebes@frontiernet.net

Wayne Howard, (585) 738-8242 or greatlakes@newyork.sierraclub.org

Update on Our February Forum

As part of a community-wide exploration entitled *FACING RACE EMBRACING EQUITY*, we invited the community to join in this discussion in our February Forum, "*Five Decades Later: What has Changed in the Community?*" Nearly 100 people attended - check out some of our media coverage:

http://www.democratandchronicle.com/article/20130225/NEWS01/302250098/rochester-1964-riots-unite?nclick_check=1 http://www.democratandchronicle.com/article/20130226/NEWS01/302260055/Aiming-equity-Forum-offers-chance-discuss-racial-disparities





Sunshine Corner

HENRIETTA TOWN BOARD 1/1/13

Observed by John and Jane Schmitt

Sound system continues to be inadequate. Citizens in attendance at the meeting find it difficult to hear the proceedings. There was an audience of 6-12 at the meeting.

Our Observers noted that a proposal for a housing development north of Lehigh Station Road was withdrawn due to traffic problems and a close proximity to wetlands. The writer wonders if the developer will try again in the future.

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

IRONDEQUOIT WORKSHOP 1/9/13

Observed by Gin Busack

Observer could hear the proceedings due to the new microphone used! The agenda was reviewed for the 1/15/13 Board meeting. No LWV issues noted.

IRONDEQUOIT TOWN BOARD 1/15/13

Observed by Gin Busack

No LWV issues noted. Of note is a proposed change to the R7 code for the developers of the Legacy project.

(To view the full minutes from this and other meetings, please click here: https://www.irondequoitrec.com/weblink7/Browse.aspx)

MONROE COUNTY WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE 1/30/13

Observed by Sara Yaworsky and Elaine Schmidt

Observers talked briefly with the Legislature Clerk about the fact that the agenda for the meeting was not available the day before the meeting. The clerk told us that the agenda was put on the website at 2:30 pm the day of the Ways & Means Committee. We were assured that this was legal. Sara pointed out that Monroe County is free to set a higher bar than the minimum requirement to make the agenda available to the public before the meeting. The Committee approved the acquisition of the Kodak site for Monroe Community College by a 9-1 vote. It will go on to the full Legislature now.

Carrie Andrews inquired about the results of the employee dependent survey conducted by the County. She was told a full report will be given at the full Legislature meeting.

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

Elaine Schmidt

Chair, Local Government

New York State Food Budget

Sometimes it helps to hear directly from the organizations that are on the "front lines". We share their concerns regarding the impact of the Governor's budget on programs we strongly support. The following articles are submitted by two such programs.

If you feel moved to convey your opinions to your legislators or governor, we ask you to write as a constituent, not as a League member. The reason being that your state and local League will write or lobby in the League's name enabling us to speak with one voice, expressing the specific concerns of the League as an organization.

CUOMO BUDGET AFFECTS FOODLINK PROGRAMS

Governor Cuomo's proposed 2013-2014 budget would eliminate direct state funding allocations for critical anti-hunger programs such as the Hunger and Nutrition Prevention Assistance Program (HP-NAP) and the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program. Foodlink administers HPNAP funds which provide major assistance to soup kitchens, food pantries, emergency shelters, kids-cafes and other programs in our area. Funding for hunger programs in the state would need to compete for funding with seventeen other programs every year under the Maternal, Child Health and Nutrition category. Foodlink urges all people concerned about hunger and poverty issues to contact their state legislators with the following message: "Please restore dedicated, lineitem funding for HPNAP at no less than the amount already approved in Fiscal year 2013." Thank you!

INVITATION TO ADVOCACY WORKSHOP.

BREAD FOR THE WORLD is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision-makers to end hunger at home and abroad. BFW collaborates with all faith groups and with the Alliance to End Hunger by researching and lobbying federal legislators on hunger and poverty issues. BFW also works with the Hunger Action Network of New York State. (HANNYS).

On Sunday, March 17, 2013, from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm, Third Presbyterian Church, 4 Meigs Street in Rochester will host a Bread for the World Regional Advocacy Workshop. The purposes of this workshop are to learn about recent developments in hunger and poverty issues at the federal and state levels, to understand the importance of advocating for change and to learn effective techniques for writing and calling on local legislators. All are welcome! Contact: Carol Coons, Third Church Hunger Team Leader, at 585-227-5953 or e-mail:

cycoons@frontier.com.





Coming Events!



March

Women's History Month Sunshine Month

- 2 1st Meeting, LWV/RMA Book Club
- 8 International Women's Day
- **12** Immigration Meeting, 3 pm Brighton Town Hall
- 13 Pittsford Village Debate
- **14** Go See Tour RMSC
- **16** Vote411 Training, noon 4pm Pittsford Town Hall
- 28 LWV/RMA Board Meeting

April

- 15 Taxes Due
- **19** National Volunteer Week through the 25th
- 22 Earth Day



Naturalization Photos

















Board meets monthly. Call Georgia DeGregorio at 787-9692 for details. Board meetings are open to all members.

Local Government Committee meets monthly at the Brighton Town Hall, Stage Room. For details, call Elaine Schmidt at 530-7414.

Membership Committee meets monthly at Brighton Town Hall, Stage Room. For details, call Ellen DeGregorio at 473-3502.

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.



Rochester/Metro **League of Women Voters**

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



APRIL VOTER DEADLINE IS MARCH 15!

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Rochester VO

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

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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

Join the League Today!

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address:		
ity:	State:	Zip:
elephone:	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	
	Household	\$105
	Susan B. Anthony/Frederick Douglass	\$150
	Carrie Chapman Catt	\$200
	Student (full-time/under 25)	
_	Low income, call office	\$liding \$cale