



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 This Date!

LWV/RMA Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 30, 2013 • 11:30 am - 2:00 pm

For more info, see page 5.

Join Us

On our upcoming

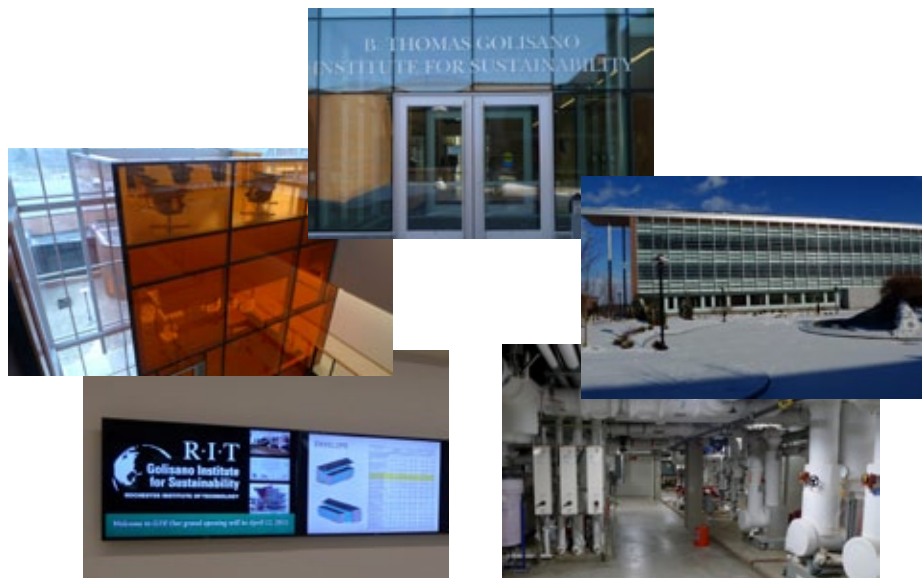
Go-See Tour

**Golisano Institute for Sustainability (GIS) Hall
on the RIT Campus**

Thursday, May 23, 2013

at 10:00 am

See the newly opened 170,000 sq. ft.
LEED-certified research building, designed to demonstrate
sustainable building technologies and energy systems.



**Please register for the event by calling 262-3730 or
visiting our website at: <http://lwv-rma.org/signup.php>**

President's Corner



One would think that we would be wrapping up League work for the year, and the Annual Meeting on May 30 is one way we do that. However, if you read the following pages, you can see signs that League work will be continuing throughout the summer into the fall, including work on

a new national study on updating our Agricultural position.

Our Program Chair, Gin Busack, working with our many great committees, has prepared for you and the community at-large two Go-See Tours, the first on May 23 and the second in July (date to be determined). Be sure to visit our website, <http://lwv-rma.org/signup.php>, and sign up to join us.

A new adventure for September is being planned, along with events to celebrate our FEPC and Naturalization efforts, Constitution Day and National Voter Registration Day. And there's our Vote411.org project. Don't be surprised when the phone call comes asking for your help in one of these activities.

We have discovered that the more members (and non-member allied groups) that are involved in a project, the more "presence" we have in the Rochester area. This visibility brings new members to the League as they discover what we stand for and want to be a part of us.

We have League members who are active in the subcommittees generated from the January and February programs on Facing Race=Embracing Equity.

Back to the Annual Meeting: this is for members and non-members alike. It is a time to see old friends and make new ones. It is a time to recognize the people who worked so hard this year in promoting our League and sharing our mutual strengths and aspirations with the community. Our guest speaker, Rochester's Chief of Police, James Sheppard will bring us his vision for Rochester's Police Department in addressing issues of criminal justice for all.

A sincere invitation is extended to each of you reading this Voter to be there for our end-of-year/beginning-of-our-new-year celebration.

Georgia DeGregorio
President

Our 14th Annual Go-See Tour

The Golisano Institute for Sustainability (GIS) Hall on the RIT Campus

May 23, 2013 at 10:00 am

WHAT IS IT?

Sustainability Hall, the Golisano Institute for Sustainability's new headquarters on the RIT campus, opened in early January 2013. The 84,000-square-foot facility is a state-of-the-art laboratory for scientific discovery and experiential learning. The building will be home to GIS's Master's degree and PhD programs in sustainability and architecture. Research labs, student work areas, classrooms and conference rooms, a 65-seat auditorium and office suites all open onto a light-filled, four-story galleria space. The facility was designed and constructed to meet Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards of the U.S. Green Building Council. Among Sustainability Hall's outstanding features are:

- windmills
- rain roof
- green wall
- rain water is filtered and used in the building
- solar Panels
- extensive glazing to reduce amount of light required in the building
- geothermal system of wells 150 ft. deep that circulates water through the floors to help maintain the temperature of the building
- a fuel cell power source where excess electricity goes into campus grid
- and much more!

HOW WILL I FIND IT?

Park in Lot T (at the end of the entrance road, turn right and Lot T is inside the curve on the west side of the campus.) The Golisano Building is visible from the parking lot (look for the windmills). There is a flight of stairs up to the main entrance of the building; handicapped may enter at the ground level. Meet in the lounge area in the center of the main (1st) floor.

WHAT ABOUT LUNCH?

Following our tour, we'll gather for lunch at The Loving Cup restaurant located in Park Point (huge sign), 1 mile east of the RIT entrance on Jefferson Road. Turn onto John St. and enter the complex; the Loving Cup is on the back side. Members may order from the menu.

Naturalization and FEPC

NATURALIZATION:

On April 11th at the Minerva Deland School in Fairport, Mimi Wilson and Lois Winterkorn welcomed fifty new citizens at an oath ceremony in the morning. Also on that day, Marcia Eisenberg met forty-five candidates for citizenship at the Federal Building in the afternoon.

May will bring the League to the Monroe County Office Building on the 9th in the morning. Marcia Eisenberg will welcome the new candidates. Also in May, Joan Rosenthal will meet candidates at RIT. The date and time are to be announced soon.

On June 13th at the Monroe County Office Building, Mimi Wilson will welcome new citizens. Also on that date, Kathy Farrar will be at the Federal Building in the afternoon to meet candidates for naturalization.

All members of the LWV/RMA are welcome to attend Naturalization ceremonies. If you are interested, please contact Sheila Abeling at sheiler162007@gmail.com or call at 585-223-6819.

FEPC:

The League of Women Voters/Rochester Metro Area (LWV/RMA) and The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester (TIAR) are already preparing for the 2013 Election Season. Two dates are set: August 26th, the Fair Election Practices Campaign (FEPC) will officially begin. On September 4th the Signing Ceremony/Press Conference for the FEPC will be held at noon in the Atrium in the Monroe County Office Building. We are hoping for a fair and issue-focused campaign season!

Please check the League website for all additional info on Naturalization Ceremonies and the FEPC.

Sheila Abeling

Chair, Naturalization and FEPC

1988 Agriculture Position to be Updated

You are invited to join our local League Agriculture Committee forming this summer. The focus is on new technology (such as GMOs) and financial issues (such as subsidies).

We'll be working collaboratively with League representatives from Wayne County, Orleans County and Geneva.

Join the fun and meet interesting people. For more information, please visit www.lwv.org and type "Agriculture Update" in the Quick Search box. To join us call 585-262-3730

Our Book Club's First Book Report!

On Saturday, April 6th our new Book Club met to discuss the book **Republic, Lost** by Lawrence Lessig. Our discussion focused on the issues of campaign finance reform, lobbying and ethics.

We evaluated the author's suggested course of action to resolve the problems that exist as a result of current campaign financing, lobbying, special interest and PAC contributions. We talked about the feasibility of some of the author's solutions, which include:

- education and further analysis of ties between campaign contributions and legislation enacted
- only small dollar contributions allowed (max \$100)
- support of a mock convention
- finding ways to put aside differences and work towards a solution

After our discussion and analysis of the book, we had a few ideas we thought might be helpful to bring more attention to this important issue:

- making an impact by speaking out at public forums and asking local politicians to voice their views on campaign finance reform publicly
- encouraging the press to be at the public forums and report on the politicians' views as they relate to campaign finance reform.

We hope you will join our Book Club and come to the next meeting scheduled for May 4th at 10:15 am at the Rundel Library. We will be reviewing the book **On a Farther Shore: The Life and Legacy of Rachel Carson** by William Souder.

Linda Howland

Member, Book Club

Raffle Reminder

Don't forget to sell those raffle tickets!

You could win over \$2,000 and you'll help support your local and state Leagues!

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK! 

We know you'll "like" us!

www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

Advocacy – It's Up To You

The last month of the 2013 legislative session in Albany is the time when LWVNY issues are brought to the floor of the Assembly and NY Senate. We expect votes on campaign finance, early voting and women's equality agenda. The governor has expressed support for these items, and there are bills in both houses of the legislative chambers for them.

Now is the week to call your representatives (Assembly member and NY Senator) to ask for their support for early voting in NY, matching public funding of campaigns and the women's equality agenda. Katherine Smith, Barbara Grosh, Elaine Schmidt and Gloria Reed have visited the Monroe County delegation. Now they need to hear from you. We await their public support of the bills introduced in April.

The January, February, March and April editions of The Voter gave details on LWVNY positions. Also, www.lwvny.org provides easy access to our policy papers which will give you points to make with the elected officials.

When contacting your official's office, state your position and ask for a response from the legislative member. Please let me know if you get a response so I can follow up with their staff.

Katherine Smith
Chair, Advocacy Committee

A Report from the Road...

During the month of March, I visited Marco Island in Collier County, Florida. I had the pleasure of attending a Collier County LWV meeting/ luncheon. The members warmly welcomed me. It was held at the Naples Hilton which wasn't too far away from where I was staying. Apparently, this is where they meet monthly.

The luncheon speaker was the retiring President of the Chamber of Commerce in Collier County. He spoke highly of the League and their relationship as well as all the experiences that he has had in his position. This Chamber President was very impressive. The meeting held after the luncheon was short. The League distributed its brochure which says, "Nationally respected, locally active in Collier County since 1975. Join us. Be part of an organization where smart, active leaders create lasting change in their communities."

When I travel in our country, I do look for other state/national links to organizations to which I belong locally. I enjoy learning about their local groups, and I've found that all have been very welcoming.

Sheila Abeling
Chair, Naturalization and FEPC

LWVUS Advocacy Update

LWVUS is working on several pieces of legislation in the US Congress. Up-to-date information on our national efforts is always available at www.lwv.org.

LWV/RMA members wishing to follow activity on Gun Safety regulations, Dream Act, Disclose Act on campaign funding, Keystone XL Pipeline and Voting Rights Act (to name just a few) will find the latest testimony of LWVUS leaders as well as policy papers on this website. Read these materials, choose a topic of particular interest to you, become knowledgeable about the issue and then call your US Representative asking for their leadership:

Louise Slaughter 585-232-4850

Dan Maffei 315-423-5657

Thomas Reed 315-759-5229

Chris Collins 716-634-2324

We are League members because we know that active citizens are the foundation of a thriving democracy. Phone calls to our elected officials by well-informed people do influence their vote. Often it takes a long time to change federal laws, but we are followers of Susan B. Anthony, so we know well that it is our responsibility to stay engaged for as long as it takes.

Call today.

Katherine Smith
Chair, Advocacy Committee

***Have you been following
LWV/RMA in the news
lately? All our recent
coverage is available on our
growing website:***

http://www.lwv-rma.org/in_the_news.php

**While you're there, check out past
issues of The VOTER, Who Represents
You 2013, and our online calendar -
and much, much more!**

Sunshine Corner

HENRIETTA 3/6/16

OBSERVED BY JOHN & JANE SCHMITT

This was a very short meeting - 8 minutes! The Supervisor, town lawyer and 1 board member were not in attendance. There were fewer than 5 members of the public in attendance. No LWV issues noted.

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

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE 3/12/13

OBSERVED BY ELAINE SCHMIDT

Members of SCOPE were present in large numbers; many expressed their approval that the Gun Law was being reviewed at the State level, but most said that Monroe County should have joined the many other counties in NYS showing their disapproval of the Gun Law. Monroe County sent a letter to NYS saying that they did not want the Gun Law as presented to them. SCOPE members brought signs printed on letter size paper but were told by the Legislature that they could not display them in the chambers, so the signs were collected and not used.

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE 4/9/13

OBSERVED BY ELAINE SCHMIDT

Several citizens spoke to the Legislature regarding the proposed resolution regulating pawnbrokers, second hand dealers and jewelry and coin exchange dealers. The resolution would have required businesses to photograph items taken in and to hold the items for 14 days, in addition to charging business owners \$250 for a license. Many owners said the expense of such procedures would be extremely time-consuming and expensive. Upon hearing of the hardship this resolution would require, the item was tabled. The intent of the law was to help the police locate stolen property; however, the law as it stood was a hardship on many legitimate business owners.

There was another heated exchange in the Legislature at this meeting. Two bond issues that had been previously voted down were introduced out of order. Bonds require more than a majority vote to pass. The minority did not support the bills. Additional money was sought for 2 construction projects that had been previously approved. Minority Leader Carrie Andrews stated that the minority party had a lot of good ideas that were not received well by the majority. Republican Daniele accused the minority of holding the bills hostage.

The Legislature did not follow its own rules when it deleted a resolution that had passed in committee. Member Haney made the point at the Legislature meeting, but nothing was changed by the majority.

Member Wilcox had requested a review of the County Charter at an earlier Legislature meeting, but his resolution did not succeed. When I spoke with Mr. Wilcox after the meeting, he suggested that some of the heated exchanges in the Legislature were partly because many members have forgotten or are unfamiliar with correct procedure. I was told the Majority must initiate any review of the Charter.

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

WEBSTER TOWN BOARD 3/7/13

OBSERVED BY LINDA HOWLAND

6-12 members of the public were present. No LWV issues were noted. The Supervisor took telephone calls from citizens after the meeting, something no other town board does to my knowledge.

WEBSTER TOWN BOARD 4/4/13

OBSERVED BY LOIS WINTERKORN

Fewer than 5 members of the public were in attendance. No LWV issues were noted.

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

Save This Date!

LWV/RMA Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 30, 2013

11:30 am - 2:00 pm

Locust Hill Country Club

Lunch

Guest Speaker:

James Sheppard, Chief of Police, Rochester, NY

Short Business Meeting

More info will be posted on our website
www.lwv-rma.org as it becomes available!

Leagues Across the Country Celebrate Membership Increase!

Many of you are aware that LWVUS initiated a new program in 2010 to address the problem of declining membership across the country. Originally it was called the Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI) and now is known as Membership and Leadership Development (MLD). I had the privilege of being in the first class of coaches who were trained to work with individual states on bringing back and institutionalizing the “best practices” of yesteryear, as well as introducing new ones for the 21st century.

As we begin to introduce the last 9 states into this program this summer, we are seeing a major shift in membership numbers. Rather than seeing a steady yearly drop of 3-5%, we have actually gone into the black with a little less than 1% increase. This is a turnaround of 4-6%!! The program does work.

Our own League began using these “best practices” before NYS Leagues were officially trained, since I had the opportunity to bring them to our Membership Committee early on and eventually to our Board of Directors. Since last year we have added 20 new members by intentionally using the ideas presented. We say “intentionally” because so often a group responds positively to a presentation and then returns to the “same old, same old.”

This is where a “coaching” system has proved invaluable. Through monthly calls with local Leagues, we share what our successes are and discover new ways to meet the challenges. Have you ever thought of how energizing it is to take a troubling situation and instead of saying, “yes, but this is why (name the new idea) won’t work,” you say, “yes, and how can we do it differently?” This is just one “best practice” that we find valuable. The toolkit is almost endless.

It is important to remember that you all have contributed to our success. You have increased the visibility of our League both through expanded publicity and through working with outside allied groups in developing programs of mutual concern and interest. You have made The Ask: that is, you have personally shared your enthusiasm for your League with others and, when an interest is shown, you have warmly invited people to come to our forums or help us with our committees. Your board has worked to find ways

to mentor new members who will be our leaders of tomorrow.

Want to know more? Want to learn to be a coach? Want to learn what other Leagues are doing and bring those ideas to our League? Want to make new friends in the League across the State? Give me a call, and I will be glad to talk with you.

Georgia DeGregorio

LWV/RMA President

LWVUS Shur Fellow Coach

LWVNYS Membership Chair

585-787-9692

Georgiatd1@gmail.com

Students Inside Albany 2013

On the lovely Sunday morning of April 14th we met our two sponsored SIA students at the Amtrak Station to see them off on a 3-day adventure. Eliza Duberstein (Brighton High School) and Shakierah Smith (School Without Walls) were chosen to attend this year’s Students Inside Albany program sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc.

This thirteenth annual Students Inside Albany program took place from April 14-17, 2013 and brought approximately 60 students from across the state to Albany to get a first-hand education about their state government. The program is designed to increase high school students’ awareness of their responsibility in representative government and provide information about the tools necessary for meeting that responsibility.

Funding for one Rochester student is provided annually by LWVNY. The ability to add a second student was made possible by funding from the Gretchen Shafer Students Inside Albany Scholarship.

When the girls returned they were all smiles and were grateful for the opportunity but were obviously tired and happy to be back home. They said they had a good time, that they were kept very busy, and that the food was just fine. Apparently one evening a fire alarm went off in their hotel, but they seemed to have taken it all in stride. They have been invited to our May annual meeting to say a few words about their experience.

Ida Holloran

Member, SIA Committee

*Note: Additional information was contributed by
Brian Valenti, Vice President; Chair, Publicity Committee*

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We know you’ll “like” us!

www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

IMMIGRATION FORUM FOLLOW-UP

Summarizing Untold Truths: Immigration & You

A large audience attended our forum on Immigration Reform on April 22.

Rev. Chava Redonnet reminded us of the stressful human impact resulting from our current immigration policy on both farm workers and on the owners of farms who hire them.

Rev. Richard Witt explained why all farm workers—citizens and non-citizens—do not have the basic rights that other classifications of groups enjoy because their group was excluded from labor legislation back in the 1930's. (See the article on this page that offers us an opportunity to advocate for a NY Senate bill before the Legislature right now to correct this discrimination.)

Finally, NYCLU civil rights attorney, Andrea Callan, explained in detail how the "due process clause" of the Fifth Amendment of our Constitution is being violated, in that it refers to all persons (not just citizens) and should be applied to the manner in which undocumented people are detained. And, aren't you glad you were so well informed about "aggravated felony" charges when the US Supreme Court ruled against using these charges for detainees in Georgia this week.

Thank you once again to our Program Committee for presenting us this opportunity to revisit the consensus we worked on in 2008 as part of National LWVUS program. For a copy of the consensus go to the national website www.lwv.org.

Georgia DeGregorio
President

Note: The Program Committee included Chair Gin Busack, Alison Wilder, Sally Chamberlin, and new members Lory Ghertner and Betty Shafer.

Farmworker Advocacy Day - Albany, May 13

Farmworkers and their allies' annual Advocacy Day has an extra special meaning this year as every effort to pass the *NY State Farmworker Fair Labor Practices Act* prior to passage of a *federal* Immigration Reform (IR) bill is imperative. The current IR draft includes some hopeful aspects for both farmers and farmworkers and their families, but there is nothing substantial about labor protections. Providing a legal way for thousands and thousands of immigrants to come to New York to work in our fields and on our dairy farms, while still denying them basic human rights, would truly be unconscionable.

Provisions of the Farmworker Fair Labor Practices Act (S.1743) include the right of farmworkers to: a day of rest, collective bargaining, disability insurance coverage, overtime pay. For far too long farmworkers have been wrongfully excluded from NY's basic labor protections.

There are seats available on the buses for the one-day trip from Rochester to Albany for Farmworker Advocacy Day, May 13. The day's agenda includes a rally outside the Legislative Office Building and visits with area Senators. For more information, contact Luis Torres, Rural & Migrant Ministry Board President and First Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Coordinator, at 585-269-4778.

Barbara Deming
*Rural and Migrant Ministry Fellow
Former Board President, NYS Rural and Migrant Ministry*



Cameo appearance by the fabulous Raging Grannies.





Coming Events!



May

- 1** Law Day
- 9** Hydrofracking as Seen Through the Lens of Public Health
- 10** Mother's Day
- 23** Go-See Tour at RIT
- 30** Annual Meeting, Locust Hill Country Club
- 31** LWVNY Convention begins in Albany

June

- 10** LWV/RMA Board meeting, 5:30 pm
Brighton Town Hall

July

- 20** LWV/RMA Retreat - all members welcome

Students in Albany 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. 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
p 585-262-3730
www.LWV-RMA.org

Rochester VOTER

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

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**JUNE VOTER
DEADLINE IS MAY 15!**

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www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

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!



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