

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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Your League Needs YOU!

Rochester Votes 2013

We learned at our forum last year that Voter Registration and Voter Participation are low in our city.

Voter Service takes time and member commitment to register new voters.

Do YOU have two hours free during the week of August 3rd - August 11th?

If you do, click on this link to sign up:

http://lwv-rma.org/voter_reg2013.php

or phone us at 585-262-3730.

Instructions will follow.



President's Corner



Nature smiled on us at our Annual Retreat as Friday night's storm broke the heat wave, and our membership could meet in comfort.

We began the morning with a discussion about our mission. We affirmed that the statement on the front of this Voter continues to reflect what we hope

to accomplish. In discussing the programs from last year, we were able to affirm that they were well-received and enabled us to be visible in the community and to welcome 17 new members. To further enhance our visibility and strengthen our collaborative efforts in the community, each member is strongly encouraged to provide our Public Relations Director, Brian Valenti, with names of additional organizations who might want to work with us.

We discussed many different ways we could make this coming year's program even better. It was agreed that we should think through the purpose of each event in order that attendees know what to expect, i.e. is this for information on public issues, or is there an expected action that needs to be taken by the members as follow up.

Possible program items for this coming year were discussed. The fall calendar will include the following:

- August/September: Celebrate Our Voter Service Work. Every member should sign up for **at least one venue** to register people to vote.

Please sign up at this website:

http://lww-rma.org/voter_reg2013.php

or phone 585-262-3730.

- October: Health Care Information Panel
- November: Education Forum with focus on Charter Schools

We appreciate the input of the members who attended our planning meeting and retreat on Saturday, July 20, and look forward to working with each of you for a solid year of program that promotes our mission.

Georgia DeGregorio
President

Advocacy Summary for Legislative Sessions

At the state level the Women's Equality Agenda was passed by the NYS Assembly on June 20, with all ten provisions proposed by the Governor. The NYS Senate, on the other hand, voted on nine separate bills that had different language, so there was no bill (or bills) for the Governor to sign. The LWV-RMA is supporting a special Assembly session to vote on the Senate bills, but this is not likely to happen. We'll be lobbying for the WEA in 2014 – look for information and join us. Your help will be needed.

For continuing updates on state legislative news, be sure to visit LWVNY Legislative Director Barbara Bartoletti's blog, LWVNY Capital Beat, at <http://lwwny-capitolbeat.blogspot.com>. Bookmark the site and visit often!

At the national level LWVUS has been a strong supporter of the immigration bill that passed in the US Senate in June. We are lobbying our Congressional members to vote on a bill this session.

The LWV's major effort this fall will be to address the US Supreme Court decision on the 1965 Voting Rights Act. As you read in the June/July Voter, we will be putting all our resources at the national, state and local levels toward ensuring that all citizens have easy access to the polls in November.

The October Voter will have a summary of NYS Constitutional Amendments that we'll be voting on this November.

Note that our LWVNY Legislative Director, Barbara Bartoletti, has been asked to be a Special Advisor to the Moreland Commission to investigate public corruption.

Katherine Smith
Director, Advocacy



Rochester Votes 2013

As part of our celebration of all that Voter Service does for the community, we are concentrating on voter registration in the City of Rochester in preparation for the September primary and the November general elections from August 3 to August 11.

REGISTERING VOTERS

We have arranged for almost four dozen registration opportunities in the city at these places:

- Tops Markets
- Anthony Jordan Health Center
- Rochester branch libraries
- Rochester Community Bikes

This will take lots of people power and, in addition to our League members, we thank our co-sponsors:

- Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity
- Kappa Alpha Kappa Sorority
- 1199 SEIU
- National Council of Jewish Women

Tell us if you have more co-sponsors who would like to work with us.

GET OUT THE VOTE

In the last mayoral election (in 2011), less than 26,000 votes were cast, while the number of registered voters in the city exceeds 100,000. To encourage registered voters to actually vote, we are inviting them to sign a pledge to vote and offering them a reminder. We will email and text reminders of election times, along with links to our Vote 411 online voters' guide.

HELPING VOTERS LEARN ABOUT THE CANDIDATES BY:

- Providing a Voters Guide through our VOTE411.ORG website
- Co-sponsoring with Channel 8 a televised debate on 8/29 at 7:00 pm between Mayoral candidates: Thomas Richards and Lovely Warren
- Providing a forum for all the candidates for City Council for the fall general election

WHY THE CITY?

The League is concentrating most of our efforts in the City of Rochester. Why? That's where the lowest rates of registration and voting occur. A quick look at our map reveals that in most of the city less than half of adults are registered to vote, while outside the city rates are much higher.

JOIN US THIS MONTH

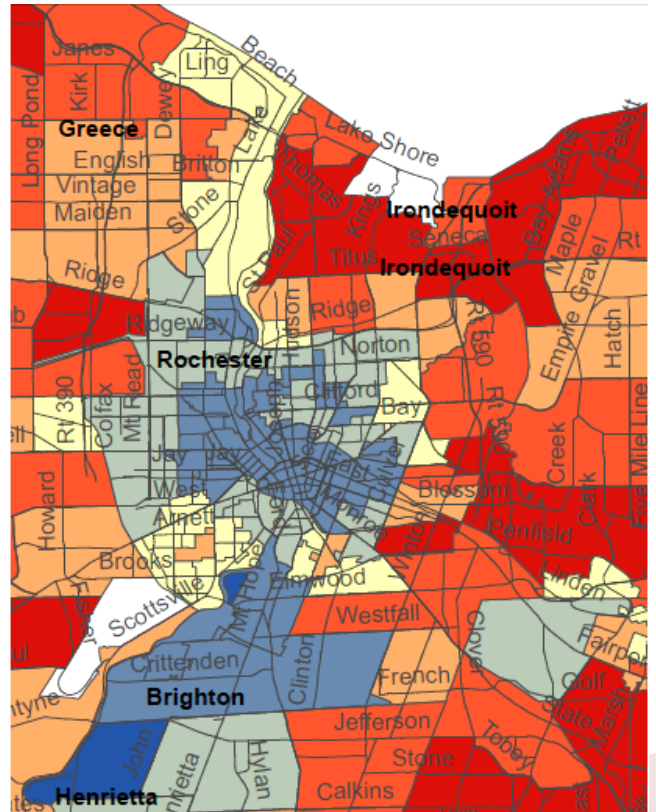
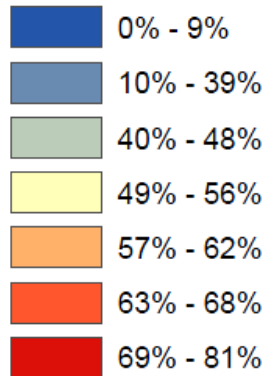
Our plans this month are ambitious, and we need your help.

- Pick a shift and help us register voters. See the list and register online here: http://lwv-rma.org/voter_reg20113.php
- If you'd like a training session on registering voters, join us July 29, 5:30 at the Brighton Town Hall meeting room (downstairs).
- If you'd like to help with the candidates' forums, let us know (contact Barbara Grosh, 415-8251 or voterservices@lwv-rma.org).

Barbara Grosh
Director, Voter Services

PERCENTAGE OF ADULT POPULATION REGISTERED TO VOTE IN MONROE COUNTY

Registered voters/ adult population



Advocacy—It's Up to Each of Us

We need your help as we try to keep up with all the information and legislation related to our League positions—especially at the State and Local levels. For a complete list of our positions, visit our website: www.lwv-rma.org.

Have you been especially interested in and following one of the issues under our positions? Natural Resources? Social Policy? Local Government?

Why not share your observations with our Advocacy Chair, Katherine Smith? She would welcome you as an assistant and would be willing to be a mentor when you wish to share your information with the rest of us.

Give this some thought and email her at kathy-smith292@gmail.com or call the League at 585-262-3730.

Georgia DeGregorio
President



Voter Registration on the 4th of July

Thirty-two new citizens from twenty-three countries attended the July 4th Naturalization Ceremony at the Genesee Country Museum. LWV-RMA members Beth Feldman, Kathryn Saunders and Katherine Smith helped register the new citizens for voting in November.

As Judge Frank Geraci told the candidates "Being an American is not a spectator sport. In this country you are the government." The 32 new citizens were excited to be registering and looking forward to voting for the first time in their new country in November 2013.

LWVRMA members register new citizens twice a month at naturalization ceremonies here in Rochester. Sheila Abeling coordinates these events with Immigration Services out of Buffalo and volunteers from LWV-RMA. We register nearly a thousand new citizens each year!

News from LWVNYS – League Day at the UN

The state League is pleased to offer League Day at the United Nations again. We've been waiting for renovations of the UN to be completed so we can arrange the tour, lunch and briefings – and we're told that most of the work is completed.

This year's briefing will be held on Tuesday, October 8, and will focus on Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's UNiTE to End Violence Against Women Campaign; this multi-year campaign is aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls around the world.

All League members are invited to attend on Tuesday, October 8, 2013. Go to the link below for the times of the morning tour, the lunch in the East River Restaurant, and the afternoon briefings.

League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc. in association with United Nations Department of Public Information (additional co-sponsors to be named at a later date) invite you to attend: Briefings on the, UNiTE to End Violence Against Women Campaign, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's multi-year campaign aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls around the world (<http://saynotoviolence.org/about-say-no/about-unite>)

Laura Ladd Bierman

Executive Director, League of Women Voters of New York State

To share travel/hotel expenses, please contact us at 585-262-3730 or www.LWV-RMA.org.

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK! 

We know you'll "like" us!

www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

Welcome to the League!

Four new members have joined the LWV-RMA in the last month. We look forward to working with:

Camille Clayton

Liz Doucette

Carrie Remis

Mira Washington

Naturalization and FEPC

NATURALIZATION:

All members of the League are welcome to attend naturalization ceremonies. If you are interested, please contact Sheila at sheiler162004@yahoo.com or 585-223-6819. Please visit our website, www.lwv-rma.org to learn more about Naturalization.

As reported in our last Voter, Beth Feldman is covering our oath ceremony on August 8th. In September we have two ceremonies. On September 12th at the Monroe County Office Building at 10:00 am, Marcia Eisenberg will welcome new citizens. Constitution Day, September 17th, will bring the League to SUNY Brockport in the morning, to meet candidates for citizenship. Kathy Farrar and Joan Rosenthal will greet the new citizens.

FAIR ELECTION PRACTICES COMMITTEE (FEPC):

The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester (TIAR) and the League of Women Voters/Rochester Metro Area (LWV-RMA) are encouraging all candidates for public office to run positive, issues-oriented campaigns. We believe that positive campaigns that address important issues are winning campaigns, and we urge candidates to commit themselves to running a positive, issues-oriented campaign.

Our 2013 Fair Election Practices Committee (FEPC) begins on August 13th and continues until the November general election. During that time our FEPC Committee hears complaints submitted to them, and renders a decision as to whether the rules and procedures have been followed. All decisions are given to the media and can be found on our website. The Pledge, along with the procedures of the FEPC, can also be found on our website.

Our Committee this year consists of the following volunteers:

Jim Morris, Chair
Lois Giess
Kay Wallace

Ralph Esposito
Channing Philbrick

Alternates are:

John Curran
Jean Keplinger
Michael Miller
Sue Roberts

Tom Frey
Peter Knapp
Jim Peters
Carol Saum

A special thank you to all for giving your time to this important project!

On September 3rd at noon in the Atrium in the Monroe County Office Building, there will be a signing ceremony/press conference recognizing those who have signed The Pledge. All local media will be invited to witness the ceremony and to interview candidates in attendance who have signed The Pledge. All League members are invited to attend.

Please visit our League website, <http://lwv-rma.org>, and learn more about the Fair Election Practices Committee (FEPC).

Sheila Abeling
Director, FEPC & Naturalization

LWV-RMA and WROC Channel 8 Co-Sponsor Debate

Channel 8 and LWV-RMA will co-sponsor a City Mayoral Primary Debate between the two Democratic candidates, incumbent Tom Richards and City Council President Lovely Warren. Mark your calendar for August 29 – details will be available soon.



Register to **VOTE**

Sunshine Corner

MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

6/11/13

OBSERVED BY ELAINE SCHMIDT

Before the formal meeting, speakers at the Legislature addressed the plans to have the Monroe County Fair at Northampton Park. Of concern to the League is that some said they had not been properly informed about the plans. Many were concerned about sanitation, traffic and stress on wildlife in the Park. The vote to pass the resolution was approved along party lines with the Republican majority voting in favor and the Democratic minority voting against the proposal.

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

HENRIETTA TOWN BOARD

6/5/13 AND 6/19/13

OBSERVED BY JANE & JOHN SCHMITT

The only LWV issue was continued difficulty in hearing speakers.

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

WEBSTER TOWN BOARD

6/13/13

OBSERVED BY LOIS WINTERKORN

Between 6 and 12 members of the public were present at the meeting. No LWV issues were noted.

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

CITY OF ROCHESTER COUNCIL MEETING

6/18/13

OBSERVED BY JEAN SHAFER AND ELAINE SCHMIDT

At this meeting several issues were voted on. The City Mounted Patrol was preserved but downsized to 4 mounted policemen, and the other item of note was a vote to extend the moratorium on fracking.

Note: This was my first observation of a City Council meeting. The Council members were attentive to the public speakers. Members and other attendees we spoke to after the meeting were informative and helpful. I found it to be a warm and welcoming atmosphere. - ES

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

Elaine Schmidt

Director, Local Government



**VOTE
OUT
LOUD**

Get a Headstart on Agriculture Update!

We will be updating our 1988 LWVUS position on Agriculture policy next Spring. Get started on reading materials recommended by National by going to the website: www.lwv.org and typing in "Agriculture Study".

You will find several suggestions for preliminary reading material.

Be ready to join a local committee this fall.



Coming Events!



August

- 3-11** Week-long City Voter Registration
ALL MEMBERS SIGN UP
- 8** Naturalization Ceremony
- 13** FEPC begins
- 15** Vote411.org goes "Live"
- 24** Voter Registration, St. John's Baptist
Church Block Fair
- 26** Women's Equality Day/Anniversary of the
Passage of the 19th Amendment
- 29** Mayoral Debate: 7:00 pm/Channel 8

September

- 3** Fair Election Practices Campaign Pledge
Signing at County Office Building
- 12** Naturalization Ceremony
- 17** Constitution Day: The College at
Brockport Naturalization Event
- 24** National Voter Registration Day with local
speaker (TBA)
- 28** Voter Registration at Livingston County's
Federation of Sportsmen's Clubs - Avon,
NY. We need members to sign up



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@lww-rma.org



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
ROCHESTER METROPOLITAN AREA

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Rochester VOTER

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League of Women Voters/Rochester Metropolitan Area

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Director, FEPC & Naturalization

Katherine Smith
Director, Advocacy

**SEPTEMBER VOTER
DEADLINE IS AUGUST 15!**



Goals of the League of Women Voters:

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

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK!



We know you'll "like" us!

www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

Join the League Today!



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Check Amount: _____

Level of Membership: _____

Please send this form and your check payable to
League of Women Voters/RMA to:
LWV/RMA
PO Box 10573
Rochester, NY 14610

or join us online at: www.lwv-rma.org/join.php

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

Individual/Associate	\$.75
Household	\$105
Susan B. Anthony/Frederick Douglass	\$150
Carrie Chapman Catt	\$200
Student (full-time/under 25)	\$.25
Low income, call office	Sliding Scale