



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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Who Cares About Hunger? We Do!

and we invite you to a forum sponsored by

***Foodlink and the LWVs of
Wayne County and Rochester Metro Area and the
Social Justice Council of the
First Unitarian Church of Rochester***

Our distinguished panel includes:

US Representative Louise Slaughter

Julia Tedesco - Foodlink Co-Executive Director,
Chief Development & Communications Officer

Lori O'Brien - Supervising Attorney, Nutrition Outreach &
Education Program (NOEP) of Legal Assistance of
Western New York Inc. Rochester Office



Thursday, April 24, 2014

6:00 – 7:30 PM

First Unitarian Church of Rochester
(220 South Winton Road)

(see the article on page 2 for further info)

Please register at 585.262.3730 or www.lwv-rma.org



Go-See Tours in May will follow up on our March forum, "Putting Food on Your Table: Linking Food, Farms & You" and our April forum, "Who Cares About Hunger? We Do!"

Join us for tours of Noblehurst Farms, NY State Agriculture Experimental Station and Foodlink – watch The Voter and the LWV-RMA website (<http://www.lwv-rma.org>) for details!

President's Corner



March has been a month of great League activity, as you can see by the many reports enclosed.

But first - have you been to our website <http://www.lwv-rma.org> lately? There are two fantastic videos for you: one on Eleanor Roosevelt and her work with the League

of Women Voters, and the other is on the last stages of women suffragists' fight for passage of the 19th Amendment.

Now back to the present: We hope you were impressed by the March 31 forum prepared by your Agriculture Study Group. The presenters were outstanding in their knowledge, and now we must be ready to have our **Member Meeting on April 7 at 7:00 PM at Brighton Town Hall** to discuss the Consensus questions sent to us by LWVUS in order to update our original Agriculture position taken in 1988. The results of your discussion on April 7 will then be sent to LWVUS to be combined with those of all other local Leagues, allowing National to update the position. This is grassroots in action!!

In addition, the Human Trafficking Study Group will be inviting a descendant of Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, Kenneth Morris, Jr., for our September forum. A huge Thank You goes to new member Carole Hoffman who brought this idea to us.

In order for our League to thrive, we depend on new members bringing suggestions for programs that the community would be interested in. Our Events Chair, Gin Busack, and her Program Committee do a fantastic job in seeing that these proposals come alive.

We encourage everyone to attend the **LWVNY Regional Training Workshop on April 5**. For newcomers and long-term members, this is a chance to meet our LWVNY people and get a better understanding of what the League is currently doing. Again, our website contains information about the workshop topics and how to register.

Be on the alert for several "Go-See" tours in May. Plans are being confirmed as I write this report.

Finally, you will notice that the time has come for our **Annual Meeting on May 10 at 10:30 AM at the Locust Hill Country Club**. This is planned for a Saturday so

working members can attend as well. Our bylaws require that notice of the new slate of leaders, the recommended changes to the bylaws, and the budget for the upcoming year be presented more than 30 days in advance. These are enclosed in this Voter (see pages 3-6). The business meeting, at which we need a quorum, begins at 11:00 AM to be followed by lunch and our speaker.

Looking forward to seeing you.

Georgia DeGregorio,
President

Who Cares About Hunger? We Do!

And we invite you to a forum on April 24th, sponsored by Foodlink, the LWVs of Wayne County and Rochester Metro Area and the First Unitarian Church of Rochester.

During the eight months that the Agriculture Study Group examined the newly approved Farm Bill for our April 7th Consensus, our members had a recurring concern. The scope covered by the proposed changes to our LWVUS Agriculture Position did not include nutritional issues, a major part of the Farm Bill.

The reasons are really quite simple. *First*, the LWV considers FOOD to be a RIGHT. Our League position on Basic Human Needs states: "...Persons who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter and access to health care..." *Second*, the issues involved with both agriculture production and the subsequent funding cuts to nutrition programs covered by the new Farm Bill are immense - too huge to be addressed adequately in one 90-minute forum.

Our solution was to create two forums: one focusing on agriculture production (in March) and another on nutrition and hunger (in April). What better partner to work with than Foodlink, the Feeding America Regional Food Bank, which "rescues and redistributes more than 16 million pounds of food annually to a network of 450 member agencies" in its 10 county service area?

Please join us on **Thursday, April 24, 2014**, for our forum and help us answer the question: Who Cares About Hunger??

Gin Busack
Director, Programs



2014 Budget

Another year of growth, visibility and community impact has earned our League a strong financial position. With continued support from members, donors and the community we serve, the League continues to fulfill its mission in every aspect.

With help from Rita Garretson, Georgia DeGregorio (ex-officio) and Ellen DeGregorio, I would like to present our 2014 budget. There are a few line items that I would like to point out for your review:

- **State convention** – Every other year, the State League hosts a convention in Albany. Based on our numbers, we are allowed to send 4 active members. The board continues to believe that upon return, our delegates will bring home invaluable knowledge to share with the League so we can continue to move forward.
- **Website** – The board continues to ask, 'How can we get better?' Looking at the evolution of the internet, we realized that the League's website is out-of-date and needs a reboot. National and State Leagues have both reworked their sites over the past couple years, and now it's our turn.
- **CGR program** – We are in the middle of negotiating terms to bring the community a study that will identify where the subsidy needs are in Monroe County for accredited childcare programs.

We are 132 members strong and growing. Each and every one of us should be proud to be part of an organization that impacts the community as the League does.

Yours truly,

Brian Valenti

Chair, Budget Committee

AmazonSmile

The State League has just joined a new program to help raise funds.

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support the State League every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as you find at Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 0.5% of the purchase price to the State League's Education Foundation.

To shop at AmazonSmile, simply go to smile.amazon.com instead of just amazon.com and search for the League of Women Voters of NYS as your selected charitable organization.

132 Current Members (88 Single, 15HH, 15 Honorary)	Budget for LWVRMA 2014-2015		
	Budget for LWVRMA 2013-2014	Projected 2013-2014	PROPOSED Budget for 2014-2015
Income:			
Member Dues	\$9,300	\$9,300	\$8,175
Donations			
Annual Appeal	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Member	\$350	\$350	\$350
Non-Member	\$400	\$400	\$400
Monroe County Election Counts	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,400
Moderator	\$0	\$0	\$100
Programs			
Annual Meeting	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$1,675
Monthly Prog /Events	\$480	\$480	\$280
Go-See Tours	\$150	\$150	\$250
Restricted Funds			
B. Bibby NYS Ed Fund (501c3)	\$2,500	\$3,000	\$3,000
B. Bibby -CGR Fund, Project TBD	\$10,000	\$0	\$15,000
NYS Education Fund (501c3)	\$400	\$5,493	\$500
RACF Grant (WRY '13)	\$1,200	\$1,200	\$1,200
Gretchen Shafer Fund (SIA)	\$700	\$700	\$700
Charles Schwab Investment Income	\$0	\$800	\$850
Total Income	\$29,980	\$26,373	\$34,880
Expense:			
National Dues	(\$3,425)	(\$3,425)	(\$3,534)
State Dues	(\$1,989)	(\$1,989)	(\$1,989)
Conventions			
Nat'l Conv. Dallas (\$1500 x 3)	(\$4,500)	(\$4,500)	\$0
NYS Conv. Albany (\$600 x 4)	\$0	\$0	(\$2,400)
Student Inside Albany	(\$790)	(\$790)	(\$790)
Support Allied Org. Events	(\$150)	(\$150)	(\$50)
Programs			
Forums/events			
Honorariums	(\$600)	(\$600)	(\$500)
Printing/Supplies	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$250)
Postage	(\$150)	(\$150)	(\$200)
Go-See Tour	(\$150)	(\$150)	(\$250)
Program Planning Meeting			
Postage	(\$100)	(\$100)	\$0
Food	(\$400)	(\$400)	(\$400)
Room Rental	(\$100)	(\$100)	(\$100)
Annual Member Meeting			
Food/Room	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$950)
Supplies	(\$200)	(\$200)	(\$200)
Speaker	(\$100)	(\$100)	(\$100)
Program Printing	\$0	\$0	(\$150)
CGR Program	(\$10,000)	\$0	(\$15,000)
Misc. Program Supplies	\$0	(\$150)	\$0
Administrative Expense			
PO Box-1 yr	(\$73)	(\$75)	(\$75)
Office Phone	(\$720)	(\$720)	(\$540)
Paper/Printer Supplies	(\$184)	(\$600)	(\$600)
Postage	(\$46)	(\$46)	(\$92)
Misc Fees	(\$50)	(\$50)	\$0
Website Design	\$0	\$0	(\$1,250)
Development Costs			
Annual Appeal	(\$175)	(\$175)	(\$60)
Public Relations	(\$100)	\$0	(\$100)
Voter Services			
Who Represents You '13	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)	(\$1,200)
Vote 411	(\$275)	(\$275)	(\$250)
FEPC	(\$75)	(\$75)	(\$250)
Printing of Guides	(\$225)	(\$225)	(\$875)
The Voter	(\$2,126)	(\$2,250)	(\$2,250)
Membership Committee			
Postage/Printing/PayPal	(\$150)	(\$156)	(\$160)
Welcome New Members	(\$350)	(\$350)	(\$300)
Other			
Advocacy Notes and Postage	\$0	\$0	(\$15)
Total Expense	(\$29,803)	(\$20,401)	(\$34,880)
Net Change in Cash	\$177	\$5,972	\$0

Proposed Changes to the Bylaws

The following proposed bylaw changes (not including grammatical and miscellaneous corrections for clarity) are presented for your review. These changes will be subject to approval of the full membership at the Annual Meeting on May 10, 2014

Any text to be deleted is ~~struck through~~. Text to be added is underlined.

ARTICLE I - Name

Sec. I. NAME. The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of the Rochester Metropolitan Area [LWVRMA]. This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States [LWVUS] and of the League of Women Voters of New York State [LWVNYS].

Note: Subsequent references to each level of the League has been replaced by the related abbreviation.

ARTICLE IV - Officers

Sec. 1. ENUMERATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS. The officers of LWVRMA shall be a president (or co-presidents), ~~a minimum of two (2) or a maximum of four (4) vice presidents~~ a first vice president, a second vice president, a secretary and a treasurer, who shall be elected for terms of two (2) years by the general membership at an annual meeting and take office upon election. The president(s), ~~one (1) or two (2) vice presidents~~ the first vice president, and a secretary shall be elected in even-numbered years. ~~One (1) or two (2) vice presidents~~ The second vice president and the treasurer shall be elected in odd-numbered years. No officer shall be eligible for election to the same office for more than two (2) full consecutive terms.

Sec. 2. THE PRESIDENT(S). The president(s) shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the board of directors [Board]. The president(s) may, in the absence or disability of the treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes. The president(s) or his designee shall be, ex-officio, a member of all committees except the nominating committee. The president(s) shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and perform such other duties as may be designated by the Board.

Note: Subsequent references to the board of directors have been replaced by "the Board".

Sec. 3. THE VICE PRESIDENTS. The vice presidents shall perform such duties as the president(s) and Board shall designate. ~~At the first regular board meeting after the board takes office it shall elect one of the vice presidents to serve as the vice president designated to~~ The first vice president shall preside in the absence of the president(s) and succeed the president(s) if same is unable to serve. In the event ~~this~~ the first vice president is unable to serve in this capacity, ~~the~~ Board shall elect one of its elected members to fill the vacancy.

Sec. 5. THE TREASURER. The treasurer shall collect and receive all moneys due. The treasurer shall be the custodian of these moneys, shall deposit them in a bank designated by the Board, and shall disburse the same ~~only as approved within the budget or~~ upon order of the Board. The treasurer shall present statements to the board at its regular meetings and an annual report ~~to~~ at the annual meeting. The treasurer will present a written ~~and oral~~ financial report of grants received with each quarterly board report and at the annual meeting. The report will include "grantor, amount of grant, purpose of grant and account of disbursement of funds". The outgoing treasurer shall complete the financial records for the fiscal year and submit them for

Proposed Changes to the Bylaws *(continued)*

review. The financial records of LWVRMA shall be reviewed at the end of each fiscal year by an audit committee or by an accountant, as determined by the board. The treasurer shall follow generally accepted accounting principles and procedures.

ARTICLE V - Board of Directors

Sec. 1. NUMBER, MANNER OF SELECTION, AND TERM OF OFFICE. The Board shall consist of the officers of LWVRMA, a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of ten (10) elected directors and not more than five (5) appointed directors. Half of the elected directors shall be elected by the general membership at the annual meeting in even-numbered years and the other half in odd-numbered years and shall serve for a term of two years, or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The terms of office for all elected directors shall begin upon election. The elected members shall appoint such additional directors, as they deem necessary to carry on the work of LWVRMA. Appointed directors shall serve ~~for one year~~ until the next annual meeting.

Sec. 4. POWERS AND DUTIES. The Board shall have full charge of the property and business of the organization, with full power and authority to manage and conduct same, subject to the instructions of the general membership. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program as adopted by the national convention, the state convention, and the annual meeting. The Board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary. These may include an executive committee, consisting of the ~~president, secretary, treasurer, and other officers chosen by the board~~ elected officers, which may be empowered to make decisions, normally falling within the Board's jurisdiction, whenever such decisions are required before the next regularly scheduled board meeting, except when the seriousness of the matter to be decided warrants calling a special board meeting. Any action so taken will be reported to the Board at the next meeting.

Sec. 5. MEETINGS. There shall be at least nine (9) regular meetings of the Board annually. The president(s) may call special meetings of the Board and shall call a special meeting upon written request of ~~five (5)~~ one-third (1/3) of the members of the Board.

Sec. 8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY. The Board shall adopt and follow a Conflict of Interest Policy that conforms with the New York Not-For-Profit Corporation Law.

ARTICLE VI - Financial Administration

Sec. 6 ENDOWMENT FUND. The Board may establish an Endowment Fund. Income from this fund may be used for the annual operating budget. The principal may be used for any purpose only upon a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the Board and a two-thirds (2/3) vote ~~of two consecutive at a general membership meetings held at least one month apart.~~

ARTICLE VII - Meetings

Sec.4. MEETING NOTICE. NOTICE FOR ALL BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE MEMBERSHIP SHALL BE GIVEN TO EACH MEMBER OF LWVRMA, EITHER PERSONALLY, BY MAIL , OR BY ELECTRONIC MAIL. IF THE NOTICE IS GIVEN PERSONALLY, BY FIRST CLASS MAIL, OR BY ELECTRONIC MAIL, IT SHALL BE GIVEN NOT LESS THAN 10 NOR MORE THAN 50 DAYS PRIOR TO THE MEETING; IF MAILED BY ANY OTHER CLASS OF MAIL, IT SHALL BE GIVEN NOT LESS THAN 30 OR MORE THAN 60 DAYS BEFORE THE MEETING. *

*Requirement of the New York Not-for-Profit Corporation Law.

Report from the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce the candidates for Officers and Directors for the next two years. Because the scope and responsibilities of the President have grown substantially over the past several years, and because we want to attract more people who are employed to serve in leadership positions, we, along with input from current senior leadership, have restructured the top leadership positions to create a management team. Other Leagues have been successful in adopting this leadership structure.

The current slate to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting is:

Management Team:

Activities Coordinator – Mary Hussong-Kallen
Membership And Leadership Development (MLD) – Gloria Read

Secretary – Mary Myers

Publicity Director – Brian Valenti

Membership Chair – Ellen DeGregorio will serve for one more year as Membership Chair while mentoring new and existing members.

Government Chair – Members will be meeting as a self-directed group to discuss the focus of the committee for the next term.

We are pleased to present to you this slate, which will be voted on at the Annual Meeting on May 10th. We look forward to seeing you there.

Nominating Committee members: Joan Rosenthal, Chair; Ida Holloran; Jane Schmitt; Ellen DeGregorio and Barbara Grosh.



It's time and you are WISE (Warmly Invited and Strongly Encouraged) to attend our Annual Meeting!

Please join us on Saturday, May 10, 2014
at 10:30 AM at Locust Hill Country Club.

Vote for:

New slate of candidates to our Board of Directors
and Nominating Committee

Annual budget for 2014-2015

Bylaws revisions

Honor Milestone League members

Celebrate Carrie Chapman Catt &
Making Democracy Work Awards

Enjoy our guest speaker: **Van White**,
Rochester City School District Board President

RSVP at <http://www.lwv-rma.org>
We look forward to seeing you!

*I have the audacity to believe that
people everywhere can have three
meals a day for their bodies,
education and culture for their
minds, and dignity, equality
and freedom for their spirits.*

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Welcome to our Newest Member!

Virginia "Ginger" Sykes



Who Represents You (WRY) Is Now Available!

Barbara Grosh and her committee have researched and edited information to update this pamphlet, with layout assistance from our talented Chris Burleigh. WRY brochures are being distributed to public libraries in Monroe County and are available by phone call to our League as well as at our forums and other public meetings. And of course, it's available on our website <http://www.lwv-rma.org>. Thank you to each one of you who worked so hard to compile this attractive and useful resource!!

Book Club Report

The LWV Book Club turned away from the politics of today and enjoyed a narrative by Alan Morehead entitled *Darwin and the Beagle*. This fascinating story begins when Charles Darwin, a college graduate of twenty-three, was invited to join a mapping expedition that would take a ship around the world for more than three years. His lifelong interest in cataloguing nature made him a perfect candidate for this voyage. The book includes many pages of his drawings and paintings that were made on the trip.

The book is developed from the journals of both Darwin and the ship's captain, Fitzroy. Both were Christians who believed in the generally accepted concepts of creation of their day. When the voyage concluded their friendship had dissolved, as Darwin could no longer accept this point of view in light of his amazing discoveries. Besides the famous descriptions of the Galapagos mammals and birds, he also went high up in the Andes and discovered sea shells that showed how different the earth had once looked and how long it would have taken for those mountains to rise up from the sea.

Our next book returns us to politics. We'll be discussing *The Parties Versus the People: How to Turn Republicans and Democrats into Americans* by Mickey Edwards. Do join us on **April 12 at 10:00 AM at the Greenhouse Café**, 2271 East Main Street. (Please note the new date!)

Georgia DeGregorio
Member, Book Club

Welcome Back!!

Sue Gaffney

Lois and John Geiss

Mary Medley

Rose Mary Zaffran

LWV-RMA Testimony Before Monroe County Charter Review Committee

This November New Yorkers will vote on an amendment to the NYS Constitution to change the composition of the NYS Commission for Redistricting after the 2020 census.

The NYS League of Women Voters supports this amendment and is asking each of the 62 counties in NYS to update the make-up of its own redistricting commission. Since Monroe County is reviewing its charter, the time is right for Section C2-2 to be changed.

LWV-RMA recommends nonpartisan appointees to the 2021 local Commission. Members could, for example, be university professors, retired judges or civic group leaders, in addition to the two Election Commissioners and members of the County Legislature. The goal is to provide districts that provide not only "one person, one vote," but to reflect the interests of the general public.

In 2011, although the Monroe County Commission held several public forums after the proposed district map was completed, the public hearings were poorly attended because citizens thought the map would be automatically accepted by the Legislature and their input would be too late. At that time LWV-RMA authorized the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) to use the B. Bibby Endowment Fund to draw another map for our forum to help citizens view and compare a possible alternative district map to reflect the goals mentioned previously. Our forum was lively with suggestions from elected officials and citizens. No changes, however, were made to the Commission's map.

The League looks forward to a County Charter change to allow a different make-up of the Legislative District Revision Commission which provides for more meaningful citizen participation. We'd welcome an opportunity to give some specific change recommendations.

Thank you.

Georgia DeGregorio
President, LWV-RMA

Elaine Schmidt
Board Director, Governmental Positions

Katherine Smith
Director, Advocacy

Following Up On...

PUTTING FOOD ON YOUR TABLE:

LINKING FOOD, FARMS & YOU

About 70 people gathered on Monday, March 31, to hear a panel of experts discuss the links in the chain of events that puts nutritious, safe food on our tables.

Our expert panel consisted of:

- **Stanley (Lee) Telega**, NYS Director, US Department of Agriculture Rural Development
- **Robert King**, PhD, Director/Sr. Agriculture Specialist, Monroe Community College
- **Sarah Noble-Moag**, representing Noblehurst Farms, a 7-generation, multi-family agribusiness in Linwood, NY
- Representative of the NYS Agricultural Experiment Station (NYSAES), Geneva, NY

WHAM-TV Channel 13 Associate News Director **Don Alhart** served as moderator, commenting several times on how fascinating he found the information our panel offered.

Some of the interesting things we learned:

- Farming is NOT a dying business! Six new farms were started in Monroe County last year, each begun as a 2nd career for the owner. Across the state, 9,000 new farms were started.
- The booming yogurt industry in our area is supported by Cornell University, MCC and GCC. Major concerns are for maintaining area water quality and securing workers.
- For every food production job, 2.1 related jobs are created.
- 2 new apple strains have been bred by Cornell to be grown in NYS: Snapdragon and Ruby Frost are expected to become very popular local varieties.
- Government has a role in funding research and oversight – all panelists agreed that voluntary oversight of GMOs and other issues is not reliable. The best solution is collaboration.
- Consumer Supported Agriculture options (CSAs) are readily available in most areas – they offer a great way to support healthy, local farming methods, and to complete the link between the farm and our tables.

If you missed the forum, you can still visit Noblehurst Farms and NYS Agriculture Experimental Station and learn even more. You won't be disappointed!



Environmental Issues: We Must Get Louder

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." ~ Margaret Mead

This past year the LWVNYS supported passage of

- (1) the Hazardous Waste Bill
- (2) a Bill which Suspends Hydraulic Fracturing for the Extraction of Natural Gas or Oil; Suspends the Issuance of New Permits for Such Drilling; and
- (3) legislation which encourages the development of solar energy throughout NYS.

NONE OF THOSE BILLS MADE IT TO A FULL VOTE.

In addition, the LWVNYS supports a moratorium on gas drilling while the State Health Commissioner makes a thorough, transparent review of available health studies. Currently, NYS has in place a defacto moratorium while NYS Health Commissioner Shah reviews health studies.

The LWVNYS and its committee on Energy, Agriculture and the Environment co-authored a letter to the editor of the Albany Times Union, published in June, 2013, voicing their support for passage of the hazardous waste legislation. (Benzene from hydraulic waste is a carcinogen.) While the bill was passed by the Assembly, it did not make it to the floor of the Senate even though the bill was supported by 34 state senators, enough for its passage into legislation.

Beth Radow, Chair of the Committee on Energy, Agriculture and the Environment, LWVNYS, shares that at least seven Western New York counties have been approved to spread brine (another waste product of fracking) on roads.

Governor Cuomo pledged \$1 billion in new funding for solar energy projects in his State of the State address. The LWVNYS supports expansion of renewable energy sources throughout New York with solar energy as one such important option.

Our local League is busy putting together a panel of Monroe County and NYS participants, presenting pro and con sides of the fracking issue. It is scheduled to be part of the LWV-RMA's Fall, 2014 program line-up.

Pat Tobin

Member, Fracking Study Group

Also in Environmental News...

The Federation of Monroe County Environmentalists and Rochesterians Concerned About Unsafe Shale-gas Extraction (R-CAUSE) are sponsoring a forum about the 2014 Draft NYS Energy Plan. The presenters are Jessica Azulay, Program Director for Alliance for a Green Economy, and Keith Schue. Both have dissected the plan inside and out and will discuss its positives (increasing renewables), negatives (expanding natural gas infrastructure) and glaring omissions that must be addressed if our state is to meet its target of 80% greenhouse gas reductions by 2050.

Anyone concerned about global warming and switching energy sources to renewables, should attend this forum and submit comments! Comment deadline is April 20, 2014.

For further information, the R-CAUSE website is an excellent resource <http://www.r-cause.net/2014-draft-nys-energy-plan.html>!

FEPC & Naturalization

Any League member who is interested in volunteering for the Naturalization Committee or learning more about the new citizen oath ceremonies, please contact Sheila Abeling at sheiler162004@yahoo.com or call 585-223-6819.

March brought us to Monroe Community College on the 11th for a Naturalization ceremony. Kathy Farrar welcomed new citizens. Mimi Wilson participated in the oath ceremony at the Monroe County Office Building at 10:00 am on March 13th. Thank you both for all you do for new citizens!

The Naturalization schedule for new citizens in Monroe County is located on the League website (<http://www.lwv-rma.org>). If you are interested in observing an oath ceremony (and observing is a truly wonderful experience!), please contact Sheila Abeling at sheiler162004@yahoo.com or call 585-223-6819.

Sheila Abeling

Director, FEPC & Naturalization

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK! 

We know you'll "like" us!

www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

Legislative Redistricting – What You Should Know

NOW is the time to once again raise the issue of an independent commission to draw the 2021 redistricting map for Monroe County Legislative lines.

Why now? The map will not be redrawn until 2021, but the charter that directs the make-up of the commission is being reviewed and updated now. Now is the time to make changes in the Monroe County Legislative District Revision Commission.

For decades the LWVNY has advocated for changes in the way reapportionment is done in NY. It should be expected that our Legislature represents the local community. The 2012 legislature was examined by numerous criteria such as age, gender, ethnicity and creed. The new body appeared to resemble the ones from the first decade of this century. It is not representative of this community – in fact, it appears to represent political parties rather than voters.

The Monroe County Commission in 2011 held several hearings around the County at different locations at different times of the day, but they were attended by few citizens. LWV-RMA held a forum using our map drawn up by the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) for purposes of public discussion. It was very well attended, but no changes were made in the County proposal.

Again LWV-RMA is advocating for independent members to be part of 2021 Commission, as well as the two Election Commissioners and elected officials. Now is the time to change the redistricting process. Changing the make-up of the Commission is the first step.

Members of the LWV-RMA Government Committee will continue to follow this issue at public hearings. The County Legislature will adopt the 2014 charter this year.

Katherine Smith
Director, Advocacy

Update on Immigration

Representatives of NY State and our local Immigration Coalitions met at the Labor Union Hall in Rochester on February 27. Lory Ghertner and Alison Wilder represented the League. Steven Choi, Executive Director of the New York Immigration Coalition (NYIC) office in Manhattan, and two associates were present to describe their services and to ask what the issues are in our part of the state, since these may be different from those downstate.

The downstate staff, while representing the whole state, concentrates on New York City immigrants. Their four areas of concern are: education, advocacy, health and civic engagement. They highlighted two projects: Drivers' licenses for all (including undocumented adults) and DACA, an educational program to give young people who were brought here as children a "leg up" in getting into college. One of their staff people is interested in knowing how many undocumented people there are outside New York City.

Upstate issues include English as a Second Language (ESL) classes and health care for farmworkers. They need interpreters to apply for services. Access to services is already difficult in rural areas, as there is little or no public transportation. Transportation hubs can also be places where ICE officers look for undocumented people. There are Opportunity Centers elsewhere but not here; Catholic Family Center serves the City. The various immigrant groups are not connected, though they may have similar concerns. Someone suggested that the Fiscal Policy Institute could provide data to refute common myths about immigrants, such as "they don't pay taxes" and "they use too many social services."

The NYIC ended the meeting by offering regular phone calls, future visits by its staff, and training sessions to assist the local coalition.

Alison Wilder
Member, Immigration Committee

Persistence is the Key

Check in every Thursday for updates and musings from League Legislative Director Barbara Bartoletti on her blog, *CapitolBeat*.

Please visit <http://www.lwvny-capitolbeat.blogspot.com> for this week's post!



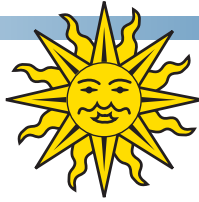
Sunshine Corner

HENRIETTA TOWN BOARD 3/5/2014

Observed by Jane and John Schmitt

No LWV issues noted. The room was filled to capacity with citizens concerned about the possibility of a casino on Clay Rd. All spoke against the casino citing its proximity to three colleges (RIT, U of R and MCC), traffic congestion, and eventual failure of restaurants and businesses already operating in the area.

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



Meet Sheila Abeling

BACKGROUND

Sheila is a woman who loves teaching – almost as much as she loves learning. She taught school for 35 years while she and her husband raised their 2 children. During that time, she was an active volunteer – in her children's activities, of course, but also in her church and in the East Rochester Teachers' Association (including several terms as president). She retired from teaching in 2004 – not to relax, but to explore new interests. She has kept education at the forefront, volunteering with students, joining several educator groups, continuing with her church work, and joining the American Association of University Women (AAUW), the National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls and LWV-RMA.

WHY SHE JOINED LWV-RMA

Sheila joined the League after her good friend and League member, Barbara Hendry, introduced her to the organization. She attended a few different forums and activities and observed several Naturalization ceremonies. Before long, she was "hooked" on the oath ceremonies. She describes her experience of encouraging the new citizens to vote and seeing their enthusiasm in becoming Americans as such a good feeling that she wanted to be an ongoing part of making that happen. She found the whole process so full of hope – for them and for our country. And since the League was a big part of that process, she had to become a big part of the League!

LEAGUE ROLE/ACTIVITY

Soon after joining, Sheila succeeded her friend Barbara as Vice President of Voter Services. Even though she was extremely busy, she loved Voter Services. It gave her a wide variety of activities: the Students Inside Albany Project, Naturalization ceremonies for Monroe County, the Fair Election Practices Campaign (FEPC) for Monroe County, the WHO REPRESENTS YOU project, and of course, registering new voters. She continued in this ambitious role for 4 years.

These days Sheila has narrowed her focus (somewhat) to Naturalizations and organizing the FEPC. She's assembled a wonderful committee of volunteers who freely give their time to welcome new citizens at the Naturalization ceremonies. She encourages everyone to attend a ceremony for a very rewarding experience! And through the FEPC, which the League co-sponsors with The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester (TIAR), she tries to ensure that candidates run fair campaigns and focus on issues. A hearing panel has been a successful mix of nonpartisan, inactive Democrats and Republicans who generously volunteer their time and display the fairness that they encourage throughout the campaign.

QUOTE

I have learned so much since joining the League. Our members contribute a wealth of knowledge to our organization, which keeps the League alive, aware and vital for our community. I still consider voting as our most important right. Every time I register a citizen to vote, I feel hope for our democracy.

We – all of us – are the LWV-RMA.

The better we get to know one another, the more we can accomplish together!



Save the Date YWCA's Stand Against Racism Breakfast Event

April 25, 2014 7:30 - 9:00 AM

The Rochester Plaza Hotel and Conference Center

Please join us at the YWCA's Stand Against Racism breakfast round table event on Friday, April 25, 2014.

The breakfast will feature YWCA USA CEO, **Dara Richardson-Heron, M.D.**, as our keynote speaker. The theme of Dr. Richardson-Heron's talk is

"Leadership Challenges in Achieving Racial Equity."

Following Dr. Richardson-Heron's presentation, Rochester's **Mayor Lovely Warren** and another prominent community leader, to be announced, will participate in a panel discussion on this topic.

Tickets for the served breakfast event are \$25.

Please go to <http://www.ywcarochester.org> to register online, or contact David Mancuso at dmancuso@ywcarochester.org or 368-2260



Coming Events!



April

- 5** LWVNY Training 9:00 – 4:00 @ Brighton Parks & Rec
- 7** Consensus on LWVUS Agriculture Position - 7:00 PM @ Brighton Town Hall
- 14** Toastmasters Workshop 7:00 PM @ Brighton Town Hall
- 24** Forum: Who Cares About Hunger? We Do! - 7:00 PM @ First Unitarian Church
- 28** Toastmasters Workshop 7:00 PM @ Brighton Town Hall

May

- 10** Annual Meeting 10:30 AM @ Locust Hill Country Club
- 16** Go See Tour: Foodlink
- 23** Go See Tour: Nobelhurst Farms/NYS Agriculture Experimental Station

Be sure to check your email and our website for other events as they are scheduled!

Toastmasters Pix



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

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Rochester VOTER

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**MAY VOTER
DEADLINE IS APRIL 15!**



SPEAK UP, BE HEARD,
IF YOU DON'T SAY A WORD, EVERYTHING WILL STAY THE SAME WAY

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

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Carrie Chapman Catt	\$200
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