

# TheVOTER



## Introducing our 2019-2020 Leadership Team

### Co-Presidents

Kim Byers (2019-2020)

Judy Sternberg (2019-2021)

**Treasurer** Judy Weinstein (2019-2021)

**Secretary** Julie Damerell (2019-2020)

**Director** Paula Aguilera (2019-2021)

**Director** Ann Carmody (2018-2020)

**Director** Myra Pelz (2019-2021)

**Director** Kris Rogers (2018-2020)

**Director** Gail Wilder (2018-2020)

### Nominating Committee (2019-20)

Mary Hussong-Kallen, *Chair*

Jane Beck

(and one member to be named from the membership and  
two members to be named from the Board of Directors)

*More Annual Meeting pictures on pages 4 – 5.*



*Shown at the Annual Meeting are some members of our 2018-19 and 2019-20 leadership teams: Mary Hussong-Kallen, 2018-19 Board Member and 2019-20 Nominating Committee Chair; Judy Weinstein, 2018-19 Leadership Team Member and 2019-21 Treasurer; Gin Busack, 2018-19 Leadership Team Member; Kim Byers, 2018-19 Leadership Team Member and 2019-2020 Co-President; Judy Sternberg, 2018-19 Secretary and 2019-2021 Co-President; Paula Aguilera, 2018-21 Director; Julie Damerell, 2019-2020 Secretary.*

## Leadership Corner

The Annual Meeting of LWV-RMA was a star-studded afternoon gala at the Locust Hill Country Club on June 6th. We rubbed elbows with some truly exceptional people in our community and organization. See the various articles throughout this issue as we honor veteran members of the League Barbara Kay, Mary Hussong-Kallen and Virginia Busack. We recognized community members Jim Tortora and Wendy Bello, who won the Making Democracy Work award as the League recognized the significant impact to voter education that they have made through their sponsorship of televised candidate debates on News 8 WROC. And let's talk about Who Makes Us Proud: veteran and freshmen members who are dedicated to "Making Democracy Work for All" in many different yet effective ways (see page 5 for a list of those honored this year).

This Annual Meeting celebrated some important trends we have seen in our League:

1. LWV-RMA has grown its reputation in the community: witness the increase in calls we receive to participate in community events
2. LWV-RMA is expanding its definition of voter services: join the "Get Out The Vote" (GOTV) team to help develop new programs to encourage registered voters to go to the polls on election day
3. LWV-RMA is expanding its reach into the community: local colleges, libraries, hospitals

All of this has been possible because of YOU. Whether you choose to provide financial support to make our programs REAL or whether you become an active volunteer to support our work, MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK FOR ALL starts with YOU. With a membership count now exceeding 160, we have the potential to do more and reach more citizens.

As we transition from the LWV-RMA Leadership Team of 2018-2019 to new roles in the coming fiscal year, we reflect on our evolution as a leadership team. Through collaboration, we bonded; through disagreement, we built consensus; through communication, we built understanding; through commitment, we built trust; and through the year, we built friendship. We thank all the members of the Board of Directors and the overall membership for the advice and support they have provided throughout the year. We are proud to declare our membership in the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE ROCHESTER METROPOLITAN AREA and hope that you feel that same pride in knowing that you are making a difference in our community.

We welcome the new Board for the 2019-2020 fiscal year and we will be here to support them and the overall membership throughout the year.

In League,

Gin Busack: (585) 467-6131, [ginbusack@aol.com](mailto:ginbusack@aol.com)

Kim Byers: (585) 247-4958,  
[lww.roc.volunteer@gmail.com](mailto:lww.roc.volunteer@gmail.com)

Judy Weinstein: (585) 721-8515,  
[j.weinstein.roc@gmail.com](mailto:j.weinstein.roc@gmail.com)

## Remembering Suressa Forbes

Suressa Forbes, who died on April 7, was a decades-long member of the League. In the 1970s, Sue left the League to begin a new challenge with the government of Rochester Mayor Tom Ryan, serving as Commissioner of Economic Development for 27 years. Besides being active in the League of Women Voters, Sue served on the boards of the Rochester Housing Authority and GEVA, and chaired the Rochester Regional Health board. She was also a docent at the Memorial Art Gallery for more than 20 years.



(Information provided by Barbara Kay)

*P.S. Judy and Gin appreciated the opportunity to serve the League in this role and are confident that Kim and Judy Sternberg will provide strong leadership as co-Presidents next year!*

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## LWV-RMA Honored with LWVNYS Carrie Chapman Catt Visibility and Leadership Award

At the June 8 meeting of the LWVNYS Convention, the LWV-RMA was given the state's 2019 Carrie Chapman Catt Visibility and Leadership Award. The proclamation states that "they have increased the League's visibility, voter service outreach, and membership and leadership development through new community partnerships and collaborations, and their intentional focus on increasing diversity and broadening the League participation in the Rochester Metro communities. The League's considerable efforts and accomplishments promoting Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) and targeted Voter Services activities emphasized building visibility and credibility in the underserved and under-resourced communities of color. From these collaborations they have also gained new members and their concerted effort to mentor new League leaders has increased diversity of the leadership and membership."



Seen at the LWVNYS Convention: Judy Sternberg, Gail Wilder, Deb Leary, Judy Weinstein, Kim Byers, and unknown delegate.



Executive Director Laura Ladd Bierman & President Dare Thompson of LWVNYS with LWV-RMA leaders Kim Byers, Judy Weinstein, and Judy Sternberg.

## Mary Hussong-Kallen Honored

Mary Hussong-Kallen and her significant contributions to LWV-RMA are commemorated with a plaque at the office of the New York State League of Women Voters. The plaque reads:

*"Mary Hussong-Kallen*

*PAVEs the Future for LWV-RMA – a Passion for  
Advocacy and the Voice of Engagement"*

The plaque recognizes Mary's many contributions to developing the LWV-RMA into a growing organization, known in the community for its non-partisanship and advocacy for positions that promote the League goal to "make democracy work for all." Mary was commended for her ability to develop partnerships with community organizations and media outlets.

## Naturalization Ceremonies

LWV-RMA volunteers attend Naturalization ceremonies throughout the year. Members talk to the candidates about voting and then help them register to vote. On April 25, at Minerva Deland School in Fairport, Margaret Supinski and Sheila Abeling welcomed 51 new citizens. It was a special ceremony attended by fifth graders as a culmination of their study of immigration. Students read letters to the new citizens and the choir sang patriotic songs. The Honorable Evelyn Frazee officiated at the ceremony. Several VIPs attended, including the Mayor of Fairport.

Julie Damerell met 50 candidates for citizenship during the April 30 ceremony at Rochester City Hall. The Honorable Jonathan Feldman held court that day for the new citizens. On May 2, Jane Beck and Lois Winterkorn welcomed candidates for citizenship at RIT. Judge Marian Payson officiated. A new venue for Monroe County Naturalizations is the Lyric Theater. Beth Feldman and Kathy Farrar welcomed 100 new citizens there on May 23.







## LWV-RMA Annual Meeting: A Time to Socialize

On June 6, LWV-RMA members gathered to elect officers, approve a budget for the coming fiscal year, and present awards. It was noted that we have welcomed 48 new members this past year and that we have added to our voter registration priorities an initiative to encourage all registered voters to cast an informed ballot on election day.

Shown here are some of our members socializing before and after the meeting.



**VOTE411.ORG**  
ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED





## Recognitions Presented During the Annual Meeting

During the meeting two broadcast journalists were recognized for their ongoing commitment to causes important to the LWV-RMA. Receiving the 2019 Making Democracy Work Award were Wendy Bello, Vice President and General Manager for News 8 WROC, and Jim Tortora, former News Director at News 8 WROC. Both recipients have been instrumental in producing televised candidate forums during political campaigns.

Receiving the Carrie Chapman Catt Award, the highest honor for an LWV-RMA member, was Barbara Kay, who has served the LWV-RMA in many ways since she joined in the 1960s.

Receiving "You Make Us Proud" awards were Chris Burleigh, Julie Damerell, Brad Freeman, Mary Garfield, Bev Kent, Deb Leary, and Myra Pelz.

Shirley Eberly was honored as a Life Member upon reaching her 50th anniversary as a member of the LWV-RMA.

Special recognition was given to Mary Hussong-Kallen for her exceptional leadership during the past five years.

It was also announced that Gin Busack is the recipient of the 2019 Rochester Federation of Women's Clubs Achievement Award for her leadership of voter registration and Get Out The Vote (GOTV) efforts.



LEFT: Wendy Bello and Jim Tortora of News 8 WROC.

TOP: 2018-19 LWV-RMA Leadership Team Gin Busack, Judy Weinstein, and Kim Byers; Past President Mary Hussong-Kallen.

BOTTOM: Shirley Eberly with Judy Weinstein; Kim Byers with Carrie Chapman Catt Award recipient Barbara Kay and Bob Kay (Barbara's husband).

## Criminal Justice Reform Efforts in Our Area

On April 29, a panel of reform leaders described regional efforts to amend the criminal justice system during a session co-sponsored by the League and the Rochester Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Presenters included Jason Willis, Ph.D., Director of African/African American Studies, Rochester City School District; the Rev. Wanda Wilson, Member, Executive Committee, Police Accountability Board Alliance; Kathleen FitzPatrick, Co-Chair, Criminal Justice Task Force, Rochester Alliance of Communities Transforming Society (RocACTS); and Ashley Gantt, NYS Organizer, Just Leadership USA and "FREENewYork Campaign".

Among their comments were the following:

- There is a direct correlation between poverty and involvement with the American prison system.
- Rochester/Monroe County is home to the fifth-worst level of income disparity in the nation.
- In the U.S., poorer districts have fewer resources and serve students in greater need of support.
- Dropouts commit about 75% of crimes in the U.S.
- Slavery in the U.S. was replaced by Jim Crow laws, which in turn were replaced by the war on drugs and mass incarcerations.
- The Police Accountability Board Alliance is negotiating with the Rochester government to create a community review board to provide independent investigation of complaints, with subpoena power, to apply discipline and to work with the police chief to ensure that police officers are held accountable for their behavior.
- Since 2011, about 80,000 prisoners have been held in solitary confinement in the U.S. (many for decades), while the U.N. defines solitary confinement of more than 15 days as torture.
- The NYS Legislature is considering bills to halt long-term solitary confinement. A2500 has already passed the Assembly and S1623 is in committee in the NYS Senate.
- The NYS Legislature earlier this session approved legislation to limit pre-trial incarceration, to provide speedy trials, and to eliminate bail requirements for misdemeanor charges.
- NYS now has one of the nation's fairest discovery laws, requiring prosecutors to share evidence with defendants within 15 days.



TOP: Panelists Jason Willis, Ph.D.; the Rev. Wanda Wilson; Kathleen FitzPatrick; and Ashley Gantt.

BOTTOM: Ann Carmody, Co-Chair, Program Committee, LWV-RMA, introducing program; Donna M. Harris, Ph.D., Social Action Co-Chair, Rochester Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., introducing panel; participants during the question-and-answer portion of the meeting.



## Promoting Participation in the 2020 Census

On May 20, the LWV-RMA, FIGHT Village, and the Faith Community Alliance of Greater Rochester presented a program on the importance of the 2020 Census, especially for those who depend on government services.

Meeting hosts—Bishop Willie F. Davis, Jr. of the Cathedral of Hope Community Church and Minister Clifford Florence, Sr. of the Central Church of Christ, and President of the Faith Community Alliance of Greater Rochester—welcomed participants to the meeting.

LWV-RMA member Ann Carmody then introduced the program. Susan Perry of the U.S. Census Bureau discussed what data the 2020 Census will collect, and how it will and will not be used. Alicia Ward, Manager of the SUNY ATTAIN computer lab at the Baden Street Center, explained how her department is involved in the census. Brigit Hurley of The Children's Agenda discussed the importance of participating in the census, since census data impacts Title I (education) funding, WIC, SNAP food assistance and children's insurance programs. At the conclusion of the presentations, League member Ann Carmody moderated a question and answer period.



*Robert Withers photos*

*TOP ROW: Minister Clifford Florence, Bishop Willie Davis, and Susan Perry.*

*BOTTOM ROW: Alicia Ward, Brigit Hurley, and Ann Carmody.*

## Fair Election Practices Campaign 2019 — Update

The League of Women Voters-Rochester Metropolitan Area (LWV-RMA) and The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester (TIAR) started the 2019 Fair Election Practices Campaign (FEPC) in May to include primary candidates in the upcoming consolidated June 25 primary election day. The FEPC provides all candidates the opportunity to sign a Fair Campaign Pledge to publicly commit to running positive, issues-oriented campaigns. The names of all candidates who sign the Pledge are listed on the League's website. A press conference was held on May 29 so that candidates could be publicly acknowledged for signing the Pledge.

Later in the summer, a second round of Pledges from the general election candidates will be solicited with a separate press conference. A Fair Election Practices Hearing Panel is established to review properly filed complaints and issue decisions ahead of the elections.

If you are interested in assisting with the FEPC mailings, working with the Hearing Panel, or coordinating press conferences, please contact Kris Rogers, LWV-RMA FEPC Coordinator, at [FEPC@lwv-rma.org](mailto:FEPC@lwv-rma.org).



*At the May 29 FEPC media conference -*

*TOP: Kris Rogers with candidates taking the fair campaign pledge.*

*CAMEO: Kris Rogers with Ebony Dukes, candidate for County Legislature District 27.*

*BOTTOM LEFT: Kris Rogers with Karen P. LoBrocco, candidate for County Legislature District 2.*

*BOTTOM RIGHT: Kris Rogers with Cheryl Dinolfo, Monroe County Executive.*

## LWV-RMA Meets with International Visitors from Tajikistan

For a number of years LWV-RMA has had a relationship with Rochester Global Connections (formerly Rochester International Council), an organization that hosts groups of international visitors brought to cities across the U.S. through Department of State and Library of Congress programs. Each visiting group has a theme for its trip, so Rochester Global Connections invites a few local organizations who can best speak to that theme to meet with the visitors. LWV-RMA was recently invited to speak to a group of four visiting journalists from Tajikistan on the topic of Countering Disinformation. The State Department wanted the visitors to meet with us to learn about our role in countering disinformation and increasing voter education, turnout, and political engagement at the local level.

On April 26, Judy Weinstein, Kim Byers and Judy Sternberg met with the group for an hour and a half to share some background on League history, the League's mission of Empowering Voters and Defending Democracy, the activities we engage in to advance that mission, and our strict non-partisan stance and reputation. We touched on LWV-RMA's forums, advocacy, and Voter Services projects, and national and state level involvements in litigation, lobbying and crafting of legislation.

Our presentation was followed by an engaging question and answer period and some photo taking. Everyone on both sides seemed to appreciate the exchange and the opportunity to meet and learn about each other.

**Judy Sternberg** [jsternberg3b@gmail.com](mailto:jsternberg3b@gmail.com)



*Photos from Rochester Global Connections.*

*TOP : Seen with visitors from Tajikistan, are LWV-RMA leaders Kim Byers (3rd from left) as well as Judy Weinstein and Judy Sternberg (5th and 6th from left).*

*BOTTOM LEFT: Judy Sternberg helping Tajik visitor with VOTE sign.*

*BOTTOM RIGHT: Tajik visitors during discussion.*

## We've Got the Plan! All We Need is You!

Some Monroe County Legislative Districts have only half as many voters registered as others, which makes them a low priority for attention from government. We're hoping to change that. The plan is to conduct door-to-door voter registration blitzes (working with community partners to get our numbers up). We started this campaign the weekend of May 25 and 26.

As part of these door-to-door meetings, we discuss changes to voting laws, like early voting in the fall and voting rights for people on parole. We offer yard signs to people proud of their voting history. We sign up people for our new text list, so we can send them reminders about Vote 411, election dates, or links to articles about voting issues, like what it means to join a political party.

We're aiming to cover the four (out of 29) County Legislative Districts with lowest political participation, Districts 22, 25, 28 and 29, by going door-to-door one day per month this season. If you'd like to participate, please contact Barbara Grosh at [barbara@grosh.net](mailto:barbara@grosh.net) or (585) 415-8251.





## Sunshine Corner

### MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE - OBSERVED BY ELAINE SCHMIDT

On May 14, the Monroe County Legislature swore in two new legislators: Kara Halstead (R), who will represent District 18 and Sabrina LaMar (D) who will represent District 27.

Dr John J. Garneau, MD, was honored by the County for helping a veteran receive his benefits, and he has offered to help other veterans locate physicians to perform their physicals. Several students from Brighton High School who are members of Youth Climate Change Leaders urged county legislators to develop a Climate Action Plan for Monroe County. They provided printed information and presented



several suggestions for responding to climate change, such as planting more trees, using electric buses, and conducting a countywide emissions assessment. A public hearing was scheduled for June 11 regarding a local law regulating the use and protection of the Monroe County geodetic survey monumentation

network. Richard Yolevich and Andrew Hollister were appointed to the Monroe County Planning Board for two-year terms. Colleen C. Rose was confirmed as Executive Director of Monroe Community Hospital.

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

**One way to be heard on federal issues:**

## Postcard Fridays

Place  
Stamp  
Here

If you are seeking a way to express your opinions about major federal issues, you might want to join Postcard Fridays. Participants receive an email packet mid-week every week outlining issues, suggested comments on these issues, and contact information for postcard recipients.

Group members meet every Friday from 9:15–10:30 a.m. at Soul Coffee & Jazz in Village Gate on Goodman Street. [Enter Village Gate through Entrance B near the Children's Institute. The tables outside Soul Cafe will be straight ahead.]

At the Friday sessions, participants write their comments on provided postcards and leave them with leaders for mailing. Since February 2017, group members have sent more than 37,000 postcards. Those who cannot attend the Friday session can send postcards from home.

To learn more, send an email to [postcardfridays@gmail.com](mailto:postcardfridays@gmail.com).

This is just one such group in our region; there are perhaps others. If you know of another group please email contact information to [judithw@frontiernet.net](mailto:judithw@frontiernet.net).

*Federal Lawmaker or Official*

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*Washington, D.C.*

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Jaylynn Pyatt-Ramos with Assemblyman Harry Bronson in the Assembly Chamber.  
 (Inset) Ariyana Cotton-Edwards and Jaylynn Pyatt-Ramos.

## Students Inside Albany

Two School Without Walls juniors, Ariyana Cotton-Edwards and Jaylynn Pyatt-Ramos, were selected to attend this year's Students Inside Albany program sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc. The 19th annual Students Inside Albany session took place in May 2019 and involved about 60 students from across the state in a first-hand experience of state government. The intent of SIA is to increase student awareness of their roles as citizens and provide information about tools to help meet those responsibilities. One student was funded by LWVNYS and one by Jean Shafer's endowment to LWV-RMA. To learn more about SIA, contact Bev Kent at [bevkent@rochester.rr.com](mailto:bevkent@rochester.rr.com).

## COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORTS FOR 2018-2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We conclude this year with the opportunity to celebrate a vibrant League, financially healthy, program strong, and energized with new ideas to expand our mission of “making democracy work for all”.

Our core programs continued to serve the community with many experiencing increased participation. Naturalization ceremonies have increased in frequency as the number of newly naturalized citizens grew. And, the League of Women Voters was there to welcome these U.S. citizens and educate them on their newly acquired right to vote.

The government and advocacy group continued to visit our local state representatives, connecting on important issues. Recently, we advocated for funding to be approved to support the newly enacted voter reform laws (in particular, to support early voting). It is gratifying to think that our voices participated in supporting this important legislation that will expand accessibility to the voting booth.

The Fair Election Practices Campaign continues to support factual, issue focused candidate communications. This is further supported by our non-partisan candidate forums. And, Rochester was again able to send two young women to the Students Inside Albany program (one student is funded by LWVNYS and one is funded by a generous endowment to LWV-RMA). *The Voter* continues to be a professional, content rich communication to not only League members but to outside community contacts as well.

Voter Registration events have grown to include new venues and populations. LWV-RMA now has a working relationship with many local colleges (namely, Brockport, Monroe Community College, Nazareth, RIT, and the University of Rochester) to provide voter education support and voter registration. Likewise, we are now a face at the library systems across Monroe County. A new initiative is underway to provide election day voter assistance to hospitalized individuals, working with the Board of Elections and legal support and focusing on Rochester General as a test site. Participation in various city events has expanded as a result of an invitation by the mayor’s office that gives us access and knowledge about upcoming events.

Beyond our core programs, there is an energy that is driving change and introducing new ideas across the League activities.

The newly formed Get Out the Vote committee has developed plans that are in the early stages of implementation and aimed at translating a voter registration into a ballot cast on election day.

You will be hearing more about neighborhood canvassing events, creative postcard mailings, and texting to enrolled individuals – all focused on reminding citizens when, where, and how to cast a ballot.

Our Membership Committee has improved our database tracking system providing a single source for membership information. New member events provided an opportunity to get to know each other, face-to-face. A team has been at work developing an organization chart that will help us to pictorially communicate how we are structured to achieve our goals. The objective is to simplify our discussions with current and prospective members, highlighting areas where there is a resource need but also enabling members to easily see where they would like to be involved.

The Program Committee has sponsored seven forums this year, working to incorporate our goals to increase advocacy or “action” opportunities and to increase LWV-RMA visibility through community partnerships. For instance, an informational session on the 2020 Census was held once in September in the East Ave. neighborhood and once in May at F.I.G.H.T. Village Community Center. This second forum was in partnership with the Faith Community Alliance of Greater Rochester, Inc. This forum also enabled participants to apply to work for the Census Bureau bringing opportunities for engagement together with the information sharing process. Similarly, the April forum was co-sponsored with the Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and focused on Criminal Justice. We heard speakers from four different organizations speak to their efforts and provide the audience with advice on how they could get involved to advocate for reform. These and the following sessions are all on the Leagues YouTube channel and can be accessed from our website: [lwv-rma.org](http://lwv-rma.org)

- October: The US Supreme Court – A Distinct and Independent Body – a contemporary information session educating the community as the country watched the news on the appointment of a new U.S. Supreme Court judge
- November: Election 2018 Results – A Review of the Political Landscape
- March: Climate Change -- discussed advocacy for legislation that would help to mitigate the effects of global warming
- May: Implementation of New Voter Reform Laws – the Board of Elections described the impact of the newly enacted legislation and how that effects voter registration and the upcoming election cycle in November



*Continued from page 10*

We complete this year as the inaugural 3-person Leadership Team trial comes to a close. While we faced challenges balancing the workload of leading various committees while also leading LWV-RMA, three people helped to fill gaps. As you will note, the nominating committee is proposing co-presidents (two people) for the coming fiscal year, with a reduction in the committee chairmanship responsibilities for these candidates while they serve as leaders of LWV-RMA overall. This approach is also expected to reduce coordination and communication activities, eliminating some duplicative work across the leadership team.

All of this work has been possible as a result of a Board of Directors that works well together to achieve our goals and a membership rich with volunteers and energy. First Friday, our informal gathering at I-Square on the first Friday of each month, continued to connect our members. With the growth in attendance, this fun, friendly, and informative gathering is a great way to get to know each other while learning about the latest volunteer opportunities.

As the Annual Business Meeting of LWV-RMA concludes, we will send five voting members to the New York State LWV Conference in Albany, June 7 to 9. Kim Byers, Deb Leary, Judy Sternberg, Judy Weinstein, and Gail Wilder will represent Rochester as the State League plans for the upcoming year. The opportunity to meet with our colleagues across the state promises to be energizing and to set the stage as we define our goals for the 2019-2020 year.

We submit this report humbly, with the hope that you share in our pride for what has been accomplished this year.

~ **Gin Busack, Kim Byers and Judy Weinstein, the Leadership Team**

## MEMBERSHIP

### MEMBERSHIP TOTALS

**MAY 2018:** approximately 150 memberships

**MAY 2019:** approximately 170 memberships

The current membership total includes 17 life members and 11 student members

**NOTE:** With LWVUS's decision in April 2018 to waive the student membership fee (through January 2021), our League followed suit: our student membership dues presently are waived.

### GETTING-TO-KNOW-THE-LEAGUE EVENT

This event for new League members took place at Irondequoit Library on November 11, 2018. Poster boards (tri-folds) encircling the large room presented a colorful display that advertised League

committees, programs, and election (and other) League work in the community. As new members paused at the tri-folds, members knowledgeable about the subjects were on hand to extend a greeting and to answer questions.

Ten new members attended the event, disappointingly fewer than Membership had expected. Thanks to Judy Wadsworth for the many lively photos of this event that appeared in the December Voter.

### FROM BARBARA KAY, SOMETHING PERSONAL

As my two-year term as Membership Chair/Co-Chair comes to an end, I note, sadly, the passing of these League members:

David Kendall September 4, 2017

Ernest Du Bois May 18, 2018

June Rogoff September 14, 2018

Sterling Weaver September 5, 2018

Jane Chase December 30, 2018

Suzanne McNamara January 12, 2019

Betty Rockford April 6, 2019

Suressa Forbes April 7, 2019

~ Mary Garfield and Barbara Kay

## NATURALIZATION, ELECTION SERVICES COMMITTEES

### NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES:

In 2018-2019, the number of Naturalization ceremonies has continued to increase due to the high number of candidates wanting to become American citizens. Our League volunteers attended an average of two - three ceremonies per month. Approximately, 1,900 new citizens will have been naturalized in Monroe County by the end of 2019. USCIS (United States Citizens Immigration Services) continues to add new venues to the ceremonies. Along with the Monroe County Office Building, The Federal Building and Rochester City Hall, ceremonies have been at Fairport Minerva School, George Eastman House, RIT, SUCBrockport, Seneca Falls, Lyric Theater, Genesee Country Museum, and Florence Brasser Elementary School in the Gates Chili School District. The League volunteers talk about the importance of voting to all in attendance at the ceremonies. The candidates are encouraged to register to vote and our volunteers assist them with their registration forms. A special thank you to our dedicated volunteers: Lois Winterkorn, Mimi Wilson, Margaret Supinski, Katherine Smith, Kay Saunders, Joan Rosenthal, Beth Feldman, Kathy Farrar, Marcia Eisenberg, Julie Damerell, Jane Beck, Sheila Abeling.

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## ELECTION SERVICES:

The League has a three year contract with the Monroe County Board of Elections (MCBOE) to open absentee ballots for the Primary Election and the General Election. Our League members volunteer to open absentee ballots. This project is a fundraiser for the League. For each person who volunteers to open ballots, the League receives \$100. In the fall, there were two Primary Elections and the General Election. The League earned \$3,800.

~ **Sheila Abeling**

## STUDENTS INSIDE ALBANY

Two School Without Walls students, juniors Ariyana Cotton-Edwards and Jaylynn Pyatt-Ramos, 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 19<sup>th</sup> annual Students Inside Albany program took place May 19 – 22, 2019, bringing approximately 60 students from across the state to Albany to get a first-hand education about state government. The program is designed to increase high school students' awareness of their roles as citizens in representative government and provide information about the tools necessary for meeting those responsibilities. One student was funded by LWVNYS and one by a generous endowment to LWV-RMA.

~ **Bev Kent**

## VOTE 411 TEAM

I am delighted to report that we now have a Vote 411 Team to manage the LWV voter information website. The Team is dividing up the responsibilities of researching candidates' email addresses, following up with candidates who haven't posted, working on the website, etc. The members of the Team are: Chris Booth, Julie Damerell, Renee Frazier, Deborah Gordon, Judy Hartmann, Myra Pelz, Chris Pryor, Judy Weinstein and Gail Wilder.

~ **Judy Weinstein**

## FEPC

The Fair Election Practices Campaign (FEPC) is being run for both the new Primary season as well as the General Election season. The Hearing Panel met on April 30th to prepare for the 2019 season. All candidates are encouraged to sign a Pledge to run fair, issue-oriented campaigns. Candidates who have signed the Pledge may file complaints against her or his opponent in their race. Hearings are held and decisions released to the media as soon as completed. Press conferences will be held for both Primary and General Elections also. In the 2018 campaign season, there were no official complaints filed. With the number of local races on the ballots

this year, 2019 is likely to be active for the FEPC Hearing Panel.

~ **Kris Rogers**

## GOVERNMENT/ADVOCACY COMMITTEE

This was another busy year for us! This year we:

- Prepared the questions asked of candidates for Vote411;
- Coordinated the Observer Corps;
- Met with members (or staff representatives) of the Monroe County delegation to the New York State Senate and Assembly to discuss LWVNYS priority issues – funding for early voting; campaign finance and ethics reform; automatic voter registration; legislation providing for the restoration of voting rights for people on parole; and reduction of state campaign contribution limits across the board.
- Candidate forums were held: for the U.S. House of Representatives District 25 for both the primary and general elections co-sponsored with News 8 WROC; NY State legislative races for both the primary and general election co-sponsored with The Children's Agenda; and NY Senate races for the general elections co-sponsored with the U of R School of Medicine and Dentistry students.

The members of the Government committee are Ann Carmody, Katherine Smith, Elaine Schmidt, and Judy Weinstein. We welcome you to join the Observer Corps or the Government/Advocacy Committee.

~ **Judy Weinstein**

## VOTER SERVICES

As always, the primary goal for Voter Services this year has been to encourage through advocacy and education, voter registration and, possibly more important, participation.

In that vein, our GET OUT THE VOTE/THINKING OUTSIDE OF THE BOX group decided to focus our efforts on Youth and on areas of low voter turnout and began work on expanding or implementing several new initiatives.

- A program to target neighborhoods of low voter registration, inviting neighborhood groups to work with us, knocking on every door, registering voters and HEARING their issues.
- Targeted use of texting and postcards to encourage people to use their vote, a reminder for important dates.
- First time distribution of Lawn Signs, asking their neighbors to come vote with them.
- Continuation of the chalking project, spraying our stenciled message to VOTE TUESDAY or VOTE MARTES on the weekend before elections.

*Continued on page 13*



- Expansion of our in-hospital patient absentee ballot and day of ballot initiative with Rochester General and Strong hospitals.
- Conduct new voter orientation sessions at community gathering locations.
- Increase our presence and visibility at City of Rochester and RCSD events, partnering with our community partners.

We are, however, only as good as our volunteers and they have excelled this year. With their efforts, we have:

- Participated in over 40 community events including the PRIDE Festival, Puerto Rican Festival, the Latino Voter Registration Drive, Anthony Jordan Health Front Porch, the RCSD Family Picnic, the Trillium Call To Women of Color and R.I.S.E. TO VOTE—IT TAKES ALL COLORS, in addition to the City-sponsored Bulls Head Community Fair, three ROC the Park (Soul, Gospel & Latino) and the Rochester Summer Soul music events, Halloween at the Market and A Walk the Neighborhood evening in the 19<sup>th</sup> Ward. We also participated in local neighborhood events including Ease on Down 14619, the Portland Avenue Business Fest, St. John Baptist Church Festival, and the Arnett Library Job Fair. We also provided voter registration services at Rochester Rehab, the Carlson YMCA, Project Homeless Connect and Constitution Day at SUNY Brockport.
- Led by Gail Wilder, we expanded our College outreach program to now include Eastman School of Music and the UofR Medical School in addition to Nazareth College, Monroe Community College, Rochester Institute of Technology, the University of Rochester and SUNY Brockport with Nazareth, RIT, and SUNY Brockport distributing our YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE pamphlets to their undergraduates.
- Worked with two student organized VOTE FOR OUR LIVES –STUDENTS DEMAND ACTION events.
- Our Voter Education Team, guided by Beth Feldman, expanded our civics education/voter registration initiative with presentations at The School Without Walls, School of the Arts, Edison Tech, East High, the World of Inquiry, Northeast Prep, Aquinas, All City and Integrated Arts & Technology/
- Underwritten by a grant from the Rochester Area Community Foundation, we once again were able to distribute 4,000 “WHO REPRESENTS YOU” brochures to various community organizations and are currently distributing the 2019 edition.

The work of our Voter Registration volunteers is never complete. It will be a busy summer season continuing our registration services and encouraging voter participation. Among the scheduled events so far are the PRIDE Fest, Portland Avenue Community Event at Gantt Rec Center, Rochester Rehab, the RCSD Mind of a Mother and St. John Baptist Church.

Finally, I wish to thank our members for supporting the efforts of the Voter Services Team over the past four years.

~ **Gin Busack**

## THE VOTER

The LWV-RMA Voter was published nine times during the past program year with breaks during the summer hiatus and winter recess. The publication is based for the most part on input submitted by program leaders and reflects our many activities. The document’s professional appearance is provided by Chris Burleigh.

~ **Judy Wadsworth**

## Dear Judy, Gin, Kim, and the LWV-RMA Board of Directors,

Thank you for the honor of a PAVE plaque at the LWVNYS offices. To say that I’m just overwhelmed doesn’t begin to describe my feelings.

The opportunity to contribute to the local League has been as challenging and rewarding as anything I’ve ever attempted, and I couldn’t be more grateful. To work with such talented, committed, dynamic women and to feel that we accomplished some awfully good things over the last few years are well beyond my hopes.

When Gloria Read and I first took on the presidency, we were relatively new League members, and we found Katherine Smith and Sheila Abeling and other more “seasoned” members so helpful. I now recognize that generous and reliable help as a hallmark of this League’s operation. Frankly, it’s the only reason I can claim any success.

To have been a part of the leadership of LWV-RMA at such an interesting time has been its own reward – but I thank you so very much for recognizing my efforts and the collaboration of so many members.

It will now be my greater pleasure to continue working with current and future leaders and members of our local League, as we continue to Make Democracy Work for All.

Sincerely,

**Mary Hussong-Kallen**



# Coming Events!



## June

- 24 LWV-RMA Board of Directors, (Noon – 2 P.M. Asbury UMC)
- 25 Naturalization (10:00 A.M., Rochester City Hall)

## July

- 4 Naturalization (10:00 A.M., Genesee Country Village & Museum, Mumford)
- 5 First Friday (11:00 A.M., I-Square, 400 Bakers Park)
- 16 LWV-RMA Board of Directors (5:30 - 8:30 P.M., Asbury UMC)
- 24 Naturalization (1:00 P.M., Rochester City Hall)
- 25 Naturalization (10:00 A.M., Monroe County Office Building)

## August

- 2 First Friday (11:00 A.M., I-Square, 400 Bakers Park)
- 8 Naturalization (10:00 A.M., Monroe County Office Building)
- 26 Naturalization (1:00 P.M., Women's Rights National Historical Park, Seneca Falls)
- 29 Naturalization (1:00 P.M. Federal Building)

### Today in History

THE NATIONAL  
SUSAN B. ANTHONY  
MUSEUM & HOUSE

**Susan B. Anthony  
found guilty of  
illegally voting  
in the 1872  
presidential  
election.**

**JUNE 19, 1873**



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

## Don't Miss First Fridays with LWV-RMA

Join League colleagues for lunch or a mid-day coffee break each First Friday of the month, 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M. at I-Square, 400 Bakers Park, at Titus Avenue, Irondequoit, NY 14617.

No need to RSVP. Pencil us in on your calendar and join when you can!

There's a place at the table for you!

July 5

August 2



Board of Directors meetings are held at Asbury First UMC. Board meetings are open to all members. See calendar for dates and times.

Advocacy/Government Committee meets monthly. For details, call Ann Carmody at (585) 748-5848.

Naturalization ceremonies are usually held on second Thursday of each month. Check League website for updated info each month.

Forums are open to the public. Calendar information is subject to change.

For more complete information, consult our website at [www.LWV-RMA.org](http://www.LWV-RMA.org), call 262-3730 or e-mail us at [info@lwv-rma.org](mailto:info@lwv-rma.org)



PO Box 10573  
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[www.LWV-RMA.org](http://www.LWV-RMA.org)

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

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Leadership Team

**Co-Presidents** Kim Byers (2019-2020) Judy Sternberg (2019-2021)

**Treasurer** Judy Weinstein (2019-2021)

**Secretary** Julie Damerell (2019-2020)

**Director** Paula Aguilera (2019-2021)

**Director** Ann Carmody (2018-2020)

**Director** Myra Pelz (2019-2021)

**Director** Kris Rogers (2018-2020)

**Director** Gail Wilder (2018-2020)

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Looking for info on a League committee or activity? Look no further!

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*The Voter is a  
monthly publication  
of the LWV-RMA*

*Editor,  
Judy Wadsworth*

*Layout/Design,  
Chris Burleigh*

## AUGUST/SEPTEMBER VOTER DEADLINE IS JULY 15!

### League of Women Voters-Rochester Metro Area 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 persons who are at least 16 years of age.

Those under 16 can be associate members.

### 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](http://www.lwv-rma.org/join.php)

### MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

Individual/Associate	.....	\$75
Household	.....	\$105
Susan B. Anthony/Frederick Douglass	.....	\$150
Carrie Chapman Catt	.....	\$200
Student	.....	FREE
Low income, call office at 262-3730	.....	Sliding Scale
or send an email to: <a href="mailto:info@lwv-rma.org">info@lwv-rma.org</a>		