

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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LWV-RMA presents

PICNIC IN THE PARK

Program Planning & General Membership Meeting

All members are cordially invited to share a day of information, discussion, planning, food and good times!

Our Government Committee, Energy Committee, Education Study Group and Poverty Study Group will lead us in determining our recommendations to LWVUS for the National Convention in June.

Saturday, January 9, 2016

10:00 AM til 1:00 PM

Buckland Lodge
1341 Westfall Rd

In order to provide enough food, please register for this event by visiting our website at:

<http://www.lwv-rma.org>

If you have any dietary restrictions, please let us know when you register.



Presidents' Corner

Tis the season – already!!!

We can't help but take time before the festivities begin to extend our thanks to all the members of the LWV-RMA for all that you do to make this League such a joy to be part of! To a person, you are hard-working, committed, knowledgeable, tireless, creative, patriotic, fearless, fun and generous with your time and your many talents!

We wish you Happy Holidays, and we so look forward to working with you in 2016...

In League,

Gloria S. Read gloell@rochester.rr.com

Mary Hussong-Kallen mmhk@rochester.rr.com



Do you check the LWVNYS website?

Here's an example of some of the news on the home page:

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

NEW! League Applauds Governor Cuomo's Signing of Women's Suffrage 100th Anniversary Commemoration Commission (11/23/2015)

NEW! Testimony to NYS Assembly Election Law Committee on Early Voting and No-Excuse Absentee (11/18/2015)

NEW! Good Government Groups Call for Comprehensive Ethics Reform Press release (11/11/2015)

After reading our website (www.wv-rma.org), be sure to take a look at www.lwvnys.org.

PICNIC IN THE PARK: General Membership Meeting

Twice a year (for program planning in January and for the annual meeting in May) we come together to enjoy each other's friendship and talk about the League's future. ALL members are encouraged to attend both meetings.

The January meeting is called Picnic in the Park because of its now-traditional location at Buckland Lodge. This year four active League groups will share what they have been doing this past year and help us discuss what we members want to recommend to the LWVUS board for the June 2016 Convention. Below is a hint of what to expect:

ENERGY COMMITTEE: With so many interesting and important topics, where do we focus our time? That has been our challenge. We have asked what the sources of New York energy are, what governmental entities are in charge, what efforts are being made to convert to green power, especially in Monroe County towns. We are particularly concerned about possible fracking waste being used on local highways and how to detect or measure it.

GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE: Although most of what we do is supported under our LWVNYS positions, we have addressed some national issues. We will review the events we have facilitated this past year and draw your attention to the national positions on campaign financing, voting rights and reapportionment. In addition, we will encourage you to join our Observer Corps!

EDUCATION STUDY GROUP: Have you heard about our PowerPoint presentation on voting that we have been presenting to city high school seniors? We will be showing you a short version and sharing what we have experienced with the students.

POVERTY STUDY GROUP: We know the problem of poverty in our community will take a long time to resolve, but there are needs that can be met NOW. Each of us can contribute something to chip away at its effects. We will identify places and needs where you may want to contribute by volunteering your time and concrete ideas. And many of you will be able to add to this list. Be thinking about what YOU have to offer. Is it computer skills, driving skills, cooking ability, mentoring, clerical skills? The list goes on...

So there you have it: information, discussion, food and good times. How can you resist? See you on Saturday, January 9 at 10:00 AM at Buckland Lodge in Brighton!

Georgia DeGregorio
Membership Committee Chair

Naturalization

On December 10 at 10:00 AM Beth Feldman will welcome candidates for Naturalization at the Monroe County Office Building. Kathy Farrar will be representing the League at the Oath Ceremony at the Federal Building on the same day at 1:00 PM. Thank you!

The League participates in at least two Naturalization Ceremonies per month. In 2015 we welcomed about 1500 new citizens. At those ceremonies, we talked about our right to vote and how each candidate could register to vote. We then helped them to register at the ceremony. Our volunteers who attend these ceremonies make all these efforts possible. A heartfelt thank you to: Lois Winterkorn, Mimi Wilson, Katherine Smith, Kay Saunders, Joan Rosenthal, Beth Feldman, Kathy Farrar, Marcia Eisenberg and Sheila Abeling.

Sheila Abeling

Election Services Coordinator

Fair Election Practices Campaign (FEPC)

The League of Women Voters-Rochester Metro Area and The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester (TIAR) co-sponsor the Fair Election Practices Campaign (FEPC). This year's campaign proved to be another successful one. Our Pledge Signer List was the largest we've ever had. Our Hearing Panel had eight (8) hearings this year. We appreciate all of the volunteer efforts, and we offer sincere thanks to all who volunteered on our Hearing Panel: Jim Morris (Chairperson), Ralph Esposito, Tom Frey, Lois Giess, Channing Philbrick; as well as our Alternates: Rob Brown, Lynda Garner Goldstein, Peter Knapp, Jim Peters, Sue Roberts, Mary Ann Thorpe.

New this year were our Observers: Bill Reilich, Republican Party Chairperson, and Jamie Romeo, Democratic Party Chairperson. We also had a student from Nazareth College (thanks to Prof. Timothy Kneeland) who observed the process this year as our intern: Thomas Caraher. We had very positive responses from him and those people who attended the hearings.

Sheila Abeling

Election Services Coordinator

Voter Services Update - High School Activity

The High School Voter Services group has been very active this fall!

With a brand new PowerPoint presentation, we are visiting city high schools and initiating discussion about the importance of being engaged citizens within the community. Typically we have been working with Social Studies teachers during their Participation in Government classes, a semester-long required course for seniors.

With the aid of the classroom Smartboard we are able to include historical data, timelines, photos and video in our 20-minute presentation. We cover local and national political figures and challenge the students to understand that participation can (and does) take place at many different levels.

We conclude with offering each student the opportunity to register to vote. For those who may not qualify until next year, we are making ourselves available to return to the classroom during the spring semester to ensure everyone who qualifies can register.

It has been a rewarding experience, and we are finding the teachers to be most welcoming. As a matter of fact, we are very successful in getting agreement for us return for the next school year. To date, we have visited School without Walls, Vanguard Collegiate and School of the Arts. On the calendar for December are Edison and East High School, and we are scheduling into January as well.

We are always looking to add to our group of volunteers. We offer training as well as the opportunity to shadow experienced presenters in the classroom setting.

Beth Feldman

Voter Services High School Coordinator

Election Services

November 3rd brought Election Day 2015. There was a low voter turnout, our League volunteers turned out to assist the Monroe County Board of Elections open absentee ballots. We not only helped them, but we helped the League earn money. A special thank you goes out to Sheila Abeling, Chris Burleigh, Gin Busack, Shirley Eberly, Beth Feldman, Carole Hoffman, Ida Holloran, Barbara Kay, Judy Weinstein, Alison Wilder and Don Wilder. The League appreciates all of your efforts!!

Sheila Abeling

Election Services Coordinator

Paid Family Leave

The LWVNYS and LWV-RMA both support Paid Family Leave. Look into the details of this important issue at <http://timetocareny.org>, and then please consider joining in the effort to enact this legislation. How?

- Sign the online petition to your NYS Senator and the NYS Governor (https://actionnetwork.org/petitions/please-stand-up-for-new-york-families-by-supporting-paid-family-leave-insurance?source=direct_link&referrer=timetocare-ny).
- In addition you can sign a postcard obtained from LWV-RMA to be delivered by the PFL Coalition at the February 2nd Rally in Albany.
- There is a great opportunity to share a story of a time when lack of paid family leave impacted you and your family. A form for your individual story is online (<http://timetocareny.org/tell-us-story>).

Workers shouldn't have to choose between family and pay check. If you are interested in helping with this statewide campaign please contact Katherine Smith at kathysmith292@gmail.com or 585-334-3991.

Katherine Smith

1st Vice-President and Advocacy Chair

Can you name 10 Suffragettes?

The University of Maryland Women's Studies Department offers a list of 75 suffrage movement leaders and supporters, all with short biographies. Meet them all at: <http://mith.umd.edu/womensstudies/ReadingRoom/History/Vote/75-suffragists.html>

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK! 

We know you'll "like" us!

www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

Do You Tweet?

If you use Twitter, consider following us! You'll find great information on many topics. Look for [@LWVrochesterNY](https://twitter.com/LWVrochesterNY) next time you're online!



Following Up on...

Money in Politics: Is Democracy for Sale?

LWV-RMA co-sponsored a forum on *Money in Politics* with the Social Justice Council of the First Unitarian Church of Rochester on November 16. Our panelists were Professor Roy Gutterman, Director of Newhouse School at Syracuse University; Scott Forsyth, of the local law firm Forsyth and Forsyth; and Sam Fedele, former Coordinator of Move to Amend/Rochester. Dorothy Borgus served as moderator.

Prof. Gutterman explained the First Amendment; Mr. Forsyth discussed the reasoning behind the Supreme Court decision in the case of *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010); and Mr. Fedele provided a presentation on the consequences of unlimited money in politics. In response to a question, the panelists were pessimistic about the possibility of meaningful campaign finance reform on the national level in the near future. Neither a constitutional amendment to overturn *Citizens United* nor public financing of elections is likely to happen soon.

The League of Women Voters of the United States is currently updating its position on campaign finance, and our local League will be holding a consensus meeting on Tuesday, December 8, at 4:00 PM at Brighton Town Hall to discuss the issues and provide our opinions to help formulate the new position. You'll find more information in the article on page 5.

Judy Weinstein

Government Committee Member

Save the Date!

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Conference

January 16, 2016

9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Wilson Foundation Academy
(200 Genesee Street)

Money in Politics Consensus Meeting

All LWV-RMA members are encouraged to help us determine the new LWVUS position on Campaign Finance. A membership meeting will be held to discuss and come to consensus on the proposed changes to the position.

The current LWVUS position on Campaign Finance, as adopted in 1974 and revised in 1982, is:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process. This position is applicable to all federal campaigns for public office — presidential and congressional, primaries as well as general elections. It also may be applied to state and local campaigns.

Why is the League updating its Campaign Finance position? Our current position dates back to the 1970s and predates Supreme Court decisions that changed campaign finance law significantly. The Money In Politics Review and Update will address a gap in our current position. It aims to get League member understanding and agreement as to the extent to which our organization believes that financing a political campaign is speech protected by the First Amendment.

Leagues are being asked to consider through the consensus process:

- the rights of individuals and organizations, under the First Amendment, to express their political views through independent expenditures and the finance of election campaign activities; and
- how those rights, if any, should be protected and reconciled with the interests set out in the current position.

Our current position has enabled the League to advocate strongly for transparency in campaign finance and against big money and its influence on elections and government. But there are still questions to consider and this is why we are studying the issue: What about the First Amendment interests of candidates and donors particularly as compared with equitable competition; preventing corruption and undue influence; enhancing voter participation? These are questions that are being considered in the position update.

Our study committee has read the detailed reports prepared by the LWVUS Money in Politics committee and placed background material on our website <http://lww-rma.org/>. Although there will be a presentation before the consensus discussion, time constraints will only permit us to present the highlights. To be more fully informed, please review the information on the website prior to the meeting.

Please join us at the consensus meeting for LWV members:

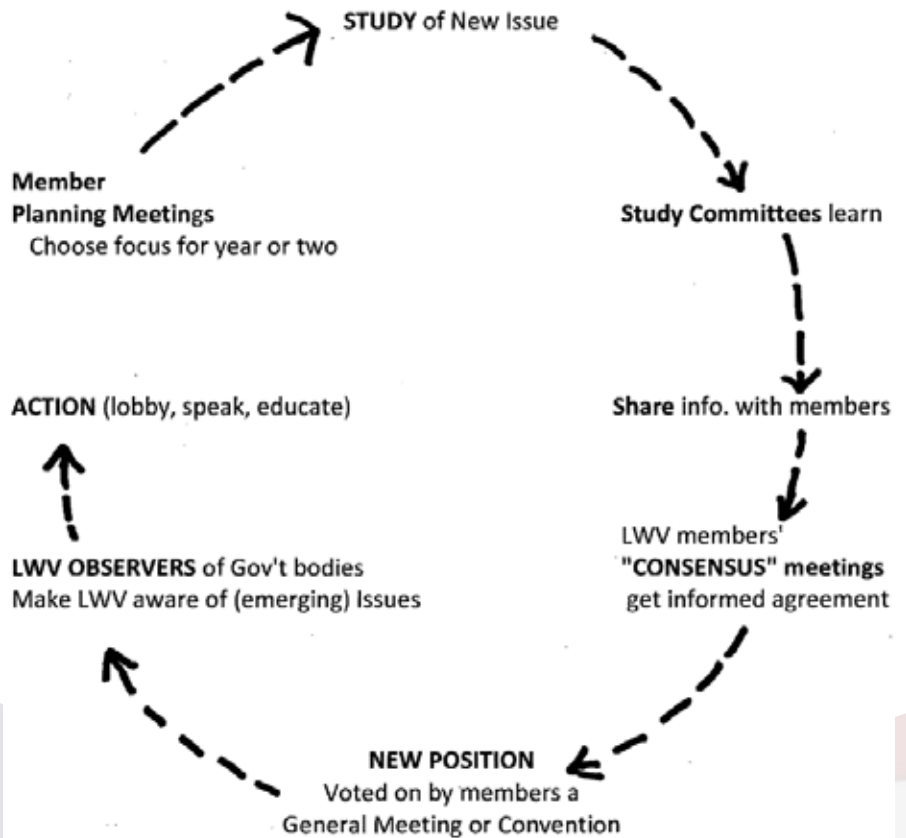
**Tuesday, December 8, at 4:00 PM
Brighton Town Hall (downstairs room)**

The questions are included in the background material to help you formulate your opinion. However, because we come to consensus through discussion, attendance at the consensus meeting is necessary for your opinion to count.

Judy Weinstein
Government Committee Member

LWV Cycle: Study, Consensus, and Action

The League of Women Voters is a Multi-Issue Organization



Meet Phyllis Walker

HER BACKGROUND

Phyllis relocated to Rochester in 1973 from Highland Mills, NY. She earned a Master of Science degree from The College at Brockport and was then employed at Monroe Community College from 1994 to 2003. In 2003 she took a new position at Rochester Institute of Technology as Assistant Director of the RIT Leadership Institute & Community Center where she is currently employed.

WHY SHE JOINED LWV-RMA

While looking for information on voter registration information for students, she came across the League of Woman Voters on the Internet. Not surprisingly, she was very impressed with all the voting information she found on the web site for the League of Woman Voters! Phyllis not only collected the information she needed, but took the next step and joined our local League.

HER LEAGUE ROLE AND ACTIVITY

In spite of a very busy work schedule, she is active on the Membership Committee, and in that capacity she's shared her impressive organizational skills with us by helping to coordinate two Picnic in the Park General Membership Meetings at Buckland Lodge, and an Annual Meeting Luncheon at Locust Hill Country Club. Phyllis has also served for several years on the Nominating Committee. She has acted as our timekeeper for the 2013 Rochester Mayoral Debate which we co-sponsored with WROC Channel 8, and for the Candidate Debate in the Town of Pittsford. (The great lesson here is, even if your time is limited, the League will welcome the time and talent you can share with us.)

QUOTE

To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream, not only plan but also believe.

Watch and Listen to our Forums on YouTube!

The League is trying something new, something that has had success in other cities. We are now recording our forums and posting the videos on YouTube for your viewing pleasure. Can't make the forum? Not a problem. Catch a 'replay' on YouTube!

To access the League's YouTube videos, please click on this link:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjC9NCupn9AhZpH2k83m5_g

Enjoy!

Amazon Smile

The state League has 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](https://www.smile.amazon.com) you'll find the same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as 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 Amazon Smile, simply go to [smile.amazon.com](https://www.smile.amazon.com) instead of just amazon.com and search for the League of Women Voters of NYS as your selected charitable organization.



Happy Birthday, Susan B!

On Wednesday, February 10, you're cordially invited to celebrate Susan B. Anthony's birthday! The annual luncheon will be held at the Riverside Convention Center beginning at 11:30 AM; the theme is "Making History" and the guest speaker is Billie Jean King. Tickets are \$75. Please reserve your place at the League's table by registering at www.lwv-rma.org.



Q/A Forum following SBA House Suffragette movie - November 22nd

Candidate Forum Photos - October 27



Paid Family Leave Rally Photos - November 4



Naturalization Photos





Coming Events!



December

- 4 First Friday (11:00 AM – 1:00 PM at Corner Bakery Café)
- 8 Money in Politics Consensus (4:00 PM at BTH)
- 8 Board Meeting (5:30 PM at BTH)
- 10 Naturalization Ceremony (10:00 AM at Monroe County Office Building)
- 10 Naturalization Ceremony (1:00 PM at Federal Building)
- 10 Rochester Federation of Women's Clubs (RFWC) Holiday Luncheon (11:00 AM at Midvale CC)

January

- 5 Board Meeting (6:30 PM – location TBA)
- 8 First Friday (11:00 AM – 1:00 PM at Corner Bakery Café)
- 9 Picnic in the Park (10:00 AM at Buckland Lodge)

February

- 2 Board Meeting (6:30 PM – location TBA)
- 5 First Friday (11:00 AM – 1:00 PM at Corner Bakery Café)
- 10 Susan B. Anthony Birthday Luncheon (11:30 AM at Convention Center)



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

First Fridays

Are you free for lunch or a mid-day coffee break? If so, we'd like to spend it with you – and note our new location: the Corner Bakery Café in College Town!

When: First Friday of the month between 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM

Where: 1367 Mt. Hope Avenue (free parking behind)

What: Chatting with other League members – topics are up to you

If you've wanted to get to know more members, here's an opportunity – because we think the work we love to do is more fun when we get to know one another better.

See you on:

Friday, December 4

Friday, January 8

(New Year's Day moves us to the 2nd Friday)

Friday, February 5

Friday, March 4

Friday, April 1

Friday, May 6

Friday, June 3

*FREE PARKING (ramp garage and open air lot)
BEHIND THE RESTAURANT!*

Board meets monthly on the first Tuesday of each month. Board meetings are open to all members.

Government Committee meets monthly. For details, call Elaine Schmidt at 530-7414.

Membership Committee meets monthly. For details, call Georgia DeGregorio at 787-9692.

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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www.LWV-RMA.org

Rochester VOTER

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

**JANUARY/FEBRUARY VOTER
DEADLINE IS JANUARY 15!**



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

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

Officers:

- Mary Hussong-Kallen**
Co-President
- Gloria S. Read**
Co-President
- Katherine Smith**
First Vice-President
- Sheila Abeling**
Second Vice-President
- Ida Holloran**
Treasurer

Board of Directors:

- Gin Busack**
Director
- Ernest DuBois**
Director/Parliamentarian
- Patrina Freeman**
Director
- Carole Hoffman**
Director
- Brian Valenti**
Director
- Judy Weinstein**
Director

Goals of the League of Women Voters:

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

*The Voter is a monthly publication of the LWV-RMA
Editor, Mary Hussong-Kallen
Layout/Design, Chris Burleigh*

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK! 
We know you'll "like" us!
www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

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