

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. Non-citizens and those under 18 can be associate members.

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Join Us for Our

Consensus Meeting on NYS Legislative Procedures

Wednesday, December 7 at 4:00 P.M.

Brighton Town Hall, 2300 Elmwood Avenue

Should there be limits
in outside income for state legislators?

Should there be term lengths for state legislators?

Should there be limits on time in legislative leadership
positions and committee chairmanships?

More about this program can be found on page 4.

Preregister at <http://www.lwv-rma.org> or 262-3730
We look forward to seeing you!



President's Corner

As 2016 moves too quickly toward 2017, I'd like to take a moment to look back on some of the highlights which made 2016 a wonderful year.

One of the most productive voter registration efforts took place this year – working collaboratively with our partner organizations, we registered well over 4,000 of Monroe County's 42,000 new voters!

Our forums continue to provide valuable, timely information to the community, featuring local experts – and our challenge in 2017 will be to increase our attendance. Be sure to check them out on our YouTube channel: (https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjC9NCupn9AhZpH2k83m5_g)!

The number of Facebook "friends," Twitter followers and website visitors steadily increases.

A new interactive database compiled by the Center for Governmental Research and funded by the Bee Bibby Endowment has proved to be a wonderful visual tool in targeting voter registration efforts and convincing would-be voters of the importance of voting.

Our new laptop has been a great asset in sharing our PowerPoint presentation in high schools and colleges – and we were able to use monies from the Education Fund, so our budget remains intact.

We continue to have a presence at local government meetings, making statements when issues arise which the League supports.

We've experienced some turnover in committee leadership and membership, but for the most part, new members have stepped up to prevent a lapse in activity. Every effort is important!

First Fridays are thriving! It's never been more fun to work together!

We welcomed 100 to 200 newly naturalized citizens every month, and registered many of them to vote.

Our board is committed to supporting League activities and committees – you've elected a hard-working, creative group!

Our annual *Who Represents You* brochure has been expanded to include judges as well as town officials – and the response has been very positive. We're grateful to the Rochester Area Community Foundation for its support.

Our network of partner organizations continues to grow and enhance our efforts in so many areas, from voter registration to sponsorship of forums to plans for upcoming women's suffrage anniversary celebrations.

Of course this list is not complete. And we do have challenges ahead, but the momentum built up in 2016 promises to make 2017 another proud year for the LWV-RMA.

Thank you for your part in our success – and your ongoing commitment to Making Democracy Work in Rochester!

Happy Holidays!

Mary Hussong-Kallen
president@lww-rma.org

Poverty Study Group Preparing Spring Forum

The Poverty Committee met with representatives from the Catholic Family Center (CFC) and The Community Place on September 30. We discussed CFC plans for implementing the contract they had received from Rochester Metropolitan Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI) to address poverty reduction in the neighborhoods of Beechwood/Marketplace Heights/East Main Mustard and Atlantic Avenue (EMMA).

This Mentors for Success pilot will provide a person-centered approach connecting people to jobs and strengthening support systems that help them retain jobs. Mobility Mentoring and the Family Independence Initiative (FII) are two creative approaches for families to gain access to connections, choice and capital. The FII program has been used in Boston successfully and mentors from Boston will be advising the local effort.

The committee, which includes Larry Burnette, Sandra Frankel, Hasana Martin, and Chris Pryor met again on October 28 to discuss these programs and to prepare for a forum in the Spring. We welcome your joining us and bringing your ideas and questions.

Georgia DeGregorio, Chairperson,
Poverty Study Group, LWV-US MLD Shur Fellow
585-787-9692 or georgiatd1@gmail.com

A Banner Year for VOTE411.ORG ELECTION INFORMATION YOU NEED

Vote411 saw unprecedented traffic and visibility, including more than 4 million users nationwide (more than doubling our traffic from 2012). Nearly 25 million pageviews. VOTE411 was featured multiple times by The New York Times, and ran in a Spanish-language PSA on TV Azteca for months leading up to Election Day, reaching up to 39 million Hispanic individuals.

Locally, a greater percentage of candidates participated than ever before, fairly evenly divided between the two major parties. The Democrat and Chronicle referred readers to Vote411 several times during the campaign season. We don't have statistics on the number of users or pageviews for our races, but with the additional publicity, I think we can assume that our local traffic also increased.

Judy Weinstein, Vote 411 Coordinator

The Attorney General's Office and You

WHAT WE LEARNED AT THE 11/14 FORUM

As head of the state's Department of Law, the Attorney General (AG) is both –

- The "People's Lawyer", guarding the legal rights of citizens, organizations, and resources;
- The State's chief legal officer, defending actions and proceedings for the State.

Over 650 Assistant Attorneys General and over 1,700 employees, including forensic accountants, legal assistants, scientists, investigators and others serve in satellite AG offices in many locations across our state. To explain what the AG office does and how it can help with our concerns and problems, two representatives of the Rochester AG office met with LWV-RMA members and others on November 14.

Ted O'Brien, Assistant Attorney General-In-Charge (AAGIC), provided an overview of services provided by the Attorney General statewide.

Ben Bruce, Assistant Attorney General, discussed some of the recent cases handled by the Rochester office. These included cases of snow plow contract fraud, disputes with credit card companies, toy safety, and charitable fund raising fraud.

The AG Office is organized into bureaus that apply statutory and common law powers to protect consumers and investors, charitable donors, the public health and environment, civil rights, and the rights of wage-earners and businesses across the State. The legal functions of the Department of Law are divided primarily into five major divisions: Appeals and Opinions, State Counsel, Criminal Justice, Economic Justice and Social Justice. A complete list of all AG bureaus is accessible at <http://www.ag.ny.gov/bureaus>.

The speakers noted that –

- Major cases leading to landmark decisions with national implications start with a single complaint.
- Major current areas of AG concern are identity theft involving senior citizens, senior health care, and tenant rights.

Visit the Attorney General website at <http://www.ag.ny.gov/> to learn more.

Judy Wadsworth, Voter Editor



Gin Busack and Ida Holloran at the registration table.

Ted O'Brien, AAGIC, with LWV-RMA President Mary Hussong-Kallen.



Mary Myers and Joan Rosenthal.

Sheila Abeling and Katherine Smith.



Presenters Ben Bruce and Ted O'Brien of the local AG office with Mary Myers who organized the program.

Consensus Meeting on NYS Legislative Procedures: A Cleaner Albany is Up to You!

Please join us for a presentation and discussion on updating the LWVNY position on Legislative Procedures on Wednesday, December 7 at 4:00 P.M. at Brighton Town Hall (downstairs). The topics for the consensus are:

- Limits in outside income for state legislators
- Term lengths for state legislators
- Limits on length in leadership positions and committee chairs; should allowances be continued for these individuals?

To help you prepare for our discussion of these important facets of government ethics reform, we are providing some background information. We hope you will participate in strengthening the LWVNY position so we can work effectively for ethics reform.

OUTSIDE INCOME:

- The base salary of a New York State legislator is \$79,500.
- In 2012, the average legislative income for currently sitting legislators, including stipends for leadership positions, was approximately \$89,500 for members of the Assembly, and approximately \$95,500 for members of the Senate.
- Legislators are reimbursed for costs associated with being a legislator: per diem when in Albany and transportation.
- The majority of our legislators declared no outside income in 2014.

TERM LENGTHS AND STAGGERED TERMS:

- Across the United States, there are wide varieties in term lengths, term limits (we will NOT be discussing term limits) and use of staggered elections.
- Representatives in the lower house of 44 states have a two-year term. Senators in 31 states have a four-year term and Senators in seven states have terms that are sometimes two years and sometimes four years.
- Staggered terms are generally thought of as a way to maintain institutional continuity.
- In the 38 states with either a four-year term or a 2-4-4 term, 27 states have staggered elections so that approximately half of state senate seats are up for re-election every two years.

TENURE FOR LEGISLATIVE LEADERSHIP:

- The N.Y. State Constitution gives each house of the legislature the power to make its own rules.

- In the current rules, the Senate has limited some of the Leadership titles to a maximum of 8 years. (This is new so no one has yet reached the limit)
- The Assembly Rules do not place any limitations on leadership positions or committee chairs.

LEADERSHIP ALLOWANCES (COMMONLY KNOWN AS LULUS):

- The Legislative Law identifies 24 Senate officers, 34 Assembly officers, members of each house "Serving in Special Capacity", committee Chairs and Ranking Minority members of each committee, each of whom receives an "allowance," ranging from \$9,000 to \$41,500.

Only League members can participate in the consensus discussion.

Judy Weinstein, *Government committee member*,
j.weinstein.roc@gmail.com



Nigerian Visitors Meet with LWV-RMA President

In November, LWV-RMA President Mary Hussong-Kallen spoke about the League to a group of women politicians and community activists from Nigeria who are visiting the U.S. via State Department's International Visitor Leadership Program, locally administered by Rochester Global Connections.

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK!

We know you'll "like" us!

www.facebook.com/lwvofrma

LWV Involvement with Election Services in November

A special thank-you to all who volunteered to open absentee ballots on November 10: Sheila Abeling, Shirley Eberly, Judy Engerman, Yolanda Gavin, Barbara Grosh, Barbara Hendry, Ida Holloran, Mary Hussong-Kallen, Barbara Kay, Sarah Liebschutz, Anna Belle Martin, Marion O'Connor, Kay Saunders, Elaine Schmidt, Bertha Simpkins, Katherine Smith, Linda Steinberg, Judy Sternberg, Judy Weinstein, and Gail Wilder!!!

Your help was very much appreciated, especially since helping the Monroe County Board of Elections was a fundraiser for the LWV-RMA.



Absentee Ballot counters

Fair Election Practices Campaign (FEPC)

The FEPC 2016 has ended. It was a quiet campaign for our Hearing Panel. A special thank-you to Panel Chairperson Jim Morris; to Panel Members Rob Brown, Ralph Esposito, Lois Giess, and Channing Philbrick; and to Alternates Tom Frey, Peter Knapp, Susan Kramarsky, Jim Peters, and Sue Roberts.

Our League website lww-rma.org has FEPC updates.

Any League member interested in helping with planning FEPC 2017 is asked to contact Sheila Abeling. Your help would be very much appreciated!

Lynda Garner Goldstein, FEPC Committee Chairperson,
lyndagoldstein@gmail.com

Sheila Abeling, 1st Vice President,
sheiler162007@gmail.com

Sunshine Corner



MONROE COUNTY LEGISLATURE
NOVEMBER 15, 2016
OBSERVED BY ELAINE SCHMIDT

Once again supporters of increased funding for Child care spoke to the Legislature. Although the proposed budget for 2017 includes an increase of \$100,000 for child care, the supporters were asking for \$1 million more. They said the proposed increase would cover only 16 additional children and believe it is possible to do more.

County Executive Cheryl Dinolfo cited the dissolving of county LDCs as a source of savings that helped her to keep the property tax rate unchanged at \$8.99 per thousand.

Once again the legislators heard pleas for increased services for Special Education services and for support of veteran-run small business owners.

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

Elaine Schmidt
Observer Corps Chairperson
e.schmidt8@frontier.com



The MCC Politicos student group stenciling sidewalks to remind others to vote. Georgia DeGregorio is the LWV-RMA liaison to their group and has been warmly received. Georgia had stencils made and brought them and chalk for Politicos members to use the day before elections.



Naturalization Ceremonies

We are at the end of the calendar year. A special thank you to the following volunteers for giving of their time to our newest citizens at Naturalizations: Sheila Abeling, Marcia Eisenberg, Kathy Farrar, Beth Feldman, Joan Rosenthal, Kay Saunders, Betty Schaeffer, Katherine Smith, Mimi Wilson and Lois Winterkorn. Please contact Sheila at sheiler162007@gmail.com or 585-223-6819 if you are interested in joining this group.

On December 8 in the Monroe County Office Building at 10:00 A.M., Beth Feldman will meet the newly naturalized citizens. Also on that day, Kathy Farrar will greet candidates for Naturalization at 1:00 P.M. in the Federal Building. Members are welcome to attend either ceremony. It's always an enjoyable time.

Sheila Abeling, Naturalization Committee,
sheiler162007@gmail.com

Naturalizations

On October 13, Marcia Eisenberg welcomed new citizens at the Monroe County Office Building. Also on that day at the Federal Building, Joan Rosenthal met candidates for Naturalization. On November 10 Mimi Wilson met candidates for citizenship at the Monroe County Office Building. The George Eastman House/Museum was also a venue for Naturalization on November 10. Kathy Farrar and Lois Winterkorn attended that ceremony. Thank you to all League volunteers! Anyone interested in attending a ceremony, please contact Sheila at sheiler162007@gmail.com or 585-223-6819. You won't be disappointed! It's a wonderful opportunity to see our Democracy at work.

Sheila Abeling, Naturalization Committee Chairperson
sheiler162007@gmail.com
or 223-6819



Voting Rights News

Residents of what jurisdiction on this map have no voting representation in Congress?

If you said, "Washington, D.C.," you were right! In 1961, the Twenty-third Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave the District three electoral votes in the election of the President and Vice President of the United States. However, the 600,000 residents of Washington still lack voting representation in Congress and real home rule.

In 1978, Congress passed a constitutional amendment to give D.C. full voting representation, but it was not ratified by the states. Frustration by the lack of progress on full voting representation and by recent actions by Congress to block decisions by D.C. voters led to an advisory referendum in November supporting D.C. statehood. Washington, D.C. would be split into a new state for its residents (New Columbia) and a smaller federal district for government buildings and monuments. The referendum was approved by 79% of the voters. The petition will now be delivered to Congress.

The LWVEF and the LWV of the District of Columbia are conducting a webinar "Fix the Hole in Our Democracy" on Thursday, December 8 at 7pm. Register for the Webinar now and hear how you and our League can educate our community on the need for full representation and statehood for DC. Additional materials on the project can be found on the League management site. For questions or assistance on signing up for the webinar contact Betsy Lawson at blawson@lwv.org. The webinar link will be on the LWV-RMA home page.

A relevant recollection: I attended the LWVUS Convention in Washington around 1990. I went into the Ladies Room where an elderly woman missing her front teeth was mopping the floor. She asked if I was attending the League of Women Voters meeting. When I said that I was, she straightened up and said, "I'm a League member! I joined the League because it supports voting rights for Washington."

Judy Weinstein, Government Committee

**Democracy is not a
spectator sport.
Tag! You're It!**

It's Over...But It's Never Over

The Board of Elections has confirmed that our voter registration count came in at nearly 4,000 for this year. Our success can be attributed to two factors – our dedicated group of volunteers and the community groups who joined in our efforts.

As part of “*MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK FOR ALL*”, we strived to reach a diverse audience, participating for the first time in the **PRIDE Fest**, **ROC The VOTE** and the **PROJECT HOMELESS CONNECT** events while continuing our role at the Naturalization Ceremonies. We were also able to offer our services at the Rochester Psychiatric Center, Rochester Rehabilitation Center, Rochester Recovery Network, Lifetime Assistance and Monroe Developmental. Working with the Rochester Voter Alliance, our volunteers were particularly active in the Anthony Jordan and Trillium Community Health Centers. We also continued to work very closely with FingerLakes Donor Recovery, participating in a wide range of community and neighborhood events, including two Red Cross blood drives and several TIPS and farm market spots.

Our volunteers made multiple presentations of our Civics power point at the School Without Walls, School of the Arts, World of Inquiry, Northeast Prep, East High, Aquinas and Edison Tech, and expanded their efforts to include a LifeSpan audience. They continued their work on our local college campuses, registering students, faculty and staff at Monroe Community College, Rochester Institute of Technology, SUNY Brockport, the University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music, Nazareth and SUNY Geneseo.

BUT the job is not done. As our recent elections have shown us, registration is only part of the job. We must continue to focus on encouraging voter participation. This can only be accomplished by working with our community partners, educating the public, and increasing our advocacy efforts.

Gin Busack

Director, Voter Services



**I WANT YOU
TO CONTACT CONGRESS
ONCE A QUARTER**

Save the Date!

Saturday, January 14, 2017

JANUARY GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

AAUW's Perkins Mansion

10:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Details to follow!

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK! 

We know you'll "like" us!

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Coming Events!



December

- 2 First Friday (11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., I-Square)
- 8 Naturalization Ceremony (11:00 A.M. at Monroe County Office Building)
- 7 Consensus Meeting on Legislative Procedure, (4:00 P.M. at Brighton Town Hall)
- 8 Naturalization Ceremony (1:00 P.M. at Federal Building)

January

- 6 First Friday (11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., I-Square)
- 12 LWV-RMA Board Meeting (3:00 P.M., Asbury First UMC)
- 14 General Membership Meeting (10:00 A.M. -1:00 P.M. at AAUW’s Perkins Mansion)

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



First Fridays

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.

First Fridays provide us all with an opportunity to get to know one another by chatting informally.

The work we love to do is more fun when we know one another better.

We hope to see you on:

- | | | |
|------------|---------|--------|
| December 2 | March 3 | June 2 |
| January 6 | April 7 | |
| February 3 | May 5 | |

Board of Directors meets the second Thursday of each month at 3:00 P.M. at Asbury First UMC. Board meetings are open to all members.

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

On second Thursday of each month at 10:00 A.M. Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Monroe County Office Building at 39 W. Main Street.

On second Thursday of each month at 1:00 P.M. 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

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

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- Sheila Abeling**
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Director

**FEBRUARY VOTER
DEADLINE IS JANUARY 15!**



Goals of the League of Women Voters:

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

*The Voter is a monthly publication of the LWV-RMA
Editor, Judy Wadsworth
Layout/Design, Chris Burleigh*

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

LOOK FOR US ON FACEBOOK! 
We know you'll "like" us!
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Join the League Today!



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Check Amount: _____

Level of Membership: _____

Please send this form and your check payable to
League of Women Voters/RMA to:
LWV/RMA
PO Box 10573
Rochester, NY 14610
or join us online at: www.lwv-rma.org/join.php

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

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