

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BROOKHAVEN
VOTER
MAY 2025

SCIENTIST HEATHER LYNCH,
STONY BROOK UNIVERSITY,
WILL SPEAK ABOUT

THE ROLE OF GRANTS TO UNIVERSITIES
HOW ARE THEY SELECTED AND MONITORED?

HOW WILL CURRENT CHANGES TO GRANT FUNDING
IMPACT OUR SCIENTIFIC COMPETITIVENESS?

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1 PM

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170 TERRYVILLE ROAD
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Many of the medicines and products that we rely on have been created by scientists working on research grants from the federal or state government. We are fortunate to have as our speaker, Heather Lynch, a quantitative ecologist and a professor at Stony Brook University. She is the Institute for Advanced Computational Sciences Endowed Chair for Ecology and Evolution and leads the Collaborative for the Earth, which facilitates university-wide research, education, and public policy engagement around global environmental crises. Her research is dedicated to the population dynamics of Antarctic wildlife, with a particular focus on penguins and other seabirds.

Dr. Lynch's research in Antarctica has been funded by a range of federal and non-governmental organizations, including through a National Science Foundation Career award—the most prestigious NSF award that supports early career faculty. Dr. Lynch was the first ecologist ever to win the Blavatnik National Medal for Life Sciences, the world's largest unrestricted prize for young scientists. She has also been an AAAS Lechner Fellow for Public Engagement for Science and is currently a Pew Marine Fellow for Marine Conservation.

Dr. Lynch will introduce the basics of research funding at research intense universities in the United States, how such grants are selected and monitored, the role of research funding in university administration, and how recent changes to the federal funding landscape impact our scientific landscape internationally.

WE WILL BE HOLDING OUR 2024-25 ANNUAL MEETING

ON JUNE 24 AT 7 PM ON ZOOM

Reports of year's accomplishments, Election of officers and next year's budget

We have scheduled it on zoom to be sure that it does not conflict with members' work or family schedule. If you are not able to use zoom, we can recommend another member who will welcome you to share hers.

Contact Nancy Marr to find out more.

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

On April 11 we held a delicious and successful luncheon at Toast in Patchogue. We had paused the luncheons during the pandemic, but hope to plan them annually. Our speaker was Lawrence Levy, Executive Dean of the National Center of Suburban Studies at Hofstra, which has collaborated on conferences on aspects of suburban life, from diversity and housing, to ecology science and health care. He acknowledged the work the League does to register voters and urged us to work even harder to get out the vote - especially since the suburban vote can often have an effect on the national vote.

We continue to remind members to contact their congressional legislators to ask them to vote against the SAVE Act, which impose new requirements on people who are just registering, or registering because of a change of address. They must complete their registration at the local Board of Elections, and will have to bring documents that show their citizenship (or birth within the United States) and proof that their name change is legal, in case, for instance they have married and change their name to match their husband's. This will make it difficult, especially for women to register, but will also make it impossible for organizations like ours to register potential voters unless we are at the Board of Elections. The SAVE Act has already passed in the House of Representatives, but has not yet been voted on in the Senate.

In February, the LWV-US and State League chapters from all 50 states sent letters to congressional leaders. The letter expressed strong concern over abandoning congressional duties and authorities under Article One of the U.S. Constitution, it urges leaders to address the unprecedented executive branch overreach threatening American democracy. The League urges Congress to exercise its authority to protect the rule of law, defend the Constitution, and rein in the Executive Branch's overreach.

From the February 14 issue of *Legislative Update*, published weekly by NYS LWV and emailed to members.

CHANGES TO OUR LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP AND DUES STRUCTURE

Beginning on February 1, 2025, the National League (LWVUS) implemented changes to the League's membership and structure. The result will mean that more money will stay in our state and local Leagues, rather than being transferred to the national League. The cost of joining will no longer be a major barrier to joining, thereby allowing us to increase our membership. You can choose the amount of your dues, as long as it is at least \$20 per person.

Existing members do not need to do anything at the moment. When your renewal date approaches, the National League will send you an email to ask for your dues. New persons should go to the website of the League of Women Voters US and look for a tab that says JOIN. It will provide information and guide you to choose the League you wish to join near you. It is sent to our Brookhaven League, we will get in touch with you.

A NEW VENUE FOR THE NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

Lisa Scott, President of the Suffolk County League of Women Voters, met with the staff of the Long Island Museum for a plan to naturalize new citizens at the Long Island Museum, instead of at the courthouse. It was held on May 7, with beautiful weather, on the lawn by the museum, as planned by the judges themselves, with help from the museum staff.

One of the judges spoke and led the audience in the pledge of allegiance and the oath that they swear before they become citizens. Our League had a table there, and were able to register a number of new voters. We are hoping the museum will offer their hospitality again, and that we can plan to host it at other sites. The museum gave each new citizen a complimentary one-year membership to the museum and provided refreshments.



WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER

Many of the local towns and villages in Suffolk County are looking for ways to reduce their carbon footprint, reduce costs and develop sustainable practices. Below are two recent endeavors which, hopefully, will incentivize others to try similar practices.

The Town of Southampton has recently developed a solar array on a 17 acre capped landfill in the North Sea area of the town. This project took four years of planning and was put into operation in March 2025.

A private developer installed the 11,500 panels at the landfill at no cost to the town. These panels will produce 4.7 kilowatts of electricity or enough to power 773 houses. This type of project was completed under a LIPA tariff rate that defined how it should be structured. Here is the financial breakdown of this project:

- The developer will sell the electricity to LIPA.
- The developer will pay the town 1.6 million dollars as rent during the 20 year term of the lease.
- The town will receive LIPA bill credits to offset electric costs at town facilities also for 20 years.
- A lottery was held to select the 500 households which will receive a 10% discount on their LIPA bill also for 20 years. This equals approximately one month of free electricity each year. The outreach for the lottery targeted the lower income areas of the town although every LIPA ratepayer was eligible.

As part of the agreement, the developer used local contractors for the construction, engineering and electric. The project manager indicated that two thirds of the cost of development was for salaries for the workers and for locally sourced materials. thereby keeping the investment costs in the local economy. The electricity generated over

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the 20 years of the project would equal the burning of 11 million gallons of fuel. This is a great carbon reduction and provided significant financial savings to the town and the 500 ratepayers receiving electric bill credits.

Suffolk County is facing a garbage crisis as the last landfill, in Brookhaven, will be shut down in the next several years. Reducing the amount of garbage that needs to be landfilled is a challenge that should be addressed. Food scrap composting is an easy way to reduce this waste as the US Environment Protection Agency estimates that 25% of US waste is food scraps. This is another local initiative that addresses carbon footprint reduction, reduces costs and is a sustainable practice. Recycling food scraps into compost captures their nutrients and energy and returns them to the environment. Trucking these food scraps long distances to landfills in other states generates greenhouse gases and when they are landfilled, they create methane, another potent greenhouse gas.

Here are the accepted food scrap items that can be composted:

- Fruits and vegetables (remove stickers)
- Bread, pasta, rice & grains
- Egg shells
- Coffee grounds & loose tea
- Chips, snacks, candy, nuts & seeds
- Cut flowers

Riverhead (three sites) and Southold (one site) Towns have drop off locations for food scraps at their transfer stations. East Hampton and Sag Harbor have drop off locations for food scraps at their weekly farmers markets. Southampton Town has added food scraps drop off locations at their transfer stations in North Sea, Hampton Bays and Sag Harbor. Westhampton will be added shortly.

(Article written by Glorian Berk, a member of Southampton Planning Board, and LWV of Hamptons, Shelter Island and the South Fork.)