

*At local, state and national levels  
the League works to influence public policy  
through education and advocacy.*

March 2020

## **SAVE THE DATES**

### **March is Women's History Month**

Wednesday, Mar. 18 – 3:30 pm  
LWVEN General Meeting  
Spkr: Sharran Chambers-Murphy  
Topic: The New Demographics-  
Women Veterans on LI  
Levittown Library

**Sunday, Mar. 29 - LWVNC  
Women's History Luncheon**  
celebrating LWV 100<sup>th</sup> Anniv.  
Verdi's, Old Country Road,  
Westbury. See page 8.

Wednesday, April 1 – 7:15 pm  
LWVEN Business Meeting  
Levittown Library

Wednesday, April 22 – 7:15 pm  
LWVEN General Meeting  
Speaker from Oceana  
Discussion about Census  
Levittown Library

Wednesday, May 6 – 7:15 pm  
LWVEN Business Meeting

Wednesday, May 20 - 7:15 pm  
Speaker: Dr. Michael  
Hadjiargyrou, Prof. & Chair, Dept.  
of Biological & Chemical  
Sciences

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Grumman Plume

## **The New Demographics – Women Veterans on Long Island**

Women have served an important role in the US military since the Revolutionary War, although history mostly ignored their contribution for generations. We have learned that some women actually posed as young men during the American Revolution and during the Civil War, in order to serve. Military nurses were invaluable during WWI, and the WACS and Waves were an important part of our military force during WWII. Women were flying troops and supplies in war zones even before they were accepted as an integral part of the military, which they are today. As a result, there are many women veterans now among us.

### **Please Join Us to Hear their Story**

**On Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020  
at 3:30 pm, at the Levittown Library,  
Sharran Chambers-Murphy will share this information with us.**



Sharran is a military veteran who served in the Army Reserves from 1986 to 1997 and was deployed during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990. Ms. Chambers-Murphy is an advocate and resource for military veterans and service members of all branches of service.

## **Coming Soon – The 2020 Census**

Beginning this month, almost everyone (95%) will receive a letter from the Census Bureau giving a code to respond online, by mail or by phone. The remaining 5% will have their survey dropped off by a census worker or be interviewed in person.

Completed questionnaires must include all residents in your home (including renters). It is of the utmost importance that every person is counted. The census data is used to determine how many seats New York will get in Congress as well as the amount of federal funding the state will receive for public transportation, schools, hospitals, senior centers, roads and bridges.

The Census Bureau is looking for workers. The pay is good. Already at least one of our members has secured a census job. The application is available at [2020census.gov/en.jobs.html](https://2020census.gov/en.jobs.html). To learn more about the census, go to [2020census.gov/en/what-is-2020-census.html](https://2020census.gov/en/what-is-2020-census.html).

## Presidential Primary Quiz

1. Which of the following is NOT a method of selecting a candidate for a general election?  
 Straw Poll  Primary  Caucus  Convention
2. Who can vote in an open primary?  
 Democrats  Republicans  Independents  All Registered Voters
3. Which of the following states holds a caucus to choose a presidential nominee?  
 Alaska  Michigan  Oklahoma  South Dakota
4. In a winner-take-all state, what percentage of the vote must a candidate win in order to claim all of the state's delegates?  
 35%  51%  100%  No set percentage
5. What makes Super-delegates different from delegates at nominating conventions?  
 There is no difference  They hold their own convention  They can pledge their votes without regard to primary or caucus results  They create their own party platform



(Answers on page 7.)

## LWVUS Priorities

### Voting Rights – Our Priorities

#### Expanding Voter Access

We fight to increase voters' access to the polls including expanding early voting, automatic and online voter registration.

#### Redistricting

Congressional districts and government legislative bodies should be apportioned substantially on population. We oppose partisan and racial gerrymandering that strips rights away from voters.

#### Money in Politics

Elections should be about the voters not big money interests. It's time to limit SuperPACs and secret donors to protect representative democracy.

#### Fighting Voter Suppression

We challenge all efforts and tactics that threaten our democracy and limit the ability of voters to exercise their right to vote.

### Elections – Our Priorities

#### Educating Voters

We host hundreds of events and programs every year to educate voters about candidates in thousands of federal, state and local races, as well as distribute millions of educational materials.

#### VOTE411

Our one-stop-shop for election-related information provides nonpartisan info to the public. Register to vote, find candidate information & much more on this much-used website.

#### Increasing Voter Registration

We work year-round to make sure all eligible Americans—especially first-time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, communities of color, and low-income Americans—have the opportunity to register and vote.

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## ERA

LWVUS has supported and pushed for ratification of the ERA since it was first passed by Congress in 1972. Leagues across the country have worked to engage lawmakers and organize at the grassroots level to ensure equal rights for all, regardless of sex. On January 27, 2020, Virginia became the 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment. Congress has voted Yes for H.J. Res. 79 to remove the ERA's ratification deadline so that the ERA can become law. Stay tuned!

## 2020 Election Dates and Deadlines

### Presidential Primary April 28, 2020

Early Voting April 18 - April 26

Deadline for Voter Registration:

April 3 in person and/or postmarked

Applications for Absentee Ballot:

April 21 postmarked; April 27 in person

### Congressional and State Primaries June 23, 2020

Early Voting: June 13 - June 21

Deadline for Voter Registration:

May 29 in person and/or postmarked

Application for Absentee Ballot:

June 16 postmarked; June 22 in person

### General Election November 3, 2020

Early Voting: October 24 - November 1

Deadline for Voter Registration:

October 9 in person and/or postmarked

Application for Absentee Ballot:

October 27 postmarked; November 2 in person

### Welcome New Members

Donna Reed

Westbury

Michele Greenblatt

Wantagh



Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future.

~ John F. Kennedy



Mary Gould

The East Nassau League's Students Inside Albany Committee: Mary Gould, Dania Smith, and Donna Buthmann, are pleased to announce the selection of **Omika Samlall** for this LWVNY's intensive four-day residential training experience.

Omika is a junior at Hicksville High School and was selected upon recommendation of her Advanced Placement U.S. History teacher and the Supervisor of the Social Studies and Home and Careers Department. Interviews were conducted with Omika and staff (from a large selection of possible candidates) and the League SIA Committee feels she will be a very enthusiastic participant in May.

Omika enjoys a wide variety of extracurricular clubs and honor societies at school, plays softball, loves reading, and volunteers in the community. We were especially impressed with her dedication to family and her appreciation of American opportunities, as she hails from South America.

Join us in congratulating Omika and hearing her report on her SIA experience at our annual meeting on June 17.



Mary Gould, LWV; Danwantie Samlall, Parent; Omika Samlall, LWV's SIA Representative; Donna Buthmann, LWV; Dania Smith, LWV; Dr. Rose Borda, Social Studies Supervisor (With thanks to Mr. Ray Williams, Principal, for his support.)

# New Voting Machines Being Evaluated by NYS

LWVNYS News Release

LWVNYS has decided to take no action on proposed new voting machine systems for NYS. It was reported that the Chair of the New York Senate Elections Committee called for a public hearing regarding state certification of a new voting system requested by ES&S (Election Systems & Software). There has been a significant amount of public misinformation and speculation regarding this voting system and the certification process. LWVNYS received a number of inquiries from members asking about our position and why we have not taken any immediate action.

To start, we want to reassure members that the process by which this system is being verified is completely legal and within the rights of both ES&S and the State Board of Elections. As part of this process, the machine is being put through rigorous security testing by outside contractors and internally by the BOE; as well as public tests allowing voters to interact with the machines and raise any concerns regarding usability. ES&S is already a contractor for voting machines within NYS. TDS200 Ballot Scanners and AutoMARK ballot marking devices are used in several counties.

In order for the new ES&S ExpressVote XL machine to be made available for purchase by county boards of elections in New York State, ES&S has to go through a verification process in which their machine is vetted to ensure it complies with all New York State voting regulations. This process takes several months, to years to complete. At this point, the machines are still being tested for security and reviewed by the State Board of Elections. Upon completion of both internal and external testing, all information will be presented to the four BOE Commissioners to be voted on for approval or denial of verification. The machine must receive at least 3 votes in order to be verified and made available for purchase.

It should be noted, verification does not mean these machines will be mandated for purchase. Counties will have the option to purchase these machines but will not be required to change their current voting technology. The average life of electronic voting equipment is about 10 years and most counties will now be seeking to replace their aging equipment. However, there are limited funds to do so and these new machines cost upwards of \$10,000 per machine

The League is in the process of updating all of our Election Law and Government positions, some of which are up to 40 years old. As part of that update we are looking to develop a New York voting systems position that will keep up with evolving technology and ensure that voting systems used in New York meet SARAT (*Secure Accurate Recountable Accessible Transparent*) criteria, work well with the particular needs of our state and provide fairness to all voters, including the disabled and those who do not speak English as their primary language.

We have not publicly opposed this ES&S machine or the class of voting system that it belongs to, pending our work on this new position. However, we are closely monitoring the process being used to certify this machine and have attended public testing of the machine and Board of Elections Commissioner meetings. The ES&S ExpressVote XL machines are an all in one machine that offers ballot on demand, ballot marking, and a ballot scanner, and has a verifiable and auditable paper record. The machines are easy to use and require less work for county boards of elections and poll workers on election day. The ballots are printed using a thermal printer which allows them to be reused after several years. The machines also have the option to serve disabled voters by acting as a ballot marking device with options for larger font, greater contrast in text, Sip-N-Puff, and paddle devices. The machines can hold many election district ballots and has the ability to translate ballots into dozens of different languages with the touch of a button. Counties in New York who have used the machines in village elections have reported positive feedback from voters and poll workers.



With that said, we have identified a number of issues with the machine regarding voter usability and accessibility. The machines are also rather large and voting sites can only hold a few machines at each site. Under New York State statute and regulation, voting equipment cannot have a modem - meaning our machines are more secure than the ES&S machines used in other states. We will continue to monitor the certification process of this machine and be ready to respond to any press or legislative inquiries. Please don't hesitate to reach out to the state office if you have any questions.




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The League of Women Voters®, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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Join us on March 29th to celebrate Women's History Month, the anniversary of US women winning the right to vote, and the 100th anniversary of the League of Women Voters of the US

See page 8!

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# Ten Ways the League of Women Voters Has Helped Improve Our Country

By Renee Davidson in 2015, with edits in 2020

This year, the League of Women Voters celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Founded by suffragist Carrie Chapman Catt on February 14, 1920 – just six months prior to passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment – the League was charged with “finishing the fight” to ensure that every eligible voter has free and fair access to the polls. Ever since, the League has been at the forefront of efforts to empower citizens to play an active role in our democracy.

**In honor of 100 years of Making Democracy Work<sup>®</sup>, here are 10 ways the League has helped strengthen our democracy and ensure equality throughout the past century.**

1. The Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921, a groundbreaking law providing federal funding for maternity and child care, was the League’s first major success.
2. Following World War II, the League helped lead the effort to establish the United Nations.
3. In 1952, the League joined NBC and Life magazine in sponsoring the first-ever televised U.S. presidential debate. We served as the official presidential debate sponsor from 1976 to 1984. Today, Leagues across the country continue to sponsor candidate debates at the state and local levels.
4. McCarthyism and the witch hunt period of the 1950s inspired the League to help educate Americans on their individual rights and liberties as guaranteed by the Constitution. This work culminated when LWVUS President Percy Maxim Lee testified before Congress against Senator Joseph McCarthy’s abuse of congressional investigative powers in 1955.
5. Between 1950 and 1970, the League increased its effectiveness in regard to both public education and advocacy, prompting Senator George Aiken to remark, “Only 135,000 of them? I thought there were millions.”
6. Throughout the 70s and 80s, passing the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) was a top League priority at the national and state levels. The League organized the National Business Council (NBC) for ERA, the first formal structure to bring major business leaders into the fight for ratification. [*Editor’s note: The fight continues. See p.2.*]
7. In the 1990s, the League was at the forefront of the fight to pass the National Voter Registration Act, better known as Motor Voter. We even have President Clinton’s pen from the signing!
8. Following five years of campaigning, the League helped pass the McCain-Feingold bill, also known as the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA), in 2002. The legislation closed the most significant loopholes in campaign finance regulation at the time, making historic strides in helping protect our nation’s elections from secret money.
9. In 2006, the League launched VOTE411.org, the go-to online resource for voter registration and elections-related information. *VOTE411.org has all the information you need to cast your ballot, including polling place locations, candidate information, voting requirements and more.*
10. In 2014, the League and our partners helped collect 8 million public comments encouraging the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to cut carbon pollution and fight climate change. We’re still pushing ahead...

The League is one of our country’s oldest and strongest nonpartisan civic organizations. 100 years after the League was founded, we continue to hold fast to the belief that our nation is at its strongest when citizens are engaged with our democracy, from voting rights and voter education to campaign finance reform and environmental defense. “

“*There will never be a true democracy,*” said Carrie Chapman Catt, “*until every responsible...adult in it, without regard to race, sex, color or creed has his or her own...voice in government.*” Cheers to that – and to the next 100 years and counting!

**Answers to Quiz on page 2:** 1. Straw Polls - Straw polls are informal votes taken to gauge voters’ opinions of and interest in presidential candidates. 2. All Registered Voters 3. Alaska 4. No Set Percentage - In a winner take-all state, the candidate who wins more than any other candidate, even if it is less than 50%, of the delegates. In a proportional state, candidates win delegates in proportion to the votes received. 5. They can pledge their votes without regard to primary or caucus

## Save the Date

*In recognition of Women's History Month, the LWVNC Will Celebrate  
the 100th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment  
and the Founding of the LWVUS*

*Sunday, March 29, 2020  
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM  
Verdi's of Westbury*

*Keynote Speaker:  
The Honorable Madeline Singas, District Attorney of Nassau County*

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## **Newsday Reports on Monumental Failure to Address the Navy-Grumman Plume**

Water for LI website

*Newsday* investigative reporters, Paul Larocco and David M. Schwartz, uncovered the 50+ years of coverups and denials of responsibility by the US Navy and the Grumman Aerospace (today Northrup-Grumman Co.) in the operation of their facilities at Bethpage, N.Y. The two-day series (February 19 and 20, 2020) described in 26 pages of detailed reporting, how this disaster was allowed to happen.

The reporters used previously undisclosed documents, interviews, and public statements from those involved to definitively prove the intentional efforts by state officials, and the two responsible parties, to delay active responses to the pending disaster that dumping the chemicals into the ground would eventually create.

Congratulations to *Newsday* and these two reporters, David Schwartz and Paul Larocco, for a true public service in uncovering decades of deceit, misinformation, and secrecy. Background documents and videos are also posted online by *Newsday*.

### **The League of Women Voters of East Nassau**

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