

Update

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE

April 2025



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®]
OF THE COOPERSTOWN AREA

From Your Co-Presidents: Christina Bourgeois and Kristin Pullyblank

Defend Democracy!

On Saturday, April 5, 2025, hundreds of thousands of Americans (maybe you were among them?) gathered on the streets of villages, towns and cities across all fifty states for the “Hands off “ rally to protest the current administration’s attacks on our democracy. They came out with signs and with their voices in opposition of tariffs; federal cutbacks to public education, Medicaid, Medicare, health and human services, and research; as well as attacks on journalists, institutions of higher education and public media. They exercised their First Amendment right to free speech and peaceful assembly. This is democracy! And it is with this same clarity that we need you to help defend the right to vote.

Below on this page you will find the League’s “talking points” regarding President Donald Trump’s executive order of March 25, 2025. The order mimics the so-called SAVE Act which, if passed, will greatly restrict the right to vote, especially for women, young people, black, rural

and low income Americans. For decades, our League has worked with our county Board of Elections and we can attest to the thorough and careful work of individuals who run that office. Our election system works!

Our message to you is “Be prepared to Defend Democracy!” Review the article on the SAVE Act and spread the word to other groups about the insidiousness of this action.

Sign up for the [LWVUS](#) and [LWVNY](#) newsletters to keep abreast of this threat. Read more below and check out other information on our [website](#), including the excellent webinar that LWVNY Executive Director Erica Smitka recently led with folks from the Brennan Center and how people can sign up for more info from LWVUS and LWVNY. As LWVUS CEO Celina Stewart noted: “To be very clear — the League of Women Voters is prepared to fight back and defend our democracy.”



Co-presidents Christina Bourgeois and Kristin Pullyblank

The SAVE Act —What You Need to Know!

On March 25, President Donald Trump’s issued an Executive Order that contained many provisions limiting access to voting. The League believes that this order is unlawful and is one more example of executive overreach.

“Let’s keep it real: this order is not about protecting elections; it is about making it harder for voters — particularly women voters — to participate in them,” said LWVUS CEO Celina Stewart. “The President continues to overstep his authority and brazenly disregard settled law in this country. To be very clear — the League of Women Voters is prepared to fight back and defend our democracy.”

The Executive Order mimics the SAVE Act, which passed the House last week. Now, the Senate must reject this bill to prevent it from becoming law. They need to hear from you.

It is already illegal for non-citizens to register and vote in federal or state elections. The bill’s requirement of a document to prove American citizenship to register to vote in federal elections is unnecessary and seeks to divide us. The SAVE Act is also an attempt by the federal government to usurp authority over elections at all levels.

It would require every single American citizen to provide very specific documents, chiefly by either presenting a passport or an original copy of their birth certificate, in person when registering to vote and anytime they update their voter registration. And finally, the bill would establish criminal penalties for election officials who mistakenly register an applicant to vote who has not presented proof of citizenship.

We should not be undoing the work of the past few decades that made it easier to register in New York State. Rural voters, working class voters, voters of color, and older Americans are less likely to hold a passport or readily accessible birth certificate. Members of the US Military could not even use their military ID to register to vote.

Learn more about what you can do. We have posted talking points and other information on our [website](#). Learn more and contact [Senator Schumer](#) and [Senator Gillibrand](#) today to let them know where you stand on this issue.

Join us for Advocacy Day in Albany on May 6

Come to Albany on May 6 for some “hands-on” action when members from Leagues across the state will descend on the capital for the LWV New York State’s annual Lobby Day. League members will meet and hear the latest on what’s happening and what the League needs to focus on in this session. (It’s April 16 as we write this and the budget is still not passed! Let’s hope the budget is passed by May 6!) Learn about our advocacy agenda, hear directly from the Issue Specialists and other experts about our expected action for the 2025 Legislative Session, and lobby your legislators! We will hear from speakers in the morn-

ing and then head up to the Capitol to lobby our representatives in the afternoon. No previous lobbying experience is necessary. You will be with other League members and the League sessions will help you prepare to meet and speak with your Assembly member and Senator.

We hope we can send a strong delegation from our League. Contact Christina Bourgeois (retiredcb2019@gmail.com; 607-544-4072), if you would like to attend as we are planning to organize carpooling. Lobby Day begins at 11 a.m. and continues until 4 p.m. Register today at the [LWVNY website](https://www.lwvny.org).

First Call to LWVCA Annual Meeting June 5

The LWV of the Cooperstown Area will hold its Annual Meeting June 5 at 6 p.m. at the Clark Sports Center. Our special guest speaker will be J.J. Cook who reports for WTOP, an all-news radio station in Washington, D.C.

Join your fellow League members as we recap our year and celebrate all we have accomplished since May 2024. At the meeting, members will also elect new officers and board members, vote on bylaws changes, pass a budget, and review our programs for the upcoming year.

J.J. Cook reports from the Pentagon on international security, terrorism and cyber developments. He also hosts the weekly podcast “Target USA,” which examines the threats facing the US, and the weekly broadcast program, “The Hunt,” which tracks emerging terror threats.

Inside this issue you will find a copy of our Annual Report for 2024-2025 which contains all the materials you will need to prepare for the meeting: Nominating Committee Report, Financial Report, and Bylaws Changes, as well as reports from various committees. The Annual Report as well as the meeting agenda and other materials will also be available on our website in the members only section. Bring your laptop or other device to the meeting so you can access the report and the agenda during the meeting if you wish. Check out the next issue of “Just Three Things” for more updates about Annual Meeting.

The Results are In! Purple Beats Green at Crayon Carnival



LWVCA’s Director of Youth Services Hudi Podolsky and two students at the Cooperstown Elementary School’s Crayon Carnival in March. Mary Tedesco and Christina Bourgeois served as “poll workers” as well for the event. Hudi reports kids of all ages enjoyed the League’s two voting activities. On the crucial question of which color crayon kids preferred, it was 40 votes for purple and 29 for green. On the favorite Crayon Carnival activity vote, it was Bounce House by a mile with 20 votes—food came in second with only 7 votes. The largest cluster of voters were in grades 4-6; they were 23 of our 47 voters. We hope to see them all in a few years at a League voter registration event.

New Dues System Launches. Are You Ready?

The new League dues system has launched! Part of the League’s “Transformation”—a process that began in 2018 to strengthen the League and ensure its future—was to change the dues structure to make it easier for people to join the League. February 1, 2025, marked the launch of the system and members are now joining and renewing across the country.

What will it mean for you? Our League has had an annual dues collection system, which meant members renewed every year starting in September and continuing through January. With the new system, dues will be collected on a rolling basis. Your dues will be up for renewal each year on

the anniversary of when you joined or for members who have been in the League for a long period of time, the anniversary of when you last renewed.

What's next?

- First, make sure you are signed in at the new database.
- Go to portal.lwv.org.
- Enter your email address and gain access to the system.

You be asked a series of about your interests and the level of involvement you wish to have with the League.

Depending on when you joined the League, you will receive your renewal notice 60 days before the due date. You can pay by credit card, ACH, or check. There is more information on our website about payments. 20% of your dues will go to support our League. LWVNY will receive 47% and LWVUS 33%.

Members Come Together for Consensus Meetings

Members came together this past winter for consensus meetings to discuss two important topics. We have to thank the LWV of Saratoga County for allowing us to attend their Zoom Presentations for two of the meetings: LWVNY's study on Rank Choice Voting and Non-partisan Elections and the LWVUS's study of the Federal Judiciary System. We had very provocative and thoughtful

discussions. There is one additional study that members may participate in: the LWVNY's [Voting Systems Approval Process](#). At this time, our League is not planning a meeting on this topic, but members may participate as individuals. Visit www.LWVCooperstownArea.org for information on the study and how to participate. The deadline to submit your [individual consensus form](#) is May 15.

Elias MacLeish Named Delegate to SIA 2025

The LWVCA is pleased to announce the selection of Elias MacLeish as the 2025 delegate to the Students Inside Albany (SIA) conference in Albany. Elias, who is the son of League member Shelby MacLeish and Padraic MacLeish, is a junior at Cooperstown High School and lives Hartwick, N.Y. At Cooperstown High School, Elias is involved in Mock Trial, Environment, Yearbook, Cross Country, Track and Field, and Leadership Training for Athletes (LFA).

Our Co-President Kristin Pullyblank, notes that "Civics education is at the forefront of the League's mission, and we are fortunate to have been able to send at least one student since the inception of the program in 2001."

The League of Women Voters of New York State Education

Foundation, Inc. sponsors one delegate from each League in the state to the program. This year SIA will take place May 18-21 and bring 40-some students from across the state to Albany. Students will participate in a series of interactive lectures on topics such as the state budget process, the role of lobbyists in the legislative process, and citizen rights to access government information, Shadowing their Senator and their Assemblymember for an afternoon and attending a session on the Chamber floors are two of the highlights of SIA.

Applications for SIA are sent to schools in the area each year in early January. Thanks to Maria Kaltenbach who coordinates the SIA Program for the LWVCA.

Once Again—We have a Hit: Doldrums Party 2025

The cure for the winter blues worked again. Fifty plus members showed up for our League's solution to the cold and snow—the Winter Doldrums party. Bill and Karen Streck invited us into their lovely home where we all enjoyed an afternoon of good conversation, wine and other beverages, and tasty treats. Our Silent Auction was once again a success with wonderful donations from our members as well as local merchants including Mel's at 22, The Local Bird, and Karen Katz.



Pictured clockwise from above: Jesse Ravage and Nancy Potter admire some of the clothing items that were part of the silent auction. A bountiful showing of other items in the auction. In total the League raised \$776. Laura Tansey Wetzel, who headed up the Doldrums Party Committee, and new member George Fasanelli.

Lend a Hand to Help Our Planet at Earth Festival 2025



The League will be participating in the 2025 Earth Day festival on April 26, 2025 at Milford Central School from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. OCCA, Otsego 2000, Cornell Cooperative Extension, and the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society (DOAS) are sponsoring the Festival which will feature more than 40 exhibitors and vendors offering interactive exhibits, workshops, and entertainment and recycling events.

Drive-through drop-off recycling event at Wilber Park from 10 am- 1 p.m. and a Repair Cafe—Don't throw it out; Fix it—from 11 a.m.-2.p.m. (The repairs will be done free of charge, materials needed to fix items will be available to purchase.)

Workshops on permaculture, Otsego2000's Tax Credits, native plants, tracking the emergence of ticks and tick-borne diseases in New York, and more.

More than forty exhibitors, including the League.

Get the full schedule at the OCCA website.

Help the League make Earth Festival a success. E-mail Hudi Poldolsky to volunteer. Do it today!

Coming Up

April 26	Earth Fest at Milford Central School with drive through recycling at Wilber Park. See story above.	May 18-21	Students Inside Albany
May 6	LWVNY Advocacy Day in Albany. 11 a.m.- 4 p.m. We are organizing carpooling. Contact Christina Bourgeois: 607-544-4072;retireddb2019@gmail.com if you plan to come.	May 20	School Board elections. Check your local district for polling time.
May 7	LWVCA Board Meeting: 3:30-5	June 5	LWVCA Annual Meeting, 6-8 p.m.
May 15	LWVNY consensus statements on Voting Systems Approval Process due. See story on p.3	June 20-22	LWVNY State Convention, Albany, N.Y. Special Guest is LWVUS CEO Celina Stewart. If you have an interest in attending as a delegate contact 607-544-4072;retireddb2019@gmail.com.

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