



December, 2022

Letter from the President

Dear LWVSC Friends,

When the end of each year rolls around, we tend to think back to all the issues – both good and bad – that we’ve encountered during the past twelve months. The issue that is foremost in my mind right now is climate change and all of the ramifications that complicate this serious situation.

As we’ve learned over the last several years, the earth is being affected by rising temperatures much more rapidly than many climatologists originally predicted. The higher temperatures in turn cause hotter heat waves, longer droughts, and bigger and more violent storms. Individually, we become more vulnerable to climate-related illnesses like respiratory diseases. In addition, these effects carry a financial component as well. Governments can be de-stabilized by a severe weather event. It’s not just that parts of the world must rebuild after a devastating weather event, but in many cases, people in those areas are often forced to become climate refugees migrating to “safer” places to live.

The costs of climate change are not distributed equally. Low-income communities have greater struggles when trying to rebuild or overcome a health crisis. This problem is even worse in many third world countries that are already suffering from displacement, unrest, violence, and disease. Ironically, the poorest half of the world produces only 10% of the fossil fuel emissions compared to the richest populations who produce 50%. (<https://ourworld.unu.edu>)

The League of Women Voters has long advocated for strong legislative policies that address climate change. “As citizens of the world, we must protect our planet from the physical, economic, and public health effects of climate change while also providing pathways to economic prosperity.” As we look forward to the new year, let’s all plan to advocate for a safer, healthier planet.

Best wishes to you for a happy, healthy, and safe holiday, and a peaceful new year...

In League,

Ann Hatke

SCLWV VOTER TURNOUT EFFORTS 2022

In addition to its annual voter registration efforts, our League engages in Get Out the Vote (GOTV) work leading up to elections each year. This hands-on effort requires the support and participation of many League members, whose work this year was once again much appreciated.

This fall, we distributed GOTV lawn signs, focusing primarily in the City of Schenectady, which has the largest population among the cities and towns in the county, but also historically the lowest voter turnout by registered voters. Neighborhoods throughout the city received signs. In addition, signs were placed at busy intersections and at each library branch operated by the County Library System. With the approval of the leadership of the County Library, which we much appreciated, in addition to lawn signs we provided handouts at each branch which set forth the dates, times and locations for early voting and Election Day voting. The County Library staff advised us that the handouts were enthusiastically received by visitors to all of the branches. Clearly, ready availability of information about how and where to vote is something we can and will expand upon!

Voters were able to participate in early, absentee, and Election Day voting again this year. The turnout in the County totaled 55,010, with 10,772 voting during early voting days, 3,550 by absentee ballot, and 40,200 voting on Election Day. Nevertheless, the voter turnout County-wide was only 55.14% of registered voters, a result that was, disappointingly, somewhat less than the turnout in the last statewide officer election in 2018, when 59% of registered voters (totaling 55,726 or about 700 more than in 2022) turned out to vote.

These numbers tell us that there is still much work to be done! Not only must we continue our efforts to reach out to eligible voters to get them to register, but we must substantially expand our efforts to persuade those who are registered to exercise their right to vote. To that end, we are planning to arrange a meeting of members interested in brainstorming about how to achieve higher voter turnout in our County, and how our individual members can help with that effort. If you would like to participate, in person, or by sending your ideas, please contact us at lwvschenectady@gmail.com.

Respectfully submitted,

Pauline Kinsella and Sandra McGarraugh



<i>President</i>	<i>Ann Hatke</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	<i>OPEN</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Heide Westergaard</i>
<i>Bulletin Editor</i>	<i>Nicole Salamone</i>

Mission Statement: The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization. We encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. We work to increase the understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

“Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy”

Welcome two new members!

Angela Dixon

Angela retired from the NY State Comptrollers office in 2018. Currently, she is Sr. Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer at Berkshire Bank and is also owns a consulting firm specializing in strategic planning, leadership development and diversity equity.

Angela is looking forward to working with people who are interested in engaging in issues that impact the community, the state and the nation.

Kathryn Rose

Kathryn is interested in helping with Voter Registration.

The Observer Corps has for several years attended the towns and city public meetings. With the advent of Covid the activity ended. It is important to have LWV eyes and ears at the public meeting to assure that all citizens are well represented. Members interested in participation at any one of the meetings are encouraged to call Connie Young. All meetings are now on Zoom as well in person allowing flexibility which makes the job easier. The information is then sent to the observer corps coordinator.

Save the date for two important local League events:

Thursday, January 12:

Religious Medical Systems and Bodily Autonomy: A Community Conversation

7:00 - 8:30 pm

Virtual participation only via Zoom

Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady Counties and Compassion & Choices

This program will provide an informative look at the complex issue of non-secular hospitals and medical systems that are acquired by religious medical institutions. How do these mergers affect our own choices on reproductive, transgender, and end of life care? Free and open to the public.

Saturday, January 21:

A preview of the 2023 legislative season with a discussion on potential capital region League advocacy

10:30 am (tentative)

Virtual participation only via Zoom

Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady Counties and LWV New York State

This program will provide an overview of the 2023 legislative season. LWVNYS specialists will give us a closer prospective on various issues that will be covered by the legislature in 2023. Potential League advocacy will be discussed.

Currently, this event is scheduled for LWV members only.

Stay tuned for additional information and Zoom links for these programs.

Our League goals are to educate citizens about government and public policy, encourage citizen participation in elections, and influence public policy relating to issues we've studied. Membership makes working on our goals possible.

MEMBERSHIP FOR JULY 1, 2022 – JUNE 30, 2023

Return to: LWV of Schenectady County, P.O. Box 9135, Schenectady, NY 12309

New or Renewing Members Please Confirm This Contact Information

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

\$60 Individual \$85 Household \$20 Full time HS student

Additional support for the League, dues plus \$10 contribution (\$70 or \$95 – circle one)
Confidential arrangements for special payment or partial assistance can be made. Contact Connie Young at 393-7061 with questions about dues or payments. Dues and contributions are not tax deductible.

I am sending my membership dues payment, but please consider me an **INACTIVE** member.

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