

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS[®] OF SCHENECTADY COUNTY

BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 2020

President's Letter

Dear LWVSC Friends,

If you're like me, you might feel like you flew into September at top speed, wondering what happened to the summer. Unusual for me, however, is that I'm not sorry to see it end. The summer months have given us high peaks for COVID-19, serious droughts with resulting fires, devastating hurricanes and tornadoes, and a deep feeling of unrest, division, and anger in the country. The beginning of a new season, though, is often a time for hope and change, and so I plan to look forward to it in that way. I wish you, your family and friends continued good health, and hope in the coming months.

We all know what Leagues do at this time of year! Registering people to vote, providing information about voting procedures, and getting them to participate in the election, whether by voting early, by absentee ballot, or at their polling place on November 3. Our Voter Services Team has done a wonderful job navigating the challenges of getting out the vote during a pandemic, and we have many upcoming (safe and socially-distant) events coming up.

We all have a charge – to follow the news from trustworthy sources, to give current voting information to our friends and neighbors, (not to mention our families!), and to make sure we encourage everyone to be a part of this democracy. We're all of us on level ground here – it is our duty and our responsibility as citizens to vote.

In League,

Ann Hatke
ash.lwvsc@gmail.com

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”



2020 Voting Information Highlights

There are three options for voting in the November 3 General Election: absentee voting, early voting and Election Day voting.

Everyone in New York State is now allowed to vote by **absentee ballot** for the November 3 Election. You will need to **REQUEST the absentee ballot** by filling out an absentee ballot application. This can be done through a very simple online link: <https://absenteeballot.elections.ny.gov/>. Or you can call the Schenectady Board of Elections at 518-377-2469 to request an application be sent by mail.

Check off “**temporary illness**” (due to the pandemic) as your reason for requesting the absentee ballot. You should **request** an absentee ballot as soon as possible. The ballot won’t be certified until September 9 so don’t expect to receive the absentee ballot before then.

Return the absentee ballot as soon as possible to make sure your vote is counted. Absentee ballots can be mailed or delivered to an election worker at the Board of Elections, 2696 Hamburg St., Schenectady, NY 12303 or to any polling site on Election Day or to any of the Early Voting sites during voting hours.

October 27 is the last day to **postmark an application** for absentee ballot if you’re mailing the application. November 2 is the last day to **postmark the actual absentee ballot**.

All polling sites are expected to be **open on Election Day** for traditional in-person voting at your designated polling site.

Early voting will be held from October 24- November 1 at the
Karen B. Johnson Library, 99 Clinton St., Schenectady;
South Schenectady Fire Station, 6 Old Mariaville Rd., Rotterdam;
Glenville Senior Center, 32 Worden Rd., Glenville;
Niskayuna TownHall, 1 Niskayuna Circle, Niskayuna.

***Note the change from VIA Port to the South Schenectady Fire Station.

Registered Schenectady County voters may vote at any of the early voting sites.

The Hours are: Saturday and Sunday, 9 AM- 2 PM;
 Monday and Wednesday, noon- 8 PM;
 Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 9 AM- 5 PM.

And of course, the all-important deadline to **register to vote** is October. 9.

Cheryl Nechamen
Voter Services Chair

Citizenship Mentoring Report

Although we haven't been able to resume our regular citizenship classes or tutoring yet, our students have been busy. Immigration Services has been shut down since March, but were able to re-open their offices in a limited way during June and resumed citizenship interviews. This summer, we had three of our students – from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Yemen, and Afghanistan – become new US citizens. And they'll be in time to vote in this election!

For more information about the Citizenship Mentoring Group, please contact Ann Hatke at ash.lwvsc@gmail.com



Get Out the Vote!

These t-shirts were a fund-raiser for LWV Saratoga County, and I purchased a few extra for members. The shirts are 100% cotton, and say "Vote! It counts. The League of Women Voters." The cost is \$10. Available: 3 ladies' medium, 1 ladies extra-large, and 1 men's large. If you'd like one, contact Ann Hatke at 518-346-1584.

President	Ann Hatke
Vice-President	Jude Rabig
Secretary	Heide Westergaard
Bulletin Editor	Helen MacDonald



Shortage of Poll Workers

With three months to go until Election Day, America is facing a critical shortage of poll workers, the linchpin of our voting process, all of whom need to be signed up and trained in time for November. We're proud to announce a new partnership with Power the Polls, a multi-faceted, multi-organizational effort to encourage Americans to help fill the gap in time for November. The future of our democracy – and our communities – is at stake this November and you can be part of the solution.

While many organizations, including the League of Women Voters, have been working around the clock to ensure voters are prepared and understand the many changes they may face in the voting process this year, concern is growing that our Election Day workforce – often understaffed and under-resourced even in a 'normal' year – will be in deep peril this November.

Poll workers staff our voting sites, process ballots, answer voters' questions, and ensure things run smoothly. They are on the front lines of our democracy and are the difference between a well-run polling place and a chaotic polling place. Sufficient, well-trained poll workers are especially important in black and brown communities where voters already tend to be at risk of voter suppression or intimidation. Poll workers also skew overwhelmingly older; in 2018, 58% of poll workers were over the age of 61 (Pew Research). With so many Americans remaining in high-risk health categories for COVID and with the virus continuing to spread at alarming rates, many experienced poll workers will have no choice but to sit out this year.

While encouraging voters to vote early or by mail, as their state allows, is an important first step, we know that many voters will still vote in person on Election Day. Our polling places must be staffed, with poll workers trained and ready to help.

Here are 5 things you can do right now:

1. **Sign up as a poll worker.** Pledge to be part of the solution on Election Day by serving in your community.
2. If you can't work the polls due to health risks or other obligations, ask the people in your life if they can. **Share information about how they can get involved, wherever they live.**
3. Talk about the importance of poll workers. Take to your social media networks, professional listservs, and neighbor groups to talk about the expected poll worker shortage.
4. Use this opportunity to shine a light on the connection between our voting processes and social and racial equity in this country. Underrepresented communities are at the highest risk of missing out on the chance to vote. They're disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. They're most likely to vote, by choice and/or necessity, in-person – and thus most impacted if our voting sites are unprepared for a crush of voters. It's on all of us to stand up and help ensure every single voter has the chance to participate this year.
5. If you're a League volunteer or advocate working to support your local elections officials, share this great list of ideas and resources, "50 Ideas for Recruiting and Retaining Election Workers," from the Center for Tech and Civic Life, and lend your expertise and problem-solving skills to help them get the job done!

We can all be part of ensuring a safe, accessible election for voters this year – and we need to get started right now. Sign up to serve as a poll worker today!

From www.lwv.org article by Maggie Bush

New Members

Julia Holcomb

Julia is a recently retired social studies and US history teacher. Prior to this she was a Major in the US Air Force. She has traveled to every continent except Antarctica.

She has signed up to do voter registration. Julia is a member of the NAACP and she hopes to help their members get registered as well. Julia is a member of the Clifton Park Elks and the First Presbyterian Church of the Stockade.

She enjoys Jazz music and is an avid gardener.

Mariellen Boomhower

Mariellen is a retired elementary school Social Studies teacher. She is a master gardener in with the Master Gardening Program working with ARC and working on the Master Gardening telephone hot line.

Mariellen is a member of the Trinity Presbyterian Church and serves as Mission Chair for the Weekend Backpack and Food Programs supporting Scotia Glenville K-8 and high school students. This program is run in conjunction with the First Reformed Church of Scotia and the Schenectady Food Pantry.

She is also a Voting Poll worker.

Her LWV activity interests include Voter Registration and Citizen Monitoring groups.

Patty Skinner

Patty is the former Director of the Capital District Child Care Council (now called Bright Side Up). Patty volunteered at the Schenectady Library's Whitney Book store for 6 years. She is an avid golfer and also enjoys reading and quilting.

Frustration with this country's current political environment has led her to join the LWV organization. Patty would like to help with voter registration.

Dana Nemic

Dana has worked in Digital Marketing with GE for the for past 20 years and with Baker Hughes for the past 3 years. Her coworkers are located all over the world.

Dana and her husband enjoy hiking and bike riding. They have recently built a wood fired hot tub. She is helping with voter registration and will participate in LWV activities as her time permits.



Sentinels walk in procession toward the White House as part of a “Women Voters Day” picket line on February 14, 191

How a Group of Silent Women Won a Battle with President Wilson a Century Ago

The first organization to picket the White House launched a hard-fought campaign to win a major victory for women’s rights. Washington, D.C. has a long history of hosting protests on every imaginable issue and the White House is a frequent setting for organized rallies, marches and demonstrations. While it is common now to picket the presidential residence for a cause, this practice began just over a century ago when activist Alice Paul organized members of the National Woman’s Party to hold signs along Pennsylvania Avenue to persuade President Woodrow Wilson and the country to support women’s suffrage.

Despite jeering, violence and the steadfast opposition of the president she picketed — she won. Paul and other members of the National Woman’s Party had met repeatedly with Wilson regarding the right to vote. During most of Wilson’s tenure women only had full voting rights in 16 states and the party supported a constitutional amendment to make women’s voting rights legal nationally. Wilson strongly opposed suffrage however and consistently rebuffed the women and their demands.

Several years earlier, Paul had traveled to England and happened to meet Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, prominent activists who often used militant tactics to fight for women’s suffrage. Paul joined the English movement while abroad and watched as the women she met were repeatedly arrested, suffered insults and violent attacks and gained widespread publicity for their protest.

When Paul returned to the states, she brought more radical and attention-grabbing strategies to the U.S. suffrage movement, realizing that writing letters and asking politely for civil rights was not winning attention or progress for the cause.

Excerpt from National Parks Conservation Assoc. Publication /August 26, 2020
by Jennifer Errick/



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Webinars

Advocacy and Litigation Webinars

Wed., September 23, 2020 - **Developing Effective Advocacy Alerts**

Rapid response is the name of the game. In today's unpredictable yet connected world, it's important to know how to rise in the moment and respond to last minute changes and challenges. Join us as we walk you through building effective advocacy alerts.

Visit the [League Management Page](#) to view past recordings and register for upcoming Advocacy and Litigation Briefings.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Webinars

September 24:

This webinar will explore micro-aggressions, how they form, how to recognize them, and how to prevent them.

Visit the [League Management Site](#) to view past recordings and register for upcoming webinars.

DEI Training Modules

If your League is looking for resources to connect on DEI remotely consider reviewing the 5 DEI Modules produced last year for the Making Democracy grant program. Each of these modules includes a short-recorded webinar with discussion prompts and additional reading and viewing materials.

The modules can be viewed on the [League Management Site](#)

This sign will be on all Schenectady, Albany, Rensselaer and Saratoga County buses. Thanks to each of the Leagues and a grant from LWVNYS and the Get Out the Vote initiative spearheaded by Pauline Kinsella and the GOTV Committee.



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, 2020 - June 30, 2021

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.

ACTIVE MEMBERS: The League depends upon the work of its members, even if for just a short task. Please check any areas that interest you. We appreciate your help.

Judicial _____ Health _____ Observer Corps _____ Fund Raising _____

Citizenship Mentoring Group _____ Environment _____ Education _____

Voter Services: Register Voters _____ Candidate Forums _____ Voter Information _____

Computer Skills: Graphics/Layout _____ Data Bases _____ Website Work _____

Facebook _____ Electronic Publicity _____ Other Technical Skill(Describe) _____

