



## President's Letter

We had a great program planning potluck dinner on February 12. Meetings are always better with food, aren't they? I've included our proposed Local Objectives for 2026-2027- see below.

We made just a few changes- separated Citizens Right to Vote and Making Democracy Work into separate categories, made Immigration into its own category with the statement: Support basic human rights of immigrants and a path to citizenship, moved support for improving connectivity to the internet to Health Services and added the statement: Advocate for climate change mitigation and adaptation to Environmental Issues.

One of the changes we made to our Local Objectives was to drop our Citizenship Mentoring Group. It was with great sadness that we made this decision. With the current attitude of the federal government towards immigrants, very few applicants were succeeding in their quest to obtain American citizenship. When this policy changes in the future, we intend to renew our efforts to support new citizens.

Spring must be coming soon- lots of organizations are planning programs. Here are just a few:

- Women's March 2026, March 7, 9:30 AM, Schenectady City Hall steps
- No Kings 3 Rally, March 28, time and location TBD, sponsored by Schenectady LWV
- Civic Discourse panel discussion, SUNY Schenectady, date TBD in April, Schenectady LWV member will be on the panel

- Democracy During Detention Act panel discussion, date and location TBD in April, co-sponsored by Schenectady LWV, Schenectady NAACP and Union College NAACP class.
- Follow us on Facebook for the latest information. We'll also send updates by email

*Cheryl Nechamen*  
*President*

## **Voter Services Report**

I am writing this Voter Services update a few short hours before the State of the Union address, an event marking a year that ended head-spinningly quickly and drearily slowly.

We do our jobs—inform and register voters, urge people to get involved, cheerlead for the US Constitution. But our efforts may feel small compared to the pressures on our democracy. And it's gray outside, and it's still cold. It's hard to feel enthusiastic.

The only way out of the doldrums is to spread the League tablecloth, put out our literature, and talk to people. Every time we do this, we have an opportunity to meet new people, to make new connections. It doesn't take much of a sales pitch (we are, after all, in sales) to get people to stop and chat, some just wanted to thank us. (Jolly Ranchers, mints, and flags help.) Being at the Schenectady Greenmarket this weekend gave some people hope, it gave me hope. Sometimes, you just got to get out there!

### ***Upcoming Opportunities:***

- Sat., March 7—Women's March. We're tabling in front of Schenectady City Hall, 9:30-11am. Then we join the march

- Mon., March 23—Fulton-Montgomery Community College, Books & Bites Café, 11am-2pm
- Tues., March 31—Fulton-Montgomery Community College, Books & Bites Café, 11am-2pm
- Here's the link: [LWV 2025 Voter Registration Drive Sign Up](#)

*Joan Fucillo*  
*Voter Services*

## Membership

The Schenectady County League of Women Voters would like to welcome four new members Stefanie Pivar, Julie Roy, Aileen Valente and Helen Passonno.

Welcome, hope you will join us at an upcoming meeting or event!

Regarding membership updating, if you have received an email about updating your membership and would like help, please call, text or email me at

[lwvschenectady@gmail.com](mailto:lwvschenectady@gmail.com)

I look forward to hearing from you.

*Ellen Daviero*  
*Membership*

## New Tool for Get Out The Vote

This new tool will allow us to engage with voters to educate and strengthen our GOTV (get out the vote) efforts. It is an online database from public voting rolls.

Along with our access to VAN, we have a specialist, Monica, who is working with the state league to help counties across the state to use the database.

With this information we could figure out areas in our county that have lower than

average voter turnout and focus activities and efforts to increase participation. So for example, we could create a nonpartisan list of voters, (party is not included in the information that we have access to) in a lower turnout district and send postcards or texts to remind them to vote or reminders about early voting, for example.

We do pay a fee for texts sent, as well as postage for postcards. I have taken the training and would love to work with other members of our league that might be interested in this project. We can make this as complicated or simple as we like, I am aiming for simple but would love to bounce ideas off other interested members. If you are interested, please reach out to me at [lwvschenectady@gmail.com](mailto:lwvschenectady@gmail.com)

## Children Issues

If you are interested in learning more about the needs of children in NYS please explore The Children's Agenda: [The Agenda](#). Their mission statement: We improve the health, education, and success of children by advocating for effective, equitable policies, especially for families most impacted by poverty, racism, health inequities, and trauma.

For more information, please contact me [wendysbender@aol.com](mailto:wendysbender@aol.com)

Wendy Bender, LCSW PLLC  
LCSW-R, IMH-E® Infant Mentor Health Mentor -clinical  
NYS Pyramid Model Master Cadre Trainer

## Reducing Plastic in Our Lives

*The National Institutes of Health (NIH) has confirmed that all humans, regardless of age, have microplastics in their bodies. The chemicals from these substances are negatively impacting our health. Reducing our exposure — especially through items that touch our*

*food – is a practical step we can take. Below are suggestions for ways to lessen microplastics in our lives.*

**Here are 10 easy, practical ways to reduce plastic use in your kitchen** - all doable without major lifestyle changes:

1. **Avoid heating or reheating food in plastic containers** - transfer food to glass or ceramic before microwaving.
2. **Toss the plastic cutting boards!** Move to ceramic, bamboo, rubber, or wood options.
3. **Throw away your old, scratched Tupperware and Rubbermaid plastic containers** - switch to glass or stainless steel for long-term use.
4. **Choose non-plastic kitchen tools** - opt for wood, metal, glass, bamboo, or silicone alternatives that will reduce plastic contact with food.
5. **Switch to reusable food storage options** - use glass containers, stainless-steel tins, or silicone bags instead of disposable plastics.
6. **Swap plastic wrap with reusable covers like beeswax wraps, silicone lids, or simply cover bowls with a plate.**
7. **Drink from a reusable metal bottle** - avoid buying single-use plastic water/soda bottles.
8. **Pick loose fruits and vegetables** instead of pre-wrapped options.
9. **Bring your mug** for coffee or tea - many coffee shops welcome them.
10. **Wrap sandwiches in wax paper or foil** instead of plastic bags.

*Nancy Tudor  
Environment Chair*

## **Local Objectives 2026-2027**

### **Citizens Right to Vote**

- Provide voter information during voter registration drives, tabling events and other LWVSC activities in person, on the LWVSC website and on social media
- Support and provide voter education to youth in high schools and colleges

## **Making Democracy Work**

- Advocate for local government transparency and monitor activities of local governmental units
- Meet with the Commissioners of the Schenectady County Board of Elections on a regular basis

## **Immigration**

- Support basic human rights of immigrants and a path to citizenship

## **Children and Education**

- Collaborate with other organizations to identify and advocate for the needs of children
- Encourage the availability and affordability of day care services for young children
- Advocate for the active recruitment by all school districts in Schenectady County of teachers of color
- Support the annual LWVNYS's Students Inside Albany program

## **Health Services**

- Advocate for national/state/local health care reform that provides quality physical and mental health care for all citizens
- Advocate for the strengthening of programs that improve the capacity, quality, and speed of connectivity to the internet, especially in rural and low-income communities

## **Justice and the Law**

- Support restorative justice programs such as the Center for Community Justice
- Improve accessibility to police complaint procedure and support Schenectady police reform efforts

- Register eligible voters in the Schenectady County Jail and encourage them to vote

### **Environmental Issues**

- Advocate for the protection of environmental resources, land, water and air in Schenectady County
- Advocate for energy conservation and development of renewable energy alternatives
- Advocate for solid waste management programs that promote Reduce, Reuse, and Recycling in the City and County
- Advocate for climate change mitigation and adaptation

## **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”**

## **Board Members**

President: Cheryl Nechamen

Vice President: Joan Fucillo

Voter Services Chair: Joan Fucillo

Membership: Ellen Daviero

Secretary: Kate Rose

Bulletin Editor: Cindy Engel

