



Letter from the President – November 2024

President's Letter

The November Election is just around the corner. In addition to President and Vice President, we'll be voting for U.S. Senator, U.S. Representative, NYS Senate, NYS Assembly, Schenectady Family Court Judge, Schenectady County Court Judge and Scotia Trustees.

When I gave a talk to the GED class at Schenectady County Jail, the teacher asked me how incarcerated individuals in the jail could find out information about candidates so they could make an informed decision.

I was embarrassed to tell her that I didn't know! I consider myself to be an informed voter, as I'm sure all of our League members are. I read 2 newspapers and listen to WAMC to keep track of daily news involving our elected officials. And of course, candidates send campaign material to my house during election season.

But people in the jail don't have access to most of those sources of information. Personal mail is restricted and slow and internet access is very limited. The teacher was happy to look for information if she knew where to find it.

The best way to determine a politician's plans for the future is to look at what they've done in the past. My fellow League members gave me links to the websites of Congress and the New York State Legislature.

Each of these websites has links to individual elected officials with their biographies, committee assignments and sponsored legislation:

- 1) U.S. House of Representatives: House.gov
- 2) U.S. Senate: Senate.gov
- 3) New York State Assembly: Assembly.state.ny.us
- 4) New York State Senate: NYsenate.gov

I haven't found similar information on city, town or county elected officials. If you know of any sources, please let me know!

For information on candidates, who may not have a track record in politics, Vote411.org, maintained by the League of Women Voters, is a great resource for voters. Another good source is Ballotpedia.org.

Let's all hope for a peaceful election and Happy Voting!

Cheryl Nechamen

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. Below are suggestions for ways to lessen microplastics in our lives.

In Our Daily Lives

- Don't drink from plastic cups/bottles. Use a glass or stainless steel mug.
- Refrain from purchasing "fast fashion"; most of these items end up in landfills.
- Donate sneakers in good condition (call your YMCA).
- Don't discard old clothing in a garbage bin. Donate good items or recycle if not wearable.
- Minimize online purchases, which generate more plastic. Shop local when possible.

In the Kitchen & At Home

- Toss the plastic cutting boards! Move to bamboo or rubber.
- Never heat/reheat food in plastic containers; transfer food to glass.
- Wrap sandwiches in wax paper or foil.
- Eliminate plastic wrap. Cover food with plates, reusable covers, or beeswax sheets.
- To store/freeze food, use glass containers with bamboo lids.
- Purchase coconut pads for cleaning pots & pans. They work great!
- In the shower, use bar soap, not liquid.

When Going Out & At The Grocery Store

- Stop buying plastic water/soda bottles; when going out, take water in a reusable stainless steel container.
- Take a mug when purchasing coffee or tea; most coffee shops welcome them.
- When eating out, take a glass container for leftovers.
- Buy meat & fish at the counters & have them packaged only in paper.
- Use cloth/reusable bags for produce.
- Purchase milk & juice in cardboard containers.
- Buy frozen juice concentrate and mix your own.
- Skip the straw, as you do at home; decline plastic utensils & condiment packets.
- Purchase food in bulk; take a cloth/paper bag with you for most items.
- Keep cloth bags in your car for shopping at the mall and retail stores.

Voter Services Committee Report

This report by Voter Services Committee reflects the work of our League in this busy and rewarding year of solidifying our long-term connections in the community and finding new opportunities for partnership. Drumroll, please:

In 2024, we held voter registration events at 40 different sites; we registered 136 voters and handed out 128 voter registration forms. We were at the Schenectady Greenmarket, Union College, Schenectady County Community College, YWCA, Sycamore, Ten Eyck, the YWCA and Fulton-Montgomery Community College—more than once. On National Voter Registration Day, we tabled at two area Price Choppers as well as at SCCC.

We created new partnerships and rekindled old ones, tabling at Hillside Crossing Apartments, I am Father Festival, Juneteenth, Caribbean Day, Latin Fest, Carrot Fest, and the Schenectady County Historical Society's African American Living History event. With Cheryl in the lead, we educated and registered voters at GED classes at the county jail, Steinmetz Houses, SEAT Center, and Washington Irving Continuing Education Center. We held our first-ever voter registration event at Middleburgh Public Library in Schoharie County.

Other education efforts included co-hosting a panel with Union College on Prop 1, the NY Equal Rights Amendment; arranging a talk and Q&A with the Schenectady County Board of Elections commissioners on the topic of election integrity; and attending two church coffee hours to speak with members about the NY ERA.

GOTV efforts included Ellen's hosting us to write postcards to remind people to vote. We sent 250 cards at \$.56 apiece. We went to Steinmetz Houses to leave door-hangers to inform residents about early voting and let them know when and where to vote early. Led by Pauline, a group effort among three leagues got us GOTV ads on CDTA buses in Schenectady, Saratoga, and Rensselaer counties. Our GOTV reminders at local libraries included posters, flyers and revised Vote! signs that now direct people to voteschenectady.com. We made headway in electronic signage, with the Village of Scotia, Schenectady County Community College and Schenectady City School District posting early voting messages.

After being assured there were no contested races in Schenectady, Sandra, Connie, Ellen, Pauline and Cheryl put together a successful candidate forum at Glenville Town Hall, where candidates for Scotia Village Trustee and Schenectady County Family Court Judge spoke to constituents.

And, in a first, a group of us went to the WAMC radio station to take pledges on the first day of its fund drive. We got a nice acknowledgement of our League—and a question about early voting!

Many thanks!

Joan Fucillo

Voter Services Committee Chair



Join Us For Our
Holiday Luncheon!

Thursday, December 12, 12:00
Turf Tavern, Scotia

Buffet Lunch \$35
Guest Speaker: Arthur Butler
Human Rights Commission
"Misguided Propositions"

Please RSVP to Cheryl Nechamen

lwwSchenectady@gmail.com

<i>President</i>	<i>Cheryl Nechamen</i>
<i>Vice President</i>	<i>Joan Fucillo</i>
<i>Voter Services Chair</i>	<i>Joan Fucillo</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”



MEMBERSHIP FOR JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025

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 _____ No Fee Full-time 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 518-393-7061 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.

- Register Voters** _____ **Candidate Forums** _____ **Get Out the Vote** _____
Citizenship Mentoring Group _____ **Environment** _____ **Students Inside Albany** _____
Observer Corps _____ **Judicial** _____ **Health** _____ **Membership** _____
Facebook _____ **Website Work** _____ **Other Technical Skills (Describe)** _____
Other areas of interest _____