



News from the League of Women Voters of New Rochelle

September 2016

Voter Services Has Been Busy!

Given the presidential election this year, a strong effort is underway to get people registered by mid-October. Voter Service Co-chairs Joan Alexander and Amy Weiser reported highly successful voter registration activities at the New Rochelle train station, local supermarkets, Hope Community Services, and all three colleges; College of New Rochelle, Iona, and Monroe.

On behalf of the entire LWVNR, Joan and Amy express our heartfelt thanks to our tireless and dedicated volunteers, including new members Bill Mullen, Michele White, and Ann Spindel. A special thank you goes out to Board Member John Hessel, his son Jack and Jack's friend Tian Brown, both NRHS students, for regularly working the Downtown Farmer's Market, Metro North train station, and Stop-n-Shop. Many of the registration drives have also been staffed by the NY Organ Donation organization, Live On NY, to help inform new registrants of their opportunity to register to become an organ donor at the same time.

Voter registration information is posted on our website, lwnnewro.org. Members are encouraged to visit vote411.org, an online voter information resource supported by the National, State, and Westchester County Leagues. Printed Voter Guides will be mailed to all members and distributed throughout the community.

We plan, with the help of volunteers, to register as many new people as possible and to provide change of address registrations, absentee ballots, and change of political party designations (which must be completed this year to vote in next year's primaries) before the mid-October deadline. The Metro North train station and Stop-n-Shop do not require special approval; if you want to do voter registration there, pick a day or evening, email us, and we'll go!

In addition, please sign up for any or all of the following upcoming volunteer opportunities:

Iona College:

[Tuesday, 9/20](#), 11-1, Latin/Hispanic students

[Saturday, 9/24](#), 12-2, Community Difference Day

[Tuesday, 9/27](#), 11-7, National VR Day.



College of New Rochelle:

[Tuesday, 9/20](#), 12-2 lunchtime

[Tuesday, 9/27](#), 5-7 PM, NVR Day, Evening event

Library Green Farmers Market outdoors:

[Every Saturday](#) anytime between 10-2 PM

NRPL Big Book Sale:

[First Saturday of every month indoors](#), anytime between 10-2 PM

Monroe College:

[Any Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday](#), 11-12:45. Email us with specific date.

Metro North NR Railroad Train Station:

[Any day, Monday thru Thursday](#), 5:30-7:00 PM

****National Voter Registration Day, Tuesday 9/27, All Day****

The League will set up many tables during this day at all 3 colleges, supermarkets. There are plans to drop off and pick up forms at various senior centers, Municipal Housing Authority residences, and large rental buildings in New Rochelle. Ideas for additional venues are welcome.

For more information, please call Joan Alexander at 914-715-3916, or email her at royjoanalex@yahoo.com



SAVE THE DATE:

Candidates' Forum

Monday, October 24

6:30 pm

NR City Council Chambers

New Rochelle City Hall

Local Races:

NYS Senate District 35: G. Latimer v J. Killian

NYS Assembly District 88: A. Paulin v Decintio

Westchester County District Attorney:

B. Bendish v A. Scarpino

NR League Member Speaks to Westchester Women's Bar Association

On September 7th, LWVNR Board Member Louise Kuklis stepped in for Janice Abbot of the White Plains League, who had broken her ankle, to talk about the history of women's suffrage, the League, and the NYS League's proposals for reforming the election laws in New York State.

Kuklis showed a PowerPoint of pictures from the history of women's suffrage and the League in NY. She focused on the division among the members of the suffrage movement as to whether to take a state-by-state reform approach, or to work on a federal amendment. She also detailed the efforts of Alice Paul and her followers to use press coverage of the treatment of women in marches and under arrest to gain sympathy around the country, while contrasting the lobbying efforts of Carrie Chapman Catt and others who lobbied members of Congress and President Wilson. Kuklis then gave a brief synopsis of the formation of the League of Women Voters and the many reforms the League has studied, worked for, and achieved in New York State, including the 1967 statute that allows voters to stay on the rolls and not have to reregister every year.

Kuklis discussed current voter reform proposals, including the use of electronic voter registration surpassing the current DMV registration system. She noted that this would be more feasible if New York State also made the switch to electronic poll books. Kuklis also discussed the introduction of early voting for two weeks before the election to help increase voter turnout. Last, she reviewed the LWV proposals to make ballots more voter-friendly and to upgrade poll worker training and recruitment. Kuklis noted that New York seems to be one of the most restrictive states in terms of voter registration and voting rules.

Kuklis was joined on the panel by the Honorable Lewis Lubell of the NYS Supreme Court, who listens to petitions of those denied the right to vote at the various Board of Election sites around the county. Lubell gave an overview of the types of cases he hears and the principles he uses in deciding who can vote. Then, Adam Gitlan of the Brennan Center for Justice gave an overview of some of the important voter rights cases the Brennan Center has filed around the country, often with the help of the League of Women Voters. Westchester Bar members were recruited to help local leagues carry out voter registration around the county.

The New League Website is Up and Running!

Thanks to the hard work of Board member, John Hessel, the New Rochelle League's newly redesigned website is fully operational (<http://www.lwvnewro.org>). The website contains a variety of educational resources, voter information, archives of the League cable show, *City People and Issues*, and announcements. Hessel reports that he is updating information on a regular basis. You can check here for the newest voter registration opportunities. New members can join, and current members can renew by paying their dues on the website through PayPal.

League to Celebrate Council-Manager Form of Government

Board member, Peter Korn, our Government Studies and Policy Issues Chair, will lead the League's efforts to acknowledge New Rochelle's 85 years of Council-Manager Form of Government in 2017. A variety of League activities, including an evening forum and panel presentation, and a morning Coffee & Conversation session, are in formation. Plans are being coordinated with other civic organizations, including the New Rochelle Charter and Civic League, to co-sponsor events on this theme. A committee that will meet after September is being formed now. Anyone interested is encouraged to email Peter at: lwvnewrochelle@gmail.com.

Supreme Court Votes in Favor of League in Three Cases



This summer a federal judge ruled that voters in Wisconsin who do not meet the ID requirements imposed by a stringent new state law *cannot* be turned away from the polls. A federal appeals court ordered changes to a similarly strict voter ID law in Texas after finding that that state's new law discriminates against persons of color, Hispanics and low-income voters.

Shortly thereafter, a federal appeals court sided with the League in our lawsuit against the State of North Carolina, and overturned one of the worst voter-discrimination laws in the entire country. The court barred North Carolina from requiring photo IDs and ordered the state to restore a week of early voting and pre-registration and maintain same-day registration and out-of-precinct voting. In finding that the new law would disproportionately impact communities of color, the judges noted in their decision, "*We can only conclude that the North Carolina General Assembly enacted the challenged provisions of the law with discriminatory intent.*"



Chris Carson, President of the national League of Women Voters applauded that statement: "*We are grateful to the Court of Appeals for seeing this bill for what it was: a race-based, chilling attempt to silence the voices of eligible voters.*" These laws were several of the many passed in states across the country shortly after the U.S. Supreme Court gutted the heart of the Voting Rights Act back in 2013.

Coffee and Conversation



On Friday, September 16th, Councilman Ivor Hayden presented information on the development of spaces around New Rochelle dedicated to the arts. He said there were sixteen potential projects but that the new RDRXR development of the Loew's movie house would begin in December. In this new apartment and retail space, a 10,000 square foot performance space will be built and given to the city to use for the benefit of the public. Hayden also discussed the city's recent approval for artist worker spaces in a four-story retail building going in near Tile and Carpet opposite The Home Depot. Additionally, there will be a new permanent gallery space in a building going in near the U-Haul lot. All this is part of a focused effort by New Rochelle to attract artists and their businesses to downtown New Rochelle. He noted that the city would have to hire or create a non-profit organization to organize the events and fill performance venues.

Hayden went on to explain how the Industrial Development Board has been working diligently to facilitate the acquisition of these spaces from businesses, and to achieve compromises that benefit the city as well. For example, the IDA has allowed the Loew's building to have an additional story in order for them to provide the performance space. Hayden assured the C & C audience that there has been little displacement so far for residents; the city has helped those small businesses that were affected to relocate. Hayden mentioned that both Huguenot and Main Streets will soon be changed to two-way traffic in order to continue to attract businesses to the downtown. He admitted that he was initially concerned about this change, but has since been convinced that it was the right thing to do.

On October 21, Coffee and Conversation will welcome representatives from the Journal News.

New Rochelle LWV Cable Programs: Superintendent Osborne and Guidance Center

The two newest interviews on *City People and Issues*, a cable television program sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New Rochelle, will be shown on alternate weeks on Cablevision Channel 76, on Mondays at 7 PM, Wednesdays at 9 PM, and Thursdays at 9:30 PM.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Brian Osborne, starting his third year as superintendent, gives an update on the bond issue expenditures and the changes in the educational program to make sure that all students learn to their potential. Ina Aronow is host. The program will be shown the week of September 26th and alternate weeks thereafter.

Directors from the Guidance Center of Westchester, a large social service agency based in New Rochelle, talk with host Haina Just-Michael about programs they offer. Guests are Daniel Bonnet, director of the College and Careers Center, Shawna Aaron-Cooke, director of the Center for Mental Health Services, and Felice Harris, Director of Creative Learning and Early Child Education. The interview will be shown the week of October 3rd and alternate weeks thereafter.

After being shown at least once on Cablevision, the programs will go on demand at Vimeo.com.

Interviews that are now available on demand include:

- Chris Selin, president, New Rochelle Public Library Foundation, <https://vimeo.com/user24211396/videos>
- Kelly Johnson, New Rochelle Youth Bureau Director and 2 teens, www.vimeo.com/179047002
- Luiz Aragon, New Rochelle Commissioner of Development, www.vimeo.com/172344471
- A.J. Woodson, editor-in-chief, BlackWestchester.com, www.vimeo.com/172348358
- Cindy Kanusher, Executive Director, Pace Women's Justice Center, www.vimeo.com/168273352
- Gary Stern, Engagement and Exchange Editor, Journal News/lohud.com, www.vimeo.com/169442913

Additional videos are on <https://vimeo.com/user24211396/videos>.

City People and Issues videotapes in the New Rochelle City Hall NRTV cable studio. Ina Aronow produces the show and does the administrative work, and she and Haina Just-Michael interview civic leaders. They need people to help with the production side of recording the videos and sound and, optionally, help with ideas and decisions about the programming. Time commitment is two hours in the studio every 4 to 6 weeks. On the job training is quick! An opportunity to learn to be a host and interviewer is possible. If interested, contact Ina directly at 636-6271 or iaronow@aol.com.

League Day at the United Nations on November 17th!

This year's event provides briefings by UN experts on two topics: Sexual Violence in Conflict Areas, and Anti-Terrorism. The briefings will present information on the issues and the actions being taken to assist in these global issues. A delicious lunch in the Delegates' Dining Room and tours of the United Nations facility are also available.

Schedule of Events:

10:00 am - Tour of United Nations

11:30 am Lunch in the Delegates' Dining Room

1:30 – 3:45 pm Briefings Program

Make your reservation today by clicking [here](#).

Or download the [form](#) and mail the completed form with a check to the state office.

Hope to see you all in New York City on November 17th!



See us on the web:

www.lwvnewro.org

Like us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/LeagueOfWomenVotersOfNewRochelle>

Email us:

LWVNewRochelle@gmail.com

Membership Form

IT'S TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP (OR START A NEW ONE) FOR THE 2016-2017 YEAR!

Please help us continue the numerous important activities you've read about in this newsletter!

Fill out the form below and enclose a check made payable to the **League of Women Voters of New Rochelle**. In doing so, you will also become a member of the county, state and national Leagues with access to members-only online resources.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION, LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW ROCHELLE

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

TELEPHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Select Membership Level:

Individual \$60 _____ Household \$85 _____

Additional Household member name: _____ email: _____

New Membership _____ Renewal _____

Friend of LWVNR: Donation amount _____

Amounts in excess of \$60 for Individual and \$85 for Household go the LWV Educational Foundation, a 501(c) (3) organization, and are tax deductible. Dues payments themselves are not tax deductible.

RETURN APPLICATION WITH CHECK TO: THE LWV OF NEW ROCHELLE, 46 LONGVUE AVE., NEW ROCHELLE, NY 10804

Calendar of Events

September 27th National Voter Registration Day-volunteers needed

October 14th Last day to register to vote or change address in New York State

October 21st Coffee and Conversation with Journal News

October 24th Candidate Forum 6:30 City Hall

November 8 Election Day-Get out and Vote!

November 17th UN Day for League members