

Help Us Let the Sun Shine In

From March 12 to 18, the League of Women Voters will celebrate Sunshine Week, a national period dedicated to promoting open government, transparency, freedom of information, and enhanced public participation in government. “Sunshine” in government refers to two distinct areas—access to public records and access to public meetings. The week-long celebration coincides with the National Freedom of Information Day on March 16. Sunshine Week reminds citizens to take advantage of their important role in fostering an open and accountable government.

This year, the LWV of the Cooperstown Area will mark Sunshine Week by re-activating our Observer Program. Observer programs throughout the country have earned the League a reputation as a fair and accurate civic monitor. Observers attend public meetings, but do

not speak for the League at the meetings. Observers are there to listen and learn and then make factual reports.

To have a successful Observer Corps, we need sufficient volunteers who will agree to regularly attend county, town, village, and school board meetings. Ideally, two or more people will choose to attend the same meeting. (That way, there should always be at least one person from the League at the meeting). The key is for League members to regularly attend the meeting.

It isn't that difficult to become a member of the Observer Corp, and we will train all volunteers. We will send observers to as many local meetings as we have volunteers to cover them. It's the perfect way to get to know your community and to let the sunshine in. If you have questions or wish to volunteer, please email president@LWVCooperstownArea.org

Be Part of the League's Grassroots: Join Us for Program Planning 2023

In a grassroots organization, it is vital that all members have the opportunity to participate, and the League's Program Planning is an essential tool for that grassroots participation. Last year the focus at Program Planning was on national issues in advance of the LWVUS Convention. This year, League members at the Program Planning meeting will look at state and local issues.

Whether you are a long-time member or brand new to the League, we hope you will join us for Program Planning. It's your opportunity to let League leaders know which issues are most important to you. After the meeting we will report our decisions to LWVNY and our comments will be considered at the LWVNY 2023 convention in June.

We will also look at local issues as we prepare for the annual meeting of the LWVCA on April 27. This process provides every member an opportunity to

influence new areas of study, recommend which current League positions should be emphasized. Your input will be part of the process that will direct League action during in 2023-2025.

We hope you will join us at 6 p.m. on February 15 at the Clark Sports Center Community Room to be part of our decision-making. We hope to make this a hybrid meeting so that members who do not want to venture out can attend as well. Check our website for details. We'll begin with a light supper of pizza and salad and celebrate the League's birthday with cake. Bring your own table setting and beverage; RSVP to president@lwvcooperstownarea.org by February 12 so we can order sufficient food.

FAQs about Program Planning: What is a position? The League, after careful study and discussion, arrives at “positions” on issues.

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Coming Up

- Jan. 29:** It's back: The Winter Doldrums party. See page 4.
- Feb. 1:** LWVCA Board Meeting 5:30 p.m., via Zoom.
- Feb. 14:** Happy 103rd Birthday to the League!
- Feb. 15:** Program Planning—help plan the League's work for the next year. See story on this page.
- March 1:** LWVCA Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- March 10:** Last day to register to vote in Village elections.
- March 21:** **ELECTION DAY** for village offices in New York. In Cooperstown, polls open 12 noon - 9 p.m. Cooperstown Fire Hall, 24 Chestnut St.

- April 5:** LWVCA Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
- April 15:** OCCA Earth Day celebration at Milford School, Go to occainfo.org/earth-festival/ for more information and volunteer sign-up.
- April 17:** Nominating petitions due for local school board elections.
- April 27:** LWV of the Cooperstown Area Annual meeting. Clark Sports Center, 6 p.m.
- May 6:** Moderator Training at Springbrook.
- May 16:** 2023 School Board Elections and Budget votes.
- June 2-4:** LWV New York Convention, Albany.

Together Again! We're Gathering Face-to-Face



Patty MacLeish (left) and Maureen Murray (right),

We hope we will see many of you at the Winter Doldrums Party on January 29. A tradition in our League since the 1980s—the Doldrums Party is a time for League members to gather and socialize. It is a great way to get to know each other better, and no doubt, some of the conversation will turn to politics and (fingers crossed) the Bills' chances for a Super Bowl win.



Silent Auction items made by LWVCA's co-presidents: Maureen's hand-knitted child's sweater and a made-to-order frozen lemon meringue cake from Patty's kitchen.

This year we are asking you to let us know if you are coming and to take a Covid test the day of the party. See the details on page 4.

Also coming up is our annual Program Planning meeting on February 15 at 6 p.m. At this meeting, members will have a chance to choose which issues the LWV New York should focus on for the next two years. Suggestions from Leagues throughout the state will be gathered and members' preferences will be presented to the state board who will recommend any changes to our state's positions and areas of emphasis. Please consider attending. It's one

of the best ways for new members to learn how the League works and where we stand on the issues that affect our lives. For long-time members, Program Planning is also a great refresher course on the work that we do.

Finally, we want to thank the many members who made additional donations to the League during our membership drive. As you may know, most of the dues that our local League collects are sent to the state and national Leagues to support advocacy on our issues in Albany and Washington. Only a small portion remains in our League's coffers. Because of the generosity of many of our members we are able to carry out our local programs. This year we were pleased in particular that we could offer a "pay-what-you-can" membership so that anyone who wanted to be part of the League would not be hindered by the cost. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

See you at the Doldrums Party!

Patty MacLeish and Maureen Murray
Co-Presidents

We Asked. You Responded!

Thank you to the many members who gave additional funds to the League when paying their dues during our annual membership renewal campaign. As we mentioned in the renewal request, very little of what we collect in dues stays here with our League. What we send to LWVUS and the LWVNY goes to support their important programs like the LWVUS Campaign for Making Democracy work and the LWVNY's VOTE411 and lobbying in Albany. These extra funds go a long way to promoting our local work including our "Pay-what-you-can" membership category which means anyone who wants to be involved in the League will not be hampered by the cost of membership.

Our members donated a total of \$1,225 to our local League and \$640 to the LWVNY Education Foundation, which will be used to support our Voter Service Activities.

Thank You!

If you made a donation, but do not see your name listed here, please contact president@LWVCooperstownArea.org.

Donors to Our 2023 Membership Campaign (as of January 15, 2023)

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Stephanie & Michael Bauer | Maureen Murray |
| Anne & Richard Blabey | Susan Newman |
| Ann Brown | Celia & David Oxley |
| Martha & Paul Clarvoe | Nancy Potter & David Pearlman |
| Barbara Cushing | Hudi Podolsky & Jay Bosley |
| Deb & Jim Dalton | Aviva Schneider & Peter Regan |
| Paula DiPerna | Patricia Smith |
| Leila & Philip Durkin | Gretchen Sorin |
| Carina & Patrick Franck | Ellen Spencer |
| Melinda Hardin & Lou Allstadt | Karen & Bill Streck |
| Liana Hirabayashi & Tom Shieber | Julie Sorensen, Todd Pink, & Ellie Pink |
| Dotty & Chuck Hudson | Ellen Tillapaugh |
| Catherine Huber | Joanne Tobey & Steve Zerby |
| Cindy Levene & Charles Egan | Sydney Waller |
| Patty & Bruce MacLeish | Pamela Washburn |
| Lynne & Kai Mebust | Laura Wetzel |
| Susanna Membrino | Nadene & Keith Willcox |

Thank you also to the following members who donated to the LWVNY Education Foundation for our local League.

(as of January 15, 2023)

- Dotty & Chuck Hudson
- Melinda Hardin & Lou Allstadt
- Susan Newman

Program Planning continued from page 1

There are national positions, state positions and local positions. Leagues use these positions to take action on issues. The box on this page lists the positions; please read the full descriptions to learn more.

Do I need to know all of the positions?

No, what is important is to know that there is a position on a topic. You can find the full positions in Impact on Issues for the LWWUS and LWWNY.

What's the difference between positions and program?

Leagues do not have the staff and funding to pursue every issue on which it has developed a position, so we must choose where we will use our resources. We refer to those choices as our "Program" for the upcoming year. Leagues on every level determine which areas are most pressing at anytime. At present, for example, there is a big push to guarantee access to the ballot. Our local members, through the Program Planning process last year, agreed that LWWUS's Making Democracy Work program should be our major focus. Much work at the state level has been focused on that issue, and there has been great success, such as reducing to ten days the amount of time between the last day to register and election day.

How does the process work? Local Leagues throughout the state will meet and review all the LWWNY's positions. (The box on this page lists the many and varied LWWNY positions. You should at minimum make cursory review of the positions.) Our membership will review each state position and vote to retain or drop each position.

There are many issues that we can potentially advocate for, but if we spread ourselves too thin trying to do EVERYTHING, we run the

LWWNY Positions			
Full a full description of all LWWNY positions, download			
https://lwwny.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Impact-on-Issues-2022-FINAL.pdf			
Registration/Ballot Access	tion	Alternatives to Incarceration	Child Care
Voting Qualifications	Filling of Vacancies In The State Legislature	Trial Jury	Transportation
Absentee Voting	Indirect Initiative	Cameras In The Court	Gun Control
Servicemen's Voting	Consolidation of Governmental	Death Penalty	Human Trafficking
The Primaries	Health Care	Civil Legal Services	Financing Education
Uniform Administration of Election Law	Access To Health Care	Criminal Justice	Campaign For Fiscal Equity
Electronic Voting Equipment	Disease Prevention & Health Promotion	Natural Resources	Tuition Tax Credits, Vouchers, & Charter Schools
Petitioning Process: Ballot Access	Personal Health Decision-Making	Air Quality	Financing Public Higher Education
Simplification of Election Law	Financing Health Care	Energy	Property Tax & Star Public Authorities
School Elections	Court Structure	Waste Management Superfund	State Budget Process
Campaign Financing	Adequate Funding Of the Judiciary	Hazardous Waste	Equality For All
Term Limits	Judicial Selection	Water Resources	Women & The Law
Government	Judicial Discipline	Land Use	Child Support/Custody
Citizen Rights	Pre-Arrest Profiling	Urban Sprawl	Pay Equity
Ethics & Lobbying	Pretrial Procedures	Erie/Barge Canal	Domestic Violence
Individual Liberties	Grand Jury	Great Lakes Ecosystem	Ratification of ERA
Reproductive Choices	Legal Services for the Indigent	Education	
Voting Rights		Employment	
Apportionment		Fair Housing	
Constitutional Conven-		Fiscal Policy	
		Welfare Reform	

risk of doing nothing. That's why the League developed Program Planning—it enables every League to express support of the issues that are important to them. It's a grassroots, bottom-up process. The decisions our League makes at our Program Planning the LWWNY Board.

Look for more information on Program Planning on our website www.LWVCooperstownArea.org in early February as well as some hints to prepare. Zoom links for the hybrid meeting will be posted. Also, if there is bad weather, will hold the meeting on Zoom and post the link. Join us on February 15 for a light supper and lively discussion. Don't forget to RSVP (president@lwvcooperstownarea.org). You'll learn more about the League and get to take part in the process that will define our work here where we live and across New York State.

LWVNYS Legislative Agenda for 2023

The LWVNYS Legislative Agenda for 2023 is now available on the state League's webpage, www.lwwny.org. (Click on Our Work>Legislative Agenda.). In February, the LWWNY will announce its priorities for the session.



Help Wanted

We need your help. Whether you want to become actively involved in the League or only have a few hours to spare a month, there's a job for you in the League. Here are some of our needs:

- Sign up for our new Observer Corps! Read the story on page one to learn more about how it works. It's just a few hours work a month and you'll be helping the sun shine on local government.
- Serve as our liaison with LWWNY and work for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment in New York.
- If you subscribe to the local papers, consider being our

historian—someone who will clip articles and letters to the editor sent by our League or stories in which we are cited.

- Spring elections are coming up. We need volunteers to help at candidates forums and will need greeters and timekeepers. We will be holding moderator training soon, too, if you would like to try that.
- Want to learn a new skill? We could use some help maintaining our website. You don't need to be a computer wizard to help keep our calendar up to date or add news stories to the site.

The training is easier.

Contact membership chair Deb Dalton if you are interested and she will put you in touch with the right person to get you started.

Renew Today!

Dues are due! If you haven't renewed your annual League membership, please do so today. You can download a renewal form at our website at www.LWVCooperstownArea.org or contact Membership@LWVCooperstownArea.org.

The Winter Doldrums Party Is Back!*

Join the League on January 29 for an Afternoon of Fun and Food

For more than thirty years the League's Winter Doldrums party had been the highlight of the League's year. The party was a time for members to chase away winter blues and enjoy beverages and delicious snacks while getting to know fellow League members outside of the constraints of a meeting.

The last Doldrums Party was held in January 2020, and we all know what happened next! Now the world is almost back to normal and once we will again embrace winter with a friendly gathering at the home of Bill and Karen Streck, 4 Lakeshore Drive, Cooperstown, on Sunday, January 29, from 2-4 p.m. Members' spouses and partners are also welcome.

A Silent Auction (our major fund-raiser) is also making a return to the Doldrums Party. The list of items is impressive—a Lavern

Kelley original sculpture, a beautiful hand-knitted sweater, a wine basket, a luscious made-to-order frozen lemon meringue dessert, a one-hour training session at the Clark Sports Centers, and a collection of hosta plants for your garden are just a sampling of what will be on offer. Come prepared to bid. RSVP to Deb Dalton (ddalton@stny.rr.com) by January 22. Hope to see you there.



Lavern Kelley sculpture, one of this year's auction items.

*Doldrums is back, however we are asking that everyone take a Covid test the day of the event. Space is limited as well, so please RSVP by January 22 if you will be attending. We want to be able to contact you if circumstances require a cancellation.

Remembering Susan Hughson

Susan Hughson, 87, a long-time member and officer of the LWV of the Oneonta Area died on November 22, 2022. Susan also served as Vice President of the LWV of New York State. A native of Oneonta, she raised her family in that city and taught chemistry at the State University College at Oneonta. She was active in many other organizations in the city and county including the Family Service Association, the Oneonta Concert Association, Catskill Hospice and A.O. Fox memorial Hospital. Susan worked with our League on many projects related to county government and was instrumental in maintaining the strong connection between our two Leagues.

Her family has made a generous donation in her name to the LWV Oneonta that will be a boost to that League's revitalization efforts.



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