

President's Letter

Dear LWWSC Members,

For many of us, "NY on Pause" has truly altered our lives. We've witnessed enormous changes almost daily – in the way we communicate, how we buy our food, how we take care of our families, and how we keep afloat financially. Many plans that would have been easy for us to accomplish a few weeks ago now seem difficult or even impossible. We've seen postponements and cancellations that have disappointed us, and followed news that has frightened and deeply saddened us. I've been encouraged by Governor Cuomo's leadership, though, and look forward to the time when we'll slowly but surely re-open.

One of the topics for discussion at our April board meeting was our Annual Meeting. We all look forward to this occasion, always held in June, as a time to see old friends after a long winter. However, it is also a very important business meeting when we make decisions for our League for 2020-21 – voting on our LWWSC budget, our slate of leaders, and our program. The big question at the board meeting was – how could we safely hold this essential meeting during an epidemic?

Luckily we had the guidance and recommendations of LWWUS and the New York State League. Given the possible extension of COVID-19 safety regulations, we felt that it would not be safe to have our annual meeting as planned. Instead we will conduct our business by email and regular mail (for those who do not use email) and we will include all LWWSC members in the process. Shortly I will be sending an email (or letter by mail) to each of you with the following items:

- The proposed 2020-21 LWWSC budget
- The proposed 2020-21 slate of LWWSC leaders
- The proposed 2020-21 LWWSC program
- A ballot to vote on the above proposals
- A current membership form (since most of us pay our yearly dues at the annual meeting)

The proposed budget, slate, and program are also available on our website at:

<http://www.lwvschenectady.org> and all are published in this issue of the May Bulletin.

I'll be very sorry not to see you in June, but we will have all the more to look forward to next year. I wish you continued good health – stay happy and safe!

In League,
Ann Hatke

GET OUT THE VOTE INITIATIVE

The NYS League of Women Voters has announced that it will fund “mini-grants” to County or Local Leagues as part of its support for get out the vote efforts at the grass roots level in advance of the 2020 election. The League has historically been a leader in voter registration drives, but has increasingly turned its attention to the fact that voter turnout among registered voters also needs improvement.

In Schenectady County, the problem of low voter turnout is apparent, even in presidential election years. In 2016 (the last presidential election year) the percentage of registered voters who actually voted in the county was at its highest over the past four years, at 70%, while in 2017 it was 37%, in 2018 it was 59%, and in 2019 it was 31%. Our County League began in 2018 to develop initiatives to improve voter turnout, but limited resources have forced reliance on free (e.g. school district electronic signs at school entrances, announcements at school sports events, letters to the editor) and low-cost initiatives like posters and lawn signs. Funding by the State League could make a real difference in getting out our message.

In an exciting new development, the Schenectady, Albany and Rensselaer County Leagues have agreed to join forces to apply for a collaborative grant from the State League which would greatly enhance any efforts that each of our county leagues could undertake on its own. We have agreed to seek funding for banners/ads on CDTA buses running in the Schenectady, Albany and Troy communities, focusing particularly on high population density/low voter turnout routes. If approved, the grant would enable us to get our message out as broadly as possible to encourage the public across the Capital Region to exercise the right to vote. If the grant is approved, we are hopeful that we, acting together, can significantly improve participation by our county and region in what is our most sacred right and duty: participation in our democracy.

We greatly appreciate the State League of Women Voters for its support for GETTING OUT THE VOTE!

Pauline Kinsella



Citizenship Mentoring Group Report – May 2020

Unfortunately, we have had to suspend all of our activities – citizenship preparation classes and all tutoring – during the COVID-19 NYS Pause. In addition, US Citizenship and Immigration Services have closed their field offices and all naturalization ceremonies have been postponed. USCIS tentatively plans to re-open their offices on May 4, unless there is a further delay due to safety concerns.

We are hoping to resume one-on-one tutoring if it is safe to do so as soon as the Schenectady libraries re-open, but will most likely have to wait to begin classes until our summer session which is scheduled to start July 11. We’ve really missed working with our students. We’ve been in touch with many of them in the last weeks and they seem as anxious as we are to get back to work. Hopefully, we’ll have our reunion soon!

The tutor training class was also postponed but will be rescheduled as soon as possible. Stay tuned!

Voter Services Report

The Presidential Primary has been canceled by the Democratic Party, but there may still be state and federal primaries in your district which will be held on June 23. For the most up-to-date information on elections, check our League’s website at <http://www.lwvschenectady.org/> or our Facebook page (league of women voters- Schenectady county).

As of this writing (4/27/20), all voters will be allowed to vote via absentee ballot for the June 23rd primaries. The first step in absentee voting is to request an absentee ballot by sending in an absentee ballot **application**. Once the Board of Elections has verified that you are a qualified voter, you will be sent an absentee ballot.

A recent Executive Order allows county Boards of Elections to send a postage-paid absentee ballot **application** to all voters. It’s not clear whether the decision to send an application is up to the county Boards of Elections or if it will be done automatically.

At any rate, voters should check the box for “temporary illness or physical disability” as their reason for requesting an absentee ballot.

The deadlines for voting remain the same. The deadline for voter registration for the June primary is May 29. Applications for absentee ballots must be postmarked by June 16 and the actual ballot must be postmarked by June 22.

Cheryl Nechamen
Voter Services Chair

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

Proposed Leaders of LWV of Schenectady County 2020/2021

President	Ann Hatke	2021
Vice President	Judith Rabig	2021
Treasurer	Judy Middelkoop	2021
Secretary	Heide Westergard	2021
Inside Albany	Maxine Brisport	2021
Letters to the Editor/	Eleanor Aronstein	2021
Press Releases	Eleanor Aronstein	2021
Lobbying	Eleanor Aronstein	2022
	Carol Furman	2021
	Yvette Gebell	2021
Voter Services	Cheryl Nechamen	2021
Forums	Cindy Weissend	2022
Poll Reporting	Dick Shave	2021
	Vicki Hoshko	2022
Voter Registration	Connie Young/Mary Jane Shave	2022
Get Out the Vote	Pauline Kinsella	2022
Bulletin	Helen MacDonald	2021
Nominating Committee	Sally Knutson	2022
	Johanna Petersen/Mary Pritchard	2022
	Connie Young	2022
	Carmel Patrick	2022
Membership	Connie Young/Johanna Petersen	2022
	Betsy Chase	2022
Community Outreach		
Fliers	Gwynneth DeLong	2021
Committee Events	Committee Members	2022
Membership Mtngs	Connie Young / Carol Furman	2021
Sept. Dec. June		
Mail Chimp	Judy Middelkoop	2022
Facebook	Cindy Weissend	2021
Observer Corps	Cindy Weissend	2021
At Large Board Members	Cathy Lewis	2021
	Anita Sanchez	2021
	Vicki Hoshko	2021
MHA Elections	Kay Ackerman	2022
	Pat Lambert	2022
Citizen's Police Review	Dick Shave	2022
Board Rep		

Resources from “Aging in Place” – a presentation by the Albany Guardian Society and Lauren Harrington, Community Liaison, Attentive Care - Albany

The Albany Guardian Society and Institute recently held a phone conference/power point presentation on Aging in Place – the presenter was Lauren Harrington, community liaison for Attentive Care Services in Albany. The mission of AGS, founded in 1852, is “to engage in a wide range of endeavors including education, research, information, and community engagement that will improve the quality of life for seniors, their families and caregivers.” They offer a wealth of information, resources, and a variety of free classes. Attentive Care is a NYS certified and licensed home health care provider based in Albany.

Here are some of the resources that were provided in the presentation:

Albany Guardian Society and Institute – www.albanyguardiansociety.org 518-434-2140

Attentive Care Home Health Care – www.attentivecareservices.com 518-438-6271

Schenectady County Department of Senior Services 518-382-8481

Umbrella (low-cost help with home maintenance) 518-346-5249 or 518-459-7152

NYS Office for the Aging 1-800-342-9871

Wright Stuff Catalog – www.thewrightstuff.com

ProMed Express Catalog – www.promedexpress.com

Advantage Medical – www.advantagemedical.com

Life Solutions Plus – www.lifesolutionsplus.com

The Elder Store – www.elderstore.com

Parent Giving – www.parentgiving.com

Aging Care – www.agingcare.com

“Design for a Lifetime” - <https://video.wcny.org/search/?q=design+for+a+lifetime>

“Age Wise in the Capital Region” – www.wmht.org (Search for “Age Wise in the Capital Region”)

We thank the Albany Guardian Society and Lauren Harrington of Attentive Care for allowing us to share this information with our members. If you would like a copy of the “Aging in Place” power point presentation, please contact Ann Hatke at lwvschenectady@gmail.com.

New Member

Sandra McGarraugh

The majority of Sandra's career has been spent in Gender Equity Study. She was employed at the Center for Women in Government and Civil Study at SUNY Albany. Sandra's most recent work, from 2011 until her recent retirement, has been writing websites for on-line marketing.

Sandra interests include the Citizenship Mentoring Group, Voter Registration, Candidate Forums and any kind of civic education.

MEMBERSHIP FOR July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021

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. Dues money makes working on our goals possible. **Dues cover the League year, July 1 to June 30.**

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

_____ In lieu of an annual fund raiser, pay 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 any questions about dues or payments.

Dues and contributions are not tax deductible.)

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_____ I am sending my membership dues payment, but please consider me an **INACTIVE** member.

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

Committees Health _____ Observer Corps _____ Fund Raising _____ Judicial _____

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)

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“Empowering Voters, Defending Democracy”

Covid19 Information

(The Following is from Johns Hopkins Hospital printed in the League of Women Voters of East Nassau Voter in April)

The virus is not a living organism but a protein molecule (DNA) covered by a protective layer of lipid (fat) which when absorbed by the ocular, nasal, or buccal mucosa, changes their genetic code (mutation) and convert them into aggressor or multiplier cells.

Since the virus is not a living organism but a protein molecule it is not killed, but decays on its own. The disintegration time depends on the temperature, humidity and type of material upon which it lies.

The virus is very fragile; the only thing that protects it is a thin outer layer of fat. That is why any soap or detergent is the best remedy, because the foam CUTS the FAT (that is why you have to rub so much: for 20 seconds or more, to make a lot of foam).

By dissolving the fat layer, the protein molecule disperses and breaks down on its own.

HEAT melts fat; that is why it is so good to use water above 25 degrees Celsius for washing hands, clothes and everything. In addition, hot water makes more foam and that makes it even more useful.

Alcohol or any mixture with alcohol over 65 percent DISSOLVES ANY FAT, especially the external lipid layer of the virus.

Any mix with 1 part bleach and 5 parts water directly dissolves the protein and breaks it down from the inside.

Oxygenated water helps long after soap, alcohol and chlorine, because peroxide dissolves the virus protein, but you have to use it pure and it hurts your skin.

NO BACTERICIDE OR ANTIBIOTIC SERVES. the virus is not a living organism like bacteria; antibodies cannot kill what is not alive.

NEVER shake used or unused clothing, sheets or cloth. While it is glued to a porous surface, it is very inert and disintegrates only:

- between 3 hours (fabric and porous)
- 4 hours (copper and wood)
- 24 hours (cardboard)
- 72 hours (plastic)

But if you shake it or use a feather duster, virus molecules float in the air for up to 3 hours and lodge in your nose.

The virus molecules remain very stable in external cold, or artificial as air conditioners in houses and cars.

They also need moisture to stay stable, and especially darkness. Therefore, dehumidified, dry warm and bright environments will degrade it faster.

UV LIGHT on any object that may contain it breaks down the virus protein. For example, to disinfect and reuse a mask is perfect. Be careful, it also breaks down collagen (which is protein) in the skin.

Vinegar is NOT useful because it does not break down the protective layer of fat.

NO SPIRITS, NOR VODKA, serve. The strongest vodka is 40% alcohol, and you need 65%.

LISTERINE IF IT SERVES! It is 65% alcohol.

The more confined the space, the more concentration of the virus there can be.
The more open or naturally ventilated, the less.

You have to wash your hands before and after touching mucosa, food, locks, knobs, switches, remote control cell phone, watches, computers, desks, TV, etc. And when using the bathroom.

You have to HUMIDIFY HANDS, DRY from so much walking them because the molecules can hide in the micro cracks. The thicker the moisturizer, the better.

Also keep your NAILS SHORT so that the virus does not hide there.

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Legislature Passes State Budget

This week the Legislature returned to pass the 2020-2021 budget. The final budget did not include any additional funding for early voting or other voting reforms and underfunded the State Board of Elections by nearly \$1.6 million. We are extremely disappointed by this lack of state funding but hopeful that some of the federal funding that was included in the COVID-19 stimulus package may help offset some of the expenses related to voting in 2020.

The Legislature also passed a [campaign finance bill](#) that allows candidates for statewide office and the Legislature to opt into a system of public financing that incentivizes small dollar donations by matching them with public funds. This version of the reform also lowered contribution limits for participating candidates. Candidates for statewide office can now raise a maximum of \$18,000 in a four-year election cycle from an individual contributor, down from about \$70,000; state Senate candidates can raise \$10,000, down from \$19,300; and state Assembly candidates can raise \$6,000, down from \$9,400.

The new law also upheld the previously proposed changes to party thresholds and ballot access requirements. Statewide candidates now have to get 45,000 signatures from voters to get on the ballot, up from 15,000. For an automatic ballot line, a party must receive at least 130,000 votes or 2% of the vote, whichever is higher, every two years in a gubernatorial or presidential election, up from 50,000 votes every four still does not address party housekeeping accounts and lacks the necessary independent oversight and transparency to make the system accountable to taxpayers.

Portal to Feminism/ May Anniversaries

May 1892 – Publication of "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, a prominent American writer, and utopian feminist who argued for women's economic independence in *Women and Economics*

16 May 1929 – Birth of Adrienne Rich, award-winning lesbian American poet and feminist

20 May 1806 – Birth of John Stuart Mill, British philosopher whose essay *The Subjection of Women* argued for the equality of women

21 May 1970 – First Women's studies program established in the United States at San Diego State College after a year of intense consciousness raising, rallies, petitions, and unofficial classes

24 May 1990 – Judi Bari Day, honoring the American ecofeminist and labor leader who worked to protect the redwood forests of Northern California

Notice for Summer Meals Volunteers!

Thank you for making the Summer Meals Program in 2019 such a success! Would you like to help us again this summer? You might be wondering how Summer Meals will be impacted by COVID-19. We are as well! SiCM is still awaiting guidance from the New York State Education Department as well as the Schenectady School District. Please bear with us as we navigate this exciting time. At this time we are proceeding with Plan A – which is to run mobile meals sites and fixed meal sites as we have last year and the years previous.

There is potential to move forward with Plan B – which is to prepare drop off sites with pre-packaged meals, similar to how our SiCM Food Pantry has been running.

Everything about our Summer Meals Program is subject to change. At this time we are moving forward with Plan A.

We will need volunteers complete our 2020 Summer Meals Training. We do not have a training scheduled at this time, but we will notify the Leader of each volunteer group what our future plans will be. The Summer Meals Training material will be available on our website once we know exactly how the program will be running, but must be completed before volunteering at a summer meals site.

Did you have a specific site that you want to be scheduled at that you really enjoyed? Let us know! Please keep in mind **all Summer Meals scheduling and programming is subject to change** as we await further instruction from our Government, State Education Department and the CDC.

Thanking you in advance for your continued support and commitment to The 2020 Summer Meals Program.

Laura Pinckney, Development Assistant, Schenectady Community Ministries