



September 2023

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**The NEW State League website is launched!!**

Check it out at [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org).

**We may still be making corrections and updates so please be patient but we hope you love the new look and feel.**

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### President's Message

Nancy Rosenthal - [nancyrosenthal9@gmail.com](mailto:nancyrosenthal9@gmail.com)

With now weeks until the General Election on Tuesday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, Leaguers are busy registering voters and creating plans for getting voters to the polls. As we gear up for this part of the election season *that can take the most of our energy*, let's pause for a moment and reflect on our purpose.

GOTV stands for "get out the vote" and signifies a concerted effort to register voters, educate voters about their ballots and increase voter turnout during elections. As Leaguers we know democracy is more resilient the more people are engaged with it and see themselves as agents of change in their own lives and communities. League remains one of the few nonpartisan, grassroots organizations engaging others to create change. Our work both strengthens our democracy now and makes it more resilient for the future. And we do all of this by building relationships within our communities, listening to what our communities care about.

Thanks to all of you, our incredible members, League continues to fight the fight and do its good and satisfying work with voter registration drives, candidate forums, creating plans for how voters will get to the polls on election day, friends being certain friends are registered to vote and vote on election day.

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### Upcoming Events

**Endocrine Disruptors in Plastic: On October 3, 2023 at 7pm**, join the League of Women Voters of New York State, Beyond Plastics, and Bedford 2030 on Zoom for a conversation about endocrine disruptors with John Peterson 'Pete' Myers, Ph.D., CEO and Chief Scientist of Environmental Health Sciences, New York State Senator Pete Harckham, Chair of the New York Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, and Megan Wolff, Ph.D., MPH, Policy Director at Beyond Plastics. People may be exposed to endocrine disrupting chemicals through everyday food and beverages consumed, pesticides applied, and cosmetics used. Endocrine disruptors can decrease or increase normal hormone levels or alter the natural production of hormones in the body. Even low doses of endocrine-disrupting chemicals may be unsafe. The body's normal endocrine functioning involves very small changes in hormone levels, yet we know even these small changes can cause significant developmental and biological effects. Click [here](#) to register.

### Going Upstate: what does living with so many prisons nearby mean to us?

A webinar with **Kristin Doughty**, Assoc. Professor of Anthropology and

**Joshua Dubler**, Assoc. Professor of Religion, both at the University of Rochester (sponsored by LWV of Rochester)

**Sept. 28, 7pm-8:30pm**

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/GoingUpstate>

When you live in a country that cages two million people, the widespread feeling that prisons exist someplace “over there” is half social engineering and half illusion. For generations prisons have been sited out in the country, and people are shuttled across the state to fill them. But the prison’s reach may be felt all around us: in missing family and friends; in those loved ones returning home changed, in the public and private interests that comprise what Angela Davis called “the prison industrial complex;” in the “crime” around which so much of our politics is predatorily oriented; and in the shriveled notion of “justice” that for most Americans marks that concept’s limits of possibility. What effect does mass incarceration have on our communities? These scholars’ work examines how the high saturation of prisons, jails, and federal immigrant detention facilities in upstate New York shapes our region. Kristin Doughty and Joshua Dubler teach an ethnology course called “The Cultural Politics of Prison Towns.”

### Regional Training Workshop Dates and Locations Set

In years when there is no state Convention, the state League organizes training workshops in four locations around the state during the month of March. All members are invited to attend the workshops so mark your calendars now! They are held on Saturdays from 10:00-4:00 with lunch provided. The following dates and locations for workshops have been set.

- March 2           Rochester
- March 9           Port Washington
- March 16          Albany
- March 23          Cortland

### Past Event

**Our Vote-Our Power: Join us for a Candid Discussion About the Women's Suffrage Movement and its Impact: On September 20, 2023 at 6pm**, join the LWVNYS and the Queens County Women’s Bar Association to talk about the history of women’s suffrage in New York and what’s happening in today’s legislative landscape. Click [here](#) watch the recording.

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### Issues and Advocacy

**Sally Robinson, VP for Issues and Advocacy**

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The League was invited to attend an event on September 20 in celebration of several voting rights bills that the Governor planned to sign. Some League members joined us for the bill signing (see photo below). The Governor signed the following bills:

- Legislation (S. 6195/A.1177) allows absentee ballots to be counted if they have been taped and show no signs of tampering.
- Legislation (S. 5984-A/A. 6132-A) creates a “Golden Day” on the first day of the early voting period when New Yorkers can register to vote and cast their ballots at their polling place all on the same day.
- Legislation (S. 6519-A/A. 1565-A) establishes a deadline for changing location of a polling place for an early voting period.
- Legislation (S. 7394-A/A. 7632-A) establishes a system for early voting by mail. This legislation will create a process allowing all eligible, registered New York State voters the opportunity to vote early by mail in advance of an election. A new application process will be developed to facilitate voter requests for early mail ballots pursuant to this legislation. Voters will be able to request mail ballots up to



ten days prior to the election in which they would like to vote early by mail; boards of election will then provide mail ballots with postage paid return envelopes to all eligible and registered voters. Early mail ballots must then be mailed back to the appropriate board of elections no later than election day and must be received by the board no later than seven days after election day. This legislation represents a significant expansion of ballot access in New York State, and will provide millions of New York voters with an easy, safe, and secure means of voting early by mail ballot.

- Legislation (S. 5965-A/A. 4009-A) requires local jails to provide voter registration information to individuals of voting age being released from a local correctional facility.
- Legislation (S. 587/A.268) requires the New York State Board of Elections to develop and provide a training program for poll workers.
- Legislation (S. 1733-A/A.5180-A) requires local boards of education, BOCES, charter schools and non-public schools to adopt policies to promote student voter registration and pre-registration.
- Legislation (S. 7550/A. 7690) schedules the Presidential Primary Election for April 2, 2024.
- Legislation (S. 350/A. 5874) prohibits “forum shopping” in constitutional challenges for election cases.
- Legislation (S. 438/A. 928) prohibits “faithless electors” from impacting the outcome of a presidential election. New York has 29 electoral votes that go to the presidential candidate who receives the highest number of votes within the state. However, individuals chosen as members of the Electoral College can – and do – subvert democracy by people by casting their electoral votes for a candidate who did not win the highest number of votes. Under this new law, rogue electors who try to disregard the will of the people will be forced to resign.

## Redistricting

### *Amicus Brief*

On September 8<sup>th</sup> we filed a motion for leave to file an amicus brief in the case of Hoffmann et al vs. IRC. This is the case attempting to reopen Congressional redistricting before the 2024 elections and give the legislature a second chance. Our position is against mid-decade redistricting and our amicus states that we believe the constitutional process and deadlines should be respected per Harkenrider. On September 19<sup>th</sup>, the Court of Appeals refused to lift a stay of the lower court order in Hoffman that the IRC immediately work on new congressional lines. Therefore, any possible IRC and legislative process for new lines will have to wait until after the case is resolved by the Court of Appeals after its hearing in November. Read the full amicus brief [here](#).



## Voter Services

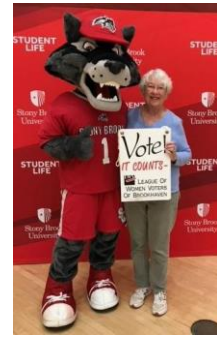
**Kathy Meany, VP for Voter Services**

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Local leagues have kicked off the Fall 2023 voter registration season on National Voter Registration Day on September 19, and have been sharing their success stories and photos with the state League. See a sampling of photos from across the state below.







**Online Voter Registration Now Available at the NYS Board of Elections Website**

You can use the Board of Elections' Online Voter Registration system to register to vote or to update your voter registration information. Updated information could include providing your County Board of Elections with your new name, new address, or changing your party enrollment. Completed applications are sent to the appropriate County Board of Elections for approval and processing.



To register you will need to use a [NY.Gov](https://www.ny.gov) ID. If you have previously used [NY.Gov](https://www.ny.gov) with another agency, you may use the same login to access the Online Voter Registration portal. If you have not used [NY.Gov](https://www.ny.gov) you will need to create an account.

To get to the online voter registration portal on the NYS BOE website, click here:

<https://www.elections.ny.gov/OnlineVoterReg.html>

**Same Day Voting - October 28**

New York State Board of Elections has approved all those eligible to register to vote in New York State may use an affidavit ballot AND vote on Saturday, October 28. Referred to as "Golden Day" being October 28 is the final voter registration deadline AND also the first day of Early Voting.

**Important Dates to Remember**

General Election: November 7, 2023

Early Voting: October 28 – November 5, 2023

Date	Deadline Information
October 23	Last day for Board of Elections to receive absentee ballot application by letter, telefax, or through the absentee request portal.
October 23	Last day for change of address.
October 28	Last day for IN-PERSON Voter Registration; MAIL IN registrations must be received by a Board of Elections.
November 6	Last day to apply IN-PERSON for absentee ballot.
November 7	Last day to postmark ballot. Must be received by the local Board of Elections no later than Nov. 14th. Military Voter Ballots must be received no later than Nov. 20th.
November 7	Last day to deliver ballot IN-PERSON to the local Board of Elections or to any poll site in your county.





## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Regina Tillman, VP for DEI

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National Voter Registration Day was September 19<sup>th</sup> and it seems like many NYS Leaguers did well with their efforts. This day is usually when the ongoing voter registration efforts begin and continue through to the general elections.

However, as the planning for where to go or what to do for getting eligible voters registered is underway, I would ask you to look, both around your own community and at neighboring communities, checking yourself if you are sufficiently aware of:

*... where the areas are that have low voter turnout rates,  
... or the locations where the voter suppression strategies are historically the most daunting,  
... or where some eligible voters are generally forgotten about, continuing to be marginalized.*

A few of you have indeed thought about these often zip code-related issues and know that the task of voter registration can be more difficult for you as a result. But, if in doubt, just ask Rensselaer County League members to tell you of their utter joy when becoming successful at achieving **voting justice!**

**EQUITY**, as an organization, means our resources begin to be directed to those who need it most. *Start by asking yourself whose voices are NOT being heard.* Thus, I challenge you to look more closely for where you are needed verse where you are used to going... and then find a way to get there, along with your fellow League members.

And, after four years, finding a way to get to the next level of DEI is the current challenge at the LWVNYS DEI Committee. Our recent successes, although not yet made measurable, can be felt in numerous corners of the State through your activities that are being shared with us. *But, to begin to measure we must!* The terms and conditions we originally spoke to you about four years ago, without much understanding then, are much better understood currently. *But, continuing to educate we must!* We opened lines of communications relative to DEI to everyone, albeit mostly in writings and several "DEI Drop-in Zooms". *Nevertheless, actively assisting your League with DEI plans and implementations we must!* We showcased individuals with unique experiences and expertise. To maintain the level of educator expertise and the quality of education that we know makes a difference when undertaking a major change in organizational culture, it is at the urging of National to find our own funds. *Therefore, fundraising we must!*

All of this is in our proposed **2023-24 Program of Work**. It will be shared in its entirety with all of you when assignments and timelines have been fully added so everyone is aware of the current course of action proposed for the State DEI Committee. Your new Committee is also made up of both new members who have been working on DEI locally as well as our some of our previous committee members, with others having departed to take on leadership roles, i.e., Presidents and State Board positions. I expect that we have at hand another great mix of talent and ideas to help maintain momentum in adopting DEI goals and strategies, in our hearts and in our minds.

If you had previously asked to join the LWVNYS DEI Committee but have not yet received your invitation to a committee meeting nor to an orientation, please contact me asap (or by October 9<sup>th</sup>) while we are in the final phase of organizing for the year. I can be reached at: [rmt370@gmail.com](mailto:rmt370@gmail.com). In the meantime, I thank the LWVNYS Board and local League members across the state for their support in embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as a critical League pillar, equal to our long-held principle of nonpartisanship.



## Youth Programs

Nick Doran, VP for Youth Programs

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Thank you to everyone who participated in National Voter Registration Day on a college campus! We had 13 Leagues participate in NVRD with at least one table on a college campus. If you participated, please send us photos!

We are also highlighting the LWV of Central Nassau and their Youth Engagement Committee. Great work from everyone involved, and a great program for engaging youth!

*It started out as an interest in expanding our youth membership demographics, but ideas and opportunities have evolved into a GOTV campaign collaboration with Hofstra University. If you want to get people involved, you need to have something meaningful for them to do. In the hope of inspiring potential high school and college students to consider the LWV, we created a Youth Engagement Committee. We send a letter to all the principals and Social Studies Chairpersons of our local High Schools inviting their students to join us in a GOTV campaign to include their input in creating a radio PSA and social media communication around GOTV. This same approach could also be used to promote in-house school election participation. We extended the same invitation to the communication departments of our local colleges. Happily, Hofstra University responded with great enthusiasm. They have a communications course that accepts semester-long projects in the areas of publication and communication. They accepted our project and assigned us an Agency Team with a Team Lead and student staff members. They will launch a radio, print and social media approach to GOTV. Potential topics for the PSA include the power of one vote, the value of the hard-fought right to vote, or make-a-plan for Election Day. Post-Election Day team efforts will focus on educating the public on how and why to register to vote. We look forward to the collaboration.*

## Local League News

### National Voter Registration Day

New York Leagues were out in full force on September 19<sup>th</sup> for National Voter Registration Day! The state League received dozens of stories, pictures, and news pieces that recorded the terrific work you all did. Here are some of the highlights we received:

- **The St. Lawrence MAL League** raised awareness about NVRD through an Op-Ed published in *North Country Now*. President Kathy Stein stresses the importance of eligible voters participating in all elections – both on the federal level and the local level. She writes: “Registering and voting enable citizens to actively engage in democratic self-government, from the most momentous issues to the most locally relevant.” Click [HERE](#) to read the Op-Ed.
- **The Northwest Westchester MAL League** celebrated its first NVRD by registering students at Westchester Community College. League members were present at both the Peekskill and Ossining locations. Congratulations to Northwest Westchester – we can’t wait to see the National Voter Registration Days to come!
- **The Buffalo-Niagara League** was hard at work ensuring members of their community knew about NVRD! Before the big day, an [Op-Ed written by President Lori Robinson was featured in \*The Buffalo News\*](#), along with [an additional article that advertised the locations of League registration tables](#). The Buffalo-Niagara League was also featured on television! Along with many mentions of where League members would be registering voters, President Lori Robinson was interviewed by WIVB, and League member Timothy Priano was interviewed by WKBW. Both discussed the importance of voting.
- **Members of the Albany County League** were in 10 different locations– 9 Price Chopper/Market 32 stores and the Stop N Shop in Ravena. Members registered 25 new voters, gave materials for registering at home to another 25, and provided information about early voting and Vote411 to more than 550 people. League members received visits from Albany Mayor Kathy Sheehan and other local officials.

Thank you to the Leagues who sent us highlights! If you took pictures, the State League would still love to see them – please send them to Milly ([milly@lwvny.org](mailto:milly@lwvny.org)) along with your League name.

### Kim Cameron, Co-President of LWV of Cortland County

#### Selected as Observer for LWVUS at UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai

"I will be going to Dubai to be an observer at the United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP28) conference. The LWVUS has delegate status at the UN, so the League has been allocated 6 observer spaces

for each of the two weeks of the conference. I'll be there the first week when the conference starts on November 30 so I'll be there for the opening ceremonies!

As an observer I will be able to observe the vast majority of the interactions and negotiations going on in the blue zone. The Blue Zone is a United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)-managed site, open to accredited party and observer delegates. I'll also have access to the green zone where organizations and companies set up booths. It's been described to me as similar to a trade show.

Most of us will be staying together in a 4 bedroom apartment close to the metro system which will provide us with easy access to the Expo City. Sessions run from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 3 pm. to 6 p.m. each day. I understand that it is quite overwhelming so I am planning on learning as much as I can before I go and try to focus on just a couple of topics when I'm there."

Congratulations, Kim, and we hope you will share lots of photos and articles with us all!

### **Rochester Metro**

On July 29 and 30, nine LWV-RMA members set out on day trips to Seneca Falls, a gem in the history of the women's rights and suffrage movements. Now memorialized by the Women's Rights National Historical Park (WRNHP) established in 1980, the park honors, preserves, and puts in perspective, the history that took place there 175 years ago.

Through the WRNHP, the story is told at the restored Wesleyan Chapel and the Visitors' Center with its expansive exhibits and gift shop filled with books and more. Declaration Park, where the full Declaration of Sentiments and its signers are inscribed on a stone water wall, sits between the Visitors Center and the Chapel. Park rangers add more background with talks at the Chapel and at the Elizabeth Cady Stanton Home, a short distance away.

Members who went on Saturday were also able to visit the National Women's Hall of Fame, where work continues to bring it to full fruition in its new home, the old Seneca Falls Knitting Mill. Celebrating its 50th year of inductions since its first in 1973, the Hall has a total of 302 inductees.

### **Rockland County**

The Rockland County League is in the process of launching a Youth Corps initiative! This initiative is designed to encourage Rockland County youth to become more connected with their civic and government activities and responsibilities, beginning with registering and voting.

The Youth Corps will target high school and college-aged young adults, and will be vitally important in encouraging participation, supporting, and involving Rockland County youth in League activities.

### **New York City**

In honor of Constitution Day on September 17, the New York City League distributed 10,000 free copies of the US Constitution. League members were active in four boroughs and distributed the copies over 5 days.

This outreach aimed to give New Yorkers a copy of their rights, and to remind them to exercise their right to vote on Election Day. The upcoming local elections has every City Council seat on the ballot, and the events were hosted in city council districts where voter turnout is declining or very low.

### **Cooperstown**

Cooperstown League members had a busy week! On top of participating in National Voter Registration Day on September 19, the League also took part in Mohawk Valley Gives Day on September 20.

Mohawk Valley Gives Day is 24-hour community-wide giving day sponsored by the Community Foundation of Herkimer and Oneida Counties. The event engages nonprofits, businesses, community residents, and fundholders to harness the community's collective energy for the greatest possible impact. The Cooperstown League was one of 255 local organizations that participated.

### **Saratoga County**

The Saratoga County League partnered with the New York State Poor People's Campaign, MLK Saratoga, Saratoga Health Committee, Capital District Alliance for Universal Healthcare, Saratoga Immigration Coalition, the New York State Senior Action Council, the Labor-Religion Coalition of New York State, and the Campaign for New York Health to host a screening of *Healing Us: A documentary about our healthcare system and how we move forward together*.

Using the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic as a jumping-off point, *Healing Us* interviews heavy-hitters in the healthcare movement to walk through all key points of the arguments in favor of a universal, single-payer healthcare system.

### **Capital Region Leagues**

The Leagues had a column recently published in *The Daily Gazette* about Women's Inequality Day. Pat Nugent, chair of the Women's Rights Awareness Campaign for the League of Women Voters of Saratoga County, wrote the column questioning the celebration of women's equality on August 26, 2023. Read the full column [here](#).

### **Buffalo-Niagara**

The Buffalo-Niagara League has begun its "Third Thursday Social" meetups for the year. These gatherings are for members of the Buffalo-Niagara League and anyone interested in learning about the League to connect, discuss opportunities for volunteering and leadership possibilities, introduce new members, showcase the organization's work, and discuss future plans. Meetups are on the third Thursday of every month.