

# STATE VOTER

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## January 2024

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### President's Message

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

Here Ye! Here Ye! All Board members, chairs of committees, and any and all members! Each Saturday in March, Regional Trainings are happening throughout the state: **March 2 in Rochester, March 9 in Port Washington/Manhasset, March 16 in Cortland, and March 23 in Albany.**

This is when League members will gather to discuss so many topics: DEI, GOTV, building leadership and membership, determining mis and dis-Information, and our advocacy agenda and how to make your voice hear. It's also a terrific time to see all one's good friends, and to visit and catch up with each other! Staff and your state board members will travel the state to highlight information on how best to navigate these next important and very crucial months for our Democracy. Please sign up and come for a very engaging day. [Register online here](#) or download, print and mail the [form here](#)

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### Member Survey (and Legislative Priorities)

The state League wants to hear from YOU! We're launching a short survey to gather valuable insights from our members - including your opinion on the legislative priorities for the upcoming legislative session. Completing this survey will only take a few minutes of your time, and your feedback will help us better understand the priorities and needs of our members.

**The form will be open until February 1, 2024.** [Click here](#) to access the survey and make your voice heard!

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### Upcoming Events

#### Legislative Hot Topics Event: February 3, 2024 at 10:00AM

Join the State League the League's state topic specialists for a virtual event about the 2024 legislative session. We will have most issue specialists and issue committee chairs on the call - in addition to most of the State Issues Committee. We will focus on how NYS does advocacy and how members can get involved. Each issue specialist will have time to talk about their committee's priority bills and which legislative issues will have the most traction this session. [Register for this program here](#)

#### Regional Training Workshop - Register NOW!

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 register to join us now! They are held on Saturdays from 10:00-4:00 with lunch provided.

- March 2 Rochester (The Perkins Mansion)
- March 9 Port Washington (Unitarian Universalist Congregation)
- March 16 Cortland (CNY Living History Center)
- March 23 Albany (The Blake)

### Workshop Topics:

- The Wild Ride: Get Ready for the 2024 Election Season!
- The Story of Us: Evaluating and Tracking League Programs
- Bridge to Excellence - Strengthening Local Leagues Through DEI Mastery
- How and Why Not to Do it All: Leading a Local League
- Making your Voice Heard: Citizens and Local Leagues
- Engaging College Students in Their Communities and Beyond
- Fact vs. Fiction: Training the Public on Determining Mis and Dis-Information

### [REGISTER NOW ONLINE HERE.](#)

More information and the option to download, print and mail your registration with a check is [here](#).

**League Advocacy Day (speakers and materials with in-person lobbying in Albany, May 7, 2024 - stay tuned for registration)**

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### Voter Services

**Kathy Meany, VP for Voter Services**

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Presidential Primary in NYS: April 2, 2024

Early Voting: March 23 – 30, 2024

Date	Deadline Information
<b>February 14</b>	<b>Last day to Change Party Enrollment for the Primaries in April and June.</b> The voter registration form should be used to change your party enrollment from one party to another or to enroll for the first time in a party. An application to change one's party enrollment for the primary election in any year must be received by the board of elections no later than <b>February 14th of that year</b> . Changes received on or after February 15th until seven days after the June Primary will be set aside and opened seven days following the June Primary and entered in the voter's registration record.
<b>March 23</b>	Last day voter registration must be received by BOE's by MAIL or IN PERSON.
<b>April 1</b>	Last day to apply IN PERSON for an absentee ballot
<b>April 2</b>	Last day to postmark ballot and the postmarked ballot envelope must be received by the BOE by April 9, 2024.
<b>April 2</b>	Last day to deliver ballot IN-PERSON to the local Board of Elections or to any poll site in your county.

### 2023 Voter Services Survey

Thank you to all local Leagues for submitting your Voter Survey Results, and for all of the hard work by the local Leagues AND the members as evidenced by the increases in many of the categories. [Read the full results here.](#)

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### Issues and Advocacy

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

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### State of the State

The Governor gave her annual State of the State on Tuesday of last week. The Capitol and LOB



were both locked down to all non-governmental personnel and media so we were only able to watch the live stream from the Governor's website.

Governor Hochul started off by reviewing several accomplishments from the past year before discussing her priorities for the upcoming year with a focus on mental health, retail theft, and early education. [Click here to read the State of the](#)

### [State in full.](#)

We did not hear her mention democracy, which was surprising given that it's a high-profile election year. She did include a plan to expand voter access on campuses in her State of the State book. Our statement can be found [here](#).

### **Executive Budget Released**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of January the Governor released her Executive Budget. We were pleasantly surprised with the adequate funding provided to the state board of elections and the public campaign finance board. The full budget book can be found [here](#). We are preparing testimony to present or submit to the legislative budget hearings now.

### **Senate Voting Rights/Election Reform Package**

As they have for the past five years, the Senate introduced a package of bills on Monday to address voting rights and election reform. The League was quoted in a press release that went out about the package- [click here to read the press release](#) and we were quoted in a Spectrum story [here](#).

Many of the bills were passed in previous Senate sessions and (as in past years) we expect it to be difficult for them to get passed in the Assembly. We were excited to see that the ERIC bill was included in this package.

### **NYS Election Commissioners Association Conference**

This week the State League attended the NYS Election Commissioners Association Conference in Albany. We spent multiple days with commissioners from across the state, attending sessions led by the State Board of Elections and county commissioners. We staffed a table with several of our coalition partners and distributed information on election security and spoke with county commissioners about how we could best support their efforts to reach voters across the state.

### **Voting in Jails at the NYS Sheriffs Association Conference**

The League was invited to present its recent report on voting in jails at the annual NYS Sheriffs' Association meeting which was held this week. Laura Ladd Bierman, LWVNYS Executive Director, introduced the League and the survey and process used for the study. Hazel Weiser, Project Manager for the study and member of the LWVNYS Criminal Justice Reform Committee, presented the results of the survey and offered assistance by local leagues in getting detainees registered, educated and voting in the jails. While full programs for voter engagement was found in jails in 12 counties, many counties were found to have minimal programs or no programs. The purpose of the presentation was to offer assistance by the League to the Sheriffs in getting more detainees registered and voting. The Sheriffs were receptive and follow-up is being planned. The full report can be found [here](#).

### **Redistricting**

Redistricting continues to be an issue in NYS. The recent court case has required the IRC to redraw the congressional lines by Feb. 28. The League is involved in two aspects of redistricting:

1. The Redistricting Research group, a coalition of organizations, is investigating potential changes to the redistricting process for the future.
2. The new redistricting coalition, same organizations, is developing a three-prong action on the current redistricting of the congressional maps:
  - Educational campaign
  - Media campaign
  - Peoples' hearing

The state League issued a [statement](#) and the coalition of organizations sent a [letter](#) to the IRC requesting them to schedule hearings and hold open meetings on mapping for the new lines.

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## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Regina Tillman, VP for DEI

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Education is the foundation used to change organizational culture and behavior. It enhances awareness that then leads to heightened knowledge and the desire to develop appropriate skills. Thus, as the year begins, the DEI Committee had its preliminary focus on education.

In recent weeks, the DEI Committee's Education Team has:

- 1.) Developed the learning opportunity to be presented to attendees of the LWVNYS Regional Trainings in March 2024; see above for more info and we hope to see many members attend!
- 2.) Developed and promoted messaging to help members actively engage, locally or on an individual basis, in honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. during the Congressionally designated MLK National Day of Service. See the flyer at: <https://conta.cc/3HfxeGK> . We were pleased to see a few Leagues took the time to create a *locally distributed* communication based on the MLK Day of Service flyer, as had been requested of local Leagues!

### WHAT IS THE COMMITTEE READING?!

This is a new subheading for our monthly Voter Updates, as of 2024! In the interest of sharing our learnings (DEI Committee Members are expected to be actively engaged in "continuous learning" on their own that will inevitably help to move our committee work forward), we hope that these articles and books help you to engage in continuous learning of your own in the arena of DEI.

**(Book)** *MASTER SLAVE HUSBAND WIFE: An Epic Journey From Slavery to Freedom*, by Ilyon Woo; NYT pick as one of 10 Best Books of 2023

**(Book)** *INSIDE OUT: THE EQUITY LEADER'S GUIDE TO UNDOING INSTITUTIONAL RACISM*, by Caprice D. Hollins

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## Remembering LWVUS Presidential Debates

Watch this short video about the first televised presidential debate moderated by the League of Women Voters (US) between Reagan and Mondale. Quite an interesting piece of political history! [Watch it here.](#)

"Given today's news about the future of presidential debates, it's worth remembering an important moment from history. In 1988, the **League of Women Voters of the U.S.** ended its role as the sponsor of presidential debates because it had 'no intention of becoming an accessory to the hoodwinking of the American public.' " - LWV of San Francisco

## Local League News

Statement from member of **LWV of Cooperstown**, "My involvement in this organization inspired me to take poll worker training and I loved being a part of the voting process this election day! "

### Buffalo/Niagara

Members of the Buffalo League's DEI Committee and representatives of 15 other organizations met at the new West Side Bazaar to learn about one another's



organizational history, projects, and how they might work together in the coming year. A real bonus was registering a new voter who had recently moved to Erie County.

### **Utica-Rome**

The Utica-Rome League recently broke its naturalization registration record! Members Donna Brady, Meg Higginson, and Karen McBride kept quite busy greeting and handing out voter registration forms to 49 new-citizen candidates hailing from 18 countries. Through their concerted efforts, the volunteers were able to register 47 of the 49 new citizen candidates, or 96%—a record number!

### **Westchester ILO**

The Westchester ILO has already started its 2024 Get Out the Vote efforts! The League recently hosted “VOTE 2024: DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT” at the Croton Library. The program was a partnership between the League and the Lorraine Hansberry Coalition, which is part of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee of Croton-on-Hudson.

### **Chautauqua County**

The Chautauqua County League hosted Dr. Lillian Ney, President of the Chautauqua County Board of Health for a discussion about public health issues of concern in the County. Topics included the reorganization of County Health and Human Services and Department of Mental Hygiene and Covid-19, which continues to spread along with flu and the respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

### **New York City**

The New York City League’s database Who Represents Me got a shout-out in the publication *The City!* “Who to Yell At: A New Yorker’s Guide on Who to Call to Get Local Problems Fixed” explains how New Yorkers can get in contact with their elected officials and government agencies and what offices they should call for certain situations. The article recommends using Who Represents Me as the first step in the process. [You can read the full article by clicking HERE.](#)

### **Saratoga County**

The Saratoga County League launched its 2024 campaign for women's equality on January 18 at the Saratoga Springs Public Library. The event, "Let's Finish What They Started," showcased famous feminists from American history as well as feminist writer Jen Deaderick, author of *She the People: A Graphic History...of The Unfinished Road to Women's Equality*. In launching the campaign Patricia Nugent, Chair of the Saratoga County League’s Women’s Rights Awareness Campaign, said “The League was founded on the premise that women deserve equal treatment under the laws of this nation. We’re determined to manifest that vision this year, and we welcome all who have suffered the consequences of second-class citizenship to join us. We’ve waited too long for justice. 2024 is the year to claim it.” Other events to raise awareness of the current disparity will be scheduled throughout the year.

### **Cooperstown**

The Cooperstown League is continuing a much-loved tradition that aims to defeat the winter blahs. In 1986, members of the Cooperstown League decided it had had ENOUGH! Winter was wonderful when the sun was shining on sparkling, newly fallen snow, but for heaven’s sake, those days of gray and slush and rain mixed with snow, and not enough snow to ski, or snowshoe, or sled—all of the fun stuff—were hard to bear. An action plan—“Save Us from the Winter Blahs!”—was established. The idea was simple enough: food, friends, and beverages should cheer up even the grumpiest souls. They also added a silent auction, which was easy and had the potential for a high return on our efforts. The Winter Doldrums Party was born. Through good times and the darkest times, the annual Winter Doldrums party endured. Doldrums came to mean a bright light during gray winters for members—especially those new to the League— and supporters.

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**Donate to LWNYS**

**Donate to LWNYS Education Foundation**

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