

# STATE VOTER

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## March 2024

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### President's Message

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

Those regional trainings were so gratifyingly chalk full of information! Over 250 members attended the four regional trainings! Special thanks to those who made these trainings possible: our League staff who traveled incredibly long distances plus all the preparations and to board members who presented! Check out <https://lwvny.org/regional-training/> for posting of all the valuable materials shared at the trainings!

LWVUS convention is in Washington, DC from Thursday June 27<sup>th</sup> through Sunday June 30<sup>th</sup>. All information related to National Convention, including registration and hotel bookings, [can be found here](#). Check with your local League leadership on how and who will represent your League!

Your monthly donations to League add up and help the Board and staff provide all the numerous services that help your local League do its' work. One such service is Vote411.org which will be coordinated by the State League office this year for all National and NY State offices up for election. Support this work we do by signing up to make that monthly donation to LWVNY here:

[https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/4DOYe-xOvWJuG5rdjJxe6Q](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/4DOYe-xOvWJuG5rdjJxe6Q)

or a monthly tax deductible donation to LWVNYEF

here: [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/ai-Wav\\_MMuwE6IJy8s8rBg](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/ai-Wav_MMuwE6IJy8s8rBg)



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## Upcoming Events

### Carbon Neutral NY: Where are We Now?

Blair Horner, the Executive Director of the New York Public Interest Research Group, will give an overview of what New York currently is doing to fight the effects of climate change as it relates to the Climate Leadership & Community Protection Act (CLCPA) scoping plan and what needs to be the focus for the immediate future including an emphasis on Social Justice.

#### [Register Here](#)

This event is sponsored by the Four League Environment Committee, including the Leagues of Women Voters of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga and Schenectady Counties, and the League of Women Voters of New York State.

## League Advocacy Day, May 7, 2024

On May 7, 2023 the State League will host an in-person advocacy day from 9:30-4:00pm. Members will be invited to do the following

- Learn about important legislative issues and how to advocate for them
- Meet new league members from across the state
- Lobby your representative at the Capitol
- Enjoy lunch provided by LWVNYS

League members are asked to make their own appointments with legislators and schedule them for 1:30 pm at the earliest. We will walk up to the Capitol after lunch. Those without appointments may try to visit their legislators or join the state League staff in the galleries watching session.

[Register Here.](#)



## Voter Services

**Kathy Meany, VP for Voter Services**

[kzmeany@gmail.com](mailto:kzmeany@gmail.com)

### PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

**Tuesday, April 2**

- Early Voting Days March 23-30
- Register in Person by March 23
- Register by Mail - Must be Received by BOE by March 23
- Apply for absentee or early vote by mail ballot in person by April 1
- Apply for absentee or early vote by mail ballot by mail/online - Must be Received by BOE by March 23
- Deliver ballot in person by close of polls April 2 to poll site or BOE
- Deliver ballot by mail - Must be postmarked by April 2 and must be received by April 9

The NYS Attorney General office is again organizing an **Election Hotline** for voters who encountered problems or issues when voting. See the chart below and share with voters. The hotline is at 866-390-2992.

<b>OAG Election Hotline</b> Dates and Hours of Operation (866) 390-2992	
<b>April 2, 2024 Presidential Primary Election</b>	
<b>Early Voting</b> (Saturday, March 23 - Saturday, March 30)	9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
<b>Day Before Election Day</b> (April 1, 2024)	9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
<b>Election Day</b> (April 2, 2024)	6 a.m. – 9 p.m.
<b>Post-Election Day</b> (April 3, 2024)	9 a.m. – 6 p.m.
<a href="#">FAQ Guide</a>   <a href="#">Complaint Web Form</a>	

## Text Alerts

Want to see reminders of deadlines - or reminders to vote? Text **VOTENY to 474747** and receive timely notices and reminders of deadlines concerning upcoming elections! Tell your friends to sign up too!



## Issues and Advocacy

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

[sally.s.robinson@gmail.com](mailto:sally.s.robinson@gmail.com)

### Redistricting Redux

You could say that the long post 2020 census redistricting saga in New York state ended with a whimper not a bang on February 28 when the

state legislature passed a new congressional map that did not significantly shift the lines drawn by a special master used in 2022. This came after a lengthy and expensive litigation brought by the national Democratic party last year on procedural grounds to force the IRC to redraw the lines in the hopes that ultimately the legislature could make major changes to shift the competitive balance in New York back more strongly toward Democrats. The legislature did reject a compromise proposal passed by the IRC (unlike in 2022 when the IRC deadlocked on a second proposal), but in the end it made less significant changes to the competitive balance between Democrats and Republicans than widely expected (other than in Syracuse). Republicans who had been threatening for months to sue recognized that the new map advantaged Democrats but accepted that it could have been much worse.

**LWVNYS Statement:** <https://lwny.org/league-of-women-voters-of-nys-statement-on-new-congressional-districts-adopted-by-nys-legislature/>

### **Pre-Budget Lobby Packet**

We released the pre-budget lobby packet on February 20. Read the pre-budget packet [here](#). If you're interested in lobbying on the topics included in the packet then please reach out to your local League President or Advocacy Chair to advocate as a part of your local League.

### **NYS Equal Rights Amendment Taskforce**

The New Yorkers for Equal Rights Coalition had a hard launch of the campaign across the state on March 21<sup>st</sup> with an anchor event down in NYC. Our LWVNYS ERA Taskforce has continued to grow, and members are very engaged. Our local Leagues hosted 10 of the estimated 35 kickoff events across the state.



## **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

**Regina Tillman, VP for DEI**

[rmt370@gmail.com](mailto:rmt370@gmail.com)

In recent months, as our state League Executive Director was cleaning out some files, I found out that back in 1996 and 1997 (before my time in the League as well that of many fellow members), the LWVNYS had appointed a "Diversity Task Force" and Chairperson. They had proceeded to develop a LWVNYS Diversity Policy, along with a list of diversity goals.

This diversity agenda was also near the time that the LWVUS voted on their Vice President, Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, to become President. As it happens, Dr. Jefferson-Jenkins was the very first BIWOC (Black, Indigenous, Woman of Color) to serve in that capacity in the League's 80-year history. (And it would be another 20 years before the second BIWOC was elected to that position, that being our recently passed President Dr. Deborah Turner.) Several documents also indicated that the LWVUS Board of Directors had established a position of Diversity Officer with whom our State League had been in communications with.

However, in 2018, as I entered what was then a newly created Board position of LWVNYS VP for DEI, I must say that it felt very much like I was starting from scratch. There were no trace of a "diversity" agenda in action, lingering from a time approximately 25 years ago. Plus, the most recent national LWV 2023 survey of membership indicated that this organization continues to shrink in numbers while still remaining quite homogeneous in its demographic, although a bit older:

- 84% are 60 or older • 89% identify as White
- verse the US population -
- 36% are between 18-44 years old • 60% identify as White

If building a stronger organization means the LWV must become more inclusive of all those in the communities we represent, how are we going to stick with the objective of diversity this time around? Maybe... just maybe... it can be so if we accept "learning" as our initial steppingstone in the journey toward DEI! In all the literature I have observed, nothing appears to replace learning as the very first step when embarking on such a

tremendous mission such as a change in culture.

As a matter of fact, the month of March was filled with opportunities for learning about the “why” of DEI (Diversity - Equity - Inclusion) within the League. This is knowledge which every League member needs to be well acquainted with. Those that attended the Regional Trainings were exposed to tips to begin adoption of DEI on both the personal and the local chapter levels. Attendees also received some of the poignant results of the 2023 LWNYS DEI Self-Assessment Survey (which actually demonstrated very little learning occurring). The slides from the Regional Training on DEI will soon be available for viewing if you missed it.

And unfortunately, most Leaguers missed the [LWNYS DEI Committee's virtual presentation](#) on the updated national DEI Policy conducted on March 5<sup>th</sup>! What was also missed was how DEI connects to the transformational actions being currently taken by the national office as well connecting DEI to our organization's “*Moon Shot Goal*” of *eliminating the Electoral College*. The LWNYS DEI Update is, however, [now available along with the slides](#) used to convey the message to all members that the League continues to hold DEI as one of the two pillars of our organization. DEI stands on par with nonpartisanship and is an integral part of our organization's “Transformational Roadmap”.

As mentioned in all the cited trainings as the biggest of all the “whys”: *DEI is being pursued as an essential element for making our League stronger... building our capacity as an organization*. And to quote Dr. Turner, I along with members of my team, are proud to be *doing this work with you*. If you have questions about the content of the regional or national training of March 2024, or want to be an active participant on our State-wide DEI Committee, feel free to contact me at the email address above.

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## Local League News

**LWN Buffalo-Niagara** helped lead a free all-day conference on March 16. Local celebrity keynote speakers and nine panels of experts from community organizations, most active in Buffalo's East Side, focused on ensuring rights, reducing health disparities, increasing health equity, and educating people about the NY Health Act ... Read the summary report [here](#).

**LWN of Albany** is planning to register new citizens to vote at Bethlehem High School, and while the Federal Court has sent judges to schools in other counties, this is the first time a naturalization ceremony is being held in a primary/secondary school in Albany County, thanks to Maureen Bernstein.

**LWN of Northeast Westchester** partnered with the AAUW for a program on the NY ERA ballot proposal. Erica Smitka, LWNYS Deputy Director, was the speaker. You can watch the program [here](#).

**LWN of Chautauqua** is spending multiple days on the campus of SUNY Fredonia registering students to vote and educating them on their ballot and the election process.

This is the 8th year that the **Suffolk County Leagues** (Lisa Scott and Nancy Marr) have written a monthly column for the northern Suffolk weekly newspapers. The columns are posted on the League website at: <https://my.lwn.org/new-york/suffolk-county/local-media-columns>

**LWN of Rochester** hosted a meeting about rent stabilization. They heard from members of the City-Wide Tenants Union who will give them a lot of information: how fast have rents been rising? What are the vacancy rates? How are renters impacted? How does the process of opting-in work? What housing units would be affected? How does the process of rent stabilization work after implementation? Would it discourage investment in housing in Rochester?

At a Lunch with the League in March, **LWN of NYC** coordinated a discussion with Ruth



Messinger, inaugural Global Ambassador of American Jewish World Service (AJWS), and City Council Member Gale Brewer on the changing role of women in politics.

In a thought-provoking workshop at Howe Library, **LWV of Albany** and friends learned about the Albany Fire of 1793, uncovering the stories of Bet, Dinah, and Pomp, enslaved persons who were accused of starting the fire. LWVAC member Alÿcia Bacon presented and led the group in Theatre of the Oppressed exercises, to connect past events with current social issues.

On February 26, **LWV of Brookhaven** met with August Ruckdeschel (Augie), from Suffolk County Cooperative Extension to learn about ways that local government, through its planning powers, contributes to health and nutrition.

Dr. Alexander Thomas is a professor of sociology at SUNY Oneonta and Executive Director of the SUNY PLACES Institute. At an upcoming **LWV of Cooperstown** event, he will discuss regional demographic and economic changes such as deindustrialization and rural out migration and how to address these challenges.

The annual luncheon of **LWV of Larchmont and Mamaroneck** is being held in April with speakers on the topic of *Empowering Our Children's Future through Education in Civics, Climate Change and Experiential Learning*. For more information or to buy tickets, go to <https://lwvlm.org/?p=3664>

**LWV of Saratoga's** book club will be discussing *These Are the Plunderers: How Private Equity Runs—and Wrecks—America* by Gretchen Morgenson when they meet in April.

**LWV of Utica/Rome** is inviting its members to join MVCC's showing of the movie "On the Basis of Sex," as part of NYS's Division of Human Rights' Hate and Bias Prevention Unit. After the movie, there will be a panel discussion on the status of women's rights.



## LWVUS Convention: June 27-30, 2024 Washington, DC

LWVUS Convention is coming. If you are interested in attending and representing your local League, contact your League's leaders. See all info on LWVUS

website [here](#). Register now [here](#) and reserve a hotel room at the Washington Hilton [here](#). All local Leagues are entitled to one delegate and then one more for each 50 members (as of the Jan. 31 US database) thereafter.

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[Donate to LWNYS Education Foundation](#)

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