

STATE VOTER

Springing into Civic Action April 2026

As we look ahead to the 2026 elections, we as members of the League of Women Voters of New York State have a powerful opportunity to strengthen civic participation in our communities by ensuring that every eligible voter feels informed, prepared, and confident to take part in the democratic process. By sharing trusted, nonpartisan information, supporting voter registration efforts, and engaging our neighbors in meaningful conversations, we can break down barriers and move forward with energy and purpose to empower more people to make their voices heard in 2026.



State Leaders Message

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The League now has a seat at the table for the No Kings protests and discussions. We all know those that stay home from protests because they don't see the point. What does showing up in these moments actually accomplish?

Here's our list:

- We find ourselves no longer alone with the despair, disgust, disappointment, discouragement, etc that we process and manage every day.
- We laugh, sing, talk, shout and wave our signs in the air with people in solidarity.
- We are inspired by brave speakers who say things like: "Power doesn't always announce itself as a king. Sometimes it shows up as fear. Sometimes as silence. Sometimes as people being too afraid to speak."
- We learn from speakers who have been taking action.
- We build our collective vision for what the future might hold.
- And finally, we commit to continue paying attention. To continue showing up. To continue fighting.

We know one day won't undo the war, the detentions, the funding cuts, the whitewashing of history, or inflation. But when more of us step in, stay engaged, and act together, we limit the damage and move more quickly toward repair and renewal. Every person who joins this fight now reduces the harm and accelerates the path to repair. Engagement isn't optional, it's how we turn the tide.

In League,
Nancy and Erica



LWVNYS Board Announcements

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Regina Tillman, 3rd Vice President/ Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

National Women's History Month comes to a close as you read this. Hopefully, as this is a traditionally woman led association, you took cues from actionable opportunities that were presented by a range of organizations during the month of March. The 2026 theme recognized women as leading change in environmental, economic, educational, and social justice movements. [The National Women's History Alliance](#) points to that leadership being solutions-based, and inclusive of taking action on equity and justice, building bridges, and carrying the vision of "thriving communities and a healthy planet."

"You come a long way, baby", as it was said years ago... 1920 for the right to vote and 1973 for the privilege of opening a bank account in a woman's own name. Recent losses over having dominion over our own bodies proves there is much to be done still. However, internal to our own LWV organization and its many chapters, no less action is needed. Our second Black LWVUS President came 22 years after the first was installed in 1998. And our membership remains stuck at 89% white women per 2023 data. The representation of those under the age of 30 continues to be miniscule.

The last of the 4 sessions of the DEI (Diversity-Equity-Inclusion) training occurs on April 11th. This regional LWVNYS training introduces "PTR" (Practice-Traditions-Requirements), a tool to examine how personal bias - shaped by our life experiences - can narrow our perspective and organizational practices.

"The League way," while valuable, sometimes excludes those with different backgrounds and experiences, making it harder for new members "to belong". We often present our methods without the context needed for openness to fresh ideas—and innovation depends on those ideas.

We encourage PTR adoption across your boards and committees. A Zoom meeting in the month of May will address implementation questions and all interested in follow-up of the initial training are welcomed.

Local League Support

Marjorie McIntosh, 4th Vice President/ Local League Support

As we begin to look forward to the arrival of spring, the Local League Support Committee (LLSC) is pleased to share updates on our ongoing regional activities and upcoming training opportunities.

All five of the NYS regions have held their third quarter meetings and as usual, the discussions were lively and unique but also share common successes and challenges. The combination of both concepts creates an opportunity to share methods, strategies and educational zoom presentations, potentially lessening the overall individual league work while creating even more opportunities with a larger educational reach for everyone. If one league creates an awesome program and shares it, other leagues can concentrate on something else and share it in return. We often say that it is not practical for each of us to continue to reinvent the wheel and this sharing of resources across the state is a result of that good thinking.

It's no secret that 2025 was a challenging year, to say the least, where we stretched the boundaries of values and commitment of individuals and our organizational response to outside forces. Some of these forces were expected with advance preparation, but still were shocking when put into reality. Our response was as rapid and clear as possible, but is a work in progress in these volatile and uncertain times. We have weathered these types of times in the past and fully expect to do so again.

As we all know, there are plenty of issues in our world these days and the themes from each region reflect that. During the last quarterly meetings, the five individual regions, representing all 40 of the NYS leagues, were interested in discussing the serious issues of immigration and enforcement, the full explanation and ramifications of the SAVE Act, Democracy in Detention, and visibly standing up in a non-partisan way. A priority is given to hosting information sessions regarding running for office, Observer Corps, as well as the ongoing projects regarding membership, engagement, Leadership models and succession, and communications in many forms. GOTV activities such as VAN, Vote 411, meeting with local Boards of Elections, SIA selection and engagement post conference, navigating the primary season, and partnering specifically with libraries, and even thinking outside the traditional box to "jazz up" annual and other meetings were on the agendas. The first three of the four regional trainings were held in Cazenovia, NYC, and Saratoga, were well attended and received and we expect the same for Rochester on April 11.

Hope without action can really mean "This is important and I hope someone else does it". Faith without action is nothing more than "Thoughts and prayers", which are needed, but empty words without meaningful change. In order to keep moving, we must believe that we can make a difference and we are just the right people to send that message into our communities. As the Suffragists were fully committed to the cause of Suffrage and women's rights for more than 72 years between the Seneca Falls convention in 1848 and passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, we need to be steadfast as well. We, like they were, are ordinary people doing extraordinary things in extraordinary times. We must continue to not be deterred from our goal of creating a more educated and involved electorate and being protectors of our democracy and constitutional rights.

Updates from the State League

Students Inside Albany 2026

Thank you all for your efforts in recruiting for the 2026 Cohort of Students Inside Albany. With your help, we have successfully accepted 60 students to participate this year!

We will be hosting a Welcome Orientation for all accepted students and their families in May, so they will be prepared before coming to Albany. Please be on the lookout for any updates from the State League.

The graphic features the LWV logo and the text "REGIONAL TRAININGS PREPARING FOR 2026". It includes a photo of a group of people and a list of training events:

- Cazenovia Regional Training**
Cazenovia Presbyterian Church
28 FEBRUARY 2026 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- New York City Regional Training**
Society for Ethical Culture
14 MARCH 2026 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- Saratoga Springs Regional Training**
Saratoga Springs United Methodist Church
21 MARCH 2026 9:30 AM - 3:30 PM
- Rochester Regional Training**
Third Presbyterian Church
11 APRIL 2026 9:15AM-3:15PM

REGISTRATION COMING SOON

Regional Trainings: Preparing for 2026

Join us for our final regional training on **April 11, 2026 in Rochester**, as we prepare for the 2026 election. We will discuss several topics to improve our impact and our reach in the communities we serve.

You can look forward to the below training topics:

- Advocating and Taking Action
- Observer Corps
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Youth Engagement/ Brand Awareness (Social Media)
- Changes to Election Law in NY and Combatting Mis & Dis Information

[Register TODAY!](#)

Plastics, Microplastics, and Human Health: The Race to Scientific Research, Regulation and Personal Care Solutions

PLEASE JOIN US: THURSDAY, APRIL 16 AT 7:00 p.m.

League of Women Voters NYS Environmental Issues Specialist, Beth Radow hosts Megan Wolff, PhD, MPH, founder and Executive Director of *The Physician and Scientist*

Network Addressing Plastics and Health (P-SNAP), which is a national alliance of professionals taking action on the health harms of plastics.

We'll discuss current related science research, steps to passing the [Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act](#) (S1464/A1749) in 2026 and essential consumer solutions to preserve your health. Dr. Wolff will include in her presentation the general and reproductive health issues in the news.

To get a glimpse of this critical topic, watch the 2- minute trailer of Dr. Shanna Swan's upcoming documentary

THE PLASTIC DETOX:

https://www.imdb.com/video/vi3470969625/?ref=tt_vids_vi_t_1

Virtual Regional Training Workshop: Strengthening the League's Identity

Thank you for joining us for our virtual regional training workshop with our Program and Office Coordinator, Xavia Francis. During this workshop Local League members learned of the importance of brand identity and using it to strengthen the league's engagement with the next generation.

Materials and follow up information will be provided to all of those who registered.



Women in Politics

The State League collaborated with the Women's Rights Alliance of NYS (WRANYS) to host a discussion with Lauren Kozakiewicz, author of *Ladies Day at the Capitol: New York's Women Legislators, 1919-1992*. Carol Faulkner, Professor at Syracuse University, led the conversation about key issues and the role of women legislators in politics from 1919-1992.

If you missed the event you can watch the recording [here](#). A huge thanks to Dare Thompson, Laura Bierman, the folks at the NYS Museum, and our partners at WRANYS for all of the hard work that went into planning this event!

Local League Happenings

Check out these updates from our Local Leagues!

League of Women Voters of Larchmont-Mamaroneck- Join the League of Women Voters Larchmont Mamaroneck to **Prepare for Safe & Secure Voting** in the 2026 Elections on April 12 at the Larchmont Village Center or on May 2 at the Mamaroneck Public Library.

Participants will have the opportunity to create postcards and other messaging for registered voters who did not vote in the last election, as well as take part in mock voting activities. The event will also feature food and live music, including SR2 (Simply Rock n' Roll) on April 12 and the Westchester Choral Society on May 2.

Attendees can learn about voter registration, explore resources like vote411.org, and discover strategies to inspire fellow voters through a session led by LWV-LM Co-presidents Beth Radow and Louise Perez. New voters will be guided through voting options and mock voting by Mamaroneck Town Clerk Allison May, and participants will have the chance to create a personalized voting plan with Beth Radow.

By the end of the event, participants will gain confidence in their voting plan and feel empowered to inspire others to vote.

League of Women Voters of East Nassau- The League of Women Voters of East Nassau hosted speaker Sue Lingenfelter from Long Island Against Trafficking on March 18. Ms. Lingenfelter spoke and provided literature about the prevalence of sex trafficking on Long Island as well as abroad. Its purpose is to raise public awareness and funds for those victimized by this modern-day form of slavery, as well as lobbying at the local, state and federal level. Our League will welcome Speaker Jessica Greenberg, of the Central American Refugee Center, will talk about issues related to immigration on **April 15**.

League of Women Voters Northwest Westchester- Members of the Youth Engagement committee of the Northwest Westchester League of Women Voters are busily working with the high schools in their [territory/catchment area/district] to host voter registration drives for seniors. In March, the drive at Lakeland High School collected 130 completed, signed voter registration forms to deliver to the appropriate Board of elections. On **April 17th**, a second drive will be held at William Panas High School.

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island & North Fork- The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island & North Fork is holding a public information program on April 27, 6:30-8 p.m. at the East Hampton Library (rescheduled from March 30), titled “Learning About Serving on Your East Hampton, Southampton & Shelter Island Town Board Advisory Committees.” To enable community residents to know more about citizen participation on non-elected Town advisory committees, LWV members who serve will speak about the responsibilities of and accomplishments of committees such as the Town Planning Board, Sustainability Committee, Housing Advisory Board, Housing Authority, Latino Advisory Committee, Dark Skies Committee, Board of Ethics, and Hampton Citizen Advisory Committee, etc.

League of Women Voters Cooperstown Area- The League of Women Voters of the Cooperstown Area launched the Spring season with some “dirty work.” The League’s Natural Resources Committee, in conjunction with Connections at the Clark Sports Center and the Cooperstown Food Pantry, presented “The Dirt on Composting.” The program featured a presentation by Worms Waste Not of Oneonta, a compost pickup service founded in 2024 by Rachel Frick Cardelle.

The presentation focused on different ways to reduce food waste—from carefully planning meals and buying groceries, to storing food to make it last longer, so it’s not going to waste, to diverting food scraps so they do not end up in the landfill. It’s something we can all do.

League of Women Voters Utica Rome Metro Area- On March 14, eight dedicated Leaguers, Dianne, Janine, Lu, Lorrie, Meg, and Nancy, marched in the Utica St. Patrick’s Day Parade. While waiting for the start, they experienced a small taste of the determination of their foremothers, as the temperature was 31 degrees with a steady west wind of approximately 10–15 mph. Despite the cold, they persevered and completed the one-mile route to downtown.



They were supported by their loyal “sag wagon” driver, Karen, along with co-pilot Kathy, who followed along in case anyone needed a break. The group agreed that the experience was enjoyable and expressed enthusiasm about participating again, noting that their newfound knowledge would make it an even more positive experience in the future. As an added bonus, the event also resulted in gaining a new member.

To watch League members walk in the parade, click [here](#).

League of Women Voters Cortland- Every month LWV Cortland host a "dinner & a discussion" event at the CNY Living History Center. All are welcome to attend! This month they will focus on the benefits of a volunteering community and how a culture of volunteerism creates a vibrant community. They will have three panelists: Liz Arnold, a Village Trustee, Ty Marshall, Managing Director, Center4Arts, and Elisabeth Osei-Kwame (Volunteer Admin, United Way of CNY). Dinner begins at 4:45 p.m. (\$18/person) followed by a free discussion at 6 p.m.

LWV Cortland also maintains a LWV Cortland County Legislative Corner in their Cortland Standard newspaper. Every other Friday they have a long-form article published.



League of Women Voters Buffalo/ Niagara- On March 25, 2026, LWV Buffalo- Niagara offered their community a presentation and panel discussion on Women's History Then and Now. The Speakers Bureau has developed presentations on a variety of topics and themes including Ranked Voting, Voter responsibility, and Civics Education.

On March 26th, participants came together from all over to create posters for the No Kings Rallies being held in Buffalo, Niagara Falls, Tonawanda, Amherst and Springville. Western New York is standing up for democracy!

League of Women Voters of Broome and Tioga Counties- Carla Michalak, Vice President of the League of Women Voters of Broome and Tioga Counties on Thursday, March 26, 2026, was invited by the Southern Tier Independence Center to present on the History of Women's Suffrage. Sixty attended in person with many more joining via Teams.

Michalak explained the difference between a suffragist and suffragette, then proceeded to discuss the many women involved in the suffrage movement. She included suffragists Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Susan B Anthony, Alice Paul, Lucy Stone, and Carrie Chapman Catt. She also included suffragettes Rosa May Billinghamurst, Adelaide Knight and Mary Sommerville. Each of the suffragettes persevered and worked diligently for securing women's right to vote. All of the women had incredible talent, but Mary Sommerville stood out. She was a polymath, someone who could integrate math, science and culture and in fact the word scientist was first applied to Mary!



On Saturday, March 28th, the League of Women Voters tabled at No Kings Protests in both Tioga and Broome Counties. We shared information on the SAVE America Act and conducted voter registrations.

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