

Building on 100 Years of Making Democracy Work

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Combating Racism

February 16, Wednesday, 7pm on Zoom

Dr. Theodore Johnson, Director of the Fellows Program at the Brennan Center for Justice, will lead us on a path to learn the



history of racism. To get the most out of the program please purchase his book, *When the Stars Begin to Fall, Overcoming Racism and Renewing the House of America*, at Northshire.

Most of us prickle at the suggestion that we may be racist, and do what we can to not be, but that’s not enough. The ultimate goal is to be anti-racist, which includes challenging inherent beliefs that we may not be aware of. A guide, such as Dr. Johnson, will lead us on the path to learn the history of racism, especially in America, educating us about the complexities of the issue.

The Equal Rights Amendment

March 16, Wednesday, 7 pm on Zoom



Patricia Nugent, author of *The Stone That Started the Ripple*, will lead us through the history of the Equal Rights Amendment from the events leading up to the writing to the point where we are today in the struggle to have the ERA become law.

Miracle Plastics? April 20, Wednesday, 7pm on zoom

David Sayer, a resident of Saratoga Springs and member of Judith Enck’s new group *Beyond Plastics*, along with Anne Ernst, leader of Skidmore College’s Environmental Studies and Sciences Program will both speak to us about solutions to the difficulties created by the production, use, and discarding of plastics.

The plot opens with plastic production from petrochemicals and the air and water pollution it causes. The next chapter informs us of the harm to our health, to those living near the factories and those who drink water almost anywhere. Where do we go from here?

More on page 7

Meetups are a way for us to come together to explore, understand and advocate for issues that matter to us. They are focused on our members and their interests.

CONTACT US

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Steering Committee:

July, August, September: **Linda Gush**, Observer Corps

October, November, December: **Monica Seebode**, Social
Media, Historian

January, February, March: **Joanna Lasher**, Environment

April, May, June: **Ann Marie Pendergast**

*Although individuals on the steering committee are
responsible for certain months, they work as a team, together.
Please CC all of them on your emails so they are up to date on
issues.*

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Charlotte Druschel, Voters' Services

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Linda McKenney, DEI Coordinator, E-Blasts

Patricia Nugent, Nominating Committee

Francine Rodger, Public Relations, Vote411, Book Club,

*The LWV of Saratoga County does not support or oppose any
candidate or political party. We take positions on issues. This
has been the League's policy since our founding in 1920.*

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*The League of Women Voters of Saratoga County is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and
inclusion in principle and in practice.*

Do You Ever Wonder if You Should Be Doing More?

I do. Every day. Every day when I hear about the latest efforts to suppress our votes. To disrupt fair and free elections. To inflict violence on those who see things differently. To further repress women. In fact, I KNOW I should do more. The question is what.

There are only so many hours in a day. And so much else I want/need to do. But I have trouble justifying that anything is more important than saving the democracy we claim to love. So, I choose to contribute to the League of Women Voters, which has been on the forefront of protecting the democratic process and civil rights for over 100 years. It's a one-stop advocacy organization, addressing all of the above and more in a political yet nonpartisan way.



I don't give a lot of time - but the hours I give are precious to me, so it is a sacrifice. But it's nothing compared to those who are on the front lines, taking the blows day after day, to preserve our form of governance. They can't do it alone.

We appreciate that you're a League member but...might you be willing to stretch a little to fill one of the 40+ positions that help guide this important organization? Because without leadership, organizations die. The Leagues in our surrounding counties folded because of that. Yet we remain strong and vibrant thanks to the longevity and expertise of our current leadership team. We're now depending on more members

to step forward with novel ideas and strategies for promoting our mission to ensure all voices are heard.

Are you good with numbers? Do you like fundraising? Enjoy planning programs? Like working with social media? Worried that this country might devolve into an autocracy and aren't sure how to stop it? Whatever your reason, please contact me at president@lwvsaratoga.org for more information. Considering what's at stake, this is a small ask.

Thanks!

Patricia Nugent
Chair, Nominating Committee 2022-23

Thank you to our Generous Contributors

General Fund

Barbara Hennig
Lillian LaFrance
Margarita Muinelo
Dee Sarno

In Honor of Barbara Thomas

Ann Bullock

In Memory of Margot Ammon

Barb Thomas

In Memory of Therese Lowenthal

Elizabeth Levine

Education Fund

Christine Alexander and Peter Martin

Good Trouble Art Work

Good Trouble on the Journey to Justice is the name of the collage just completed by fabric artist Francalise Dawkins with funds from a grant obtained by the League of Women Voters of Saratoga from Saratoga Arts. The title of the collage comes from the words of famed civil rights activist John Lewis. Ruth Bader Ginsburg also served as inspiration.

The collage is inspired by stories that the League collected from people connected to the Saratoga County area, people who caused some trouble as they stood up for what they thought was right. The book of their stories will accompany the collage when it is displayed.

Good Trouble on the Journey to Justice was scheduled to be displayed during the MLK Celebration events, but the omicron virus forced all those events to move online. We will be releasing a schedule of venues where this inspiring work will be displayed via an email blast and on the lwvsaratoga website.



Students Inside Albany

Good News, The Student's Inside Albany program is anticipating an in-person conference this spring! Students must be vaccinated and wear masks, but we are hoping to renew the regular program that had to be virtual the last 2 years. The conference is scheduled to be held May 22-25, 2022 in Albany.

The SIA conference, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc., is designed to increase students' awareness of their responsibility in representative government and provide the tools necessary for meeting that responsibility. This interactive conference will bring together high school students from across the state to learn about New York State government and the process by which citizens can participate in the policy making arena. As part of this program, students will also tour the Capitol and observe both the Senate and Assembly in action and spend an afternoon shadowing their legislator. The 60 students attending are sponsored by one of the local League of Women Voters throughout New York State; all their expenses are covered, including three nights at the Hampton Inn & Suites, downtown Albany.

Saratoga LWV can send two Juniors this year. We send information to the area high schools to get applications from interested students. If you know of a high school Junior who would benefit from this program please pass the information along. We are also looking for League members to join the committee who could help with the selection process. Please contact Darnell Rohrbaugh, president@lwvsaratoga.org if interested.

Something to Think About

America is a country which produces citizens who will cross the ocean to fight for democracy but won't cross the street to vote.

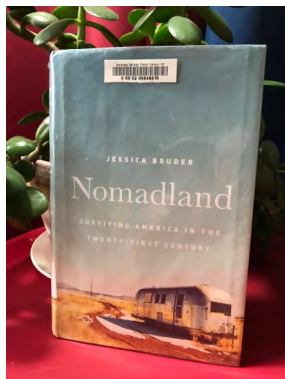
How can the League counteract that?

Book Club – Online

We invite you to join us for our upcoming monthly Book Club gatherings on the second Thursday of each month at 1:30pm. Everyone is welcome to join our discussions, *even if you have not read or finished reading the book.* We usually talk about the topic that the month's book addresses.

Please contact Francine Rodger at lwvsaratoga@aol.com to receive your invitation and a link to join these Zoom discussions.

February 10 – *Nomadland*
by Jessica Bruder



March 10 – *Tangled Up In Blue -Policing the American City* by Rosa Brooks



April 14- *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins



VOTE411 had its most visible local general election this fall and over 5,500 users in Saratoga County. We know this is a low estimate as folks who access the site from out of county (for example, those who log on from work in Albany or Schenectady) and the large number of users with no identifiable location would not be included in this data. 167 candidates were contacted in 103 local and county wide races. The races also gave links to view the league's candidate forums. Numerous media and news articles pointed readers to the site as well as candidates from all parties, some posting links to VOTE411.

LWV Saratoga's own website saw 2,263 visitors in the month leading up to the election. 85% of these are noted as first time visitors! Once again, our webmaster, Chris Alexander did a beautiful job creating an easy interface for voters to find their local race and candidate information within VOTE411.

School Boards are the next elections up. Hotly contested school board races across the country are shining a light on the importance of these positions. If you are able to help VOTE411 by acting as a contact for your local school district or providing relevant issues or questions for candidates to answer, please e-mail SaratogaVoterGuide@gmail.com.

Candidate Forums for Village Elections

Saratoga County has 9 Villages and some of them may have contested elections this March. If so, LWV Saratoga will attempt to schedule a Candidate Forum. Volunteers will be needed. Contact Mary Sue D'Orizio if you want to help. (Check page 2, Contact Us for how to contact all Chairs).



Helen Crawshaw, Rick Hassenauer, Ann Kril, Pat Nugent and Barb Thomas were among the League members participating and protesting the attempt to interfere with the peaceful transfer of power our the rightfully elected President, Joe Biden. League members throughout the country participated in similar events to call for the passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Act and federal voting rights guarantees.

Whitewashed: The Racism Project

By Linda McKenney, DEI Chair

This event on December 12, at the Bowtie Cinema, was, in part, well received. Most found the film interesting and sometimes difficult to watch. There was some confusion regarding the Playback portion of the event, which is most likely due to it being the first time people experienced this form of improvisational theater.

We limited the number of tickets to 60, assuming some no-shows. We sold out tickets, but only about 35 people attended. I attribute this to: the weather (rainy); free admission (people tend to sign up if they think they may attend, but aren't really committed}; there may have been some confusion about the fact that it was an in-person event. I say this because one person who was late said that she thought it was a zoom event

Candlelight Vigil for Democracy

On the bitterly cold night of January 6, 2022 a group of about 100 people gathered at the traffic circle in Glens Falls in remembrance and mourning for those who lost their lives defending our Capital from the insurrectionists trying to overturn the results of the 2020 election.



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More on MIRACLE PLASTIC?

A few decades ago, plastic was invented and clever people thought of more and more ways to use it. It was inexpensive, convenient, waterproof, durable and could be made into almost anything. We all loved it. The fossil fuel companies especially loved it because it was a great new way to make money and in more recent years, it has been a way to save their bottom line from the inroads from green energy while spending very little money in production.

But it was so cheap and convenient, we made millions of plastic bags, diapers, food wrappers etc., used them once and threw them away. No Problem? Just dump them in the trash and they would disappear and probably get recycled. If not here, then overseas.

Oops, then we started hearing about problems. First the dumps and then the oceans were literally filling up. Most things weren't really able to be recycled, so they were just getting passed along. Third world countries, that had been sending most of the trash to the oceans, decided it wasn't worth the money and the hassle and announced they would no longer take our trash.

We, you and I, in our personal choices and our decisions to actively engage in and/or advocate for the solutions, can make a difference. Yes, Reuse, Reduce, and Recycle, still count. But how about Replace, Rethink, and Reclaim (our precious earth)? We can't do it all alone, but as a community, a state and a nation we can make an impact.

At the state level, a ban on single use plastic bags is now in place and people are carrying their own bags into stores. A ban on polystyrene(styrofoam) has just been put in place as of January 1, 2022. At the national level, Judith Enck has founded a group called Beyond Plastic. They are advocating for a bill in Congress, which would incorporate Extended Producer Responsibility. Producers would be responsible for their products from "cradle to grave" which would encourage them to

find recyclable or sustainable alternatives or at least pay for the damages.

The Environment Committee

Meetup Report- Voter Suppression

Perry Grossman, Senior Staff Attorney of the Voting Rights Project of the New York Civil Liberties Union opened our November Meetup with the history of how election laws have been enacted on both a state and national level. He detailed current voting laws in New York State including the fact that the NYS deadline for voter registration is 25 days before the election - the longest waiting period in the nation. Other deterrents to participation in NY's elections included arcane rules for who gets on the ballot, at-large elections, and the need for more language assistance. On the positive side, a joint effort of SUNY and CUNY will create a database across NY State that will help with all voting. There were 24 participants at the Zoom event held November 17, 2021.

Meetup Report- Effecting Change (Program Planning)

In order for the LWV to advocate for something, we first have to discuss and adopt a position. Once we have a position we can try to change (or to support some existing) government policy. On January 19 we met to consider recommending that LWVUS add positions to our program of action. We supported three concurrences: one would add excerpts from the LWVNY Healthcare positions which we adopted last year to the existing LWVUS position on Healthcare; the second would allow Leagues at all levels of government to support digital equity by supporting access to broadband and other types of electronic communication; the third is a concurrence with California's position on Criminal Justice that was concurred with by LWVNY (at the urging of LWV Saratoga) at the 2021 LWVNY Convention. Find the details here <https://www.lwvsaratoga.org/positions>.

Redistricting Committee Wrap-Up

By Elizabeth Rossi, Chair

LWVSC advocated for the interests of Saratoga County throughout the NY State Redistricting process from March 2021 through January 2022. Our Redistricting Committee worked independently, with the LWVNYS and as part of the 1Person, 1Vote Coalition which included two other local leagues. Below are some of our actions:

- Letter to the Editor denouncing the use of redistricting to unseat or advantage incumbents
- Lobbied legislators to fully fund the Redistricting process
- Participated in the LWVNYS People's Hearing in April
- Successfully applied for a \$500 grant supporting redistricting advocacy and outreach
- Outreach to Community Based Organizations and legislators re: redistricting updates and educational resources
- Produced a Saratoga County Redistricting Program in October for 43 zoom participants.
- Presented an informational program to local Rotarians.
- Testified and presented maps at two public hearings of the IRC in August and November.
- Wrote letters to the IRC and press seeking improved public access and transparency.

Although disappointed that the Independent Redistricting Commission did not succeed as had been hoped, we are very proud of the many voters in Saratoga County who made their voices heard.

Editor's Note: The State Senate and Assembly both rejected the Commission's congressional and state legislative plans on January 10. The IRC has 15 days to resubmit new plans to the legislature for consideration.

Welcome new member, Colleen Cremen!
We're glad you decided to join the League.

About T.R. Johnson

Theodore (Ted) R. Johnson is the director of the Fellows Program at the Brennan Center for Justice. His work explores the role that race plays in electoral politics, issue framing, and disparities in policy outcomes. Previously, he was a national fellow at New America and a research manager at Deloitte. He is also a retired commander in the U.S. Navy following a two-decade career that included service as a White House fellow, military professor at the U.S. Naval War College, and speechwriter to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

His work has appeared in the *Washington Post*, *Atlantic*, *New York Times Magazine*, *Wall Street Journal*, *National Review*, and *Politico*, among other publications. He teaches law and public policy to master's and doctoral students. His debut book, *When the Stars Begin to Fall: Overcoming Racism and Renewing the Promise of America*, outlines a path toward a multiracial national solidarity to finally overcome the existential threat of racism in the United States. It was published by Atlantic Monthly Press in June 2021.

Johnson holds a BS in mathematics from Hampton University, an ALM with a concentration in international relations from Harvard University, and a doctorate of law and policy from Northeastern University.

LWVNY Legislative Agenda

The Senate and the Assembly are back in session and meeting in person in a socially distanced, masked way. LWV Saratoga will soon be organizing lobbying sessions with our representatives. You are urged to join us in those efforts. It is not intimidating to advocate with the League. The Legislative Agenda, found at https://lwvny.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/LegislativeAgenda_WEB2022.pdf gives a brief outline of the issues the League hopes to move forward this session.

Contact Ann Kril if you'd like to be a part of this effort at 518-441-2936.

Volunteer Help Wanted

Editor for the Newsletter. The Editor is responsible for gathering information from League members about Leagues activities (upcoming and past), rewriting if necessary, and transmitting copy to the Design Editor, proofing the final copy. 4 issues per year. Contact Barb at president@lwvsaratoga.org to discuss.

Circulation Manager for the Newsletter. Duties: Pick up newsletters from the printer in SS, tape closed, affix mailing labels, transport to SS Post Office for bulk mailing. Must be available days, 4X/year. Contact Barb at president@lwvsaratoga.org to discuss.

Voters Services Chair or Co-chair. Plans and coordinates all aspects of conducting Candidate Forums, including scheduling events with candidates, training League volunteers for roles needed to conduct candidate events, scheduling volunteers. Delegates specific responsibilities to Co-Chair or other volunteers. Must not engage in partisan activities while in this position. Contact Charlotte Druschel at president@lwvsaratoga.org to discuss.

MLK Celebration Weekend

The DEI committee took an active role in the planning for this event. As Omicron surged almost all events (originally planned as in-person or hybrid) were moved online. We organized the volunteers for the 4-day weekend, and then reorganized them as things changed.

If you missed some of the more than 21 interesting and often challenging events crammed into the long weekend you may be able to find them at www.mlksaratoga.org.

Linda McKenney has been attending MLK planning meetings. Our partnership with MLK for this event is very much appreciated.



Roadmap for Climate Leadership

Roadmap for the CLCPA (Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act) a program presented by Peter Iwanowitz of Environmental Advocates to a joint meeting of LWVSC and Sustainable Saratoga on January 12, outlined elements of the Draft Plan to implement the goals of the CLIA. The plan, which the NY Times calls the most ambitious in the world for mitigating climate change, is out for public comment for at least 120 days. There will be at least 6 public hearings, but the dates haven't been set yet. Final regulations are due by 2023.

It is imperative to get the general population to understand and buy into the plan, not just people who identify as environmentalists. Some points Iwanowitz made: The CLCPA

- Calls for 70% of electricity to be generated from renewable sources by 2030

- Calls for 100% of electricity to be generated from renewable sources by 2040

- Nuclear energy does not meet the definition of renewable energy

- There is a Climate Justice Working Group and a Just Transition Working Group providing input to the plan. 35% of climate funding to be spent on disadvantaged communities

- The cost of inaction on climate change exceeds the cost of implementation by \$90 Billion between now and 2050

- All new homes will be built to use only electrical energy by 2024

- 1/3 of passenger vehicles to run on electricity by 2030

- Will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs
- Buildings are the largest producers of greenhouse gases (more than vehicles)

- Calls for most producers to be responsible for diverting their products and packaging from landfills

- By 2050 the amount of waste going into landfills should be negligible

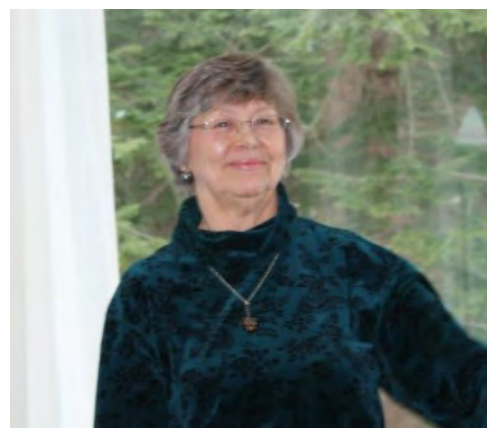
Everyone is encouraged to become familiar with the plan and to testify at the hearings. A recording of this program will be on YouTube under Environmental Advocates of NY.

DEI task force news

The League of Women Voters of NYS invited members across the state to attend a second 21-Day Challenge: [The Better Listening Challenge](#)

The challenge started on January 23, and unfortunately registration is already closed. This challenge was designed to help members of the LWVNYS as they continued to walk the path toward transformational equity and inclusion. We hope you participated.

Obituary: Margot Ammon



Margot Ammon died peacefully in her sleep at Glens Falls Hospital on November 25, 2021, following years of increasing infirmity. Both she and her husband Cliff were members of the Saratoga LWV since the 1990's. In 1998 Margot headed up our Study of Emergency Services in Saratoga County, which led to the Position adopted in 2000. Then she became the Layout Artist for the LWVSC Bulletin (now newsletter). She served in that capacity till 2016, and also produced innumerable flyers for us. She was honored to receive the Carrie Chapman Catt Award in 2007.

Art was Margot's passion: throughout her life she worked as a commercial artist and painted for pleasure. Her last employment was as a graphic artist for Garden Way, paving the way for her enthusiastic and dependable volunteer work with the Saratoga County Arts Council (now Saratoga Arts) and as the long-time layout editor of the League of Women Voters Newsletter.

Access to Broadband – Digital Equity

This is the position that our Members decided (at our Meetup on Effecting Change) that LWV Saratoga should urge that the June LWVUS Convention consider this position for adoption. The pandemic has shown us how critical the access to reliable, high-speed broadband is for remote work, learning, and telemedicine for all Americans – even those living in rural and other underserved areas.

This position was developed and adopted by the League of Women Voters of Connecticut. If adopted at Convention 2022 it will become the position of the LWVUS.

Universal High Speed Internet Access (Digital Equity) for All Residents of the United States

The League of Women Voters believes that high speed affordable internet access is an essential service that should be readily available to all U.S. residents and businesses. National, state and local government policies should support broadband, wireless, and other means of high speed internet deployment throughout the nation. Efficient, high speed, affordable access to the internet for all U.S. residents in their homes, schools and workplaces--regardless of geographic location or neighborhood demographics--is a necessity for assuring equal access to local and state government, for maintaining openness and transparency in government activities, for communicating with legislative leaders, for engaging in political discourse, for competing in the global marketplace, and for assuring that voters receive the information they need to participate in our democracy.

The League of Women Voters supports making high speed internet access available to all residents of the United States, without charge, through schools, libraries, and other secure public buildings.

Community Access and Public Affairs Media

The League of Women Voters believes that community access media – for Public, Educational, and Governmental programming (PEG) – must be adequately protected, promoted, and funded, regardless of the provider of media services. Statewide public affairs programming must be adequately protected, promoted, and funded by state legislatures and available to all residents, regardless of the provider of media services. Government should provide opportunities for citizen participation in decisions regarding community access, or PEG media.

Access to public affairs programming through modern media communication is essential to the public interest and to League of Women Voters' mission and purpose--to protect civil liberties, to ensure open, transparent government, and to promote the public's right to know. To protect the public interest, high quality PEG transmission and PEG availability on basic service tiers and on the internet are essential.

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

FEB

2/2—Wednesday, **Board Meeting**, 7pm, Virtual.
2/10 - Thursday, **Book Club, *Nomadland***, 1:30 via Zoom
2/14 - Monday, **Last Day to register for the June Primary**
2/16 - Wednesday, **Meetup: Combatting Racism**, 7pm via Zoom

MAR

3/2—Wednesday, **Board Meeting**, 7pm, Virtual.
3/10 - Thursday, **Book Club, *Tangled Up In Blue***, 1:30 via Zoom
3/16 - Wednesday, **Meetup: Equal Rights Amendment**, 7pm via Zoom

APR

4/6—Wednesday, **Board Meeting**, 7pm, Virtual.
4/12 - Tuesday, **Equal Pay Day**
4/14 - Thursday, **Book Club, *American Dirt***, 1:30 via Zoom
4/20 - Wednesday, **Meetup: Miracle Plastics?** 7pm via Zoom

Board meetings are open to all members. E-mail president@lwvsaratoga.org to receive the Zoom link