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## Message from our Co-Presidents

Welcome to our first fully digital newsletter. Life, as they say, comes at you fast and this year is going to be all that and more. 2024 is full of challenges and opportunities to defend democracy and work for human rights.

This year's elections give the League a chance to engage and educate on voting rights, voting access, and how to get accurate information about candidates and issues. Also, this November New Yorkers will have the opportunity to vote on the NY State ERA. The League of Women Voters will be out in force to get this amendment adopted! There is critical work for everyone.

Talk to your friends and neighbors, pass along reliable information from the League, jump in and volunteer.

Ann Marie & Linda, Co-Presidents

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## You're Invited to our Monthly Forums

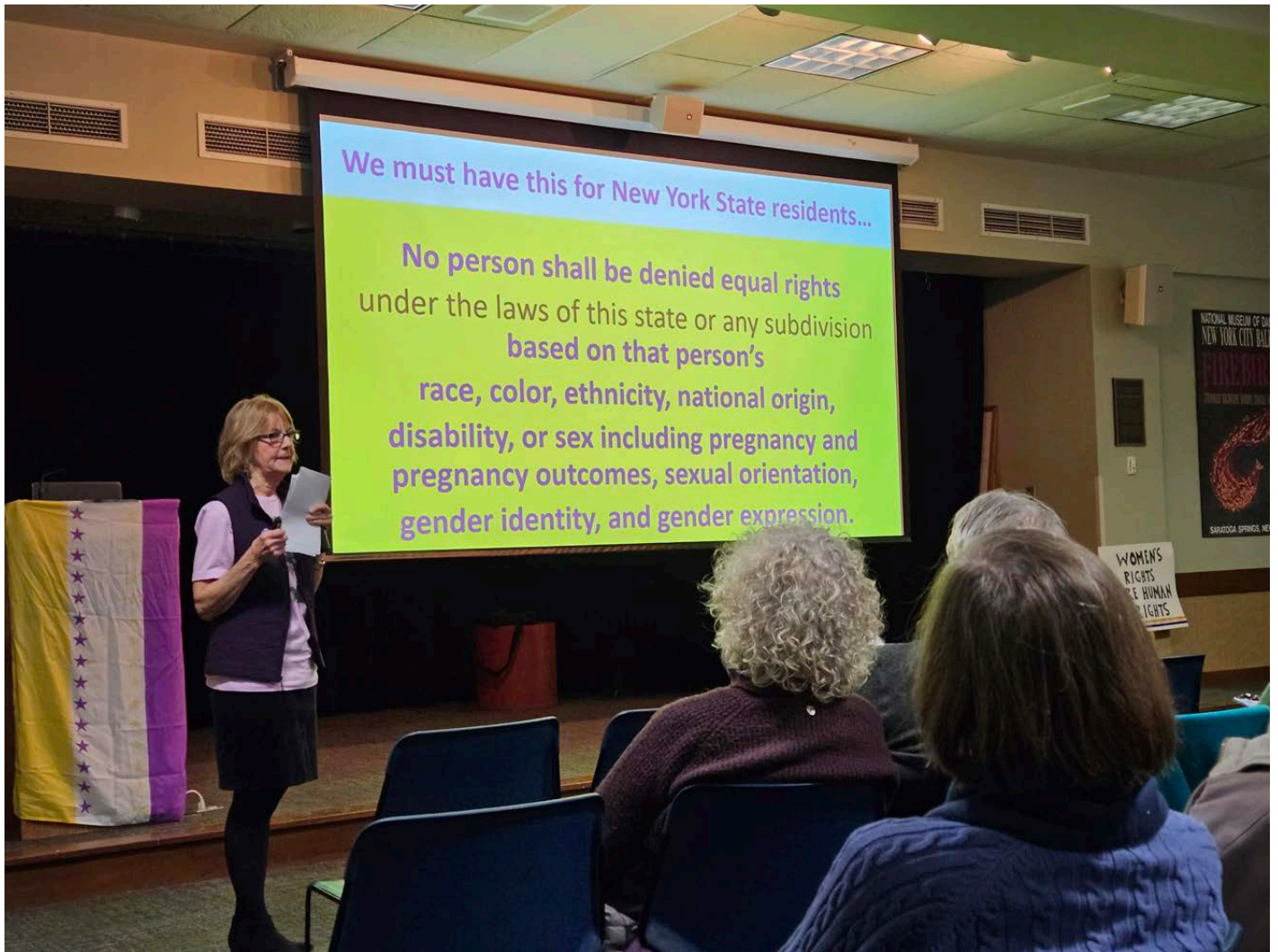
### Effecting Change: Shaping LWWUS Positions

Many of us are passionate about issues and we want to have the national League advocate for them. We do this locally by inviting all League members to discuss priorities and positions for LWWUS to consider.

Our February Forum (formerly called Meetups) will be devoted to this grassroots discussion. Details and registration are at [this link](#) for the Zoom session, which is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 15, from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

The national League (LWVUS) will be holding a convention June 27-29 in Washington, DC, and will be considering additions, deletions, and changes to our positions. Our Feb. 15 forum is your opportunity to weigh in on the positions that are the basis of all League action. This is a process known in “League Speak” as “program planning.”

Our League’s Monthly Forums (formerly called Meetups) are a way for members to come together to explore, understand, and advocate for issues that matter. Click here for a full listing and details for all upcoming League Events, click here.



## **A Full House for Equal Rights**

At our January Forum, we launched our 2024 campaign for an Equal Rights Amendment – which will be on the November New York State ballot – with a standing room only program titled, “Let’s Finish What They Started.”

Our League's Women's Rights Awareness Campaign chair, Patricia Nugent, walked the audience through the history of the inequitable treatment women have endured since the inception of this nation, despite Abigail Adams imploring her husband in 1776 to "Remember the ladies...." Patricia called the campaign for equal rights, both at the state and federal levels, "the suffrage movement of our time," saying, "It's up to us to get the ERA over the finish line – 100 years after first proposed by Dr. Alice Paul. What comes of this campaign will define who we are as a nation, and what we leave our daughters and their daughters. And sons."

The event also showcased remarks by famous feminists from American history -- Susan B. Anthony (Linda McKenney), Alice Paul (Lezlie Dana), and Ruth Bader Ginsburg (Linda Letendre). Over 20 feminist-themed books were given away. And more than forty people signed up to volunteer for the cause!

It makes sense for the LWV to be a leader in this movement. "The League was founded on the premise that women deserve equal treatment under the laws of this nation," Patricia said. "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."

In November, NYS voters will have the opportunity to approve an equal rights amendment protecting women and other marginalized groups from discrimination. For more information, visit <https://lwvny.org/nysera/> or [click here to sign a petition and read ERA details](#).

We thank those who attended, including Assembly representative Carrie Woerner and state Sen. Jim Tedisco's policy director, Tracy Ellis. We also thank the Saratoga Springs Public Library for hosting and co-sponsoring the event. If you are interested in volunteering for the WRAC, please contact us at [www.lwvsaratoga.org/era](http://www.lwvsaratoga.org/era). Other events to raise awareness of the current disparity will be scheduled throughout the year.





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## The Barbie Debate

Staying with the theme of equality, the March Forum takes on a different twist with a program titled, “Baffling Barbie: Feminist Friend or Foe?” The event is scheduled for Saturday, March 9 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Clifton Park/Halfmoon Library. A debate will ensue about that infamous doll! Check out our [website events calendar](#) for details.

## Measuring Success of NYS Environmental Efforts

(The following is excerpted from a blog post by Joanna Lasher, LWVSC Environment Chair. Read Joanna’s [full post on the League’s blog.](#))

What is happening to the climate around the globe, nation, state and Capital Region? Besides global melting glaciers, higher average temperatures, animal species going extinct, wildfires, and increasingly frequent mega storms, locally we notice weird weather patterns, heavy rains and flooding.

In 2019, New York State adopted the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, a model program plan for the country. The goal was to replace fossil fuels/dirty energy and polluted air and water with clean energy and a cleaner environment while developing new, good jobs and using 40% of the funds to improve disadvantaged communities. In January 2023, the Climate Action Council then developed a Climate

Scoping Plan to help meet those goals.

So how are we doing? Our April Forum will be a Zoom program on April 18 featuring Blair Horner, Executive Director of New York Public Interest Research Group. He will talk to us about progress the state is making in pursuit of Scoping Plan goals. [Click here to go to our Events Calendar](#) to learn more and [here to register for the Zoom link](#).

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## Focusing on Voter Registration

### Student Voter Registration and Pre-Registration

This is going to be a big year for our League's Voter Registration Committee. The focus this year is providing more voter information into local high schools and engaging students at Skidmore, ACC Adirondack, and HVCC Malta.

New state legislation will help us to reach this target audience. In January, Gov. Hochul signed S1733, which requires school boards of education, BOCES, charter schools, and non-public schools to promote student voter registration and pre-

registration. This includes providing access to voter registration and pre-registration applications during the school year and helping students fill out the applications. More information on S1733 can be found here: [S1733 \(nysenate.gov\)](https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2023/S1733).

### **Your Help is Needed**

We must begin now to actively staff voter registration events, to make sure eligible voters in our area are registered and ready to cast their votes in the upcoming primaries. More than ever, there is a need to provide information on voter registration as well as early voting and absentee voting, not to mention the Equal Rights Amendment that will be on the state ballot this November.

If you would like to help staff a voter registration event, or if you have an upcoming event at which our League can set up a voter registration table, please reach out to Pamela King-Hall or send an email to [president@lwvsaratoga.org](mailto:president@lwvsaratoga.org).

## **Upcoming Primary Election Dates**

**Presidential Primary: April 2, 2024**

**Early Voting: March 23 – 30**

**February 14:** Last Day to Change Party Enrollment for the Primaries in April and June.

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 February 14. Changes received on or after February 15 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.

**March 13:** Last Day Voter Registration Forms Must Be Received by Board of Elections by Mail or In Person.

**April 1:** Last day to apply in person for an absentee ballot.

**April 2:** Last day to postmark ballot and the postmarked ballot envelop must be received by the Board of Elections by April 9. This is also the last day to deliver ballot in person to the local Board of Elections or to any poll site in your county.

**Click here to visit the LWVNYS  
website for further election and  
voting information!**





## More Ways to Get Involved

### Developing Hybrid Access to Meetings

The Alfred Z. Solomon Foundation has awarded funding for LWV of Saratoga County to add hybrid access to meetings in which attendees are both in person and remote. The first step is to identify the equipment needed and do a pilot event. Volunteers are needed to help set this up and test it. Email [president@lwvsaratoga.org](mailto:president@lwvsaratoga.org) to join this short-term working group.

### Lend a Hand with Candidate Events

The 2024 election season is ramping up and the League needs you to make sure everyone has the information and ability to cast their votes. The candidate event team needs help with staffing. Moderators, timers, question vetters, and Zoom hosts are all needed for successful forums. New to the League? Don't let that stop you from volunteering. We will pair you with an experienced League member. Contact our volunteer coordinator, Kathy Koebrich, at [k718malta@hotmail.com](mailto:k718malta@hotmail.com). You can help empower voters and defend democracy.

### It's Time to Lobby!

We're getting ready to lobby the state Legislature during its 2024 session, now through the first week in June. Our Pre-Budget meetings with state legislators will take place during the third and fourth weeks of February and early in March. Post-Budget meetings will take place during the last week of April and early in May. We may meet in person or online. You can get involved in several ways. Help give our message to legislators, take down their positions on each of the bills or issues we will discuss, research their action on recent bills, or just sit in to listen and learn. Interested? Please contact Ann Kril, Advocacy Chair, ASAP at [annsockkril@gmail.com](mailto:annsockkril@gmail.com). Ann

will contact you when appointments have been set so you can sign up and learn the process.

## **Seeking Board Nominations**

The LWV of Saratoga County Nominating Committee is seeking recommendations for people to be considered for positions on the Board of Directors. Service on the Board is an opportunity to build your leadership skills, make things happen for the League and for your community, help to set direction for the League and more. It is rewarding and challenging. The monthly meetings are currently on Zoom.

If this sounds like an opportunity you, or someone you know, might want to pursue, please contact any member of the Nominating Committee: Mary Lou Classen, Charlotte Druschel, Stacey Lamodi, Quency Rene, or Lori Dawson, Chair. The committee would appreciate hearing recommendations as early as possible and no later than Feb. 20. Email Lori at [iddawson12@yahoo.com](mailto:iddawson12@yahoo.com).

## **State League Training Workshop**

All members are invited to attend a regional training workshop offered by the state League. Topics will include the 2024 Elections and GOTV, engaging college students in their communities, leadership and membership tips and tools, DEI around the state, evaluating our impact through data tracking, mis- and disinformation in the 2024 election, and making your voice heard in advocacy.

The workshop in this area is scheduled for Saturday, March 23 at The Blake, 1 Steuben Place, Albany. They run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with lunch provided. Cost is \$25. Details and the registration link can be found [here on LWVNY's website](#).

## **DEI: A Never-Ending Journey**

Our League is committed to incorporating Diversity, Equity,



and Inclusion in all our work, across all of our programs and committees. We will continue to invite participation in DEI programs offered by National and State Leagues and provide other resources to increase our awareness. In each newsletter, Co-President Linda McKenney will share a DEI resource, such as the article linked here in Humanities magazine about [Black Suffragists](#).

Let Linda know if you have suggestions to help the League realize its commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion via email at [president@lwv.org](mailto:president@lwv.org).

## **Book Club**

Everyone is welcome to our monthly Book Club gatherings on the second Thursday of each month at 1:30 p.m. via Zoom – and possibly in person beginning in April. We usually talk about the topic that the month's book addresses, as well as the book. You're welcome to join the discussion even if you have not read or finished reading the book. Please contact Francine Rodger at [lwvsaratoga@aol.com](mailto:lwvsaratoga@aol.com) to receive your invitation and a link to join the Zoom discussions. We may be meeting in person in April and May, so check the website for meeting details as well as future book club selections. For more information and details on the books we will be reading, visit our [Events calendar](#).

## **Board Meetings are Open to All Members**

Board Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. All meetings are virtual. If you are interested in attending a Board Meeting, email [president@lwvsaratoga.org](mailto:president@lwvsaratoga.org) to receive the Zoom link.

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## Advocating for Medical Aid in Dying

Linda McKenney, Ann Marie Pendergast, and Barb Thomas braved a snowstorm to participate in a Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) Lobby Day on Jan. 16 at the state Capitol. Compassion and Choices' lobbyists had set up appointments to speak with several legislators' staffers, and in between participants attended a press conference. [Click here to watch.](#)

Barb plans to attend upcoming lobby days on Feb. 6, 13, and 2 and March 5 and 12. For more information and carpooling, email Barb at [bkoepicust@gmail.com](mailto:bkoepicust@gmail.com). You can [click here](#) to sign up for any of the dates.

The Medical Aid in Dying Act ([A995a/S2445a](#)) has been on our NYS legislative agenda for quite a few years. We want to move it out of committees to bring to a vote in both chambers this year. [Read more here.](#)

## Welcome New Members

Edith Allen (life member  
who transferred from the  
Albany League)  
Terri Allen  
Paulette Azon  
James Birnby  
Lisa Brown  
Barry Bruno  
Olivia Carpenter\*  
Katarina Evans  
Bill Evans

Rose A. Farr  
Annette Fordyce\*  
Fran Hanna  
Peggy Huckel  
Suzanne Kahan  
Faye Mihuta  
Jenny Mirling  
Ben Mirling  
Noah Pedrosa\*  
Angela Rella  
Sue Ellen Schlitzer

Karen Score  
Beth Shropshire-Bruno  
Lorrie Smith  
Vickie Souve  
Robert Stromberg  
Patricia Vaughn  
Barbara Ann Whelan  
Loraine Wies  
Steven Wright  
  
\* student membership

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Click here to share your suggestions and comments about our new digital format.



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The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization, fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Through education and advocacy, we encourage informed and active participation of all citizens in government and major public policy issues.

**Board Meetings are open to all League members.** Board Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. and are virtual via Zoom. E-mail [president@lwvsaratoga.org](mailto:president@lwvsaratoga.org) to receive the Zoom link.

Donations are appreciated: <https://www.lwvsaratoga.org/donate>

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