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LWVB/N website

www.lwvbn.org

LWVNYS website

www.lwvny.org

LWVUS website

www.lwv.org

**Your Voter is published
11 times a year. Send
copy by the second
Monday of the month to
Terri Parks at
lwvoter@verizon.net.**

President's Letter

Dear Members and Friends,

The good news is the days are getting longer, and spring is around the corner. And so is our Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon. Please save the date of **Saturday, June 10**, for this event. At our Annual Meeting we will vote on board members and our LWVBN budget for 2023-2024 and present League awards. Watch this space as details become available.

Nominations for our Making Democracy Work award and our two League awards (the LEE award and the Joan K. Bozer award) should be submitted by March 31, 2023, to Terri Parks at lwvbn@lwvbn.org.

In continuing the project started in October, the board is working on restructuring our program committees. As you can see from the list in this VOTER, we had more than 119 volunteers that were engaged and interested in the work of the League in 2022. I send a huge THANK YOU to each and every one for your commitment to democracy. The concern is that a small number of members actually attend the various monthly committee meetings and carry out their work and it is increasingly difficult to find people to commit to chairing and organizing the meetings. Our goal is to provide more effective, interesting, and productive committees at a variety of times to accommodate more participation.

I am pleased to say that our Voter Services, Healthcare, and DEI Committees are strong and vibrant. Please remember that our members do not have to formally join a committee to participate in meetings to see what is being discussed and planned. We welcome your interest and ideas.

Thank you for continuing to follow LWVBN on social media and sharing our posts with your networks; this outreach provides our League with essential visibility. Please contact me at president@LWVBN.org with any questions, concerns, or great ideas regarding our local program.

In League, Lori Robinson

Sincere Appreciation for the 2022 Volunteers for League Activities

In her book, *A Nun on the Bus*, Sister Simone Campbell wrote: “But a democracy cannot survive if various groups and individuals only pull away in different directions. Such separation will not guarantee that all are allowed the opportunity for ‘life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.’ All people must be recognized for their inherent dignity and gifts regardless of the color of their skin, their religious beliefs, or their place of origin. And all these gifts need to be shared in order to build up the whole.

“So I have begun to wonder if the new task of the first half of the twenty-first century should be a commitment to civil obligation as a balance to the focus on civil rights.

“Civil obligations call each of us to participate out of a concern and commitment for the whole. Civil obligations call us to vote, to inform ourselves about the issues of the day, to engage in serious conversation about our nation’s future and learn to listen to various perspectives.”

The 119 people listed below, plus Jennifer Steiner’s high school class, have shown through their actions on behalf of the League in 2022 that they embrace the concept of civil obligations as Sister Campbell envisions it. This list includes League members and volunteers from the other organizations that partner with the League.

Terri Parks

Andrea Baldi	Tryell Ford	Nina Lukin	Elaine Puchlerz
Mary Bashore	E. Gabelnick	Kathleen Macaluso	Christine Reichmuth
Mary Bisson	Hanna Gabelnick	Janet Massaro	Amanda Robert
Melissa Bolz	Darryl Gaines	Kathleen McCarthy	Sophia Roberts
Joan Bozer	Ramona Gallagher	Kathleen McCormick	Lori Robinson
Dot Brown	Ellen Gibson	Laura McDade	Alberta Roman
Pamela Buehler	Gladys Gifford	Liz McGough	Caren Shapiro
James Carr	Jody Goldstein	JoAnn Mecca	Deborah Shiffner
Lisa Casper	Janet Goodsell	Barbara Metiver	Helena Slavsky
Eileen Cassidy	Michelle Greco	Sally Metzger	Edward Slavsky
Kat Cejka	Miles Gresham	Margaret Meyer	Barbara Snyder
Naomi Cerre	Barbara Gunderson	Patti Meyer-Lee	BJ Stasio
Deborah Cohen	RJ Haq	Nora Mikes	Jennifer Steiner
Sharon Cramer	Cindy Havey	Arlene Miles	Lynda Stephens
Janique Curry	Jennifer Hoffman	Kerry Mitchell	Suzanne Thomas
Elaine Cusker	Fran Holmes	Amanda Mitchell	Lyle Toohey
Susan Czynny	Judy Huber	Ellen Moomaw	Pat Townsend
Felton Davis	Alison Hyde	Amy Moritz	Marjorie Tritto
Nancy DeTine	Maxine Inera	Jayne Murray	Mary Ann Turkla
Marian Deutschman	David Jankowiak	Charlotte Nelson	Lynne Vallone
Amy DiChristina	Barbara Jezioro	Ellen Neumaier	Kate Wagner
Joyce DiCristina	Shirley Joy	Monica Neuwirt	Therese Warden
Krista Doerfler	Joanne Kahn	Margie Nobel	William C. Webb
Susan Dombrowski	Beth Kauffman	Rev. Michah Nutter Dowling	Judy Weidemann
Ellen Drexler	Kathleen Keenan-Takagi	Beverly Painter	Melissa Weiksner
Paula Dyson	Tricia Korzelius	Terri Parks	Amy Witryol
Mike Egan	Mara Koven-Gelman	Amelia Palka-Mikes	Liz Zausmer
Ted Egan	Betty Krist	Lisa Parshall	Ann Zawicki
Maria Evancho	Rebecca LaCivita & Family	Timothy Priano	Joe Zawicki
Janica Faye	Janet Lenichek	Lauren Pristach	

Call for Nominations to the Board of Directors

Are you interested in a challenging and rewarding experience? The 2023 LWV Buffalo/Niagara Nominating Committee is looking for you to become a part of our board of directors. The committee is recruiting candidates for its 2023-25 slate of nominees. Positions to be elected are president, recording secretary, and four (4) at-large directors, as well as the 2024 Nominating Committee chair and two committee members.

Have you had previous board experience, or are you willing to learn, develop, enhance, or share your leadership skills to continue to make exciting things happen for our League and community? In-depth knowledge of the League is not required; you'll have an opportunity to learn that. Currently our League is especially seeking members with fund development and membership recruiting and retention experience. Officer and director terms are two years; Nominating Committee members serve a one-year term. As we strive to fill these positions, we are cognizant of our goal to diversify, and to be inclusive and equitable in seeking candidates. All candidates need to be able to utilize a computer and have email. Please contact any Nominating Committee member for more details by Friday, March 10, 2023, at lwvbn@lwvbn.org.

Thank you!

Ramona Gallagher, Nominating Committee Chair

Great Decisions

The 2023 Great Decisions discussion group resumed its meetings at 10 a.m. on Thursday, March 2, on Zoom. We organized our dates for the coming year and also discussed Chapter 1 in the 2023 Foreign Policy Association's "Great Decisions 2023 Edition." The group meets on the first Tuesday of the month in April, May, June, August, September, October, and November from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

Contact Fran Holmes at lwvbn@lwvbn.org if you wish to join this group. Use this link for Information about the Foreign Policy Association (FPA) and Great Decisions:
https://www.fpa.org/great_decisions/?act=gd_about2.

The books are available for purchase from the FPA's website here – "Great Decisions 2023":
https://www.fpa.org/great_decisions/?act=gd_materials.

Fran Holmes, Great Decisions Coordinator

Nuclear Nugget from Pat Townsend

"At the beginning of 2023, the U.S. Department of Defense maintained an estimated stockpile of approximately 3,708 nuclear warheads for delivery by ballistic missiles and aircraft. ...In addition to the warheads in the Department of Defense stockpile, approximately 1,536 retired – but still intact – warheads are stored under the custody of the Department of Energy and are awaiting dismantlement, giving a total U.S. inventory of an estimated 5,244 warheads."

Hans M. Kristensen & Matt Korda, The Long View: Strategic arms control after the New START Treaty, 2022, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, 79:1, 28-52

Take our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Self-Assessment Survey!

LWVNYS Invitation to Members

LWVUS has identified the implementation of DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) as on par with nonpartisanship in its importance to what the League is as an organization. It is also deemed necessary for the League to fully support America's democracy and to see future growth in membership.

As such, the LWVNYS has been sharing guidance on DEI implementation, by a number of various methods, since 2019. Now, we would welcome input on your progress in adopting a "DEI Lens" when engaged in the work of the League. This input is sought both from local League boards of directors and from any individual member.

This self-assessment offers questions and statements for consideration in order to think about DEI – in policy, practice and behavior – within your local League. Through this survey input, we can all get a sense of the range of actions that have and have not been taken, and what may be enabling and/or hindering certain actions.

Plus, we are looking to obtain a better understanding at the state level of the support that local Leagues may need or the areas where Leagues are achieving their greatest successes in realizing changes that support the advancement of DEI.

Please keep in mind that the intent is not to pass judgment, and there are no wrong answers! We only ask that you be honest and thoughtful in your responses so that we all benefit from the DEI conversations that are taking place in and around your League, thus placing the LWV more securely on the path to becoming an organization that fulfills its promises of equity and justice.

We encourage individual League members to complete the survey at this link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/u/1/d/e/1FAIpQLSezNxesleFCgu9v4kXpGE5A4RcgeGQJ6eemO7xQsay_wZVK7Q/view_form?usp=send_form.

Surveys are due on April 1, 2023.

Requests for clarifications as the need arises are welcomed! Please email Regina Tillman, LWVNYS 3rd vice president for DEI at lwvbn@lwvbn.org using the subject line "DEI Assessment Survey."

Thank you for your participation!

Regina Tillman

Naturalization Ceremonies Resume

On January 4, 2023, Deborah Shiffner and Barbara Weitzner-Lin greeted 52 new citizens and registered 37 of them at the Federal Courthouse. This was the first ceremony there since April 2020. This year ceremonies will be held monthly. Please watch your email for the opportunity to volunteer for this important activity.

Deborah Shiffner, Naturalization Ceremonies Coordinator

Help Wanted for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive (DEI) Committee

Are you are looking to become more active in the League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara? Do you have an interest in creating a better understanding of our diverse community and its needs? Would you like to help us actively engage with this community to promote democracy and social justice? Please join us!!

Our DEI Committee has been busy over the past three years, working with other community organizations including the NAACP, Self Advocacy of New York State (SANYS), Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), the National Action Network, and Journey’s End. We have worked with our Voter Services to get out the vote, again including representatives from these and other partner organizations.

Since our inception we and our partners have created three webinars with panel discussions: The History of Voting; Fighting for Our Vote, about the challenges incurred by people who are disabled, people who belong to minorities and women; and Our Future is on the Ballot, a discussion of the five ballot proposals presented in 2020. This past October we and our partners held an event called Pulling the Race Card, where participants broke into small groups to discuss racial issues.

Most recently we collaborated with Journey’s End for a movie and discussion about Sudanese refugees who have relocated to Maine. We are planning to present an online 21-Day Challenge centering around the history, experiences and challenges of refugees and those seeking asylum and the communities that welcome them.

The DEI Committee meets on the second Thursday of each month to plan activities and develop our League’s understanding and implementation of DEI principles. We welcome anyone who is interested in working to help the League to become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive in its membership and work.

Thank you for your consideration.

Elisabeth Zausmer, DEI Committee Chair

League of Women Voters Mission

The League of Women Voters is a good government organization that encourages informed and active participation in the political process, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League never supports political parties or candidates.

News from the League of Women Voters of New York State

LWV State Convention is Coming!



The LWNYS Biennial Convention will be held on **June 2-4, 2023** at the Crowne Plaza Albany – Desmond Hotel (yes, it'll be an in-person Convention). We have started to make plans for the Convention and your local League should, too. The Registration Kit will be emailed in next week so start thinking about who might represent your League.

If you have any suggested **amendments to the League's bylaws** (<https://lwny.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Bylaws-as-Amended-June-2021-Convention.pdf>), email laura@lwny.org.

If you have ideas for **new positions, updates to positions**, etc, contact your local League board to see how and where you can provide input. Talk with your local League Board about providing input.

Boast about an event, activity or accomplishment that your local League did this year by submitting an application for an **Award** at the state Convention. There are seven categories of awards and you can submit applications to as many as you want. Let's hear about your great project and honor those who made it all happen in your local League. Contact the state League for the details at lwny.org and submit the application **by May 1**. Any member can nominate their League or a Committee for an award. Winners will be announced at the Saturday evening banquet at the state Convention.

Categories for Awards are (see more in Awards packet [here](#)):

- Educating Voters to Action Award (Citizen Education)
- Mobilizing Democracy into Action Award (Get Out the Vote)
- Lighting the Way Award (Membership and Leadership)
- Building Bridges to Excellence Award (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)
- Thinking Out of the Box
- Shaping Our Future Award (Youth Award)
- Inspiring Citizens into Action Award (Citizen Engagement)



United Nation's Commission on the Status of Women

The United Nation's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW67) ([link](#)) will take place from March 6 to 17. Since 1945, at the invitation of President Truman, LWV has had a standing committee of UN Observers, <https://www.lwv.org/united-nations-observers>.

This year's delegation will be led by Dr. Connie Sobon Sensor, LWV's Chief Observer to the UN. The CSW is a combination of meetings with official proceedings at the UN as well as parallel and side events sponsored by NGOs and other organizations to be held at on UN grounds, off-site, or online.

The priority theme of CSW67 is, "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls."

Aside from leading the delegation, Dr. Sensor, along with Jane Colvin, LWV Observer to the UN and member of LWNYS Board of Directors, organized a virtual panel presentation to be held on March 15, 2-4PM, "Technology: Friend or Foe of Free, Fair and Accessible Elections?" League members are invited to join this webinar and others by registering at the NGO CSW/NY Forum Website. ([link](#)) You will be asked to register for free for Whova, which is a tool to communicate and to host and attend events. You are also invited to watch the UN proceedings on YouTube ([link](#)). Once you are registered you can search for panels by keyword or simply scroll the calendar by date. You can also register directly for the webinar using this link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8F38HOUUTsywTfU9UInSA

LWVBN Awards to Recognize Outstanding Contributions of League Members

Awards Will Be Presented at the Annual Meeting

The Joan K. Bozer Leadership Award recognizes outstanding League leadership that reflects some of the many qualities that Joan has demonstrated in her long experience as a League and community leader. We selected five key characteristics exhibited by Joan that we feel are essential qualities for recognition: Ethical, Innovative, Resourceful, Respected, Steadfast. Please submit a paragraph of up to 250 words that describes how your nominee embodies these characteristics. Be sure to include each characteristic as you write about your nominee.

The League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara LEE Award is presented to a League member who has made a Long Term Commitment to the League with Energy and Excellence – in short the initials LEE. The award honors Lenore Tetkowski, Leonore Lambert, and Lenore Banks. Please submit a paragraph of up to 250 words about your nominee in which you note the approximate number of years the person served the League actively, and give examples of her/his Energy and Excellence in League activity.

Please email completed nominations to lwvbn@lwvbn.org or mail them to the League office by March 31, 2023. Be sure your name is noted as the nominator. Please feel free to contact Terri Parks at lwvbn@lwvbn.org if you need help with your nominations.

We also invite you to become a member of the committee to select this year's LWVBN award recipients. We will meet by Zoom and expect to need no more than two meetings. To volunteer, contact Terri. Meetings will be via Zoom.

Making Democracy Work Award to Recognize a Community Member for Outstanding Efforts

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, but political, organization. Because we never support or oppose candidates or parties, we are non-partisan. We are political because we take stands on issues. These are issues which the organization's grassroots members study before coming to consensus on a position. These positions are the basis of our lobbying at the national, state and local levels.

The League operates at all three levels – national, state and local. There are more than 700 Leagues in the United States. The League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara is one of the local Leagues.

The League of Women Voters is an organization dedicated to improving our systems of government; it is *the* organization where leaders volunteer to make democracy work.

The League of Women Voters is where active leaders volunteer to make democracy work and create positive change in the community.

All of the recipients of the Making Democracy Work Award are leaders who are creating change in our community. As one of the most trusted organizations in Western New York, the League of Women Voters is proud to be part of a community with such dynamic citizens and is honored to present this award.

The League of Women Voters is dedicated to safeguarding democracy and creating positive change; The Making Democracy Work Award is an ideal opportunity to celebrate an individual who exemplifies this in our community.

We reach out to our members and organizations we partner with for nominees for the Making Democracy Work Award each year. The board of directors selects the awardee from your nominations.

The Making Democracy Work Award nomination form is being sent with the emailed March Voter. If you need to have a form mailed to you, call me or send me an email request.

Terri Parks



1272 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14209

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

March 2023 Calendar

Thursday, March 2, 10:00 a.m.
Great Decisions
via Zoom

Tuesday, March 7, 4:00 p.m.
Program/Issues/Events Committee
via Zoom

Wednesday, March 8, 4:30 p.m.
Local Government
via Zoom

Tuesday, March 28, 7:00 p.m.
Healthcare Committee
via Zoom

Thursday, March 9, 7:00 p.m.
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
via Zoom

Monday, March 13, 4:30 p.m.
Board of Directors
via Zoom

Tuesday, March 28, 5:00 p.m.
Education Committee
via Zoom

If you are not a member of any of the groups above and would like to attend its meeting, contact the League at lwvbn@lwvbn.org to be added to the Zoom invitation list.

