The VOTER is published 10 times per year. Items for the September issue are due Friday, Aug. 5, 2016

LWVBN Annual Potluck Picnic

Tuesday, July 19, Noon
Chelsea Clubhouse at Canterbury Woods
Downing Lane (off of Renaissance Drive)
Williamsville, NY 14221

All LWVBN members and friends of the League invited! Bring a dish to pass.
We are grateful to Sally Metzger, who lives in the Canterbury Woods community, for securing this wonderful site.

After lunch, described recently by one League member as “the best lunch in town,” our delegates to the League of Women Voters of the United States convention will give us some brief highlights from the workshops and caucuses they attended June 16-19. There will be plenty of time for conversation with League friends.

Please bring someone new who may be interested in working with the League.

Mission of the League of Women Voters:
The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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Presidents’ Report

We look forward to another delightful League Potluck Picnic on July 19 and hope you’ll come and bring someone who may be interested in joining the League. We appreciate Sally Metzger’s work to coordinate the best lunch in town provided by League members. This year our delegation to the national League convention in June will share some of their experiences. The actions of the convention plenary are in this Voter.

The first meeting of the 2016-2017 board of directors will be July 11. We will publish the board member assignments in the September Voter, but off-board committee chairs are listed here. Please contact them if you’d like to join in their efforts.

Committee Chairs

Money in Politics Committee                                    Janet Massaro
Education Committee (co-chairs)                              Dorothy Tao, Lee Tetkowski
Election Services Committee                                   Alan Dozoretz
Local Government Committee                                    Marian Deutschman
Youth Program, Students Inside Albany Program                 Janet Goodsell
Nominating Committee                                             Judy Weidemann
Social, Economic Justice Committee                            Lynda Stephens
Waterfront/Transportation Committee                          Gladys Gifford
Voter Editor                                                 Barbara Jezioro
Voter Copy Editor                                               Nora Mikes
Voters Guide (interim)                                          Terri Parks

Thank you to all who have renewed your membership in our League for 2016-2017. Our membership year begins July 1 each year. Please return your interest survey as we depend on the involvement of our members for our strength. We need each of you to attend programs, help plan one, join a committee, and/or provide constructive ideas. We anticipate another productive League year with your interest and active participation. Many of you continue to include a donation in your membership check. We appreciate your generosity greatly and have, of course, sent each of you a thank you letter.  

Great Decisions: Korean Choices

First of all my apologies to Joan Sillman because once again I forgot that the summer issue of the Voter would not get out in time to publicize our fourth Great Decisions topic, International Migration, which was discussed on Thursday, July 7. It was the longest article written by the Foreign Policy Association, as well it should have been, and we are thankful to Joan that she was willing to tackle this most difficult subject. Joan Photiadis has agreed to facilitate our fifth topic for the year, Korean Choices, on Thursday August 4, from 10 a.m. till noon at 1272 Delaware. "At the end of World War II, Korea was divided in two. The northern half of the Korean peninsula was occupied by the Soviet Union, the southern by the United States. Today North and South Korea couldn't be further apart. The North is underdeveloped, impoverished and ruled by a corrupt authoritarian government, while the South advanced rapidly to become one of the most developed countries in the world. With such a wide gap, some are asking if unification is possible, even desirable, anymore?"  Hope to see as many as possible!

Bernice Baeumler
Many of our members have once again registered for the coming year. I would like to remind you to fill out a membership survey even if you have done so in previous years. It is the only way we can keep track of how you want to participate in the LWVBN. Situations and interests are always changing, so it is important to keep us updated.

We had five volunteers represent the LWVBN at three naturalization ceremonies between the end of May and June 23, 2016. They were: Janet Goodsell (who served twice), Judy Weidemann, Joyce Bol, Kathleen McCarthy, and Pat Wille. The LWVBN is very grateful for their service.

New procedures may be instituted regarding where new citizens are sent for passport pictures. Until we receive clarification, volunteers for ceremonies at the U.S. Courthouse should do their best to help people fill out their voter registration forms in the courtroom rather than having one person go to the second floor.

I urge all our members to look at the volunteer opportunities available through the LWVBN. Your help is what makes us an effective organization.

Judith Clarke, LWVBN Volunteer Coordinator

LWVBN Voter Service Committee preparing for an active fall: Voter registration!

After setting up a voter registration table with Unyts (Western New York's only organ, eye, tissue and community blood center) on June 6 at the Food Truck Rodeo at the Buffalo Historical Society, we are returning on July 6. Then on September 10, we will be teaming up with Unyts once again at Ralph Wilson Stadium, not for a football game, but rather for a blood drive/health fair event.

In addition, this later this summer and this fall — thanks to suggestions from League members — we have a long list of possible for voter registration sites at community events. We shall soon have times and locations during August and September for our voter registration tables — and we will be needing volunteers. Stay tuned!

Margaret Brunson, Voter Service Chair

Save the Date!
Friday, September 16

Women at the Table: Expanding the Role of Women in Governance
Speaker: Hon. Rose H. Sconiers

“I have learned over the years, if you’re not at the table, your voice is not heard,” Judge Sconiers told The Buffalo News when she retired last January. Don’t miss this chance to hear this accomplished jurist’s views on positioning women for leadership roles in elected office and on corporate boards of directors.

Join us for lunch at the 20th Century Club for this exciting 2016-17 kick-off program. Registration begins at 11:00 a.m., with the event starting at 11:30 a.m. and ending at 1:30 p.m. Further details will be coming soon. So mark your calendars and spread the word — guests are welcome and encouraged!
Money in politics

Last month we printed the League of Women Voters of the United States new Money in Politics position. All Leagues can now use the new position as we continue to educate ourselves, our communities and our elected officials.

Study without action is only half a loaf; the whole loaf is required. The National League immediately called for action in its first MIP press release: “The LWV today announced a new position statement on “Money in Politics” and called for the Federal Elections Commission (FEC) to be restructured as a five member commission. The FEC is the only civil enforcement agency for federal laws governing money in politics … and is paralyzed by its current structure. The result is that even the nation’s weak campaign finance laws now on the books are not enforced …”

League member participation is important if we are to accomplish political change. For both new and long-time members, please contact events@lwvbn.org about dates and times for our Money in Politics Primer – guaranteed to add a bit of spice to those lazy summer days.

Janet Massaro, chair, MIP Committee

Our first Happy Hour was …. happy!

On Thursday, June 2, members and friends of LWVBN enjoyed a delightful evening at RiverWorks. An ad hoc committee of Lori Robinson, Pat Costanzo, Nicole Matteson and Nancy DeTine organized the informal gathering — hopefully the first of more to come.

The event was purely social — no speaker, presentation or agenda — just a chance to chat and perhaps learn more about LWVBN committees, activities and opportunities to get more involved. A sign with our logo was on display and League materials, including our membership brochure, were available.

Of the 15 who attended, six were members, and two were members’ spouses. Quite a success for an event that came together so fast!

Watch for details about future happy hours. And if you’d like to help plan the next one, please contact a committee member.

Nancy DeTine, Ad Hoc Happy Hour Committee
This has been an extremely busy season for this committee. Since April we have been working on the Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority (BMHA) tenant commissioner election. This involves numerous procedures, meetings, contacts with candidates, and coordination among our League volunteers, BMHA staff, candidates, site building managers and the Erie County Board of Elections. All entities must cooperate so this election works.

I need to thank all of the League volunteers who served this committee so that this election could reach a successful conclusion:

Kathleen McCarthy for her computer skills, a willingness to assist, and never-ending support.
Terri Parks, another huge pillar of support, as well as a terrific moderator and ballot counter.
Lee Tetkowsi, an energetic ballot counter at 300 Perry Street, and Janet Goodsell, an excellent card coordinator and timekeeper at 300 Perry Street.
Kathleen Macaluso, for her willingness to travel to 300 Perry Street for two ballot counts.
Marion Deutschman, for her card coordinating skills as well as summarizing the reasons for some of the BMHA resident anger.
Joan Mondul, for her willingness to travel to the far West Side to share her timekeeping skills.
Dorothy Brown, who utilized her moderating skills in a difficult situation.
JoAnn Mecca, our wonderful timekeeper and card coordinator.
Judy Weidemann, another skillful card coordinator.
Judy Capodicasa, for a willingness to travel to 300 Perry Street to count ballots.
Mike Egan — when it comes to counting anything, count on Mike.
Ramona Gallagher has talents and we all benefit.

This has been a long and difficult election season. Thank you, one and all.  

Alan Dozoretz

A highlight from our annual meeting

Congratulations to Joan Photiadis upon receiving the Joan Bozer award from Joan Bozer!
Decisions reached at Plenary

The slate of officers and directors for 2016-2018 was elected by acclamation. Ramona Gallagher attended the Meet the Candidates event and was very enthusiastic in her support for the new board. The candidates impressed her with their understanding of the current challenges facing the League. The body approved the budget with no increase in the per member payment that we collect as part of our annual registration — $32 per year.

Bylaw Revisions: The first three articles of each League’s bylaws must conform to the LWVUS Bylaws. The changes approved at the 2016 convention were limited to Types of Membership. In two separate motions, the body approved replacing the word "citizens" with "persons" who may be voting members of the League and lowering the age of voting members from 18 to 16 after considerable discussion. Therefore, from now forward, our League will operate under the new provisions for voting members determined at convention.

2016-2018 Program: The body adopted the proposed League-wide campaign for MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK® unanimously without debate. The campaign will engage Leagues in work for voter protection and mobilization, election reform and Money in Politics, constitutional amendment and redistricting. It also voted to retain all current LWVUS Positions in the areas of Representative Government, International Relations and Social Policy.

The LWVUS Redistricting Task Force proposed a Redistricting Position, which was presented as an item to be adopted by concurrence. As such, it could not be amended. It will enable Leagues in states that have no current redistricting positions to advocate for fair and effective redistricting. It does not supersede any existing state League redistricting position. The Position in Brief: Support redistricting processes and enforceable standards that promote fair and effective representation at all levels of government with maximum opportunity for public participation. The concurrence was approved.

The Convention overwhelming approved a concurrence with the LWV Colorado position on Behavioral Health including amending the LWVUS Health Care position to include the following second sentence under Basic Level of Quality Care:

Every U.S. resident should have access to affordable, quality in- and outpatient behavioral health care, including needed medications and supportive services, that is integrated with, and achieves parity with, physical health care.

The item Behavioral Health is the nationally accepted term that includes both mental illness and substance abuse disorder.
The Resolution on Gun Safety and Center for Disease Control Research — urging “LWVUS to support restoration of funding for gun violence research at the CDC. In keeping with the LWVUS strong positions on gun control, recent statistics from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) showing 33,636 Americans died due to firearms in 2013, and an April 2016 letter from 141 medical organizations urging Congress to restore funding for gun violence research at the CDC” — was unanimously approved.

Resolution on Supporting Full Rights for the People of DC: The body approved the resolution proposed by the LWV District of Columbia “that the League of Women Voters of the United States will make statehood for the people of the District of Columbia a legislative priority.”

The body approved a Resolution that LWVUS consider signing with the 21 youth plaintiffs to the Our Children's Trust Federal Amicus Brief in a landmark climate lawsuit against the federal government “for violating their constitutional rights to life, liberty and property, and their right to essential public trust resources, by permitting, encouraging, and otherwise enabling continued exploitation, production, and combustion of fossil fuels.” Oral argument is scheduled for September 13, 2016, in Eugene, Oregon.

The body also overwhelmingly approved a resolution that LWVUS support the United States ratification of the UN COP 21 Paris Agreement and a resolution stating that “LWVUS should continue working for full implementation of the EPA Clean Power Plan, especially at the state level, as a first step, and should call on the White House to implement an updated science-based Climate Action Plan that stabilizes global warming by bringing CO2 levels down to no more than 350 ppm by 2100.”

Terri Parks

For more details about the 2016 convention, go to [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), click on Convention/Council at the bottom of the home page under League Management. The 2016 Convention is the first item in the drop down menu on the League Management page.
Summer Meetings & Events

Mon., 7/11, 4:00 p.m.  
Board Meeting, League Office

Tues., 7/19, noon  
**Potluck Picnic**, Canterbury Woods Clubhouse

Tues., 8/2, 4:00 p.m.  
Issues Committee, Harlem Road Com. Cntr

Thur., 8/4, 10:00 a.m.  
Great Decisions, League Office

Mon., 8/8, 4:00 p.m.  
Board Meeting, League Office

Wed., 8/10, 1:30 p.m.  
Local Gov., League Office

Thurs., 8/25, 1:30 p.m.  
Education Committee, League Office

**REMINDER:** The next deadline for the Summer Voter is Friday, 8/5/2016. All copy, photos, etc., should be sent to our new copy Editor, Nora Mikes