



your
★VOTER★

Volume 24, Number 8

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President

Terri Parks

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LWVB/N website

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LWVNYS website

www.lwvny.org

LWVUS website

www.lwv.org

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copy is due Monday, April
8. Send copy to Nancy
DeTine at
nancy@nancydetine.com.

**Connecting the Outer Harbor with
the Niagara Greenway**

Friday, April 12, 2019

Lunch & Issues

Registration: 11:30 a.m.
Speaker: 12:00 noon, lunch to follow
Scotch 'n Sirloin Restaurant
3999 Maple Road, Amherst, NY 14226

**Guest speaker: Gregory D. Stevens, Executive
Director, Niagara River Greenway Commission**

Imagine a glorious network of parks, scenic vistas, access points and trails stretching alongside the entire Niagara River, from Lake Ontario to Lake Erie. Creating these public green spaces, while restoring the shoreline's ecological health, is the mission of the Niagara River Greenway Commission. Join us for a look at the plan to make Buffalo's beautiful Outer Harbor the Greenway's southern terminus.

RSVP: Reservations and \$18 lunch payment must be received by Monday, April 8. Make checks out to LWVBN and mail to LWVBN, 1272 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, NY 14209.

To attend the program only at no charge, reserve online at www.lwvbn.org, send email to lwvbn@lwvbn.org, or call 716-986-4898.

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.

President's Report and Board Actions

The League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara usually sends an Annual Appeal request each February to coincide with the national League's anniversary. This year, we sent you an invitation to our May 4 event to honor 100 years of the League of Women Voters of New York State with opportunities to make a patron donation. We decided not to request an Annual Appeal donation at this time, but hope you'll make a donation of an amount you choose by returning the invitation form. We also hope you'll join us for the celebration! All donations received will be used for the League's education efforts.

This edition of Your Voter includes the first of two installments of a brief history of our local League(s). It will be included in a publication about the current Leagues in New York State that is being produced by the League of Women Voters of New York State.

The Nominating Committee submitted a slate of officers, board members and Nominating Committee members at the March board meeting. We'll publish it in the Annual Meeting booklet that will accompany the May Voter and hope you'll join us on June 1, 2019, at the Fairdale Banquet Center for the Annual Meeting. We have much to celebrate!

Our presence at each naturalization ceremony has a dual purpose. We inform new citizens of the importance of voting and we register new voters. We're proud that voter registrations have increased to an average of 95% since we began distributing registration forms and LWVBN pens prior to the start of the ceremonies with the assistance of our Board of Elections partner, Bob Hellwitz. This effort requires our volunteers to spend more time at the ceremonies (often three hours), mainly at the U.S. Court House in downtown Buffalo. Because downtown parking fees increased dramatically this year, the board approved reimbursement of up to \$20 for parking expenses for volunteers for each ceremony they attend. Pat Wille will note the increase in her reminders to volunteers. We provide volunteers for an average of three ceremonies each month and appreciate the dedication they show to this important League activity.

Terri Parks

Important Notice: Is This Your LAST Voter?

Members who have not renewed for the 2018-2019 membership year are receiving their last edition of the Voter. We will notify you electronically of League events unless you notify the League office at lwvbn@lwvbn.org to remove your name and email contact from our list. Of course, we'll be very happy if you rejoin the League at any time.

Great Decisions

As you now know, Buffalo weather did not cooperate and I'm glad our members were willing to go along with the decision to postpone our first session for the 2019 Great Decisions until, again hopefully, Thursday, April 4, from 10 a.m. to noon at 1272 Delaware Ave. I'll reiterate my words in the March Voter as I look forward to exchanging the briefing book you ordered for the price of \$29.80 and setting up facilitators for the eight topics. Also, the spring updates have arrived.

Bernice Baeumler, 876-0672

"Learn from the mistakes of others. You can't live long enough to make them all yourself." - [Eleanor Roosevelt](#)

An Afternoon with Eleanor

Join us May 4 to celebrate LWVNY's centennial!

One hundred years is a milestone to celebrate – for a person, a thing, an institution, an idea. This year is the centennial of the **League of Women Voters of New York State**.

We invite you to join us at the Garret Club on *Saturday, May 4, from 4 to 6 p.m.* for a 100th anniversary celebration cocktail party! See the enclosed invitation for important details.

The League in Erie County, also founded in 1919, was known as the Erie County League of Women Voters in its early years. Not only has the League persevered for a century, but the ideas on which it was founded – educating the public, influencing public policy, supporting good government – are as relevant today as they were in 1919.

On May 4, we will step back in time as Denise Reichard presents a creative dramatic portrayal of one of history's most extraordinary women – **Eleanor Roosevelt**. An influential leader during the early years of the state League, which she served as vice chair of Legislative Affairs, Mrs. Roosevelt worked tirelessly to promote women's roles in politics. You will thoroughly enjoy gaining insights into her personality and experiences.

Ms. Reichard has presented the stories of history's great women for three decades. If you have seen one of her many portrayals, you know you are in for an exceptional experience. If you haven't, you won't want to miss this chance to enter the historical context she creates. We all will be entertained and educated.

We are delighted to have our celebration at the Garret Club, a historic women's clubhouse in a historic residential area in the heart of the Elmwood Village in Buffalo. A large, gracious building designed by architect E. B. Green in 1929, the Garret Club was recently added to the National Register of Historic Places.

Please join us (bring friends!) as we raise a glass to the centennial of the **League of Women Voters of New York State**. Send your reservation form today!

Lyle Toohey, Centennial Celebration Chair

Naturalization Ceremonies

The February 26 ceremony at Albright-Knox Art Gallery hosted the largest number of new citizens to date in the Buffalo area – Sharon Cramer and Marilee Keller welcomed 125 new citizens! On March 4, Janet Goodsell and Judy Weidemann welcomed 51 candidates for citizenship at West Seneca West High School.

Patricia Wille, Volunteer Coordinator for Naturalization Ceremonies

Election Services

The first order of business for our committee is to thank Nora Mikes and her family for their dedication and hard work in getting out a mailing in a timely fashion so that no dates for a BMHA site nominations meeting would need to be changed. A huge "thank you" to all of the family that participated.

The committee completed a nominations meeting at the Stuyvesant site. Some of us may remember the glitzy and glamorous Stuyvesant hotel, restaurant and bar with the revolving dance floor. Later in the month, we traveled to Bailey Avenue for a nominations meeting at the Msgr. Geary Apartments. This site also has a history – Bailo's, a neighborhood restaurant famous for its gigantic roast beef sandwiches, was previously located here.

Judy and I appreciate everyone's kind thoughts.

Alan Dozoretz, Chair

Become a Poll Worker

The right to vote is one of our nation's oldest and most important entitlements, and with this right comes responsibility. Free and open elections are the basis on which this country was formed and the Erie County Board of Elections is committed to fulfilling this responsibility.

You can make a difference by becoming a poll worker. You will be paid, and the assignment involves only a few days a year. Erie County residents who are registered voters are eligible to serve.

Get involved and become a proud participant in a process that is the foundation of democracy! For more information, use this link:

<https://www.elections.erie.gov/election-poll-workers/become-a-poll-worker/>

Note: The League thanks our friend Bob Hellwitz at the Erie County Board of Elections for inviting our members to consider signing up!

Patricia Wille, Volunteer Coordinator for Naturalization Ceremonies

Welcome New Members!

We are pleased to add these new members to our League: Sharon Dobkin, Jane Lehman, Jayne and John Mack (family members), Lori and Irelis Reiner (mother and daughter!), and Patricia Timmons. Whether you have joined as individuals, as a family or as a student, we extend a hearty welcome and look forward to meeting you at League programs and activities.

The Membership Committee

Our Nuclear Times: Article 16

An Underground Tale with Four Characters: Chapter 3

Ms. Splinter wistfully recalled old-time quilting bees and summer county fairs, then suddenly exclaimed, “Fashions have changed! We need new clothes! Luckily, I’ve been trading homemade pies for fabric scraps from the neighbors. I’ve got needles and extra strong thread. Instead of another quilt, I’ll stitch together original outfits for us all. ...”

“Where’s that book on climate change? It mentioned increased rainfall intensity and frequency.” Mr. Black planned seriously for possible quick getaways. “Anyhow, remember that five-inch rainfall in August 2009? More will come. Lots of rain means lots of erosion. Waterways get wider, deeper, and advance at their heads. Truckloads of sediment get flushed downstream. With the next big storm, we can break loose and ride out with the torrents. Fortunately, Frank’s and Erdman are on our sides. ... And in a strong earthquake, when this place falls apart fast – *whoosh* – we’re out along with a whole mess of others. ...”

Ms. Rad spoke. “We’ll need lookouts. I have many daughters. Those daughters have daughters and daughters. So, we’ll have a trusted network of extra eyes and ears, here and there. We don’t want to get caught. Back in the 1980s, a Lake Ontario bounty hunter successfully tracked the footprints of some ‘emigrant’ friends. ... What’s beyond belief: a bunch of high and mighty high-level waste got special treatment and 50-year leases on luxury casks in a nearby gated community.”

Mr. Pebble smoothed out a tattered topographic map with the trenches of the SDA clearly marked. “Smuggled in. We need to know the terrain. ... We are here. To the east, 1400 feet straight over the plateau, a slope drops 160 feet into Buttermilk Creek. If we wait just a few hundred years, after a dozen landslides, it will come to us. ... Or we can trek through deep clay fissures, lenses, and loose layers of till ... then follow back alleys and worm holes ... a circuitous path with many obstacles. ... For now, I say we memorize gully and stream locations. These lead to Buttermilk and Cattaraugus Creeks, then to Lake Erie. ...”

And so ends another episode of Trench Number Nine, at the nuclear waste site called West Valley, in Western New York.

Barbara Frackiewicz

Send us your ideas!

What speakers would you like to hear? What programs would you like the League to present? The Issues/Program Committee welcomes your suggestions! And think big – let’s consider bringing in a big name. Send your thoughts via email to Marian Deutschman at deutschmt@buffalostate.edu.

Marian Deutschman, Chair

Endnotes for Highlights from our History, Part 1

1. Ellen Taussig, “Women Voters’ Diary -- 40 Years of Achievement,” *Buffalo Evening News Magazine*, August 20, 1960
2. *Some History of Erie County Council LWV or The way we were since ‘52*

League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara Highlights from our History

The Erie County League of Women Voters was christened at the May 27, 1919, annual luncheon of the Erie County Women's Suffrage Party according to an article in the Buffalo Enquirer on May 28, 1919. Mrs. James Lee Laidlaw, chairman of the League of Women Voters of New York State, predicted that the National Women's Suffrage Association would merge into the League of Women Voters. Miss Elizabeth Olmstead, chairman of the Erie County League of Women Voters, introduced the speakers at the luncheon at the Hotel Lafayette with approximately 350 attendees.

In 1921, the League began conducting citizenship courses at the Buffalo Seminary, a private high school for girls, and the YWCA.

In 1921, the East Aurora-Elma League was formed.

In the 1920s and 1930s, the Erie County and Niagara County Leagues were in the Eighth Region of the New York State League, which included 15 counties in Western New York. About 200 women attended the 1929 regional conference held in Perry, New York.

In April 1924, the National League of Women Voters held its convention in Buffalo. Carrie Chapman Catt was a featured speaker.

From 1926 through 1939, the Erie County LWV conducted political institutes in conjunction with the University of Buffalo. The proceedings featured forums and round table discussions on issues of the day. Many of the institutes were three days long.

In 1927, the League hosted many porch meetings at houses of League members to discuss the proposed New City Charter of Buffalo and a series of Thursday evening meetings to educate women on the many angles of the issue prior to voting it. Voters approved the new charter on August 29, 1927.

In May 1927, the Amherst LWV was formed. The board met for the first time on June 3. Throughout its history, the Amherst League actively monitored the Amherst Town Board.

The 1928 LWV New York State convention was held in Buffalo.

In 1930, members of the Erie County League collected 3,000 signatures on a petition supporting the Women Juror Bill, which would permit women in New York to serve on juries. The law was passed on September 1, 1937.

The Erie County League hosted a radio program series on political affairs in the 1930s.

The Hamburg LWV began in 1935. The members participated in all local, state and national studies, candidate forums and voter registration drives.

The Springville LWV was accepted as a special group in 1936. The suburban Leagues were called branches in the minutes of the Erie County League. The Tonawanda LWV started in 1939. In 1939-1941, board meeting minutes were headed Buffalo & Erie County LWV.

In April of 1941, the League reorganized with an Erie County Council composed of all the branches and the Buffalo City League with its office. In 1947, the Buffalo League was renamed the Buffalo Metro LWV.

During the 1940s, League members "served on community agency boards ... successfully supported the placement of all libraries under county control, worked for continuance of day nurseries for the convenience of war mothers, pushed juvenile protection and household employment standards."¹

League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara Highlights from our History

The Clarence LWV began in 1952.

Local efforts in the 1950s included working for “adequate money for Buffalo school budgets, opposition to removal of restrictions on the succession of the incumbent mayor and councilmen, increased Buffalo parks area, an opposition to appropriation of park lands without replacement of equivalent acreage.”¹ The League continued its work for an executive type county charter.

In 1952, seven Leagues in Erie County adopted a study of the present county government and possibilities. In 1956, the Leagues promoted reorganization of Erie County government with a strong executive form of government.

The local Leagues worked tirelessly for Permanent Personal Registration (PPR) for voters beginning in the late 1940s. “Among other efforts, members painted yellow footsteps throughout downtown Buffalo, leading to the Board of Elections. The paint was supposed to wash away, but because the paint provider accidentally provided indelible paint, the footsteps lasted for years. Restaurants served a special PPR sandwich of pastrami, pickle and rye on placemats that explained permanent personal registration.”² In 1957, PPR was achieved!

From 1960 through 1967, the League supported the Erie County Charter that provided for a strong executive and a County Legislature composed of single member districts apportioned equally according to population. “The League’s influence in gaining the charter in 1959 for Erie County is now part of a legend. Hats, bands, buttons, a quarter million handbills, two telephones and the reams of print” all were used to educate and convince voters to support the charter. Then the League worked to reapportion the Board of Supervisors; that effort was accomplished in 1967 with voter approval of the “County Legislature composed of single member districts apportioned equally according to population.”²

In 1963, the Erie County Council became a coordinating unit for county wide issues and program and worked solely on issues related to county government. An ILO replaced it in 1972 for ten years. The ILO disbanded in 1982 because declining membership made it difficult to staff local boards and the ILO Board. League structure through local Leagues was retained.

From 1965 to 1971, the League “promoted the establishment of a District Court in Erie County.”²

The League of Women Voters of Kenmore, Inc., was incorporated by the State of New York on October 26, 1967, as a 501(c)(4) not for profit. During its active tenure, the Kenmore League included Tonawanda and Grand Island. At one point, the Grand Island League became a unit of the Kenmore League.

A study to support a comprehensive public transportation system in Erie County concluded with consensus in May 1974. The position states in part, “The League envisions an integrated transportation system that will offer mobility for all people, protect the environment, conserve energy, promote efficient land use and improve the economy of the Buffalo central business district.” (No footnote needed)

The Orchard Park League began in 1977.

The West Valley Demonstration Project began with the West Valley Demonstration Project Act of 1980. The act requires that the Department of Energy is responsible for solidifying the high-level waste, disposing of waste created by the solidification, and decommissioning the facilities used in the process. The radioactive waste at West Valley in southwest New York State endangers the water supply for Western New York if it is not disposed of correctly. For most of its existence, the League has had a seat at the table of the West Valley Citizen Task Force and Lee Lambert occupied that seat.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF BUFFALO/NIAGARA

1272 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14209

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

April 2019 Calendar

Tuesday, April 2, 4:00 p.m.

Issues/Program Committee

Harlem Road Community Center

Thursday, April 4, 10:00 a.m. - noon

Great Decisions

League Office

Monday, April 8, 3:30 p.m.

Board of Directors

League Office

Wednesday, April 10, 1:30 p.m.

Local Government Committee

League Office

Friday, April 12, 11:30 a.m.

Lunch & Issues

Harlem Road Community Center

Thursday, April 18, 1:30 p.m.

Education Committee

League Office

Please remember to wear your League name badge to all League events.