

**President**

Lori Robinson  
president@lwvbn.org

**Office**

1272 Delaware Avenue  
Buffalo, NY 14209  
716-986-4898  
Fax 716-882-3797  
Email [lwvbn@lwvbn.org](mailto:lwvbn@lwvbn.org)

**Office Manager**

Amelia Palka-Mikes

**Office hours are flexible**

Always call before going to the office

**LWVBN website**

[www.lwvbn.org](http://www.lwvbn.org)

**LWVNYS website**

[www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)

**LWVUS website**

[www.lwv.org](http://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](mailto:lwvoter@verizon.net).

**League of Women Voters Buffalo/Niagara**

**2023 Annual Meeting**  
**Saturday, June 10, 10:00 am**

Ilio DiPaolo's Restaurant  
3785 South Park Avenue, Blasdell, NY 14219

Coffee at 10:00 a.m.

Business Meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Awards Luncheon at noon

Please note that you must be present at the annual meeting to vote in accordance with both the law and the League bylaws.

***Joan K. Bozer Leadership Award***

Nancy DeTine

***LWVBN LEE Award***

Ellen Neumaier

***Making Democracy Work Award***

Tim Tielman

We have also invited our Students in Albany to make remarks.

Reservation deadline: June 1, 2023

Make reservations online at [lwvbn.org](http://lwvbn.org).

Please call the League office when you make a reservation if you are paying by check. Make check payable to LWVBN and mail to LWVBN, 1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209.

**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 Letter**

Dear Members and Friends,

Is anybody else noticing that the years are going by faster and faster? Here we are again, time for annual meetings, conventions, and planning for another year. It is a time to reflect on and celebrate what we have accomplished, while planning for improvements and change where we can.

The LWVBN board is working on a strategic plan for 2023-2026.

*“Strategic planning is a process in which an organization’s leaders define their vision for the future and identify their organization’s goals and objectives. The process includes establishing the sequence in which those goals should be realized so that the organization can reach its stated vision.”*

A big THANK YOU to the members who participated in the survey that was sent out in April. Your responses were included in our presentation. The strategic planning group is composed of board members, committee chairs, and some new and long-time members. The group of 16 met on April 29.

We reviewed the survey responses and what we have been doing and came up with four key strategies for the next two to three years:

- Focus on voting-related issues and taking stands on important issues.
- Connect to more diverse and local communities and organizations.
- Conduct education for board, committees, and members regarding how our League works.
- Increase and diversify our membership.

This process now requires our four working groups to come up with goals and action plans to be implemented. Watch this space for updates! My expectation is to have some of this in place for the new board/membership year starting in July 2023.

It was also announced at the May board meeting that Amelia Palka, our office manager, will be leaving us in June. Amelia will be working at a legal clinic as experience for her UB Law School studies. Way to go, Amelia – we are so proud of you! We will be advertising the position for part-time office help shortly. If you or someone you know may be interested, please let me know.

The LWV New York State Convention is June 2-4. Our delegates will be Ramona Gallagher, Barbara Gunderson, Amy Moritz, Alberta Roman and me. I look forward to sharing what we learn.

Thank you for continuing to follow LWVBN on social media and sharing with your networks; this outreach provides our League with essential visibility.

Please contact me with any questions, concerns or ideas regarding our local program.

*In League, Lori Robinson*

## **Buffalo City Council Primary June 6, 2023**

There are five contested races in this year’s primary for the Buffalo City Council with 11 candidates total. The League and PUSH Buffalo are co-sponsoring a forum on June 6, 2023, at the Central Library from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The doors will open at 5:30 p.m. The candidates represent all the contested races in this election and are from the Ellicott, Lovejoy, Masten, North, and University Districts and all are seeking election as members of the Democratic Party. Each district contest is considered a separate race and must have at least two candidates accept the invitation to participate in accordance with League rules. The League will provide the moderator, timekeeper, and question screener. The event will be live-streamed and available on the League’s YouTube channel in its entirety.

*Terri Parks, Candidate Forum Coordinator*

## Great Decisions

The Great Decisions discussion group will meet on Thursday, June 1, 2023, via Zoom, to discuss Chapter 4 in the 2023 Great Decisions book: “Economic warfare and U.S. policy.” The Foreign Policy Association, which sponsors this discussion group nationwide, says this about the topic:

*Economic Warfare – Waging economic warfare consists of a variety of measures from implementing sanctions to fomenting labor strikes. Such tools are utilized by states to hinder their enemies, and in the case of the United States have been used as far back as the early 19th century. Since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, economic warfare has been the main means for the west to challenge Russia. How effective will these sanctions be at convincing Russia to cease its war? By Jonathan Chanis*

Lillis McLean will moderate this discussion. Contact Fran Holmes for additional information.

*Fran Holmes, Great Decisions Coordinator*

## In Memorium

We are aware that this League of 100+ years has many members who have lived to an advanced age. This is especially true of four of our members who were active in the League and their community until recently. The Buffalo News reported Janet Sciolino’s death at age 98 on January 18, 2023, in its May 14, 2023, edition. Janet was most active as a member of the League’s Transportation Committee when it worked to promote the expansion of the rapid transit system and to promote other local transportation issues.

Both John (Jack) and Elizabeth (Betty) Howell died this spring, Jack on March 22 and Betty on April 22. They were both 93 years old and had often attended League events prior to Covid-19. When we had a printed Voters Guide, Betty and Jack comprised one of the most reliable distribution teams to deliver the guides to locations where people could pick up that valuable resource. They were able to make that effort as recently as 2017.

May 13 would have been Joan Kendig Bozer’s 95th birthday. Instead, her family hosted a Service of Witness to the Resurrection and Thanksgiving for her life that ended on May 4, 2023. Joan gave great service to the community as a volunteer and elected official and was still looking forward to having an impact on important issues that remain unresolved. She was most active in the Buffalo League and served as its president prior to her election to the Erie County Legislature in 1977. Joan’s loyalty and support of the League continued until her death, and she promoted the League and encouraged our leadership in numerous ways. Most recently, she served on the committee to celebrate 100 years of the League of Women Voters of New York State in 2019.

Joan’s 18-year service in the Legislature was highlighted in a Buffalo News article in 1995, as she got ready to retire. The News summed up Joan’s support this way: “So as Bozer retires, the arts, the libraries, the mentally ill and the issues of shared government services and the preservation of historic local buildings, among others, are losing a determined official friend.” While her role as an elected official ended, Joan Bozer continued to champion those issues and others for the remainder of her life. It was because she was a role model for us all that the League continues to honor her with the Joan K. Bozer Leadership Award.

*Terri Parks*

## Nuclear Nugget

After reaching a peak of nearly 60,000 in the late 1980s, the number of nuclear warheads in the world has dropped significantly, to an estimated 10,000. But more countries now possess them – nine, including the U.S., Russia, China, North Korea, India, Pakistan, France, the U.K., and Israel.

Source: <https://thebulletin.org/nuclear-notebook/>

*Pat Townsend*

## Democracy: The Next Generation

### Youth Program Outreach seeks volunteers

The League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara has received a grant from the national League to implement voter registration and education in high schools across Erie and Niagara Counties. We need your help!

**Technology:** We're looking for someone to coordinate our use of the platform Outreach Circle to support follow-up with students who register to vote.

**Social media:** To complement our technology platform, we want to develop a presence on social media platforms to encourage teens to register, vote, and advocate for issues they are passionate about.

**Classroom presenters and aides:** We need a roster of volunteers to present voter education and register students in high school classrooms, along with assistants to help pass out materials and check registration forms. We'll train you on the content!

**Contact information research:** To reach more schools in Erie and Niagara Counties, we need to research names and contact information for high school principals and district superintendents.

Interested? Want more information? Contact Barbara Gunderson, Youth Program Chair.

*Barbara Gunderson, Youth Program Chair*

## 2023 School Board Candidate Forums

The League was invited to conduct six candidate forums for school board elections in May. Unfortunately, we were able to staff only five of them. The climate in all six was much calmer than last year, but there were issues that could have become volatile. They did not, and each forum was conducted with the usual calm, civil manner that the League rules promote and our League volunteers emulate. Many thanks to our moderators: Ramona Gallagher, Terri Parks, Lori Robinson, and Judy Weidemann; timekeepers: Alison Hyde, JoAnn Mecca, Amy Moritz, Ellen Neumaier, and Timothy Priano; and question screeners: Deborah Cohen, Ellen Moomaw, and Terri Parks.

The school districts were East Aurora Central Schools, Lockport City Schools, Starpoint Central Schools, Williamsville Central Schools, and Wilson Central Schools. It was a pleasure to work with school districts and PTAs to provide an opportunity for voters to learn the views of the candidates regarding issues that are important to the voters in each of those districts.

*Terri Parks, Candidate Forum Coordinator*

## Naturalization Ceremonies

There has been a new citizens ceremony at the Robert H. Jackson U.S. Courthouse each month this year. We appreciate Ramona Gallagher, Ellen Moomaw, Caren Shapiro, Janet Goodsell, Ann Zawicki, and Mike Egan for representing the League from February through May and helping 157 of the 200 new citizens welcomed to United States citizenship to complete voter registration forms. They joined with other groups and the presiding judge to remind our newest citizens that voting is one of the most important things that a citizen can do.

*Deborah Shiffner, Naturalization Ceremonies Coordinator*

## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Committee Organizes Activities in June

### 21-Day Challenge

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee of the League of Women Voters and Journey's End are providing an online learning opportunity: Seeking Safety, Seeking Welcome: A 21-Day Challenge About Refugees and Their Journeys. The Challenge begins on June 1, 2023, and will continue until June 22, 2023. You may register at any time. We will be able to learn about our newest residents, and their amazing stories and challenges, as they resettle in the U.S., New York State, Western New York and the greater Buffalo area.

If you are interested in joining the challenge you may register here: [Register for the 21-Day Online Challenge](#)

### Meet, Greet and Learn from our Allied Organizations

As a follow-up to the 21-Day Challenge we have decided to invite representatives of local organizations with common goals to a gathering in September 2023, from 2:00 till 5:00 p.m. at the Saturn Club on Delaware Avenue in Buffalo. We will encourage attendees to bring literature about their organizations to display. A representative from each group will have an opportunity to present a brief overview of what their organization is doing with respect to DEI and allowing people to become valued members of our Western New York community.

It takes courage to bring people from different backgrounds together. Some people may feel that it is not courageous, but risky or foolhardy, to hold such a gathering in a space belonging to a club that bears an elitist history. We trust that people will see that we are trying to get others and ourselves out of the silos and bubbles that we inhabit. Our intention is to welcome people of various walks of life who share common goals. We want to provide an opportunity for networking, collaboration and the exchange of ideas about what can be done to foster social justice and democracy in our region.

*Elizabeth Zausmer, DEI Chair*

## Primary Election Schedule

- June 17: Last day to register or change your address
- June 17-25: Early Voting
- June 27: Primary Election
  - Polls open in Erie County from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
  - Polls open in Niagara County from noon to 9:00 p.m.

## From LWVUS League Update, May 18, 2023

May 20, 2023, marks the 30th anniversary of the passage of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA), a landmark law that increased accessibility to the electoral process and reformed voter registration. The "motor voter" bill allowed citizens to register to vote at motor vehicle agencies, as well as by mail and through other agencies that serve the public.

The League was instrumental in passing the NVRA, organizing a national grassroots campaign to make voter registration more accessible.



1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## June 2023

**Thursday, June 1, 10:00 a.m. - noon**

**Great Decisions**

via Zoom

**Tuesday, June 6, 4:00 p.m.**

**Program, Issues & Events Committee**

via Zoom

**Thursday, June 8, 7:00 p.m.**

**Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Committee**

via Zoom

**Saturday, June 10, 10:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.**

**Annual Meeting**

Ilio DiPaolo's Restaurant

**Wednesday, June 14, 2:00 p.m.**

**Local Government Committee**

via Zoom