

President

Lori Robinson
president@lwvbn.org

LWVBN website

www.lwvbn.org

LWVNYS website

www.lwvny.org

LWVUS website

www.lwv.org

Office

1272 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14209
716-986-4898
Fax 716-882-3797
Email lwvbn@lwvbn.org

Office Manager

Sue Kelley

Office hours

Mon-Wed: Noon to 4:00 p.m.
Always call before going to the office

The Voter will be published six times this year. Copy for the November-December Voter is due by October 14 to Terri Parks at lwvoter@verizon.net.

How To Become A More Informed Voter

Speaker: Timothy J. Redmond, Ph.D.

Tuesday, September 17

Registration and Social Time at 6:00 pm

The Columns Restaurant, 2221 Transit Rd., Elma, 14059

It is generally agreed that the 2024 elections will be among the most consequential in America's history, yet correct information about the candidates and the issues is difficult to sort out from exaggerations, irrelevant name calling, and untruths inundating us from all sides.

Learn more at this program organized by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and co-sponsored by LWVBN.

The buffet dinner will feature slow cooked roast beef and chicken souvlaki and will include garden salad, penne florina (penne pasta with red pepper cream sauce and spinach), roasted baby red potatoes, seasonal vegetables, rolls and butter, dessert (cheesecake with strawberries), coffee and tea. A cash bar will be available.

Click <https://aaubuffalo.org/contact-us/program-registration/> to register or complete the form below and send it along with a check for \$35.00 per person made out to AAUW Buffalo to Susan McClary, by the September 12 deadline. Please add the names of additional guests on the back or on a separate sheet.

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

If interested in carpooling, please indicate your area (O.P., Williamsville, etc.): _____

Names of guests: _____

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,

YAY! We have a new office manager! Sue Kelley started working for LWVBN July 22, 2024. Sue brings experience in not-for-profit organizations, having worked with Clean Air Coalition, United Way and Canopy of Neighbors, specializing in customer service and data entry! I am looking forward to having our office organized and up to date very soon. Welcome, Sue!

At our board meeting on August 13, our new 2024-25 board participated in an orientation to keep us all on track regarding League policies and procedures.

We also reviewed our 2023–24 year-end financials (we are doing okay) and finalized purchasing bus wraps with our co-sponsors NAACP, Voice Buffalo, Buffalo Jewish Federation and PUSH Buffalo. These will be on the Niagara and Erie County bus lines in October.

Looking forward we have many voter registration and GOTV tabling opportunities available. We need volunteers to staff the tables. There are various times and places on the schedule. If you are not receiving the notices and want to help, please contact the office so Sue can get you on the correct mailing list.

A reminder that all memberships are now due for the 2024-25 membership and fiscal year. You may renew online at www.lwvbn.org or mail a check to the office. The annual dues remain \$75 for individual members, \$110 for households, and students are still free. Watch for a member's survey that will be sent with your renewal reminder. Please return it even if you have already renewed your membership.

As always, please contact me at president@lwvbn.org with any questions, concerns or great ideas regarding our local program.

*In League,
Lori Robinson*

P.S.: Thank you for continuing to follow LWVBN on social media and sharing with your networks. This outreach provides our League with essential visibility and helps to spread the word about making democracy work!

Great Decisions

On Thursday, September 5, at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom, the Great Decisions discussion group will meet to discuss Chapter 7 in the 2024 booklet: "High Seas Treaty." Following is a synopsis of the chapter as provided by the Foreign Policy Association, which produces the booklet:

High Seas Treaty by Foreign Policy Association editors

Areas of the seas beyond national jurisdiction comprise the high seas, which are facing a degradation of ecosystems due to climate change and the increase in human activities, such as shipping, overfishing, pollution, and deep-sea mining. The recently negotiated High Seas Treaty, also known as the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction treaty, will attempt to address these issues. How difficult will it be to convince nations to participate?

Contact Fran Holmes at mfranholmes@gmail.com for more information and if you wish to be provided the Zoom link for this discussion.

NOTE: Great Decisions will not meet in October.

Fran Holmes, Great Decisions Coordinator



A.R.I.S.E. WNY and Voice Buffalo present

Lunch and Learn: On Accessing the Vote

Tuesday, September 10, 2024
12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m., via Zoom



We will explore various voting options, including absentee voting and accessible voting machines. The session will also include instructional videos on ballot marking devices to help you understand how to use accessible voting machines effectively.

Moderator: Frank Cammarata, Director, Erie County Office of People with Disabilities

Guest Speakers:

Todd Vaarwerk, Chief Policy Officer, WNY Independent Living

Shanell Davis, People Inc. Advocacy

Sarah Saunders, Incredible VOICE Self-Advocacy Group Member

Register for this free event at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZlpceiorz8jGNbtzokySz3zl6FzmSVnnXf3> - /registration

An Invitation to the 16th Annual Anne Frank Social Justice Festival

AFP 2024 – Home: Building Our Collective Story
September 25-26, 2024
Buffalo State University

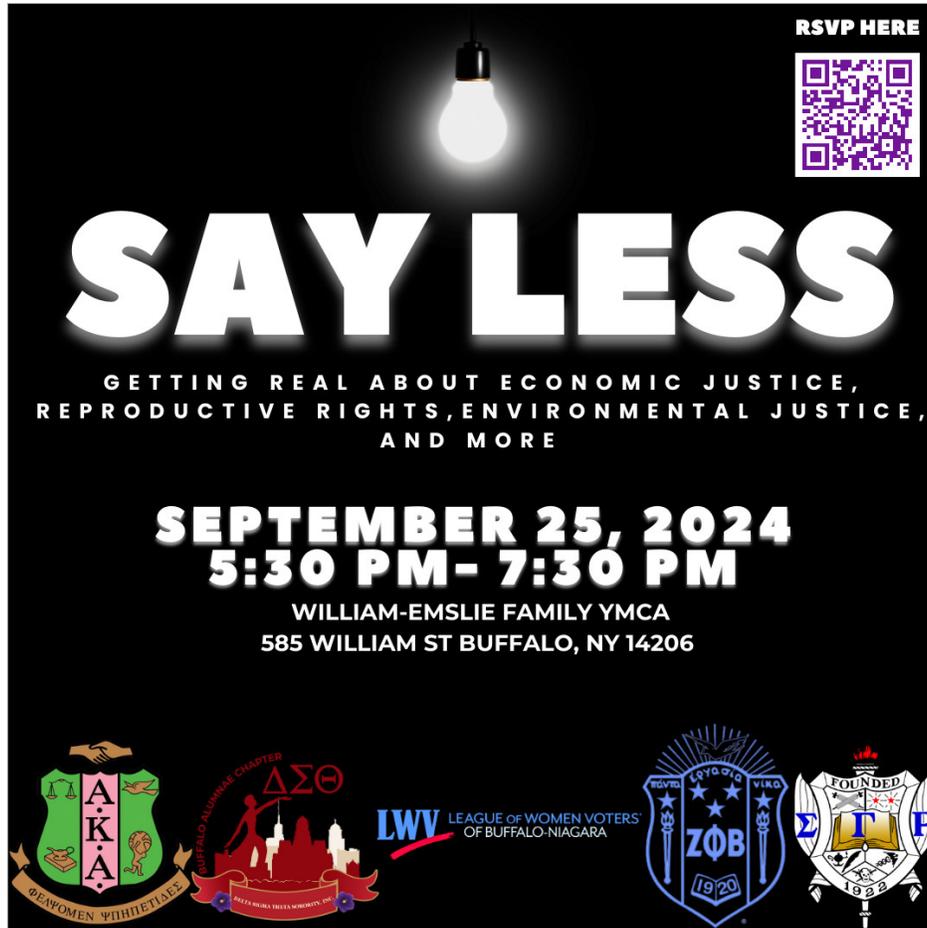
The Anne Frank Project website briefly describes the festival as follows:

We are honored to host this signature two-day celebration of stories at Buffalo State University: A campus that welcomes students from all over the world to immerse themselves in education, diversity, and social justice. Here, at Buffalo State, this is our community. What if we took this one step further and created an environment considered not only a community, but also a home?

Details about this year's festival and the Anne Frank Project are available here:

<https://www.annefrankproject.com/social-justice-festival>

Timothy Priano, Chair, Membership Committee



We are hosting a panel discussion targeting the issues that will attract young voters.

The panel will discuss affordable housing, student debt, reproductive and general health equity, environmental equity, and employment.

The panelists are **Lisa Hicks**, Director of Development, City of Buffalo; W. **Charles Brandy**, Director of Social Studies, Buffalo Public Schools; **Giavanna Cuomo-Brown**, Community Engagement Specialist, Buffalo Center for Health Equity; and **Nile Blass**, DMV Organizer, League of Women Voters U.S. **Jamil Crews**, Digital Communications Manager of Say Yes Buffalo, will be our moderator.

We look forward to seeing you there! If you have children or grandchildren of voting age, please bring them with you to this informative event!

Note: DEI meetings take place via Zoom from 7 to 8 p.m. on the second Thursday of the month. We are looking for new members who are eager to reach out to other organizations in the community, meet their members, learn about their activities and find a way to collaborate with them.

Elisabeth Zausmer, Co-Chair, DEI Committee

Naturalization Ceremonies

July and August Naturalization Ceremonies

Volunteers from LWVBN greeted 140 new citizens at three naturalization ceremonies in July and August and successfully registered 127 new voters. We were able to actively engage with voters, answer questions and make sure the voter registration forms were accurate and complete. Working with our partners from the Erie County Board of Elections we greeted new citizens who were excited to register to vote and looking forward to voting for the first time. We greeted a member of the Marines and a member of the Coast Guard who were already serving their country.

Citizens were welcomed to our country from 39 countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Burma, Canada, China, Congo, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Ghana, Guyana, Haiti, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Russia, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

Thanks to our volunteers for June through August: Barbara Weitzner Lin, Suzanne Thomas, Angela Kelschenback, Kim Nyugen, Mary Lou Enser, Linda Montgomery, Deborah Shiffner and Eileen Cassidy. Thanks to our partners at the Board of Elections for working with us to make these events so successful.

Deborah Shiffner, Volunteer Coordinator, Naturalization Ceremonies

Special Naturalization Ceremony at Iroquois Central High School

Mary Lou Enser and Linda Montgomery attended the naturalization ceremony at Iroquois Central High School on August 16. With our partners from the Board of Elections we registered 24 of 27 new citizens. The Board of Elections, Daughters of the American Revolution and the Erie County Commissioner of Jurors were present.

Mrs. Colleen McCoy and students in her BOCES Summer Government and Civics class arranged for the ceremony. Principal Patrick O'Brian also attended. A table, complete with a glittery "League of Women Voters" sign made by the students, was provided for us. Our table runner made it welcoming for people to come over to get help. The students also created flags of the new citizens' original 17 countries, which were hanging in the cafeteria.

The ceremony in the auditorium started with a color guard provided by the Boy Scouts. The Hon. Jeremiah McCarthy presided. We were seated on the stage with the other guests and each of us gave a presentation to the new citizens. The new citizens then came up one by one to receive their certificates. Afterwards the class had arranged for snacks and beverages in the cafeteria: pizza, chips, brownies, cookies, donuts, and pie along with coffee and water. A student provided music by playing guitar. What a wonderful event. It was an honor to be present and participate.

Mary Louise Enser

In Memoriam

Lee Tetkowski

One of the League's most influential and vital members for almost 60 years, Lee Tetkowski, died peacefully at age 101 on Independence Day, her favorite holiday. It's fitting that every year there will be fireworks honoring her long and active life. Many years ago, Lee was active in the Kenmore League until there were enough League members to start a Grand Island chapter. She was one of the founders and leaders on Grand Island until all the local Leagues merged in the League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara in 1997. Her passion for public education led to her leadership of a League Education Committee and a study of charter schools. Members of the committee were often asked to monitor the annual drawings for placement in charter schools in this area. When a League program organized by the Education Committee conflicted with a meeting of the school board superintendents' association about a decade ago, the group changed its meeting date in deference to Lee. A longtime activist, Lee marched in the first Women's March on January 17, 2017, and was briefly interviewed on the TV news that evening. Lee's contributions to the League were too many to mention, but many of us have considered her our role model for our League service. We honored Lee by creating the LWVBN LEE Award for members who have made a Long Term Commitment to the League with Energy and Excellence. Lee's love of life, talent as a weaver, and many contributions to education and the League will long be remembered.



Photo by Neil Tetkowski

In Neil Tetkowski's tribute to his mother, he issued this invitation: A public celebration of life will take place on October 19, 2024, at 2:00 p.m., followed by a reception at the Burchfield Penney Art Center. Friends, family, former students and the general public are invited to attend. In lieu of flowers, donations in Lee's memory may be made in support of the Tetkowski Family Endowment at the Burchfield Penny Art Center, 1300 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222.

Agnes Annis

On July 9, longtime League member and supporter Agnes Annis passed away peacefully at age 96. Agnes and her late husband, Bob, were among the group who delivered the printed Voters Guides each year when we published them. She also volunteered to deliver They Represent You brochures and assist in many voter service registration efforts. Both Agnes and Bob were regular attendees at League program events.

June Licence

June was a League member for many years. She was especially active in efforts in the community for peace education, restorative justice programs and world peace advocacy. She died on May 19, 2024, at age 85. On September 1, there was a tribute to her life at the annual Labor Day celebration at the home she shared with her lifelong companion, Roger Cook. League members were invited to attend.

Terri Parks

Geri Smith

Geraldine (Geri) Smith recently passed away peacefully in hospice in the Washington, D.C., area where she had lived since 2018. Before she moved, Geri was an active member of LWVBN and she continued her League membership in Washington. When our local members marched in the parade to celebrate 75 years of the League, Geri was one of those who dressed as suffragists and marched. She will be missed.

Judy Metzger

Disability Pride Festival, 21-Day Challenge, and Panel Discussion

Janet Goodsell and Barbara Gunderson spent a wonderful afternoon tabling with voter information at the Disability Pride Festival on July 26 at Canalside. The League of Women Voters of New York State co-sponsored a 21-Day Disability Access Challenge online. On July 31 they sponsored a panel discussion on disability rights. Panelists included Barbara Gunderson of LWVBN and Shameeka Andrews, who uses a wheelchair. LWVBN works closely with Self-Advocacy Association of New York State to promote access to voting for people with many different disabilities. We are advocating that all League members in New York State use the ballot marking machines at your polling places so that Boards of Election will make sure that they are in good working order and are accessible. If many of us request access to the machines, BOEs will have to do a better job of training poll workers. The Lunch and Learn Zoom event described on page 3 should help you. We encourage you to attend if you are able.

Barbara Gunderson, Voter Services Chair



1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

September-October 2024

Thursday, September 5, 10:00 a.m.

Great Decisions

via Zoom

Monday, September 9, 4:30 p.m.

Board of Directors

LWVBN Office and Zoom

Thursday, September 12, 7:00 p.m.

Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Committee

via Zoom

Tuesday, September 17, 6:00 p.m.

How to Become a More Informed Voter

The Columns Restaurant

Wednesday, September 25, 5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

Say Less

William - Emslie Family YMCA

Thursday, October 10, 7:00 p.m.

Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Committee

via Zoom

Monday, October 14, 4:30 p.m.

Board of Directors

LWVBN Office

Thursday, October 17, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Candidate Forum

Amherst Senior Center

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