

President

Lori Robinson
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LWVBN website

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LWVNYS website

www.lwvny.org

LWVUS website

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Office Manager

Now Hiring

Office hours are flexible

Always call before going to the office

The Voter will be published six times this year. Copy for the September-October Voter is due by August 12 to Terri Parks at lwvoter@verizon.net.

Summer Potluck!

Bring some friends and join us to learn about all the wonderful things our League is doing! Members and friends are all invited.

Monday, August 19, 2024
11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Ronald J. Pilozzi Pavilion
Niawanda Park (Veterans Memorial Park)
600 Niagara Street
Tonawanda, NY 14150

Please bring a dish to pass

Directions: The main entrance to the pavilion is located on the east side of the building in Section C of Niawanda Park. Enter at Niagara and Gibson Streets. Parking is also available in Section D by entering the park near Two Mile Creek Road.



Ronald J. Pilozzi Pavilion

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,

Wow! We had a delightful annual meeting and awards program on Saturday, June 1, with 61 guests, including long-time members, new members and lots of friends. All our awardees and presenters gave us inspiration to carry on. We appreciate you!

At the morning business meeting, with 34 members present, we approved the 2024-25 budget that includes some stretches and growth that will need all of you to help us fulfill. Our new board members were also elected – a fun group of defenders of democracy!

The Nominating Committee presented a slate that fulfilled our bylaws requirements. We have the ability to increase our board with appointed members for a one-year term. I am pleased to report that Deborah Cohen and Christine Cavarello have agreed to join the LWVBN board of directors and will increase our bandwidth to accomplish our mission. I am extremely grateful for the knowledge, commitment and energy all will bring to the table.

Joining me for 2024-25, the members of the board of directors are Marian Deutschman, vice president; Nancy DeTine, secretary; and Terri Parks, treasurer; at-large board members are Susan Czryny, Barbara Gunderson, Deborah Shiffner, Alberta Roman, Cynthia Havey, Fatima Zohra Slimani, Timothy Priano, Chris Cavarello, and Deborah Cohen.



Fatima Zohra Slimani, Alberta Roman, Barbara Gunderson, Timothy Priano, Nancy DeTine, Cynthia Havey, Marian Deutschman, Lori Robinson, Deborah Shiffner, Terri Parks

We are setting up a new software system to track our memberships. We will be sending out renewal reminders by the end of July. In the meantime, 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 \$75.00 for individual members, \$110 for households and students are still free. Watch for the 2024 Member Survey that will be sent with the renewal. Please complete and return it even if you have already renewed your membership.

I look forward to seeing you at our Summer Potluck on August 19, and please stop by to say “hello” as you see our League table out and about this summer registering voters and promoting the League.

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

*In League,
Lori Robinson*

PS: 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

July

On July 11 (the second Thursday in July), the Great Decisions discussion group will meet at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Rise' Kulick will moderate our discussion of Chapter 5: “NATO’s future.” The Foreign Policy Association, which produces the Great Decisions booklet, states the following on this topic:

NATO’s future by Sarwar Kashmeri

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has come under increased scrutiny, not because NATO troops are involved in the conflict, but because of its role in relations between Russia and its neighbors. Will expanding membership in NATO protect countries, or will it further provoke Russia?

August

The Great Decisions discussion group will meet via Zoom at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, August 1, to discuss Chapter 6. Beverley Painter will moderate our discussion: “Invisible Indonesia.” The Foreign Policy Association provides the following statement on this topic:

Understanding Indonesia by Charles Sullivan

Despite its large size, Indonesia remains virtually invisible to most Americans. But as one of the world’s largest democracies, the world’s largest Muslim-majority nation, and as an economic driver of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, why does it fly below the radar? What are current issues in U.S.-Indonesian relations, and what role can the country play in Asia?

Contact Fran Holmes for more information and if you wish to be provided the Zoom link for either or both of these discussions.

Fran Holmes, Great Decisions Coordinator

Thank You for the Joan K. Bozer Award

Dear LWVBN Members,

I was so honored to receive the Joan K. Bozer Award at the annual meeting luncheon on June 1. It is a privilege to serve as Voter Services chair. I'm proud of all we've accomplished: civic engagement through candidate forums and Students Inside Albany; registering voters and voter education through high school and college programs; participation in community events and naturalization ceremonies; and getting out the vote through canvassing and library displays. This happens because of the ongoing efforts of all of you, the members, who volunteer as college liaisons, library champs, canvassers, postcard writers, and staff at community events tables and naturalization ceremonies. You also reach out to other community organizations and work with them to make democracy work. I'm so proud that so many of you are engaged in this vital effort. It's a privilege and a joy to work with you.

Thank you all for your enthusiasm, energy, and commitment to empowering voters and defending democracy! And thanks so much for honoring me with this award!

Barbara Gunderson, Voter Services Chair

2024 School Board Candidate Forum Staff Acknowledgements

This year, the League provided staff for five school board candidate forums. Many thanks to the moderators: Laura McDade, Ramona Gallagher, Deborah Cohen, Timothy Priano, and Lori Robinson; timekeepers: Janet Goodsell, Mike Egan, Barbara Metiever, and Terri Parks; and question screeners: Judy Huber, Ramona Gallagher, Deborah Cohen, and Terri Parks. All five events were conducted with civility and respect from the candidates and audience. It is rewarding to provide the opportunity for voters in school districts to learn the views of the candidates. There was 100% participation of all the candidates for the school boards in the Hamburg Central School District, Williamsville Central School District, Lockport City Schools, Starpoint Central School District, and Wilson Central School District.

Terri Parks, Candidate Forum Coordinator

Naturalization Ceremonies

Volunteers from the League of Women Voters of Buffalo Niagara stepped up to work with 212 new citizens and help register them to vote at five naturalization ceremonies from March through June. 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 their first time.

Citizens were welcomed to our country from 32 nations: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Canada, China, Congo, Dominican Republic, Ghana, Haiti, India, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Liberia, Lebanon, Mexico, Morocco, Mongolia, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Russia, Saint Lucia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Vietnam.

We were grateful to be present as our new citizens swore allegiance to the United States. Thanks to our naturalization volunteers, including Deborah Shiffner, Janet Goodsell, Sharon Cramer, Suzanne Thomas, Mary Lou Enser, Eileen Cassidy, Lori O'Day and Barbara Weitzner-Lin. Thanks to our Board of Elections partner as well.

Deborah Shiffner, Naturalization Ceremonies Coordinator

Civics Day for Buffalo Public School Students



Charles Brandy, Social Studies Department Chair, Buffalo Public Schools; Barbara Gunderson, Chris Cavarello and Cindy Havey

On May 23, ten groups of Buffalo public school students and their social studies teachers attended the first-ever Civics Day at the Buffalo History Museum. Sponsored by Generation Citizen, which provided the curriculum used by the teachers with their classes this year, the students presented their research and recommendations on issues of importance to their classes. Issues included: “Advocating for a Bus Lane at Olmsted,” “Increased Access to Mental Health Training,” “Love Canal: Ongoing Environmental Issues,” “Racial Conflict as an Enduring Issue,” “Food Deserts and Lack of Investment in Inner City Urban Areas,” “Decreasing Community Violence,” and “Addressing Abandoned Properties.”

Barbara Gunderson, Cindy Havey and Chris Cavarello of LWVBN were mentors to the student groups, along with many civic leaders and other Buffalonians. We listened to student presentations, asked questions to explore their understanding further, and evaluated their efforts. The students at East Community High School and their teacher, Caitlin Orgek, won the overall competition with their topic, “Increased Access to Mental Health Training.”

It was an amazing experience. To meet students who are so invested in their community and so articulate about the problems facing them, and us, was inspiring. We are honored to have been invited to participate and hope to work with Generation Citizen every year. We’ll definitely be there at the next Civics Day!

Barbara Gunderson

Help your community — be a poll worker!

The Erie County Board of Elections invites you to join its team of poll workers if you are a registered voter and a resident of Erie County.

> Visit elections.erie.gov

- Learn the tasks and duties of a poll worker
- Complete the online application

>Take a training class

- Schedule a training class with a coordinator
- Earn \$25 for attending class
- Be administered the oath

>Work on Election Day

- Hours are 5:30 a.m. until approximately 9:30 p.m.
- Earn up to \$250 for the whole day
- Know that your work helps your community

Visit the Board of Elections website (<https://elections.erie.gov/ElectionWorker>) for more information.

Membership News

We welcome these new members who have joined the League in 2024:

From Buffalo: Beverly Waker, Amanda Anderson, Suzanne Thomas, Denise O'Donnell

From Clarence Center: Brenda Young

From Grand Island: Bridget Baumgartner

From Tonawanda: Karen Holloway

From Kenmore: Margo Downey

From Lewiston: Martina Fern

We hope this fine group of League members will all be able to attend our Summer Potluck and get to know the rest of us. Some of the new members have already become active in Voter Service activities.

Save the Date for September Events

September 17, 2024

Author Timothy Redmond, PhD, will deliver a presentation on How to Become a More Informed Voter at a dinner meeting at The Columns, 2221 Transit Road, Elma 14059. Dr. Redmond wrote a book entitled Political Tribalism in America: How Hyper-Partisanship Dumbs Down Democracy and How to Fix it.

The AAUW is planning the program with the League as co-sponsor.

Marian Deutschman

September 25, 2024

Time: 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Place: William-Emslie Family YMCA

Collaborating organizations: Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Tau, Zeta Phi Beta, and the League of Women Voters of Buffalo Niagara

Format: Panel discussion

Topic: The history of suffrage and the importance of voting

Light refreshments will be served.

Elisabeth Zausmer, DEI Committee Co-chair



Some of the League members and friends who marched in the 2024 Pride Parade

Lori Robinson, Timothy Priano, Joy Fields, Rabbi Jonathan Freirich, Cindy Havey, Shelly Marino, and Suzanne Thomas

They marched behind the League banner designed and crafted by Lee Tetkowski's daughter, Diane Pokorski.



1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

July-August 2024

Thursday, July 11, 10:00 a.m.

Great Decisions

via Zoom

Thursday, July 11, 7:00 p.m.

Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Committee

via Zoom

Monday, July 15, 4:30 p.m.

Board of Directors

LWVBN Office and Zoom

Thursday, August 1, 10:00 a.m.

Great Decisions

via Zoom

Thursday, August 8, 7:00 p.m.

Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Committee

via Zoom

Monday, August 12, 4:30 p.m.

Board of Directors

LWVBN Office

Thursday, August 19, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Summer Potluck Luncheon

Niawanda Park

The Voter is now being published six times a year. The next edition will arrive in the beginning of September 2024.

We are still seeking to hire an office manager!