

Rochester/Metro League of Women Voters

Mission Statement

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.

Voter education is one of the League's most important functions, and the League encourages all citizens to register and to cast an informed vote.

The League does not support political parties or candidates, but does take stands on important issues after careful study and research.

Membership in the League is open to all citizens of voting age.

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Join Us for Our Annual U. S. CONSTITUTION DAY CELEBRATION

September 17, 2009

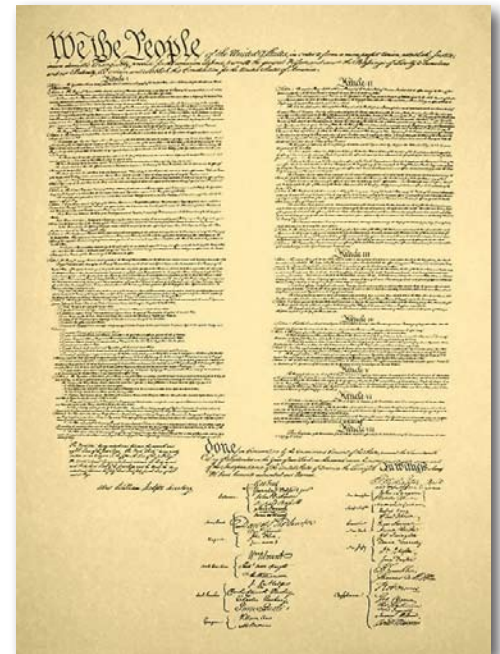
Nazareth College of Rochester, Otto Shults Center

- 12: 00 - 1:00 Workshop by Assembly Member, Joe Morrelle
- 1:00 - 3:00 Voter Registration by League of Women Voters
- 3:30 - 4:30 Reception by League of Women Voters
- 4:30 - 5:00 Lecture by Judge Evelyn Frazee, Supreme Court Justice, 7th Judicial District since 1992.

This September 17th marks the 222nd anniversary of the signing of the Constitution. Constitution Day marks an important opportunity for us to reflect upon the democratic foundations we still rely on today.

It is essential for Americans to remember key ideals such as responsive government, individual liberties and the separation of powers, especially an independent judicial branch. It is our responsibility to teach those lessons to future generations, and also to ensure our leaders are actively protecting the basic civil liberties we fought to obtain.

From LWVUS



Please join us for all of the activities or any part of the day you can. And don't forget to bring a friend to this informative celebration!

Since Last Spring

League members have been busy over the summer.

Katherine Smith, Co-President of LWV/RMA, received the Antoinette Brown Blackwell Society's Henrietta Woman of the Year award on May 20.

Betsey Swan, newly elected President of the LWV/NYS, visited Rochester and took time to visit with League Board members on June 23rd.

On June 6th, Georgia DiGregorio and Sheila Abeling registered voters at "The Spring Into Safety Health Fair" held in the parking lot of Rochester General. It was a beautiful sunny day with lots of enthusiastic people in attendance.

The new Board of Directors met July 23 and 29 to discuss the business of the League and plan program events for the following year.

Naturalization Ceremonies have been ongoing this summer. On July 4th, at the Genesee Country Museum, Barb Hendry, Kay Saunders and Katherine Smith participated in the ceremony.

On July 9th in the Monroe County Office Building, Ellie Newell welcomed 35 new citizens at the morning ceremony.

August 13th Marcia Eisenberg welcomed new citizens at the Naturalization Ceremony in the Federal Building; Ellie Newell also participated in the ceremony in the Monroe County Office Building and welcomed more new American citizens on that day.

On August 22 St. John Missionary Baptist Church will hold its tenth Block Fair which is an annual outreach event. The League participates and registers people to vote. Marcia Eisenberg and Sheila Abeling will attend.

A special thanks to the Naturalization Committee and all who participated in ceremonies. Their time and effort expended in welcoming new American citizens is greatly appreciated.

If you are interested in opening absentee ballots on Sept. 15th, Primary Day, or Nov. 3rd, Election Day, or helping with voter registration, please contact Sheila Abeling at 585-223-6819.



Katherine Smith receiving Woman of the Year Award from Henrietta Town Councilwoman, Cathy McCabe



LWV/NYS President Betsey Swan with LWV/RMA Co-Presidents Katherine Smith and Sula Baxter

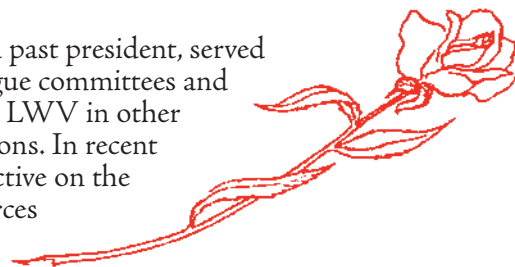


May League Day on Domestic Violence

In Memoriam

Charlotte Fraser, League member since 1954, died May 12, 2009.

Charlotte was a past president, served on various League committees and represented the LWV in other local organizations. In recent years she was active on the Natural Resources Committee.



LWV/RMA 2009-2010 Program

LWV/RMA has planned five public education forums for the 2009-2010 year. Three of these forums will be developed by local study groups on LWVNY and LWVUS positions on the following topics:

- Climate Change/Global Warming on Feb. 5, 2010
- NYS Public Authority Law '09 on Mar. 5, 2010
- Federal and State plans on Health Care on May 7, 2010

Please attend these Community Conversations and bring a friend.

In addition the LWV/RMA is co-sponsoring a meeting at Brighton Town Hall on Oct. 19 on gas drilling in the Marcellus shale and an event at Nazareth College in April on the women's suffrage movement in Liberia. More information on each of these events will be in a future VOTER. Please become an active member of the League by attending the study groups and the educational forums

In order to join one or more of these study groups, call or e-mail:

- Beth Keigher at 271-6694, jkeigher@rochester.rr.com
for Public Authorities in Monroe County
- Judy Dresnack 637-4753, jdresnac@brockport.edu
for Health Care
- Chris Pryor 329-4918, cpryor@rochester.rr.com
for global warming.
- Kathy Smith, *Co-President*

Please Join Us for a League Co-Sponsored Public Forum: Natural Gas Production - At What Cost to NYS?

How will hydraulic fracturing in the Marcellus shale in the Southern Tier impact our water, environment and economy?

Monday, October 19, 2009 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM (Free)
Brighton Town Hall Downstairs Meeting Room
2300 Elmwood Avenue, Rochester, NY 14618

Orientation to the Issues • Q&A with Expert Panel

Co-sponsored by the Federation of Monroe County Environmentalists, League of Women Voters/Rochester Metro Area, Sierra Club, Genesee Valley Chapter - Adirondack Mountain Club, Genesee Valley Audubon Society.

For information go to www.fmce.org or call: 392-4918.

Pre-register via email to receive pre-forum reference materials.

See page 4 for article, "Natural Gas Production at What Cost to NYS?"

Needed! Moderator and Speaker Trainees

The League is well known for providing non-partisan moderators for candidate public forums and debates and for providing speakers on relevant topics. This activity promotes our mission of voter education and, in addition, is a source of League income. With public interest running high for this fall's election, we anticipate many moderating requests, more than we can presently handle. If you are interested in being a League speaker, speeches will be prepared for you. These are activities that require a minimum number of volunteer hours on an as-needed basis.



Dorothy Borgus will be conducting one-on-one training with assistance and ongoing coaching as necessary. Please consider this public outreach as your opportunity to serve the League. It's fun, it's easy, and you meet the most interesting people!

Contact Dorothy at 889-4763 or dorothyborgus@aol.com for further information or to shadow her at an event to see if it's for you.

LWV Garage Sale

September 11-12 9am-3pm

22 Indian Spring Lane (Turn east off Clover between Monroe and Elmwood Ave.)

All those items you have been saving because they might be needed sometime – well, the sometime is here. The League will gladly take them off your hands. Items may be dropped off for the garage sale at the above location from September 4th through September 9th. League member, Gretchen Shafer, has generously donated her garage for the event. Household items, jewelry, books, and furniture are acceptable. Please, no clothing, televisions, computers or sports equipment.

We need not only donated items, but also WORKERS. Volunteers are needed in 4 hour shifts (8-12 and 12-4) on Sept 9 and 10 to sort, price, and set up; and on Sept 11 and 12 to work the sale. The League has not undertaken a sale in several years and many workers are needed to make it a success. Please give generously of your time and items.

Call the following if you can help: For preparation and set up call Sula Baxter, 225-5284. For sale days, call Ann Weintraub, 482-8662.

Let us hear from you!



Fair Campaign Pledge

The pledge is sent by the League of Women Voters/RMA and Interfaith Alliance of Rochester to all candidates for public office.

FAIR CAMPAIGN PLEDGE

As a candidate for public office in 2009 election, I pledge the following:

- I will conduct my campaign accurately and honestly. I will discuss the issues and participate in fair public debate with respect to my views and qualifications.
- I will not engage in, permit or condone personal attacks upon the character of my opponent(s); nor will I engage in invasions of personal privacy unrelated to campaign issues.
- I will not use or permit the use of any campaign material or advertisement which uses quotations or images taken out of context to misrepresent the other candidate or other candidate's message.
- I will refuse to disseminate any campaign material or message in which I am not prominently identified, or affiliated.
- I will publicly repudiate any individual or group whose activities on my campaign's behalf (directly or indirectly) violate this Fair Campaign Pledge.

In signing this pledge, I assume personal control and responsibility for the conduct of my campaign.

Signature: _____



On September 9th, the League of Women Voters/Rochester Metro Area and The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester will hold a "Pledge Signing and Recognition Ceremony" at the Monroe County Office Building in the Atrium at noon.

We are encouraging all candidates running for public office to run positive, issues-oriented campaigns. Some candidates feel that negative ads are effective. We believe that positive campaigns that address important issues are winning campaigns. We encourage the candidates to sign The Fair Campaign Pledge. If The Pledge is broken by a candidate, the Fair Election Practices Committee will hear all candidate complaints brought before them.

The members of the FEPC Committee are Sarah F. Liebschutz (Chairperson), John Curran, Channing Filbrick, Margaret Freeman, and Thomas Frey. Alternates on the committee are Lois Geiss, Bill Kelly, Joanne VanZandt and Kay Wallace.

Sheila Abeling, VP Voter Service

Natural Gas Production at What Cost to NYS?

We all know that New York State is fortunate to have an excellent supply of fresh water, from Lake Ontario to the Finger Lakes and many rivers and streams. But how many of us know that we also have a rich supply of natural gas in the Southern Tier of New York in what geologists call the Marcellus Shale layer?

Even though oil companies have been extracting this natural gas for the last 100 years, most of it was inaccessible until the recent combination of two new techniques: horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing. By using these techniques together, the oil companies are confident that they can extract this natural gas and use it to heat people's homes and cook their food in the Eastern United States. But before we do this, we should consider the following:

- Approximately 1 million gallons of water are forced deep into the ground each time a well is fractured, and there may be hundreds of wells;
- Many compounds, some of them very toxic, are used to help fracture a well; these could leak out and contaminate ground or surface water;
- Fracturing produces huge quantities of contaminated waste water; even if sewage treatment is available locally, our sewage treatment plants currently have neither the technology nor the capacity to treat these hazardous wastes.

In addition to our water supply, there will be impacts on roads, traffic patterns, noise levels, aesthetics, and air quality (including emissions from trucks, drilling equipment, compressors, and test burn-offs).

Local business, such as farming, wineries, fishing, real estate and tourism, depend upon our excellent quality of water, air and soil, as well as the beautiful landscapes of the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes.

Join us on Monday, Oct. 19, 2009 from 7-9 PM in the Brighton Town Hall Downstairs Meeting Room to discuss with experts the impacts of drilling for natural gas in New York State and determine what actions citizens should take to protect our environment in the process. For more information, see www.fmce.org or call Chris Pryor at 392-4918.

Save the Date!

Get Out The Vote Luncheon

Locust Hill Country Club

October 22, 2009, 11:30-2:00

Speaker: Senator Joseph Robach

\$50 for members and guests

Send checks to LWVRMA, 45 Exchange Blvd

Rochester 14614

Sunlight NY Gets Better and Better

Since its initial launch, state website Sunlight 2.0 has added:

- A new interactive map which allows users to easily locate their local officials, including contact information and links to their Web sites
- Links to the 2009-2010 state budget
- All 10,036 member items in 2008-2009 state budget, and 3,000 completed member item dispositions from the Attorney General's review of the 2006-2007 state budget
- An enhanced member items map which allows for multiple years to be searched simultaneously
- An interactive map showing the number and types of governments in each county
- A Smart Search feature which allows users to overcome variations in words due to misspellings, transcriptions, transpositions, acronyms, phonetics, sequence differences, nicknames and many other common errors found in campaign finance disclosure reports
- The ability to export search data to an Excel spreadsheet, making it easier for the public to use
- Spanish translation

Project Sunlight is more than just a repository of government information; it is also an educational resource. The Web site offers information on the basics of state government, how candidates report campaign finances, what lobbyists are required to publicly report, and member items categorized by the name of the sponsoring elected official and the county in which the money is directed. It also includes an series of videos to enhance the ease with which users can understand the educational materials.

To access this site go to: www.sunlightny.com.



Update on Consolidation & Shared Services

Government Reorganization:

Governor Paterson signed into law June 2009 a bill that the Attorney General proposed, and Assembly and Senate passed, that deals with issues on consolidation and dissolution of governmental entities.

The law has the following provisions:

- Establishes uniform and simplified consolidation and dissolution procedures
- Empowers governing bodies to initiate said procedures
- Clarifies petition process
- Empowers citizens to place issue on ballot by collecting petitions of 10% or 5,000 voters which ever is less, or in entities under 5,000, 20% of electors
- Strikes from previous law property qualifications (must own property) to sign petition
- Authorizes counties to abolish entire units of local governments with a standardized process including referendum with special majority requirements.

LWV/RMA held a forum on this topic in the spring and we are working with the Center on Government Research to continue study. In addition the LWVNY has authorized a study and consensus on consolidation with consensus next spring.

Kathy Smith, *Co-President LWV/RMA*

New Study on Government

From LWVNYS: "...many local Leagues have studied or are currently studying various aspects of local consolidation, with the hope of arriving at local positions that would permit lobbying. We believe a statewide study is necessary...Without a statewide position on consolidation, there is a danger that local Leagues will adopt conflicting positions and seek to lobby at cross purposes with each other."

More on the proposed study will appear in future issues of the VOTER.

Member on New Study Committee

From Beth Keigher, *Chair Local Government*

I am pleased that I have been asked to serve on a state study on consolidation and shared services as the representative of LWV/RMA. I suspect this will be a two-year study. I invite any and all members interested in this issue to contact me about participation as we "wade" through this issue and its many components. The focus of the study is two fold: one, do we want a position on possible consolidation mandates (currently the law is voluntary initiatives) or financial incentives and second, do we want to develop some criteria for evaluating local proposals to assist local leagues as their localities deal with this issue. Call me at 271-6694, if you are interested. Go to Attorney General Andrew Cuomo's website for more information or to reformnygov.com.

SEPTEMBER 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 VOTER deadline	2	3	4 Deadline, Ga- rage sale items	5
6	7	8	9 Fair Election Campaign Signing Ceremony	10 Naturalization Ceremony AM	11 LWV/RMA Garage Sale	
13	14	15 Primary Day	16	17 US Constitution Day/Public Forum Naturalization, Noon	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Board Meeting 3pm	25	26
27	28	29	30			

OCTOBER 2009

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5 VOTER deadline	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 Board Meeting 3pm	16	17
18	19 Natural Gas Drilling Forum	20	21	22 Get Out the Vote Luncheon	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Board meets at 3:00 PM on the fourth Thursday of each month at Brighton Town Hall, Stage Conference Room.
 Natural Resources meets at the home of Ann Jones, 244-9337. For Natural Resources details, call Chris Pryor 392-4918
 Social Policy meets at the home of Joan Rosenthal, 244-6255. For Social Policy details, call Judy Dresnak 637-4753
 For Local Government details, call Beth Keigher 271-6694

11:00 AM Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Monroe County Office Building, 39 W. Main St;
 2:00 PM Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Federal Court House at 100 State Street.

League Days are open to the public. Calendar information subject to change.
 Board meetings of the LWV/RMA are open to membership.

For more complete information consult our website at www.lwv-rma.org, call the office at 262-3730 or e-mail us at lwv-rma@frontiernet.net

Voter Award

At its spring convention, the LWV/NYS presented its Award of Excellence to the LWV/RMA for its VOTER "In Recognition of Outstanding Accomplishment & Bulletin Design". My thanks to members for their contributions to the VOTER and to Chris Burleigh who does the layout and makes it look so great! According to the state League, "This bulletin is extremely informative and practical".

Jane Schmitt, VOTER Editor



**Report: Annual Meeting
June 4, 2009**

Members took action on the following items:

- Elected officers and directors
Sula Baxter and Katherine Smith, Co-Presidents 2009-2010
Ann Weintraub, VP Development 2009-2011
Judy Dresnack 2009-2011, Director Social Policy
Jane Schmitt 2009-2011, Director (Voter Editor)
- Approved substitute budget presented by Dorothy Borgus
- Increased individual and household membership by \$5
- Accepted By-Laws changes to Article V recommended by Committee and printed in May Voter.
- Accepted Local 2009-2010 Program.
- Recognized Sarah Liebshutz for her 50 years as a League member.



Sarah Liebshutz

Members attending the meeting: 30.

Join the League Today!



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Check Amount: _____

Level of Membership: _____

Yes! I would like to get The VOTER in my E-Mail!

Please send this form and your check payable to
League of Women Voters/RMA to:
LWV/RMA, Times Square Building,
45 Exchange Street, Suite 508,
Rochester, New York 14614

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

Individual/Associate	\$75
Household	\$105
Susan B. Anthony/Frederick Douglass	\$150
Carrie Chapman Catt	\$200
Student (full-time/under 25).	\$25
Low income, call office	Sliding \$scale



**Rochester/Metro
League of Women Voters**

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Rochester **VOTER**

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Office Hours: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Monday and Wednesday

Officers:

Katherine Smith
Co-President

Sula Baxter
Co-President

Ann Weintraub
VP Development

Sheila Abeling
VP Voter Service

Dorothy Borgus
Treasurer

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Social Policy

Beth Keigher
Local Government

Roxanne Kuliner
Public Relations

Chris Pryor
Natural Resources

Gaynelle Wethers
Budget

Jane Schmitt
VOTER Editor

Off-Board:

Chris Burleigh
VOTER Layout & Production

**October VOTER
Deadline is September 1!**

Goals of the League of Women Voters:

- To encourage informed citizen participation in government and politics
- To influence public policy through education and advocacy

Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all – the apathy of human beings.
Helen Keller, *My Religion*