



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.

Inside this issue:

- Annual Meeting 1
- Since Last Month 2
- Convention Considers Arms Control . . 2
- Remembering Bee Bibby 2
- New Members 2
- Albany Student 2
- Remember Earth Day 3
- What a Celebration! 3
- More About Tajikistan 4
- Brockport Consolidation Forums 4
- Volunteers for Open World Program . . 4
- Coming Events 5
- Good News from Voter Service 5
- Fair Judiciary 5
- Latest on Redistricting 5
- Calendars 6
- Picture Page 7
- Officers 8

Join Us for the Annual Meeting!

June 3, 2010

Locust Hill Country Club
2000 Jefferson Road
11:00 am - 2:00 pm

Agenda:

Gathering & Social time 11:00
Luncheon at 11:30
Business meeting at 12:00

Election of Officers & Directors (below)
Adoption of Budget
Adoption of Program

Please send your check for \$25 to LWV/RMA, 45 Exchange Blvd., Rochester, New York 14614, if you plan to attend the luncheon. Deadline for luncheon reservations is May 26th.

The following are proposed for election, June 3, 2010:

Officers:

1. President: Katherine Smith 2010-2012
2. VP Voter Service: Sheila Abeling 2010-2012
3. Secretary: Judy Dresnack to complete vacated term to 2011
4. Treasurer: Annette Miller 2010-2012

Board of Directors:

5. Gin Busack 2010-2012
6. Beth Keigher 2010-2012
7. Gaynelle Wethers 2010-2012

Off Board non-elected, to be appointed

Nominating Chair: Sula Baxter
Member: Georgia DeGregorio
Member: Lauren Frank

Budget information is in the May VOTER; please bring it with you.

Members are encouraged to attend and participate in the business meeting at 12:00. Please plan to attend; a quorum is required to convene the business meeting.

Since Last Month

The League participated in 2 Naturalization Ceremonies in the last month. Between 40 and 50 new citizens took part in these ceremonies. One was held at Minerva DeLand School in Fairport, with students sharing essays and providing vocal performances.

Convention to Consider Arms Control

At Convention 2010 in Atlanta, LWVUS will be recommending adoption of concurrence on the convention floor with its updated position on arms control. The proposed update is based on the recommendation of the LWVUS Arms Control Task Force.

Arguments that support an updated position:

- The LWVUS Arms Control position was adopted in 1983 and reflected the language and thinking of the Cold War era.
- Lethality and distribution of all weaponry have increased over the last 27 years.
- Threat realities from state and non-state actors have changed markedly.

Arguments that oppose an updated position:

- The Arms Control position is usable as is.
- The members should examine these recommended changes by the traditional study method.

Rationale for using this form of member agreement:

Concurrence at Convention is a valid method of developing new League positions. This method was used on Gun Control in 1990, Early Intervention for Children at Risk in 1994, Violence Prevention in 1994, Abolition of the Death Penalty in 2006 and addition of language on the Judicial branch to the LWVUS Principles in 2008. It is particularly useful for issues that are easily understood and where a traditional local-League based study could be expected to reach the same conclusion as the proposed concurrence.

For more information, see April VOTER and/or go to www.LWV.org.

New Members:

Sue Dombrowski and Linda Donahue
42 Bunny Run
Churchville, NY 14428
585-293-9274
ldonahu1@rochester.rr.com

Yar Deng
31 Bobrich Drive – Apt. D
Rochester, New York 14610

Ed Scutt (National Member)
258 Macintosh Drive
Rochester, NY 14626
585-227-0532.

Remembering Bee Bibby

The following is from an article that appeared in the VOTER when the LWV/RMA hosted a birthday party for Bee Bibby to celebrate her 100th birthday.

Bee related how both her parents were strong supporters of women's rights. As a child, she remembers attending an evening event with her parents where Emma Sweet, assistant to Susan B. Anthony, pounded her cane on the church floor in order to be heard. Bee commented, "It was a church congregational meeting and in those days women were not in the habit of speaking up. My guess is that she was trying to be heard and was being ignored. As a disciple of Susan B. Anthony, she was not about to let that happen."

Known for her active role in the League, Bee has advocated for better management of local government, helped draw up the charter that defines the governmental powers of Monroe County, and persuaded local legislators to revise the county budget in order that the public could more easily understand it. More recently, she sponsored the undertaking of a study by the League, in conjunction with the Center for Governmental Research, and the issuance of the report, "Local Development Corporations: Risks & Benefits."

Bee, a past League president, chaired the Local Government Committee and was also active in other committees. Over the years, her knowledge, dedication and sense of perspective have been invaluable to the League. We shall miss Bee's support and guidance. As Mark Hare concluded in a recent article in the D&C, we need more Bee Bibbys.

Jane Schmitt, *Voter Editor*

Albany Student

The League sent Yar Deng, a senior at School Without Walls, to the conference "Students Inside Albany" on April 11-14th. Yar Deng, a student member of the League, formed a non-profit organization called "Chance to Empower Sudanese Girls". It helps female survivors of the Sudanese Civil War and similar conflicts. Its goal is to provide girls with the tools to move on with their lives and get an education. Sudanese girls are given scholarships to further their secondary education in Kenya in boarding schools. She hosted a fundraiser on May 7th at the School Without Walls that included a fashion show, poetry slam and drumming.



Yar Deng & Assemblyman Joseph Morelle

Yar was one of forty students to attend the Albany conference. The program helped to increase high school students' awareness of representative government. Yar had the opportunity to shadow Assemblyman Joseph Morelle.

Remember Earth Day

As our nation reflects on the problems facing our planet, it's important to remember why these issues matter, and what we can do as citizens. League supporters are now asking their senators to make sure a climate change bill is as strong as possible, and it's not too late to add your voice. You can call 1-877-9-REPOWER, a service our friends at Repower America are providing as another way to reach your senators.

The League has been working year-round educating the public and lobbying Congress on climate change, and we expect legislation to be introduced in the Senate soon.

Why is climate legislation important? The scientific evidence is clear: climate change, caused largely by human emissions of greenhouse gases, is already threatening our health and causing environmental damages, including:

- Intensifying floods, hurricanes, sewage overflows and wildfires
- Displaced populations and an increase in the spread of diseases like malaria
- Severe droughts and heat waves leading to heat-related illness and deaths
- Crop devastation and drinking water shortages.

What next?

These disturbing trends will continue and worsen substantially unless we make serious changes. The League supports legislation that includes:

- A declining cap on greenhouse gases that reduces U.S. emissions at least 25% by 2020 and 80-95% by 2050
- Funding to help the poorest countries deal with these emerging problems
- A 10-year moratorium on new coal plants to restrict greenhouse gas emissions
- Investments in a new clean energy economy, including wind, conservation and efficiency programs that will secure energy supplies, foster innovation, and create new jobs.

Ask your friends and relatives to take action today by contacting your senators and representatives. As citizens, we are in this fight together.

From LWVUS



What a Celebration!

The LWV/RMA's 85th birthday was a great success! Nearly eighty people came to honor our history and the important work we do to make democracy work. The celebration added nearly \$2,000 to our treasury which will help us provide voter services and impact change based on consensus issues. Thanks to all who made this day truly special!

Enjoying the occasion with us were the County Executive, Maggie Brooks; Mayor, Robert Duffy; Town Supervisor, Sandra Frankel, and LWVNY President, Betsy Swan. Proclamations from government officials with words of praise for the League were most appreciated. Speaker, David Cay Johnston, spoke on the importance of a civic voice in a democracy. His remarks were perceptive and stimulating. I hope you saw the D&C article (4/14/10) on the event as well as the Thumbs Up for the work of the LWV/RMA.

It was a pleasure to honor our many community partners with whom we have worked to educate the public and advocate for reform. The LWV/RMA would like to acknowledge all those organizations who supported us over the years.

ADVOCACY

Center for Environmental Information
Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning
Domestic Violence Consortium
Early Childhood Development Initiative
Fair Election Practices Committee
Lake Ontario Coastal Initiative
Monroe County Federation of Environmentalists
Sierra Club

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS/INSTITUTIONS

American Association of University Women (AAUW)
Center For Governmental Research
The Interfaith Alliance of Rochester
Rochester Federation of Women's Clubs
Susan B. Anthony House
The Ukrainian Federal Credit Union

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District
Nazareth College
Rochester Chapter Upstate Green Business Network
Rochester Museum & Science Center
Seneca Park Zoo
St. John Fisher College
SUNY Brockport

ELECTION COMMISSIONERS

FOUNDATIONS

The Rochester Area Community Foundation

MEDIA

Democrat and Chronicle
WXXI

We thank them for having a civic voice that makes a difference!

Ann Weintraub, *VP Development*

More About Tajikistan

History:

The Tajik people came under Russian rule in the 1860s and 1870s, but Russia's hold on Central Asia weakened following the Revolution of 1917. Bolshevik control of the area was fiercely contested and not fully reestablished until 1925. Tajikistan became independent in 1991 following the breakup of the Soviet Union, and experienced a civil war between regional factions from 1992-97. There have been no major security incidents in recent years, although the country remains the poorest in the former Soviet sphere.

Geography:

Area: 143,100 sq. km. (slightly smaller than Wisconsin). Tajikistan is located between Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to the north and west, China to the east, and Afghanistan to the south.

Ninety-three percent of Tajikistan is mountainous with altitudes ranging from 1,000 feet to 27,000 feet, with nearly 50% of Tajikistan's territory above 10,000 feet. Earthquakes of varying degrees are frequent. The massive mountain ranges are cut by hundreds of canyons and gorges; at the bottom of these run streams which flow into larger river valleys where the majority of the country's population lives and works.

Economy:

Tajikistan is the poorest country in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and one of the poorest countries in the world. Because of a lack of employment opportunities in Tajikistan, nearly half of the labor force works abroad, primarily in Russia and Kazakhstan, supporting families in Tajikistan through remittances. Foreign revenue is precariously dependent upon exports of cotton and aluminum, and on remittances from Tajik migrant workers abroad. The economy is highly vulnerable to external shocks. Tajikistan has great hydropower potential, and has focused on attracting investment for projects internally and for electricity export. Meanwhile, the country faces severe electricity shortages, particularly during the winter, when most of Tajikistan's inhabitants receive little or no electricity for weeks at a time.

Judy Weinstein, *Co-Chair Open World*

Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ti.html>.

For more information about hosting our Tajikistan guests, or volunteering to help with the program, please call Sula Baxter (225-5284). They will be here September 25-October 3. Volunteers are needed!

Brockport Consolidation Forums

The League of Women Voters /Rochester Metro Area along with the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) will conduct two forums in Brockport on May 26 and June 8 at the Brockport Middle School at 7:00 pm. The purpose is to inform and share viewpoints about the June 15 vote on dissolving the village.

Consolidation is an issue the LWV/RMA has been studying for several years. With the generous financial support of the Bee Bibby Endowment Fund, we can now offer the material to voters when they are actually going to vote on consolidation proposals. We hope our expertise on this subject will help the citizens in Brockport.

A major mission of LWV is to present the facts to voters and elected officials regarding proposals on which they are voting. This vote in Brockport will be the first in NYS under the new 2010 Consolidation law. It is on the ballot under the updated process of citizens petitioning their Village Board to have such a vote.

The citizens of Brockport will decide June 15 what governmental structure they want to provide their local services. The LWV/RMA and CGR will encourage an open and honest debate about this decision. The Bee Bibby Endowment Fund provides the opportunity for the Brockport Village Board to offer these forums. Also, LWV/RMA will own the material produced, so we can make it available to other NYS Leagues when consolidation votes are going to take place in their communities.

The information presented May 26 and the summary of the forum that evening will be available on the LWV/RMA and CGR's websites. The Village of Brockport and LWV/RMA will have copies of all materials that can be copied for distribution to interested parties.

Katherine Smith, *Co-President LWV/RMA*

Volunteers for Open World Program

Would and could you share your time and friendship? You have a wonderful opportunity this fall to participate in the Open World Program. We are looking for volunteers to give their time for us to have a successful project for our League. We need people to drive our Tajikistani visitors to different places for eight days. So if you could find time to volunteer for the joy of transporting our visitors, we would appreciate it. Please call Sula Baxter at 225-5284 or e-mail her at billsula@frontiernet.net.

Coming Events

On June 10th, Mimi Wilson will be welcoming new citizens in a Naturalization Ceremony at the Monroe County Office Building at 10:00 am. Also, at 1:00 pm, Barb Hendry will be representing the League at the Federal Building ceremony.

The Genesee Country Museum will host a Naturalization Ceremony on July 4th. Barb Hendry and Phyllis Masters will represent the League.

Marcia Eisenberg will welcome new citizens on July 8th at 10:00 am at the Monroe County Office Building.

Sheila Abeling, *VP Voters Service*

Good News from Voter Service

The Governor signed into laws the following:

1. An affidavit ballot submitted on Election Day at a polling place will constitute an application to register to vote, or to change political party enrollment. Previously, voters whose names were either not found in the poll books, or whose names were not listed as being enrolled in a party in a primary election, were required to cast affidavit ballots. This new law codifies into statute the current custom of using the affidavit ballot as a registration or change of enrollment tool.
2. The absentee ballot has been simplified by removing a requirement that the voter provide certain information on the reason for the voter's absence. Currently, the absentee ballot application form requires that individuals provide specific information about the nature of their disabilities or why they won't be in their polling district on Election Day, as well as names and addresses of employers and specific information regarding their whereabouts.

Sheila Abeling, *VP Voters Services*

Fair Judiciary

The Kansas League's state-wide educational campaign, "Safeguarding U.S. Democracy: Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary," is featured in the American Judicature Society's publication, *Judicature*, March-April, Vol. 93, No. 5. The article was written by Program Director Zaida Arguedas and Program Specialist David Ward to highlight the League's important campaign in Kansas. By highlighting the League's program, the Society recognizes how significant the topic of judicial diversity has become to citizens and good-government groups throughout the country.

From LWVUS

Latest on Redistricting

The Pocantico Conference Center in Tarrytown, NY played host to a conference, "Developing an Action Agenda for Redistricting in 2011," convened by the League of Women Voters of the United States and the Campaign Legal Center.

The conference brought together organizations and individuals from across the nation to discuss ways to work together to influence the results of the upcoming redistricting processes in 2011. Although the conferees had differing views regarding the general topic of reforming the redistricting process itself, there was a general consensus that more transparency and greater citizen participation in actual redistricting hold the promise of improving our nation's democracy. Indeed, at the conclusion of the conference, most attendees endorsed a broad set of "essential redistricting principles" for going forward.

The first conference, convened by the Legal Center and the Council for Excellence in Government in Airlie, Virginia, was geared toward developing consensus principles for redistricting reform. The second, organized by those two organizations and the League of Women Voters, focused on lessons learned from several high-profile failed state initiatives and on the need to share and disseminate information and expertise on redistricting issues throughout the nation.

Ultimately, the Pocantico Conference yielded three key results:

- Participants agreed to continue talking and working together in preparing for the post-2010 redistricting cycle
- Consensus was reached on four "Essential Principles on Redistricting," which were released last August
- Many action steps were identified for organizations and individuals to prepare and to participate effectively in the 2011 redistricting.

Going forward, there is a continuing need to share information and strategies, develop capabilities in the states, and implement the ideas brought forward at Pocantico.

The conference was held from July 22-24, with the generous support of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Joyce Foundation, and the Ford Foundation. For more information go to LWV.org - then click on Projects and bring up "Developing an Action Agenda for Redistricting in 2011"; also see the LWV/RMA October VOTER for the four "Essential Principles on Redistricting".

JUNE 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3 Annual Mtg. Locust Hill CC 11:00 am	4	5
6	7	8 Brockport Forum 7:00 pm	9	10 Naturalization Ceremony 10:00 am 1:00 pm	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

JULY 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4 Independence Day Naturalization Ceremony Genesee Country Museum	5	6	7	8 Naturalization Ceremony 10:00 am	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	Have A Great Summer!			23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Board meets at 2:00 pm on the third Thursday of each month at Brighton Town Hall, Stage Conference Room, unless otherwise noted.

Natural Resources meets at the home of Ann Jones, 244-9337. Local Government meets at the Brighton Library.

For Social Policy details, call Judy Dresnak 637-4753 .

For Local Government details, call Beth Keigher 271-6694.

10:00 am Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Monroe County Office Building, 39 W. Main St;

1:00 pm Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Federal Court House at 100 State Street.

Forums 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



Tour of Freshwise Farms and Lunch



Recent Naturalization Ceremony



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



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**September VOTER
Deadline is August 2!**

Goals of the League of Women Voters:

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

“The great law of culture is: Let each become all that he was capable of being”.

Thomas Carlyle,
Critical and Miscellaneous Essays