

## LWVNEW SUMMER 2024 NEWSLETTER

### LWVNEW 2024-2025

#### HAPPY NEW YEAR

And so it begins! This new League year runs from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

The 2024-25 Board:

President: Susan Ferris Rights

1<sup>st</sup> VP/Vote411: Bob Boffa

2<sup>nd</sup> VP/Membership: Lisa Pizzurro

Secretary: Lisa Colby

Treasurer: Lisa Pizzurro

Elected Directors:

Kimberly Morella

Anice Mills

Janet Gaffey

\*Lynne Landau was elected as a Director but recently stepped down.

*Lynne, thank you for serving as our Treasurer for the last two years.*

*Your thoughtful contributions to the Board will be missed!*

### VOTER SERVICE

#### THIS FALL

Looking ahead, there is National Voter Registration Day on Sept 17, as well as potential candidate forums for our state senate districts and two seats on the Village Board of Trustees in Mount Kisco. Ideally, we would like to tackle all of these things – but we can only do that

if we have volunteers. Please think about how YOU could contribute. Two years ago, we partnered with other local leagues who shared our state senate and assembly districts and ran a virtual candidate forum for each office. The collaborative process ran like a well-oiled machine!

If you'd like to work on that this fall, let Susan know: [susanferris123@gmail.com](mailto:susanferris123@gmail.com)

If you'd like to register voters, contact Allison: [alchernow@gmail.com](mailto:alchernow@gmail.com).

*These voter services are at the very heart of what we do! The fall provides great opportunities to get involved.*

#### FORMERLY INCARCERATED

Our outreach in this space continues! Susan Ferris Rights attended an afternoon of presentations in Bedford featuring organizations dedicated to assisting formerly incarcerated individuals. This event was sponsored by Bedford's Prison Relations Advisory Committee (PRAC).

During the event, Susan connected with Pamela Zimba, who runs Lilac House in lower Westchester. Lilac House is committed to addressing the housing gap for formerly incarcerated women in Westchester County and aims to

increase their access to a second chance in a safe community.

Lilac House operates as part of Susan Burton's nationwide model to support women returning from prison. Susan Burton, recognized as a CNN Hero, is the founder of the non-profit organization A New Way of Life and the SAFE Housing Network. Through these initiatives, Burton has helped establish several homes where women can rebuild their lives after incarceration. Lilac House is a proud member of this model and network.

In continuation of their support, Susan and Lisa Pizzurro plan to visit Lilac House to assist the current residents with voter registration.

**LWVNYS TEXT MESSAGING SERVICE**

Want to receive reminders about elections and voting? Text VOTENY to 474747 to start receiving reminders from the League of Women Voters of New York State.

**NEW YORK'S ERA**

The New York State Equal Rights Amendment will be back on the ballot in November. It is now officially referenced as Proposition 1.

**MEMBERSHIP**



Welcome to  
our newest member,  
Keri Reitman

**RENEWALS**

If you recently received a notice about renewing your membership, please make your payment as soon as possible.

As stated in the notice, membership payments can be made by mail to LWVNEW, PO Box 385, Cross River, NY 10518 or online at [www.LWVNEW.org/membership](http://www.LWVNEW.org/membership).

**STUDENT MEMBERS**

We've checked in with our five student members and so far two of them have expressed a desire to stay on for another year.

**OTHER**

**LWVUS CONVENTION**

Many thanks to Nzingha Milanes for attending the LWVUS National Convention as a virtual delegate! Here is her summary:

“I am excited to share with you my recent experience as a virtual delegate for New York at the 56th Biennial LWVUS National Convention, aptly titled “Turn Up and Turn Out,” which took place June 27-30 in Washington, DC. Although I participated virtually, I learned a lot and gave my best to represent our local league. I advocated and supported the motion for our sister Westchester league in Scarsdale to make sure that youth league memberships remain free and the local leagues not supplement that fee. It was not passed, as half of all leagues nationally have a student fee, even if it is only nominal.

Our Westchester County President Kathy Meany also advocated with an impassioned plea in person from the floor to support our ILO's.

The event witnessed the participation of over 1,200 League members, board members, and staff from all 50 states, DC, and the Virgin Islands in both in-person and virtual formats. This was the first time the League held this biennial event in the Nation's capital since 2016.

An interesting highlight of the convention was that something unexpected happened. An opportunity came up to run for an open seat on the LWV's US nominating committee. I decided to put my name forward,

believing this could be a great way to further contribute to the US league and the mission of the LWV.

Out of the people in person who ran for the two available spots on the National Nominating Committee, I was the only virtual one and placed third.

While I didn't win a spot on the committee, I found the experience invaluable and was happy to contribute to the democratic process in whatever way I could.

It was an eventful moment, especially given that due to technical errors with the leagues voting system for this seat alone, the voting had to be postponed until the following day rather than immediately after our speeches changing the momentum.

Despite being a virtual attendee, it was gratifying to watch our membership actively advocating for various proposals for the League's mission and vision. It inspired me to keep working hard on our local leagues and reminded me of the influence we can exert when we join together for common causes.”

#### **LWVNYS COUNCIL**

Susan Ferris Rights attended the LWVNYS Council meeting on June 11 as a virtual delegate.

**LWVW CONVENTION**

Nancy Miringoff, Kimberly Morella, and Susan Ferris Rights attended the League of Women Voters of Westchester's Convention on June 6.



LWVW President Kathy Meany directs the meeting at Manhattanville College.

Photo credit: K. Morella

**NATURALIZATION COURT**

(Recap by Allison Chernow and Kimberly Morella): LWVNEW was represented at the July 12th naturalization ceremony by members Del Bashkow and Allison Chernow. One hundred people were sworn in as new citizens by Timothy C. Iodoni, Westchester County Clerk. NYS Supreme Court Judge Amy Puerto presided over this court proceeding and made extended, moving remarks by relaying a story about her Italian immigrant background and about her delight in presiding over this

naturalization ceremony for the first time. She exuded warmth and genuine excitement.

After each citizen applicant's name was called, that person came to the front, received the certificate of citizenship, had a photo taken with the County Clerk and Judge, then walked over to Allison and Del to receive LWV brochures about voting and the rights of new citizens. They then were given small American flags and pocket-sized Constitutions by representatives from the Daughters of the American Revolution. As each person received their "gifts," the four of us were able to congratulate them individually on this momentous day—it was truly a privilege to partake in this special and moving ceremony.

Impressive, too, was the fact that after the ceremony the newly Naturalized could head to the County Clerk's office, just a floor above, to apply for an official passport from their new country. Also available for these newest members of our community was the opportunity to register to vote directly with representatives from the Board of Elections. The wheels of citizenship were clearly well oiled!



Allison, Judge Puerto, and Del at July's Naturalization ceremony

**CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER**

Two members have been recognized for their community involvement.

**Allison Chernow** was honored as one of 2024's Women of Distinction by Assemblymember Chris Burdick.

**Jean Farber** was honored by the Mount Kisco Chamber of Commerce as the 2024 Citizen of the Year.

*Congratulations, Jean and Allison!*

**LEVELS OF LEAGUE**

While the League never supports or opposes candidates, it *does* hold positions on issues. LWVUS & LWVNYS provide advocacy opportunities for members to get further involved if they choose.

**LWVNEW is overwhelmingly focused on local voter service and voter education.**

**LWVNEW BOARD MEETINGS 2024-25**

Tuesday, September 10:

Pound Ridge Library, 6 pm

Tuesday, October 8:

Pound Ridge Library, 6 pm

Tuesday, November 12: via Zoom

Tuesday, January 14: via Zoom

Tuesday, March 11: in-person

Tuesday, April 8: in-person

May date TBD (Annual Meeting)

June date TBD (organizational meeting)

Meetings will be held in the evening.

*ANY MEMBER is welcome to attend our monthly Board meetings.*

 **TO DO LIST**

- ✓ Volunteer to help out this fall. Election season may seem far away -- but it's already August!
- ✓ Make a dues payment (if you've received a renewal reminder)



# THE NEW YORK EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT



**ON YOUR  
BALLOT  
NOVEMBER 5TH**

## WHAT

The New York Equal Rights Amendment (NY ERA) is a ballot proposal to amend the New York State Constitution.

## WHO & WHEN

New York voters will have the opportunity to vote for or against this ballot proposal in the general election on November 5, 2024.

## IMPACT

Adding to existing protections against discrimination based on race and religion, this amendment to the New York State Constitution would explicitly prohibit discrimination based on a person's ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, and sex—including their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes, reproductive healthcare and autonomy.

**BE SURE TO**

**FLIP YOUR  
BALLOT**

**IN NOVEMBER TO CAST  
YOUR VOTE!**

**LWV** LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK



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