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LWVBN website

www.lwvbn.org

LWVNYS website

www.lwvny.org

LWVUS website

www.lwv.org

Voter is published 11 times a
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Monday of the month to Terri
Parks at lwvoter@verizon.net.

President's Letter and Board Report

Dear Members and Friends:

Phew! We made it through the 2022 midterm elections.

Congratulations and thank you to Barbara Gunderson and the Voter Service subcommittees for their excellent work to get out the vote. They organized a cadre of volunteers to be out and about getting information out and encouraging people to vote. Thank you to each and every one!

At our November board meeting we appointed board members Terri Parks and Susan Czynry to the Nominating Committee. Along with Ramona Gallagher, Janet Goodsell and Shirley Joy they will be seeking volunteers for our 2023-2024 LWVBN Board of Directors. When they call, please consider the opportunity to serve on the board and help keep our local League vibrant. We welcome all members to join any of our committees; we value your input.

The board has also decided to invite Maria Evancho and Arahah Akib to once again be our Buffalo/Niagara Students In Albany. Unfortunately, in May of 2022 the SIA program was cancelled. They are both high school seniors and this will be their last opportunity to participate.

We are gearing up for interesting programs for the spring. Yes, the spring is coming. Watch this space for details. In the meantime, enjoy the holidays and stay safe and warm.

Lori Robinson



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.

Voter Service Efforts for the November 2022 Election

In June, July, August, September, and early October we did voter registration tabling at 26 locations. We registered 93 new voters and handed out 125 registration forms for people to complete at home. Sixteen of these events were located in under-resourced communities, especially on the East Side of Buffalo. We partnered with the Buffalo March for Our Lives, the Buffalo branch of the NAACP, VOICE Buffalo, the Jewish Community Relations Council, Westminster Presbyterian Church, and St. Joseph University Parish.

In August, September, and early October our college liaisons Cindy Havey, Alberta Roman, Judy Weidemann, Deborah Cohen, Michele Greco, Lauren Pristach, Ramona Gallagher, Liz Zausmer and Maria Evancho organized 15 voter registration drives and one training session at 12 local colleges. We registered 184 new voters and handed out 28 voter registration forms. Ninety-five students completed absentee ballot applications so they could vote in their home counties and states.

Our GOTV Committee led by Ann Zawicki created library displays at the Buffalo and Erie County Main Library; Amherst Library, Snyder Branch; Cheektowaga Library; Concord Public Library; Eden Library; Elma Library; Grand Island Library; Lancaster Library; North Tonawanda Library; Clearfield Library; and Audubon Library. Special thanks to Alberta Roman, who initiated the idea with her October 2021 display at the North Tonawanda Library.

We also shared much information with NOAH/Niagara; VOICE Buffalo; PUSH Buffalo; all Buffalo and Erie County Library branches; the Buffalo Jewish Federation, the Buffalo branch of the NAACP, the Navel Street Block Club, and the Buffalo Educational Opportunity Center.

RJ Haq developed a GOTV plan for the city of Buffalo. Based on this plan, the League concentrated on the eight lowest-turnout precincts of the North Common Council District, one of the lowest-turnout districts, for our October GOTV action effort for 2022. Tyrell Ford of VOICE Buffalo provided us with a list of 730 registered voters who were 40%-60% likely to vote in those precincts. Barbara Gunderson used this list to create and map 11 canvassing routes of between 40 and 90 addresses each. We distributed doorknob hangers containing nonpartisan voting information to each door and also talked with many of the occupants. We included the following in each doorknob hanger: a personally written postcard on LWVNY 411.org cards; an LWVBN information card; an LWVNY Voters Guide, Part I; an early voting site list, plus an Erie County They Represent You brochure in 300 of the hangers.

On October 27, the League partnered with the Amherst Center for Senior Citizens for *Ask the Candidates*, a candidate forum for the U.S. Congress NY-26 District, New York Senate District 61, New York Assembly District 146, and Erie County Clerk. All candidates for those offices participated.

In addition to people named above, League volunteers in one or more of these efforts were Fran Holmes, Nina Lukin, Sharon Cramer, Patti Meyer-Lee, Liz McGough, Joe Zawicki, Barbara Gunderson, Sally Metzger, Melissa Bolz, Timothy Priano, Eileen Cassidy, Ellen Gibson, Becca LaCivita and her family, Judy Huber, Tricia Korzelius, Barbara Snyder, Kathleen Macaluso, Lori Robinson, Janet Goodsell, Amy DiChristina, Suzanne Thomas, Mary Bisson, Ellen Drexler, Melissa Weiksnar, Lisa Casper, William C. Webb, Pamela Buehler, Jennifer Hoffman, Kerry Mitchell, Amanda Robert, Laura McDade, Beverly Painter, Margie Nobel, Anita Mitchell, Christine Reichmuth, Jennifer Hoffman, Shirley Joy, Betty Krist, Mary Ann Turkla, Joyce DiChristina, Marjorie Tritto, Mike and Ted Egan, Jody Goldstein, Elaine Cusker, Mary Bashore, Terri Parks, and Jenica Faye.

Volunteers and consultants from our partners were RJ Haq, Tyrell Ford, Kathleen Keenan-Takagi, Felton Davis, Jenica Faye, Miles Gresham, Mara Kovan-Gelman, Hanna Gabelnick, E. Gabelnick, Naomi Cerre, Monica Neuwirt, Rev. Micah Nutter Dowling and Jennifer Steiner's Advanced Legal Academy class.

Barbara Gunderson, Voter Service Chair



LWVUS Files Amicus Brief In Moore v. Harper

The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) has filed an amicus brief in the Moore v. Harper case before the U.S. Supreme Court. The case will be argued on December 7, 2022. The case concerns the “independent state legislative theory” which, the League and other good government groups believe, if adopted, would give state legislatures unrestricted authority to set the rules for federal elections.

Virginia Case Solomon, CEO of the LWVUS, wrote, “Historically state legislatures have enacted the most harmful and suppressive anti-voter laws, and pro-voter groups like the League have relied on the ability to fight such laws in state courts.”

The Moore v. Harper case concerns new district maps drawn by the North Carolina Legislature following the 2020 census. The North Carolina Supreme Court ruled that the proposed maps were excessively gerrymandered and ordered that they be redrawn. The state’s legislative leaders argue that the U.S. Constitution forbids state courts from reviewing congressional redistricting plans, an argument known as the “independent state legislative theory.”

As this case has massive implications for every state, the LWVUS amicus brief expresses the concerns of Leagues representing all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The League implores the Supreme Court to rule in favor of voters and to reject the independent state legislative theory.

Janet Massaro

Deep Geological Repositories for Nuclear Waste: A World Tour

Take a trip with me around the world in search of solutions to the disposal of used fuel from nuclear power plants and other nuclear waste. We start our tour 35 miles south of Buffalo at the West Valley Demonstration Project, where 50 concrete casks contain high level nuclear waste turned into a form of glass prepared to be shipped to the United States deep geological repository at Yucca Mountain, except WAIT! There is no repository at Yucca Mountain, and Nevada declares it will not have one! Even if they were to change their mind, further scientific study suggests the geology is not suitable at Yucca Mountain after all. Are things going any better in other countries? Let's travel.

First stop, Canada. Good news! In June 2022, Canada's Nuclear Waste Management Organization determined that two sites in Ontario meet the necessary geological conditions for storing nuclear waste for thousands of years deep underground, the recognized best practice. It is sensible to site the storage locations in reasonable transport distance from their nuclear reactors, too. But WAIT! In October 2022, the organization began consulting with the residents of those two areas, [Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation-Ignace area](#) and [Saugeen Ojibway Nation-South Bruce area](#), seeking their consent. Hmm! How does it happen that First Nations seem to be the ones always asked to consent to bear the nuclear burden? Sounds like the U.S. "Watch this space!" as Rachel Maddow says.

Russia chose a site in Siberia for an underground "research" project toward a future repository. China narrowed its selection to three possible repository sites in northwest China, and one of them for its "research" facility. Presumably the consent of local residents will not figure much in the decision in either country.

Sweden, France, and Switzerland each have approved sites, while other countries still fumbling through a site selection process include Japan, India, Germany, Hungary, and the United Kingdom.

Why is Australia not on this list? It has no nuclear power reactors, despite having a third of the world's uranium, relying instead on cheap coal, gas, and oil. Only in 2021 did it choose a site in South Australia for disposing of its low-level nuclear waste, mostly medical waste. New Zealand depends mostly on hydropower, no nukes.

Finland began selecting a site in the 1980s in a process that was both technically and consent driven. In 2000, the Olkiluoto Island in western Finland, where two of Finland's four reactors are located, was selected. The construction license for the Onkalo repository was granted in 2015 and application for a license to operate was submitted in 2021. Have we a happy place to end our tour? Well, it's sort of happy. Finns live in the shadow of Putin's Russia. Could it be that their progress is due to the small amount of spent fuel and anticipation of the situation currently faced in Ukraine, whose unburied nuclear wastes are vulnerable to attack?

Pat Townsend

A Lesson About Voter Registration

While helping new citizens to complete voter registration forms this year, we had several naturalization ceremonies in October, very close to Election Day. We registered nearly all of the new citizens. There was a young couple from Somalia who were very excited to be able to vote this year. While filling out their forms, they had each left their party registration choice blank. When I told them to complete their registration form they must choose to select either no political party or register with a party, they asked if they picked a party that day, was that the party they must support every time they vote. They were very excited when I explained our system including that they do not have to tell anyone whom they voted for, and that they would never be forced to vote for a particular candidate or support any political party through their vote.

Deborah Shiffner, Naturalization Ceremonies Coordinator

**Reservation for the Holiday Party, December 10, 2022
for people who order and pay by check.**

Please mark an X in the box of each menu choice for the people in your party and note any dietary needs in the space below your contact information.

Name (please print)	Eggplant Parmigiana (vegetarian)	Chicken Francaise with Risotto & Grilled Vegetables

Total number of meals ordered: _____ X \$25 per meal = \$ _____

Write checks payable to LWVBN

Mail to LWVBN, 1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209 by November 30, 2022.

Your phone number: _____ Email address: _____

Pulling the Race Card: A Successful Collaboration

On October 26, 2022, the League’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEI) and our partners, the NAACP, Self Advocacy of New York State (SANYS), Westminster Presbyterian Church, National Action Network and the Jewish Community Relations Council, hosted a successful Pulling the Race Card event at the SANYS office, 1021 Broadway, Buffalo. Thirty-one people participated in the discussion and 19 people attended via Zoom. Among the live participants were clergy, Buffalo Common Council members, physicians, teachers, the mayor of Lancaster, N.Y., people with diverse abilities, and people of various cultures, races and national origins.

The creators of The Race Card, Sarah Pearson-Collins and her sister, Kezia Collins, facilitated the challenging and lively discussions about race. The post-event feedback from the diverse group of participants was very positive. We were honored to receive a \$1,000 grant from Councilman David Rivera to help with expenses for this and other DEI efforts. Both Councilman Rivera and Councilman Mitch Nowakowski attended and participated actively in the discussions.

We could not have succeeded without our volunteers who registered participants, set up the room and the refreshment table, managed the video, sound system and Zoom, and cleaned up after the event. Volunteers from our partners were Janique Curry, Rev. Micah Nutter Dowling, Kathleen Keenan-Takagi, Sophia Roberts, BJ Stasio, Daryll Gaines, and Felton Davis. The League volunteers were Barbara Gunderson, Nina Lukin, Marian Deutschman, Liz Zausmer, Timothy Priano, Ramona Gallagher, Lori Robinson, Terri Parks, and Charlotte Nelson.

Liz Zausmer, DEI Chair



1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

December 2022

Tuesday, December 6, 4:00 p.m.
Program, Issues & Events Committee
via Zoom

Thursday, December 8, 7:00 p.m.
Diversity/Equity/Inclusion Committee
via Zoom

Saturday, December 10, 11:30 a.m.
Holiday Party
Rizotto's Restaurant

Tuesday, December 27, 4:30 p.m.
Education Committee
via Zoom