

LWVNEW FEBRUARY 2023 NEWSLETTER

FROM YOUR CO-PRESIDENTS

February 14 is the 103rd birthday of the League of Women Voters. It is also a 2023 voter registration deadline in New York.

We hope you enjoyed the Songs of the Suffragists virtual program. It is now available for viewing on our website.

We've already been contacted by the Bedford Central School District about potential dates for a school board candidate forum there. If there is a contested race, LWVNEW will be there to connect voters with their candidates.

-- Read on! Susan & Lisa

VOTER SERVICE

FEBRUARY 14 DEADLINE

In addition to Valentine's Day being the League's birthday, this year it is the deadline to change your political party affiliation in time for the June primary. New York's closed primary system means you need to be registered with a political party to vote in that party's primary.

If you want to change your party affiliation in time for the June primary election, you must do so by February 14. The primary is June 27. Changes

submitted after February 14 won't go into effect until AFTER the June primary.

Go to

<https://www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html> for more info.

VOTER EMPOWERMENT TEAMS

Our candidate forums are important: candidates should be held accountable to the voters and voters should be as informed and educated as possible heading into an election. We want to establish Voter Empowerment Teams (VETs) on a town-by-town basis, to facilitate the planning of these forums and allow interested LWVNEW members to help voters *in their own communities*. We'd like to start with the three towns where the majority of our members reside: Bedford, Lewisboro & Mount Kisco. You would be part of a team that would determine the races in your area, work on scheduling the event's dates and formats, and contact the candidates about participating in the forum.

Team members would be trained, mentored, and set up for success!

Contact Susan or Lisa if you are interested:

Susan Ferris Rights:

susanferris123@gmail.com

908.568.1884

Lisa Pizzurro:

lcp328@gmail.com 646.341.3332

ADVOCACY**PASSING THE NYS EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT**

The League of Women Voters of New York has formed a task force to work towards the education and passage of the NYS Equal Rights Amendment.

This is an amendment to the Constitution **of the State of New York** and does not relate to the ERA ratification efforts from the 1970's.

What would the ERA do?

Currently, our state constitution only protects against racial and religious discrimination. The ERA would prohibit discrimination by the government based on a person's ethnicity, national origin, age, disability, and sex — including their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes. It would also protect against any government actions that would curtail a person's reproductive autonomy or their access to reproductive health care.

The proposed New York State Equal Rights Amendment has now been voted on and approved by a second state legislature. With this latest passage of New York's ERA, the legislative process for amending the New York constitution is over; the proposal has passed in two separately-elected legislatures and now goes before the voters in Fall 2024.

New York's ERA would include protections for a woman's right to choose.

The LWV of New York State has been advocating for the amendment. Local leagues have been asked to designate a

task force representative and Susan Ferris Rights and then Tara Finneran will represent LWVNEW.

OTHER**THE LEAGUE'S BIRTHDAY**

The League of Women Voters of the United States was established on February 14, 1920. We want to take the opportunity on this **Valentine's Day** birthday to say thank you and show our **love** to our LWVNEW volunteers.

To mark the occasion, Susan and Lisa submitted a letter to the editors of local media outlets.

To The Editor:

February 14th is Valentine's Day but did you know that it is also the birthday of the League of Women Voters?

This Valentine's Day marks the 103rd birthday of the League, which was founded in Chicago in 1920, six months prior to the ratification of the 19th amendment and women winning the right to vote. The League began as a "mighty political experiment" designed to help 20 million women carry out their new responsibilities as voters.

Fast forward to 2023. We are a small part of that legacy, putting on local candidate forums and registering voters without regard to political party. We are proud to be a part of a non-partisan organization that never supports or opposes candidates. While the Leagues of the U.S. and New York State do hold positions on various issues, our focus is very local. We strive to inform, educate, and register area voters.

We thought the League's Valentine birthday was a perfect opportunity to show some love to our volunteers, without whom LWVNEW would not exist. We are always looking for active members to help with student voter registration, candidate forums, and other voter services.

February 14 also happens to be this year's deadline to change your party enrollment in time for the June primary election in New York State. We have information about that on our website, www.LWVNEW.org, as well as information about LWVNEW membership. Come be a part of your local league and show some love to your community. And while you're there, check out the link to the League's history and the link to a vintage Suffrage Valentine card.

Thank You, Volunteers – and Happy Birthday, LWV!

*Susan Ferris Rights, Mount Kisco
Lisa Pizzurro, South Salem
Co-Presidents, League of Women Voters
of North East Westchester (LWVNEW)*

On the homepage of our website, you will find links to a brief LWVUS history and to an example of a Suffrage-themed Valentine.

www.LWVNEW.org

SONGS OF THE SUFFRAGISTS

*Thank you to Susan Ferris Rights and her colleague, Laura Engelhardt, for presenting their documentary, *Songs of the Suffragists*.*

*A video of the presentation, which features the film followed by a discussion, is available on the *News & Events* page of our website, www.LWVNEW.org/events-1.*

The companion book is available in paperback at Amazon. Proceeds from the sale of the book support our local league.

[Songs of the Suffragists: Lyrics of American Feminism from 1850 to 2020: League of Women Voters of Berkeley Heights, New Providence & Summit, The, Engelhardt, Laura, Lioudis, Stephanie: 9781711686431: Amazon.com: Books.](#)

MEMBERSHIP

DUES

*New and current members alike can pay their annual dues at the *Membership* page of our website:*

www.LWVNEW.org/membership

If you prefer to pay by check, send your payment to:

LWVNEW, PO Box 385, Cross River 10518.

Questions? Contact Lisa Pizzurro lcp328@gmail.com; 646-341-3332.

SPREAD THE WORD

*We bet you know someone who would be interested in joining LWVNEW. Maybe you have a friend who you would love to do voter registration with. Or a friend (or friends) that you could envision working with on a Voter Empowerment Team. *These activities in and of themselves are impactful but they can also be fun.**

SOCIAL MEDIA

We encourage those of you who use social media to 1) like and follow LWVNEW and 2) share our posts.

Facebook: League of Women Voters of North East Westchester

Twitter: @LWVNEW

LWV OF THE U.S.**LWVUS TRANSFORMATION PLAN**

On a recent Zoom, State League leaders discussed finally beginning the process of developing a plan for the new bylaw amendment that passed at the LWVUS Convention last June.

As a reminder, this new amendment will totally change how people join the League and manage finances among the 3 levels (national, state & local). The proposal is to have all members join at the *national* level and have LWVUS collect dues – and then distribute that money back to the state and local leagues. This would be the reverse of the current system, in which dues are collected at the local level and Per Member Payments (PMPs) then paid to State and U.S.

This change won't happen until at least 2024.

From LWVNYS: The New York State League reminds us to please remember that we must be helpful in developing this new plan. The bylaw amendment passed at the last national Convention and it is going to happen. The goal now is to make sure that it is implemented in a plan that best supports and works for state and local leagues.

Please see the info below from LWVUS and have any appropriate leaders from your local league sign up to join the discussion and work for this change.

Contact LWVNY Executive Director Laura Bierman if you are interested:

laura@lwwny.org

FROM LWVUS: Transformation

We need your input on the next phase of our transformation journey. Apply or ask someone you know to apply today. These working groups will generate feedback as we progress to implement the Transformation Plan. Groups will have up to 10 members, and meetings will occur virtually between March and April 2023. Applications for these working groups open on Feb. 9 and close Friday, Feb. 24. Applications are open to state and local League leaders, as well as League members. Click the links below to learn more about each group and apply:

- [Business Model Working Group](#)
- [Data Model Group](#)
- [Functional Specification Working Group](#)
- [League Capacity Working Group](#)



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