

## LWVNEW DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

### FROM YOUR CO-PRESIDENTS

*It's a busy time of the year for all of us, so it's kind of nice to have a quiet(ish) spot on the League calendar right now.*

*We are going to be working hard on membership come the new year. Consider adding LWVNEW to your list of new year's resolutions. How about, "I will get more involved in 2022" or "I will get a friend to join LWVNEW"?*

*In all seriousness, we do need to grow our ranks and engage our members. But first things first: Happy Holidays and all the best in the coming new year.*

*-Katherine & Lisa*

### VOTER SERVICE

#### EMPTY CHAIR POLICY

The League of Women Voters has acknowledged the frustration on the part of local leagues and candidates as a result of its empty chair policy.

A quick review: The League's empty chair policy forbids leagues from allowing one candidate running for office to participate in a debate or forum when his or her opponent declines the invitation.

This League rule frustrates local leagues because it gives an "out" to a candidate who does not wish to debate. A candidate knows that, by declining our invitation, they keep their opponent from participating as well. It is sometimes deployed as a strategy. This is unfair to the willing candidates and to area voters.

While the State League acknowledges the problems that arise from the policy, it has no plans to back away from it. The League feels that the benefits of the policy – chiefly that it bolsters the appearance of non-partisanship – outweigh the downsides. The League cited ways that local leagues can try to mitigate lack of participation by candidates:

>Publicize the lack of participation via local media and social media

>Allow the candidates who have agreed to participate but can't to at least stand and be recognized in the audience. These candidates are free to mingle and talk with voters once the formal event is over. (Obviously this would apply only to in-person events.)

#### RANKED CHOICE VOTING

Want to learn more about RCV? *Common Cause New York* and *BluePrint for a Great Democracy* present *Getting Ready to Rank: A Conference on Everything Ranked Choice Voting*. Wednesday, December 15, 2-5 pm central time (so **3-6 pm** for us).

We know it's a busy time of the year...but maybe a break from all of the holiday hustle and bustle is just what you need! Brew a cup of coffee, tea or hot chocolate and fire up the computer to learn more about ranked choice voting.

[BluePrint for a Great Democracy -- Ranked Choice Voting Conference 12/15](#)  
[\(actionnetwork.org\)](#)

## OTHER VIDEOS

There are a couple of videos currently available on the *News & Events* page of our website which might be of interest to you: a presentation of the proposed 2022 Westchester County Budget and a recent Independent Redistricting Commission (IRC) hearing.

<https://www.lwvnew.org/events-1>

## CLIMATE

The League of Women Voters of the United States sent delegates to the recent international climate conference in Glasgow, Scotland. Check out the blog post by one of the League delegates. Like so many of us, she believes the science and is concerned about climate change but was nervous about participating while not knowing enough about the topic.

[What I Learned at the UN Climate Change Conference | League of Women Voters \(lwv.org\)](#)

## MEMBERSHIP

Our focus turns to membership in the new year: how to engage current members and attract new ones.

How best could we engage YOU?

We want to hear from you! Please send ideas or comments to our email address, [LWVNEW@gmail.com](mailto:LWVNEW@gmail.com).

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.

## LWVNEW

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*Happy  
Holidays*