



THE VOTER

The Newsletter of the League of Woman Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and the North Fork
Founded in 1977

Volume XXXIX, No. 19

February/March 2021



Democracy Is Not a Spectator Sport

American democracy is built upon the standard of fair and free elections and the peaceful transfer of power. Since its founding 100 years ago, the League of Women Voters have been passionate activists who work year-round to register voters of every political party, provide election information, fight for policies that will protect and strengthen our democracy.

Despite our efforts and those of other proponents of the franchise, the United States routinely ranks lower in voter turnout than most other democracies. 2020 was different: According to ABC News, over 155 million Americans cast votes, more than ever before, many taking advantage of their state's laws enabling early voting and mail-in options.

The winner of the 2020 election, Joe Biden, received the most votes ever in a presidential election: 81,009,468

The loser, incumbent Donald Trump, won the second largest number: 74,111,419

But, for the first time in our history, there was no peaceful transfer of power. To this day, Trump has not conceded. In fact, he insists that he won, that there was massive fraud, that (with no evidence to back his assertion) Democrats in certain swing states had fixed voting machines to switch Trump to Biden, hidden or destroyed millions of mail-in and drop box ballots, and

that Biden had "stolen" the election. Millions of his followers accept the assertion as true.

As we all know, Trump's Big Lie led to the deadly insurrection at the Capitol on January 6th. It has also damaged trust in the process of our democratic elections.

With the swearing in of Joe Biden and his Vice President Kamala Harris a new era has begun, but the threat to democracy continues, not only by means of violence but also by new restrictions to mail-in voting now being considered by some state governments.

Rest assured, the League of Women voters will continue to be committed to our mission of encouraging every eligible citizen to support our most cherished right as citizens: to vote. "Democracy is not a spectator sport." "Every vote counts."

--Eva Moore, Editor

NOT A MEMBER? HELP PRESERVE VOTING RIGHTS
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SAVE THE DATE February 22, 2021 Zoom meeting See page 3



The League of Woman Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and the North Fork

Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and the North Fork a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and the North Fork, in both its values and practices, is committed to diversity and pluralism. This means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of economic position, gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability. The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and the North Fork subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that inclusiveness enhances the organization's ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs. The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of the East End.

Membership

Any person who supports the mission of the League may become a member.

The Voter Newsletter

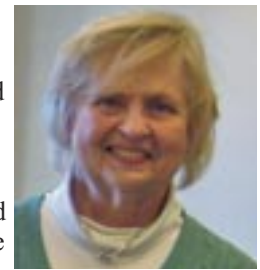
The newsletter of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and the North Fork League, *The Voter*, is dedicated to bringing useful information, background, perspective and commentary on public policy issues confronting League members and other community citizens in Southampton and East Hampton Towns, Suffolk County and the State of New York. It explores the work of the League to promote positive solutions, and it empowers people to make a difference in their communities.

The Voter is published six times a year (October/November, December/January, February/March, April/May, June/July, August/September) by the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and the North Fork, P. O. Box 2253, East Hampton, NY 11937.

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Co-President's Message



TIME magazine may have dubbed 2020 "The Worst Year Ever", but we survived and learned that as a League we are resourceful, resilient, and more creative than we may have realized. Initially it was difficult to give up face to face meetings and events and move to online virtual events. Not everyone embraced the new approach or the new technology, however the overwhelming success of our candidate debates tipped the scale. The debates presented on YouTube reached a far greater number of viewers than our traditional live debates and being able to playback the event any time online made it much more convenient for many voters. Voters turned out to vote in record numbers in no small part due to the efforts of the League and the Voter Services Committee.

We are excited about the opportunity to sustain the momentum of civic engagement we saw throughout 2020 and will work to bring diverse communities together with our grassroots membership to shape public policy issues.

LWVH/SI/NF began the year with our annual program planning meeting. Not only did we ask members to help us determine the focus for our local league, we also reviewed the New York State Legislative Policy Positions to make priority recommendations to the New York State League. These recommendations will be presented at the NY State Convention in June.

Since the 2020 census and election cycle have wrapped up, redistricting is on everyone's mind. The New York State League is hosting a series of online meetings about redistricting. If you are interested in working on redistricting contact either me at 631-495-9288 or Co-President Estelle Gellman.

The Biden administration has quickly gotten down to work and is supporting a number of League priorities, including a commitment to tackle climate change and providing quality and affordable health care for all Americans.

In her memo to the new administration LWVUS president Dr. Deborah Ann Turner outlined the top league priorities and stated: "We look forward to working alongside lawmakers to advance voting rights and make democracy work."

This year the 117th Congress has made the For the People Act their top priority. The League supports this comprehensive democracy reform bill - known as H.R. 1 in the House and S.1 in the Senate with important provisions, including the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, fair redistricting, D.C. statehood, and more! I urge you to contact your representative to vote for this important legislation.

Susan Wilson

Zoom, Zoom, Zoom

League activities being curtailed by continuing Covid restrictions, LWVH/SI/NF has been holding regular Board and business meetings via Zoom. Below, twenty-one League members attended the Program Planning meeting on Monday, January 18 to provide input on LWWNYS program positions on Election Law, Government, Health Care, Judicial, Natural Resources, Social Policy, State Finances and Women's Issues, and to make suggestions for local program items to be voted on at the Annual Meeting in May.

Coming up

Health Committee Zoom Meeting, February 22nd 4-5:30 PM

Health Committee chairs from local Leagues across New York State, including Valerie King, chair of our Health Committee, along with Estelle Gellman, attended a series of meetings in the fall of 2019 to review and update the State League's position on healthcare, with the specific task of studying the financing of the New York Health Act as an example of a single payer program, which the current position supports. The committee completed several study documents in the spring of 2020. These documents are the basis upon which local Leagues can inform their members about current healthcare issues, leading to a statewide consensus. These informational guides are available on the State League's website. Members are invited to participate in a consen-

sus Zoom meeting scheduled for February 22nd. Those interested in attending are urged to examine the informational documents before the meeting, especially the "footnoted" version of the current and the proposed language in the healthcare positions. Logon information will be provided via Constant Contact before the date

Please note that the LWVUS supports "universal" healthcare, and the LWWNY supports the concept of a "single payer" plan. The consensus to concur process will not be focused on any proposed or pending legislation for a single payer plan. There will be two areas to discuss for consensus and concurrence, 1) changes in the language of healthcare position in general and 2) changes in the language of the position regarding the financing of healthcare. For more information on these important upcoming League Healthcare events, please contact Valerie King (email) valeriekingphd@gmail.com or 631-267-3282

January 18, 2021



March is Women’s History Month—A Quiz

March 2021 marks a monumental step in the American women’s march to equal rights and governmental power with the election of Kamala Harris as the first woman vice president.

Can you identify these other women’s rights pioneers?

1. In 1787, when the Founders were composing the laws that would govern our new country, the wife of one of the writers wrote to urge the men to consider giving women a voice in government. Who was she?

2. Who was the first woman to run a campaign for president?

3. Who was the first woman from a major political party to run for president?

4. Who was the first Black woman to run a campaign for president?

5. Who was the most recent woman to run?

6. In 1836, two sisters from South Carolina defied the perceived notion that women should be seen but not heard and were the first women to draw large audiences for their anti-slavery speeches. They later spoke out for women’s rights. Who were they?

7. Which two women met in Seneca Falls, NY in the summer of 1848 to plan a national convention for women’s rights?

8. Which was the first state to allow their women to vote in an election and who led the campaign?



9. In January of 1917, thousands of women joined a march in Washington, DC to demand a Constitutional Amendment enabling women to vote. Who led this march?

10. Three years later, the 19th Amendment was approved when the legislature of Tennessee voted in favor by one vote. Who made that historic vote?

11. Only one woman who had attended the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention was alive when the 72- year fight for women’s suffrage became a reality. Who was she?

12. What suffragist was featured on a United States coin?

13. Noted for her skill in planning and organization, this woman was a leader in the formation of the League of Women Voters. Who was she?

Answers on page 15



February 2021

Suffolk County Voter

<https://my.lwv.org/new-york/suffolk-county> Box 1440, Stony Brook, NY 11790-1440 631 862-6860

LWVSC Board Meeting: Wednesday, February 17, at 10am via Zoom

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Making Democracy Work: Build a Stronger, More Equal New York for Working Families

The United States is an outlier in family care policies. It is one of the few wealthy democracies without national provision of paid parental and sick leave. New York has established a better record at protecting working families, from the women’s Equality Agenda to the landmark paid family leave law, to this year’s statewide paid sick time law. During the pandemic, workers who need to care for themselves or a sick loved one have been protected by the family leave and sick time laws. But there is more to be done.

Child care providers across the state have closed, leaving the child care workers without jobs and asking parents to stay home to care for their children. With schools largely virtual, parents have had to use family leave time or leave their jobs to stay home with the children. Women were twice as likely as men to report leaving work due to caregiving duties; a large percentage were low-wage workers, many of whom faced discrimination or might not be eligible for family leave payments. (To be eligible they had to have worked 40 hours a week for at least 26 weeks, or 175 days for the same employer if they were parttime workers.)

Ending this care crisis is a crucial step toward gender equality and racial justice. Workers who are themselves experiencing COVID19 deserve the same rights. Under the Disability Benefits Law, employees are eligible for benefits of 50 percent of their average week wage but no more than the maximum benefit of \$170 per week for a period of 26 weeks. The benefits cap, raised last in 1989, must be raised.

The paid family leave act, which will reach full phase-in in 2021, must be updated to remove exceptions and ensure coverage for all private and public sector employees, including parttime domestic workers. Workers who move between jobs or face unemployment should be covered, and we should expand the definition of family to include all those whom workers consider family.

The New York Human Rights Law should be updated to expand the prohibition on familial status discrimination to encompass all forms of caregiver discrimination. It must ensure that domestic workers, who are predominantly women of color and immigrants, can benefit from all of the law’s protections, and we should fully fund the Division of Human Rights to ensure robust enforcement.

In 2021, the New York State Department of Labor must enact strong regulations for the paid sick time rights. There needs to be outreach and education to ensure all workers know and can use their rights.

New York must also lead the way to insure that workers have meaningful access to alternative work arrangements, including telecommuting and part-time work. Workers, especially in low-wage industries, should know in advance what their schedules will be, and have a say in planning them. Worker-protective legislation on misclassification and fair pay for all New Yorkers is also needed.

The financing of long-term services and supports – for older Americans and people with disabilities – has come chiefly from Medicaid and private long-term care insurance, neither of which are available to the average middle class person. Direct care services for the elderly or disabled, either in nursing homes or at home, are among the fastest growing jobs in the economy, but, like child care, have low pay and few protections. Women of color are the most likely to be in this cohort, and are the most likely to leave their jobs to perform uncompensated care at home. Home care, whether by an outsider or a family member, should be paid for and protected.

Funding for family leave and disability pay comes from payroll deductions from employees and employer contributions through insurances held by employers. We need to find ways to assist employers of domestic and part-time workers to comply with regulations or seek help from the Department of Labor in order to guarantee the eligibility of their workers for benefits. More information can be found at <https://www.abetterbalance.org/>.

Contact New York State Governor Cuomo (www.governor.ny.gov), NYS Senate Majority Leader and Temporary President Andrea Stewart-Cousins (scousins@nysenate.gov) and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie (speaker@nyassembly.gov) to let them know you care about worker and family rights.

by Nancy Marr. Printed in TimesBeaconRecord newspapers and available online

Pass this application along to a worthy high school student.



League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and the North Fork

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
BETTY DESCH SCHOLARSHIP

2021

SCHOLARSHIP AMOUNT \$2,000

Pass this application along to a worthy high school student.

Name _____

Phone _____

Email _____

High School Attending _____

Criteria for the Award

- Student shall be a senior graduating from a public high school.
- Student shall use the funds for further education or training.

In this unusual year, the League recognizes that many of the activities students would have taken part in to show their strengths in civic engagement and leadership may not have materialized. So, we have changed the focus of our Betty Desch Scholarship to raise several questions relating to the recent Presidential election and on how you have shown leadership in working through issues with people who don't hold your same political beliefs. We ask that you address one of the four questions in a one-page essay.

1. From Covid-19 to early voting, to mail-in ballots to battles over electoral votes, and selection of electors themselves, the Presidential election of 2020 was unlike any other. What was your reaction to the vote and what have you learned during this election? How will it affect your future decision on how to vote?
2. Many people had difficulty during this election in talking to people who were going to vote for another candidate. These differences did not go away after the election as evidenced by articles and stories telling about tense family gatherings during the holidays. Describe how you held or might have held such conversations to bridge the gap with family or friends who hold different views than your own. How did you or how might you use your leadership skills in such discussions? Give examples.
3. Do you think social media played a persuasive role in this election? Why? Why not? What media resources do you use for information and to what degree do you rely on them in forming your opinions and making decisions? Give examples. Do you share what you learn with others through social media? If you did, what were their responses?

4. Young people were very active and key in both campaigns. In fact the youth vote (voters aged 18-29) was between 52-55%, 10% higher than in 2016. Although you may not have been old enough to vote, did you play any role in a campaign or encourage other young people to vote? Describe what you did to be politically active in spite of the Covid restrictions. What have you done in past elections? What might you do in the future?

Procedure for Applying

- Submit a brief (no more than one page) essay answering one of the above essay questions.
- Submit 2 letters of support from people such as teachers, community members, mentors, or organizations you have worked with, etc. Please do not send letters of reference that have been written for your college applications.
- Do not submit transcripts of grades or courses taken.
- Please mail your application along with the essay and your references to the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, PO Box 2253, East Hampton, NY 11937.
- Applications must be postmarked by April 1, 2021.
- If you have any questions please call Judi Roth at 631-283-0759 or email to rothhandj@yahoo.com or Terri Wildrick at 631-728-6897, mswild@optonline.net

Selection of Award Recipient

- The Education Committee of the LWVH/SI/NF will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors of the League for the Board's approval.
- The League will inform the school and the recipient of the award and it will be given to the student at the League's annual meeting on either May 2nd or 16th on Zoom or in person.

Past Recipients

2008 Kathleen Samot, Pierson High School

2009 Kate Smith, Westhampton Beach

2010 Katelyn Boyle, Westhampton Beach

2011 Thalia Olaya, East Hampton

2012 Milton Farez

2013 Paris Hodges, Southampton

2014 Emma Newberger, Southampton

2015 Natalie Polombo, Southampton

2016 Caitlin DeCara, Westhampton

2017 Andrew Wilson, East Hampton

2018 Hope Brindle, Pierson High School

2019 Lindsay Rongo, Westhampton Beach

2020 Brynne Rozzi, Southampton

Introducing a new member...



Denise Gray Meehan

Denise joined the League in November 2020. She was recruited by League member Beth Barth who belongs to the same writing group. Denise self-published "Bridge Walker" which was inspired by her many walks across Ponquogue Bridge in Hampton Bays

Denise grew up in Garden City and Great Neck but was fortunate to spend her summers in Hampton Bays. When she married for the first time, she decided she was either going to live in the city or at the beach. Hampton Bays won out and she has lived here since 1969. During most of those years she

taught English and reading in the middle school at Miller Place and before that in Port Jefferson.

Denise has a son and daughter and when she married her present husband, Terry, she happily acquired three step-children and now has seven grandchildren. All families live in and around Hampton Bays and says "they have brought a lot of love into my life".

In addition to writing, Denise is a bridge player and has a vegetable bed at the Hampton Bays School which she works with one of her daughters.

Denise is interested in joining both the Voter Services and Education committees.

Welcome to our additional 2020 members:

Susan Rausch, Westhampton; Bernie Epstein, East Hampton/Springs; Susan Hawkins Bennett, Southampton/North Sea; Tracy Grathwohl, East Hampton; Andrea Gabor, Shelter Island; Susan Moyer, Sag Harbor; Jane Hastay, East Hampton; Ann Teuwen Coppola, Hampton Bays

NOT A MEMBER? JOIN OR DONATE NOW

Membership Dues /_ / \$60 Individual /_ / \$90 Household /_ / No Charge Full-time Student /_ / \$___ Donation

Dues Year is June 1 through May 31.

Questions? Call us at 631-324-4637. Send this form and payment option (with check or credit card information) to League of Women Voters, P.O. Box 2253, East Hampton, NY 11937. Make checks payable to LWVH.

Individual Member's Name _____

Additional Household Member's Name _____

Mailing Address: Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Email _____

I'm interested in these committees: _____

/_ / Check or /_ / Credit Card
Credit Card # _____ Exp Date _____ CVC # _____ Zip _____

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Answers

1. Abigail Adams
2. Virginia Woodhull formed the Equal Rights Party in the 1872 election.
3. Senator Margaret Chase Smith ran as a Republican in 1964.
4. Shirley Chisolm ran as a Democrat in 1972. (Neither she nor Margaret Chase Smith became the party's nominee in the general election.)
5. Hillary Clinton won the popular vote in the 2016 general election but lost the Electoral vote to Donald Trump
6. Sarah and Angelina Grimké
7. Elizabeth Cady Smith of Seneca Falls and Lucretia Mott of New Hampshire.
8. Wyoming, in 1869; Ester Hobart Morris spearheaded the movement
9. Alice Paul
10. Harry Burn, following orders from his mother
11. Charlotte Woodward was a young glove maker in New York; she was 92 when she voted for the first time
12. Susan B Anthony was featured on a \$1.00 coin minted in 1979 to 1981 and again in 1999.
13. Carrie Chapman Catt of New York

The Voter

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The League of Women Voters

Nonpartisan. Political. Grassroots. Volunteer.

Making democracy work through voter education,
issue advocacy, and civic participation.