



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. 31

February/March 2023

March Is Women’s History Month

Mary McLeod Bethune, A Woman for the Ages

This month we are paying tribute to Mary McLeod Bethune, a woman whose work in education and civic rights enhanced interracial relations back in the late ‘30s through mid ‘50s

“It is our pledge to make a lasting contribution to all that is finest and best in America, to cherish and enrich her [America] heritage of freedom and progress of race, creed, or national origin, into her spiritual, cultural, civic, and economical life, and thus aid her to achieve the glorious destiny of a true and unfettered democracy.”

These are words of Mary McLeod Bethune, the incomparable educator and civil rights leader, in a speech in 1935. And Bethune did all she could to forward this cause.

Now, at a time when politicians are challenging schools to amend their curriculums, removing references to black history, it is time to reintroduce a woman who made so many important contributions the education and advancement of her people that she was included in scholar Kete Asante’s 2002 list of 100 Greatest African Americans, was the subject of a US postal stamp, and even inspired the International Astronomical Union to name a crater on Venus in her honor.

Mary Jane McLeod was born in 1875, in Mayesville, South Carolina, the 15th of 18 children, some born to slavery before her parents were freed. Her parents were determined to be independent and worked hard, her father as a cotton farmer, and her mother as a houseworker for white people. Mary was allowed to go inside the nurseries and was captivated with the toys there. One day she picked up a book and opened it, but it was snatched away by one of the white children because, the child said, she didn’t know how to read. Mary decided that the only difference between white and people of her color was the ability to read and write; she was determined to learn.

The Learning Begins

(Continued on page 7)



Mary at age 59 / 1934

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Save the Date

Come to the next LWV program: A Salute to Nursing
Monday, April 3, 6 p.m,
Southampton’s Rogers Memorial Library
More information on page 6.



**The League of Woman Voters of the Hamp-
tons, 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 recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. 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,
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Arlene Hinkemeyer, Photographer
Madison Lohrius Inc., Printing and Mailing

Printed on recycled paper.

Remembering Barbara McClancy

We were saddened to learn of the sudden passing of our friend Barbara McClancy on March 1 from complications after a fall on February 12, 2023.

Barbara loved to travel, loved her dogs, Guild Hall, and the League of Women Voters.

It was on a trip to Croatia sponsored by the Southampton and East Hampton Trails Societies more than 10 years ago that she met East End league member Glorian Berk and learned all about the League of Women Voters and our environmental projects. Returning home, she joined the league and became involved in several committees including Natural Resources (now the Sustainability) Committee, Government and Voter Services.

Voter Services ultimately became her focus. She organized virtual and in-person candidate debates ensuring that those participating followed league guidelines.

Not only did she organize all the League's voter registration tabling events in Sag Harbor, Southampton, Amagansett, East Hampton



and other communities, she coordinated voter registration for new citizens at the U.S. Federal Courthouse in Central Islip.

Barbara was instrumental in LWVH/SI/NF receiving the The New York State Victoria Woodhull "Get Out the Vote" Award in 2019, and she received the award in person at an LWV New York State Bi-Annual Convention.

Also in 2019, the LWVH/SI/NF awarded Barbara with the Carrie Chapman Catt Award for her dedication and contributions to the league.

She served on the Suffolk County Inter League Board of Directors

Barbara holds the "Get out the vote" citation presented by Laura Ladd Biermen Executive Director of the New York State League.

as secretary, organized many fundraising luncheons and a memorable tour to Sylvester Manor on Shelter Island. She became the Suffolk County League's Liaison with the Suffolk County Board of Elections, served as LWV Suffolk County Voter Services Chair, and was a trusted source for voter information.

I can't imagine a Board meeting or league convention without her.

Donations in her memory can be made to the LWV Barbara McClancy Voter Services Fund and mailed to: LWVH/SI/NF

P. O. Box 2253
East Hampton, New York 11937

The family held a private service.

Condolences to the McClancy family can be sent to Barbara's sister:

Susan McClancy
P.O. Box 1200, Amagansett, New York 11930

President's Message



Spring is in the air and despite strong winds, chilly temperatures and that April Fool's Day threat of snow, we are excited to resume our Public Information Meetings in person. Join us at the Rogers Memorial Library on April 3, 2023, 6p.m. for "A Salute to Nurses Past and Present". Simply log on to: myrml.org to register.

The Youth Committee received a \$750 LWVUS Grant to promote voter registration in our 10 area high schools. They are also working on Student Day at the Suffolk Legislature and the NY State program "Students Inside Albany". More on these special projects in future issues of the Voter.

Interested in learning something new and help educate voters? Training on Vote 411 will be held virtually on April 12th @ 5:30 p.m. Come learn how the program works and start creating your page for the upcoming June primary. It's time now to set up the races, etc – come see how.

This training will also be a great refresher for any who have used Vote 411 in the past and will be creating it again this election season. As the elections are all local this year, the local Leagues are responsible for creating the Vote 411 pages for their races. Come remind yourself how to do that! Contact Susan Wilson: hamptonssw@gmail.com for more information.

Mark your calendars for our Annual Meeting which will be held this year at the Westhampton Beach Library on May 7th. More details and speaker information to follow.

The 60th convention of the League of Women Voters of New York State will be held June 2 – 4, 2023 at the Crowne Plaza Albany – Desmond Hotel.

Convention is an opportunity

- to meet and network with League leaders from all over the state in person!
- to make new friends and renew old friendships
- to learn what's forthcoming in League operations
- to improve your League's communications and visibility
- to strengthen your League by working together, sharing experiences, learning from each other, and being inspired
- to celebrate our successes

You will leave with more knowledge, new ideas and motivation to make your League better able to reach its goals. LWVH/SI/NF will have 4 Voting Delegates.

If you are interested in joining us as an observer, please contact me at: hamptonssw@gmail.com

Mensaje del presidente

La primavera está en el aire y a pesar de los fuertes vientos, las temperaturas frías y la amenaza de nieve del Día de los Inocentes, estamos entusiasmados de reanudar nuestras Reuniones de Información Pública en persona. Únase a nosotros en la Biblioteca Rogers Memorial el 3 de abril de 2023, a las 6 p.m. para "Un saludo a las enfermeras". Simplemente inicie sesión en: myrml.org para registrarse.

El Comité de la Juventud recibió una subvención de \$750 de LWVUS para promover el registro de votantes en nuestras 10 escuelas secundarias del área. También están trabajando en el Día del Estudiante en la Legislatura de Suffolk y el programa estatal de Nueva York "Students Inside Albany". Más sobre estos proyectos especiales en futuros números del votante.

¿Interesado en aprender algo nuevo y ayudar a educar a los votantes? La capacitación sobre Vote 411 se llevará a cabo virtualmente el 12 de abril @ 5:30 p.m. Venga a aprender cómo funciona el programa y comience a crear su página para las próximas primarias de junio. Ahora es el momento de configurar las carreras, etc., ven a ver cómo.

Esta capacitación también será un gran repaso para cualquiera que haya usado Vote 411 en el pasado y lo creará nuevamente esta temporada electoral. Como las elecciones son todas locales este año, las ligas locales son responsables de crear las páginas de Vote 411 para sus carreras. ¡Ven a recordarte cómo hacerlo! Póngase en contacto con Susan Wilson: hamptonssw@gmail.com para obtener más información.

Marque sus calendarios para nuestra Reunión Anual que se llevará a cabo este año en la Biblioteca de Westhampton Beach el 7 de mayo. Más detalles e información de speaker a continuación.

La 60ª convención de la Liga de Mujeres Votantes del Estado de Nueva York se llevará a cabo del 2 al 4 de junio de 2023 en el Crowne Plaza Albany – Desmond Hotel.

La convención es una oportunidad

- para conocer y establecer contactos con líderes de la Liga de todo el estado en persona!
- para hacer nuevos amigos y renovar viejas amistades
- para saber lo que viene en las operaciones de la Liga
- para mejorar las comunicaciones y la visibilidad de tu Liga
- para fortalecer su Liga trabajando juntos, compartiendo experiencias, aprendiendo unos de otros y siendo inspirados
- para celebrar nuestros éxitos

Saldrás con más conocimiento, nuevas ideas y motivación para que tu Liga sea más capaz de alcanzar sus objetivos. LWVH/SI/NF tendrá 4 delegados con derecho a voto.

Si está interesado en unirse a nosotros como observador, póngase en contacto conmigo en: hamptonssw@gmail.com

A Salute to Nursing Past and Present

The first part of this three part essay by Valerie King, chair of the Health Committee, focused on the role of nurses in American women's long fight to gain voting rights. Here she examines the growth of nursing from the time our local hospital was established to the present.

Nursing in the past at Southampton Hospital, now Stony Brook Southampton Hospital has a long history of nursing programs.

According to the Mary Cummings in her book 100 Years of Healing South Hampton Hospital 1901-2009, "local nurse Charlotte Lilly White was hired at a salary of \$65 per month to take charge of the first hospital dispensary located in Stephen Goodale's boarding house on Hampton Road She took up her duties in the winter of 1908-1909 when the hospital was just being established." The timing is just about the same as the beginnings of the suffragist movement.

During the 1918 epidemic, working with the infected carried a great risk, and, in the opening pages of the hospital's annual report for the year, the board of governors expressed its "grateful recognition of the devotion of the nurses who remained with the hospital).

Miss Alice M. Large Superintendent (of nurses) at the hospital resigned in 1921, and was succeeded by **Miss Ellen Jacobsen**, a nurse trained at St. Luke's and at Southampton Hospital for around ten years.

In 1922, the hospital board approved the resolution for a Training School for Nurses, with funding estimated at 80,000 that included a residence for the nurses. Superintendent (of Nurses) Jacobsen was viewed as the "mother of Southampton's School of Nursing", which opened in 1924 with a class of six students, and a new building in 1925. This School of Nursing entered into an affiliation with the Yale School of Nursing in New Haven, Connecticut.

The nursing school received donations for student scholarships and over the years Jacobsen was promoted to Hospital Superintendent. **Edna L. Parkin** became head of the school in 1930. Under

the tutelage of these two women the nursing school became approved by the New York State Department of Education, a member of Diploma and Associate Degree Programs of the National League for Nursing, a member of the Council of Hospital Schools of Professional Nursing and an affiliation with the Southampton College of Long Island University.

The 1935 Nursing School Graduation was held in Parrish Hall Southampton, built by Samuel Parrish on his property adjacent to the hospital as a memorial to local men lost in the World War.

Nursing shortages were frequent during times of war and epidemics. **Dolores Zebrowski**, a Sag Harbor High School graduate, entered the Nursing School in 1940. She describes the hospital as being staffed with student nurses: "Only during World War II when doctors and nurses signed on in great numbers for military service... did the hospital start to hire nurses' aides and staff nurses".

In 1945 Zebrowski joined the Army Nurse Corps transporting injured soldiers to hospitals across the country and later as part of the Air Force hospital. She used her G.I. bill for advanced professional studies earning a Bachelor of Science degree, master's degrees in nursing and hospital administration, and completed a course of study at the Cornell School of Labor. During this time **Mary MacDonald Miller** became Director of Nursing at Southampton Hospital, followed by **Sheila M.**



Nurses and patients at the first hospital dispensary in Southampton, 1908.

Dwyer. Both supervised women who had signed up for the Red Cross Nurse's Aide course, along with private duty and retired graduate nurses into a Cadet Nurse Corps.

A city doctor, **Emma Bellows**, relocated to Southampton to practice medicine and eventually became the first female doctor at the hospital. By the end of the war, the nursing school facilities were outdated. Classrooms, laboratories, and equipment in the basement of the nurses' residence were not up to standards set by the New York State Board of Regents. Funding was acquired and improvements were made to Parrish Hall with a tunnel to connect with a new Dr. Schenck Memorial educational building.

Irene Hurley a student nurse there in 1949 gave this description of the 'tunnel dash'... "*say you were working on OB and you got off duty at 11pm...you went to the dining room for a snack... then home (the residence)...if you were on call you didn't get undressed. You took your scrub gown off and put your hair up and left your stockings on and got into bed. The supervisor would come through the tunnel and wake you up if there was (a patient) delivery...you put on your nursing gown and cap and rush through the tunnel to assist the delivery...when it was over you were allowed to wash all the blood clots and things out of the linen and you did up the instruments and you went back to your bed*".

1950-1960's

Cynthia Dunwell, a senior at the nursing school, along with all the other nurses in residence, assisted with the 1951 Labor Day disaster of the Pelican, a charter fishing boat that rolled over in the ocean off the coast of Montauk.

Later, at the height of the polio epidemic she joined staff nurse Irene Hurley and other nursing students in assisting with new techniques of physical therapy required for post-polio care.

Dolores Mulvilhill Zebrowski returned from military nursing service to Southampton and became Director of the newly named Suffolk Nursing School.

During the 1960's the rising operating costs of the Suffolk Nursing School at Southampton Hospital became untenable. In 1966 no new classes of student nurses were admitted. Governmental and regulatory agencies were raising concerns regarding academic and pro-

essional standards. Although efforts were made to increase the affiliation with Southampton College of Long Island University, the last class of nurses to graduate was in 1968 and after 41 years, the nursing school was officially closed.

Nurses as mediators

From the mid 60's, government regulation and control along with third party payers such as Medicare, Medicaid and commercial insurance programs, influenced the financial underpinnings of hospitals and health care throughout the country. By the end of the 1970's nurses accounted for more than half of the hospital's personnel. Zebrowski noted in 1978 that she was "working with three labor/management organizations. Irene Hurley, now a union chair, described arbitration and mediation meetings along with nursing contract strikes.

Government, regulatory institutional controls, and insurance programs have an impact on the profession of nursing then as well as now.

Recently, our healthcare system on the East End has been undergoing a transition. Our hospital has successfully affiliated with the major medical complex of Stony Brook Medicine. This was a progressive move considering the subsequent COVID 19 global pandemic and the ongoing endemic viral illnesses, at times referred to as a "triple-demic" of



flu, RSV and COVID 19, that impact our East End communities.

Prior to the COVID 19 pandemic there were national nurse shortages. Post pandemic nurse shortages have continued to increase. Exhaustion, stress, access to appropriate PPE and the potential of exposure to COVID for healthcare professionals as first responders, were new job-related risks during the height of the pandemic, prior to COVID 19 vaccines.

In December 2022, the Healthcare Association of New York, reported that 100% of hospitals responding to a survey said they had nursing shortages they could not fill. If this trend continues, Dr. Marcus Schabacker, CEO of ECRI, an Independent Healthcare Research Firm predicts, “by the year 2025 there would be a shortage of 1 million nurses nationwide”.

Saluting our local heroes

Some nurses find advocacy a means of meeting the challenges of the profession. One pathway for advocacy is through the League of Women Voters. Some nurses find advocacy a means of meeting the challenges of the profession. One pathway for advocacy is through the League of Women Voters.

Barbara Bartolletti, an outstanding member of the New York State League of Women Voters, recalls: “I was a nurse for 20 years, primarily working as a neonatal intensive care nurse before beginning my advocacy career with the League. My first advocacy job was working with Shirley Gordon at Family Planning Advocates (FPA). After leaving FPA, I began my League career as Legislative Director for the State League for the next 40 years retiring in 2020.” Giving voice to local nurses through community information meetings is another means of recognition.

You’re Invited

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and North Fork, (LWVHSINF) have identified and selected a few local nurses to salute and honor for their service. Our East End league, in conjunction with the support of Stony Brook Southampton Hospital and the Southampton Rogers Memorial Library will host an event to honor nursing past and present. We are organizing a public information meeting to be presented on April 3rd at the Roger’s Memorial Library.

Keynote speaker, Althea Mills RN MSN Chief of Nursing and Vice President of Patient Care Services at Stony Brook Southampton Hospital has selected among her staff of nurses Jennifer Schmidt RN, Charge Nurse on a very busy medical, surgical, telemetry unit, and Marie Barnes RN Charge Nurse on the Intensive Care Unit to make brief presentations. In addition, Mary Crosby RN, MPH, CHPN, President and CEO of the East End Hospice (Kanas Center) will be a guest speaker on hospice nursing and Catherine O’Brien NP will present on East End psychiatric nursing. The event will be geared toward informing the public of the challenges and successes of nursing services provided in our community. Please join us in saluting and honoring our local nurses! 6pm-7:30pm April 3rd 2023, in the Morris Community Room of the Southampton Library.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Contact the Southampton Roger’s Memorial Library website <https://myrml.org> click on Upcoming Events.

A message from Valerie King

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons Shelter Island North Folk has consistently incorporated healthcare in committee work. I have chaired our league’s Health Committee for over 15 years, while maintaining my private practice of psychological services in East Hampton. Individuals do not have to be a nurse or healthcare professional to be on the Health Committee of our local league. An interest in the healthcare services in our community is the only requirement. Contact me at ValerieKingValerikingphd@gmail.com (phone:) 646-217-1825

(Continued from page 1)

Mary McCleod Bethune

Mary's formal education began in the Mayesville one-room black schoolhouse run by the Presbyterian Board of Missions of Freedmen. Her teacher, Emma Jane Wilson, saw the 13-year-old girl's determination and helped Mary get a scholarship to her alma mater, Scotia Seminar. After four years there, at the age of 19, Mary moved to Chicago to attend Dwight L. Moody's Institute for Home and Foreign Missions, hoping to be a missionary in Africa. That dream was squashed when she was told that black missionaries were not needed.

This disappointment marked a pivotal change that in Mary's life: She had always known that education was a prime goal among African-Americans. She would become teacher.

She became that, and much more.

In 1896 Mary was teaching at a girls' school in Augusta, Georgia, run by a woman named Lucy Craft Laney. The school emphasized educating girls and women to improve the conditions of black people. Bethune adopted this philosophy. "I believe that the greatest hope for the development of my race lies in training our women thoroughly and practically."

Mary Moves On

A brief marriage to Albertus Bethune in 1898 left her to raise their only son, Albert.

In 1905, now residing in Daytona Beach, Florida, she was determined to start her own school for girls. She rented a small house, made benches and desks from discarded crates, and obtained other items from charities. The Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls (in the vernacular of the time) opened with a class of five girls ages six to twelve, and her 7-year-old son Albert. Within a year, she had 30 students.

The school grew to become a beacon for civil rights, attracting the attention of notable black leaders. After a visit from Booker T. Washington, who had founded the Tuskegee Institute in 1912, Mary followed his advice to seek out financial support from white benefactors. Soon she was inviting wealthy and influential white men to sit on her school board of trustees; among them were James Gamble of Procter and Gamble and Ransom Eli Olds of the Oldsmobile Motor Company).

Mary proved to be a persuasive fundraiser. She was able to expand the school's curriculum to include science and business courses, then high-school-level math, science, English, and foreign languages.

During fundraising visits to Washington, D.C., Mary became acquainted with the rich (John D. Rockefeller who donated \$62,000) and the famous (Franklin D. Roosevelt and his wife Eleanor.)

Many achievements

Mary's contributions to the advancement of her race and the country in general are so numerous that it's impossible to

mention all of them in one article.

Some highlights:

1911 Founded, in Daytona Beach, the McLeod Hospital, the first hospital for black people.

1917-1925 Served as the Florida chapter president of the National Association of Colored Women, working to register black voters, before and after the 19th amendment and attracting threats from the Klu Klux Klan.

1931 Established the first black junior college, the Bethune-Cookman College, merging her school with the Cookman College for Men.

1937-1943 Was Director of the Division of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration created under President Roosevelt's Works Progress Administration (WPA) plan, helping black people gain a better job and salary opportunities. She was the only black agent who was a financial manager.

1944 Co-founded the United Negro College Fund offering scholarships, mentorships and job opportunities to minority students attending any of 37 historically black colleges and universities

1945 Was the only black woman present at the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco representing the NAACP.

Mary served under five presidents, but above and beyond her government service, Mary will always be remembered for her efforts to bring black and white together through education and example. Today, many schools across the country, including one in Rochester NY, bear her name.

Final words

Mary died on May 18, 1955, and is buried in Daytona Beach.

The tributes poured in.

From the New York Times: "She was one of the most potent factors in the growth of interracial goodwill in America." From the Beach Evening News: "To some, she seemed unreal, something that could not be. . . What right had she to greatness? . . . The lesson of Mrs. Bethune's life is that genius knows no racial barriers."

And from Christian Century: "... the story of her life should be taught to every school child for generations to come.

Amen to that."

—Eva Moore

Recommended reading available from Amazon

Mary McLeod Bethune (Crowell Biographies)

By Eloise Greenfield picture book

Mary McLeod Bethune

By Nancy Ann Zrinyi Long

161 pages

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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 _____

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I'm interested in these committees: _____

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You can also join or donate on our website LWVHSINF.org

Developing Collaborative Relationships

by Terese Wildrick, chair

For the past several months, our committee has been working with other organizations whose objectives align with the League resolution declaring a climate emergency.

In addition to all her other responsibilities, our president, Susan Wilson, has committed to leading Carbon CREWs monthly. Carbon CREW stands for Carbon Reduction for Earth Wellbeing. The book 2040, by Damon Gameau, serves as the focus for five weekly virtual or in-person meetings. Participants assess their carbon footprint at the beginning and make personal climate action plans to reduce it right away, in the near future, and in a few years. Susan is preparing a Carbon CREW caucus for the LWVNYS convention in June. It would be wonderful to have a show of support from our local League members for this major project.

League member and founder of Carbon CREW, Dorothy Reilly, is involved in revising and updating the original 2040, making it more user friendly to American readers. It promises to be an outstanding resource for reducing carbon emissions.

One way that our League can help reduce carbon emissions in our communities is to advocate for composting at town transfer stations. Composting reduces methane emissions, and helps sequester carbon in the soil. The town facilities in East Hampton and Southampton accept brush, leaves and grass clippings that they turn into mulch for gardening and landscaping. Compost is made from fruit and vegetable scraps such as apple cores, carrot peels, coffee grounds, etc. The Ecological Culture Initiative based in Hampton Bays offers composting to their members. For a reasonable fee, you receive a metal compost bucket. When it is full of food scraps (no meat, rubber bands or stickers) you bring it to the ECI compost bin. When the compost is ready, you can use some of it in your garden. ECI uses it in their garden that provides organic produce to local food pantries. We would like to work with ECI in advocating for composting in our towns.

Please email mswild@optonline.net if you are interested in joining the Sustainability Committee. We are open to your ideas and suggestions.



LWVH/SI/NF on Social Media

by Andrea Gabor

Whether you consider social media to be essential, evil or merely bewildering, it is a useful tool for engaging with like-minded organizations and individuals locally, nationally and even internationally. At their best social-media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter can spread the word about local ideas and events, and can draw followers to organizations like the League of Women Voters. It is with these benefits in mind that the board of League of Women Voters of the Hamptons Shelter Island and the North Fork asked Isabel Scanlon-Sepulveda and me to create social media accounts for our chapter a few months ago.

We agreed that the most important first step was to create identical, easy-to-remember handles that members and outsiders alike could easily access. For this reason, the common handle we've chosen is LWVEastEndNY. The accounts are as follows: Our Facebook page is LWVeastendny and our Instagram and Twitter accounts share the same handle--@LWVeastendNY.

Our earliest posts included notices of both the legislative debates sponsored by LWVHSINF, as well as several Tweets relating to the chapter's affordable-housing panel. We also crafted posts about our first in-person annual meeting, complete with photo, as well as a notice—with flyer—of a Suffolk league Long Island Conservation talk in cooperation with the Nature Conservancy. In addition, Isabel and I are reposting relevant items by others—for example, a tweet by Fred Thiele about some of the new laws that went into effect at the end of the year.

My personal favorite was a retweet of a post by Sarah Reckhow, a political scientist at Michigan State University who tweeted the following on election day last November: "A favorite recollection of the Brody Hall voting scene at MSU—part of the volunteer corps was several retired women from League of Women Voters. They were helping out for hours, chatting with the students, and driving some who were in the wrong place to precincts across town."

This tweet (and our retweet) demonstrates the qualities that a good post should have: It is timely, non-partisan, and highlights the league's get-out-the-vote mission; it is also pithy and fun.

Of course, setting up an account is just a first step. Compared to larger leagues, we are several years behind in our social media strategy. For example, the New York City chapter established its Twitter account, @LWCNYC, in 2010 and now has over 2,200 Twitter and more than 1,600 Instagram followers. Meanwhile, the League of Women Voters of Suffolk County account was established about four years ago and has just over 100 Twitter followers.

Building a following is important, but not easy. It's worth remembering the adage that in today's world "the scarcest resource is human attention."

To draw and keep followers, organizations that want to increase their social-media footprint have to be consistent in their messaging, judicious about what they post, while also crafting relevant items regularly.

We invite you to participate.

Maintaining a social media presence means posting, ideally, every day, but certainly every week, which is a big commitment for LWV volunteers. Down the road, this means that we will want hire a journalism intern who is conversant with social media and has both the judgment and writing skills to maintain a strong and relevant profile for our chapter.

In the meantime, please help us cultivate followers among like-minded folks who are interested in small-"d" democracy, promoting voting, and the many important civic programs that our chapter sponsors. Follow our Twitter and Instagram accounts and copy us on your relevant posts @LWVEastEndNY. Most important, whether you are on social media or not, please apprise both me and Isabel of timely events that we can post. I can be reached at aagabor@aol.com; Isabel can be reached at iscanlon13@yahoo.com.



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ELECTED DIRECTORS

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Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

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Voter Services

Sadly not filled

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Nominating Committee

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LWVH/SI/NF is looking for some priceless people to work on our various committees. Contact any officer listed above if interested in volunteering for the committee.

The Voter

League of Women Voters of the Hamptons,
Shelter Island and the North Fork
P.O. Box 2253
East Hampton, NY 11937
Phone: 631-324-4637
LWVHSINF.org

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