



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. 32

April/May/June 2023

Highlights of the LWVH/SI/NF Annual Meeting, May 7, at Westhampton Beach Library



The meeting opened with a Power-Point presentation by guest speaker, Yvette DeBow-Salsedo, Vice President of the Peconic Land Trust, who spoke about the Trust's acquisition and stewardship of nearly 14,000 acres of farmland, woodlands and wetlands over the past 40 years. At speech's end, LWV President Susan Wilson presented an Honorary Membership to her in thanks



Susan Wilson presented one of two Carrie Chapman Catt Awards for long-term Distinguished League Service (a red Susan B. Anthony cashmere shawl) to Valerie Levenstein of Shelter Island for her many years as Shelter Island's Voter Services chair, organizing voter registration drives, candidate debates and the State of the Town Luncheon Address.

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In Annual Meeting business, Mary O'Brien presented the Treasurer's Report from Cathy Peacock and the LWV Budget for 2023-24.

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Announcing..

LWVH/SI/NF Fundraising Event
Wednesday June 21st, 1:00 – 4:30 PM
Arlene Hinkemeyer will conduct a Bridgehampton tour which includes the new NathanielRogers House Museum (on the corner by the war monument), the new Bridgehampton Child Care and Recreation Center on Sag Turnpike, the Candy Kitchen ice cream shoppe, and Bridge Gardens. Call Arlene formore information. 631-324-6713



**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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Letter from the editor

This May, the East Hampton Town Board announced two new ventures that will be of interest to League members : One involves a plan for the town to establish a program aimed at reusing food scraps to create compost and return it to the soil. (This concept was covered by our Sustainability Committee in the February/March Voter.)

According to an article in The East Hampton Star, Mark Hauber, chairman of Riverhead Town’s Environmental Advisory Committee, pointed out that-- in addition to significant reduction of greenhouse gases-- this would mean that by collecting three tons of scrap a day the town would be a saving of \$300 a day compared to current tipping fees for solid waste—enough to hire a recycling coordinator and pay for a new truck that manages food scraps by itself.

Mr. Hauber and Mary Morgan, co-founder of Drawdown East End, described a pilot program in Southold Town that they helped to run in which 30 town residents participated over 30 days to divert food



scraps from the waste stream. “We [the five towns] are a bioregion,” Ms Morgan explained to the East Hampton Town Board, “and we have to think about the impacts of the entire North and South Forks into Riverhead, and work with Nature, not against it.” The federal Environmental Protection Agency, she said, “uses compost as a best practice to mitigate stormwater runoff.”

Also on the Town Board’s agenda is the formation of a zoning code amendment motivated by an insistent Amagansett resident, Jaine Mehring, encouraging the board to take action to “restore rational restraint and inspire more modulated propositions” in development. Councilwoman Cate Rogers, who will head the endeavor, read from the town’s comprehensive plan, adopted in 2005: “The Nature Conservancy has designated the area as one of the ‘Last Great Places’ in the western Hemisphere. . . .Development has not obliterated the natural and scenic characteristics once covering all Long Island. . . . Future development should be harmonious with the existing character of the community.”

We look forward to following the advancement of these initiatives.

– Eva Moore (with a nod to Christopher Walsh who wrote both articles for the Star.)

President's Message



Our Annual Meeting is the culmination of a year's worth of activities and projects and the chance to honor those who have made important contributions to the success of the League.

Congratulations to Valerie King and Valerie Levenstein, recipients of the 2023 Carrie Chapman Catt Award presented at this year's Annual Meeting, May 7th, 2023. We also awarded the 2023 Betty Desch Scholarship to Pierson High School student Miachesca Gangemi. Look for her winning essay in this issue.

Sadly we say goodbye to outgoing Board members, Mary Blake, Beverly Daniel, Dale Grant and Cathy Peacock. We thank them for their boundless energy, countless hours of hard work and support.

Welcome to newly appointed Board Members Michelle Corbett, Claudia Hunt and Neil Cohen.

At the meeting we approved local League positions and the January program planning recommendations. That means that in addition to voter rights, local environmental issues and affordable housing, you have told us to focus this year on women's issues, support of a unified court system, and the Equal Rights Amendment. A tall order but we are up to the challenge.

Looking back at some of last year's accomplishments: Candidate Debates; 9 Sites for National Voter Registration Day; New Citizen Voter Registration in Central Islip; In-person Public Information Meeting: A Salute to Nurses, Past and Present, partnering with Stony Brook Southampton Hospital and the Rogers Memorial Library; Historical Suffragist Presentation for the Westhampton Woman's Club; ongoing Carbon CREW presentations; LWVUS Grant of \$750 for a Youth Registration Program. We are scheduled to present an environmental caucus at the NYS Biennial Convention on June 2-4, 2023. Two of our programs are in the running for New York State Awards: the Youth Committee's Running and Winning Program and the Carbon CREW Project in the category of "Thinking Outside the Box".

We look forward to a very active year filled with lots of in-person events and activities but cannot accomplish all we have planned without your support. We can use more help on all of our committees: Fundraising Events, Membership, Sustainability, Youth, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Government, Health, Voter Services, Social Media and North Fork Outreach. If you are interested in helping, please contact me: at 631-495-9288 or hamptonssw@gmail.com

Susan Wilson

Mensaje del presidente

Nuestra Reunión Anual es la culminación de un año de actividades y proyectos y la oportunidad de honrar a aquellos que han hecho importantes contribuciones al éxito de la Liga.

Felicitaciones a Valerie King y Valerie Levenstein, ganadoras del Premio Carrie Chapman Catt 2023 presentado en la Reunión Anual de este año, el 7 de mayo de 2023. También otorgamos la beca Betty Desch 2023 a la estudiante de Pierson High School Miachesca Gangemi. Busque su ensayo ganador en este número.

Tristemente nos despedimos de los miembros salientes de la Junta, Mary Blake, Beverly Daniel, Dale Grant y Cathy Peacock. Les agradecemos su energía ilimitada, innumerables horas de arduo trabajo y apoyo.

Bienvenidos a los recién nombrados miembros de la Junta Michelle Corbett, Claudia Hunt y Neil Cohen.

En la reunión aprobamos las posiciones de la Liga Local y las Recomendaciones de Planificación del Programa de enero. Eso significa que, además de los derechos de los votantes, los problemas ambientales locales y la vivienda asequible, nos ha dicho que nos centremos este año en los problemas de las mujeres, el apoyo a un sistema judicial unificado y la Enmienda de Igualdad de Derechos. Una tarea difícil, pero estamos a la altura del desafío.

Mirando hacia atrás en algunos de los logros del año pasado: Debates de candidatos; 9 sitios para el Día Nacional de Registro de Votantes; Registro de votantes de nuevos ciudadanos en Central Islip; Reunión de información pública en persona: Un saludo a las enfermeras, pasado y presente, en asociación con el Hospital Stony Brook Southampton y la Biblioteca Rogers Memorial; Presentación sufragista histórica para el Club de Mujeres de Westhampton; presentaciones continuas de Carbon CREW; Subvención LWVUS de \$750 para un Programa de Registro de Jóvenes. Estamos programados para presentar un Caucus ambiental en la Convención Bienal del Estado de Nueva York del 2 al 4 de junio de 2023. Dos de nuestros programas están en la carrera para los Premios del Estado de Nueva York: el Programa Running & Winning del Comité Juvenil y el Proyecto Carbon CREW en la categoría de "Pensar fuera de la caja".

Esperamos un año muy activo lleno de muchos eventos y actividades en persona, pero no podemos lograr todo lo que hemos planeado sin su apoyo. Podemos usar más ayuda en todos nuestros comités: Recaudación de fondos y eventos, Membresía, Sostenibilidad, Juventud, Diversidad, Equidad e inclusión y Gobierno, Salud, Servicios al votante, Redes sociales y North Fork Outreach. Si está interesado en ayudar, comuníquese conmigo: al 631-495-9288 o hamptonssw@gmail.com

Health Committee Hosts Panel Discussion Honoring Nurses

On April 3, League's Health Committee chair Valerie King, Ph.D. moderated an outstanding program and panel entitled "A Salute to Nursing Past & Present," at Southampton's Rogers Memorial Library. She distributed a beautiful handout that included the two Voter articles she had written, with the research she had done on the history of nurse suffragists and the history of the nursing school affiliated with Southampton Hospital. Each of the nurse panelists spoke about her area of expertise. The program was taped by Southampton Town's new SUN20TV and is available on their YouTube channel at [YouTube.com/@Sun20TVSouthampton](https://www.youtube.com/@Sun20TVSouthampton)



In her opening remarks, Valerie King did a "fast time travel into the past"—donning headwear worn by nurses at various periods of their history, starting with different hats: a boater hat (plus a "Votes for Women" sash) to represent the early nurse suffragists; then a "Flossie" hat in honor of Florence Nightingale (pictured here), which is still worn at nurses' capping ceremonies; and finally PPE apparel, to represent the present COVID era.



Valerie with League President Susan Wilson and the panelists—Marie Barnes, Stony Brook Southampton Hospital ICU nurse; Mary Crosby, President/CEO of East End Hospice; Jennifer Schmidt, SBSH, surgical nurse; and Catherine O'Brien, psychiatric nurse. At program's end, each panelist received a gift bag and a one-year honorary membership in the League.

Highlights of the LWVH/SI/NF Annual Meeting

(Continued from page 1)



Valerie King (who could not be at the meeting) received her Susan B. Anthony red scarf as the second League member to be honored this year with the Carrie Chapman Catt Award at home. She was recognized for her many years as Chair of the Health Committee, organizing numerous committee programs, conducting visits to health service sites and presenting Public Information Programs, such as the recent panel discussion described above



Newly joining the Board will be Appointed Directors Michelle Corbett of Shelter Island, Neil Cohen of East Hampton, and absent from photo, Claudia Hunt of Southampton.



Nominating Committee Chair Judi Roth presented the slate of officers and directors for the election at the Annual Meeting.



Estelle Gellman presented the League's previous Local Positions for consideration, in the areas of recycling/solid waste, affordable housing, and the council/town manager form of government, after which Susan Wilson presented the Program Planning emphases for the year in the areas of voting rights, natural resources/sustainability, judicial reform and women's issues.

Introduction by Anne K Marshall, Selection Committee

The Betty Desch scholarship, named after its benefactor, a long-time physical education teacher at Southampton High School, has been presented to a graduating high school student in the League's legal areas (now 10 schools) since 2005. This year, there were 21 applications from eight of the ten schools.

LWV Youth Committee member Martha Potter presented the annual Betty Desch \$2,000 Scholarship to Sag Harbor Pierson H.S. senior Miachessa Gangemi, who will be attending Stony Brook University's Honors College this fall.



In eleventh grade, I was elected as the Head of Tutoring for Pierson's chapter of the National Honors Society (NHS). It was a position I wanted because it was one in which I felt I could make an impact. I had worked as a tutor all of the past year and not only felt that it was an important experience for the student I was tutoring, but also for myself.

As the Head of Tutoring, I receive emails from teachers in both the middle and high school requesting tutors for students in their classes. I then reach out to my peers and find an NHS member who is comfortable in the designated subject to match with the student. Over 100 students in Pierson are being tutored through NHS. Tutors meet with the students once a week in the library and help them in the class they are snuggling in. At times, the Head of Tutoring Position is difficult; a tutor or tutee doesn't show up, a tutee doesn't like their tutor, or a teacher is unhappy with the tutor their student was assigned. However, whenever I walk into the library, I am always gratified by the amount of students working together. It is fulfilling to see the product of the work I have put into the program. As everyone in the NHS is tutoring at least once a week, it is also, at times, hard to find tutors who will take particular jobs. When this occurs, I fill the position until I am able to find a tutor. I tutor consistently in 1B Chemistry, Spanish IV, and Algebra I. However, I have also taken jobs for a short period of time in Math 6, Math 8, Regents Chemistry, and Algebra II. In fact, the Algebra I students that I now tutor twice a week started out as a job that no one wanted to take. When jobs were first being assigned, everyone was afraid to work with these students because they only spoke Spanish. Nobody wanted to mess up in a language that none of us are fluent in. I was certainly included among that number. However, when I thought about it, I realized that these students had just made what will likely be the biggest journey of their lives by moving to the United States. Now, they had to do something comparatively insignificant, but challenging in a different way: learn Algebra in a class taught in English. I couldn't help them in terms of all they had experienced, but I could certainly help them in Algebra. Now, having worked with them for over 5 months, I can see not only them improving in Algebra I and English, but myself improving in Spanish. Though I make constant errors, I have learned a ton about communication and language. The Head of Tutoring position has tested my leadership skills in dealing with the many issues that arrive in terms of assigning tutors, but also on a more personal level in working with the students that I tutor. I have learned more about people and how they work together -about the differences in personalities between people that make for a positive or negative working relationship. I have had the amazing opportunity to form closer connections with my peers, both in my grade and those younger than me. I would love to be selected for this scholarship because I believe that my leadership role in the NHS has allowed me to better the community. As Mother Teresa said, "I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."



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Recommended reading

In his new book, Dr Richard Haass, a recipient of the Presidential Citizens Medal and other honors, suggests that the most serious question facing us is whether we are prepared to do what is necessary to save our increasingly endangered democracy.

In Dr. Haass's view, today the United States faces dangerous threats from other countries, including Russia, North Korea, Iran, and from terrorists, climate change, and future pandemics, but the greatest peril to the country comes from within, from ourselves.

The Bill of Rights is at the center of our Constitution, yet our most intractable conflicts often emerge from contrasting views as to what our rights are. It is clear that rights alone cannot provide the basis for a functioning, much less flourishing, democracy. Dr Haass offers an innovative solution: to place obligations on the same footing as rights.

At a time when Civics has all but disappeared from school curriculums, he offers ten steps we

can take to bolster democracy and counter the growing apathy, anger, selfishness, division, disinformation, and violence that threaten us all. 1) Be Informed 2) Get Involved 3) Stay Open to Compromise 4) Remain Civil 5) Reject Violence 6) Value Norms 7) Promote the Common Good 8) Respect Government Service 9) Support the Teaching of Civics 10) Put Country First.



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The Voter

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