



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. 35

November/December 2023



Knock on Every Door to Win an Election!

by Judi Roth

This was the message that was given to the 30 students who attended Running and Winning at the Watermill Community House on Thursday, November 16th, by the elected officials who shared their stories with the students, teachers and League members. Whether it was newly elected Southampton Town Councilman Michael Iasilli, Mayor and former trustee of Southampton Village Bill Manger, or key note speaker, retiring County Legislator Bridget Fleming, they all stressed the importance of meeting voters and listening to their concerns. Mayor Manger recounted that his father, a doctor, always said if you listen long enough to a patient they'll tell you what's wrong with them. The same can be applied to the voting public – what is the issue that will motivate them to go out and vote – hopefully for you but if not, you're at least letting them know that politicians care about them.

Setting up the Watermill Community House were Sue Wilson, Arlene Hinkemeyer, Martha Potter, Kathleen Mulcahy, Ursula Lynch, Eileen Mercer, Terry Wildrick, Beth Barth, Nada Barry, Stephanie Snider

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Save the Date

Mon. Jan. 29, 12:30 p.m.

Annual Program Planning Meeting & Lunch
Bridgehampton Library, 2478 Main St.
RSVP 631-324-4637

Sat. March 9, 1-5 p.m.

LTVDRR Awareness Event
LTV Studios, 75 Industrial Rd., Wainscott.
Come learn about the Equal Rights Amendment, which has passed the NYS Legislature twice and now goes to NYS voters on Nov. 5 ballot. Included are noted speakers—former Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D, NY), State Senator Sandy Senn (R, SC), Laura Harding (Exec. Dir, ERASE Racism)—plus films, music and refreshments!



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 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, P. O. Box 2253, East Hampton, NY 11937.

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Letter from the Editor

Introduction

This will be the final Voter for the year, a fitting time to review some of LWVHSINF's activities featured in five issues from 2023.

In 2024 we will be publishing quarterly, starting with a January-March issue.

December 2022/January 2023

December 13, 2022

Holiday Party and Chinese Auction, Unitarian Universalist Congregation, December 13th, 2022



Arlene Hinkemeyer, Judi Roth, Terry Wildrick, Martha Potter, president of UU Congregation

February/March

Women's History Month

Remembering Mary McLeod Bethune, whose dedicated efforts promoting racial equality focused on girls and women.

Farewell to longtime chair of Voter Services, Barbara McClancy, who died at the end of February.



Mary at age 59/1934

April/May/June

April 3: Health Committee Panel

Discussion at Rogers Memorial Library, honoring the history of suffragists and contributions of local nurses.



Left to right: Valerie King, chair and author of the two-part essay "A Salute to Nursing Past and Present," with LWV president Susan Wilson and panel of nurses: Marie Barns, Mary Crosby, Jennifer Schmidt, and Catherine O'Brien

(Continued on page 7)

President's Message



As the calendar year comes to an end we look back over our accomplishments, many chronicled in the pages of *The Voter*. In this issue you'll see photos of the successful Running & Winning event hosted by the Youth Committee and our online Candidate Debates.

Seems like we just celebrated our country's birthday in July and in the blink of an eye it is nearly time to deck the halls, trim the tree, light the Menorah or the Kwanza Kinara and toast the new year on the horizon.

Our Holiday gathering this year has been moved to January and will be a celebration of the Winter Solstice at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Bridgehampton. There will be camaraderie, food and wine. Watch for a Constant Contact Invitation with the date and more information.

Be sure to mark your calendars and plan to attend our Annual Program Planning Meeting being held in person this year at the Hampton Library in Bridgehampton on January 29, 2024 (12:30 - 2:30). This member-only meeting will give you an opportunity to help decide where LWVH/SI/NF should focus its energy, which programs and activities to hold, and what our 3 Top Priorities for the coming year should be. Please RSVP to the LWVH phone 631-324-4637 since we are serving a light lunch.

In January 2023, the NY Legislature passed (for a second time) the Equal Rights Amendment bringing the Amendment to New York voters for ratification on the November 2024 ballot.

Please join us in March 2024 for a program that addresses this important legislation.

It isn't too soon to plan to attend our fundraising Sunday Brunch at the American Hotel on April 7 2024. More details to follow.

I wish everyone a safe and prosperous new year.

Susan Wilson

Mensaje del presidente

A medida que el año calendario llega a su fin, miramos hacia atrás y repasamos nuestros logros, muchos de ellos narrados en las páginas de *The Voter*. En esta edición verás fotos del exitoso evento Running & Winning organizado por el Comité de la Juventud y nuestros Debates de Candidatos en línea.

Parece que acabamos de celebrar el cumpleaños de nuestro país en julio y en un abrir y cerrar de ojos es casi la hora de decorar los pasillos, podar el árbol, encender la Menorá o el Kwanza Kinara y brindar por el año nuevo en el horizonte.

Nuestra reunión navideña de este año se ha trasladado a enero y será una celebración del solsticio de invierno en la Iglesia Unitaria Universalista en Bridgehampton. Habrá camaradería, comida y vino. Esté atento a una invitación de contacto constante con la fecha y más información.

Asegúrese de marcar sus calendarios y planee asistir a nuestra Reunión Anual de Planificación del Programa que se llevará a cabo en persona este año en la Biblioteca Hampton en Bridgehampton el 29 de enero de 2024 (12:30 - 2:30). Esta reunión exclusiva para miembros le dará la oportunidad de ayudar a decidir dónde LWVH/SI/NF debe enfocar su energía, qué programas y actividades llevar a cabo, y cuáles deberían ser nuestras 3 prioridades principales para el próximo año. Por favor, confirme su asistencia al teléfono de LWVH 631-324-4637 ya que estamos sirviendo un almuerzo ligero.

En enero de 2023, la Legislatura de Nueva York aprobó (por segunda vez) la Enmienda de Igualdad de Derechos que lleva la Enmienda a los votantes de Nueva York para su ratificación en la boleta electoral de noviembre de 2024.

Únase a nosotros en marzo de 2024 para un programa que aborda esta importante legislación.

No es demasiado pronto para planificar con anticipación para asistir a nuestro brunch dominical de recaudación de fondos en el American Hotel el 7 de abril de 2024. Más detalles a continuación.

Les deseo a todos felices fiestas llenas de familia, amigos, actividades divertidas, paz y prosperidad.



(Continued from page 1)

Knock on Every Door to Win an Election!

and myself. What a team we made – whether getting out some 60 chairs, putting stickers on folders, putting up the screen for the video portion, arranging the food on the tables – or most importantly – realizing that the round tables we had ordered were not going to be delivered and switching to carrying out the long, heavy rectangle tables owned by the Watermill Community House. The good news about that? Not only did we save money, but we realized that the long tables worked better!

By 8:30 students began arriving– from Southampton High School, East Hampton High School, Pierson High School, Hampton Bays High School and Greenport High School – some 30 in all. The elected officials were Sarah Amaden and Sandra Melendez, East Hampton Village Trustees, William Manger, Southampton Village Mayor, Theresa Kiernan, Southampton Town Tax Receiver, Joseph McLoughlin, Southampton Town Trustee, Michael Iasilli and Tommy John Schiavoni, Southampton Town Council and Ann Welker, the newly elected Suffolk County Legislator.

Despite the fact that most of the members of the committee have been involved with Running and Winning for many years, hearing the stories from the elected officials is always inspiring – their backgrounds, how they decided to run, how they campaigned, how



LWV President Susan Wilson welcomed elected officials and students from five East End high schools.

they find the job to be rewarding and fulfilling. Ann Welker's knees were shaking when she first began public speaking, Tommy John's grandmother was a suffragette, Bridget wanted to be a dancer until a teacher encouraged her to go to college, Joseph was on the planning commission. Each elected official spoke to the whole group and then spent 30 minutes



Southampton Village Mayor William Manger, who worked for a time for the federal government, spoke about his experience.



Newly-elected Suffolk County Legislator Ann Welker (and former Southampton Town Trustee) addressed the group.

Youth Committee Report

rotating around the tables twice where the students got to ask them questions.

In reading through the students feedback it is evident that they realize that the life of a public official is stressful and that campaigns are very time consuming. A student from Greenport High School, Brae Iglesias wrote: “You will not be able to please everybody and even if some people do not take you seriously for who you are or for your beliefs, do not let them distract you from your goals.” Lachlan Fuer of Pierson High School wrote “It is very expensive and time-consuming, but it is greatly rewarding to work in public service”.

The second portion of the program was devoted to a mobile phone survey designed by Kathleen Mulcahey and Martha Potter. The Teens Talk Voting Survey was taken by the students on their phones and their answers were immediately shown on the screen. Questions included are you registered to vote, will you vote, why or why not, etc. Also surveyed were how important different issues were to these students, from gun control, to affordable housing to the cost of college education. The students were charged with coming up with a plan to take back to their respective schools to encourage their fellow students to register and vote. Each table had oak tag and colored markers to make a presentation to show to the audience. The colors, the ideas and the enthusiasm were fantastic. Table 1’s theme was “How Do I Vote? Why Should I Vote?”. Table 2 focused on why voting matters – focus on the issues, it doesn’t matter if you’re political or not. Table 3 talked about absentee ballots and pre-registration drawing a

Kathleen Mulcahy and Martha Potter encouraged students to share the Teens Talk Survey they had composed.



Keynote speaker, Bridget Fleming, who has served as a Southampton Town Councilmember and Suffolk County Legislator, spoke on the topic “Highlights and Challenges of Two Decades in Public Office.”



Students interviewed the officials during a round of table visits. Here, Southampton Town Receiver of Taxes Theresa Kieran and new Southampton Town Trustee Joseph McLoughlin

Youth Committee Report



Students worked in teams to create plans that encourage all eligible citizens to register to vote. The team at Table 5 devised a plan "Why Voting Matters."

pyramid with the federal government on top and state and local elections as the base. Table 4 suggested incentives to get people involved. They proposed enforced registration time in classes and "scan me" posters in the hallways. Table 5 heralded "The Time Is Right" – one vote matters. They thought the survey should be given as an assignment in their history classes. "Why? Because if it's voluntary you will have a biased result. "

After group photos, the students helped us put away

chairs and tables. Leftover food was sent away with the teachers – and the volunteers – and we swept the place clean and went home happy with what the League of Women Voters had once again accomplished.

And we can't end this without thanking the Watermill Community Club, Hampton Coffee, the Rotarians of Southampton, Staples and the LWVUS Education Foundation Voter Services Grant.



The LWV Youth Committee members who planned this year's Running & Winning. Front row, left to right, Eileen Mercer, Ursula Lynch, Martha Potter, Arlene Hinkemeyer, Susan Wilson, Stephanie Snider. Back row, Kathleen Mulcahy, Terri Wildrick, Judi Roth. Not in photo, Nada Barry, Beth Barth.

(Continued from page 2)

May 7: Annual Members Meeting
Westhampton Beach Library

Guest speaker Yvette DeBow-Salsedo, Vice President, Peconic Land Trust, with LWVHSINFPresident Susan Wilson. Election of Board Members for 2023-2024 and 2023-2025



July/August

May 21-24: Students in Albany Conference

Pierson High School students Isabelle Caplin and Rachael Monaco with State Assemblyman Fred Thiele



June 21 : Tour of sites in Bridgehampton
Fund Raising Event organized by Arlene Hinkemeyer



Bridge Gardens



Newly restored Nathaniel Rogers House Museum



New Childcare & Recreational Center, headed by Bonnie Cannon

Feature about the 175th anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention of July, 1848

August 5th: Voter registration drive at history fair celebrating the 375th anniversary of EH Town.

Too late to publish, this photo shows Estelle Gellman, Valerie King, and Arlene Hinkemeyer at voter registration booth dressed in suffragette white with gold sashes



September/October

September 18: Sustainability Committee Public Information Meeting

Standing: Terry Wildrick, chair, LWV Sustainability Committee and Susan Wilson, seated: the leaders of Sustainability Committees of EH Town, Lena Tabori and Southampton, Lynn Arthur



September 19: National Registration Day

LWV dispenses voter information in Westhampton Beach, Southampton, Hampton Bays, Sag Harbor, East Hampton Town, Springs, and Montauk.



Left to right: Eva Moore, Judy Samuelson, Estelle Gellman at Montauk Post Office

Final Hinkemeyer 2023 fundraising event was a tour of historic Sag Harbor buildings. Also included The Church Art Center.



Sag Harbor Historical Museum



Writer John Steinbeck's kiosk-studio on his summer residence



Nada Barry [left] entertained the group with stories about her friendship with the writer


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Elections 2023

Our League completed an action-packed election season by sponsoring debates for the major offices in three towns and our district's county legislature seat during the run-up to the November 7th election.

On Oct. 16, we presented a debate between the candidates for Suffolk County's 2nd legislative district between Ann Welker (D, WF) and Manny Vilar (R, C). Two days later, the participants were the candidates for East Hampton Town Supervisor—Kathee Burke-Gonzalez (D, WF) and Gretta Leon (R, C)—and Town Council—David Lys (D, WF), Tom Flight (D, WF), Scott Smith (R, C), and Michael Wooton (R, C).

On Oct. 22, Shelter Island candidates for Supervisor—Amber Brach-Williams (R, C) and Gordon Gooding (D)—and Council—Art Williams (R, C), Tom Cronin (R, C), Albert Dickson (D), and Ben-

jamin Dyett (D)—took part in a live debate at the Shelter Island School.

On Oct. 23, candidates for Southampton Supervisor—Maria Moore (D, C) and Cynthia McNamara (R)—and Council—Bill Pell (D, C), Michael Iasilli (D, WF), Richard Martel (R, C), and William Parash (R) met to discuss the issues in their town. These debates were conducted on Zoom and broadcast on SeaTV (legislature and Southampton) and LTV (East Hampton).

The debates were widely viewed and attended. Our legislative debate was seen by 187 viewers and the Southampton debates attracted 604 viewers on YouTube. (No figures were available for the East Hampton debate which could be seen live and later on LTV'S Channel 20). In addition, about 200 people attended the live forum on Shelter Island, which was co-sponsored by the Shelter Island As-



Oct. 16 Debate for Suffolk County Legislature, 2nd L.D., between Ann Welker and Manuel Vilar, with Judi Roth as moderator, Susan Wilson as timekeeper, hosted by Southampton Town's SEA-TV. Ms Welker was elected.



Oct. 18 Debate for East Hampton Town Supervisor and Town Board, with Susan Wilson as moderator (shown here) and Eileen Mercer as timekeeper, hosted by East Hampton Town's LTV. (The Leaguers and candidates were not shown in gallery form, so only one person at a time appeared on screen.) Kathee Burke-Gonzales was elected Town Supervisor and David Lys won another term on the Town Board.

Voter Services Report

sociation, and 238 viewed a recording on YouTube. Another League effort, Vote411.org, which provides election and candidate information nationally, drew almost two million visitors leading up to Election Day.

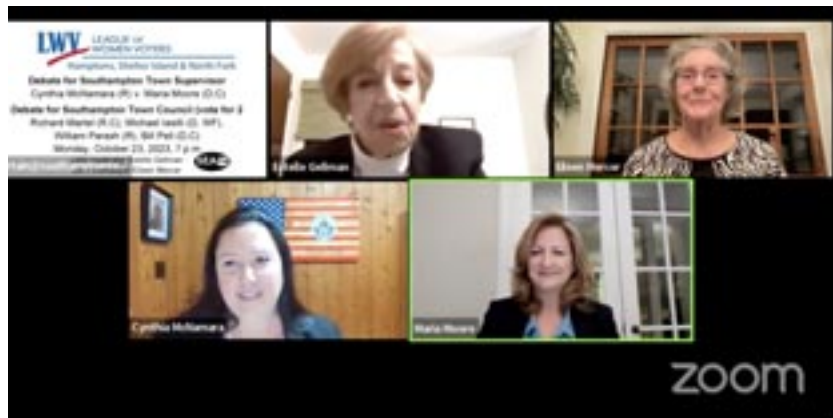
While the election results had not yet been certified when The Voter went to press, the unofficial winners declared after Election Day were Ms. Welker for county legislature; Ms. Burke-Gonzalez, Mr. Lys, and Mr. Flight in East Hampton; Ms. Moore, Mr. Pell, and Mr. Iasilli in Southampton; and Ms. Brach-Williams, Mr. Dickson, and Mr. Dyett on Shelter Island. In addition, state-wide propositions to remove small city schools from a constitutional debt limitation and extend sewage project debt exclusion from its constitutional debt limit both were approved by voters.

Turnout for the election was disappointing, with only 25 percent of eligible voters in Suffolk County casting ballots, according to a report by Newsday, a number that roughly mirrored the turnout on the East End.

With the 2024 elections looming, our league will continue to expand our efforts in what figures to be another action-packed year. This will include tabling sessions (highlighted by National Voter Registration Day), high-school voter registration, reaching out to neglected demographic groups, speaking to community organizations, and contributing to Vote411.org. If you have any time to educate, register and motivate voters, please reach out to the Voter Services Committee (see contact information in The Voter). Remember, Democracy is not a Spectator Sport.

--Neil Cohen, Voter Services

Oct. 23 Debate for Southampton Town Supervisor, between Cynthia McNamara and Maria Moore, with Estelle Gellman as moderator, Eileen Mercer as timekeeper, hosted by Southampton Town's SEA-TV. Ms Moore was elected.



Oct. 23 Debate for Southampton Town Council, with candidates Michael Iaselli, Rick Martel, Bill Pell and William Parash, Estelle Gellman serving as moderator, Eileen Mercer as timekeeper, hosted by Southampton Town's SEA-TV. Winners were Bill Pell and Michael Iaselli.

New Orleans League of Women Voters

by Judi Roth

On our recent trip to New Orleans (which we visit very frequently and encourage everyone to go for the food, music and history), we stopped at the Historic New Orleans Collection. This free museum is dedicated to the history of New Orleans and has rotating exhibits as well as some permanent collections. They also offer walking tours of the French Quarter and are the curators of historic houses in the quarter. This month featured an exhibit entitled "Yet She is Advancing: New Orleans Women and the Right to Vote, 1878-1970". I happened to visit the exhibit with a class of high school girls and their history teacher so I had the benefit of the guide who was leading them.

While the 19th amendment extended the right to vote to American women in 1920, the struggle for voting rights in New Orleans and the South did not end there. Louisiana laws effectively disenfranchised black women and many white women's organizations including the League of Women Voters of New Orleans were very slow to include black members and fight for their voting rights. Poll taxes and obscure questions asked at the time of voter registration made it difficult for black men and women to register to vote. One of them recounted to us was "tell us your age not in years but in months and days"! Black women challenged

their status as second class citizens up to and through the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The League of Women Voters of New Orleans was formed in 1942 and did not follow the mandate of the national League in having your membership be "representative of the community". Until 1963 the LWVNO remained open to white women only. Between 1947 and 1963 members made attempts to integrate the LWVNO. They succeeded briefly in 1955 only to be thwarted by new laws passed to entrench segregation in the face of the growing Civil Rights movement.

I spent some time looking at the LWVNO website and it is very impressive. Their positions deal with everything from the city's capital budget to zoning processes to operation of local gas and electric utilities to home rule and city charter issues. They were successful in helping the state pass the first Louisiana Office on Women's Health and Community Health in 2022. Louisiana ranks 50th in women's and children's health. According to League member Rosalind Blanco Cook the LWVNO has 70 members; they are still trying to rebuild after Katrina. Member Linda Walker is writing a booklet about how the chapter functioned after Katrina and their work in the first New Orleans election post-Katrina.

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.

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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

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