



Newsletter September 2024

Table of Contents (When viewing the entire newsletter you can click on the title to go directly to that item)

- [Action Items](#)
- [The Prez says...](#)
- [Environmental Impact](#)
- [News Items](#)
- [Editor's Note](#)

Action Items

Get the most out of a Membership and Be Involved with Your Local League!

This section offers reports from ongoing groups and a Calendar to keep us connected:

MEETING DATES & ZOOM LINKS-

September

* All members and interested non-members are welcome at all League meetings unless otherwise indicated.

Be sure to check the latest [Volunteer Opportunities](#) and Events at our Website!

September 6 - 15

"What the Constitution Means to Me" at Morton Memorial Library in Rhinecliff

Presented by the
Rhinebeck Theatre
Society and directed
by Ellen Honig
More at



<https://www.broadwayworld.com/central-new-york/regional/What-the-Constitution-Means-to-Me-4277925>

September 4th

12:00 PM

LWV Mid-Hudson Membership Committee Meeting

Zoom link:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88561290895?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88561290895?pwd=IssuU7JX3DIphLbLBNnZUxWbaecAYN.1)

[pwd=IssuU7JX3DIphLbLBNnZUxWbaecAYN.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88561290895?pwd=IssuU7JX3DIphLbLBNnZUxWbaecAYN.1)

September 10th

Postcards & Coffee Meetup

10 AM

[Big Mouth Coffee Shop](#)

Beacon

September 13th

12:00 PM

Dutchess Meetup

[Mahoney's](#)

Poughkeepsie

September 15th

LWVMHR Whitecliff Winery Event

4 - 6 PM

Whitecliff Winery

Gardiner

September 19th

LWVMHR Board Meeting

4 PM

Join Zoom Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting [https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87841231146?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87841231146?pwd=dFp5bDdtZFNvWjNMRTkyTVBCRmg3dz09)

[pwd=dFp5bDdtZFNvWjNMRTkyTVBCRmg3dz09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87841231146?pwd=dFp5bDdtZFNvWjNMRTkyTVBCRmg3dz09)

September 20th

12:00 PM

Southern Tier Meetup

Silk Factory

Newburgh

September 21st

NYS-ERA Event

HV-LBGTQ Center

Kingston

* Watch our [website](#) for more info

September 26 - 29th

"What the Constitution Means to Me" at the Rosendale Theatre

It is directed by Ann Citron and the cast includes Ivy Meehan, Rick Meyer, and Lydia Pidlusky.

More at <https://www.rosendaletheatre.org/movies/what-the-constitution-means-to-me-by-heidi-schreck/>

The Prez Says

Since all of us care about the health of our elections as well as how the voting actually turns out in November, this will be an emotionally charged few weeks ahead.

Let's do all we can to help our fellow voters and potential voters through these critical weeks including our Boards of Elections and all the polling places that will be opening up in late October.

This newsletter gives you many ways to help out in a hands-on way starting now and kicking off in a big way on September 17th, National Voter Registration Day.

Early voting begins on October 26th (which is also the last day to register to vote) and continues through Sunday, November 3.



I think we are all aware that Election Day finally arrives on Tuesday, November 5th.

Here are the websites of our three county boards of elections for your own use and so you can help others get the information they need:

Dutchess: elections.dutchessny.gov or 845-486-2473

Orange: orangecountygov.com/783/Board-of-Elections or 845-360-6500

Ulster: elections.ulstercountyny.gov or 845-334-5470

The people there are, usually, our good and faithful partners but if you have any problems getting what you need from them, let us know!

Meanwhile we hope you also take some time to relax with others. We highly recommend the play "What the Constitution Means to Me" being presented in Dutchess and Ulster counties this September. See details elsewhere in this newsletter.

We also hope you will join us at the lovely [Whitecliff Winery](#) in Gardiner on **Sunday, September 15th, 4-6pm**, for our own official kick-off to this busy time. We are hoping for a beautiful day and a happy opportunity to meet and greet one another - especially our many new members!

Thanks for all YOU are doing to keep our democracy vibrant. Onward!

Dare Thompson, President
LWVMHR
darethompson@gmail.com,
845-236-3074 (home)

NEW “VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES” PAGE

The new website that we launched this spring not only has an updated look and feel, but the technology also allows us to use it as a tool to support many of our activities. Two weeks ago, we launched a new [“Volunteer Opportunities” page](#).

On this page, you will see a calendar of events at which the League will be participating and for which we need volunteers. You can click on any one of the activities to read more about it; if you would like to volunteer for that event, fill out the form at the bottom of the page and that event’s coordinator will contact you. At the bottom of each month’s list of activities, there is a generic form that allows you to submit an interest in volunteering that is not tied to a specific event. We will continue to update the website as new volunteer opportunities arise, so check back often!

Voter Services

Countdown to Election Day 2024!!

by Fay Casatuta

As I write this piece, we are 70 days out from election day. And, we have the power to increase voter turnout by ensuring every eligible voter within our reach has a fair and equal opportunity to register to vote and to cast their ballot.

Throughout the summer, our Voter Services team has been very busy registering voters and hosting community voter registration drives across Dutchess, Orange, and Ulster counties. We've organized, educated, and advocated to empower voters to participate in our democracy.



Fay Casatuta and Lisa Bretherick, Dutchess Outreach Farmstand

Activities have included tabling at farmer's markets, county Naturalization Ceremonies, Dutchess Outreach Farmstands, Ulster Savings Bank Community Appreciation Event, Bard College Democracy Day, Music on the Walkway Over the Hudson, and much more.

The Voter Services team is continuing to schedule activities throughout the fall. There is SO much work to do and we need your help!!

Whether you want to actively talk to new citizens or students about voting or helping to organize events behind the scenes, we would love to have your help.

Please join us by visiting [Volunteer Opportunities](#) to volunteer!

If you have any questions or suggestions for events, email us at volunteer@lwvmidhudson.org.



Fay Casatutua and Katie Meares, Ulster Savings Bank Community Appreciation Event, Hyde Park



NYS AFL-CIO graphic

Equal Rights for All - Update

by Louise Reavis & Cindy Lanzetta

The NY State Board of Elections worked on a draft of the simple language for the New York State Constitutional Amendment ballot.

Public comments were solicited and the final form remained the same as the draft.

That is currently being challenged in the Courts as being not consistent with the original legislative intent and not consistent with the requirement to keep the language at an 8th grade understanding.

The simple language that the NY State Attorney General's Office offered is very good:

The Amendment - "Protects against unequal treatment by New York and local governments no matter your sex, age, disability status, ethnicity, or national origin. Protects LGBT and pregnant people. Protects abortion."

The Mid-Hudson ERA task force is working with Voter Services to distribute information and write postcards to encourage voters to turn their ballots over and vote!

Are you interested in joining our LWVMHR ERA task force? If so, contact Cindy Lanzetta at packback56@yahoo.com or Louise Reavis at louise.reavis@gmail.com

Regional Meetup Groups

Southern Tier:

This group is made up of members from Orange County, southern Dutchess County, and southern Ulster County.

Last month we worked on doing postcards to remind voters to turn their ballots over and vote Yes! on Proposition 1! We will finish up the postcards on September 10th, 10 AM, at the [Big Mouth Coffee Shop](#) in Beacon.

Our next regular meeting will be at the [Silk Factory](#) in Newburgh, on September 20th at noon.

Everyone is welcome to attend!

Dutchess County

On the second Friday of every month, the Dutchess County League members have been meeting at Mahoney's in Poughkeepsie. This regular gathering has become a great way to talk about issues that are on our minds, catch up on League activities, and meet other League members. As a result of the discussions there, a Dutchess Voter Services team has formed and initiated quite a few new voter registration activities – more on that elsewhere in this newsletter. While we do call it a “Dutchess” gathering, all are welcome and, in fact, League members from all over the Mid-Hudson have joined us. We have a great time so we hope you'll consider joining us. The next lunch is on Friday



September 13th at noon. Mahoney's is at 35 Main Street in Poughkeepsie (right by the train station). Let us know if you can join us - faycasatuta@gmail.com



LWVMHR Observer Jane Simkin Smith begins her coverage of the August Dutchess County Legislature Meeting -

"Once again, the dominant issue addressed at this session – by the public and the legislators -- was Resolution 132, authorizing acceptance of a state grant in order to construct an emergency homeless

shelter at 26 Oakley Street in the City of Poughkeepsie, and to amend the county budget in order to fund, design, and manage construction of the project. 20 members of the public (including five members of the Poughkeepsie Common Council) addressed the resolution before and after it was voted upon; all except one were residents of the City of Poughkeepsie and all but one voiced strong opposition. As in previous sessions, the objections were to the location in an already blighted neighborhood, to the failure of legislators to listen to stakeholders, answer their questions, or to even visit the location, to the financial burden, to bullying, racism, a lack of trust and a lack of communication."

Read more about this and other discussions on our [League Website!](#)

We are looking for additional Legislative Observers for Ulster & Orange Counties. Let us know if this might be for you?

Special Invitation

League Members and friends are invited to a lovely afternoon at [Whitecliff Winery](#), located in the shadows of the Shawangunk Mountains in Gardiner, for wine tasting and nibbles-

September 15th

4-6 PM

We've done this before and it's amazing! Be sure to let us know if you are



coming!
RSVP Here!



Photo by Allison Hoffman

[CLICK HERE TO RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

Environmental Impact

VOTE, VOTE, VOTE!

Maybe the single most important thing you can do for the environment is vote for candidates who support meaningful climate policies. Help your friends and family vote, too.

Remember: The historic 2022 [Inflation Reduction Act](#), which puts the U.S. on track to reduce heat-trapping emissions by 40% by 2030, came about because pro-climate elected officials devised, voted for and signed it into law.

Look up your candidate's stances on their campaign website.

This is #1 of the "[5 BIG things you can do to fight Climate Change](#)" compiled by the Environmental Defense Fund. Check out the other good suggestions

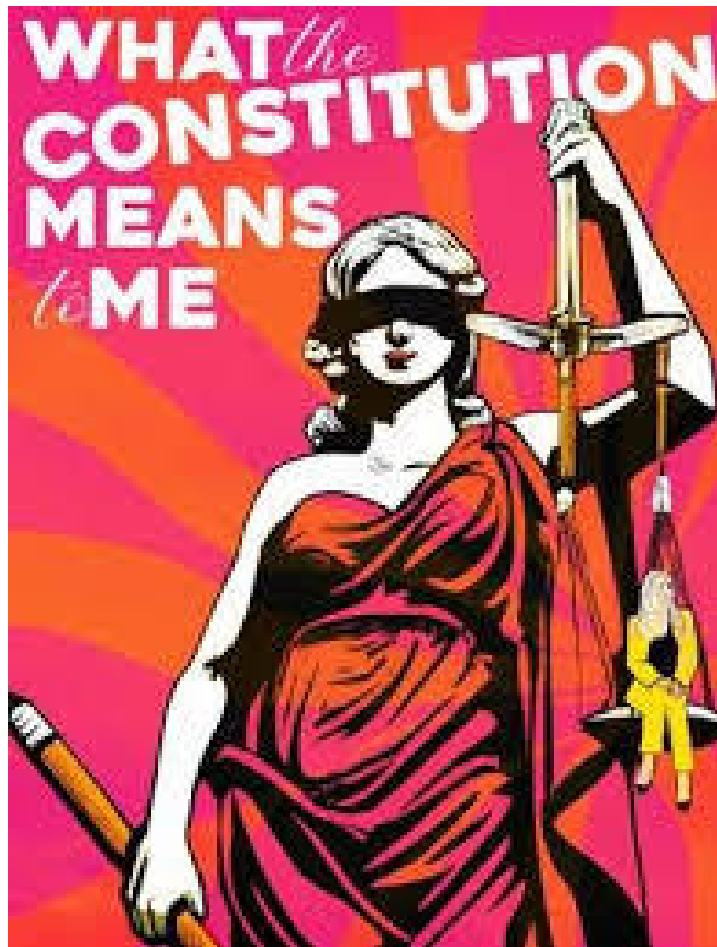
HERE!



Photo by Greenpeace

[CLICK HERE TO RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

News



Syracuse Stage

Great Way to Learn about our Constitution!

Even before we ALL started giving our U.S. Constitution more attentive appreciation, Heidi Schreck's 2017 one-woman play was wowing Broadway audiences in spite of a title that might better fit a 6th grade social studies report: "What the Constitution Means to Me."

It's unlikely subject matter aside, the play went on to be nominated for Best Play at the 2019 Tony awards, and it was a finalist that year for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Considering our 2024 political climate, it is no surprise that two area theatre groups are presenting the play right here in the Mid-Hudson Region, and you might want to check out both and see how they compare.

Both presentations also offer voting-related volunteer opportunities. See details in this newsletter or on our website, lvvmidhudson.org

September 6 - 15

at Morton Memorial Library in Rhinecliff

Presented by the Rhinebeck Theatre Society and directed by Ellen Honig

More at <https://www.broadwayworld.com/central-new-york/regional/What-the-Constitution-Means-to-Me-4277925>

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at the Rosendale Theatre

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LWV and Orange County Board of Elections present program on Election Security and Transparency

by Louise Reavis

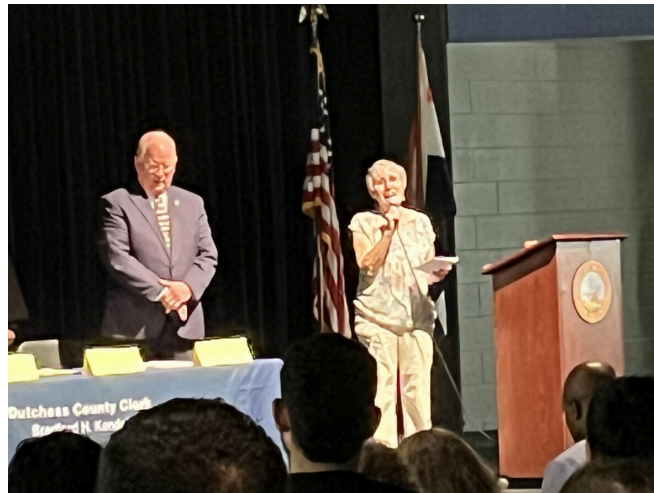
On Thursday, August 1, 2024, about 25 Orange County residents attended a program entitled "Election Security and Transparency" sponsored by the LWV Mid-Hudson and the Orange County Board of Elections. It was hosted by the Albert Wisner Library in Warwick, NY.

After a brief introduction from League personnel stating the League's mission and why this topic is so important in our current political climate of mis- and disinformation, two BOE representatives were introduced, Ada Kirkpatrick and Frank Sambets. Their presentation described the ways that the physical process of tallying votes is done in a manner specifically designed to be accurate and secure. For example, they explained how every step of the process is performed by trained election personnel from BOE, one Republican and one Democrat. This ensures that all actions taken are non-partisan and in compliance with New York state voting laws. In addition, they described how representatives of political parties or candidates and organizations are allowed to observe and monitor election activities.

They described how on election night, after vote counts are collected from every machine and results reported to headquarters, ballots and equipment are then securely transported back to the BOE. They said all county boards of elections must conduct post-election audits to further verify results. The many safeguards utilized by the BOE were described in detail and, through personal anecdotes and incidents in which the security and accuracy of the final result was questioned, proved to be correct.

People in attendance asked many questions during the 2 hour presentation and some even took notes. All were answered, often with humor, and in great detail, and the BOE officials were able to dispel some of the more common myths about what really happens in our election process. The general consensus seemed to be satisfaction for having an opportunity to hear the process explained and be assured about the secure process.

The LWVMHR is grateful to Orange County BOE Commissioners Louise Vandemark and Courtney Canfield Greene for their assistance in putting this event together and to the Albert Wisner library in Warwick for requesting it.



Dutchess County Naturalization Ceremony

by Pat Lamanna

Pat Lamanna, Fay Casatuta, and Jane Simkin Smith attended the Dutchess County naturalization ceremony on August 9 at Millbrook High School. We gave out registration forms and voting information to about 45 new citizens, and got 10 registration forms back, which Pat hand delivered to the Board of Elections.

This naturalization ceremony was a little different. As the time to begin the ceremony approached, Dutchess County Clerk Brad Kendall (who attends the same church as Pat) approached the table and asked Pat if she'd like to sing the Star-Spangled Banner and America the Beautiful. The person who'd been scheduled to sing had backed out, and Brad wasn't able to find a replacement. So Pat led the singing of those two songs, in addition to her LWV duties!

Pictured are the three of us at the table, and of Pat singing, with Brad Kendall standing beside her.



Fay Casatuta and Lisa Bretherick, Jackie Wildau

Engaging Young Voters at Bard College

by Fay Casatuta

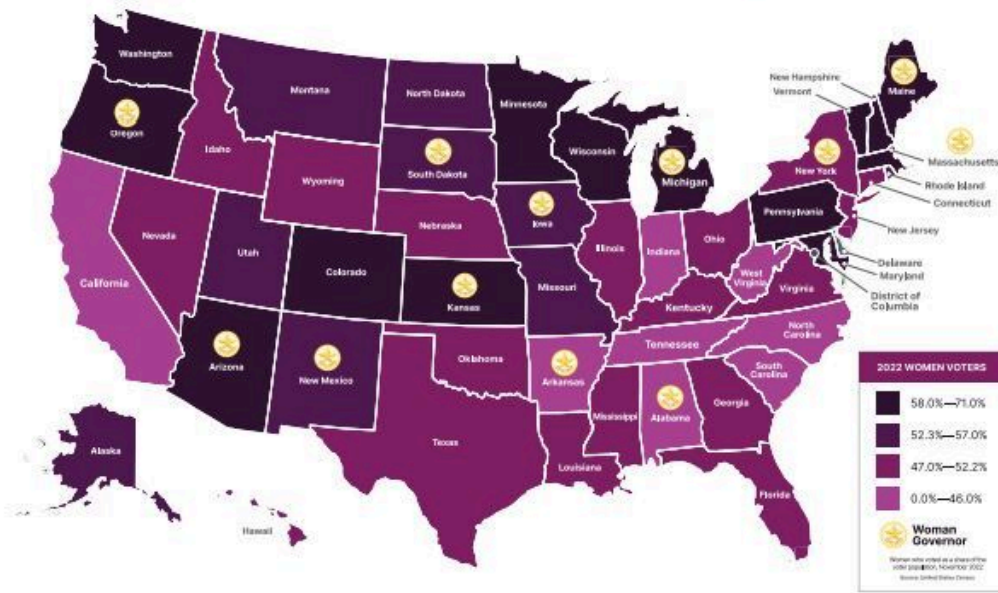
Did you know that 48% of voters in the 2024 election will be 18 to 29?

So ... it's no wonder our Voter Services team is targeting this demographic in our voter registration and education efforts. To date, we have events scheduled at colleges throughout the fall in Dutchess, Orange and Ulster counties to reach these young voters.

On August 21, the Dutchess County Voter Services team was invited by the Bard Center for Civic Engagement to table at their Annual Bard Block Party. The event is billed as a Day of Engagement to draw the attention of freshman Bardians to the community around them by engaging with community partners.

We had a great time at that evening! Such a hoot! There were fun activities, BBQ, great music by DJ Jeszack, and dancing. We spoke with and registered many engaged and informed students. We talked about the importance of voting in local, state, and federal elections; the NY ERA amendment (Prop 1); issues important to them such as jobs, healthcare, the environment, democracy, gun control. We're looking forward to partnering with Bard in the future to continue building the power of our young people!

THE NEXT ELECTION IS UP TO WOMEN



The following link will allow you to make tax-deductible donations to our **local League online!** These donations go directly into our account at LWVNY Education Foundation and we can then access these funds to pay for voting related publications and other purely nonpartisan educational materials and activities. Click [HERE](#) to donate now.



[CLICK HERE TO RETURN TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)

Editor's Note:

We want you to know that we welcome your feedback with regard to anything you read in this newsletter, or items that you would like to see. We're here for you and would like to hear from you. Contact info@lwvmidhudson.org. Thanks.
Next Newsletter deadline is September 23rd.

Also note: this and previous issues of our newsletter are available for viewing on our website <https://lwvmidhudson.org/newsletters/>

info@lwvmidhudson.org

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