

Like



Newsletter January 2021



President Biden and Vice President Harris courtesy of Daily Princetonian

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Action Items for Members

Per numerous requests, we've moved our "Action Items for Members" to the top of our Newsletter.



How to Run for Public Office

Saturday 23rd January from 10 a.m. to noon. A virtual seminar put on by the LWV Mid-Hudson. It is not too late to attend. Zoom link is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89214124527..>

Meeting ID: 892 1412 4527 Passcode: 827607

NY Health Act

Thursday 28th January from 7-8:30 p.m. A chance to learn about this proposed legislation. A virtual Town Hall with a panel of four.

Register at: bit.ly/NYHealthActJan28. LWV Mid-Hudson is co-sponsoring.



Redistricting

Thursday 28th January from 6:30 - 8:00 pm. Join us for an expert panel discussion on redistricting in 2021. Find out what's changed in the last 10 years, how

communities can get involved in the redistricting process, and what New Yorkers need to know about this redistricting cycle.

Register here: <https://cutt.ly/4jS33Jv>

Submit your questions ahead of the forum here:

<https://forms.gle/CZbGPHJ9mfcJDqMG8>

Ranked Choice Voting Information Session

Tuesday 9th February from
6:15 p.m. See “[One Reform to
Save America](#)” - David Brooks
of the NYT.

LWV Member Dave Heller will explain the merits of this method
of voting that's already been adopted by Alaska, Maine and many
cities including NYC. [CLICK HERE](#) to join Zoom meeting. Meeting
ID: 861 5923 4759 Passcode: 574775

	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
Candidate A	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidate B	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Candidate C	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Board members

LWV Mid-Hudson Board Meeting

Tuesday 23rd February
from 6-8 p.m. Catch up on
the latest. Contact
LWVMidHudson@gmail.com
for Zoom link.

LWV Concurrence on Health Care

Tuesday 2nd March from 6:15 p.m. Make your voice heard in the
formulation of an updated LWV position for health care in New
York State. We'll explain in next month's newsletter what a
concurrence is and how you can participate.

Join LWV Mid-Hudson Board

Ongoing. Throw your hat in the ring to join the LWV Mid-Hudson
Board starting mid-summer. Contact: LWVMidHudson@gmail.com.

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The Prez says...

Greetings of 2021 to all! I'll toast to a (sort of) return to some normalcy in government and in our lives during the upcoming year. Thank you all for hanging in there with us through the past year.



We have some excellent programs planned for the next couple of months and hope to see many of you at one or two of them. We have the ability to effect real positive change, and Zoom is a wonderful medium to participate from the comfort of your own homes. If you feel like you would like to do something meaningful, but you aren't sure what to do or how to do it, please join us at any of the events listed in the Action Items above.

If you have any comments, questions or concerns about our local League, I invite you to send me an email at cynthia.bell2@aol.com or communicate through our website. Communication is the way forward and online is the method these days. I am looking forward to resuming in-person and community gatherings.

Until then ...

Cindy Bell, President

LWV Mid-Hudson Region

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Wishing a Fond Farewell

We bid a fond farewell to two individuals we lost recently.



Harriett Straus

Cindy Lanzetta pays tribute to LWV member Harriett Straus.

Long time League member, Harriett Straus, passed away in November. I knew Harriett from the environmental stewardship work that she and her husband David supported. It was a pleasure for me to accompany her to League gatherings and gave me the chance to know her better. Harriett had a quick and enquiring mind. She always had lots of questions and she took an active interest in the world around her. Her bright smile mirrored an attitude of positivity. Harriett valued education and worked to improve the world through her compassion and humility. She will be missed...

You can view her obituary online at: [Harriett Straus Obituary - Visitation & Funeral Information](#)

Gai Galitzine pays homage to a man who, while not a member of the LWV, had a lasting impact on all in the Hudson Valley, John Wackman.

Many reading this will know John

Wackman as the founder of the now over 30 Repair Cafes in the Hudson Valley and co-author of "Repair Revolution." Others will know him for his work with the Climate Smart groups, solar energy installations and love of music as a board member of the Rosendale Theater.



John Wackman at a Repair Cafe

John died suddenly earlier this month. He will be greatly missed in the Hudson Valley where, although he had only lived here for eight years, his generous spirit, unflagging energy, infectious optimism and commitment to community made him a friend and often mentor of many. He was currently working on the Ulster County Zero Waste Implementation Plan with activists Manna Jo Greene, Laura Petit and others. His vision of a community Resource Recovery Park will be carried forward by those he inspired, and we look forward to marking its progress.

You can read a full obituary online at the [J. V. Leahy Funeral Home](#)

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Welcome new State Senators

Mike Martucci, Republican, Conservative, narrowly defeated the incumbent, Jen Metzger, to win the 42nd state senate district seat



State Senator Mike Martucci courtesy of the Shawagunk Journal

in November. The district encompasses all of Sullivan County and parts of Ulster, (including Ellenville and New Paltz), as well as parts of Orange and Delaware counties.

Martucci is an Orange County native, graduating from Orange County Community College and going on to get a BS and MBA from Marist. He built a school bus business from start up to 550 employees and 350 buses, and has been active in local civic and philanthropic organizations.

He is the Ranking Member on the Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Committee and serves on several other Committees. According to his website, he wants to eliminate property taxes for seniors, repeal the new bail reform legislation and make sure the state gets its fair share of federal resources, especially for education.

Michelle Hinchey, Democrat, Working Families Party, won the 46th state senate district, following the retirement of Republican George Amadore and defeating Republican candidate Rich Amadore.



State Senator Michelle Hinchey

The 46th district encompasses all of Greene and Montgomery Counties and parts of Ulster, (including Kingston, Woodstock &

Saugerties) and with parts of Schenectady, and Albany Counties, this is one of the most rural districts in the Democratic Conference. Senator Hinchey is Chair of the Senate Agriculture and Food Committee, and serves on several other Committees.

Born in Saugerties, Hinchey has always been a strong union advocate, graduating from Cornell's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and like her late father, the former Congressman, a champion of environmental protection. As a grassroots organizer, she successfully campaigned to stop fracking in New York and spent ten years in communications in the corporate arena. She lists her priorities for the upcoming session as protecting our environment, fighting the opioid epidemic, expanding broadband access, and building back Main Streets in her upstate constituency.

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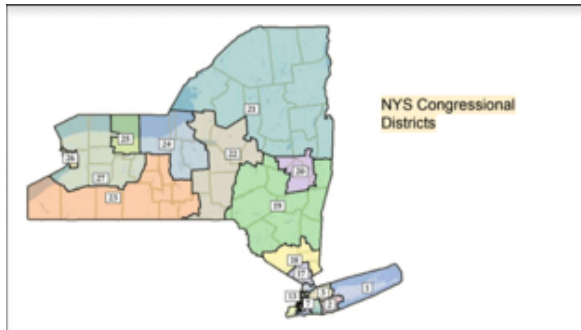
Redistricting

If I say "redistricting," do your eyes glaze over? You're interested in the League, so maybe not, but (alas) too many other people think it sounds dull and dry and have no idea that it is key to the health of their vote. And maybe even YOU don't know what a sea change is going on. Even I (a redistricting "junkie") am somewhat shocked to report that ALL the political lines



Dare Thompson

that affect my vote are now in the hands of independent commissions. Amazing!



NYS Congressional Districts

Ulster County led the way in 2010, and now in 2020, Dutchess has joined Ulster in being one of the very few NY counties to let regular voters - not the legislators themselves - draw the county lines. And in this year

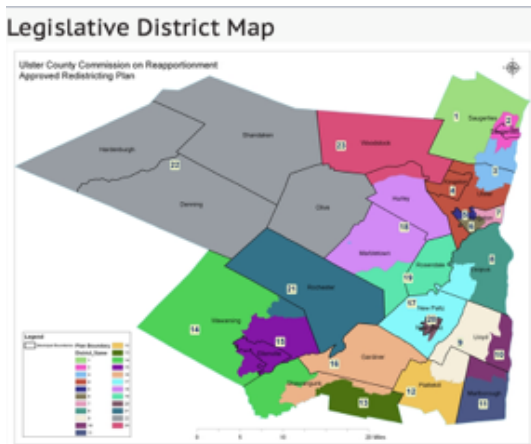
the STATE will also have a more independent process - not perfect, but an improvement - and it will be interesting to see how well that plays out. And do you know that the state draws the Congressional lines, not the federal folks? Almost no one knows that! Yikes! This is BIG.

Ulster and the state have their commissions in place, ready to start work as soon as the census data comes down. Dutchess should have theirs in place soon. Now the job before us is to keep our eyes on these commissions and make sure they behave transparently and keep their own party biases out of the process. We all know how powerfully effective it is for bodies to know that we have our eyes on them!



Dutchess County Legislature Districts

Ten years ago I served on the Ulster commission and what a



Ulster County Legislature Districts

joy it was to ask not "Where are the registered Dems (or Reps)? How can I make the districts as "safe" as possible for me and my party?" Instead we asked, "What other relationships do you do business with - maybe share a school district? What town makes sense for you to share a legislator with so that legislator

can really represent your interests well?" Around Kingston the towns said, "Just don't put us with Kingston - their issues are so different." So we gave Kingston legislators that represent just Kingston and everyone seems to be happy. And we did it in a very transparent way, even establishing a Saturday when we gathered early with doors wide open to all, and drew our final try at a good map right there in front of everyone with lots of opportunity for public input. What will *these commissions* do?

We will report more in future issues and we welcome fellow watchers. Please contact me at darethompson@gmail.com if you'd like to be in a "watch group" and talk about what to look for and what we're seeing.

Meanwhile, join the LWV-NYS for a panel discussion on redistricting **Thursday January 28th at 6:30 p.m.** Experts will offer insights into this topic. See Action Items for Members above.

Dare Thompson, *past president and current board member of both LWV-MHR and LWV-NYS.*

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Health Care Reform

HEALTH CARE REFORM



Health care reform has long been a subject of concern for the League of Women Voters. The national League states on its [website](#): "Every U.S. resident should have access to affordable, quality health care, including birth control and the privacy to make reproductive choices." Note that this statement refers to all U.S. residents, not just U.S. citizens.

It also states: "We believe that the U.S. health care system should provide a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost. Basic care includes disease prevention, primary care, acute long-term care, mental health care, as well as health promotion and education. Among other objectives, health care policy goals include the equitable distribution of services and delivery of care."

In the past, LWV has lobbied for health care policy solutions, including the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The League has worked to provide millions of people across the country with objective information about the health care system and its significant reforms.

For several years now, momentum has been building in New York State for the NY Health Act (A5248, S3577), which would provide universal health care to all New Yorkers. The League of Women Voters Mid-Hudson Region is happy to partner with several other organizations in the Hudson Valley to present a panel discussion on this legislation **Thursday January 28th at 7 p.m.** Please

register at bit.ly/NYHealthActJan28.

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