



Newsletter March 2021

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...
- Recent Events
- Students Inside Albany
- Redistricting
- Reviving the Equal Rights Amendment
- Environmental Impact: a series by Cindy Bell
- Editor's Note

Action Items



Bridge Talks: Women in Politics in the Hudson Valley

Monday, March 29, 2021 - 6:00pm

An all-female panel discussion featuring a multi-partisan group of local elected officials and candidates currently seeking offices in state, county and local town races. The discussion will be lead by League member Dare Thompson There will be a brief Q+A following the panel discussion. [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

LWVMHR Board Meeting

Tuesday March 30th at 6pm

LWV Mid-Hudson Region Board

Meeting via zoom. All members

are invited. Join your board

members as they review

upcoming state and local issues,

matters directly related to our area and future LWV events.

Members may contact lwvmidhudson@gmail.com to obtain the

link to join this meeting.

Please consider joining the LWVMHR Board. A number of openings

will be available in July. Write to lwvmidhudson@gmail.com to

indicate your interest.



LWV CONVENTION “Striving for a Stronger, More Inclusive Democracy” June 7th-12th

Calling all members...the 59th Biennial Convention of NYS League of Women Voters will take start **Monday June 7th** with two plenary sessions on **Friday evening June 11th** and **Saturday afternoon June 12th**. All meetings will

be conducted on virtual platforms. Early Bird Special for Delegates and Visitors **before April 1st for \$50; after April 1st \$75.** [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

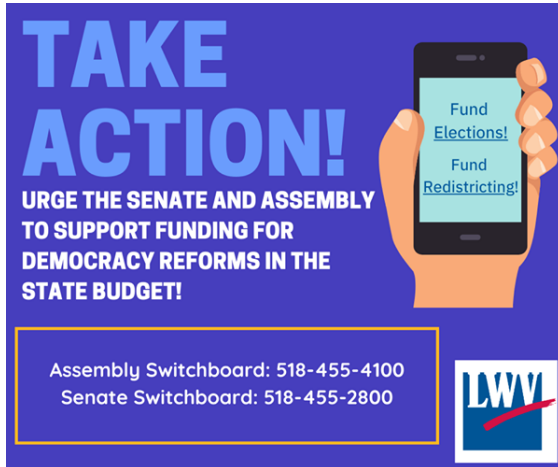
Caucuses and workshops will take place Monday thru Friday 5:30-9:00pm and Saturday 9:30-12 noon. Members are welcome to participate in all events. [CLICK HERE](#) for the Registration Kit which contains the tentative list of workshops and caucuses.

Only Delegates may vote or participate in debates in the plenary

sessions but all members are welcome to all sessions.

Support funding for NYS Independent Redistricting Commission and Electoral Reforms

Contact your state representatives today and urge them to make sure to fund the Independent Redistricting Commission (see Dare's article below) and the already agreed upon electoral reforms (early voting and no-excuse absentee voting).



ACTION DAY - April 29th 6:30-8:30pm

Mark your calendar to tell legislators why redistricting is so important to you and your community. Share this with friends and colleagues, particularly those from diverse communities who want to be sure their community members are fairly represented in the redistricting plans. NYS League is inviting all comers and each participant will be allowed two minutes of oral comments on a first come, first served basis. All comments, including written comments, will be collected and passed to the Legislature and the Redistricting Commission. The registration link and promotional materials will be available after April 1st through the [LWV NYS website](#).

In case you missed it..

Recasting the Vote: How Women of Color Transformed the Suffrage Movement.

You can view this presentation by [CLICKING HERE](#). Professor and social historian Dr. Cathleen D. Cahill is the author of "Recasting the Vote: How Women of Color Transformed the Suffrage Movement". In this presentation she talks about this multiracial group of suffragists, largely ignored in earlier suffrage histories, but whose vision for suffrage included women of all races or national origins. Professor Cahill spoke earlier this month at a Newburgh Library sponsored event.



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

The Prez says...

The first couple of the months were intense and interesting this year and I was proud of how our League showed up for the challenge. From meetings on Program Planning and an updated Health Care position Concurrence to the NYS Independent Redistricting Commission funding/education and our annual local Legislative visits, we got the job done! Of course, there is more to do but, as of this writing, funding for the Commission has passed in the Senate, and Assembly and looks very promising for positioning in the final



budget.

I want to take a moment to thank Nora Scherer for the excellent work on securing two students for Students Inside Albany-- I know it was quite a challenge at times. Nora has also secured an educator nominee for the Harvard Case Method Workshop this summer, which is an opportunity offered to Leagues for the first time in 2021. Good luck to this teacher and a big thank you to Nora for being flexible and persistent.

Finally, I also wish to acknowledge Laura Chasin for taking the helm of our wonderful Nominating Committee. I'm sure they are going to present a slate of excellent new board members. If any member reading this is interested in board service, please contact Laura at lvwmidhudson@gmail.com for consideration by the committee.

I wish you all good health and hope you will be vaccinated by summer's end, when we have an event planned at Historic Huguenot Street in New Paltz, to celebrate women's 100th anniversary achieving the right to vote. It's been almost two years since we'd hoped to gather for the historic anniversary, and will keep you apprised as we re-start planning for our September date.

Until then,
Cindy Bell

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

[Recent Events](#)



LWVMHR Planning Meeting 2021

February 25th ushered in a new year of program for LWVNYS and for our local League. A lively discussion took place as we gathered via Zoom to take one item at a time from the League's state Legislative Agenda and decide whether we agree to Retain a current position, Update that position, or Drop it. We had a consensus for most items on the agenda, as well as agreement to support the LWV Saratoga's request regarding LWVNYS picking up the LWV California's new position on Criminal Justice.

Local items of interest discussed included: Redistricting Education, loss of psychiatric services in Ulster County, the proposed jail in Dutchess County, Climate Emergency, protection of the Mid-Hudson Valley's waterways (especially the Hudson River), Ranked Choice Voting, Voter Education, Ulster County's impending Charter Review Commission, and local League History. These are all particular to members of our local League and, if you couldn't make it to the meeting and would like to add your voice to any or all, please feel free to send me an email at lwvmidhudson@gmail.com.

This was a wonderful opportunity to introduce members to our stated priorities and let them know how we can make a difference. Indeed, since I've been looking through our history, it's clear that we have made all the difference when we work together and persist in our efforts. I would like to thank all the members that participated and look forward to hearing from others about what is important to you and what we might do about it.

___Cindy Bell

LWV NYS Health Care Concurrence

On March 2nd, I joined a lively group of our LWV-Mid Hudson members to discuss the New York State League of Women Voters request that local Leagues review the State's position on Health Care. We were also being asked if we could concur with the suggested changes that had been proposed. This is different from "consensus", which a local League tries to achieve after it has done its own study and come to a position. "Concurrence", instead, is agreeing to a position statement that has been proposed by a League's resource committee or by another League.



Overall, our group agreed that we still support the single payer option. We agreed that health care services should be expanded to include more options, such as dental and vision. We agreed that more should be done to allow people to age and receive health care in their homes. The difficult thing, and not something that we had to definitively identify, is how to pay for everything.

The study materials, offered by the State League, [CLICK HERE](#) to view them, provided a lot of interesting material. It included information on what the State of New York would expect if it decides to do its own single payer health care program.

While the study materials make the case that a single payer program will yield better expanded services to more people at a lower cost, it will be difficult to change the mindset of citizens to accept significantly higher taxes, even though they will, ultimately, pay less out of pocket. There...they say...is the rub.

___Cindy Lanzetta

LWVMHR and our Local Representatives

This past month, several members of our League remotely visited with four State Senators and four state Assembly Members to encourage them to support funding for voting reforms and redistricting efforts. We always appreciate the opportunity for contact with our elected officials, and were graciously received in each case.

Join us for our League Board meeting this Tuesday the 23rd, to learn the details of these meetings. Obtain your Zoom link by emailing lwvmidhudson@gmail.org.

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

Students Inside Albany



While last year the Students Inside Albany (SIA) conference was cancelled due to the pandemic, this year we are delighted to report that the conference will take place virtually. Sponsored by the State League of Women Voters, local Leagues select student delegates to attend. Lucky juniors or seniors in high school are afforded an opportunity to convene with students from across the state to learn how government works. They are customarily paired with a state legislator and shadow them, including observing legislative sessions in progress.

Each year we try to send two delegates to Albany to participate.

This year (May 21st and 22nd), we will be sending Shannyn Iacobaccio from Rondout Valley High School, and Kristina Piatek from Spackenkill.

[CLICK HERE](#) to learn more about this amazing opportunity.

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

Redistricting



I reported in the January newsletter that those of us who vote in Dutchess and Ulster are now fortunate to have independent commissions drawing our state Senate and Assembly lines, our U.S. Congressional lines, and our county legislative lines. WE will be

able to decide who represents us - not have our legislators basically decide for us. YAY!

Of course that assumes that the commissions behave honorably - and that's where WE/YOU come in. With even Congressional lines at stake at the state level, you can believe political shenanigans are particularly possible there, and the state League has already spoken out forcefully about a recent move by the majority (Democrats) to limit even further the power of the minority (Republicans). This will be on the ballot in November and we will be telling voters to VOTE NO.

Putting that aside for now, I report that all three redistricting commissions are now gathered at the starting gates and you can see a list of their names by [CLICKING HERE](#). Anyone you know? While they wait for the census figures to come down (reported to be delayed by the pandemic until September), they are mostly dealing with process issues.

As someone who served on the history-making 2011 commission here in Ulster (the first NY county to have such an entity), I am really pleased that both the Ulster and Dutchess commissions are reviewing what we did and what we recommended for next time, and they are clearly benefitting from our pioneering experience.

We definitely expect more bumps in the road at the state level, beyond what I reported above. The state League's efforts have most recently been on making sure that the state Commission has the money and the freedom it needs to do its job, and we are glad to see our efforts meet with some success. But please help us watch this process at all levels and stand ready to contact your elected officials when anything goes astray. The commissioners really need to know we are watching them! You'll see a wealth of info on redistricting at all levels at lwvny.org and there will be a special advocacy day on redistricting on April 29 as mentioned in the Action Items in this newsletter. Stay tuned - and informed!

We've seen too clearly how fragile democracy can be, and FAIR REDISTRICTING is fundamental to its good health! If you just read all this, you are a great citizen, and we thank you.

___Dare Thompson

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

Reviving the Equal Rights Amendment

Thank you to all members who contacted their representatives to support the recent House bill seeking to remove an expired deadline for the Equal Rights Amendment. The bill, which passed on March 17th, removes a deadline for ratification that expired in 1979. At that time, the amendment was not ratified by the constitutionally required 38 states, and it was left to linger for decades. But last year [Virginia](#) became the crucial 38th state to ratify it.



courtesy of NPR

The ERA was created to ensure that all women are protected from discrimination under the law by preventing federal and state governments from denying equality of rights based on gender. Since its 1972 passage in Congress, the League has campaigned to make it an official part of our Constitution. American women need the ERA now more than ever. With the onset of COVID-19, women, particularly women of color, are experiencing disproportionately high rates of job loss. Issues like equal pay, maternal healthcare, and discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons affect millions of us daily.

“There is no time limit on equality,” Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D., N.Y.), a longtime supporter of the ERA, said. It is not yet clear when the Senate will take up the issue, where it needs 60 votes to clear. League members are urged to help get this measure through the Senate, so call your Senators and remind them how important this is.

Today America remains one of the few countries in the world without any explicit guarantee of gender equality in its constitution. And several legal wrinkles – most importantly

whether Congress even has the power to remove the ratification deadline – still make the amendment’s adoption far from guaranteed.

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

Environmental Impact: a series by Cindy Bell

March 22nd was UN World Water Day - here are some facts about our world's water supply that you may not know. Click the link at the end to see Cindy's list of things you can do to help.



**What does water
mean to you?**

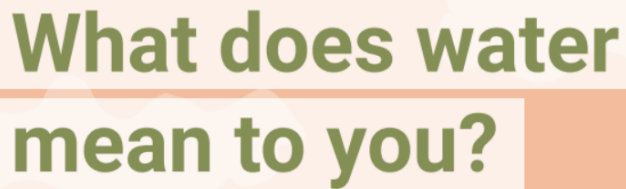
2.2 billion people live without access to clean water.
That’s 28 percent of the world’s population, or more than 1 in 4 people – and 2 million of them live right here in the U.S.

**What does water
mean to you?**

Every year, an estimated 250,000 tons of tiny plastic pellets are lost in our oceans.

Nurdles are pellets made of molten plastic and sold to

manufacturers that turn them into straws, Styrofoam, water bottles, and other consumer goods. And **microplastics like these make up 85 percent of plastic pollution found on shorelines.** The environmental impact is difficult to overstate: Researchers have determined that nurdles are vehicles for toxins and pathogens, choking delicate ecosystems, and polluting entire food chains that end with us.



What does water mean to you?

It takes up to 7 gallons of water to flush a toilet. All the while, **just 1 percent of the Earth's water is drinkable, and 2 billion people lack reliable access.**

These facts courtesy of [Waterkeeper Alliance](#) - working to strengthen and grow a global network of grassroots leaders protecting everyone's right to clean water. [CLICK HERE](#) to read Cindy's list of some practical things you can do to limit your use of water.

[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 lwvmidhudson@gmail.com. Thanks.

Also note: this and previous issues of our newsletter are available for viewing on our website lwvmidhudson.org.

lwvmidhudson@gmail.com

lwvmidhudson.org



©2021 LWV Mid-Hudson | PO Box 3564, Kingston NY 12402

[Web Version](#) [Forward](#) [Unsubscribe](#)

Powered by [Mad Mimi®](#)
A GoDaddy® company