

Welcome to the first issue of your LWVMHR newsletter...

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The Prez says...

Welcome to our Newsletter! Issue Number One; long in the making. This is the work of many, and we hope you enjoy it.

What's my steer on this dastardly pandemic that we've all been dealing with for some time now?

An optimist at heart, I am confident that we, as a society, will ultimately end up with a new and improved future. Young people are becoming bright and active citizens, our state and local governments are thinking outside the box, and the value of quality leadership has renewed importance.



We are learning new ways to communicate and connect with each other. It is imperative that we do our best to make the most of our time, whether that means paying dues, participating in marches or voter registration events, following our League's Facebook page and website, or adding your own touches to our brand new newsletter!

Feedback is welcomed and desired as we embark on this new journey together. Feel free to contribute notes and short articles, photos and letters about voter registrations, civil rights activities or any League-supported event to help carry out our mission of education, activism and community. Send to lwvmidhudson@gmail.com

We're all in this together. Thank you for your support.

In League,

Cindy Bell, President

LWV Mid-Hudson Region

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New Additions to the Board

We are delighted to welcome two new board members elected at the Annual Meeting held (remotely) in June:



Joan (Joanie) Metzler

is a Kingston native and former Studio Arts and Art History teacher and Department Chair at Red Hook High. She says she is happy now living life as an artist. The current political polarity in the country, as revealed by our

last national election, led to her interest in joining the LWVMHR. Joanie has learned more about voting rights and has trained in observing local government through the League. Covid 19, however, hit after she attended her first Legislature meeting. She strongly believes citizens should be more informed, and as Board Secretary looks forward to making a contribution in this effort.

Karen Holloway

Karen Holloway is a retired microelectronics engineer who grew up moving around the USA in a military family. She has been a Dutchess county resident since 1994. In her retirement, Karen has developed her avocations as a weaver and fiber artist.



Karen Holloway

Karen watched in dismay as poor participation in the 2010 elections, the year of the census and redistricting, created non-representative Congress and state legislatures. This led to her activism in voting rights. She celebrated in the State Capitol building as she watched early voting being passed in the NYS Senate in January 2019. After attending a course on New York State government given by the League of Women Voters, she signed up for the LWVMHR.

Current Board:

Officers: Cindy Bell (President), Jennifer Clark (Vice President), Joan Metzler (Secretary), Dare Thompson (Treasurer). **Directors:** Sally Colclough, Karen Holloway, Kate Hymes, Kathy OConnor, Maura O'Meara, Margaret Sellers, Daisy Tyler, Dorothy Winrow.

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Last Year in Review



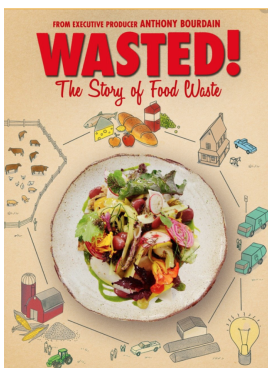
Dare facilitating a Candidate Forum

The Program Committee organized several events:

- Sponsored four programs demonstrating the new electronic poll books and reviewing the early voting procedures in Ulster and Dutchess counties.
- Chaired several Candidate Forums, in both Dutchess County and Ulster County.
- Hosted a Pre-election Voters' Rally providing information on candidates running in November
- Facilitated a Panel discussion on Election Security
- Led a Local Government Observer Corps Training



2 of 4 panelists on Election Security



- Sponsored the seminar “Making Yourself Heard” - how to contact local representatives and get results
- Participated in a Demonstration, Discussion and Film Preview “Food Waste” held at the Culinary Institute of America (final program before the pandemic hit).

Voter Services

The Voter Services Committee, headed by Kate Hymes and Maura O'Meara, provided training for volunteers in voter registration and education tabling. They developed



Kate at the YMCA Farmstand

new relationships with a number of individuals and organizations throughout the Hudson Valley. The YMCA of Kingston and Ulster County enabled us to table at events during Black History Month and at weekly farm stands in Kingston. Through the Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Poughkeepsie we were able to participate for the first time in a Naturalization Ceremony in Dutchess.



Daisy at UC Courthouse

Daisy Tyler and other Leaguers have consistently participated in every Naturalization Ceremony in Ulster County. Since the pandemic, volunteers have been walking around events with clipboards, registering voters and answering questions, with very positive

results.

Book Club

Although the Book Club no longer meets monthly since the pandemic, during the previous year it was very active. Members



The Book Club meets

met to discuss books from the women's suffrage movement and voting rights and suppression, the second amendment and immigration, as well as requirements to impeach a President.

Contact Daisy Tyler at 845-331-5103 if you are interested in participating when the Book Club resumes.

Communications

Our new [website](#) was launched in 2019.



New LWVMHR Website

Thanks go to member Tori Alexander for stepping up to be our new webmaster, and to member Jim McGarry for his many years of service administering our former website.

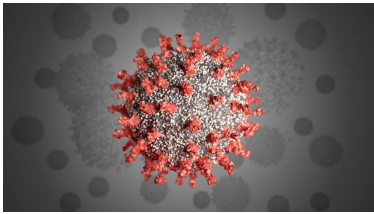
Kathy O'Connor has taken on responsibility for mailings from Jean McGarry. Thank you, Jean, for doing that for so long. Don't forget to continually check out our [Facebook](#) page. Kate Hymes and others continue to post information there periodically.

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Proposed Local Studies

Bail Reform Study

This study will look at New York State's bail reform laws and their impact on local communities. There has been a fair amount of misinformation out there about exactly what bail reform means, with resulting in citizen confusion and political manipulation. The study participants will be conducting local interviews and looking at League positions on a state and national level to come to a solid understanding of a fluid issue. Once a better understanding is reached, the information will be shared with the membership and others via a Zoom or in-person meeting or through written statements. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the Brennan Center's *New York's Latest Bail Law Changes Explained*



The Pandemic's Effect on Ulster County Revenues

This study will take an in-depth look at the effects of the pandemic on Ulster County's revenues. The focus of the study will be an examination of projected shortfalls and how they can be managed with maximum efficiency, ameliorating its financial impact on everyday citizens. Members from Dutchess are encouraged to join Ulster members with a 'sister' study in their county.

All those interested in participating in these studies are welcomed and encouraged to bring their own thoughts and ideas to the discussion. [CONTACT CINDY](#) if you are interested. Meetings are expected to take place monthly via Zoom, email or conference calls until such time as we can safely meet in person. The direction, duration and process of each study will be set by the group and subject to change according to the interests and resources of the participants.

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Action Items for Members

Boards of Elections in Ulster and Dutchess

Have said they would welcome impartial observers to witness the many absentee ballots they expect to have to open and process after the November elections. If you are interested contact your county Board of Elections. [CLICK HERE](#) for [Dutchess County](#) or [Ulster County](#).



LWV Area Coordinators

A coordinator serves as the point person for the League in their area, coordinating members, volunteers and events in their neighborhood. This helps us focus on local events using people familiar with the neighborhood. We are looking for coordinators in Poughkeepsie, Beacon and southern Ulster County. If you would like to know more, contact Cindy at 845-235-5410 or [Cindy email](#).

League presence at non-partisan outdoor events and protests

In accordance with the National League position of supporting social justice for all, the League supports the Black Lives Matter movement. For information on the bi-weekly Wednesday BLM rally in Kingston go to [HV Citizen Action of NY's FB page](#). For information on Poughkeepsie action, check out [Nobody Leaves Mid-Hudson](#). Note that the recent BLM protest in Dutchess County resulted in some clashes.

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the League's guidance on criteria for participation in marches & events and the level at which local Leagues can decide how to participate. Please do wear your League button or carry a sign when taking part in non partisan events, remembering that participating in any event in this political climate opens the League up to risk.

At the NYS level:

Support the COVID Voting Reforms for November Election, #LetNYVoteSafely. The legislature will reconvene (remotely) on July 20, call your Assemblymember and Senator - [CLICK HERE](#) to act.

Stop the Press: On July 23rd, NYS passed Automatic Voter Registration legislation. Once the Governor signs, this will go into effect 2023.

At the National Level

The League and the Use of Federal Force in cities. The League national office released a press release on Wednesday saying "...these actions are unpatriotic and un-American" and calling on the President to put an end to these unconstitutional acts and on Congress to exercise its power to hold the administration accountable and stand up for American democracy. [CLICK HERE](#) for the full press release.

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Upcoming Events

WE RISE Poughkeepsie is a collaboration of city art galleries, organizations, artists and activists to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, giving women in the United States the right to vote. It will take place in downtown Poughkeepsie Sept 4 through Sept 19. Members of our League are encouraged to join a march through the City in distinctive garb to celebrate this centennial. More information can be found [HERE](#). We'll provide more info at a later date.



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Election Update

Town and Village Elections



are scheduled for **September 15th**. See your local town/village website for details.

General Election November 3rd

Last day to register to vote: **October 9th**.

Early Voting: **October 24th-November 1st**.

[CLICK HERE](#) for Dutchess County information and [CLICK HERE](#) for Ulster County Board of Elections.

Voter Fraud

There have been and continue to be stories of potential voter fraud in the upcoming election. [CLICK HERE](#) to read the Brennan Center for Justice recent report entitled "The Myth of Voter Fraud."

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