



Newsletter July 2023

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

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

The Prez says ...



Knowing that many of you had to miss our very jolly annual meeting in Rhinebeck last week, here below are some highlights of the past year that I shared in the Annual Report:

I reported that we are getting creative with our operational structure by having Cindy

Bell (nominally now our Treasurer) head up a **Finance Committee** to handle the money-related tasks that have put a large burden on just one person over the years. (I know. I've done it!)

A huge thank you to **Dorothy Winrow** for so graciously stepping up to be treasurer this last year in spite of her busy work life – with thanks for ALL she's done for us over the years.

We will soon have individual membership-coordinating people in each county who can do help welcome and engage new members and handle renewals.

We will also be setting up a **Voter Service Committee** that has at least one person from each county to handle our relationship with the county Board of Elections, oversee voter registration and candidate events, and help get candidate information on [LWV's Vote411 website](#).

If you would like to serve on any of these committees, please let me know.

Meanwhile a big welcome to new board members, **Lisa Bretherick** (Staasburg), **Deborah Marr** (Accord), and **Leslie Simons** (Cornwall). You'll learn more about them in the next newsletter.

And a big thank you to all who joined in the last year-plus (see long list elsewhere here). And thanks to those of you who attended the Annual Meeting. It was great to see you out of Zoom boxes!

Following this message are some highlights of the past year that were printed in the report handed out at the Annual Meeting.

Dare Thompson

Additional highlights from 2022-23 included in our Annual Report:

Getting a polling site on the Vassar campus! We had to SUE the Dutchess County Board of Elections to do this but it worked – and it also helped us win this year’s Get Out the Vote Award at the state League convention this month.

Special thanks go to our VP Jen Clark for her legal skills and persistence, to several old and new members in the Vassar area of Poughkeepsie, and to great coverage in the Poughkeepsie Journal.

More interactions with young people. We’ve learned that the best way to register new voters in the high schools is to get the students to hustle their peers to our registration table – they know what works! And it feels so good to hand over those stacks of registrations at the Board of Elections!

We are also working more in Dutchess County with the Marist and Bard offices of civic engagement as well as with Vassar. We are especially eager to help Marist get enough registered students to qualify for its own polling site.

Finally, we will continue sending two local high school students to Students Inside Albany.

More **ADVOCACY**. This year we educated our members on ranked choice voting and we now have a state League position supporting it. We also continued to educate and advocate on other state and national positions outlined in our Legislative Agenda available on the [state League website](#).

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

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-

July - August

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

July 5th

12:00 PM

LWV Mid-Hudson Membership Committee Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84179974295?>

[pwd=S1U0bEZ5TjFJcWp1UituUEVWcmw5dz09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84179974295?pwd=S1U0bEZ5TjFJcWp1UituUEVWcmw5dz09)

July 10th

1:45 PM

LWVMHR Book Club

[Enzo's Restaurant](#)

Kingston

July 11th

4-7 PM

In person Board Meeting

Place to be determined

July 21st

12:00 PM

Southern Tier Meeting

[The Silk Factory](#)

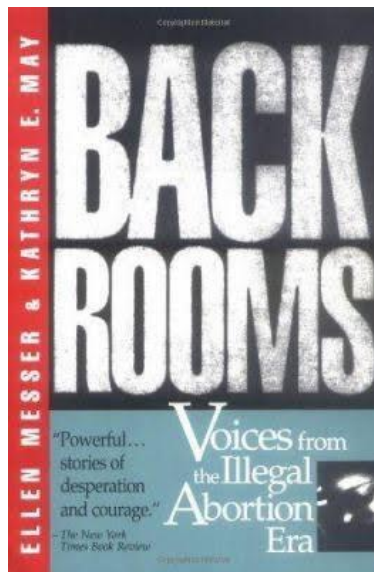
Newburgh

August 7th

5 PM

Rural Caucus Virtual Meeting

See Environmental Article below for more info



LWVMHR Book Club Meeting

Our Book Club met on June at [Enzo's Italian Restaurant in Kingston](#). We discussed "The Bill of Obligations: The Ten Habits of Good Citizens" by Richard Haass

Who is an American Citizen? Do we even count ourselves as one of them?

In his book, Richard Haass contends that for America to survive, the very idea of citizenship must be revised. The U.S. has placed too much emphasis on securing individual rights and not enough on the obligations that each citizen has to the society at large. He continues speaking on the danger this country is facing with it's democracy. This danger

isn't from abroad but, rather, from within. The idea of what an American citizen is must be renewed by the author's proposed "Bill of Obligations":

Be informed, get involved, stay open to compromise, remain civil, reject violence, value norms, promote the common good, respect government services and support the teaching of civics.

In his book, author Richard Haass has given us, in very simple language, the problem and the solutions to save our democracy and counter the growing apathy, anger, selfishness, disinformation and violence that we are witnessing in our country.

We next meet on Monday, July 10th at 1:45pm at [Enzo's](#). Our book discussion will be on "Back Rooms: Voices from the Illegal Abortion Era" by Ellen Messer and Kathryn E. May. We are also considering discussing Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, Lincoln's Inaugural Address or any other President's Inaugural Address that the group is interested in.

As always, we encourage members to borrow the book from the library or purchase from local booksellers.

Daisy Tyler
daisytyler68@hotmail.com

ERA Update

by Louise Reavis

Did you know that New York state is going to be voting on a constitutional amendment next year? New York's



proposed ERA will bar discrimination not just based on gender but on all of the following:

- Ethnicity
 - National origin
 - Disability
 - Age
 - Sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression)
- Pregnancy/Pregnancy outcomes

So while it is referred to as the New York state ERA, it encompasses so much more than what many people remember from the national ERA back in the 70's and 80's.

Voters will have the chance to say “yes” or “no” to this momentous amendment in November of 2024.

The League of Women Voters, along with many other groups who have formed a state-wide coalition, will be working between now and then to convince voters to say “yes.”

Sasha Ahuja, leader of the NY State Task Force met virtually with the LWVNYS ERA task force in May to outline the polling that is currently being done to ensure that once the campaign to launch the ERA happens, the messaging will be right. Once the best talking points have been developed, the campaign to educate and convince the public will begin. It's important to get the timing right so that the message is foremost in people's minds in the fall of 2024.

One important strategy that has already been identified is that young people, especially college students, will be a key group to focus on. This strategy was very successful in Michigan which

saw a big increase in these voters when their state ERA passed.

Recent good news in New York is that the legislature did pass the Plain Language Bill before it adjourned. This bill requires any constitutional amendment to be written at an 8th grade reading level.

Also, related state news is that former NYS representative, Carolyn Maloney, addressed the state convention on the topic of passage of the national ERA. She encouraged attendees to sign on to her national ERA petition which you can still do at www.sign4era.org

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

Next steps we'll be working on, as we get closer to November of 2024, will be to start thinking about places to set up voter registration tables, colleges where you can distribute flyers, writing a letter to the editor to your local paper or media outlet, and thinking of other local groups in your community that you might collaborate with.

For more information about the proposed amendment, go to www.lwvny.org and scroll down to the box that says [NYS Equal Rights Amendment](#).

Regional Meetup Groups

A report on the
"Southern Tier

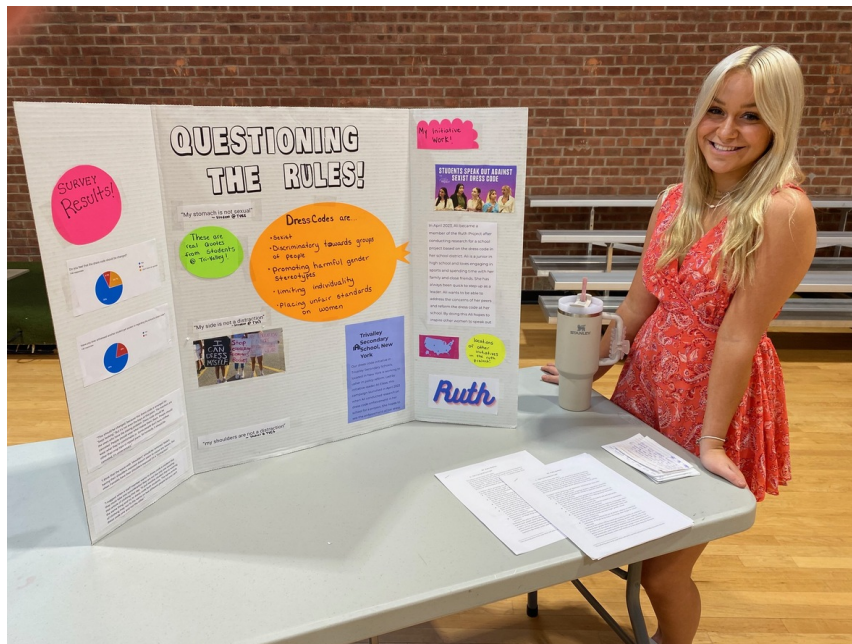
Group" by Cindy Lanzetta

On June 8th, League members Marylin Jones and Cindy Lanzetta visited Tri-Valley High School to attend the presentations done by the students they had

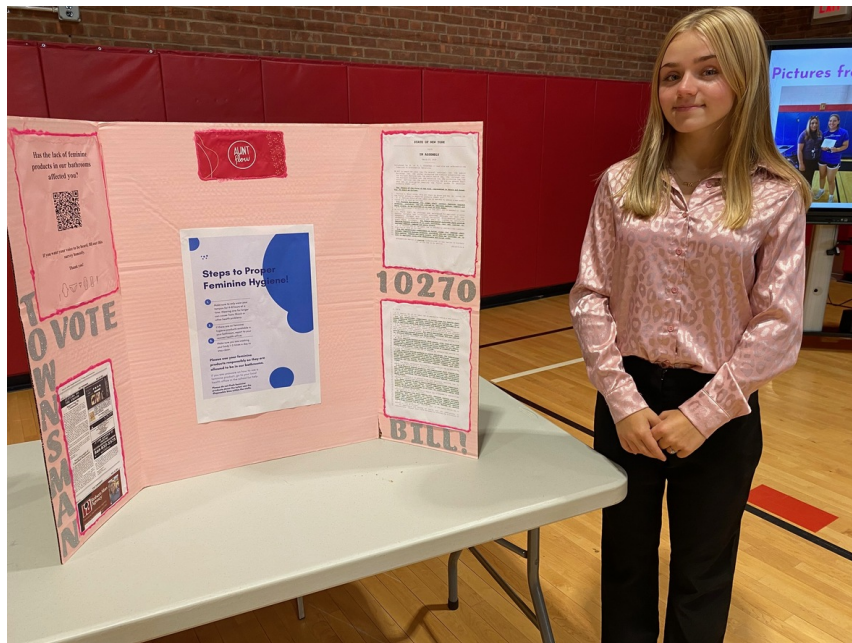
previously met with in the fall. The program they work with is a special Civics & Social Justice Class for Juniors and Seniors. Students identify an issue of concern to the community, research it and come up with a plan of action. The presentations we saw included making athletics and after school activities more accessible, opioid education and NARCAN training, self defense & domestic abuse, veteran appreciation, access to feminine hygiene products, and sexualization through poor dress codes. It was amazing to see how much the students had done and still hope to do, over the school year. The League is very proud to be a resource to these young people!



LWVMHR Marylin Jones and Emily Hornbeck



Ali Etes (Tri-Valley Dress Code Revision)



Ashley Miller (Feminine Hygiene Accessibility)

Aid in Dying Act Update

from Kathie Beinkafner

On WAMC public radio from Albany, Dr. Alan Chartock interviewed Corinne Carey, Senior Campaign Director at



Compassion and Choices. She is the leader who is helping to get the New York State Legislature to pass the AID IN DYING ACT.

The interview was on “The Capitol Connection” show # 2301 and aired on January 5 and 7, 2023.

You can hear the program the interview by going online [HERE](#)

The League has supported passage of this bill for about 7 years. 59% of New Yorkers support passage of this law in a poll by Marist College in 2021. Additional resources can be found at this website -<https://www.compassionandchoices.org/>

You can see the current status of the bill [HERE](#).

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

Environmental Impact

LWVNYS Amendments to Position on Land Use

from Cindy Bell



The most recent Rural Caucus meeting featured member Antoinette Kuzminski (LWV Cooperstown) outlining needed changes to the now outdated LWVNYS position on land use. The proposed changes come as a result of the movement to expand solar farms into rural areas in order to power cities (most notably NYC). Residents of rural

communities have historically hosted city water resources in the form of the 19 reservoirs located north and west of the city and now they are being targeted for solar farms, most of them industrial (corporate-owned). The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) has been instrumental in providing funding for these projects but allows for no benefit at all (economic, partial ownership or shares in production) for local communities. Corporations, with their vast and effective resources, have been first in line for IRA benefits for renewable projects. In addition, the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES), which is responsible for permitting any sizable renewable energy projects, can override any municipal, county or regional laws. This may not go over well in rural areas, especially with no benefit for local residents.

So far, the proposed changes state:

- NYS should put in place a fair and equitable policy for solar farm placement, siting the above concerns.
- NYS should also develop a master land use plan which prioritizes preservation of forest and certain parcels of agricultural or historical significance.
- The proposed changes in the Position on Land use will also include rooftop, parking lots and landfills projects.

Stay tuned for more information as the committee refines its wording to be presented at the next LWVNYS Convention or Council meeting.

For a complete copy of the current proposed changes with more information, please email cindylwv@gmail.com and I will be happy to forward the document to you.

To join in the Rural Caucus conversation, email kstein1@twcny.rr.com for a link to the next virtual meeting on August 7, 2023 at 5:00pm. Visitors welcome as we discuss the

above energy, broadband, childcare, medical and home care and more. No need to live in a rural community. We all share many of the same concerns.

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

News Items



New York State LWV Convention!

The League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region were well represented at the State Convention in Albany in June. We were

presented with two awards.

One was for our success in suing the Dutchess County Board of Elections that resulted in getting a polling place on the Vassar College campus.

The second award was for having the greatest membership growth in the last two years!



League members Deb Marr, Cindy Bell & Leslie Simons

**NEW MEMBERS
SINCE JULY 1, 2022!**

D = Dutchess, U = Ulster

Other counties named



- Isis Benitez, Poughkeepsie D
- Janet Blake, New Paltz U
- Lisa Bretherick, Staasburg D
- Alison Buckley, New Paltz U
- Carla Burns, Highland Falls (Orange Co.)
- Matthew Carroll, Poughkeepsie D
- Fred Chromey and Molly Shanley, Poughkeepsie D
- Miriam Cohen, Poughkeepsie D
- Mary Lou Dillon, New Paltz U
- Marcia Dunn, Poughkeepsie D
- Rebecca Edwards, Poughkeepsie D
- Michael Frazier, Rhinebeck D
- Martha Kaplan and John Kelly, Poughkeepsie D

Janice Lanzetta, Hopewell Junction D
David LaTourette, Saugerties U
Kirsten Menking, Poughkeepsie D
Mary Missere, Cornwall (Orange Co.)
Elizabeth Mitchell, Woodstock U
Maribel Montijo, Wingdale D
Lydia Murdoch, Poughkeepsie D
Danielle Novi Heller, Saugerties U
Doran O'Meara, New Paltz U
David Reavis, Monroe (Orange)
Margaret Stofsky, Poughkeepsie D
Marylin & Robert A. Jones, Grahmsville (Sullivan)

Welcome!!

2023 LWVMHR Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting took place at the Starr Library in Rhinebeck. Lots of good stuff to report and a special performance by League member Pat Lamanna. Thanks to all who participated!





League member Daisy Tyler





We also have an archive of videos done by our local LWV Mid-Hudson on YouTube! You can access them [here](#).

[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 July 24th.

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

info@lwvmidhudson.org

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