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The Prez says ...



"Wow, where did the summer go?!" It seems shorter every year, especially when there's lots to do.

Of course the League, at all levels, has been working hard to get ready for the fall elections. While this year's election season is not as flashy as one with

presidential or congressional candidates, we know these local elections are very important in our day-to-day life and the candidates are eager to have us get to know them. As volunteers it is also a critically important time for us to get procedures in place that will be even more critical in next year's hectic presidential election season.

Teams have been developed in all three counties to find locations for registration booths and other activities on **National Voter Registration Day** (this year on September 19th) and to address other opportunities to serve voters.

We are gathering candidate information and learning how to get it on the national League voter information platform called **Vote411**.

Finally, we will be training more volunteers to help moderate, keep time, and otherwise help with candidate meetings.

PLEASE LET US KNOW how you might like to help with all this! Also, watch for a possible email or phone call from a member in your region letting you know of opportunities to help close to where you live and answering any questions you might have. This is a great time to get to know one another better, especially our many newer members.

By the time you read this, August 26th - Women's Equality Day - may have already passed. But with our democracy facing major challenges, it's important to remember and to celebrate the day in 1919 that Tennessee pushed the women's suffrage effort across the finish line in a frighteningly close vote. It is now 104 years later but our democracy is still young and we are seeing that we can still never take our rights for granted.

“Frighteningly close” votes continue to keep us on our toes! We

need to remember that Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Frederick Douglass and the other participants in the first convention for women's rights in Seneca Falls in 1848 did not even live to see August 26, 1919. It was a full 72 years later that women were finally heading for voting booths across the country and the victorious suffrage organization had become the League of Women Voters.

As we do our work, we honor the suffragists' faith, persistence, and hard work, and the work of many since then at every election. And even though we were assured in 1920 that a nonpartisan political organization would never work, it has become clear that our nonpartisanship is needed more than ever. Thanks for helping to keep the faith!

Dare Thompson

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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.



September 6th

12:00 PM

LWV Mid-Hudson Membership Committee Meeting

Zoom link:

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

September 8th

11 AM

Ulster County Naturalization Ceremony

Quimby Theater, UCCC

Stone Ridge

September 15th

12:00 PM

Southern Tier Meeting

[The Silk Factory](#)

Newburgh

September 18th

1:45 PM

LWVMHR Book Club

[Enzo's Restaurant](#)

Kingston

September 19th

National Voter Registration Day

Opportunities to do Voter Registration will happen all week!

Watch your email for information!

September 20th

11 AM

Orange County Naturalization Ceremony

Newburgh Armory

Newburgh

September 20th

6 PM

Our Vote Our Power

Discussion Zoom

Register [Here](#)

September 21st

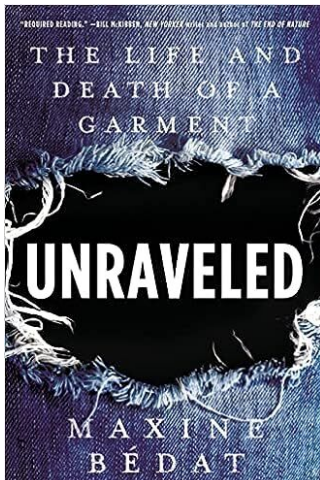
7 PM

LWVMHR Board Meeting

Zoom link:

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

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



LWVMHR Book Club Meeting

September 18th

1:45 PM, Kingston

"UNRAVELED: The Life and Death of a Garment"

Author Maxine Bedat

The New Yorker wrote: ". Unraveled is at once fascinating and disturbing. Read it

before you buy a new pair of jeans or anything else, for that matter. It'll forever change the way you look at fashion.”

Note: The Book Club meets at 1:45pm monthly on the listed Mondays at [Enzo's Ristorante](#) in Kingston.

All members are welcome to join. Bring a friend and discover a new experience with League Members.

October 16th

"Countdown"

Authors Shanna HSwan, Phd. & Stacey Colino

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

Daisy Tyler

daisytyler68@hotmail.com

**THE NYS
EQUAL RIGHTS
AMENDMENT**



ERA Update

No matter our gender, age, disability status, or cultural background, we all deserve to be

treated with dignity and respect.

Check out this website:

<https://nyequalrights.org/>

The New York State League of Women Voters is an active partner in the effort to pass a constitutional amendment adding to existing enumerated protections against discrimination based on race and religion. This amendment would explicitly prohibit discrimination based on a person's ethnicity, national origin, age,

disability, and sex—including their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes, reproductive healthcare and autonomy.

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

We hope to begin meeting regularly to prepare for the campaign in 2024. In the meantime, read the info on the website and watch this space!

Regional Meetup Groups

Southern Tier:
This group is made up of members from Orange County, Southern Dutchess County, and Southern Ulster County. All League members are welcome to attend!



Silk Factory, Newburgh

Our next regular meeting will be September 15th, noon, at the [Silk Factory](#). All League members & friends are welcome to attend!

Vote 411 Help Needed!

This website enables all voters to simply type in their address and instantly have access to all the voting

information they could

possibly need from how and where to register in their area, to finding out what races are on their ballot (national, state, county and local town or village), even information from candidates about their stand on important issues and recordings of any debates that have occurred.



While national and state data are entered already, each local league is asked to help provide as much info as possible about local races. This involves contacting candidates with questions about their campaigns and reporting the information you gather to our chapter contact.

If you are interested in helping with this important initiative for 2023, or to learn about it in preparation for the big election of 2024, contact Louise Reavis at louise.reavis@gmail.com Thank you!

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Environmental Impact

In place of Cynthia

Bell's usual column we

have a release by the
Washington Post:

**Judge Rules in Favor
of Montana Youths in
Landmark Climate
Decision**



In the first ruling of its kind nationwide, a Montana state court decided August 14th in favor of young people who alleged the state violated their right to a “clean and healthful environment” by promoting the use of fossil fuels.

The court determined that a provision in the Montana Environmental Policy Act has harmed the state’s environment and the young plaintiffs by preventing Montana from considering the climate impacts of energy projects. The provision is accordingly unconstitutional, the court said. “This is a huge win for Montana, for youth, for democracy and for our climate,” said Julia Olson, the executive director of Our Children’s Trust, which brought *Held v. Montana*. “More rulings like this will certainly come.”

The sweeping win, one of the strongest decisions on climate change ever issued by a court, could energize the environmental movement and usher in a wave of cases aimed at advancing action on climate change, experts say.

The ruling — which invalidates the provision blocking climate considerations — also represents a rare victory for climate activists who have tried to use the courts to push back against government policies and industrial activities they say are harming the planet.

In this case, it involved 16 young Montanans, ranging in age from 5 to 22, who brought the nation's first constitutional and first youth-led climate lawsuit to go to trial. Those youths are elated by the decision, according to Our Children's Trust.

Despite the track record of dismissals for youth-led climate cases in the United States, experts said the Montana youths had an advantage in the state's constitution, which guarantees a right to a "clean and healthful environment."

Montana, a major coal producer, is home to the largest recoverable coal reserves in the country. The plaintiff's attorneys say the state has never denied a permit for a fossil fuel project.

The youths focused on this constitutional right across five days of emotional testimony in June, where they made claims about injuries they have suffered as a result of climate change. A 15-year-old with asthma described himself as "a prisoner in my own home" when isolating with covid during a period of intense wildfire smoke. Rikki Held, the 22-year-old plaintiff for whom the lawsuit is named, detailed how extreme weather has hurt her family's ranch. Held testified that a favorable judgment would make her more hopeful for the future. "I know that climate change is a global issue, but Montana has to take responsibility for our part in that," she said.

Attorneys for the state countered that Montana's contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions is small. If the law in question were altered or overturned, Montana Assistant Attorney General Michael Russell said, there would be "no meaningful impact or appreciable effect" on the climate.

The state began and rested its defense on the same day, bringing the trial to an unexpectedly early close on June 20. In a pivot from

its expected defense disputing the climate science behind the plaintiffs' case, the state focused instead on arguing that the legislature should weigh in on the contested law, not the judiciary.

Michael Gerrard, the founder of Columbia's Sabin Center, said the change in strategy came as a surprise: "Everyone expected them to put on a more vigorous defense," he said. "And they may have concluded that the underlying science of climate change was so strong that they didn't want to contest it."

The state's defense was unsuccessful.

Judge Kathy Seeley determined that the state's emissions could be fairly traced to the legal provision blocking Montana from reviewing the climate impacts of energy projects. She further wrote that the state's emissions and climate change have caused harm to the environment and the youth plaintiffs. "Every additional ton of GHG emissions exacerbates Plaintiffs' injuries and risks locking in irreversible climate injuries," she wrote in the ruling.

From

The Washington Post

, August 14, 2023

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News Items



Affirmative Action Ruling by the Supreme Court - We need to discuss this....

by Dare Thompson

On August 15th several LWV members met on a Zoom call to discuss the recent Supreme Court decision on Affirmative Action referred to as "Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College."

In the summary before the official decision, the Court's staff says: "The question presented is whether the admissions systems used by Harvard College and the University of North Carolina are lawful under the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment."

You are probably well aware that this has caused a great stir not just in relation to college admissions but to affirmative action in all aspects of our lives. What does the decision really say and what might be next?

Our League Zoom discussion on the decision was led by our LWV-MHR vice president, Jennifer (Jen) Clark, who is an attorney and who years ago worked for the Supreme Court of Wisconsin, which gave her special insights into how such decisions are put together and presented to the public. Jen urged us to read the "Syllabus," the staffed-prepared summary of the case, and as much of the actual decision as we had time for. This is an especially long document - at over 230 pages it's longer than most SCOTUS decisions - and you can find the whole document here:

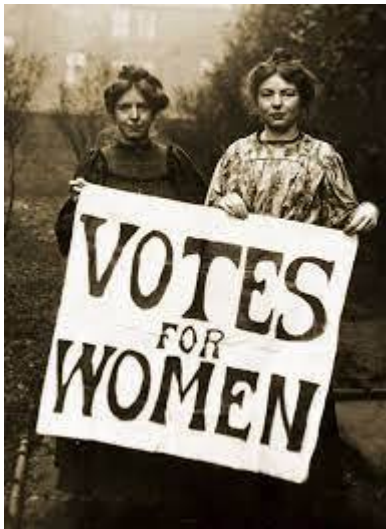
https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/22pdf/20-1199_hgdj.pdf.

Jen explained why the pieces are in the order given (seniority plays a role, which is why Justice Jackson's dissent from the majority opinion is last), and she gave us other insights related to the document itself and to Court procedures. We then discussed the arguments in both the Majority opinion presented by Chief Justice Roberts and in those by others who were concurring or dissenting.

We can't outline all we said but will note that a primary concern raised by us was the degree to which this opinion went against precedent and what this may mean for future decisions by this Court and throughout the whole U.S. judicial system.

We agreed that this Court's decisions bear more such scrutiny by us and we decided to have the same sort of discussion about the Dobbs decision on reproductive rights as soon as Jen's schedule and ours allow. We should know in time for the next newsletter.

Please let me know if you would like to see the recording of our August 15th discussion. We are hoping to post it on YouTube once it's edited down a bit but we might be able to share it sooner.



Our Vote-Our Power

Join us for a Candid Discussion About the Women's Suffrage Movement and its Impact: On September 20, 2023 at 6pm, join the LWWNYS and the Queens County Women's Bar Association to talk about the history of women's suffrage in New York and what's happening in today's legislative landscape. Click [here](#)

to register.

We were pleased to see our LWVMHR visit with State Senator Michelle Hinchey reported in the August LWWNY State Voter Newsletter:

Mid-Hudson League

The Mid-Hudson League had the opportunity to discuss natural resources with Senator Michelle Hinchey, who chairs the Agriculture Committee. Despite the event being originally scheduled for thirty minutes, the conversation went on for an hour.

Conversation topics included climate versus an impending food crisis and how it would affect importing food in New York State; the use of agrivoltaics (placing solar panels, wind turbines/renewables on farmland) and how some solar companies are placing panels on farmland in a way that the soil underneath cannot be farmed; and how due to the current trend of wildfires and the drought, many state legislators are predicting that New York may be a part of the new 'breadbasket' of the United States.



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

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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 25th.

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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