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July 2025

Prez Says



PREZ SAYS

If you weren't at the Annual Meeting on June 18, I'm sorry. You missed a very good time! In spite of some rainy weather, the food supplied by many of us was abundant and delicious and the information shared among us all about the past and current League work was equally abundant. We also

quite cheerfully handled the required business of approving the new year's budget and the board and nominating committee appointments that were outlined in the mailing you got in early June.

But I think all those present would agree that hearing from our Ulster County sheriff was the highlight of the evening. Sheriff Figueroa goes well beyond law enforcement. He clearly wants to make his whole community better, not just crime-free. An example is the way he eagerly assisted us in getting qualified jail "residents" registered to vote and his willingness to help League leaders in other counties have successful partnerships with *their* sheriffs. We could easily have kept him there for an extra hour with all our questions.

We also appreciated having Hyde Park singer-songwriter Pat Lamanna opening and closing our meeting with songs we could sing along with. The final song of the night had us refusing to let anyone steal our joy, and I hope that in spite of everything that distresses us, we are still allowing ourselves to be joyful about the many good things that are also happening. We need that joy to support us in the challenging work that lies ahead. Onward!

Dare Thompson, President

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Calendar Happenings

You can also check our website for more info!

League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region

July 1st

11 AM

Program Committee

(all are welcome - new ideas!)

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87868759939?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87868759939?pwd=ysvpH9gwbU52gzGwbkFN8AbCsksz0H.1)

[pwd=ysvpH9gwbU52gzGwbkFN8AbCsksz0H.1](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87868759939?pwd=ysvpH9gwbU52gzGwbkFN8AbCsksz0H.1)

July 2nd

Noon

Membership/Communications Meeting

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87961878308?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87961878308?pwd=xGZSMb9S3kgbU3xW5Ou741J7GQCvSe.1)

[pwd=xGZSMb9S3kgbU3xW5Ou741J7GQCvSe.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87961878308?pwd=xGZSMb9S3kgbU3xW5Ou741J7GQCvSe.1)

July 11th

Noon

Dutchess Meetup

[Mahoney's](#), Poughkeepsie

July 14th

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Voter Services County Chairs Meeting

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86341969784?
pwd=dsBLhdSfAaDTaWhdfAYQVRYuS5xTeE.1](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86341969784?pwd=dsBLhdSfAaDTaWhdfAYQVRYuS5xTeE.1)

July 15th

4 - 8 PM

Special Board Meeting

[Mahoney's](#), Poughkeepsie

July 18th

Noon

Southern Tier Meetup

[Silk Factory](#), Newburgh

July 22nd

11:45 PM

Ulster County Meetup

[Plaza Diner](#), New Paltz

July 23rd

7 - 8 PM

Voter Registration Training Workshop

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84381378265?>

**Erica Smitka, Director LWNYS; Dianna Wynn, President LWV US;
Nancy Rosenthal, President LWNYS; Olivia Hill, keynote speaker and
Council Member at Large, Nashville, TN.**



SOME NOTES FROM THE STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION (June 20 - 22)

by President Dare Thompson

Four LWVMHR members attended this event in Albany: Dare Thompson, Leslie Simons, Cindy Bell, and brand new member Deborah McManus.

The newest president of LWVUS, Dianna Wynn, was with us for a full day and among the most interesting things she talked about was how and why LWVUS decided to declare that the U.S. is in a constitutional crisis. Dianna was open and accessible - "Hey, remember, I'm a local League member like you!" she said. She's from Cary, North Carolina (near Durham) and is a communication consultant with several books on that topic to her credit.

Another speaker was Olivia Hill, a transgender woman who has managed to get elected to the Nashville, TN city council as a Member At-Large. That victory against a background of so much hate and misinformation even in a blue city was inspiring to all of us and we gave her a huge standing ovation. Two things from her talk that will forever stick with me are 1) even she was surprised by the significant changes she experienced when she lost "white male privilege" and 2) becoming a female changed her body AND MIND in ways she totally didn't expect - e.g. lost upper body strength and gained a confusing new ability to multi-task! I think we are now all more prepared and enthusiastic about supporting former males in female sports and wherever people say a trans woman doesn't belong. Go to <https://theoliviahill.com/> for more. She also has a memoir coming out.

MEMBERSHIPS:

Every year we also look at our membership numbers as of January 31 of the current year. We saw that in the state as a whole the membership grew by about 10%, thanks not only to the hard work of League members but also to the political climate.

And what local League now has the most members? You might think NYC but no - it's in second place. Number 1 is Saratoga County! It has 287 to NYC's 219! With 168 members we are in 5th place, after Albany County with 195 members and Rochester Metro with 182. All of us are clearly doing good work but where Saratoga really stands out is with the fun they have. Let's remember that in all we do. Joy is not only important in keeping us going - it makes us better!

LEARNING FROM ONE ANOTHER:

The speakers are great, but the main reason we go to Convention is to learn from one another. On the last morning, all the presidents met in a separate room for breakfast and to talk with our executive director, Erica Smitka, and president, Nancy Rosenthal. Many of us continue to learn from one another throughout the year but not in person in one room! Go team!

Voter Services



The League in Action!

Dutchess members had a great day at the June 8 Beacon Sloop Club Strawberry Festival, registering new voters, recruiting new members, listening to people's concerns, and advocating on behalf of the League! Many people stopped by to thank us for our work and service, including

Dutchess County Comptroller Dan Aymar-Blair and Beacon Mayor Lee Kyriacou. And, the strawberry shortcake and smoothies were delicious!

Dutchess County Voter Registration Opportunity

We'll register voters at the **Beacon Sloop Club Corn Festival in Dutchess County on August 10th, from 12 to 5 PM**. We're looking for volunteers for the following shifts:

- 11am to 2 PM (includes set up); 3 volunteers
- 2 to 5 PM (includes breakdown); 3 volunteers

Contact Fay Casatuta at faycasatuta@gmail.com if you are interested.





Voter Registration Training

Are you new to voter registration? Are you experienced and need a refresher? Join us on **Wednesday, July 23, from 7 to 8 pm via Zoom** for our Voter Registration Workshop. Contact Fay Casatuta at faycasatuta@gmail.com with questions.

Zoom link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84381378265?>

Want to Get Involved?

Voter Services has many events planned this summer across all three counties. Please keep checking the website [calendar](#) and [volunteer opportunities](#).



LWV Mid-Hudson Meetups

Dutchess Meetup

On Friday, June 13, Dutchess County held their monthly meetup and welcomed Dani White - Recycling Educator, Division of Solid Waste Management, Dutchess County Department of Planning & Development - to speak with us about sustainable practices in Dutchess County.

The program covered how to live more sustainably and how to dispose of waste such as garbage, hazardous materials, and recyclables. We also discussed where to bring certain materials and where County residents waste is processed. This included refusing, reusing, repairing, rethinking, reeducating, recycling, and composting practices.

Our next meeting is **Friday, July 11th at noon** at [Mahoney's](#) in Poughkeepsie.

Southern Tier

Our group consists of folks from the Southern portions of Ulster and Dutchess Counties, as well as all of Orange County. Anyone is welcome to come and hear about the latest work of the League and get involved. We plan fun trips too - July we will be going to Broadway to see "John Proctor is the Villain". We are open to ideas that compliment our commitment to Women's issues.

Next meeting is **July 18th**, at the [Silk Factory](#) in Newburgh at noon!

Ulster County Meetups

We have been unable to hold the Kings Valley Diner meet-ups in Kingston in June and July because of conflicts with other League events, so we are holding one on Tuesday, July 22 at 11:45 (and through the lunch-hour) at the Plaza Diner in New Paltz to fill in the gap and catch members farther south. Please join us wherever you live and hear about newly hatched LWV-MHR plans for the rest of the summer and into the fall. Defending democracy isn't easy, but with your help, we're up to it!



Legislation

Voter Registration Challenges

As of now, the Federal SAVE Act (Safeguard American Voter Eligibility), promising tectonic shifts in who, how, and when people may register to vote, is winding its way through the U.S. Senate. Its passage and implementation – whether all or in part – will affect our League’s core mission of registering voters. At the sametime, our identity is being challenged from another front – New York State is considering automatic voter registration for all eligible voters. The passage of either, or both, will surely change what we do and how we do it.

While we understand the purpose of the SAVE Act is to restrict voting rights, and the purpose of New York’s move to automatic registration is to expand those rights, the implication for our work is the same – how do we shift from registering voters to educating and giving them the tools they need to make the best choices for them and their families? This is something the League will need to address in this changing environment.

For over a century, the League has put voter services – registration, education, and voting information – at the core of its mission. It’s incumbent on the League to not only fight against the passage and implementation of the SAVE Act, but also to think strategically about how we continue to serve the voting public if registering voters is off the table. How do we support voters and voting rights, help people navigate the revised registration process, and ensure that people have access to nonpartisan, fact-based voting information? That discussion needs to start now.

See the more about the SAVE Act check this [OUT HERE!](#)

NY MAID Act

The New York Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) Act has finally passed in the NYS Senate! It passed in the Assembly earlier this year, so now it will go to

the Governor for her to sign. This bill would afford terminally ill New Yorkers greater peace and the ability to die with dignity.

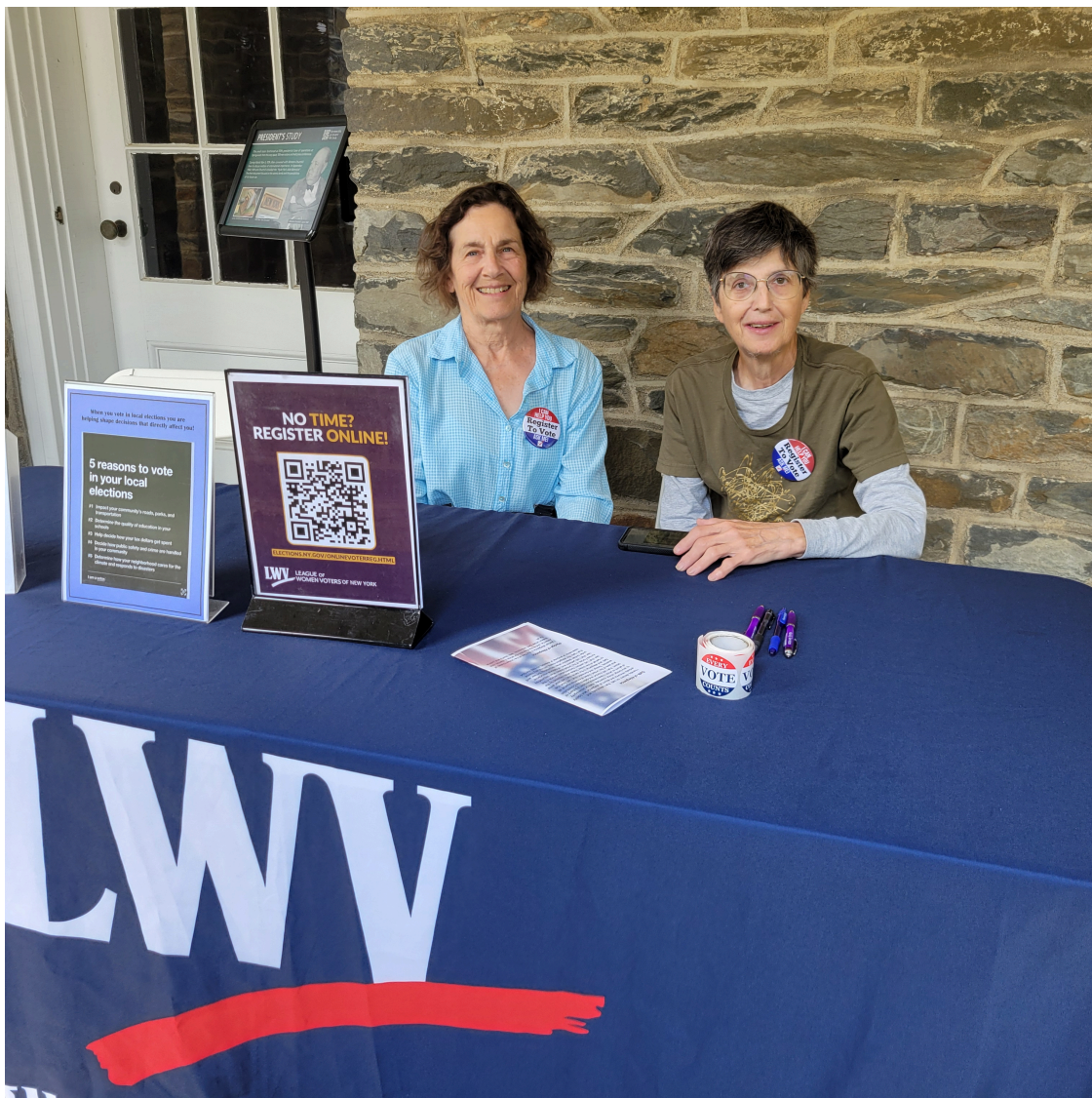
The MAID Act would allow a terminally ill, mentally capable adult to request life-ending medication from a doctor that the person can self-administer at a time of his or her choosing, or never, should suffering become unbearable.

Click [here](#) to read more.

NY ERIC Bill

The ERIC bill has finally passed in the NYS Assembly!

The Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization created by and comprised of state election officials from around the U.S. It's the most effective tool available to help election officials maintain more accurate voter rolls. It passed in the NYS Senate earlier this year so now it will go to the Governor for her to sign. This bill will allow NY to join a multistate voter list maintenance organization like ERIC. Click [here](#) to learn more about the bill.



Welcome New Americans!

LWVMHR Members Carol Miyake, Jane Smith, and Pat Lamanna were on hand at the Dutchess County Naturalization Ceremony at the FDR Site in Hyde Park. Held on June 13th, the League was there to help answer any questions our new Citizens might have.

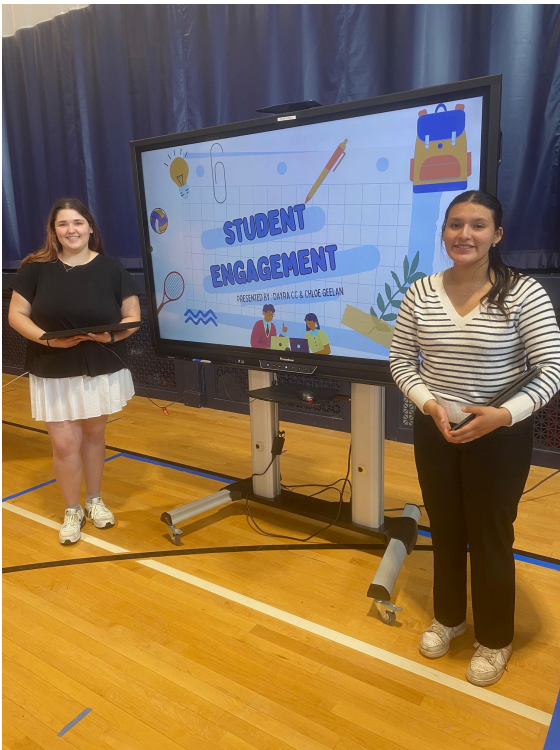
Keep Up With your League's Latest



Local Events! Always at the Website!

[Learn more](#)

In the News



LWVMHR Visits Tri-Valley Central High School

For the third year, Tri-Valley Central High School has offered a unique Civics and Social Justice Class. The class is made up of students who look at School and Community needs, research issues, and take action to address the needs with special projects they design and implement.

League members volunteer to speak with the class and offer to be a resource. The League members are always impressed with the final projects the young people do.

This year was especially interesting because many of the students set their projects in motion but, because they were Seniors, had made arrangements with younger students to continue their projects into next year and beyond. The League is honored to be a part of this innovative curriculum and we thank teacher Matthew Haynes for including us!





The month of June offered some interesting happenings at the meeting of the Dutchess County Legislature. Besides the ongoing issue of siting a homeless shelter in Poughkeepsie, the ongoing questions about Solid Waste Disposal and options were brought up at the public portion.

LWVMHR Observer Jane Simkin Smith writes:

“A **Mother’s Out Front** member brought attention to the Dutchess County Resource and Recovery Agency’s Put or Pay Solid Waste Disposal Service Agreement which, she urged, was not favorable to taxpayers; she also inveighed against the amount of waste being sent to incinerators and landfills, and urged county wide composting along with the need to know the economic impact of a new boiler or super incinerator”. Read more at our Website or go to this direct link:

<https://lwvmidhudson.org/2025/06/22/dutchess-county-legislature-board-meeting-june-9-2025/>

LWVMHR

EMAIL TIP - Having trouble finding the Newsletter amongst reams of emails? Search “Local League Newsletter” to find the correct email!

From the Editor - We welcome information or articles you think would add to our members' & friends' knowledge of educating voters and protecting our Democracy. Write to info@lwvmidhudson.org.
Deadline for next Newsletter is **July 21st**. Thank you!



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