



News from the League of Women Voters of New Rochelle

February 2017

League Members in Women's Marches Across the Country

Although initially cautious about supporting the Women's March on Washington, the LWVUS, having satisfied themselves that organizers had obtained permits and security and had "shaped the grassroots demonstration as a diverse and inclusive event," decided days before the marches were scheduled to participate in the March on D.C. In a letter announcing the decision, LWVUS President Chris Carson expressed her understanding that "this event will bring together many organizations with a variety of priorities and messages for the incoming administration, not all of which we will agree with. But as women and defenders of democracy, there is more that unites us than divides us." Believing that participation was an opportunity for the League to make its voice heard on our priorities, she outlined core issues that she felt would be placed front and center: voting rights, reform money in politics, healthcare and the environment.



The League of Women Voters of New York State had a fantastic turnout on January 21st. Local League members joined marches in Washington, D.C, New York City, Albany, Seneca Falls, Sag Harbor, Glens Falls, Hudson, Utica, Rochester, and Syracuse. The New York City march was so crowded that it was virtually impossible to meet up with fellow members and crowds filled an area from 2nd Avenue to 5th Avenue and from 47th Street to 42nd Street. Many signs reflected common concerns about the potential loss of the Affordable Care Act, ensuring the civil rights of immigrants and Muslims, denial of global warming as well as issues traditionally considered women's issues, such as affordable child care and the preservation of women's reproductive rights.

LWVUS URGES MEMBERS TO KEEP IT GOING

From LWVUS: On January 21, 2017, millions of women and men around the world turned out to make their voices heard. The Women's March brought attention to important issues. Here are some actions you can take **RIGHT NOW** to make a difference in your community and beyond.

1. [Join the League of Women Voters!](#)

The League is working to make a difference and actively engage people in more than 700 communities around the country. Attend a League event to get involved in our work to engage with elected officials, empower new voters and to learn about issues that impact your community. (See membership information at the end of this newsletter.)

2. [Call Congress – and call them often!](#)

Elected officials work for the people and need to hear from concerned citizens like you! Make sure Congress knows YOUR priorities and concerns. The general number to reach a member of Congress is 202-224-3121.

3. [Register to Vote- and help your friends get registered!](#)

It might not be an election year where you live – but it's never too early to make sure your registration is up to date. The League works year-round in hundreds of communities to prepare eligible voters. Check out www.VOTE411.org for more information.

4. [Make a Donation to Defend our Democracy!](#)

Your support makes it possible for the League to take a stand in statehouses and courtrooms across the country. Visit our website to make a tax-deductible donation online: LWVNewRo.org

5. [Become an e-Activist!](#)

Read updates from the League and take action by holding your elected officials accountable on the League's key priorities including voting rights and money in politics.

Making your voice heard never goes out of style. Let's keep the momentum going!

Hearing Set on New Rochelle Education Budget

The community has been invited to provide input on the New Rochelle Board of Education budget on February 9 in the New Rochelle High School Library, 264 Clove Road, New Rochelle, starting at 7 PM.

On March 9, 14, and 21 at 7 PM, also in the New Rochelle High School Library, the community can listen to a review of the proposed budget and participate in a discussion about it.

Coffee and Conversation with City Councilman Albert Tarantino

Albert Tarantino, New Rochelle City Councilman, was the guest at a Coffee and Conversation sponsored by the League of Women Voters on Friday, January 20. Councilman Tarantino was elected in 2007 and represents District 2, the southeastern section of New Rochelle, which includes the downtown area. He is also the co-owner of a long established downtown jewelry store. Tarantino was born and raised in New Rochelle and has a long history of community service here.



Councilman Tarantino started off with an overview of current building projects. He talked about the old Loews movie theatre, which will undergo asbestos removal and demolition over the next 1-2 years, and will be replaced by an apartment complex and black box theater. He added that the city is trying to increase the number of parking spaces by requiring public parking in new buildings, but also noted that local restaurants have been using valet parking successfully for their patrons. Tarantino went on to describe the need for increased budget to pay for capital expenditures such as snow removal, fixing potholes, and repaving. He was enthusiastic about the possibility that Hudson Park may be free to enter next summer. Tarantino stated that the City is trying to make all New Rochelle parks more user-friendly.

The most controversial issue Tarantino addressed was the recent zoning change passed by the City Council to allow for a "floating senior zone." This would allow the building of a senior facility anywhere in the city as long as there was enough acreage. The vote was 4-3 and Tarantino admitted that he did not vote in favor of the proposal because it "opened the door" for other projects which might not be suitable. His concern was also whether the City would have enough fire and ambulance services to service those facilities. Tarantino encouraged all New Rochelle residents to contact their City Council members to make them aware of any concerns. He also stated that it was the "responsibility of each City Council member to make his/her citizens aware of upcoming issues."

The next Coffee and Conversation will kick off our celebration of the 85th Anniversary of New Rochelle's council-manager form of government. It will feature Charles R. Strome, City Manager since 2002, Barbara Davis, our City Historian for the last decade, and retired City Manager Peter A. Korn, and will be held on Friday, February 17 at 9:30 a.m. at the New Rochelle Public Library, 1 Library Plaza. They will discuss reform efforts that led to the 1929 adoption of the council-manager form of government and how it differs from the mayor-council form, how well it works, and will also answer questions from the audience. This event will be co-sponsored by the New Rochelle Charter League and is the first of several events that explain how council manager government provides leadership in New Rochelle.

On March 17, Coffee and Conversation will be hosting Dr. Brian Osborne, Superintendent of the New Rochelle City Schools, who will discuss and answer questions about the school budget for the upcoming year.

Governor Cuomo Proposes Voting Reforms

In his 9th State of the State Proposal, Governor Andrew M. Cuomo announced a series of actions to modernize New York's voting system. The Democracy Project would allow early voting, and adopt both automatic voter registration and same day voter registration. These new actions should streamline voter registration services, remove unnecessary barriers that prevent participation in elections, and increase accuracy within the voting process. Many of these proposals are similar to ones advocated by the New York State League of Women Voters, and they also include the following:

Early Voting:

Currently, New York is one of only thirteen states where early voting is not available and an excuse is required to request an absentee ballot. New Yorkers can vote via absentee ballot only if the voter meets certain qualifications such as being absent from his or her county on Election Day or being unable to get to the polls due to a disability.

This proposal would require every county to offer residents access to at least one early voting poll site during the 12 days leading up to Election Day. Voters will have at least eight hours on weekdays and five hours on weekends to cast early ballots. Counties must have one early voting poll site for every 50,000 residents and the bipartisan county boards of elections will determine the specific location of early voting polling places, subject to standards of accessibility and convenience. The NYS League has proposed a two-week period, which includes two weekends, as well as times during the week.

Automatic Voter Registration:

The NYS League has recommended that New York State adopt an opt-out system of voter registration (also known as automatic voter registration.) Under this system, county boards of elections would automatically and electronically receive the information necessary to add citizens to the voter rolls when they interact with New York State government, and no information would enter the registration rolls without approval. The Governor will propose adopting a system implementing automatic voter registration, but restrict its sources to the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Same-Day Voter Registration:

New York does not currently allow voters to register on Election Day. This proposal would allow New Yorkers to register and vote on the same day, so that onerous and counter-intuitive registration deadlines do not prevent New Yorkers from having the opportunity to participate in the electoral process. Thirteen other states and the District of Columbia allow same-day registration, and this has greatly increased the accessibility of the democratic process to everyday citizens. The League has not taken a stand on this.

Additional LWVNY Proposals:

The League has also proposed the implementation of electronic poll books and early voting, making ballots more voter-friendly, and the upgrading of poll worker recruitment/training and county election commission websites. For more information, see this website: <http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy/election-law/2017/Joint-Policy-Statement-Voting-Reform-Priorities-2017.pdf>

LWV Cable Programs Cover the Presidential Election and Electoral College, Black History, and Community Gardens

Here is the schedule for the two newest interviews on CITY PEOPLE AND ISSUES, a cable television program sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New Rochelle. They will be shown on alternate weeks on Cablevision Channel 76 on Mondays at 7 pm, Wednesdays at 10 PM and Thursdays at 9:30 PM. They will later be shown on demand at www.vimeo.com.

Jeanne Zaino, Professor of Political Science at Iona College and frequent radio and television commentator, will discuss the 2016 Presidential election and the Electoral College with host Ina Aronow. The program will be shown the week of January 30 and the week of February 13, 2017.

Linda Tarrant-Reid, author of the acclaimed book *Discovering Black History* and Director of the Grow Lincoln Park community garden, talks with host Haina Just-Michael. The interview will be shown the weeks of February 6 and 20.

After being shown at least once on Cablevision, the programs will go on demand at www.vimeo.com. Interviews that are now on demand include:

- City Manager Charles Strome on the new city budget, www.vimeo.com/196346253.
- Superintendent of Schools Dr. Brian Osborne, www.vimeo.com/185883868
- Westchester Guidance Center Program Directors, www.vimeo.com/185889361
- Chris Selin, president, New Rochelle Public Library Foundation, www.vimeo.com/24211396
- Kelly Johnson, New Rochelle Youth Bureau Director and 2 teens, www.vimeo.com/179047002
- Luiz Aragon, New Rochelle Commissioner of Development, www.vimeo.com/172344471
- A.J. Woodson, Editor-in-Chief, BlackWestchester.com, www.vimeo.com/172348358
- Cindy Kanusher, Exec. Dir., Pace Women's Justice Center, www.vimeo.com/168273352

Additional videos are on <https://vimeo.com/user24211396/videos> as well as through our LWV of New Rochelle website at <http://www.lwvnewro.org/>.

To Be or Not to Be: League of Women Voters Meeting on Whether to Vote for a Constitutional Convention

As required by New York State Constitutional mandate every 20 years, the November 2017 ballots throughout the state will ask the question: "Shall there be a convention to revise the Constitution and amend the same?"

The League of Women Voters invites the public to attend a meeting on Tuesday, Feb 7, to explain the history and meaning of that question. Sally Robinson, LWV of NYS Vice President of Issues and Advocacy (seen below,) will discuss *The Who, What, Where, When, Why and How of New York State's Constitutional Convention Question*. The meeting will be from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Church Street School Auditorium, 295 Church Street, White Plains. (Snow date February 28.) For questions or directions, call 914-761-4382.



The LWVNYS has not taken a position on whether to support, oppose or remain neutral on the question of holding a constitutional convention. The goal at this time is to educate members of the public about important aspects of the question and to assist the State League in its decision on what, if any, position it will take on the question of convening a constitutional convention.

This program is organized by the LWV of White Plains and co-sponsored by the local Leagues of Harrison, Larchmont/Mamaroneck, New Castle, New Rochelle, Northeast, Scarsdale and the Westchester county league. There will be time for questions from the audience. For additional information consult the New York State League of Women Voters website, www.lwvny.org. The program is free and open to all.

Pearl Quarles to be Honored at Luncheon

New Rochelle LWV Board member Pearl Quarles will be honored for her many years of community service at a luncheon sponsored by The Gathering of Men of New Rochelle, Inc. to celebrate Phenomenal Black Women on February 11 at Juliano's Restaurant. Other honorees include Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins and Minister Joanna Willis-Kanyali. The luncheon takes place from 1:00-4:00 and costs \$55. Additional information and tickets can be obtained by calling 914 384-1895.

As one example of her community service, Ms. Quarles will help the New Rochelle Historical Society celebrate Black History Month on February 5th by sharing the trail-breaking and uplifting story of her rise to prominence as a business woman, school board member and the first African American woman elected to become a Westchester County Legislator. The program takes place at 3 pm at the Thomas Paine Cottage. (www.thomaspainecottage.org)



League Welcomes New Citizens

On December 21, 2016, New Rochelle League member Louise Kuklis helped to welcome in almost one hundred new citizens at the Richard J. Daronco Courthouse. Westchester County Clerk Timothy C. Itoni administered the Oath of Citizenship to the new citizens. Many had family members and friends there to witness this important event in their lives.

Naturalization is the process by which United States citizenship is conferred upon a foreign citizen or national after he or she fulfills the requirements established by Congress in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA.) These requirements include a period of residency within the United States, the ability to read, write and speak English, and an understanding of United States history, among other things. In addition, all naturalization applicants must demonstrate good moral character.

Westchester Leagues take turns welcoming these new citizens and giving them literature about their rights as citizens. They are also encouraged to register to vote onsite that day, and most do.



City Leaders Issue Statement on Treatment of Immigrants

In a joint statement, New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson, New Rochelle City Manager Chuck Strome and New Rochelle Police Commissioner Patrick Carroll emailed this:

"Yesterday (1/24/2017) President Trump issued executive orders related to immigration, one of which concerns coordination between federal immigration authorities and local police departments and is, therefore, directly relevant to municipal policy and practice.

The term “sanctuary city” has no precise definition, and we do not use it in New Rochelle, but we do make absolutely clear that all people of good will are welcomed, valued, and respected in our community, regardless of their origins, and that immigrants are an essential part of New Rochelle’s identity and future.

For our Police Department, maintaining a respectful and mutually supportive relationship with all constituencies in New Rochelle is not just the right thing to do, it is also necessary to the promotion of public safety, which depends on trust and the free flow of information. That is why local police departments are not and should not engage in immigration enforcement – and our practices in New Rochelle reflect and support this principle.

Of course, the New Rochelle Police Department will continue coordinating with federal authorities to apprehend and bring to justice criminals who threaten our safety, regardless of their immigration status.”

100th Anniversary of Women’s Suffrage in New York on 11/6/17

The League of Women Voters of New Rochelle is planning to celebrate this anniversary and to emphasize the importance of New Rochelle in the history of Women’s Suffrage. We encourage and welcome your help in developing these activities. Please contact us with your interest at lwnnewrochelle@gmail.com, or call Monica Grey, LWVNR President, @ 914 632 1086.

To celebrate Women’s History Month, New Rochelle Board Member Sydelle Herzberg will be speaking at the Paine Cottage at 2:00 on Saturday, March 4th about the steady march of women to gain the right to vote. Learn about the roles Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt played in the movement and about their residence in New Rochelle! The cost is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children.



New York Suffrage Parade 1917

November 6, 2017
November 19, 2019
February 14, 2020
August 26, 2020

100th Anniversary Dates

100th Anniversary of Woman Suffrage in New York State
100th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters of New York State
100th Anniversary of National League of Women Voters
100th Anniversary of the official certification of the ratification of the 19th amendment by the US Secretary of State



Join THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW ROCHELLE

The League depends on the work and financial support of all of its members to carry out its programs. Membership is open to women **and** men of voting age. Joining our local league confers membership in the State and National Leagues, enables you to receive publications from all three levels with access to members-only online resources, and provides the opportunity to be involved in local, state and national issues.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

TELEPHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

New Membership

Renewal

Individual: \$60.00 year

Household*: \$85.00 year

*Additional Household Member Name: _____

Email: _____

Please make your membership check payable to: **LWV NR**

I would like to support the League with a tax-deductible contribution made payable to:

LWV Education Foundation

\$100.00

\$50.00

Other _____

Return this application with your check(s) to:

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW ROCHELLE
45 LONG VUE
NEW ROCHELLE, NY 10804**

OR

Join and/or donate using PayPal on our website: www.lwvnewro.org