



Green Mountain CITIZEN

Summer 2023

LWVVT Adopts Program for 2024/25

League members gathered at the Vermont Historical Museum on June 24 for their 58th State Convention.

The day began with a rousing keynote address by Sec. of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas and Civic Education Coordinator Robyn Palmer on *Voting Issues in Vermont and Ethics Education*. Their talk focused on plans to increase voter engagement, primarily by outreach to youth, to educate on the importance of voting and inculcate the habit early.

Two important Program items were adopted at the 58th LWVVT State Convention.

A study of a proposed amendment to LWVUS Position on Privatization

In 2012, the LWVUS adopted a position on Privatization. The introduction to the position reads: “The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that *when governmental entities consider the transfer of governmental services, assets, and/or functions to the private sector, the community impact and goals of such transfers must be identified and considered*. Further, the League believes that transparency, accountability, and preservation of the common good must be ensured.” [Emphasis added.]

The position goes on, in part, “Privatization is not appropriate when the provision of services by the government is necessary to preserve the common good, to protect national or local security or to meet the needs of the most vulnerable members of society. These services include the electoral process, justice system, military, public safety, public health, education, transportation, environmental protection, and programs that protect and provide basic human needs.”

Although the position specifies public health, public safety, and basic human needs on the list of public goods, it does not specify medical care; and it does not address the concern about services that are currently provided by the private sector that would be better provided by the public sector.

In response to increasing movement of Medicare money from traditional Medicare to private entities (e.g. Medicare Advantage policies), the following study was adopted by our convention:

Scope: *To examine and evaluate the various ways that health care fits the criteria to be included as a public good as defined in our position; and whether the position should be expanded to include the other direction as well: movement of services that are public goods from the private sector to the public sector.*

The intent of this study is to provide a well-researched position with which other states may choose to concur, and to propose a national concurrence to the 2024 LWVUS Convention.

Information about member participation in this study will soon be available.

Cont. on p. 6

President: Sue Racanelli (East Montpelier)

*Message from the Board
Summer 2023*



Convention 2023 in session

I am pleased to welcome four new members to the LWVVT Board of Directors - Rachel Onuf, Secretary; Maisie Wood, Treasurer; Pelin Kohn, and Joanne Necrason. We're excited to have them bring their unique talents, expertise, and perspectives to the League.

As well, I extend heartfelt thanks to outgoing member Debbie Ramsdell who served on the board for two terms, total of four years, providing fiscal oversight and perspective.

The Board of Directors was nominated by the Nominating Committee and voted onto the board by our membership. Re-elected members include Marguerite Adelman (now Vice President), Susan Kuecker, Anne Mixer, Madeline Motta, and Sonja Schuyler. I am grateful for their consistent and thoughtful guidance, their insight, ideas, dedication, and advocacy.

Board members serve a two-year term and volunteer time and energy to support, promote, guide and shape the future of our League. I look forward to working together with the Board to advance the League's mission of empowering voters and defending democracy.

I wish to thank the following League members for their efforts in successfully spearheading our many committees - Betty Keller, Health Care and Ranked Choice Voting; Kate Rader, Legislation Advocacy and Library Speaker Series; Madeline Motta, Inmate Voter Registration; Chris Abrams, Montpelier Independence Day Parade; Sonja Schuyler-New American Voter Registration; Marguerite Adelman, Non-US Citizen Voting; and Anne Mixer, Youth Voter Registration.

My thanks also go to members Paul Erlbaum who chairs the Vermont State Ethics Commission, and Madeline Motta who represents LWVUS as a UN Observer. It does, indeed, take a village and we are privileged to have members we can count on to come together and contribute to the League's success.

See *Opportunities* on p. 6 for information about joining any of the committees listed above.

Finally, in the League's annual report to LWVUS, we noted that members had volunteered 2,544 hours in 2022 to help with election-related activities. THANK YOU!!

Sue Racanelli
President

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Kate Rader, Editor

Membership in the League includes a subscription.

If you would like to join the League, go to our website, <https://lwvofvt.org/>, or write:

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Montpelier, VT 05601-1391
e-mail, League@lwvofvt.org

!!Here Comes the Parade!!

League members, friends, and family joined in Montpelier's Independence Day parade on July 3, and a good time was had by all.

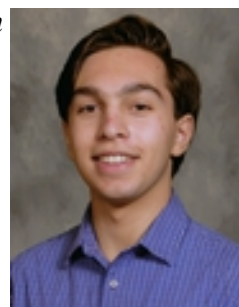
Thanks to everyone who participated, especially those who livened the procession with a spontaneous dance. And of course, special recognition to organizer extraordinaire Chris Abrams, who brought all the accoutrements for the marchers: hats, sashes, banners, windsocks, and noisemakers. She also provided for our well-being, with water and nutritious snacks to keep body and soul together.



2023 Winona Smith Scholarship Winners

"His intellectual curiosity, love of learning, and systematic problem-solving approach make him an ideal candidate for any scholarship." - Teacher Emily

Michael Fernandez of Thetford Academy is recognized for his outstanding achievements and commitment to making a difference. As a recipient of awards such as the Design Award and 2nd place at the State Tournament for VEX Robotics, and the First Place Entrepreneurship/Business Pitch Competition at the Governor's Institute of VT, Michael has demonstrated his exceptional talent and determination. He has been accepted at George Washington University and the University of Vermont.



In his essay on voting rights, Michael explores the impact of tactics like voter ID laws, restricted voting, and the closing of polling places, emphasizing the importance of equal access to the political process.

Drawing from his family history, Michael shares his passionate thoughts on the embargo with Cuba in his second essay. Advocating for its elimination, he highlights the potential benefits in terms of economic growth, improved diplomatic ties, and better human rights conditions for the Cuban people.



"Amanda's deep devotion to making the world a better place is evident in all that she does." -Amanda's History Teacher, Susan

Amanda Gomes, a determined student from Middlebury Union High School, has been accepted at Northeastern University, and aims to obtain a master's degree in Political Science. She has gained valuable experience through internships in politics and policy, and working on a re-election campaign. Amanda actively participates in the Women Safe Youth Advisory Board, advocating for consent culture and combatting domestic and sexual violence. She initiated a free tutoring program in Brazil and assisted with a pop-up shop providing food to those in need during the pandemic.

Amanda has been selected for the Governor's Institute of Vermont and Green Mountain Girls State. She has also received recognition for her academic accomplishments, including the Rural and Small Town Recognition Award and the Hispanic Recognition Award.

In the first essay, Amanda shares her thoughts on Voter ID laws as a voting rights issue, emphasizing the financial burden and difficulties in obtaining such IDs. While she doesn't classify Voter ID laws as a major issue, Amanda believes they contribute to voting inequality.

Amanda's second essay expresses heartbreak and lack of surprise over the Nashville school shooting, highlighting the alarming frequency of such incidents in the United States. Amanda shares her fear, devastation, and disappointment, emphasizing the need for stronger gun regulations and the urgency to address the ongoing issue of school shootings.



“For six years, [Anna] has done everything to make Otter Valley a better place. Receiving the scholarship will enable her to continue to do so on a college campus.”
– Anna Lee’s Language Arts teacher

Anna Lee was a driven and ambitious student at Otter Valley Union High School with a strong desire to make a positive impact in the world. Despite financial hardships faced by her family, Anna Lee is determined to pursue higher education and fulfill her goals.

With a focus on legal studies and political science, she aims to become a public policy advocate and create meaningful change. Ms. Lee has been accepted to several notable universities, including Roger Williams University, Catholic University of America, James Madison University, St. Anselm University, and the University of Vermont.

Alongside her academic pursuits, Anna gained valuable work experience and volunteered in various roles, displaying her strong work ethic and commitment to giving back to her community. She actively participated in high school activities, including varsity basketball and golf, serving as a member of the Student Council, the National Honor Society, and engaging in initiatives against racism.

In her first essay, Anna reflects on election denial and the impact it has on undermining voter trust, expressing the need to protect voting rights and strengthen democracy for future elections.

Anna’s powerful second essay shares a personal experience of being in a school lockdown due to an active shooter threat, highlighting the urgent need for gun law reform and prioritizing safety in schools and communities to address the alarming frequency of mass shootings.

“When I think of Alexina, I think of someone who is intelligent, curious, friendly, mature, and driven. ... ” Alexina’s English Teacher

Alexina Rose Peckinpaugh from Windsor High School has a strong academic focus and a passion for the arts. With a keen interest in English, Classics, and History, her career objective is to become an author or an editor. She will be attending Mount Holyoke College.



Beyond academics, Alexina actively engaged in various extracurricular activities: captain of the Field Hockey team, holding leadership positions on the Student Council and Senior class, and participating in the Rotary Interact Club. Her involvement in the arts includes choreographer for the Hartland Elementary School theater department and her recognition as a nationally ranked Irish dancer.

In her first essay, Alexina addresses the importance of unhindered voting access, highlighting concerns about restrictions on mail-in voting, stricter voter ID policies, and attempts to remove voting stations from college campuses.

Her second essay discusses the alarming rise in anti-LGBTQ legislation, emphasizing the impact on transgender rights and the need to combat harmful rhetoric and policies.

Convention cont'd

Concurrence position on non-US Citizen Voting

We adopted by Concurrence the position on non-US citizen voting as developed by the LWV of Boulder County, CO. The position, in short:

The League of Women Voters of Vermont (LWVVT) supports the inclusion of non-US citizens residing in Vermont municipalities, in some of our local democratic processes, at municipal, school district, and special district level (i.e., solid waste, water, etc.)

Non-citizen voting is currently legal in Burlington, Montpelier, and Winooski.

With this position in hand, LWVVT can now continue to monitor non-US citizen voting in the United States and in Vermont; educate about non-US citizen voting in the United States and in Vermont; and assist individuals and groups interested in pursuing non-US citizen voting for their communities.

Last but not least, we will register non-US Citizens in Vermont cities that have completed the process of securing non-US citizen voting rights.

Other business,

A budget was adopted for FY24/25 and an expanded Board of ten members was elected.

Opportunities

Committee chairs made an appeal to members to help out with continuing League activities. There's surely something for everyone among the opportunities on offer. Contact those listed below if anything on the list appeals.

Health Care (advocacy and new study): Betty Keller, bkeller@lwvofvt.org

Kellogg-Hubbard Library Speaker Series (potential topic, Civil Discourse): Kate Rader, raderca2015@gmail.com

Montpelier Independence Day Parade: Chris Abrams, abrams1234@aol.com

New American Voter Registration: Sonja Schuyler, sonjapeter@comcast.net

Non-U.S. Citizen Voting: Marguerite Adelman, madel51353@gmail.com

Inmate Voter Registration: Madeline Motta, madelinemotta@aol.com

Ranked Choice Voting (advocacy): Betty Keller, bkeller@lwvofvt.org

Youth Voter Registration (outreach to high schools): Anne Mixer, amixer@comcast.net

Dottie Ricks Received the June Carmichael Award



The June Carmichael award was established in 2008 to honor June's long service to the League and her community. In recognition of her many contributions to the League, the 2008 Council voted to establish the award in her name to be presented in recognition of outstanding League service.

Dottie Ricks, of Graniteville, is the fourth League member to receive this award since its inception. She received a framed certificate with the citation:

*Fearless leader as League liaison advocating for the historic passage of the
Reproductive Liberty Amendment to the Vermont Constitution*

*One-woman dynamo participating in voter registration drives with her tables, banners, buttons,
stickers and organizing Honk & Wave parades*

*Tirelessly managed the League of Women Voters of Vermont Education Fund
Winona Smith Scholarship Program for six years*

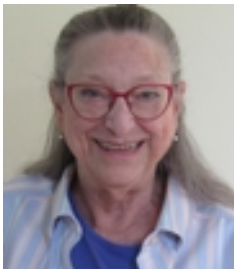
LWV member for more than 30 years, including service on the Board

Meet the New Board Members



Rachel Onuf, Secretary. Rachel is Director of the Vermont Historical Records Program based at the Vermont State Archives & Records Administration, a division of the Office of Secretary of State. She provides technical assistance to Vermonters who preserve and provide access to historical records and is an active member of the Collections Care and Conservation Alliance (CCCA) and Vermont Arts & Culture Disaster and Resilience Network (VACDaRN). Previously, she was a member of the Vermont Suffrage Centennial Alliance, headed by LWVVT.

Prior to moving to Vermont in 2015, Rachel served as Roving Archivist for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Director of Archives at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. She taught as an adjunct for Simmons College School of Library and Information Science and worked as an independent consultant for many years. Rachel received a BA from Swarthmore College, an MA in Library and Information Science from the University of Michigan, and an MA in American History from the University of Virginia.



Maisie Wood, Treasurer. Lobbyist and civil rights activist, educator, historian and author. Recipient of state and national appointments and commendations; Kentucky Colonel; written into Maryland Women's History in 1987; the John Adams of the American with Disabilities Act.



Pelin Kohn (pkohn@montpelier-vt.org). Dr. Pelin Kohn is a leadership educator and administrator at Norwich University. As a leader with over 20 years' experience working with corporate and future leaders, she is passionate about leadership. She worked as an executive coach before becoming a professor at the college, designing and implementing leadership development and advancement workshops for corporations. Dr. Kohn has worked with global CEOs, middle management, and novice managers to improve their leadership skills.

A member of the Montpelier City Council, Pelin contributes to creating a more diverse community by raising the voices of all Montpelier residents.

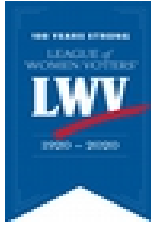


Joanne Necrason (joanne.necrason@gmail.com) After a two-year absence from the Champlain Valley League to care for her husband, Joanne is looking forward to again promoting our mission through membership on our Board. As a daughter of a naturalized American citizen, she has particularly appreciated representing us at Naturalization Ceremonies.

Originally from Rochester, NY she joined the LWV in Cooperstown, NY in 1971 and credits the League with expanding her knowledge of citizen participation in government.

Joanne's 32 years in education in four states included teaching grades 7-12, school district and building administration, and educating future teachers at both SUNY Oneonta and Albany. She earned two Master's degrees in both Reading Education and Educational Administration and Leadership at Albany.

Retiring with her husband to Grand Isle County VT in 2002 she found a new community of active citizens. Joanne served on the Boards of the Champlain Islands Parent Child Center, Island Arts, C.I.D.E.R. (Champlain Islanders Developing Essential Resources), and was instrumental in the creation of the Vermont Shakespeare Festival.



GREEN MOUNTAIN CITIZEN

League of Women Voters of Vermont

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