

**N H Voter**, the newsletter of the LWVNH

**February 2019**

*Continuing our information on how the public can relate to their elected officials, we offer below the current contact information for NH's congressional delegation:*

**Websites for Congress members and for the President** include a webform for sending email. You must include your 9-digit ZIP code so the officials know you are a constituent. Below are the websites. On the Contact page the websites include phone numbers for DC and NH offices, along with the webform for email. Each Congress member also has a place where you can sign up for emailed newsletters, sent regularly but not overwhelmingly.

Congressional District 1 (southeastern part of NH): Christopher Pappas (D) <https://pappas.house.gov>

Congressional District 2 (rest of NH): Ann McLane Kuster (D) <https://kuster.house.gov/>

US Senate: Jeanne Shaheen (D) <https://www.shaheen.senate.gov/>

US Senate: Maggie Hassan (D) <https://www.hassan.senate.gov/about>

President Donald Trump (R) <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/> Comments phone: 202-456-1111

To connect with your **NH elected officials**, you may phone, email, or write an actual letter. Each NH representative and senator has a webpage with contact information, which you can access via the *Your Legislators* link on the <http://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/> website. You can find out who they are by selecting your town, if you are not sure of their names.

You can contact Governor Sununu via this website, which also includes a phone number: <https://www.governor.nh.gov/>

**This month, the League of Women Voters celebrate our 99<sup>th</sup> birthday.**

As passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment affirming women's right to vote was drawing near, the National American Woman Suffrage Association changed its name on Feb. 14, 1920, to the League of Women Voters.

Work still had to be done to get the final necessary states to ratify the amendment (which was accomplished on August 26, 1920). But the suffragists realized that legally affirming their right to vote was not enough. Women also needed to understand the issues, the workings of government, and the power of their votes. Thus the League began the work we still do today, to study issues and educate ourselves and others, and then to encourage voter registration and voting.

Happy 99 years to us! And 2020, our centennial, will call for a big celebration!

## **League Advocacy in the NH Legislature:**

LWVNH board members and certain other members appointed by the board will present testimony in support or in opposition to some specific bills when they are heard in committee in the legislature. We generally offer written testimony, which may include charts, references and citations, in addition to our oral summary. All of our testimony is based on League principles and positions and research. We post the written testimony on the [Action and Testimony page](#) of our website within a day of presenting in the hearings, so League members and others can see exactly what the legislators were given.

But what can other members do? When the time is right, we will email to members **Action Alerts** regarding bills of particular interest to League. We will ask you to call or email your own representatives and urge them to support or to oppose the bills. We may give you a couple of talking points, but the important thing is for you to let your representatives and senator know you are paying attention to these bills and hope they will consider your suggestions. You won't be speaking for the League but rather for yourself. If you don't agree with the League's position, that is of course your right, but please don't mention League in a contrary message to your legislators.

Your reps and senator may not agree with your suggestions when you call them. They may vote opposite your recommendation. But the important thing is, you and they have communicated, and what's the point of our giant legislature if not to allow good communication between the public and elected officials?

## **State League Study of Public Education – update on pre-kindergarten public programs**

Background: In the fall of 2017 a subset of the education study committee decided to investigate the status of public Pre-K education on the national and NH state level. We gathered documentation on the status of Pre-K across the US and research about the efficacy of public Pre-K, which is available on the [LWVNH.org website's Education Study page](#). We visited a public Pre-K in Vermont. In May of 2018 we held a conference on public Pre-K with an impressive group of speakers including the head of the Vermont Pre-K program, an academic researcher from UNH, and several members of non-profits who are engaged in early childhood advocacy. After the conference the LWVNH membership and board voted to formally include public Pre-K as a part of the education study.

Summary of report on publicly financed Pre-K programs in NH: All schools are required to provide Pre-K programming for children with special needs. These are federally mandated and at least in part federally funded, through the NH Dept. of Education. But what about Pre-K for children who are developmentally within normal ranges, with no identified special needs? In some districts, a defined percentage of typically developing children are served in the same classes as the children with special needs, but parents must pay for this and it is limited to lottery or other criteria.

This survey sought out those school districts in NH that offer **publicly funded pre-K programs for three- and/or four-year-old children who have not been identified as having special needs.** Although there are many limits to this study, we were able to document that a large number of school districts in NH are beginning to experiment with some version of a publicly funded pre-K program for all of the three and/or four-year-old children in their district. These programs are voluntary. Several districts noted that they were able to gain public support for a new program by carefully laying the groundwork in their communities before asking for public funds.

Only two programs we know of are offering a true universal pre-K program; that is, five days per week, full school day for all three- and four-year-old children in a district, without charge. Two others are offering this for four-year-olds only. The rest of the districts are offering some combination of half day and/or less than five days per week for three- or four-year-olds or both.

Partial day or partial week programs are not helpful for most working parents. An interesting model is offered by the Cornish Elementary School. The morning session is funded by the district, but families may pay tuition to receive day care in the afternoon. Thus all day programming is achieved for those whose parents need it.

For the full report (5 pp, pdf) with specific details of methodology and school districts, visit the LWNH.org Education Study page or [click here](#).

### **Education Study Committee Visits UNH Child Study and Development Center**

As part of our study of Pre Kindergarten programs in NH, six LWV Kearsarge/Sunapee members had an illuminating visit to the Child Study and Development Center at UNH on Nov. 30, 2018. We observed all the classrooms for children from six weeks through kindergarten and learned what a Reggio-Emilia inspired approach to early education looks like. Classrooms are serene and beautiful; the curriculum emerges out of the children's interests, ideas, questions and theories.

Lisa Ranfos, the director of the center and a UNH professor, explained how the center trains student teachers enrolled in UNH's early childhood degree programs and also works with teachers across NH to implement play-based high quality kindergarten in public schools. We discussed how UNH professors are working on the state level to upgrade quality child care. We came away inspired by what we saw and wishing that every child in NH could have the kind of early education and care that we observed at UNH.

Update: On Jan 3, 2019, Senators Shaheen and Hassan announced that UNH has received a \$ 4 million Preschool Development Grant from the Department of Health and Human Services to help NH improve its system of early care and education. Exciting opportunity!

To read more about our visit to this model pre-school, go to [LWNH.org Education Study page](#).

### **Education Study Committee visits new Bartlett public pre-K program**

The study committee visited the new Bartlett public school Pre-K program in October 2018. That program for all three- and four- year-old children in the school district started this fall with an enrollment of 31 children, including those that receive special education services. Children may attend this full day program for up to five days per week. The children have access to all school specialists, who have adapted well to serving preschool children in an elementary school setting.

This program was established through a warrant article passed by a 74% majority after almost five years of community education and involvement. The effort has been led by the extraordinary devotion of a coalition of committed citizens, school board members and early childhood proponents including Pam Stimpson, the director of Special Services, and the school's principal Joe Yahna, who are committed to providing all of Bartlett's children with a high quality early childhood experience. Read the report on our Education Study page: (2 pp. Pdf) [http://lwvnh.org/files/prek\\_bartlett\\_visit\\_10-23-18.pdf](http://lwvnh.org/files/prek_bartlett_visit_10-23-18.pdf)

## Upcoming meetings and events:

No monthly meeting for **Peterborough Plus** in February. March meeting date and place TBA.

LWV/Kearsarge/Sunapee will be hosting candidate forums. Details to be announced.

Feb. 12, 9:30, **Coffee and Conversation with LWV Kearsarge/Sunapee** members, at Fenwood Commons in New London. All members welcome. Redistricting will be one of the topics discussed.

Feb. 24 at Nashua Library, 3:30 to 6 pm: **"The People vs the Politicians,"** a documentary. Co--sponsored by Open Democracy/NH Rebellion and LWVNH-Nashua. Discussion to follow with Hedrik Smith, the film maker. Free and open to the public. Learn how grassroots heroes can make a difference, begin to change big money in politics and gerrymandering.

Feb. 21, 7 pm, at Nashua Library, lower level. Monthly meeting for members in the **Greater Nashua Area**. Guest speakers will be the candidates for the Alderman-at-Large Nashua special election on March 5.

Check our [Candidate Forums webpage](#) for information of all events we learn about. If your town is having a forum, whether organized by League or not, please send us details to be posted.

## **Thirteenth Annual League Leadership Conference - Wells, ME. April 6-7, 2019 ADVANCING CIVILITY IN A DIVERSE NEW ENGLAND**



*photo from 2018 event*

[Register now](#) for the League's Thirteenth annual New England Regional Leadership Development Conference! All League members are welcome!

**Our theme this year is  
"Advancing Civility in a Diverse New England"**

State League leaders from NH, ME, RI, CT, MA, and VT have developed a dynamic agenda for 2019 that is sure to address the most compelling issues of the year.

Our plenary sessions will be at the York County Community College, 112 College Drive in Wells, ME, <https://www.yccc.edu> / less than a mile from our hotel accommodations at the Hampton Inn, 900 Post Road, Wells, ME.

### **Tentative Agenda - Schedule Subject to Change**

**Friday evening, April 5** (optional): dinner out and socializing with other early arrivals.

**Raffle Tickets** Please visit our raffle table to benefit this Conference. Prizes are contributed by League members. Tickets are available all weekend: \$5 each or five for \$20.

### **Saturday, April 6**

**9:00 - 9:30** Registration at York County Community College, coffee, and welcome.

**9:30 - 10:15** Keynote Speaker: Nancy Thomas, Director of Institute for Democracy and Higher Education, Tufts University, will address the question of what populations did not vote in the 2016 elections. Who are they? Why didn't they vote? What would motivate them to vote? What are the tangible and psychological barriers to voting? What was different in 2018?

**10:15 – 10:45** Questions & Answers

**10:45 – 11:00** Break

**11:00 – 12:15** Workshop Communicating Across the Divide: Challenges and Tools: Susan Clark, author of *Slow Democracy: Rediscovering Community, Bringing Decision Making Back Home*,

**12:15- 1:00** Lunch (covered by the event registration fee)

**1:00 – 2:45** Panel of Three Experts: What does 'diversity' look like in New England? We know that gender/race/ethnic/ generational differences influence our democracy. We also know that other factors divide us.

- Economic inequality
- Rural/urban
- Education and literacy

**2:45 - 3:00** Break

**3:00 – 4:45** Break-out sessions: Deeper discussion of how those differences affect how these factors divide or engage us

**5:30 Dine Around:** Sign up for dinner at one of the Wells/Ogunquit restaurants. This is a good time to get together with others from a different state.

### **Sunday, April 7**

Until 9:00 Breakfast at the Hampton Inn included with room reservation.

**9:00 – 10:00** Takeaways from Saturday's sessions

- Summary of results
- Implications for each state
- What can we do to cross the divide?
- How does this shape leadership for LWV moving forward?

**10:00 – 10:15** Break

**10:15 – 11:45** Getting ready for 2020: LWV 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary

- Celebrating our history
- Going beyond our current goals
- What will we do to move our organization forward?
- How do we incorporate many new voices?

**11:45 Raffle Drawing:** We close on Sunday with our annual raffle to benefit this Conference, with prizes contributed by League members. Prizes will be on display and tickets will be available all weekend, \$5 each or five for \$20.

**11:45 – 12:00** Wrap-up and adjourn.

**Don't leave early -- Sunday could be the best part!**

### Register Now

- [Register online](#) using a credit card. Use the PayPal button in the LWVME Education Fund section. Note "Leadership Conference" in the area for special instructions to the seller.
- To register by check, fill out the [registration form](#) and return **with a check for \$25**, payable to the LWVME Education Fund. Note "Leadership Conference" in the memo field. Send to

LWVME Education Fund  
PO Box 863,  
Augusta, ME 04332

- **Make your own hotel reservation at Hampton Inn & Suites**, 900 Post Road, Wells, Maine 04090 (207-646-0555). Be sure to say you are with the League of Women Voters and the room rate will be \$99 plus tax. Find a roommate to share, and the cost will be just a tad over \$50 per person. Our block of rooms will be held until March 31, but the rate will be in effect until the event. Upon request, LWVME attendees will be reimbursed \$50/night toward the room rate.
- LWVNew Hampshire members who stay overnight will get a room rebate up to \$50, thanks to a grant from the LWNH Education Fund. Share a room and your one-night room will be practically free. If more than 10 members from NH attend, the rebate will be pro-rated.
- Breakfast is included in the hotel's room rate. Saturday lunch is included in your registration fee. Saturday evening, we will have dinner in small groups at your own expense at area restaurants. Sign up at the registration table.

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As of this NH Voter going to press, three of our local units have updated their **Know Your Elected Officials brochures for 2019-2020**. They are on the Publications page of our website. Soon to come is an updated Peterborough Plus brochure and a brochure from our newest unit in the Akinson/Plaistow area.

On the website site now are current brochures for Kearsarge/Sunapee, Nashua, and Mt Washington Valley. Print copies will be distributed locally in the coming month. Thank you to local League members for compiling the information and formatting the brochures.

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Coming in March: a profile of NH's own suffragist, Armenia White. Does anyone have a family story to share of someone active in the women's suffrage movement? If so, send it to [LWVNewHampshire@gmail.com](mailto:LWVNewHampshire@gmail.com) and we can include it in the coming year.