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www.LWVNH.org

NH Voter, the newsletter of the League of Women Voters NH - May 2024

A message from the League of Women Voters NH president and board:

First, a huge thank you to all who responded to our legislative alerts by contacting committees and calling your own state reps and senators over the past several months. We think it can make a difference. At the least, legislators know the public cares about issues and watches how legislators vote.

Our priority will always be voting rights. League was founded in 1920 by the women suffragists who realized that getting the vote was just one step. Helping people learn to vote was another, and studying issues just as important.

It is in that spirit that **we hope to have League members staffing tables at community events** over the summer and fall, distributing our non-partisan voting information and answering voters' questions about almost anything election related. My favorite experience was a few years ago when someone asked me why the ballots came in two colors on primary election day, pink and blue. That gave me the chance to explain that primaries are party elections, and only the Republicans running appear on the pink ballot, Democrats on the blue. Ah ha!

If your town hosts an event that might attract a good number of not-yet-registered voters, let us know. Maybe we can table there. We carry insurance (many events require it), we can pay the tabling fee, and we can give you materials to distribute. But we need some lead time and you will want to round up some other League members to help you with set up and staffing the table. And to share the fun!

Email us at LWVnewhampshire@gmail.com to discuss further.

NH's housing crisis. You can't pick up a newspaper without seeing something about the shortage of affordable housing and housing options in New Hampshire. At state League convention last spring, we voted to study housing issues in NH. Several members have been following NH legislation, and we hope you've been learning about the situation in your own town. If you'd like a broader view, here are two opportunities:

Housing Webinar with a national perspective, hosted locally by St. Anselm College, from the Pew Charitable Trusts, on [how policymakers nationwide are addressing housing shortages, soaring costs, and limited financing access](#). This was recorded so you can watch at your leisure.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTEHePUxbnc>

To learn more about NH housing policies and issues consider attending the bi-weekly Friday morning zoom calls hosted by **Housing Action NH**. Email them for the agenda and zoom link:

info@housingactionnh.org

Do you have marketing or messaging experience?

We're looking for people with expertise to help us update and refresh our voter information, including our "Voting in NH" fliers. LWVNH has no paid staff, but we can get a grant for a stipend if that's what is needed to get the skill set we're looking for. We have the information; we need talented people who can make the facts compelling. And brief.

Feel free to forward this to others who might be willing to help. If you're interested, email us at LWVnewhampshire@gmail.com for more information.

Vacancies to be filled to make League stronger in NH: Can you step up?

Our long-time chair of the League of Women Voters Education Fund Board of Trustees, **Lillian Nelligan**, is stepping down. We thank her for her decades of service to League, as president of the state board from 1993 to 2001, then as chair of the Education Fund.

The board is looking for League members to fill several vacancies. Knowledge of finances and investments is a plus. The Education Fund is the nonprofit tax exempt arm of our state organization (501c3). The trustees make grants for citizen and voter education activities such as candidates forums, informational fliers on voting procedures, and ads to encourage participation in the democratic process. The LWVNH Ed Fund meets twice a year to review the fund assets and investments and make grants.

If you're interested in learning more about this opportunity to serve the League, contact us at LWVnewhampshire@gmail.com.

Which reminds us: **June 11-12 is NH Gives day**, when you will be asked to support many worthwhile causes. If you'd like to make a tax-deductible donation to League of Women Voters NH, you can do it online then with a donation to the League of Women Voters NH Education Fund.

This is apart from dues (look for membership renewal notices in August), which are not tax deductible. But Education Fund donations are, and they are very welcome for our voter service work.

Ballot Counting Device Assessment

Volunteers are needed for this new research project! The New Hampshire Campaign for Voting Rights, of which LWVNH is a member, is looking for volunteers to call town officials. We're trying to get a comprehensive understanding of New Hampshire towns' awareness of the upcoming need to purchase new ballot counting devices if they currently use AccuVote devices, whether local officials have budgeted for this cost, how many of the current AccuVote devices are still in use and where, and whether towns are meeting resistance in obtaining funding to purchase new devices. This is a follow up from a previous survey conducted in late 2023. The information gained in this project will allow NHCVR and partners to help advocate for a plan for NH's aging ballot counting devices ahead of the fall elections, to understand which devices will be used in the 2024 election, and to more effectively support election officials. Volunteers will be provided with a call list and training and background materials. Please fill out this [interest form](#) if interested in participating.

- If the form doesn't work on your computer, please email Kelsey at kfisk@americavotes.org if interested.

*Sharing this **invitation** from The People, a non-profit non-partisan organization focused on helping citizens come together across political differences to make change in their community.*

[New Hampshire Together](#) is organizing a statewide Citizens Assembly in Manchester in June at St Anselm's College Institute of Politics. The focus of the Assembly will be **exploring how Granite Staters can strengthen voter confidence in elections, reduce polarization, and improve political responsiveness to the public.**

The goal of New Hampshire Together is to offer Granite Staters a way to share thoughts, preferences and insights with others around the state on what is working in NH and what might work better, through a system that can lead to new and better public policy in areas people identify as important. This event, and the process around it, is meant to demonstrate how this can be done, in a way that could then be repeated in the future.

The process is nonpartisan, citizen-driven, and open to all. The organizers are looking for informed, thoughtful individuals with diverse experiences and perspectives to be part of these discussions and eventual decision-making process. (*sounds like League members to me.*)

The Citizens Assembly event will start Friday afternoon (about 3pm) on June 21, continue all day Saturday (8am to 5pm-ish), and wrap up on Sunday (June 23) by 1pm. Major costs related to participation will be covered (food, two nights at St Anselm, and travel cost to and from the event). We

are planning for 80-100 participants who are representative of the state's demographics, plus staff and volunteers.

If you are interested in registering for the NH Together Citizens Assembly, please contact Martha Madsen at martha@thepeople.org Learn more at their website: newhampshiretogether.us

It's not too soon to be thinking about **candidate forums for state rep/state senate races** in your towns in October. We can give you an organizing template so local League members and others can do the necessary prep work. League can supply a moderator if needed. It takes time to plan a good forum. Contact us if you think you can round up a team to make this happen in *your* town. We're happy to set up a zoom call with interested volunteers. Email president@LWVNH.org

*Save the dates for **Presidential debates** in the fall:*

This announcement is from the Commission on Presidential Debates. It does not mean that the candidates will actually agree to debate. **September 16, September 25, and October 9, 2024**. Also scheduled is a **vice-presidential candidates debate** on October 1. All debates will be broadcast, beginning at 9 pm ET (expected to run 90 minutes each).

And now, just for fun: June 13, 1:00-3:30 pm

State House sculpture – knitted! Unveiling at **NH State Library**, Park Street, Concord
NH Humanities writes: Join us for the unveiling of the **collaborative sculpture created during our *Knit Democracy Together* series**. Made of the knitted and crocheted pieces stitched at six knitting circles around the state, the sculpture is a visual representation of individuals' participation in lawmaking and the democratic process. *Registration is required due to limited capacity. [Register here by June 5.](#)*

Beginning at 1:00 pm, artist and former election lawyer Eve Jacobs-Carnahan will speak about the project, followed by brief remarks from Michael Haley Goldman, executive director. Afterwards attendees can enjoy light refreshments including a birthday cake to mark the special occasion while perusing this special pop-up exhibit on voting rights.

At approximately 2:45 pm we will also show a documentary film on the 26th amendment that lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 in 1971, created by current NH House representative Mel Myler.