

**Words Do Matter: Bylaws, Mission Statement & Principles** – Rick Bennett

Words do matter. In recent years, we have often been reminded of the truth of that statement. Of course, words without action may be easily dismissed.

In 2018, LWVUS embraced a new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policy with the understanding that policy alone was not enough. Since 2018, the League has been working to integrate its DEI policy both within the organization as well as in its education and advocacy activities. The national organization has also encouraged its state and local organizations to update their governance documents and statements to include a diversity, equity, and inclusion policy. With that in mind, the League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley, at its Annual Meeting on May 20, 2021, amended its bylaws with a new section to Article II regarding DEI:

- \* **Sec. 3 Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy.** The LWVRV is fully committed to ensure compliance – in principle and in practice – with LWVRV’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.

Additionally, at its April Board Meeting, the LWVRV Board approved a DEI policy that mirrors the LWVUS policy (see page 3):

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## President's Pen

I want to thank all who attended the Redistricting Webinar with the Office of the Oregon Secretary of State. It was a good turn out; the last count I had was 79 from all around the state. A recording was not made but I am hoping to get permission to post Shemia Fagan's message to us on the website—great Q & A with the superb help of Barbara Klein! AND we had a quorum for our Annual Business Meeting! Sheila McGuinnis is our new Vice President and Sharon Perper has joined the board. Lisa Medway has raised her hand to help with Publicity and Normary Barrett will be our new Historian and she and Sheina Polehn will share Hospitality. Here I must give a shout out to Nancy Swan who has kept our records and artifacts for years. Rick Bennett will be terribly, terribly missed on the Board, but he leaves us with his work on DEI changes to our bylaws and I'm already working on ways to utilize his talent in the Fall months.

We were represented by 13 members at the LWVOR Convention. There were workshops and caucuses for 5 days: Bill Walsh's caucus on a healthcare resolution dealing with the Hope amendment (which just passed in the Oregon Legislature!); a thought provoking workshop on volunteerism; a caucus on adopting a Washington State position on forestry; a caucus on updating our position on childcare; a caucus on updating our position on election methods and many more—most of these were recorded and can be found at <https://www.lwvor.org/lwvor-convention-2021>.

And then we had 2 days of business. Resolutions were passed: a LWVRV initiated resolution which encouraged all local leagues to adopt the National Policy on DEI; the Healthcare resolution (with an amendment); LWVWA's position on forestry was adopted; a resolution to restudy our past study on election methods (with particular attention to Star Voting); and it was agreed that we will update our position on childcare. (If you are interested in working on 'childcare', contact Kathleen Hersh, [hershor@gmail.com](mailto:hershor@gmail.com); or for

The League of Women Voters Rogue Valley welcomes submissions to the newsletter, *The Voters' Voice*. Editor Jim Buck can be reached at 541-830-0602 and [newsletter@lwvroguevalley.org](mailto:newsletter@lwvroguevalley.org)

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election methods, contact Margaret Noel, [communications@lwvpdx.org](mailto:communications@lwvpdx.org)). Many bylaws were changed and the budget and slate of officers were accepted. It was a busy week.

And now, we can slide into summer with the hope of more social time and freedom. When we meet in the Fall, it will not be the same as in past years. We have changed, each of us in many subtle ways. Our virtual skills have improved and small meetings will be more expeditious via Zoom. But our monthly general meetings should see a return to the OEA Building and events in libraries and halls and happily, our Centennial Luncheon is on for September 17<sup>th</sup>! Thank you Lorraine!

Margie Peterson, President LWVRV

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

- \* LWVRV is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.
- \* There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation, and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.

As a part of the review of the bylaws and policies related to DEI, the LWVRV Board also updated its Mission Statement and created a statement of principles. The Mission Statement is like the national and state mission statements and the LWVRV Principles also utilize examples from the national and state organizations. The updated mission statement and new principles are below:

### LWVRV Mission Statement

- \* The League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley (LWVRV) is a grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government to build better communities. LWVRV's purpose is to influence public policy through education and advocacy, and to provide support for League members and the League organization.

### LWVRV Principles

- \* The League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.
- \* The League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination.
- \* The League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people. That it should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems which affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies which facilitate the solution of international problems.
- \* The League of Women Voters of Rogue Valley believes in the principle and practice of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

As mentioned above, words do matter. But words without action can be easily dismissed. As it moves forward, the LWVRV must make every effort to incorporate its policy into its education and advocacy actions.



## Is There any Hope for Voting Rights nationally aside from passing the **For the People** act (HR1 or SR1)?

As a sneak preview, the answer to the title question is a tentative “yes.” First, let’s consider the issue.

The League of Women Voters Rogue Valley (and nearly every League in the nation) is working to support and promote the For the People act. We are not the only organization concerned over election issues, voter suppression, election security, and fair rights for every voter.

Three other such nonpartisan groups (**States United Democracy Center, Protect Democracy, and Law Forward**) share our urgency in examining these issues. If you did not see their report, **A Democracy Crisis in the Making: How State Legislatures are Politicizing, criminalizing and Interfering with Election Administration**, you might like to read it [here](#). It's a bit long (33 pages), but explores various bills from different states.

Their Table of Contents alone gives an understanding of their approach. It includes (in part):

Legislative Seizure of Control over Election Results: Increasing the Probability of an Election Crisis (8);

Legislative Seizure of Election Responsibilities: Stripping Executive Power Over Elections (10)

Legislative Meddling in Election Minutiae: Degrading Local Competence and Control in Favor of Micromanagement by State Legislatures (17);

Legislative Imposition of Criminal or Other Penalties for Election Decisions: Inviting Costly, Time-consuming, and High-stakes Legal Challenges (23)

Picking out a few overall concerns, here are three quotations from the report:

*“This report is not aimed at raising the alarm on any particular state bill, as concerning as some may be. The bills spotlighted here are indicative of a larger national effort, being prosecuted at the state level, that threatens the free and fair elections on which American democracy prides itself. The defeat (or death in committee) of any single bill will not be sufficient to right the ship. The goal here is to sound the alarm about the prevailing winds. The winds shaping these emerging legislative trends are cause for concern.”*

*“Quelling these attempts to undermine democratic processes is urgent.*

*If adopted, proposals like those outlined in this report will result in an inability to react to emergencies, duplicative expenses, and unworkable timelines.”*

*“This is a disaster in the making—one that could potentially unravel much of the progress American democracy has made over centuries toward fairer, more open, more inclusive election processes. Our democracy both deserves and requires a better, and less politically motivated, approach.”*

## **Two (2) Solutions Could Offer Other Hope**

As the title suggests there may be other hope if the For the People act does not pass. At the time of this writing (in late May 2021) passage seems vulnerable, although the League of Women Voters fights on to support such voting transformations. Despite that, when asked about individual reforms included in the act, the American people tend to support them, the package as a whole ignites the common polarization spark seen so often in the country. What else might be done other than separating out each item of the bill for negotiation?

### **1) A “Carve Out” for Voting Rights**

Much has made of the Filibuster of late, and again the sides are divided. However, without doing away with or drastically reforming the Filibuster, there could be a “carve-out” to it. Just as we have seen such carve-outs in action over judicial nominations or budgets, there could be one for protecting constitutional rights (or narrowed to voting rights). Without voting against the filibuster as it stands, this one piece could reduce the needed senate votes from 60 to 50 to promote the voting power of the American public.

### **2) Reliance on a SCOTUS Precedent**

I recently became aware of a 1983 Supreme Court decision that had previously gone under my radar (certainly it lacked the media attention seen with *Citizens’ United or Shelby County v. Holder*). This case is ***Anderson v. Celebrezze*** and it has the potential to strike down incredibly unjust state voting laws. In basic terms, if the precedent of this case is respected, then any law which burdens the right to vote without further achieving other real purpose should be struck down by the justices. While the constitution gives the states the power to determine “time, place and manner of holding elections,” laws clearly meant to burden the vote and which don’t clearly achieve a real purpose otherwise, would not stand.

Like all league members, I support, and hope for, the passage of the For the People act. Still, without its passage, there may be other avenues to obtain and protect at least some reasonable state election laws.

Barbara Klein  
LWVRV Action Chair

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion—Our Ongoing Challenge by Joyce Puccini Chapman, for now

It's been quite a month. President Biden signed an anti-AAPI hate bill, the LWVRV adopted the DEI Policy and revised our Bylaws to include DEI as a policy on the same level with nonpartisanship, Shirley Weathers drafted a resolution doing the same for the LWVOR to adopt and in doing so also got Leagues from Coos, Curry, Umpqua, and Klamath Counties to sign-on as well. The resolution passed unanimously at the state convention. Now the work begins to try to look at our work through a DEI lens in the same way we consider nonpartisanship. That will be a challenge for our majority white group but I believe we are up to it. Shirley's efforts to get the resolution passed represent her effort to look through a DEI lens. I am personally very grateful for this change.

Looking through a DEI lens is more than thinking about Black people. There are a host of people in the BIPOC community. So, for a bit of a change, I offer today a story from an Asian woman who lives in Ashland. She published her story on a Facebook page where she felt safe to ask for help. The events she described happened in early May, 2021. She gave me permission to share what she wrote as long as I removed her name and other identifying information. She tells me she is C-PTSD. I'd never heard that term before and though it meant Caucasian-related PTSD. Actually C-PTSD is [Complex Posttraumatic Stress Disorder](#) and included in the definition is this description "...**abuse (interactions in which one person behaves in a violent, demeaning or invasive manner towards another person (e.g., child or partner).**" Vanden Bos, Gary R. (Ed), American Psychological Association (2006). APA Dictionary of Psychology. ISBN 1591473802.

As you read her story, please consider that definition and this. If you had been nearby and heard this exchange, would you have stepped in to protect the Asian woman? Would it have occurred to you to do so? If you were she, how would you feel about white people? How would you know which white people to trust? Do you understand now what it means to "soothe" white people as a Black friend tells me he does? How can we use our DEI policy to make positive change in our work?

As requested by my new friend, I am removing references that might divulge her identity. The story is otherwise a full quote from her, including bolding of certain words and sentences.

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"Tomorrow will be the end of my first week at my new apartment. ...On day 4 of living here at this complex I was stopped by an older white man right after I pulled into the shared parking garage. These were his first words to me, "Can I ask you a question? How did you get access to here?" He was not friendly, courteous or legitimately curious. **He was accusatory.** He literally stopped me in my tracks before I even reached my designated parking spot. It was as if he was waiting there to "catch" me in the act. The act of what you ask? *The threatening act of minding my own business and going about my life, NOT causing harm to anyone.* **This was his perceived threat:**

**An Asian woman driving around the complex where he and his white friends live** was enough to cause him alarm. (I did notice he and his friend eyeing me earlier that a.m. as I was leaving but at that time, I thought nothing of it). I explained to him that I live here now and even told him my unit #. He was surprised. Audaciously he admitted that he saw someone recently move in (Hello U Haul truck), but that he didn't know it **was me**. He proceeded to harass and interrogate me treating me as an intruder who was trespassing while simultaneously pretending to be nice to me. He asked me personal questions including wanting to know where I work... He commented that I have a "nice car" and said he didn't want anything to happen to my car but he wanted me to know that my parking spot was in the way of others' storage unit and they were bothered by the inconvenience. He wondered if I could park elsewhere because the "others" may not be so careful around my (surprisingly) "nice car."

After he accosted me with his racist views, entitlement and white supremacist ways and took up a bunch of my time until he felt my responses were sufficient enough he told me, "Welcome to the neighborhood." I felt quite threatened and unsafe as I stayed there like a deer in the headlights continuing to engage in conversation with this man, a stranger who obviously did not welcome me. I spent a good amount of time explaining myself, my actions, saying who gave me permission, and justifying my mere presence there all with a smile on my face. Appearing very interested in his every word, nodding, trying hard to be very polite, nice and to maintain composure.

Meanwhile however, my nervous system was very triggered and I didn't realize it until later that I was in "freeze" (i.e. Fight-flight-freeze) state from fear and internal panic. There was so much trauma and generational trauma inside of me that was being signaled by this encounter.

Assimilation & Survival Strategies: Bow your head, nod, smile, be polite, say the right thing, don't cause trouble, don't raise questions or instigate. Submit to those before you! Shrink. Smile. Speak nicely. Don't ask for more. Hush. Please THEM. Be agreeable.

I am the daughter of immigrants and refugees who were displaced by war. My people came here as foreigners to a new homeland and their survival tactic to this day is to lower their heads, and their gaze (literally and metaphorically) and to not make a fuss but to stay quiet, be gentle and submissive. This is why we shrink. This is why we people-please. This is why we are afraid for our lives and why we don't dare to take up space in this world. ... We are a target. Why? Because we "don't belong here." We are made to feel beneath white folks and beneath men. We are ok to be used as fetishized trophies for men, or as servants or service workers, and as the token for POC representation in commercials and ads for white-owned businesses.

This man told me he is "head of maintenance" and that it's a very tight knit community. Racist people have a way of saying words and acting friendly, (smiling at you even), while they're actually threatening you. He continued to stand there watching me while making a phone call as I drove very slowly to proceed to park my car (in my assigned and designated spot mind you.) I was so afraid that I parked my car over five feet away from the wall where the door to their storage unit is.

It leaves me feeling on edge and anxious like there are people here who will continue to watch my every move and potentially continue to harass and bitch at me unjustifiably and over nothing! I do not feel welcome and that threatens my peace of mind and my sense of safety. Why does he feel entitled to police me, to take my time AND interrogate me? Why does he feel entitled to have me adjust for their comfort? Why did he not put two and two together after he saw me enter the parking garage using my remote when he KNEW someone new just moved in? Why did he have a problem with me being there? Why did he need to point out that I have a nice car the way that he did? I was NOT breaking and entering but that's how he treated me. Why???

He couldn't fathom that I was on the same level as him. He thinks he is better than me and more important than me. He doesn't like me. Even though he does not know me at all. Because I am not white like he is. He wants me to tip-toe around him and to know my place. He was proudly claiming his territory. This is white supremacy. This is racism. Where not being in a White body is enough cause to make one apparently guilty. It is not just Black men that they fear and hate. (Not that that is OK in ANY way!!) They also Hate WOC, and Asian femmes too. We BI-POC are forced to over-explain, accommodate, bend over backwards and work very hard in order to prove our innocence, our worth and our belonging.

But, WHY though?

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## Climate Action Update

By Shirley Weathers, Climate Change Coordinator

### *Jordan Cove continues to suffer losses, but owner Pembina still hangs on*

Over a year ago in March 2020, FERC granted the JCPCGP project the two federal authorizations it needs to go forward, but the agency conditioned project construction on receipt of *all* necessary permits—federal, state, and local—around 50 in total. Since then, project owner Pembina has lost its attempts to fight back Oregon’s denial of two crucial state permits, withdrawn a third before denial was announced, and the regulatory fortunes for the project have continued to go awry. The following highlights some of the key happenings since the March 2021 issue of *Voters Voice* when we last reported on this matter.

Numerically speaking, the JCEP had the best track record on obtaining permits from local governmental entities, but opponents recognized vulnerabilities in the permitting processes and mounted challenges. In April, those efforts yielded fruit as the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) issued a favorable remand decision on a pipeline issue in Douglas County. Then in May, in a huge win for opponents, LUBA reversed two previously granted estuary dredging permits to widen the navigation channel in Coos Bay. (Note that LWVOR granted funds to LWVRV last year to help support the critical work of Tonia Moro, longtime Jackson County attorney who, along with attorneys from the Crag Law Center and the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians (CTCLUSI), has achieved these latest (and other) wins.

Also in April, Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum and Attorneys General of 18 other states filed an [amicus brief](#) in the U.S. Supreme Court supporting New Jersey. SCOTUS agreed to hear a challenge from PennEast Pipeline Co. LLC of Third Circuit Court’s ruling that, due to state sovereignty, private parties cannot sue states to seize [state] lands for their projects under eminent domain. SCOTUS heard oral arguments in *PennEast Pipeline Company v. New Jersey* on April 28. Justices’ questions indicate that this case could well have significance, but the direction it might go is not clear. A decision is expected in June. Those with interest in this case and pertinent issues can read more [here](#).

Whether Pembina intends on pursuing the JCEP despite these and other major current questions about the future of natural gas is unclear. In April, they filed a motion in the Court of Appeals of the D.C. Circuit to pause the cases of the Jordan Cove LNG and Pacific Connector Pipeline Project “ . . . while they assess the impact of recent regulatory decisions involving denial of permits authorizations necessary for the Project to move forward.” The motion was filed in the petition against FERC’s authorization of the project the State of Oregon, landowners, non-governmental organizations, and Tribal groups filed in Court of Appeals of the D.C. Circuit. Petitioners oppose the pause. We will keep watching to learn whether the Court grants it or orders the schedule to proceed.

## HOPE Amendment to be a 2022 Ballot Measure

### Health Care Action Update—Bill Walsh

Great news! The HOPE Amendment, [SJR 12](#), passed the Senate and House and now awaits the Governor’s signature. SJR 12 is one of the shortest bills to pass this session:

#### PARAGRAPH 1.

*The Constitution of the State of Oregon is amended by creating a new section 47 to be added to and made a part of Article I, such section to read:*

#### SECTION 47.

*(1) It is the obligation of the state to ensure that every resident of Oregon has access to cost-effective, clinically appropriate and affordable health care as a fundamental right.*

*(2) The obligation of the state described in subsection (1) of this section must be balanced against the public interest in funding public schools and other essential public services, and any remedy arising from an action brought against the state to enforce the provisions of this section may not interfere with the balance described in this subsection.*

#### PARAGRAPH 2.

*The amendment proposed by this resolution shall be submitted to the people for their approval or rejection at the next regular general election held throughout this state.*

Representative Andrea Salinas, one of 25 co-sponsors, noted: “We need to send this to the voters because of the unpredictability of the future of health care at the federal level. The marketplace needs some stability, the state of Oregon needs a path forward. We don’t need better insurance instruments; we need better access to health care.”

The proposed amendment to the Oregon Constitution, if passed by the voters in 2022, will declare health care to be a human right. It will require the state to balance for affordable care with other “essential public services,” including public schools. It will require lawmakers and policy makers to craft policies that would put some sort of universal health care coverage in place. And that is happening. Enter the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care – their charge is to design and put forward a financing plan to achieve universal health care for all residents and their work is progressing.

HOPE stands for Healthcare Opportunities Provided Efficiently. There is evidence to show that the dollars spent for health care in this state (and nation) are sufficient to cover all residents. The COVID-19 pandemic illustrates anew what has already been clear--that coverage is not happening. The funds must be redirected. The League has supported universal health care for decades. The LWVOR has watched previous iterations of the HOPE Amendment over a number of years and withheld support. We urged language like that added this year in subsection 2. In 2021, the Rogue Valley LWV Board is on record supporting SJR 12, as is the LWVOR Action Committee. That support is based on LWVUS positions, so to be certain we were on the right track, LWVOR President Becky Gladstone consulted with the National League on the bill’s compliance and they concurred. Now that the bill has passed, LWVOR and LWVRV are positioned to partner with allies on a public education campaign on the upcoming ballot measure much like we did here in support of Ballot Measure 101.

## **Voter Service—Give me your Opinion - Kathleen Donham**

The Voter Service Committee serves a number of functions. In addition to sponsoring candidate fairs and debates, and registering voters, the committee is charged with civic education. In some Leagues it also staffs the Speakers Bureau. These pursuits are core missions of the League, and require that we maintain a non-partisan status in order to keep our credibility. We never target individuals, only principles. Our reputation is critical, and members in leadership roles must maintain a clear view of our responsibility—like a referee who remains the adult in the room. If this position is what you can offer, I hope you will join the Voter Service committee. Plans for the coming year include the following: 1) recruiting area teachers for the Harvard Civic Education Project, 2) following the status of ballot measures in Oregon, 3) registering new voters, particularly new High school graduates, and 4) searching for venues for our Civic Education programs. Do you have ideas, concerns, or recommendations for the committee? Please contact Kathleen Donham, Voter Service, 541-772-5044

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## **MEMBERSHIP**

I know we are all hoping we can soon meet in person again. If all goes well, we may be able to do that this coming fall. In the meantime, be careful out there, but at the same time, have fun (however you define fun! We probably won't ask for a "what I did this summer" report).

As Membership Chair, I get to pester you all about dues. In addition to the annual dues notice I send each of you, I am also including another minor task. This is a **Membership Form** (see next page) and the reason I would like you to fill it out and return it (with your dues) is so we will have the most current contact information for you. Consider this your annual LWVRV check-up.

If you have any questions, comments, regarding Membership or otherwise, please call or email me.

Thank you for being a member of LWVRV.

Jackie Clary

541-479-4486 or [jackieclary@gmail.com](mailto:jackieclary@gmail.com)

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ROGUE VALLEY(LWVRV)

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, the access, and the confidence to participate.

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

**PLEASE PRINT**

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Household Member(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

May we publish your contact information in our Directory? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Tell us if you are **not** able to receive our newsletter by email. No \_\_\_

Please circle items below that might be of interest to you so that we can connect you to others in our League with the same interests.

Immigration	Voter Service
Campaign Finance	Membership
Environment/Climate Change	Newsletter
Health Care	Website Team
Redistricting/Election Reforms	Fundraising
Local Government/Observer Corps	Publicity
Other: _____	

League of Women Voters status: NEW \_\_\_ New to LWVRV\_\_\_ Continuing \_\_\_

**DUES:** Primary Membership - \$65; Others in Household - \$32.50 each; Students Pay No Dues

**LWVRV is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Your dues and other contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by the IRS.**

Mail this form with your check (made out to **LWVRV**) to the address below:

**LWVRV**  
**P.O. Box 8555**  
**Medford, OR 97501**

5/30/21

## LWVRV Calendar

### July

- Tuesday 27 Newsletter submissions due

### September

- Thursday 9 Monthly members meeting, 11:30 AM
- Thursday 16 Board Meeting, 10:30
- Friday 17 **Reschedule of Centennial Luncheon** at Ashland Springs Hotel

If you are reading this newsletter on-line, maybe you don't need a mailed paper copy. Call the newsletter editor at 541-830-0602 if you would prefer *not* to get the newsletter by U.S. Mail, or leave a note at [newsletter@lwvroguevalley.org](mailto:newsletter@lwvroguevalley.org) .

You should also be receiving newsletters by email from State and National. For membership application, go to <http://lwvroguevalley.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/MembershipApplication501c3AsOf20190725.pdf>

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