



Amherst League of Women Voters

A Voice for Citizens, a Force for Change
e-bulletin

March 2024

CALENDAR

Wednesday, March 6th, 7:00 PM- LWVA Steering Committee meeting.
[Email to receive location and agenda.](#)

Sunday, March 17th, 2:00 - 3:30 PM -LWVA Town Charter Review .
Discussion of Town Council (Article 2) and Financial Policies and
Procedures (Article 5). Zoom link [here](#).

Dear Members and Friends,

It was good to see so many of you at the Birthday Luncheon (see below). Special thanks to Sen. Jo Comerford and Rep. Mindy Domb for coming. Sen. Comerford gave a very informative recap of her initiatives and took Q&A. To prepare for the talk, she reviewed our program book and she told me she was thrilled to see that so much of her work aligns with the positions we have developed over the decades.

For those who could not make it, we hope to see you at the Town Charter Review meetings and at the Judy Brooks Conversations this spring. Thank you to those of you willing to help with the election poll survey. Jessica Ryan is looking for a few more people willing to assess Amherst's (and surrounding towns') polling places for accessibility. Please [contact her](#) to find out more.

Don't forget that it is nominating time! The Nominating Committee is looking for people who want to learn more about what it means to become more active in the League. Please [email](#) Cynthia Brubaker for more information.

Rebecca Fricke
Spokesperson - [Email](#) me with any questions or comments.



Amherst Home Rule Charter Review

The LWVA Charter Review Task Force is continuing its review of the Amherst Home Rule Charter in relation to League good government principles. The Task Force will be hosting a series of public Zoom discussions on questions related to potential Charter Amendments. Save the dates and spread the word.

Dates (including Zoom links):

Sunday, March 17th, 2:00 - 3:30 PM

Town Council (Article 2)

Financial Policies and Procedures (Article 5)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82820853930?pwd=MD4VEgnNHPUQh59b30AGHPPAbvbTr6.1>

Sunday, April 14th, 2:00 - 3:30 PM

Town Manager (Article 3)

Incorporation Powers (Article 1)

Elections (Article 7)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83271559250?pwd=hESFauTfCYXMtW7r7teejAi5RTSayf.1>

Sunday, May 5, 2:00 - 3:30 PM

Public Participation (Article 8)

Transition Procedures (Article 10)

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83034246172?pwd=0z9cTpybUhSjPnmxrI8OEY4bNIYcQL.1>

The public is cordially invited to participate or just listen in. The first part of the discussion will be the presentation of potential amendments to the Charter, how they may relate to good government principles, and how five years of experience has demonstrated whether an amendment is or is not needed. We will then open to public comments.

The LWVA'S "Good Government" Principles

1. **Widespread and inclusive** participation
2. **Diversity** in the community reflected in government
3. **Openness** and full disclosure
4. **Checks and balances** of power among the executive, legislative and administrative branches of government and the electorate
5. **Honesty and non-corruptibility** in all decision-making
6. **Efficiency**, based on professional management and timely decision making
7. **Accountability** for political and fiscal decisions

Racial Justice Committee News

Greetings from the Racial Justice Committee (RJC) for March 2024

The Judy Brooks Series is going great! We have had a series of interesting and relevant programs that can all be accessed on our League YouTube channel found on [our website](#). If you know a speaker or would like to hear more about a certain issue or topic, please let the RJC know.

I'd like to share a little about the statewide Reparations Study Group that some RJC members are participating in. We are working in small groups to gather the materials necessary to create the study guides which will be used for local Leagues to determine whether or not the Leagues will support and advocate for reparations for African Americans. This process is a wonderful follow up to the Stolen Beam Series, in which some of you all have participated. Those materials are proving very helpful to us in our study group exploration as well.

Speaking about the Stolen Beam Series, it is again being offered for free in the catalogue of the [Truth School](#) and co-taught by our League members Andrea Battle and Jeff Gold. This is an amazing opportunity to explore difficult issues in a safe and respectful way.

My hope is that throughout the Reparations Study Group process, Leaguers can benefit from our process vicariously and prepare for discussing this very important issue when it comes to us as a Consensus Meeting down the road. There is so much to learn and process. More so since delving into this work, I am personally understanding the importance of history and digging deeply into our country's past to understand where we are today and how we can make it better. Stay tuned....

Marcie Sclove
Chair, Racial Justice Committee (RJC) - [email](#)

Health Care

The Health Care Committee is already planning for the LWV Convention in

Washington, D.C., in June: the national network we participate in is preparing a Concurrence proposal.

Last year, LWV Vermont voted on a new position on Privatization (*Impact on Issues*, p. 67) as a first step toward allowing League advocacy against the second most profitable industry sector on Wall Street (behind only tech stocks, and ahead of fossil fuels). Privatization is not remote from health care: the flow of public money to corporate monopolies and private equity is the most rapid and harmful change in the field, especially since 2010.

Like the update to the LWVUS Health Care position with elements of a new New York State League position that was "adopted by concurrence" by a vote at the Convention in 2022, the Vermont update will affect the nature of health care advocacy that can be supported by the League.

LWV Amherst voted last month to support discussion of the Concurrence at the Convention, and the Health Care Reform Interest Group is currently contacting Leagues around the country to vote to allow the discussion to take place. You can find out more about the Concurrence proposal and its progress at the Health Care Reform Toolkit: <https://lwwhealthcarereform.org/vermont-concurrence-page-2024/>

Questions welcome. (They may turn up as FAQs on the site!)

Barbara Pearson

[Email](#) for more information!

2023-2024 Civic Action Grants

The LWV Amherst is still accepting applications for 2023-2024 Civic Action Grants. Up to \$2,500 is awarded for projects that are directly related to the League's priority programs. Read [here](#) for how to apply. Contact [Rebecca Fricke](#) for more information or questions.

LWVA Book Sale

The Book Sale Committee is ramping up! This is a perfect opportunity to make new friends, learn new skills, be part of an amazing recycling of all kinds of books and help the LWVA while you are at it!

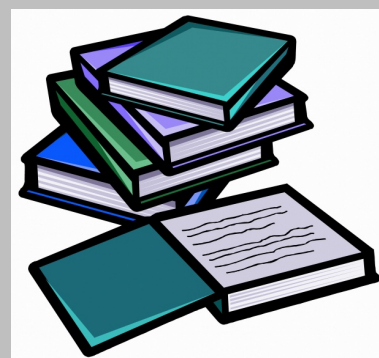
Please [email](#) Susan Millinger to find out how you can get involved.

LWVA Book Group Schedule

The LWV Book Group will meet the second Wednesday of the month at 1:30 PM at Applewood, 1 Spencer Drive, Amherst. The building is handicapped accessible.

Here are the schedule and books:

March - *American Character: A History of the Epic Struggle Between Individual Liberty and the Common Good*, Colin Woodard



For information, call Phyllis Lehrer 253-5179 or [email her](#).

FORWARD THIS MESSAGE!

This monthly message is for anyone interested in the League, not just members. If you know someone who might be interested, forward this message and invite them to subscribe themselves, using the link below.

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LWV Amherst



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