

# The Balloteer



**WHO'S THAT LADY? (HINT, P. 22)**

**In this issue: Re-entry Registration and new Registration Schedules; Census 2020; Coming Events Galore; A Commendation from the N.J. State Senate; and "The 2010s: The Decade We All Grew Up: A Generation Z Perspective".**

## GREETINGS FROM THE CO-PRESIDENT

Dear GNBA Members and Friends,

### Rediscovering Democracy

The League of Women Voters throughout the country identifies “defending democracy” as one of its core missions. But what if citizens don’t know what “democracy” is? Current events have helped many of us to think about exactly what we mean when we talk about something being “democratic.” Among those things that we are now witnessing and that alarm us are



- citizens’ voices being shut down through intimidation and threats;
  - a decline in serious investigations/breaches into violations of rules that have existed since our nation’s founding;
  - the crumbling of norms – e.g. outing whistleblowers;
  - criminalizing political opponents;
  - the failure to allow mandated oversight by authorized agencies
- 
- disinformation occupying headlines as “news”;
  - political control on systems of justice that are supposed to be neutral;
  - foreign interference in our elections.

It is only when a piling on of such breaking of norms of democracy occurs that we actually start thinking about why these norms exist and why they must continue. Our witnessing evidence of their crumbling provokes recognition of our need for defending them. It also makes clear why future generations must learn the parameters of democratic institutions and the centrality of preserving them - in other words, civic education.

The League of Women Voters has a critical role to play at this juncture. As we celebrate the 100th anniversary of our inauguration as an advocacy organization dedicated to defending

and strengthening our foundational principles, we recognize even moreso the value and need to continue our work for the next 100 years.

In League,

Jill

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<https://www.facebook.com/LWVGNBA>

**FOLLOW US** on INSTAGRAM at @lwvgnba.nj

## GNBA ACTIVITY UPDATES

### GNBA COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

#### VOTER SERVICES AND CIVIC EDUCATION

**Co-Chairs:** **Ethel Reid** (ereid36@aol.com) and **Steve Lax** (zevson2004@verizon.net), Sheila Mazar, Harriet Warner, Sharon Gruber, Reggie Musolf, Ellen Unger

#### VOTER REGISTRATION AND RE-ENTRY

Beginning March 17, we will be welcoming a new group of registrants and re-registrants in our voter registration drives.

On December 19, 2019, Governor Phil Murphy signed Legislation A5823, which restores voting rights to over 83,000 residents on probation or parole, allowing them to participate in our democratic process.

This was one of two major bills signed by Governor Murphy that is designed to make much-needed reform to our criminal justice system in New Jersey. The other bill was an expungement bill, S4154. It creates a petition process for a “clean slate” for residents who have not committed an offense in 10 years and who have not been convicted of the most serious crimes.

The legislation also calls for low-level marijuana convictions to be sealed upon a court settlement of a case, so that those convictions can't be used against them in the future.

Please note that re-entry registration begins on March 17. No re-entry registrations can be done prior to that date. We will have a voter registration presence at a special Voter Day Registration celebration in New Brunswick. For more information, see p. 16 of *The Balloteer*.

For more information concerning voting rights and re-entry, you can see the announcement released by Governor Murphy's office at

[nj.gov/governor/news/news/562019/approved/20191218a.shtml](http://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562019/approved/20191218a.shtml)

## FEBRUARY/MARCH 2020 VOTER REGISTRATION SCHEDULE

**Sheila Mazar, Coordinator of Middlesex County High Schools** - [sheilamazar@gmail.com](mailto:sheilamazar@gmail.com)  
**Sharon Gruber, Coordinator of Somerset County High Schools** - [sharon.gruber1@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.gruber1@gmail.com)  
**Ethel Reid, Coordinator Middlesex County College Campuses** - [ereid36@aol.com](mailto:ereid36@aol.com)

Please contact the coordinators above to register for voter registration drives. **WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH VOTER REGISTRATION!** Please volunteer now to help at Middlesex County College before high school registration begins in March.

This schedule was prepared **February 14, 2020**, but it changes often. Please check back for updates.

<b>March 17 – Citizens Day </b>				
We might realize an upsurge in voter registration because of the NEW voter registration law passed in New Jersey in December that restores voting rights to citizens on parole and probation. On March 17 please begin to use the NEW voter registration applications that will be distributed to you. Discontinue use of the old ones; discard them.				
Date	Start	End	Building	Volunteers
2/24/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Middlesex County College College Center Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue Edison	Sharon Gruber Sheila Mazar
3/2/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Middlesex County College Main Hall Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue Edison	Lavonne Heydel <b>1 Volunteer Needed</b>
3/3/2020 Tues.	2 PM	3:20 PM Voter Education/ Census Kahoot! Presentation <b>*No voter registration</b>	Middlesex County College <b>Professor Wilson</b> Johnson Learning Center Room 243 2600 Woodbridge Avenue Edison	Sharon Gruber Sheila Mazar
3/5/2020 Thurs.	5 PM	7 PM	Middlesex County College 60 Washington Street Perth	<b>1 Volunteer needed</b>

			Amboy	
3/9/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Middlesex County College College Center Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue Edison	Lavonne Heydel MCC Student Assistants <b>1 Volunteer Needed</b>
3/11/2020 Wed.	10:15 AM	12:30 PM	Franklin High School	<b>4 Volunteers Needed</b>
3/11/2020 Fri.	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	Reentry Class Voter Registration 57 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick	Ethel Reid
3/17/2020 Tues.	10:00 AM	2:00 PM <b>Citizens Day</b>  Citizens on parole and probation can register to vote	Reentry Corporation 57 Livingston Avenue New Brunswick	Ethel Reid Karen Kanter Steve Lax Sharon Gruber Sheila Mazar Larry Klein?
3/19/2020 Thurs.	2:00 PM	3:30 PM	College Center Lobby "Coffee, Tea, and You and Me: The Legacy of the 19 <sup>th</sup> Amendment	Andrea Kahn Sharon Gruber Ethel Reid Steve Lax Reggie Musolf ?(*)
3/20/2020 Fri.	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	Reentry Class Voter Registration	Harriet Warner
3/23/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Main Hall Lobby Middlesex County College College Center Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue, Edison	Lavonne Heydel <b>1 Volunteers Needed</b>
3/24/2020 Tues.	10:15 AM	1:15 PM	Manville High School	<b>2 Volunteers Needed</b>
3/24/2020 Tues.	8:30 AM	11:30 AM	Middlesex County College 60 Washington Street Perth Amboy	<b>1 Volunteer Needed</b>
3/26/2020 Thurs.	10:15 AM	1:00 PM	South Brunswick High School South Brunswick, NJ	<b>Volunteers Needed</b>
3/27/2020 Fri.	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	Reentry Class Voter Registration 57 Livingston Avenue, New Brunswick	Larry Klein
3/27/2020 Fri.	10:15 AM	12:15 PM	North Brunswick High School, North Brunswick, New Jersey	<b>Volunteers Needed</b>
3/28/2020 Sat.	10:00 AM	<b>Thomas Mundy Peterson's Day</b>	St. Peter's Episcopal Church 183 Rector St. Perth Amboy	Ethel Reid MCC Student Assistants?

		1 <sup>st</sup> African Am. Voter After passage of 15 <sup>th</sup> Amendment		
3/30/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Middlesex County College College Center Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue Edison	Sharon Gruber Lavonne Heydel
3/31/2020 Tues.	10:30 AM	11:15 AM	Watchung Hills High School	Sharon Gruber Volunteers Needed
4/2/2020 Thurs.	5 PM	7 PM	Middlesex County College 60 Washington Street Perth Amboy	1 Volunteer Needed
4/6/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Middlesex County College Main Hall Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue, Edison	Lavonne Heydel Ethel Reid
4/7/2020 Tues.	8:30 AM	11:30 AM	Middlesex County College 140 New Street New Brunswick	Steve Lax
4/7/2020 Tues.	10:15 AM	11:10 AM	Montgomery High School	Sharon Gruber Volunteers Needed
4/13/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Middlesex County College College Center Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue Edison	2 Volunteers Needed
4/14/2020 Tues.	9:30 AM	1:00 PM	Bridgewater-Raritan High School	Sharon Gruber Volunteers Needed
4/16/2020 Thurs.			Metuchen	Sheila Mazar Volunteers Needed
4/20/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Main Hall Lobby	2 Volunteers Needed
4/24/2020 Fri.	10 AM 9:45 arrival time	1:00 PM	Bernards High School Bernardsville, NJ	
4/24/2020 Fri.			Middlesex County Academy for Math, Science and Engineering Tech	Volunteers Needed
4/25/2020 Sat.	10:00 AM	4:00 PM Rutgers Day Festival	Rutgers University New Brunswick College Avenue	Jill Lewis-Spector David Spector Ethel Reid Steve Lax 4 Volunteers Needed
4/23/2020 Thurs.	5 PM	6:30 PM	Middlesex County College 140 New Street	Steve Lax



			New Brunswick	
4/27/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Middlesex County College College Center Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue Edison	2 Volunteers Needed
5/4/2020 Mon.	11:00 AM	1:00 PM	Middlesex County College Main Hall Lobby 2600 Woodbridge Avenue Edison	Ethel Reid Lavonne Heydel

**CENSUS 2020 NJ**

The U.S. Constitution requires that a count be made of every person living in the United States every ten years. The 2020 census will begin in March of this year and continue through into the summer. Every household will receive a letter asking them to respond to the census online, by phone, or by mail. The results of the census are critically important. They determine the number of representatives a state can send to congress, the number of votes a state has in the electoral college, and how much federal funding a state will receive for, among other things, social programs, education, roads, and disaster relief. In NJ, \$22.7 billion of federal funding hinges on the results of this census.

GNBA will be participating in the census by helping reach “hard-to-count” populations in Middlesex County. Hard-to-count populations are defined as those for which there was a low return rate in the 2010 census. Among them are: immigrant communities, non-English speakers, children under age 5, renters, and people living in non-related groups.

Since college students living off campus fall into several of those categories, GNBA will be holding information sessions at both Rutgers University and Middlesex County College. We are also trying to set up visits to houses of worship and community centers in immigrant communities.

**We need volunteers! If you wish to participate in Census 2020 in whatever capacity, please contact Sharon Gruber, GNBA Census Coordinator, (sharon.gruber1@gmail.com.).**

**TOPIC FOR MAY MEETING IN HILLSBOROUGH ANNOUNCED**

Bob Fenster, the Hillsborough Social Science teacher who GNBA sponsored to attend a program at Harvard this past summer, has announced the topic of his May 12 presentation. It is SECESSION. Just a reminder, the date is Tuesday, May 12 at 7:00 PM at HILLSBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL. All area residents are invited. REGISTRATION IS

REQUIRED. Please e-mail Steve Lax zevson2004@verizon.net and include "Harvard May 12" in the subject line to reserve a spot.

More information will be available shortly.

### **The Voter Girl Project**

A team from GNBA (Sheila Mazar, Reggie Musolf, and Beth Stevens) has been working with the Girl Scouts of the Heart of New Jersey (one of the 4 regional councils that run the Girl Scout movement here in New Jersey) to organize a half-day civics education meeting.

The meeting would provide the Scouts, ranging in age from Brownies to Seniors, a variety of learning experiences tailored to age groups. Scouts would learn about such topics as the importance and process of voting; the basics of the various parts of the government; and the involvement of women in government and politics. Scout leaders and League members will run badge workshops, hold a mock election, and host presentations by female elected officials. The meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 7, in Plainfield.

Reggie Musolf and Sheila Mazar will be working with other people from other Leagues and with Girl Scout leaders on the mock election that is part of the event. Beth Stevens will be in the Hospitality Room working to make connections to local elected officials for possible programs in the future and to recruit possible members for GNBA.

## **GNBA LIAISONS TO STATE BOARD COMMITTEE ACTIVITY**

### **LWVNJ Natural Resources Committee**

GNBA Liaison: **Marilyn Rye**

THE Natural Resources Group is still focused on stopping the construction or extension of pipelines in New Jersey. Current discussions are focused on the PennEast pipeline which would carry fracked gas across New Jersey. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has supported PennEast's right to claim eminent domain over lands needed to build the pipeline, including lands belonging to the state of New Jersey. On November 7, 2019 a federal appeals court ruled eminent domain could not be used in the case of state lands. PennEast and FERC are sending a petition to the Supreme Court to hear their case.

Williams/Transco is still seeking extensions and permits to construct an extension of the NESE pipeline through Middlesex and Monmouth Counties, across wetlands and through remediated Superfund Sites in the Raritan Bay. W/T withdrew the latest round of applications submitted on 11/26/19 without stating any reason for its actions. On February 5, 2020, T/W submitted a new set of applications to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

The link to these new applications: <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1KeBT60-8YUK7NvOHvW8XDRSwprAIA130>

Notice of these actions was published in the DEP Bulletin on 2/5/20. The public has 30 days to submit comments and request public hearings.

For more information and suggestions for letter topics arguing against approval of these applications, go to: [www.scrap-nese.org](http://www.scrap-nese.org)

Members from a coalition of NJ environmental groups met recently with members of Governor Murphy's Office and also with the NJDEP. These meetings clarified the role of demonstrating "need" in seeking approval for applications for projects that raise concerns about harm to the environment.

Empower NJ continues its "Moratorium Monday" exercise and asks that everyone call the Governor's Office (609- 292-6000) every Monday to request that Governor Murphy put a moratorium on all pending or new pipeline construction.

The Natural Resources Group continues to follow previously discussed issues including recycling legislation, use of public lands, the dangers of plastic in the environment, and the threat to public safety posed by the Gibbstown LNG operation.

If you identify other issues you feel the Natural Resources Group should be discussing, please send me a note. ([marilyn.rye@gmail.com](mailto:marilyn.rye@gmail.com))

## **Education Committee**

Committee Chairperson: Jill Lewis-Spector

### **Civics Bill Receives Approval In Senate Education Committee**

In a 5-0 vote on February 13, the NJ Senate Education Committee approved the passage of S854. This bill provides for (1) stand-alone civics course in middle school for two quarters (minimum). (2) NJ Center for Civic Education prepare curriculum guidelines and professional development for HS to help fulfill requirements of integrating civics into required US history course and (3) clearinghouse of materials in a online resource center. Two bills originally posted, S237 and S854 were merged and the single bill has now been released to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee.

Multiple primary and co-sponsors of the bill have been added since it was first posted, when the only primary sponsor was Senator Turner. Senator Singleton was originally sponsor of S237. Sponsors as of 2/15/20 are:

Turner, Shirley K. as Primary Sponsor  
Singleton, Troy as Primary Sponsor  
Ruiz, M. Teresa as Primary Sponsor  
Greenstein, Linda R. as Primary Sponsor  
Kean, Thomas H., Jr. as Primary Sponsor  
Rice, Ronald L. as Co-Sponsor  
Thompson, Samuel D. as Co-Sponsor  
Doherty, Michael J. as Co-Sponsor

The text of the bill can be found at:  
[https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2020/Bills/S1000/854\\_U1.PDF](https://www.njleg.state.nj.us/2020/Bills/S1000/854_U1.PDF)

The positive response the bill received was no doubt affected by the testimony offered during the hearing on February 13, including that of LWVNJ's lobbyist and member of LWVNJ's Education Committee. The Education Committee sought and received approval from LWVNJ's Board of Directors to support this bill.

The following is the LWVNJ statement of support:

**Support for S.854 and S.237  
Senate Education Committee  
February 13, 2020**

**The League of Women Voters of New Jersey has been committed to civic engagement for 100 years. We know that robust civics education leads to adults that not only vote at higher rates, but that also participate more deeply in civic life.**

**The League has been concerned for many years that as curricula narrowed to focus on the subjects in standardized testing and STEM, stand-alone civics courses have disappeared from our schools.**

**We believe the Senate Committee Substitute for S. 854 and S.237 begins to address this problem in a way that is manageable for school districts.**

- **It places this requirement in middle school as a half year course at a minimum.**
- **It provides for professional development and resources to assist those school boards in developing curriculum and it provides assistance to high school teachers who must integrate civics into social studies. Such support is necessary for successful outcomes. Mandates alone are not sufficient.**

**Civics education leads to a better democracy and society – producing future generations of informed and engaged citizens ready to take an active and productive role in shaping our country. The League asks you to release this bill from committee.**

Testimony was presented by Sandra L. Matsen, LWWNJ Lobbyist  
LWWNJ

Sandy reports the following from the meeting:

Speaking in favor: Hope Perry (a student at Lawrenceville HS), Arlene Gardner (Center for Civic Education) Bob O'Dell (Social Studies Supervisors), LWWNJ, Marcia Steinberg (LWW Lawrenceville speaking for herself), son of Laura Wooten and close friend of Laura Wooten (who the bill is named for--long time Trenton poll worker--74 years, LWWNJ honored her several years ago). speaking in opposition NJ Principals & Supervisors, NJEA, NJ School Boards Association.

Those opposed raised two issues--the social studies curriculum is currently being revised and the difficulty of adding stand-alone courses in an already crammed schedule, causing some other elective course to be dropped or not available to students due to scheduling. Also raised was tasking the NJ Center for Civic Education at Rutgers University rather than New Jersey Department of Education with preparing curriculum guidelines.

**UPCOMING GNBA MEETINGS AND EVENTS OF INTEREST**



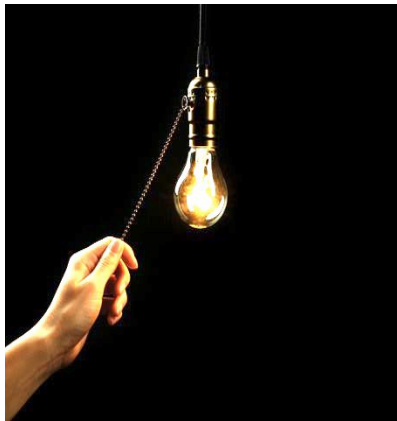
**A Special GNBA Chapter Monthly Meeting**

"Look, there's just no way. "

"Let's face it - no can do."

"We've tried everything."

"You're kidding, right?"



"What if we looked at this from where we want to end up? That'll tell us where we should start."

"Now, suppose - I'm just saying suppose - that we. . ."

"Instead of trying to figure out how to get them to follow through, let's think about what's making them stop."

1. The Quandary

2. The A-Ha! Moment

3. The Path to a Solution

**PUT ON YOUR THINKING CAPS AND LET'S ENGAGE**

It's time we all got together and took stock. Find out what's on the horizon for GNBA, with committee chairs detailing new initiatives and challenging volunteer opportunities. Let's hear **your** ideas for new directions, and for ways of meeting a need for volunteers.

**The Reformed Church of Highland Park**  
 (Room 104 - behind the stage)  
 19 South 2nd Avenue

Highland Park, New Jersey 08904



CIVICS  
FOR THE  
COMMUNITY  
SERIES



***Election Security 2020:  
Are Middlesex and Somerset Counties Prepared?***

**March 18, 2020  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

**Highland Park Middle School Cafeteria  
330 Wayne Street, Highland Park, NJ, 08904**

This co-sponsored program on **Election Security** is both critical and very timely. Thomas Lynch, Administrator of the Middlesex County Board of Elections, and Steve Peter, Somerset County Clerk, will address us on this important issue. **The meeting is open to all.**

For more information on this event please email: [hglazer@hpboro.com](mailto:hglazer@hpboro.com)

**NJ REENTRY CORPORATION**



**LWV**

**VOTER  
REGISTRATION DAY**

Those on **PROBATION & PAROLE** are now  
eligible to vote! Come out and restore your  
voting rights!

**MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup> 10 AM – 2 PM**  
**57 LIVINGSTON AVE (SUITE 3)**  
**NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ 08901**

**CALL 732-509-9304 FOR MORE  
INFO!**

Sponsored by NJ Reentry Corp. & League of Women Voters  
Of Middlesex County



## **MARK YOUR CALENDARS - TWO MORE EXCITING UPCOMING GNBA EVENTS**

**Our April 15 GNBA monthly chapter meeting will feature Ronald Pierce, Justice Fellow at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, speaking on:**



***Voting Has Value to the  
Soul: Creating a More  
Inclusive Democracy***

**April 15, 2020**

**6:30-8:30 p.m.**

**ReEntry program (at New Millennium Bank)**

**57 Livingston Avenue, Suite 3 (outside side door)**

**New Brunswick, NJ 08904**

**Be sure to make note of the address for this event!**

**More to follow -**



**We are a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to empowering voters and defending democracy.**

(But we bet you know that by now.)

**Have you been thinking about joining us?**

**Would you like to volunteer - but aren't sure what that would look like, or what you'd do?**

# **MEET & GREET**

**Come to our Meet & Greet and find out!**

**We're also anxious to hear your ideas for LWV-GNBA.**

**Light refreshments served.**

**WE HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!**

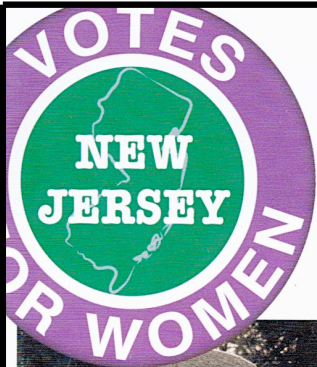
**Sunday, March 29, 2020 1:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

**Franhlin Township Puvlic Library**

**485 DeMott Lane, Somerset NJ 08873**

# THE LEAGUE IN THE NEWS

## GNBA'S FEBRUARY "DOUBLE BIRTHDAY" MEETING HIGHLIGHTED IN FEBRUARY 2020 NJ MUNICIPALITIES MAGAZINE



# Reclaiming Our Voice, Telling Our Story

February 9 marks the 100th anniversary of New Jersey's ratification of the 19th Amendment. The Garden State was key to bringing women's votes to reality and was one of the original 36 states to affirm the proposed Amendment.

Key to the effort were women like Lillian F. Feickert, a Plainfield resident who served as New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association President from 1912 to 1920.

Feickert was the focus of a special presentation recently held at Franklin Township Public Library (Somerset). The event celebrated of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment and the second anniversary of the Greater New Brunswick Area League of Women Voters. The evening was co-sponsored by LWV-GNBA and the Middlesex-Somerset chapter of NOW (National Organization for Women).

At the heart of the program was a lecture by NJ Council for the Humanities Public Scholar Carol Simon Levin, "Reclaiming Our Voice: New Jersey's Central Role in the Fight for Woman Suffrage."

She portrayed Lillian Feickert discussing New Jersey's role in the long fight for women's suffrage. She shared stories about how suffrage advocates

Lucy Stone and Elizabeth Cady Stanton staged tax and voting protests. The audience learned how Alice Paul re-energized the push for a federal amendment and how Dr. Florence Spearing Randolph brought black women into the movement.

Towns interested in bringing in a suffrage speaker can apply for a public scholar project through the New Jersey Council for the Humanities. For more information, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/NJCH-2020-program-funding> or <https://njhumanities.org/humanities-to-go/psp/reclaiming-our-voice-new-jerseys-central-role-in-the-fight-for-woman-suffrage/>

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey ([www.lwvnj.org/](http://www.lwvnj.org/)), including GNBA ([www.lwvgnba.com/](http://www.lwvgnba.com/)), and NJLM are participating in the New Jersey Women Vote Coalition, created to plan and participate in activities and celebrations of the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution. Visit <https://discovernjhistory/njwomenvote2020>. 📌



Carol Simon Levin, portraying Lillian Feickert (inset), suffrage activist and one of the founders of the NJ League of Women Voters in 1920.

# NEW JERSEY SENATE PASSES RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ON ITS 100th YEAR ANNIVERSARY



At last! Something that a duly constituted political body in these United States can agree on. And what more fitting than a commendation of the League of Women Voters for their one hundred years of educating voters and defending democracy. **Note: If you have trouble with the font size, use the official Balloteer magnifying glass opposite to view the Resolution in large type.**

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

## THE SENATE

STATEHOUSE, TRENTON, N. J.

### SENATE RESOLUTION

**By Senate President SWEENEY, Senators TURNER, WEINBERG, ADDIEGO, CORRADO, CRUZ-PEREZ, CUNNINGHAM, GILL, GREENSTEIN, POU, RUIZ, and All Senators**

**Whereas**, The Senate of the State of New Jersey is pleased to honor and salute the League of Women Voters, highly esteemed in the Garden State, upon the auspicious occasion of its One Hundredth Anniversary; and

**Whereas**, The League of Women Voters was founded by Carrie Chapman Catt during the National American Woman's Suffrage Association convention on February 20, 1920 to help twenty million women exercise the right to vote earned just six months earlier when the Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution was ratified; and,

**Whereas**, as state suffrage organizations across the nation reorganized as League chapters, the League of Women Voters of New Jersey immediately took on the mission of educating new voters through citizenship schools, registration drives, and house-to-house canvassing, while also influencing public opinion in favor of legislation it supported; and,

**Whereas**, The League of Women Voters of New Jersey made its indelible mark on our State's government when it organized the New Jersey Committee for Constitutional Convention, which made numerous noteworthy recommendations, including strengthening the governor's office, extending legislators' terms, and reorganizing the justice system, and after several hurdles, a new Constitution, which substituted the word *person* for *man*, was approved in 1947; and,

**Whereas**, Throughout its illustrious history The League of Women Voters has influenced the American political landscape through its support of the United Nations, the World Bank, the World Monetary Fund, and its commitment to the Civil Rights movement and equal access to education and employment, and by sponsoring the Emmy - Award winning broadcast of the 1976 presidential debates; and,

**Whereas**, This mighty political force has furthered its mission to encourage all citizens to lend their voices to the democratic process through its essential contribution to the Voting Rights Amendments of 1982, the *Motor Voter* National Registration Act, and the Help America Vote Act and Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Acts of 2002; and,

**Whereas,** The League's steadfast fight for freedom has continued into this century through its Power to Vote campaign, which opposes measures that restrict access to voting for minorities, the elderly, students, rural voters and through the filing of an amicus brief arguing that partisan gerrymandering violates the First Amendment and the Equal Protection Clause as the Supreme Court heard oral arguments in the case of *Gill v. Whitford*; and,

**Whereas,** The strength and prosperity of the State of New Jersey, the vitality of its communities, and the effectiveness of our American society depend, in great measure, upon exceptional organizations such as The League of Women Voters; now, therefore,

*Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of New Jersey:*

That this House hereby commends The League of Women Voters for a century of service to our democracy, praises the meritorious efforts of its leaders and staff, and extends sincere good wishes for its continued success and vigor; and,

*Be It Further Resolved,* That a duly authenticated copy of this resolution, signed by the President and attested by the Secretary be transmitted to the League of Women Voters.

## LEAGUE ISSUES IN THE NEWS

Our April GNBA chapter meeting will feature Ron Pierce, Justice Fellow at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, presenting "Voting Has Value to the Soul: Creating a More Inclusive Democracy" (see "Upcoming Events" in this issue of *The Balloteer*). As a preview, here is an article by Raven Santana, from the February 4 issue of *NJ Spotlight*.

### **Social Justice Group Offers Ways to Boost Voter Turnout In NJ**

RAVEN SANTANA | FEBRUARY 4, 2020 |

Creating more opportunities for more people to vote, lowering the voting age to 16 and establishing mandatory civics classes in high school among recommendations

A voting age as low as 16. Paid time off on Election Day. Mandatory civics classes in high school and college. Terms limits for local officials.

A respected social advocacy group is recommending these and other sweeping changes in a new report addressing low voter turnout for elections in New Jersey.

In "Our Vote, Our Power: Lifting up Democracy's Voices in the Garden State," the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice identifies four barriers that keep people from exercising their franchise: lack of knowledge about how government works; registration challenges and the timing of elections; restrictions on who can vote; and the perception that the system is not responsive to voters' desires.

"People don't really believe in the right to vote because people don't trust that our elected officials believe in the right to vote," said Henal Patel, author of the report and director of the institute's Democracy and Justice Program.

### **In-depth research and interviews**

The report's findings are based on a combination of in-depth research and interviews with people who live in Newark, where fewer than 5% of residents voted in the April 2018 school board election. According to the report, turnout in Newark was 49% for the 2016 presidential election, 40% for the 2018 congressional midterms and 19% for the city's municipal elections also held in the spring of 2018.

"Newark is the biggest city in the state of New Jersey, so it's a good sense of what people are all around the state," Patel said. "Instead of just guessing what the issue is, we asked people why their communities aren't voting, and the responses were fascinating."

Part of the problem, Patel said, is a lack of knowledge among voters of how government works.

"We have a federal government, we have a state government, we have local governments, we have county governments, it's complicated," she said. "And if no one is teaching you, how are you learning this? We need to have actual comprehensive mandatory civics education in schools."

### **Voting from jail**

Decisions about who can vote also work to limit turnout, Patel said, and among the institute's recommendations are allowing incarcerated people to vote and lowering the voting age.

"The justification for 18 as the voting age is often competency or needing sufficient knowledge," the report reads. "Indeed, there is no evidence that people over 18 are more competent or have more knowledge to vote. Sixteen-year-olds, on average, have similar civic knowledge as adults."

The institute also recommends steps to eliminate "systemic barriers to voting," calling for paid time off on election days, enhanced early voting opportunities and allowing people to register and vote on the same day.

The Institute's research also showed that some potential voters are dissuaded because they question whether their votes really count.

"Too many people decide not to vote because they believe that the system is not responsive to them and the winners seem predetermined," according to the report.

Among the group's suggested remedies is eliminating the "party line" on ballots, term limits for local officials and a full-time state Legislature to broaden the field of potential candidates.



“Let’s have a full-time Legislature that is paid a full-time wage,” Patel said. “Right now, the Legislature meets two times a week. But what jobs let you be in Trenton two days a week? So it really limits who can actually run.”

Statewide election figures show that turnout has been rising since the election of Donald Trump as president. New Jersey has expanded registration and vote-by-mail options.

Created in 1999, the Institute for Social Justice has a mission of creating “just, vibrant, and healthy urban communities.” Its board of trustees includes numerous luminaries, such as former state Attorney General John Farmer and Paul Fishman, who once served as U.S. Attorney for New Jersey.

## A REPORT FROM GENERATION Z

In 2018 GNBA held the Y Vote Essay and Video Contest. High school students were asked to write a persuasive essay of 500 words or less, or produce a persuasive video of three minutes or less, to convince their peers that Yes was the answer to the question Y Vote.

The response was overwhelming; so much so that the Y Vote Contest was one of the major reasons the fledgling GNBA chapter was given the LWVNJ Innovation Award at the 2019 bi-annual state convention (so the Innovation Award would not have to endure only child syndrome, the state League also saw fit to give GNBA that year's Membership Engagement Award).

The first prize winner in the essay contest was Inica Kotasthane. At the time, Inica was a freshman in high school and all of fourteen years old. This is what you might call an auspicious beginning.

And beginning it was, meaning more was to follow. Inica has remained in touch with the League and in January an article that she had written for a blog on the website Next Generation Politics was brought to the attention of *The Balloteer*. It was called "The 2010's: The Decade We All Grew Up - A Generation Z Perspective".

It's one (young) person's picture of the decade we've all just passed through - but a person who is engaged with the world around her and with determined hopes that she can perhaps leave it a better place than the shape she found it in. The article appears courtesy of Inica and Next Generation Politics, an organization established and run by teen-agers, who are dedicated to building a national and global network of young people committed to positive civic engagement across various divides.

To visit Next Generation Politics, access [nextgenpolitics.org](http://nextgenpolitics.org).



*Inica, receiving her award certificate from Andrew Zwicker, New Jersey State Assemblyman, at the 2019 Y Vote Awards Ceremony.*

# The 2010s: The Decade We All Grew Up

## A Generation Z Perspective

When this past decade started, I was five years old. I barely knew how to tie my shoes, let alone who the president was. I lived my life oblivious to serious matters like international relations and exponents, focusing on more pressing matters like what shoes my Barbie doll was going to wear and what color Puffle to adopt. Ten years later, headlines have replaced storytimes, and my generation has had to adjust to the constantly changing world we live in. Through the years, advocacy for issues in politics and social justice has come into the spotlight and with it, arguably one of the most politically active groups of people has emerged: teens. This decade has truly been the time in which Generation Z has matured - of course physically, but mentally and politically as well – as a response to our increasingly dynamic world.

### 2010: Haiti

Throughout elementary school, this generation experienced the importance of charity, especially after the devastating earthquake in Haiti. My school, as well as thousands of others across the nation, rallied together to collect shirts, blankets, and toiletries, all to help victims of the natural disaster. For the first time in our lives, we saw that we had the capability to help people hundreds and hundreds of miles away, and this power came as a shock. Why hadn't we used it before?

This instilled a sense of global awareness and compassion within our country's kids, which has evolved since into what some may say is an overly generous spirit that has become characteristic of this generation. Haiti provided Generation Z's first true introduction to suffering beyond our borders and provided a new degree of importance for charity in our eyes, which continues to affect our political and social dogmas today.

### 2011: Same-Sex Marriage

Same-sex marriage became a hot topic in United States' politics, and although most of us were too young then to see significant disparities between opposite-sex and same-sex marriage, it changed us all the same. Perhaps the bright rainbows drew our generation's young eyes towards the LGBTQ+ cause, or maybe it was the subconscious realization that

many of us simply couldn't see anything wrong with loving someone of the same gender. The gay rights slogan that continues to ring in the hearts of people across the globe was

“Love is Love.” While many of us had only truly experienced love from our parents and relatives, from there grew the rudimentary thought that you should love who you want. Naturally, the issue was much more complicated than letting people love whomever they wished. Religion and social norms were factors we were too young to fully understand, but the belief, childish as it was, remained rooted in many of our hearts: love genuinely was love, it didn’t matter who it was between.

## 2012: Hurricane Sandy

In 2012, much of the east coast was devastated by Hurricane Sandy, and the nation rediscovered a long-needed spirit of community and neighborhood friendliness. Living in New Jersey, my entire town lost power, and although nearly all school-going kids were glad to have the days off, many of us no longer had running water and had to find places to stay while hurricane relief arrived.

My family and I were welcomed into a local hotel. Despite being crowded into a lobby with dozens of others, the atmosphere remained amicable and warm. I vividly remember an older couple offering my parents their room after realizing that they no longer needed it. It was these acts of kindness that reinforced the benevolent American culture we had lost for so long.

In other areas, Good Samaritans who still had power opened up their homes to complete strangers, providing a warm place to stay for those who were forced to evacuate. Restaurants across the tri-state area offered free meals and bottles of water. Those who had generators connected extension cords and power adapters, encouraging people to charge their phones and let their loved ones know how they were doing. Communities gathered for the greater good, renewing the magnanimity our country values so much.



Sandy did not break us. It showed our generation how we can be stronger united, and this belief in cooperation has carried on ever since.

## 2013: Sandy Hook

Though the heartbreaking events of Sandy Hook had occurred in late 2012, 2013 was the year in which the nation’s students felt the impact of stricter safety regulations. At many schools, teachers were required to place magnetic strips on the insides of their door frames that would

automatically lock in an emergency. Lockdowns and active shooter drills became a normal occurrence, and children would hold their breath in fear until an announcement declared the

drill was over. Generation Z was scarred; we had come face to face with the reality that guns could kill, and they could kill us.

Sandy Hook was, unfortunately, only the first of many school shootings and mass shootings that have affected our generation. Importantly, it planted the seed that, perhaps when we were old enough, we would speak out against gun violence. This idea, though only occurring to most of us while we were in elementary and middle school, would eventually blossom into the March for Our Lives movement, establishing Generation Z as a formidable political force determined to make the childhood of the future better than our own.

### **2014: One World**

A majority of Generation Z wasn't alive when 9/11 happened, but we were old enough to understand the significance of the One World Trade Center's re-opening: it signified recovery. Learning about the attacks only through news articles and video clips, it wasn't easy for the younger generation to understand the gravity of September 11th. However, seeing the national triumph that emerged as a result of One World showed us the importance of healing.

It was through healing that we saw a way to move on from the horrors of the past and make way for a progressive and safe future. It was through healing that we realized there are ways to honor our fallen without forgetting their tragedy. It was through healing that the country allowed itself to recuperate, and enabled kids to understand the importance of restoration. Restoration is what reunited America, and it is these values that remain with us today.

### **2015: Paris Agreement**

From late November to December, the Paris Agreement, an international treaty determined to combat climate change, was drafted in France. The document not only acknowledged climate change as an issue that posed severe consequences to all aspects of human life but proposed various solutions to the problem on both corporate and individual levels. Despite all this, the very existence of global warming and corresponding issues – rather than the actions to take regarding it – continue to be debated.

Seeing the older generations' ineffectiveness in tackling the issue of climate change, let alone recognizing it as an issue, Generation Z came to the realization that the responsibility of solving the problem was going to be ours. From this acceptance surfaced a growing movement of youth climate change activists, causing the environmental status of the world to be elevated to a much higher place in importance.

Though much of this generation is still unable to vote, let alone make legislation, we have found a voice about the issues we know will affect our lives, regardless of whether current leaders choose to address them or not. We protest and we picket and we pledge that one

day when we are old enough to represent ourselves in government, we will use our power to take on the issues our predecessors refused to.

### **2016: The Presidential Election**

Upon reaching a fairly mature age of twelve in 2016, I was old enough to understand the basis of the presidential election, if not the underlying political dynamics. I was old enough to see a widening gap between political parties, to see rallies and marches and debates tearing the nation apart. I was old enough to realize that this election was going to have devastating repercussions no matter who won, and that political beliefs were becoming increasingly polarized, like two sides of a magnet.

My generation thought the country would rebound, that we would find common ground and reunite within a year. We didn't know that families would turn against each other and friends would have falling-outs. We were never prepared for the torn America we would have to grow up in. Even four years later, facing a new election, we are less prepared than ever.

Unity is crucial to liberty— we've learned that—but it feels like there's little we can do other than wait for our turn to govern. Upon doing so, we will attempt to reconstruct a semblance of the American connectedness we once idealized as children.

### **2017: #MeToo**

A deluge of sexual assault and harassment allegations came out against those in power, many of whom held high positions in entertainment and politics, which were then amplified by the #MeToo movement. People all around the world found a platform to share their stories and receive support from other victims and allies. It was about time for victims to receive justice (in fact, the other name for the campaign is Time's Up.)

Watching this cause from a social media perspective was enlightening, in a gross and disheartening kind of way. The bright, shining sham of gender equality within high profile industries was unmasked, exposing the disgusting skeletons many influential people had hidden away in their closets.

Generation Z watched with disappointment as their favorite artists and actors were accused by dozens of individuals. The news was riddled with allegations of this and claims of that. We learned that to respect a person was to not take advantage of them; if you failed to recognize and consider one's boundaries, you failed to respect them. 'So,' we thought, 'let's just respect everybody, okay?'

## 2018: Parkland

Twenty-four mass school shootings took place in 2018, and yet only two of them received more than a couple days of media coverage: Parkland and Santa Fe. America had grown numb to the pain of students across the country. The media had successfully ground deaths and injuries down to nothing more than statistics, and eventually, shootings were just a daily occurrence. It was only a matter of time before gun violence in schools faded into the background noise of 'more important' issues.



Then the teens stood up. The teens, who had lost their friends, their classmates, their teachers, and their siblings, prevented a complete erasure of the tragedies that marked their halls. The March for Our Lives organization, spearheaded by student representatives from Parkland, took the country by storm, as hundreds of thousands of kids joined the cause to put

an end to the slaughter of students. Generation Z had found one of its first unifying issues, prompting walkouts, protests, and tributes in all fifty states. We had become a force whose voices would no longer be silenced by those who believed we were too immature to understand that our lives were on the line. We had found something to fight for, setting the precedent for teenage activism for years to come.

## 2019: ???

The past year has been a rollercoaster. From today's position just a few days into 2020, it's too soon to tell what events from 2019 defined Generation Z the most. All we can hope for this next decade of the 2020s is that we've learned from the mistakes (and triumphs) of our elders and that we will use this knowledge to create a better future for us all.

Fingers crossed.

# ABOUT THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE GREATER NEW BRUNSWICK AREA

## A NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The League of Women Voters is a national, non-partisan, grass-roots political organization that will celebrate its 100 year anniversary in 2020. For over a century, from its beginning to the present day, its mission has been to strive to create a more perfect democracy: by establishing a more politically informed populace, by fostering civic engagement of all kinds, and by positioning the citizen voice as the central voice in democratic governance.

The League of Women Voters of the Greater New Brunswick Area was founded one year ago and in this short time has met the requirements to be certified as a local chapter of The League of Women Voters of New Jersey.

To learn more about the League of Women Voters, visit its website at [LWV.org](http://LWV.org).

To learn more about the League of Women Voters of New Jersey, visit its website at [LWVNJ.org](http://LWVNJ.org).

For more information about the League of Women Voters of the Greater New Brunswick Area, visit us at [LWVGNBA.com](http://LWVGNBA.com), or at our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/LWVGNBA>.

## ABOUT OUR LOCAL LEAGUE

GNBA draws its membership from the following areas: East Brunswick, Edison, Franklin Township, Highland Park, Hillsborough, Metuchen, Monmouth Junction, New Brunswick, North Brunswick, Perth Amboy, Piscataway, Skillman, Somerset, and South Plainfield. However, we welcome anyone who wants to become a member, regardless of location, and we encourage anyone who is interested to attend our monthly chapter meeting, which is held on the second Wednesday evening of each month, usually in New Brunswick. A guest speaker is usually in attendance. Our web site, Facebook page and The Balloteer will keep you current on this and other events.

For more information about the League of Women Voters of the Greater New Brunswick Area, visit us at [LWVGNBA.com](http://LWVGNBA.com), AND visit us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVGNBA>.



**HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS WE DO...**

- **CONDUCT VOTER REGISTRATION & ASSISTANCE in MIDDLESEX AND SOMERSET COUNTIES**
- **PROVIDE CIVICS EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN SCHOOLS/COLLEGES**
- **HEAR SPECIAL GUESTS AT MONTHLY MEETINGS, including:**  
 Dr. Scott Taylor – Superintendent, Highland Park Public Schools  
 Michael Hill – NJTV  
 Jeff Tittel – NJ Sierra Club  
 John Wisniewski - Former Member of the N.J. General Assembly (1996 - 2018)
- **HOST COMMUNITY FORUMS, including:**
  - REDISTRICTING REFORM FORUM – FEBRUARY 2019
  - HIGHLAND PARK CANDIDATE FORUM – MAY 2019
- **ADVOCATE FOR LWVNJ-SUPPORTED LEGISLATION & ACTIONS**
- **SERVE AS LIAISONS TO LWVNJ STATEWIDE COMMITTEES** – Natural Resources, Education, Government, Women & Family Issues, Immigration
- **SPONSOR ESSAY/VIDEO CONTESTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**  
 YVOTE Contest held Fall 2018 with wide participation throughout Middlesex and Somerset counties.
- **CREATE & DISTRIBUTE MEMBER NEWSLETTER - (*THE BALLOTEER*)**  
 Keeping our members informed each month and providing updates from our liaison work on LWVNJ statewide committees.
- **HOLD SPECIAL EVENTS & FUNDRAISERS**  
 Booktalk and Gallery Walk, - May 2019  
 GNBA Garage Sale – June 2019  
 Women in History Series, Part 1 – August 2019

**... AND BECAUSE YOU'RE READING OUR NEWSLETTER, WE THINK YOU ARE LIKELY ALSO A PERSON WHO WANTS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US, WHETHER TO PARTICIPATE OR JUST STAY INFORMED. YOU CAN FIND LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION AND AN APPLICATION FORM ON PAGE 22 .**

<b>LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE GREATER NEW BRUNSWICK AREA Planning Team</b>	
<b>GNBA Co-Presidents</b>	Jill Lewis-Spector (Co-President) Andrea Kahn (Co-President)
<b>Funds Manager</b>	Larry Klein
<b>Voter Services and Civic Education</b>	Ethel Reid and Steven Lax (Co-Chairs) Sheila Mazar (New Brunswick Voter Registration) Noel Mazar (New Brunswick Voter Registration) Harriet Warner (Somerset County/My Voice My Vote, in collaboration with ACSD)
<b>Census2020 Coordinator</b>	Sharon Gruber
<b>Fundraising</b>	Jamie Figliolino (Chair)
<b>Student Organizing</b>	Iris Klein Harriet Warner
<b>First Time Voter Celebration</b>	Beth Stevens
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	David Spector
<b>Webmaster &amp; Facebook Administrator</b>	Andrea Rojas Divya Konduru Annushka Pande

<b>GNBA Liaisons to State Board Committees</b>	
<b>Education Committee</b>	Jill Lewis-Spector (Chair) Nora Krieger
<b>Natural Resources Committee</b>	Marilyn Rye
<b>Government Committee</b>	Beth Stevens
<b>Fair Districts New Jersey LWVNJ Advocacy Program Liaison</b>	Beth Stevens

**SHARE YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

All GNBA members are invited to serve on LWVNJ statewide committees. Our liaisons serve an important role – keeping GNBA members informed about state-level initiatives and advocacy opportunities. There are statewide committees that as of this newsletter do not have GNBA representation, including Women and Family Issues, and other volunteer opportunities where assistance is needed.

There are also vacancies in some GNBA Planning Committee roles.

**GNBA OPEN PLANNING COMMITTEE POSITIONS**

GNBA SECRETARY  
GNBA MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

Contact Jill at [jlewisprof1@gmail.com](mailto:jlewisprof1@gmail.com) if you would like to volunteer for the open state committee liaison or GNBA positions.



OF THE GREATER NEW BRUNSWICK AREA

**JOIN the League of Women Voters  
of the Greater New Brunswick Area!**

**Both men and women are encouraged to become part of a nonpartisan organization that has worked for nearly 100 years to promote voter education, better citizen participation in government, and defend democracy.**

Please print.

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Former League Member? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Where: \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in Committee Work? (check as many as apply):

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- Website/Facebook

Annual Dues:

- Individual \$60
- Household (2 persons) \$90
- Student \$10
- Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to LWV NJ, and mail with this form to:  
League of Women Voters New Jersey, 204 West State St., Trenton NJ 08608-1009  
You can also join and pay and also donate online at <https://www.lwvnj.org/home/join>

Your dues include membership in the National and New Jersey LWV as well as the Greater New Brunswick Area LWV. More information. Dues and donations are not tax deductible, except for donations to the LWV Education Fund.



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