Hoppin’ mad about politics?
Take it out at the voting booth!

It is easy to reflect on the current state of politics and say “never before have Americans been so divided.”

But anyone who takes 10 minutes to review America’s history knows that is far from the case. Americans took up arms against each other during the Civil War. There were riots in the streets in the 1960s and at other times our differences seemed to simmer and eventually boil over if not into a war with weapons, then at least a war of vicious words.

That is not to deny that the current state of affairs, both at the state and federal levels, is fierce and polarized. We can continue to argue in the press, with our neighbors and around our family’s dinner table. Truth is, we are all entitled to our opinions, and in the rare exceptions that people can set aside emotion and sentiment and reach some middle ground, great divides will remain.

So, what can a citizen do. Vote! That is where your voice is heard the loudest and your opinions firmly noted. Election day in New York State is Tuesday, November 6. Here are some deadlines you should know about to take part in the process and stand up for what you believe in.

• Voter registration deadline is Fri., Oct. 12, 2018
• Forms must be postmarked by Fri., Oct. 12, 2018, and received by Wed., Oct. 17, 2018
• In-person request must be made by Fri., Oct. 12, 2018
• Request For Absentee Ballot:
  • In-Person Request by Mon., Nov. 5
  • Absentee Ballot Deadline: Fri., Nov. 2, 2018
For more information call: Suffolk County Board of Elections at 631-852-4500, or the Nassau County Board of Elections at 516-571-2411.

PUBLIC COMMENTARY:
Animal research is crucial for pets—and their owners

by Matthew R. Bailey

A team of researchers is testing a groundbreaking vaccine that could prevent cancer in dogs.

About 800 dog owners have volunteered their healthy canine companions for a clinical trial. The pets will receive either the vaccine or a placebo and will undergo regular checkups to monitor for tumors. Researchers have spent more than a decade developing the drug — and hope that it could stave off every form of cancer.

Six million canines are diagnosed with cancer annually. If the vaccine works, it could save tens of millions from an untimely end. And since dogs and humans develop similar cancers, researchers are optimistic the vaccine could ultimately be used in people.

Eradicating cancer with a single shot sounds like science fiction. But thanks to research in animal models, it could soon be scientific fact. Impeding this research, as some animal rights activists would have us do, would be a disaster —for pets and people.

Americans love their pets. More than 60 million U.S. households have a dog; 47 million have a cat. Our pets rely on medicines that were developed thanks to research in animals. Several vaccines can prevent cats from developing feline leukemia virus — which kills 85 percent of cats within three years of diagnosis. New anti-inflammatory drugs can enable dogs with arthritis — which afflicts one in five dogs — to move with less pain.

Without clinical trials in pets, none of these advances would have been possible.

Many animal researchers are pet owners who chose their profession specifically to help their furry friends. Consider Dr. Jessica Quimby, a veterinary scientist at Ohio State University who developed an affection for barn cats.

Considerations that people can set aside emotion and sentiment and reach some middle ground, great divides will remain.

The writer is president of the Foundation for Biomedical Research.