



The League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207
Phone: 518-465-4162 Fax: 518-465-0812
www.lwvny.org E-Mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

State Board Updates: December 2014

Each local League's membership roster MUST be updated in the LWVUS database by January 31, 2015. Remember that this is the list of members for whom you will be charged PMP starting in July 2015. If someone is no longer a member, you MUST make them "inactive" in the database or they will still be considered a member (and you will be charged). Call Katrina at the state office (518-465-4162) if you need help.

Local League To Do's (email: lwvny@lwvny.org or call 518-465-4162)

- Call or email Katrina (518-465-4162 or katrina@lwvny.org) to join us in Elmira on **Jan. 10** for League sharing and networking (more info below).
- Return consensus report forms (term limits and ballot access) **by Jan. 31, 2015.**
- Update membership roster in LWVUS database **by Jan. 31, 2015.**
- Call or email Katrina (518-465-4162 or katrina@lwvny.org) to reserve your spot at the Advocacy Training Day on **Feb. 3rd** in NYC.
- Return Program Planning Response form **by Feb. 20, 2015.**
- State League Convention is **June 6-7** in Albany. Save the date!

President's Report/Issues & Advocacy: Sally Robinson, robintwins@gmail.com

Happy holidays to all members and friends! We've had a busy year and we greatly appreciate all of the hard work of our members which has allowed the League to remain visible and effective. We could not have as much impact in our communities without the constant support and work of our members and local Leagues. Enjoy some family time to celebrate the holidays and the fantastic work we've all accomplished.

LWVNYS Program Planning

Long-time LWV leaders sometimes forget that many newer members have no idea how extensive our state program is. And if we don't show them the inspiring breadth and depth of our advocacy, how will they know? New leaders rarely just appear - they're usually developed. And program planning meetings can really help.

The process for evaluating the state League's program and positions begins now. We have emailed you all information and timeline on the process (and attached again here). Your local League should review the state League's positions and decide if you want to keep them, update them, revise them or delete them. You also have to discuss any new positions you might want the state League to consider for new

studies. The responses from all of the local Leagues are reviewed by the state League Board in March. The Board's recommendations are then presented to the delegates at state Convention in June for consideration and a vote. Schedule a meeting to discuss the state League program and positions with your members (or board) in January or February. This is your opportunity to influence our program – **new items CANNOT be introduced at Convention**; the ideas and suggestions must first be included in the local League's responses on Program Planning forms.

Advocacy Training Session – Feb. 3rd in NYC

The state League will be holding its annual Advocacy Training session on February 3 in New York City. The State Advocacy team, including our Issue Specialists, will be presenting information on the League's expected action during the upcoming legislative session. We hope that holding it in NYC this year will encourage more downstate members to come learn about our advocacy agenda. Plans are being developed to organize a lobby day later in the spring in Albany for members to directly lobby their legislators in Albany. **To attend the Feb. 3rd Advocacy Training Day in NYC, please call or email Katrina at the state office (518-465-4162 or katrina@lwvny.org).** Please encourage all members to join us on this day.

Legislative Agenda

The Issue Specialists and state Board recently met to discuss a new legislative agenda document. It was decided that we will no longer be creating a legislative agenda brochure identifying a couple of the issues that the state League will be working on during the upcoming legislative session. Instead we will be creating booklet with one page on each of the main issues that we monitor: election law, government reform (ethics, campaign finance reform), health care, judiciary, environment, women's issues, transportation, financing education. We will have a summary page which may include a couple of other issues that don't need a full page for explanation of the issue. We are still working on exactly what this document will look like, but we're hoping it will be some kind of booklet to be distributed. With this new approach, we believe that members, the public and legislators will see the full breadth of issues (rather than the few listed on the former legislative agenda brochure) that we are monitoring, even if we don't expect to accomplish all of these during this session. Watch for more info and forms to order your copies of this new booklet.

Membership: Dare Thompson, darethompson@gmail.com

Join us in Elmira on January 10 (snow date is Jan. 24) from 10:30 am to 3:00 pm for a get-together with League colleagues to share ideas, gripes, successes, etc. and learn from one another. All members are invited to join LWVNYS Vice President Dare Thompson, LWVNYS Board Member Terri Parks, LWVNYS Executive Director Laura Ladd Bierman and LWVNYS Director of Programs and Policy Victoria Melillo-Jordan at the Steele Memorial Library in Elmira. Possible discussion topics (you'll choose) include:

- growing and diversifying your membership
- developing leaders
- serving your communities and having the most impact with the least effort
- working with community allies and other area leagues
- getting the attention and respect you deserve
- voter service issues (e.g. getting candidates to debate!)
- fundraising
- avoiding burn-out

- OTHER

Call or email Katrina at the state office to register (518-465-4162 or katrina@lwvny.org). We will be collecting \$10 at the door to cover coffee, munchies and lunch. Join us!

Join the LWVNYS Leadership Team in 2015

As the Nominating Committee for the June 2015 LWVNYS Convention, we take our responsibilities seriously and passionately. We're genuinely excited about the terrific team of LWVNYS leaders that we are already assembling for 2015-2017 and invite you (or a League colleague of yours) to consider applying for one of our small number of open positions including directors for youth programs, membership, and citizen education.

The coming years will be both challenging and inspiring for League in New York State. Many local Leagues are in transition, and looking for ways to attract and retain new members in compelling ways. The state League stands ready to assist in these efforts, strengthening our skills, imparting information and tools, and sharing best practices across the state.

If you (or a friend) are passionate about League, willing to work with a team from all parts of the state to further League goals and engage with our talented and inspiring local League members and boards, please consider joining our LWVNYS board and working in an area you find compelling. It will be a way for you to share your strengths, learn from others, and help lead LWVNYS in the important years ahead.

For more information please contact Lisa Scott, Chair of the Nominating Committee (631) 523-1653 or email lisawscott@gmail.com

Grassroots Lobbyist, Carol Mellor, camellor@aol.com

Over 30 members signed on for the call held on December 11. Carol Mellor, as Grassroots Lobby Director moderated, while Barbara Bartoletti shared her extensive experience in the front line of our advocacy as Legislative Director and Laura Ladd Berman described the role of the State office in implementing League advocacy. For more information on the state advocacy process, please see the attached power point presentation.

We covered the process from League position to the decision to support or oppose a particular piece of legislation, ballot proposal or coalition. Members seemed to be most interested in how they, as members, could be a part of the process. Two ways were discussed: first, all members can bring issues to the Issues Committee by "calling a meeting", which is done by sending an email to the committee members (or email Laura@lwvny.org to make a request). A second way to be a part of the process is to either volunteer to be an Issue Specialist, or volunteer to assist an Issue Specialist in her/his work. Just recently, a member interested in health care took on the position of specialist in this area, and has assembled a committee of nearly twenty members, who are in the process of attending public hearings across the state on the topic of single payer provider.

As second concern was a perception that communication on action the League is involved in could be more widely disseminated. In response, it was pointed out that each month State Board Updates and the Voter are sent from the state office. Each of these documents contains information on the

advocacy actions being taken. In addition, members are often sent “Updates” and “Action Alerts”. In response to a suggestion that members be “polled” on support for a particular course of action, Barbara and Laura described the need for almost instantaneous action based on changes in the situation in Albany which can be lightning fast. The need for quick decisions would make such a deliberative process unworkable, but the actions taken rely on the established positions as contained in Impact on Issues, and the policies passed by the Board.

Local Studies Database

We still need to hear from locals about any studies they have done and what positions, if any, were arrived at. Please email the information to camellor@aol.com. When the database is complete, it will allow locals to see what issues might be ripe for study in their geographical area; provide opportunities for concurrence; provide resource material for local studies.

From the State League Office: Laura Ladd Bierman, laura@lwvny.org

State Studies

Hopefully you are all scheduling membership meetings to discuss the two state studies: term limits and ballot access. **Remember that the consensus results are due to the state office by January 31, 2015.** The report forms for both state studies (term limits and ballot access) are attached. All materials can also be found on the state website (click on Programs and Studies on left side of homepage). Contact the state office if you have questions.

BIG NEWS FOR LOCAL LEAGUES!

Tax Deductible Online and Credit Card Donations to Local Leagues Now Possible

The state League is pleased to announce that we have a new benefit for our local Leagues! Members and friends wishing to make tax deductible donations to their local League through the grants management system can now use credit cards and do it online. Please use the link below – post it on your website, put it in your newsletters, etc – advertise that people can donate using this link:

[Local League EF Donations](#)

When people donate using this link, they will be required to select to which local League they want their donation sent. The donation will be deposited into your local league grants management account here at the state League office and you can use it as usual for educational expenses or to pay ½ of your annual PMP to state and LWVUS. Lisa Allendorph, LWVNYS Finance Administrator, will email the President and Treasurer a notice of who donated and how much they donated. Please be aware that there is a bank fee averaging 3.5% (depending on which credit card they use) that will be deducted from the donation, eg, a \$50 donation will actually be about \$48 donation to the local League. Also, as usual, the local League is responsible for sending a thank you letter for donations made to their grants management account.

Youth Programs: Judie Gorenstein, judieL728@aol.com

The great success of the Students Inside Albany conference is even more evident this year with an even bigger response from our local Leagues! We are now at capacity for the program. We have heard from local Leagues as indicated below. Since we are at capacity, please let us know ASAP if you are not sending the number indicated – we may have alternates who would love to attend if we have space. Also, a reminder that the first student is free (except that the local League pays the transportation costs for the student), but the second student will cost the local League \$600. We’re very excited that the

program is growing and growing! The paperwork to be completed by the selected student(s) will be emailed to all in early January. Contact me or the state office if you have questions.

Local League	# of Students to SIA 2015
LWV of Albany	2
LWV of Bedford, Lewisboro, N. Salem	1
LWV of Brookhaven	1
LWV of Broome and Tioga Co.	1
LWV of Buffalo	1
LWV of Cazenovia	1
LWV of Central Nassau	2
LWV of Chautauqua County	0
LWV of Cooperstown Area	1
LWV of Cortland	2
LWV of East Nassau	2
LWV of Eastern Putnam	0
LWV of Geneva	1
LWV of The Hamptons	2
LWV of Harrison	
LWV of Huntington	2
LWV of Larchmont/Mamaroneck	1
LWV of Long Beach	1
LWV of Mid Hudson Region	2
LWV of New Castle	1
LWV of New Rochelle	2
LWV of New York City	2
LWV of Oneonta	1
LWV of Port Washington	2
LWV of Rensselaer County	1
LWV of Rochester Metro	2
LWV of Rockland	0
LWV of Rye, Ryebrook	2
LWV of Saratoga County	2
LWV of Saugerties	1
LWV of Scarsdale	2
LWV of Schenectady County	2
LWV of Schuyler	
LWV of Shelter Island	0
LWV of Smithtown	1
LWV of Somers	1

LWV of Southwest Nassau	1
LWV of Steuben County	1
LWV of Suffolk County ILO	1
LWV of Syracuse	2
LWV of the Greater Oneida Area	1
LWV of The Hamptons	2
LWV of the North Country	1
LWV of the Rivertowns	2
LWV of Tompkins County	2
LWV of Utica Metro. Area	1
LWV of Warren County	
LWV of White Plains	2
LWVNYS	1
Nassau County ILO	2
St. Lawrence MAL	1
Wayne County MAL	1
Westchester ILO	1

Development: Susan Wilson, sswilson@hamptons.com and Kate Jankowski, Communications and Development Coordinator

GivingTuesday Results

Our #GivingTuesday match was a success! Donors contributed over \$3,000 online for our educational programs on December 2nd and it was matched by two League members for a total of over \$6,000 in one day. Thanks to all who participated.

Year-end Fundraising Initiatives

We have several year-end fundraising initiatives happening this year. They include:

- Our regular Education Foundation Annual Fund appeal which was mailed around Election Day,
- An online gift match for the Education Foundation that was announced on December 15. All online gifts made between now and year-end will be matched by a Board member.
- The announcement and an appeal for our special fundraising Campaign—the League Matters Campaign. This is a three year Campaign to safeguard the future of the state League that was started in July 2012 and will conclude in June 2015. There is a challenge gift associated with the Campaign from December 1, 2014 – February 14, 2015. If we can raise \$25,000 during that time, the LWV of Albany County will donate \$10,000 to the Campaign. For more information check out our press release about the Campaign at: http://www.lwvny.org/donations/ef-campaign/League-Matters-press_1014.pdf.

If any of you would like to talk about fundraising ideas for local Leagues, please contact Kate Jankowski, Communications and Development Coordinator, at (518) 465-4162 or kate@lwvny.org.

LWVUS Roster Update

Each local League's membership roster MUST be updated in the LWVUS database by January 31, 2015. Remember that this is the list of members for whom you will be charged PMP starting in July 2015. If someone is no longer a member, you MUST make them "inactive" in the database or they will still be considered a member (and you will be charged). Call Katrina at the state office (518-465-4162) for help. LWVUS is also sponsoring some challenges to encourage local Leagues to update their rosters – see below:

Win Free Convention Registration!

Saturday, January 31, is the deadline for Leagues to update their member roster for FY2014-15. Summary sheets (the online document that shows your League's official membership count) are now LIVE. Any changes that you make to your members' records will be reflected on that page. Tips on renewing members, including a renewal letter template, are available [here](#). As a way of saying thank you for all the hard work that Leagues do, we will be giving away five FREE registrations to National Convention 2016. For more details about how to win, [click here](#). For assistance updating your League's roster, download the [user manual](#) or contact membership@lww.org.

Roster Update Challenge #2!

This week we have another challenge — an opportunity for all Leagues to win great prizes! If you have upwards of 85 percent of your active League members' birthdates entered into the Member Roster, LWVUS will send you some great items from our [League Store!](#) (Prizes determined by number of winners.) You have until January 31st to update this information to qualify. To see more about all of the challenges, [click here](#).

LWVUS Advocacy Agenda (from LWVUS Leaders' Updates)

LWVUS Legislative Priorities

It's a new year and a new Congress. The LWVUS Board will be setting legislative priorities for the upcoming session in January. We ask members and local Leagues to submit their suggestions. Here is some background for you to consider as you decide what you would like to recommend.

The Board sets priorities using this filter: opportunities for the League to make an impact; program decisions made at Convention and/or Council; member interest; and resources available to manage effectively. We also look realistically at the political climate and composition of Congress. And doing that, we have to acknowledge that the incoming Congressional leadership has issued statements that are not supportive of League program. Realistically, we will have to expend resources on defending voting rights and threats to existing campaign finance law, good climate change work and the Affordable Health Care Act. So as you consider what to recommend as legislative priorities, ask yourself how important you think it is for the League to fight for our core issues.

If you would like to make suggestions for LWVUS advocacy priorities, please email Advocacy Committee Chair Chris Carson at carsonlww@yahoo.com. Please indicate whether the suggestions are from an individual member, a committee, Board or membership meeting. **Suggestions must be received by January 12.**

The LWV Lake Michigan Region Board, of which LWVNYS is a member, wrote to LWVUS asking that Sustainable Water Resources be a priority. They are also asking member leagues and other interested parties to also suggest that **Sustainable Water Resources** be a priority. Some reasons are

enumerated in their attached letter, but other Leagues may want to add their own reasons. They indicated that they know that there is great concern about water issues across our country and they see that these issues provide a wide range of citizen engagement possibilities. Water issues, in particular, allow people to see how becoming involved in civic issues can have a meaningful impact. But leadership is needed at the national level in order to be most effective addressing them. If your local league would like to email this as a priority (or other issues, too), please do so.

Travel Concepts - Travel with the League

A former NYS League member (Cazenovia) is now a travel agent who organizes educational trips and programs around the world. Many League members have participated in these trips, most recently to England and Cuba, with great experiences. *The state and local Leagues also receive a share of the trip cost for League members who travel with them.*

Local Leagues can advertise these trips by using the link, www.serioustraveler.com/index.php. And, the latest newsletter from Travel Concepts is attached and can be shared with members.