



The League of Women Voters of New York State
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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

State Board Updates: May 2014

If you are no longer the President or on the Board, please forward this email and information on to the new President and board members.

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

- Set up your Vote 411 infrastructure **NOW** – races, questions, etc! See attached Time Table.
- Schedule a meeting to consider the State League's 2014-15 Budget as presented in the 2014 Council Kit (distributed on May 5); responses are **due June 20, 2014** (change in dates).
- By **June 27**, complete and return the form listing your officers, board and chairs for the 2014-2015 year.
- Complete and return order form for Voter Guide Part I **by June 30, 2014**; payment must accompany the order.
- Schedule an educational forum on the issue of redistricting in **September or October 2014**; email katrina@lwvny.org with the date of the forum.

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

It is with great sadness that I report the passing of Sharon Lindsay, President of the Westchester ILO. Sharon served on the League's State Budget Committee for the last 3 years and was also a former Village Trustee and Deputy Mayor of Scarsdale. Sharon will be greatly missed by many friends and colleagues for her great wit, intelligence and her dedication to the League. To read more, click here: <http://scarsdale10583.com/the-goods/4033-former-deputy-mayor-sharon-lindsay-passes-away>.

Advocacy Efforts

The advocacy efforts of the League recently have been mostly within our coalitions. We continue to talk with our coalition partners on **campaign finance reform** although our optimism for some action before the end of the session is diminishing. The **Women's Equality** coalition is also continuing to apply pressure on the legislature to take action. Postcards were sent to each local League with the Council Kit; these postcards were to be distributed and sent to either the Senator or the regional coordinators of the Women's coalition in your area. Hold June 10 for an Albany Lobby Day on this issue – more information to come. We are also continuing to work with the coalition to oppose the **education investment tax credit** proposal; it is rumored that this proposal will be considered again before the end of the session. Finally, the League has been active on the issue of additional **family court judges** in the New York State Coalition for More Family Court Judges; a lobby day on this issue was held on May 28th. While the Judiciary Budget included a request for 20 more Family Court judges in New York State, the Legislature has to pass a bill to amend the Family Court Act to increase the number of judges, as well as approve the appropriation. The Governor then has to sign the budget as

well as the bill for more judges. Watch for an action alert on any of these issues if the legislature does consider these bills.

Redistricting

As we have mentioned before, the state League will be asking all local Leagues to help with passage of the redistricting amendment on the November ballot. A power point presentation will be available to all local Leagues; we ask all local Leagues to schedule a community forum in September or October to present the information. A palm card is also being designed with information on the amendment; this card will be made available to all local Leagues for voter registration drives and elsewhere. **Please email Katrina with the date of your community forum in September or October.**

Energy, Agriculture & Environment Chair: Beth Radow, enradow@gmail.com

The League submitted comments on the New York State Energy Planning Board's Draft 2014 New York State Energy Plan in May. The study on natural gas commissioned by the state League was attached to the comments. The comments and the study are posted on the state League website and attached here.

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

Voter Guide Part I

The order form for the Voter Guide Part I is attached to this email. **The orders and payment are due by June 30.** If you don't order by then, the supply is available on a first come-first serve limited basis. As a reminder, Part I will include general information on how to register to vote, absentee ballots, voting machines and the election calendar for 2014. Part I will be distributed to local Leagues in early July.

There will be a Voter Guide Part II this year which will include candidate information on the statewide level races and the two propositions on the ballot in November. Orders for Part II will be available in July with distribution of Part II Guides in late September.

Big League Raffle

We are pleased to announce that Bernice Baeumler from LWV of Buffalo/Niagara was the winner of the Big League Raffle. We are still calculating the amount of the winning ticket, but it will be over \$2,000. Thanks to all the local Leagues and members who sold tickets. Local Leagues will be receiving their portion of the net profit, based on the number of tickets sold by their members, in the next week. LWV Buffalo/Niagara also sold the most number of tickets and will receive over \$167 of the profits in addition to the \$400 bonus for selling the winning ticket. Only one local League did not sell any tickets.

2014-15 Local League Contacts

Please complete and return the attached form identifying the 2014-15 local League officers and board members **by June 27, 2014.** Also, please include anyone who coordinates the listed activities, even if they are not on your board. We need to have the correct email addresses to include these people on the appropriate listserves. This is vital to receiving the timely and correct info from the state League.

2014 Council Kit

In the years when there is no state Convention (2014), the state League creates a Council Kit that is distributed to each local League. In the Kit is the proposed budget for the following year (2014-15) and any new updates, studies, etc recommended by the board to be considered by the membership. At its March meeting, the state Board of the LWVNYS Education Foundation adopted the 2014-15 budget for the Education Foundation and recommended the LWVNYS budget to be considered through the Council Kit. This year's Kit will require action only on the budget but it will include reports from the state Board members on their activities this past year; no program changes are recommended. The Kit was mailed to one President or co-President of each local League. We ask you to consider the budget at a membership meeting, open board meeting or even your Annual Meeting. We need to receive responses to approve the budget for the state League. Responses will be due to the state office **by June 20, 2014**.

Local Bulletins and Newsletter

Don't forget to email your local League bulletins and newsletters to the listserv at localLeaguebulletineditors@lwvny.org so they will be posted on the state League website and brief information will be included in the State Voter.

Vote 411: Marianna Stout, marianna.stout@att.net

If you haven't yet started, now is the time to start setting up your Vote 411 infrastructure (i.e. races, question sets, email templates, etc.)! **You can get all this set up in Vote 411 even before we know who the candidates will be.** The earlier you get the infrastructure set up, the easier the process of inviting candidates and tracking responses will be! See the updated and attached Vote 411 Time Table. More instructions are available on the state website with the handouts from the regional training workshops (<http://lwvny.org/training/index.html#vote>).

The State Board is finalizing the questions to be asked of all state Assembly and Senate candidates; local Leagues will be able to add 1-3 additional questions, if they want. But, you should have finalized your questions now, and you can even start gathering lists of candidates – the petition process for the primaries starts this week and many candidates have declared. Also, draft your letter of invitation to the candidates so that's ready to go as soon as you have the candidate list.

Email Sarah at sarah@lwvny.org immediately with a list of what races you will be covering in your league's voter guide so as not to duplicate efforts with other local Leagues. And of course, if your league would like to participate in Vote 411 and has not yet signed up **this year** (or if you are not sure if you have done so), please contact Sarah.

State Studies: Sarah Podber, sarah@lwvny.org

Consensus questions for both state studies, term limits and ballot access, will be distributed to all local Leagues by the end of June, 2014. A packet of information will accompany the consensus questions. A power point presentation on the ballot access study will also be distributed in the summer – this will assist in presenting the issue during your local League meetings. All local Leagues are asked to schedule a consensus meeting (either one to discuss both issues or two to discuss the issues separately); the responses on the consensus questions will be due in the state office **by January 31, 2015**. Even if you don't have a local study group that has been meeting to discuss the issues, we ask each local League to distribute information we provide, direct people to the state website for more articles and materials, and then schedule a meeting to discuss the consensus questions. You are not required to

have a local study group to participate in the consensus – it certainly makes it easier, but it's not required. Contact Sarah if you have questions.

Youth Programs: Judie Gorenstein, judieL728@aol.com

The 2014 Students Inside Albany Conference was held May 18-21 in Albany. Sixty students from around New York State attended the 3 day conference. The students lobbied Assemblymembers Pat Fahey and Peter Lopez in role-playing exercises, heard from Casey Seiler and Jimmy Vielkind of the Albany media correspondents, Bob Freeman about FOIA and Open Meetings, Billy Easton of the Alliance for Quality Education and Jess Wisneski of Citizen Action. The highlight of the conference, as usual, is shadowing their Assemblymember on Monday afternoon and their Senator on Tuesday afternoon. We are one of a few, if not the only, program in which the students are actually on the floor of the Chambers during the legislative session. Photos have been posted on the state facebook page and a selection will be posted to the state website soon. Thanks to all of you who helped select the students – they were an outstanding and enjoyable group of high school students. And, thank you very much to the chaperones who joined me: Dare Thompson (LWV Mid-Hudson), Betsy Metz (LWV of the North Country), Betty Ann King (LWV of the North Country), Sarah Podber of the state League staff, Laura Ladd Bierman of the state League staff.