



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: October 2014***

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

- Post a link to the Judicial Voter Guide on your local League website ([www.nycourts.gov/vote](http://www.nycourts.gov/vote)).
- Distribute registration form for Nov. 13 Day at the United Nations; **registrations are still being accepted, but space is limited.**
- Complete and return the Legislative Agenda Response form **by Nov. 10, 2014.**
- Complete IRS 990N **by November 15** if your fiscal year ended on June 30 to retain your nonprofit status (see instructions below)
- Complete and return your Voter Services Survey **by Dec. 10.**
- Complete and return Youth Survey to state office **ASAP**; inform state office **by Dec. 15** if your League plans to send a student (or 2) to 2015 SIA.

#### **President's Report/Issues & Advocacy: Sally Robinson, [robintwins@gmail.com](mailto:robintwins@gmail.com)**

The busiest League time of the year is wrapping up with less than two weeks until Election Day. Our efforts to pass Proposal 1 reforming the state's redistricting process continue.

The state office or our partner Citizens Union has sent copies of the Vote Yes For Progress palm card to local leagues. Please distribute them as widely as possible—take to public buildings, including the library, set out at your meetings and other organizations' meetings in your community. Have local volunteers give them out on Election Day. Thank you for all your efforts. If you have any questions, please contact the state office. Vote Yes For Progress also has a great video out that that you can access from [www.voteyesforprogress.org](http://www.voteyesforprogress.org), or on our website [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org). Please share it with everyone you know. You can also download a toolkit, <http://www.voteyes4progress.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Final-Vote-Yes-Campaign-Toolkit1.pdf> and sign up as a campaign ambassador.

You can see links to several debates or forums on Proposal 1 on the League website. They have been intense, interesting and a wonderful reminder of how the league can get out there and argue for what we believe in. Both Elisabeth McNamara, LWVUS President and Deirdre McNab, Florida state President, are supporters of Proposal 1 and how we are trying to accomplish in New York what Florida has already accomplished, banning partisan gerrymandering in our state constitution.

#### **2015 Legislative Agenda**

Now is the time for your local League to have input on the 2015 Legislative Agenda. Please discuss with your members and board their suggestions and concerns – what are the issues that they want the state League to lobby next spring. Complete and return the Legislative Agenda Form (attached) **by**

**November 10.** Once we have responses from the local Leagues, our Issue Specialists will meet to discuss the issues and present a proposed Agenda to the Board. Make sure your local League shares its opinions with us now!

### **Grassroots Lobbyist, Carol Mellor, [camellor@aol.com](mailto:camellor@aol.com)**

#### **Update on Issues Conference Call**

Earlier this month, approximately 40 members participated in the Update on Issues Conference Call on the redistricting proposition. Sally Robinson provided expert analysis and answered questions ranging from analysis of the proposal to the applicability of the Florida experience on our state.

A follow-up call is planned on the process by which the state League determines its position with respect to pending legislation and constitutional amendments. If anyone wishes to participate in such a call please let Carol Mellor know at [camellor@aol.com](mailto:camellor@aol.com) .

#### **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](mailto: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](mailto:laura@lwvny.org)**

#### **Judicial Candidate Voter Guide**

In New York State certain judgeships are filled by election, while others are filled by appointment. The Judicial Candidate Voter Guide, prepared by the NY Unified Court System, provides information about judges who are candidates in the 2014 General Election. The [Voter Guide](#) covers all judgeships except Town and Village Courts. This page also provides basic information about the different courts in the NY State Court System. For more information about the courts, go to [www.nycourts.gov/vote](http://www.nycourts.gov/vote). Please post a link to this Judicial Voter Guide on your local League website, too.

#### **United Nations Day**

The annual League Day at the United Nations will be held on **Thursday, November 13**. All members, family and friends are invited to join us for a fun and educational day. The day includes a tour of the UN building, lunch in the Delegates Dining Room and a briefing by key UN experts. The topic this year is "Water for Life" the UN International Decade for Action 2005-2015.

From the "Water for Life" website, <http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/background.shtml>:

*Water is essential for life. No living being on planet Earth can survive without it. It is a prerequisite for human health and well-being as well as for the preservation of the environment. However, four of every ten people in the world do not have access to even a simple pit latrine; and nearly two in ten have no source of safe drinking water. Every year millions of people, most of them children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation, and hygiene. According to the World Health Organization, each and every day some 3,900 children die because of dirty water or poor hygiene; diseases transmitted through water or human excrement are the second-leading cause of death among children worldwide, after respiratory diseases. Water scarcity, poor water quality, and inadequate sanitation negatively impact food security, livelihood choices, and educational opportunities for poor families across the world. Water-related natural disasters such as floods, tropical storms*

*and tsunamis exert a heavy toll in human life and suffering. And all too regularly, drought afflicts some of the world's poorest countries, exacerbating hunger and malnutrition.*

*Beyond meeting basic human needs, water supply and sanitation services, as well as water as a resource, are critical to sustainable development. It is a major source of energy in some parts of the world, while in others its potential as an energy source remains largely untapped. Water is also necessary for agriculture and for many industrial processes. And in more than a few countries, it makes up an integral part of transport systems. With improved scientific understanding, the international community has also come to appreciate more fully the valuable services provided by water-related ecosystems, from flood control to storm protection and water purification.*

The registration form is attached and will be posted on the state League website. Encourage all to join us on November 13 at the United Nations.

### **2014 Voter Service Survey**

Here is your time to boast and brag! Let us know what you did this year for voter services. A survey is attached. Please complete and return the survey. Last year only 27 local Leagues submitted completed surveys ☺. We know that you all have organized amazing events and a bunch of activities – tell us about them! Return the completed survey by Dec. 10.

### **State Studies**

A power point presentation and a new handout on the state study on Term Limits have been created and distributed to all local League Presidents/Co-Presidents and Program/Education Chairs. The PPT and handout is attached here as well. It was thought that the power point might help present the issue and facilitate discussion during your local consensus meetings. **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.

### **Financial Reports – IRS 990s**

Any local League whose fiscal year ended on June 30 must complete an IRS 990N **by NOVEMBER 15** (unless you have income over \$25,000 in which case you have to complete a different 990 form). Leagues with other fiscal years also have to file the 990N within 4 months and 15 days from the end of their fiscal year. The 990N is a short form that must be completed online. Instructions for completion are attached to this SBU but are also on the state League website (click on Local League Resources, In League document and then scroll down to Raising and Managing Money). Make sure your Treasurer is completing this form. You will lose your tax-exempt status if you don't complete this form (after 3 years).

### **Vote 411: Marianna Stout, [marianna.stout@att.net](mailto:marianna.stout@att.net) and Victoria Melillo-Jordan, [Victoria@lwvny.org](mailto:Victoria@lwvny.org)**

As we near the end of election season, we want to extend our sincere thanks to all of our local Leagues for all your help with Vote411! Thanks to your hard-work, we now have 395 races live on Vote411, including 142 Assembly races, 55 Senate races, all 27 Congressional races and over 150 local races.

Please remember to advertise Vote411 in your communities! Please let us know if you need us to re-send you a copy of the Vote411 flyer. Thanks again for all over your help! This would not have been possible without you!

**Development: Susan Wilson, [sswilson@hamptons.com](mailto:sswilson@hamptons.com) and Kate Jankowski, Communications and Development Coordinator**

We are pleased to formally announce that the League of Women Voters of New York State has launched a special fundraising campaign for the Education Foundation. The **League Matters Campaign** is a three-year fund-raising effort to raise at least \$300,000 above our regular Annual Fund donations.

Joanne Esposito, a long-time member and past president of the LWV of Albany County, is chairing this effort and we have already raised \$225,000 thanks to several leadership donors. This represents a tremendous vote of confidence for the state League and what it provides to all of our local Leagues in New York.

*Special Challenge Gift*

Recently, the Board of the LWV of Albany County voted to donate \$10,000 to this Campaign from their reserve funding. They feel that the state League is crucial to the work they do and that we can't stay strong unless we are all working together. This important gift will be issued as a challenge to other donors across the state. If we raise \$25,000 from other donors by the League's birthday on February 14, 2015, we will receive the \$10,000.

This Campaign will allow the state League to increase the resources we offer to our local Leagues. We have all seen a decline in our volunteer numbers in recent years and an increase in the demands on the time of the volunteers we have. In order to ensure the strength of the League across this state, it is imperative that we have a strong state League providing programs and services that lessen the demands placed on our members and local leaders.

*Sharing Campaign Gifts*

The state League Board approved a share formula for League Matters Campaign gifts so that each local League will get a portion of any gift from an individual in their area. The state League is committed to giving you what you need to keep your League visible and responsive in your community.

Over the next few weeks, we will issue a press release to announce the Campaign and will be sending a special mailing to all members and Education Foundation donors asking them to participate in the Campaign.

Please call the state League office at (518) 465-4162 or email Kate Jankowski, Communications and Development Coordinator, at [kate@lwny.org](mailto:kate@lwny.org) if you have any questions about the League Matters Campaign.

League Matters Campaign Committee

Barbara Strauss  
LWV of Scarsdale  
Honorary Chair

Joanne Esposito  
LWV of Albany County  
Chair

Susan Wilson  
LWV of the Hamptons  
Board Liaison

Sally Robinson LWV of New York State President Marian Bott LWV of New York City	LWV of New York City  Arlene Hinkemeyer LWV of the Hamptons  Jane Park LWV of Broome/Tioga Cos  A.C. Riley	LWV of Saratoga County  Helga Schroeter LWV of Schenectady County  Sally Sears-Mack LWV of the North Country  Evelyn Stock LWV of Scarsdale
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**Membership: Dare Thompson, [darethompson@gmail.com](mailto:darethompson@gmail.com)**

**MLD:** The Membership and Leadership Development Program (MLD), a collaboration among all three levels of the LWV, recently welcomed three more NY leagues into the program - Larchmont/Mamaroneck, Rivertowns, and Rye, RyeBrook, Port Chester. Their coaches include Donna Dardaris, Carole Torok-Huxtable and me, with Lisa Scott and Susan Schwarz assisting. Continuing MLD leagues and their coaches are Buffalo/Niagara, Rochester Wayne County MAL (now coached by Kathleen Stein), and Syracuse with me, Lisa Scott, and Carole Torok-Huxtable also coaching.

Being coached should not add work but simply make what you are already doing more effective at building membership and leadership. Contact Lisa Scott at [lisawscott@gmail.com](mailto:lisawscott@gmail.com) if you're interested in getting a coach and growing YOUR league. In Westchester you might also contact MLD coach Susan Schwarz at [SDSchwarz@aol.com](mailto:SDSchwarz@aol.com).

We're coming to **ELMIRA!** We are bringing together the Southern Tier leagues and any others who are interested on **JANUARY 10** (a Saturday, from 10:30 - 3 at the Elmira Library, with a snowdate of January 24) to talk about whatever issues you're having with membership and leadership development as well as advocacy and education efforts. ALL League members are welcome, not just board members.

Terri Parks and I from the LWVNYS board and Laura Ladd Bierman and Victoria Melillo-Jordan, state office staff, will be braving whatever Mother Nature offers to get there from the Hudson Valley, Buffalo and Albany so please come out and greet them in with lots of smiling faces! This is a great chance to share concerns, questions, and successful ideas and possibly find ways to work across local league lines on studies, advocacy and other activities.

We thank Barb Luther in the Chemung County LWV for all her help with this. More details will be coming out soon, but if you have questions now, contact me at [darethompson@gmail.com](mailto:darethompson@gmail.com) or Barb at [bluther@stny.rr.com](mailto:bluther@stny.rr.com).

And if you need help with your leagues in another part of the state, let me know. We know how helpful it is for all of us when we get together and share.

**Youth Programs: Judie Gorenstein, [judieL728@aol.com](mailto:judieL728@aol.com)**

Twelve local Leagues and ILOs have responded to the youth survey that was emailed to all Leagues in September. Once again we are trying to have a 100% response, which will not only help us learn what local Leagues are doing and give us information to share on the youth webpage, but also will make certain that local Leagues begin their planning for Students Inside Albany. Remember that there is a

Dec. 15 deadline to let LWWNYS know of your intention to send a student(s) to SIA, in 2015. Recruitment materials for 2015 Students Inside Albany Conference were emailed to all local League Presidents and Youth Contacts. If you need copies, just contact the state office at 518-465-4162 or download the materials from the state website (click on Youth Programs on the left side of the homepage). For those Leagues who do not have the youth survey, it is attached.