



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: November 2015

Local League leaders, does your League board review the TO-DO listed below at every board meeting? Are you sure these things are truly getting done? If you can't say YES to either question, take the list to your next meeting yourself! We know local leagues often have to pick and choose among League studies and other activities but some of these items are truly MUST-DOs to avoid problems!

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

- Access to the newly revised LWVUS database will be available on **Dec. 7** – see how to get your access below.
- RSVP to participate in the state League's conference call on **Dec. 14, at 7:00 pm**, on the LWVUS study on Money in Politics; email Laura@lwvny.org to reserve your place (more info under Grassroots Lobby Director report below).
- Complete and return 2015 Voter Services Activities Survey **by December 11, 2015**.
- Call state office (Katrina) or email Katrina@lwvny.org **by Dec. 15** to reserve your spot for a student(s) at 2016 Students Inside Albany Conference (see more below)
- Schedule a Fall membership meeting to consider the concurrence on "Raise the Age" and return Concurrence Response Form **by January 1, 2016**.
- Schedule meetings to consider LWVUS studies on Money in Politics (due Feb. 1) and US Constitutional Amendment Process (due Dec. 1)

President's Report/Membership Report: Dare Thompson, darethompson@gmail.com

I hope you'll be taking a little breather this week to celebrate with family and friends all that you have to be grateful for. Let's keep the gratitude going through the year, because considering how easily things can go wrong, it's amazing how often they hum along all right! Our bodies, our environment, and even our governments do have some remarkable corrective mechanisms built in.

Here are some things from this past month in my League work at the state and local levels that I'll celebrate.

- Seeing at my local polling site how carefully everyone was working to make sure each vote was protected, that ballots were secure, and that the process was accessible to all. The heads of the parties worked cheerfully together to make sure poll workers got lunch and dinner - kumbaya in an often polarized town!

- Sitting in on a county Laws and Rules Committee with several other local LWV members to make sure it made no changes to the county charter we helped create. They know we are watching their every move.
- Participating in a wide array of conference calls about strengthening local Leagues, making the League more visible, and addressing various advocacy and educational topics.
- Sitting in all day (!) on a state Assembly hearing on improving elections across New York and listening to our many thoughtful allies as well as our own Aimee Allaud and Barb Bartoletti make suggestions and respond to questions.
- Visiting (along with Laura Bierman) a very community-minded couple who have supported the League for decades both as members and as donors and who presented us with a generous annual gift.
- Representing the state League at a cheerful and thoughtful board meeting of the Saugerties LWV and getting Krause locally-made chocolates as a thank you!
- Participating in my local League's informational meeting on Raise the Age with four fine panelists. It's a little trickier issue than I had realized.
- Hearing that the Governor just signed the legislation authorizing **the Women's Suffrage 100th Anniversary Commemoration Commission!** We can all thank Senator Betty Little for pushing this legislation through and putting the president of the LWV on the Commission. See the statement applauding the Governor for signing the legislation posted on our website.
- Lining up six great state League leaders to serve as honorary chairs of our OWN celebration of the 1917 winning of the vote in NY, the 1919 birth of LWVNYS, and the 1920 winning of the vote nationwide. They are Shirley Eberly, Emily Grant, Ruth Hinerfeld, Libby Hubbard, and Evelyn Stock.

I'm putting lots of miles on my Subaru and wearing out my ears on conference calls, but how gratifying it all is. Happy thanks-giving to all of us!

State and National LWV Studies

Three studies all due by December or early 2016 - what were they thinking!? Well, it's really not anyone's fault, just our own enthusiasm to be up to date in our positions, but it IS a challenge! Most of you seem to be doing our state **Raise the Age** concurrence, which is great. But more of you seem to be avoiding the two studies related to the new world created by Citizens United, namely the one that asks if a **Constitutional Amendment** to overturn is possible or even desirable and the other that asks how else we can control or counter the flood of **Money in Politics**. We had a great conference call in November to discuss the Amending the US Constitution Study and we have a conference call scheduled for **Monday, Dec. 14 at 7:00 pm to discuss the Money in Politics Study** – join us!

Voter Services Report: Judie Gorenstein, JudieL728@aol.com

Don't forget to complete and return your Voter Services Survey (attached) – boast about all the great work you did during this election season!

Issues and Advocacy Report: Sally Robinson, robintwins@gmail.com

With the backdrop of the United States District court house and the trials of former Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver and former Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos on federal corruption charges, the state

League held a press conference with our good government colleagues to press for comprehensive ethics reform. At the press conference we announced a letter to the Governor and legislative leaders giving a specific list of urgent reforms (posted on the state website and linked here: http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy/gov-reform/ethics-lobbying/2015/Letter-from-Civic-Groups-to-State-Leaders_111115.pdf). As most of you have been reading in the newspaper, the Silver trial has thrown a sad spotlight on the pervasive culture of Albany. That is what the League is hoping we can finally change this coming legislative session.

On a more positive note, Aimee Allaud the League's Election specialist testified before the New York State Assembly Election Law Committee on early voting and no-excuse voting (again, posted on the state website and linked here: http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy/election-law/2015/Testimony-to-NYSA-Election-Law-Early-Voting-No-Excuse-Absentee_111815.pdf). Here is an area where the League has traditionally been the leader around the country and we know there is much that can be accomplished in New York to bring our voting into the 21st century.

Advocacy Training/Lobby Day

This year we are going to combine our annual advocacy training day with an actual lobby day! Save the date of **Tuesday, April 26**, to come to Albany. We're still developing the exact schedule, but we are tentatively planning on presentations by our Issue Specialists on "hot topics" in the morning, lunch for networking, and then lobby visits with your own legislators to lobby our League priority issues (still to be determined). Watch for more info – but mark your calendar now!

Grassroots Lobby Director: Carol Mellor, carolmellor140@gmail.com

State Conference Call: LWVUS Study Money in Politics

Over 40 people joined the conference call in November to discuss the US Study on Amending the Constitution. The materials, including a Powerpoint presentation, are posted on the state website for all to use and review.

We are now offering a **conference call to all members to go over the LWVUS materials on the Money in Politics Study**. Results will still have to be reported by the local Leagues as Leagues to LWVUS by February 1. The conference call will be on **Monday, December 14, at 7:00 pm**. We need you to RSVP as soon as possible by email to Laura@lwvny.org that you want to be on the call and we will get back to you with information for the call. The LWVUS materials on the MIP review and update can be found at <http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/money-politics-review>.

Raise the Age Concurrence

Many local League have held meetings to discuss this concurrence – thanks! And, don't forget to complete and return your concurrence response form (attached). Materials, including a Powerpoint presentation, articles, etc, have been posted on the state League's website. We ask that each local League schedule a meeting **during the Fall 2015** to present the materials and ask members to concur with the OH position. The results will be due into the state office **by January 1** so that if agreement is reached, we can lobby on this new position during the next legislative session.

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

2016 Students Inside Albany Conference

The 2016 Students Inside Albany Conference will be held in Albany from May 22-25, 2016, at the Albany Hilton. **By December 15, local Leagues MUST tell the state office** (katrina@lwvny.org or 518-465-4162) if they are planning on sending a student or two students (or none). **We cannot hold a space for your student, unless you reserve that space in December.** Recruitment materials are posted on the Youth page of the state website (<http://lwvny.org/youth.html>). The forms to be completed by the student(s) selected by the local League will be available in January and MUST be returned to the state office by March 1, 2016.

New Emails for Listserves

The state League has just implemented a new email system in the office. Because of the new system, we had to create new listserv emails. Similar to the old listserv, if you would like to send an email to all chairs or officers in a local league, eg, Presidents, please use the new address for that group.

Here are the new email addresses for all of the group lists:

Presidents@lwvny.org

Bulletins@lwvny.org

Finance@lwvny.org

Advocacy@lwvny.org

Membership@lwvny.org

Education@lwvny.org

PR@lwvny.org

Treasurers@lwvny.org

Vote411@lwvny.org

Voterservice@lwvny.org

These lists are developed from the information you send to us in June/July each year with your local League officers, board and chairs. When an email from the state office is sent to one of these lists, we also always copy the Presidents' list so that the Presidents/Co-Presidents/Management Teams will receive all communication from the state League.

In the past, these addresses were posted on our state website. In order to reduce, or possibly avoid, spam emails, we will not be posting these addresses.

New Chocolate Treats



Announcing a new chocolate treat just in time for the holidays — the League logo chocolate.

The state League now offers customized logo chocolates to use for volunteer recognition or just a fun gift for your fellow League members. The chocolates are made at Krause's Homemade Candy in Albany, NY and shipped to you.

There is a minimum order of 10 chocolates and they can be made in milk, white, or dark chocolate. You can order multiple types of chocolate in one order (for example, 15 pieces with 5 white, 5 milk, and 5 dark). Chocolates arrive wrapped in cellophane bags and tied with ribbons.

The price is \$2/piece (includes tax) with additional shipping costs depending on how many you order:

- 10 – 80 pieces--\$2/piece with \$12 shipping
- More than 80 pieces--\$2/piece with \$20 shipping

Please call the state League office at (518) 465-4162 to place your order. The chocolates are custom made for each order so please allow one to two weeks for delivery.

Every Vote Counts, Every Donor Counts Project Update

The Every Vote Counts, Every Donor Counts voter and organ & tissue donor registration project is off to a fantastic start! To date, 25 local leagues have participated in an educational program on organ & tissue donation, and have agreed to participate in the project's activities and collect data at voter registration drives. Feedback received from both the voter registration and organ & tissue donation communities indicates an enjoyable and mutually beneficial partnership.

Voter registration drive data has been aggregated for year one of the project, which ended on August 31, 2015, with the bulk of the drives being conducted in August due to the later than anticipated distribution of the project's collateral materials. A breakdown of the data collected during project year one is as follows:

Overall Voter Registration Drive

- Data was reported from a total of 41 drives.
- 201 voter registration forms were completed and returned at these drives.
- 73 voter registration forms, or 36%, contained donor enrollments.
- 306 voter registration forms were distributed but not completed on site at these drives.

Keeping in mind that one donor can save the lives of up to 8 people through organ donation and help 50 or more people through the gift of eye and tissue donation, the impact of registered donors from project year one could potentially save the lives of 584 New Yorkers in need of an organ transplant and improve the lives of an additional 3,650 people in need of corneal or tissue transplants! Though overall 36% of voter registration forms during project year one contained donor enrollments, at the drives where a professional or volunteer from one of New York State's organ and tissue donation organizations was present, 53% of completed voter registration forms also contained donor enrollments. The presence of a donation community member greatly increased the percentage of donor enrollments on the voter registration form. Each organ and tissue donation organization in New York State serves a designated service area, or DSA that encompasses a number of counties. We encourage local Leagues to partner with the organ and tissue donation organization serving your area, particularly during high traffic drives, as we move forward with this project to ensure the greatest number of lives saved. More information will be available shortly to provide the partnerships between the local Leagues and the DSA.

Development: Kate Jankowski, Kate@lwvny.org

November is traditionally the time of year when donors start planning for and making their annual gifts so it is a busy time for any fundraising program. And the state League office is no exception. Currently, we have several opportunities for people to give to the Education Foundation:

Education Foundation 2015 Annual Fund Appeal

Right after Election Day, our annual letter asking for donations to the Education Foundation was mailed. This mailing is sent to over 4,000 people who have supported the Education Foundation in the past. It includes updates on our successes from the previous year as well as a glimpse of priorities for 2016. Please look for it if you haven't already seen it.

#GivingTuesday December 1, 2015

The state League Education Foundation will be participating in the #GivingTuesday movement for the third year in a row. On December 1, 2015, people around the globe will join together to demonstrate that generosity and giving are the focus of the holiday season. Since its founding in 2012, #GivingTuesday has inspired giving around the world, resulting in greater donations, volunteer hours, and activities that bring about real change in communities. We invite you to join the movement and to help get out and give this December 1. **And, to help us celebrate #GivingTuesday at the state League, a small group of donors has offered to match any gift we receive for #GivingTuesday.** Stay tuned for our email notices about this program as we get closer to December 1. To make a gift in support of #GivingTuesday, click here:

https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/4ALAnURS6LRDeI8cvUu58Q

LWVUS

LWVUS Database is finally active again!

The newly redesigned LWVUS database is now up again. They are slowly rolling out access to all local Leagues. **Local Leagues in NYS will have access as of December 7.** In order to get access, however, you have to have one of your members signed up as the Roster Manager (could be membership chair, treasurer, etc) and then she/he MUST complete a number of steps:

- An email alert two weeks in advance to remind you of your League's start date
- On the start date, you will receive an email invitation with detailed instructions on next steps and links to training materials and a **comprehensive demonstration video**.
- Once you have gone over the materials to familiarize yourself with the new database, you will be asked to take an easy six question survey.
- After you have completed the survey to acknowledge you have gone over the materials, you will be emailed a link to set up your new password. You will have 24 hours to access that link and set up your password. Your username will be the email address you used to sign up as a Roster Manager.

A staff member at LWVUS is available for ongoing support and to answer questions. Questions can be emailed to RosterSupport@lwg.org. If your local Leagues hasn't notified LWVUS as to who is the Roster Manager, contact Rostersupport@lwg.org. More info on the process is also available here: <http://forum.lwg.org/member-resources/article/new-lwvus-online-database-here> .

All prior data is in the new system and Leagues will only need to add new members or update information that has changed since May 2015. As usual, by January 31, 2016, you MUST have your roster up-to-date as the PMP charged for 2016-17 will be based on the members listed as "active" on January 31.

Also, Katrina in the state office has completed all the instructions and had access for the month of November – don't hesitate to contact her (katrina@lwvny.org or 518-465-4162) for assistance or if you have questions!

Money in Politics Materials

The final MIP background papers in the series have been posted. [Hard, Soft and Dark Money](#) presents ways used by outside groups try to influence elections through hard money, soft money and dark money and [Options to Reform Money in Politics](#) covers campaign finance reform strategies that are currently allowable in the wake of Supreme Court decisions. The [official MIP Consensus form](#) is also posted for Leagues to use to report their consensus reports. All these materials can be found on the [Money in Politics page](#). For additional information, please contact Barbara Zia, MIP Committee Chair at MIPCommitteeChair@lwv.org.

Constitutional Amendment (CA) Study Materials

Leagues that are preparing to hold CA Study meetings should check out [the Constitutional Amendment page](#) on the [League Management website](#), which includes the Study Guide, Consensus Questions and the [official CA Consensus form](#). The deadline for response forms is December 1, 2015.

Grants for Local Leagues to Register Students

LWVEF is pleased to announce a new pass-through grant opportunity to help Leagues register and engage high school/community college/technical/vocational school students in the spring of 2016. Friday, December 4, is the application deadline. State and local Leagues are encouraged to download the project description and funding application. If you have questions about completing your application, contact Maggie Bush (mbush@lwv.org). More info and the application form is available at: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/grants-available-youth-voter-registration>.