



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: December 2016

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

- **Update your roster in the LWVUS membership database regularly from now until January 31, 2017** to ensure correct PMP billing for FY2017-18. Always include membership expiration dates. Contact Katrina at the state office at Katrina@lwvny.org or 518-465-4162 for help.
- Complete and return the 2017 Legislative Agenda Survey **by Jan. 20, 2017 (deadline extended)**
- Send Bylaw Amendment proposals to the state office **by Feb. 20, 2017**
- **Schedule a community forum/membership meeting in Jan or Feb, 2017**, to present program on constitutional convention and upcoming ballot proposal (see website for materials)
- Complete and return **Program Planning form** to state office **by March 3, 2017** (see info below)
- Mark your calendar for **Lobby Day, April 25, 2017**, in Albany.
- Mark your calendar for **LWVNY State Convention, June 9-11, 2017, in Liverpool, NY** (read more details below).

100th Anniversary Dates

November 6, 2017	100 th Anniversary of Woman Suffrage in New York State
November 19, 2019	100 th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters of New York State
February 14, 2020	100 th Anniversary of National League of Women Voters
August 26, 2020	100 th Anniversary of the official certification of the ratification of the 19 th amendment by the US Secretary of State

League's State Convention Is Coming!

The 57th State League Convention is scheduled for June 10-11, 2017, at the Holiday Inn Express in Liverpool, NY (just off the Thruway near Syracuse). We will be sending out the registration kits in February. In the meantime, we need some help from our local Leagues and members.

Field Trip!

To celebrate women achieving the right to vote in 1917 in NYS, the state League is organizing a field trip from Liverpool to Seneca Falls on Friday, June 9 (day before Convention actually begins). This is

will a separate charge and everyone is welcome (not just convention attendees); tours of the Elizabeth Cady Stanton home, Women's Hall of Fame and the Women's Rights National History Park (and Wesleyan Chapel), as well as dinner and a speaker at an historic restaurant in Seneca Falls, will be included. You will need to be in Liverpool by noon on Friday to join this trip. Watch for more information in the registration kit.

Bylaws

Attached are the bylaws as amended at the last State Convention in 2015. Please discuss and forward any recommended amendments by **February 20** to the state office (Katrina@lwvny.org).

Program Planning

In a grassroots organization, it is vital that all members have the opportunity to participate. The League "Program" is determined by members and consists of federal, state and local issues. National issues are adopted at LWVUS Convention, state issues at LWVNYS Convention and local issues at local Leagues' annual meetings. This process provides every member an opportunity to influence new areas of study and the issues that will direct League action during the 2017-2019 League years.

A timetable and instructions are attached, as well as a summary of our current positions. Local Leagues should review this info and **MUST** respond by **March 3, 2017 (deadline extended)**, to retain or delete any positions, and to recommend updates, new studies or concurrences. **Changes in Program cannot be suggested for the first time at Convention.**

Workshops

Workshops will be organized for Friday evening, June 9, and Saturday morning, June 10. Please email the state office (Katrina@lwvny.org) with specific topics you would like us to offer as a workshop during Convention. Local Leagues and members can also offer caucuses or info sessions to share their own concerns or successes and times will be available for these also.

State Nominating Committee: Lisa Scott, Chair, lisawscott@gmail.com

It's never too early to think about leadership... defining roles, evaluating performance and planning for the future. **We need your help!**

As your LWVNY 2017 Nominating Committee, our charge is to present a slate of officers/directors at Convention in Syracuse next year (June 2017).

If you, or anyone you might recommend from your local League are interested in knowing more about getting involved in the wonderful and productive group of state leaders we have, please get in touch.

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

I want to sincerely thank the 27 Leagues who completed and returned their voter service surveys. We knew 2016 was an extremely busy time for voter service committees throughout the state but the surveys already received indicated some did more than we ever expected. All Leagues had conducted voter registration drives sponsoring between 2 to the 100 drives(LWV of NYC) and registering 20 to 3000 voters. Surprisingly, only one of the Leagues did not collect the forms and most of the Leagues hand delivered them to their BOE. All Leagues, other than two, held candidate nights, ranging from 1 to 5 of them. The majority of these nights were covered by the media, taped and aired. Although many Leagues had trepidation this year due to the extreme polarization of politics and the incivility

that was displayed at televised debates, our Leagues were able to sponsor well run, respectful, candidate nights. Only four Leagues had to cancel a candidate night and only three Leagues noted very, very minor problems that occurred during their forums. This was much less than in the past and I believe was a result of the very careful planning Leagues had done in setting , adhering to, and informing the candidates and audience of their written forum/debate policy.

Congratulations Leagues on a job well done! Most of you participated in Vote 411, distributed the state voter guide, participated in the organ donation program and tried to turn out the vote. Many also helped at naturalization ceremonies, registering new citizens. You educated and informed the public at the same time as you upheld our reputation of being nonpartisan position. Many of you also took the time to email your candidate night policies, your formats and other pertinent information as well as detailing your challenges, successes and ideas. The LWV of Utica /Rome included their detailed plans for preparing and hosting a candidate forum. This is attached as a template for others to use. For those who want to get a more detailed report including what were successes, challenges and new ideas Leagues recommended, contact JudieL728@aol.com to receive it.

As I have written so many times, we call all learn from one another. In 2016, we held voter service teleconference call and 22 of the reporting Leagues want these to continue. We also set up a voter service google group. While only 10 of the responders were members of that group this year, all but four indicated they want to join. I can promise now that in 2017, we will continue to hold teleconference calls and will make every effort to expand the use of our google group. The Road to the Voting booth will also be edited to reflect needed changes to help our local League hold successful voter drives and candidate nights.

2016 was a strong year for voter services. We will build on our successes and make 2017 even better!

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

Legislative Agenda

As in the last two years, we will create a Legislative Agenda booklet with a short description of many of the issues we're anticipating to work on during the next legislative session; the booklet will be available to all local Leagues in late January. Attached please find the annual survey on legislative issues; **the deadline to complete and return this survey has been extended until January 20, 2017.** We still want to hear from the local Leagues and our members what issues are most important to them. The responses help to ensure that our legislative activity is in line with our members' concerns.

Lobby Day 2017

Mark your calendars for Lobby Day 2017 on April 25 in Albany. We will hear from our issue specialists on "hot topics" and coordinate visits with your own legislators to lobby on issues.

Development: Kate Jankowski, kate@lwny.org

Online Gift Matching Challenge by the Board

From now until midnight on December 31, 2016, the LWNYS Board will match any gift we receive online up to \$10,000. Encourage members to take advantage of doubling their gifts! Please help us meet their challenge by donating online today. Click here to make your gift:

https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/pVB04lfnW649ZRVdNXGxlw

Also, remember that people can donate to your local League online (into your grants management account). Encourage them to give a tax-deductible gift to your League's educational grants management fund, using this link: [Local League EF Donations](#). They will be prompted to choose your local League when making your gift. Post this link on your website, facebook page or in letters – easy way to raise funds for your League. Your League's treasurer will receive an email notice when a donation is made to your League.

LWVUS

March in DC on January 21 – UPDATE as of Dec. 15, 2016

Thank you for the feedback that we have received from members both thanking the LWVUS Board for the decision to not officially participate in the Women's March on Washington and for those who have requested the Board reconsider the decision. There is tremendous passion and strong sentiments on both sides of this issue.

As leaders for our respective League organizations, we need to consider our participation through multiple lens – activists, influencers, and organizational leaders. As organizational leaders, protecting our brand and assets, as well as considering the safety of members and staff must be at the forefront of our thoughts. We have continued to monitor the media as well as engage in conversations with leaders of other organizations. Based on the information now available, we note:

- The national march organizers have obtained a permit and have engaged three veteran organizers of color into their leadership ranks.
- While the Women's March on Washington developed organically in the spirit of sisterhood post-election, there is a very real perception problem with the timing of this march. The day after inauguration, this event will be viewed by many as a protest against the incoming Trump administration. Because the League is a non-partisan organization, and we never endorse or oppose specific candidates, we cannot risk appearing to be an anti-Trump organization.
- March organizers have yet to release any details of safety or security measures being taken to protect the women and men who plan to march. The issue of risk and the seriousness of liability for organizations who elect to officially participate in the march is something we all need to consider especially since the national organization (s) planning the march are not visible. The issue of risk and liability is an issue for all Leagues.
- Organizers have not shared the names of any organizations officially partnering and participating in the festivities. While they promise to include nationally recognized advocates, the League has not been officially approached in any capacity.

We believe the intentions of the Women's March organizers are good – and we do not discourage private citizens from taking part in this event. At this time, LWVUS continues to monitor the plans for this event but we will not officially participate in the Women's March on Washington nor should state and local Leagues officially participate. There are still too many unanswered questions to help us safeguard our brand, assets, and the safety of members, volunteers and staff.

Chris Carson, President/Chair
League of Women Voters of the United States