



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: July 2016

If you are no longer President or on your local League board, please forward this to the appropriate board member – and be sure that your League has submitted the changes in your board to the state office.

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

- Complete and return local League Update form (attached) for new officers, board and portfolios to state office **ASAP**
- Complete and return order form (attached) for Voter Guide Part II **by September 1.**
- Contact the state office if you'd like to register voters at the **NY State Fair in Syracuse, Aug. 25 through Sept. 5** – we need volunteers!
- Set up your races in Vote 411 for the state primary on Sept. 13 **NOW** – contact Jennifer@lwvny.org for help.
- **National Voter Registration Day is September 27** (not Sept. 25 as listed in last month's SBU – sorry for the error)
- **Schedule a membership meeting in the Fall, 2016**, to consider the state update on legislative procedures – more info below and packets being mailed later this summer.
- Mark your calendar for **LWVNYS State Convention, June 9-11, 2017**

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

We know this continues to be a very busy time for voter services as Leagues prepare for voter registration drives, National Voter Registration Day on Sept. 27, Candidate Nights and try to turn out the vote. We also are all aware how critical it is that we not only are nonpartisan but are perceived this way by candidates, political parties and the public. Although the eight Leagues who held candidates nights for the primaries (Broome and Tioga Counties, Hamptons, Huntington, Nassau County ILO, Port Washington/Manhasset, Oneonta, Cooperstown, Syracuse) all had written recording and airing policy, there were still problems and concerns that arose. Even though it is impossible to enforce our policy, 100% of the time, there are many things we can do to help us remain in control. What is the best way to handle the situations? We began the conversation on lwvnysvoterservice google group last month but only very few people responded.

In an effort to help as many Leagues as possible, there is a brief survey attached which I hope Leagues will complete and email it back so we can help you plan for your fall voter service activities.

In the meantime, as you help register voters, here are some important things to remember:

1. If a person is reregistering to change their name, address or party, if they want to be enrolled in a party, even if it is the same one they were previously enrolled in, they must check that box.
2. Any person who is changing their party affiliation, even if they were not previously enrolled, between now and Oct. 14, 2016, will not be enrolled in that new party until after the general election in November, 2016 (effective for 2017 primaries).
3. No longer must a person indicate their sex on a voter registration form. Questions 6 (phone number) and 7 (email address) were optional. New voter registration forms now have question 5 (sex) as optional.
4. We can never be too careful in being nonpartisan. Do NOT EVER give any indication that you support or oppose a candidate or party.

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

Legislative Procedures Update

The packet of info and update questions are being finalized currently and all will be mailed to each local League (one paper copy mailed and electronic to all). **Each local League should schedule a membership meeting in the fall to discuss the issues of this update.** The issues concern outside income by legislators and lengths of terms. Local League responses will be due by December 15 so that, if a revised position is accepted, we can use this updated position to lobby during the 2017 legislative session.

Local League Update

Attached is the annual Local League Update form. **Please complete and return to the state office as soon as possible.** Even if your officers or board have not changed, please complete and return the form. This information is crucial to communication between the state and local Leagues. Group email lists are developed from this form to ensure that appropriate communication from the state League goes to the correct local League contact.

Thanks to the following Leagues who **have** submitted their officer and board lists; **if your League isn't listed, submit your form NOW:**

Albany	New Castle	St. Lawrence
Brookhaven	North Country	Suffolk County ILO
Buffalo/Niagara	North East Westchester	Syracuse
Cazenovia	Rensselaer	Tompkins
Chautauqua	Rivertowns	Utica /Rome
Cortland	Saratoga	Wayne County MAL
East Nassau	Scarsdale	White Plains
Huntington	Somers	

Voter Guide Part II

The Voter Guide Part II will be available in late September. This Guide will include some general voting information, but also candidate information for the Presidential, Vice Presidential and US Senate races candidates. Be sure to get your order in by September 1 to be included in the limited supply. Those local Leagues which participate in the organ donor registration project can receive 300

copies for free and additional copies at half price – but you still must complete and return the order form by Sept. 1.

New York State Fair, Aug. 25 through Sept. 5

The state League has acquired a table at the New York State Fair, held in Syracuse from August 25 through September 5. We will be coordinating this table with the organ donor organizations to help increase both voter and organ donor registrations. We will also provide information about the upcoming election – to get out the vote! Finally, League membership information will be distributed. Come join the fun – we need volunteers for as much or as little time as you'd like. We will provide entrance and parking passes. Contact the state office NOW if you'd like to volunteer!

Program and Policy Director, Jennifer Wilson, jennifer@lwvny.org

Vote 411

Jennifer has emailed all local League Vote 411 chairs with information about the process for Vote 411 this election season. Please check with your Vote 411 chair and encourage him/her to begin the process and set up the races, etc. The state League has developed the questions to be asked of all state Assembly and Senate candidates – and other optional questions that you may use if you wish. They are as follows:

Required to be asked of all NYS Assembly and Senate candidates:

- Priorities: What would be your top three priorities?
- What further changes, if any, to campaign finance and ethics rules in New York State do you propose? Please explain.
- What election reforms would you support, such as: early voting; voting by mail; better ballot design; and voter registration modernization?

Optional:

- Economy: What steps would you propose at the state level regarding income inequality, while maintaining an environment that encourages economic growth?
- Energy Policy: What steps would you propose to secure the state's energy needs while protecting the local and global environment?
- Transportation: What steps would you propose to maintain the state's transportation infrastructure?
- Constitutional Convention: Would you support holding a Constitutional Convention in 2017? Please explain.

The State League will be covering races where there is no local League participating in Vote 411 – **but we will still need your help in urging the candidates to submit their answers and participate in Vote 411.** Contact Jennifer if you have questions.

Lobby Day Update (report missed last month): Madeline Zevon, Chair of LWVNYS Healthcare Committee Report

On May 24th five members of the Health Care Committee of Westchester travelled to Albany to lobby for the single-payer bill, New York Health. Ruth Goldberg, Harriet Slivka and Madeline Zevon from White Plains, Betsy Rosenthal from Larchmont and Carol Schneebaum of Dobbs Ferry. Lobby Day was coordinated by the Campaign for New York Health which is made up of many organizations

including doctor groups, nurses, unions and the League to name just a few. There were 40 lobby teams, each with four to five members.

It was a great, exciting day - democracy in action. As a result of our efforts the Assembly voted 86-53 to pass universal health care legislation in New York, making it the second time the bill passed in the Assembly. In the Senate there are 22 cosponsors making that only 7 votes away from passage in the upper house. (*July update: it did not pass the Senate prior to the end of session in June*)

Coincidentally, we ran into a group from Students Inside Albany with Laura Bierman, Executive Director of LWVNYS. The League was all over the Capitol.