



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 2016

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

- **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.
- Join us on **Nov. 10** in Albany for panel on NYS constitution (registration info below)
- Join us on **Nov. 17** in NYC for our annual Day at the United Nations (registration form attached)
- Complete and return Voter Service Survey **by Nov. 30, 2016**
- Complete and return the 2017 Legislative Agenda Survey **by Dec. 1, 2016**.
- **Schedule a community forum/membership meeting in Jan or Feb, 2017**, to present program on constitutional convention and upcoming ballot proposal (see below for more info)
- Mark your calendar for **Lobby Day, April 25, 2017**, in Albany.
- Mark your calendar for **LWVNYS State Convention, June 9-11, 2017, in Liverpool, NY.**

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

Praises be that the presidential campaigns are finally about to end and we will be able to VOTE soon! Thanks for all you did and are probably still doing to help your voters deal with this challenging election including perhaps working at the polls on November 8. It's been an election like no other in our memories.

You get one day to recover before heading to Albany to join us on **Thursday, November 10** for a program on New York's first constitution (see details elsewhere). As one savvy League member said recently, it is really hard to understand the present constitution and the whole constitutional convention debate without understanding where our state started.

I get to drive Jerry Benjamin to the event and hear all he has to say about the election and what it means for NY politics. You too may hear some of this talk in informal conversations with our fine panelists. The election will surely still be on everyone's mind and we'll all be eager for their insights.

But truly there IS life after the election and **eight League members were at the October 6-7 suffrage centennial conference in Waterloo/Seneca Falls** to learn more about what the League might do to celebrate. Nan Fogel and I from Mid-Hudson picked up Mary Berry and Jen Wilson in Albany and Barb Thomas and Patti Garrett drove out from Saratoga. We joined Carole Torok-Huxtable (Utica-Rome) and Joan Johnson (Syracuse). This created a very visible LWV presence at the conference.

The tour of historic sites on the 6th was inspiring and the speakers on the 7th further revved us up. We also had time to confer with other attendees about working together to promote this centennial throughout the state including in classrooms.

We hope every local League will be celebrating in some way next year and we'll be sending you more information soon about resources you might not have found yet. For sure go to <http://www.nywomenshistory.com/> and click on all the menus to see lots about what's going on. You can also go to the Path Through History part of the I Love NY site for additional info at <http://paththroughhistory.iloveny.com/themes/womens-rights/#.WA9w-y0rKM8>. NYS Parks and Rec is also well worth a visit at <http://nysparks.com/historic-preservation/heritage-trails/womens-heritage/default.aspx>. No matter what part of the state you're in, there's something special to celebrate right there and people eager to work with you.

And be sure to put this on your calendars right now. On **Friday, April 21** in Hyde Park, SUNY New Paltz with us and others will be kicking off a **two-day conference** on women in the past, present and future. Our new-ish **LWVUS executive director, Wylecia Wiggs Harris**, will be there and we are planning a **luncheon** with her before the conference starts on Friday. All who meet her are impressed and we know you will be too. Watch for details next month.

Finally, if you're not on one of our Centennial subcommittees (education, events, LWV history update, and fundraising) but want to be, just let us know. There is much fun to be had - and LWV visibility and funds to raise - in working across local League boundaries on such a great topic! How lucky we are to be League members right now.

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

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 wish to thank not only the voter service chairs and committees who have worked so diligently this fall to engage and encourage citizens to be informed voters, but all the League members, participating in voter registration drives, candidate forums, and Vote 411, who were able to not only be nonpartisan but were perceived as being nonpartisan. This has been a particularly challenging year and from what I have heard, our Leagues and members have made every effort to achieve our mission.

LWVNYS has also made every effort to get relevant information to the Leagues; i.e., the one day extension to Sat. Oct. 15, that allowed people to register at their BOEs and the extension to Oct. 29 for newly naturalized citizens to register at their own county BOEs. Local League chapters have also been informing LWVNYS of their successes as well as challenges. The League MAL Unit of St. Lawrence County reported that their County Board of Elections had acted on the feedback that the League had given them regarding problems on the presidential primary day and had fixed those problems for the other primaries. They also had gotten good publicity by donating 16,000 “I Voted” stickers to their BOE. The LWV of Broome County alerted us to an issue they were having with local media airing only a portion of the video from their MTC night. What are the FCC regulations that licensed media need to follow when showing “clips”? Are there guidelines for our local Leagues regarding FCC regulations? As of now, this issue is not included in detail in our Road to the Voting Booth II. This is only one of the things we will be looking into in 2017.

For now Leagues are engaging in turning out the vote and some are still holding candidate forums. I know many of you will be working tirelessly through Election Day. However, after Nov. 8, it is important for the local Leagues to complete and return the Voter Service Survey to LWVNY@lwvny.org. The completed survey (attached) is due November 30. We will be using your surveys as we begin to edit Road to the Voting booth in 2017. Yes, democracy is not a spectator sport and we will continue to work together.

Election Protection Hotline

This year with their being talk of rigged elections, we should remember to let people know about Election Protection. The Election Protection hotlines, 866-OUR-VOTE (led by the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law), 888-VE-Y-VOTA (led by NALEO Educational Fund) and 888-API-VOTE (led by APIAVote & Asian Americans Advancing Justice—AAJC) are nationwide, non-partisan toll-free voter assistance helplines available to anyone to promote. Voters can call the hotlines to receive answers to their questions and report problems to be addressed by trained Election Protection volunteers. More information is attached.

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 January. Attached please find the annual survey on legislative issues; please complete and return this survey **by December 1, 2016**. 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.

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

Legislative Procedures Update

Each local League President/Co-Presidents received the packet of info and update questions (one paper copy mailed and electronic to all) to complete consideration of an “update” to the state League position on Legislative Procedures. **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.

Voter Guide Part II

The Voter Guide Part II is now available and has been distributed. **We still have a good supply so we’ll provide them free to our local Leagues, if you pay for the shipping** – call Katrina now to receive more! This Guide includes some general voting information, but also candidate information for the Presidential, and US Senate races candidates. It has been posted to our website.

Constitutional Convention Educational Program

We continue to work with the Rockefeller Institute on their educational programs related to constitutional convention (con con). Susan Arbetter of WCNY (PBS in Syracuse) has aired a 6 part series on the issues of con con. The schedule of airings is as follows (archived episodes are available at <http://www.wcny.org/connect-ny/>):

May 16, 2016

NY’s Constitutional Convention: Halley’s Comet of Change

June 2016

Re-imagining New York: Environment

July 2016

Re-imagining New York: Crime & Punishment

August 2016

Re-imagining New York: Ethics & Power

September 2016

Re-imagining New York: Education

October 2016

Con Con 2017: From Imagination to Reality?

Episodes of Connect:NY air Mondays at 9 p.m. on WCNY, and on local PBS stations across New York. The programs are available via streaming at wcny.org.

League Con Con Educational Program

The state League is developing a power point presentation and briefing paper, with additional resources, to be distributed to all local Leagues in November. We are asking all local Leagues to schedule a full community forum **in January or February, 2017**, to present the materials or host a speaker on the topic. We will also include a form to be completed by the local League on the comments or discussion that follows the educational program. The state League Board will be using these comments as they discuss at their March meeting whether the state League should support,

oppose or remain neutral on the ballot proposal of the constitutional convention (on the ballot in November 2017). Plan a meeting and watch for the materials.

Special Exhibit and Panel Discussion on Original NYS Constitution: Nov. 10

From Nov. 8-27, 2016, the Archives Partnership Trust Foundation has arranged for a special exhibit of the original NYS Constitution at the NYS Museum. The League has joined the Foundation in organizing a panel discussion of the history of the NYS Constitution, including its original creation and adoption – and changes since first ratified in 1777; this presentation will be held **at the NYS Museum on Thursday, Nov. 10, at 5:30 pm.** Panelist include **Gerald Benjamin**, Associate Vice President for Regional Engagement and Director of the Benjamin Center for Public Policy Initiatives at SUNY New Paltz, and **Peter Galie**, professor emeritus of political science at Canisius College in Buffalo, with Susan Arbetter, Director, News and Public Affairs at WCNY and Host of The Capitol Pressroom, moderating the discussion. Please advertise the event with the attached flyer – and view the original NYS Constitution at the Museum.

League Day at the United Nations: Thursday, Nov. 17

The annual League Day at the United Nations is being held on **Thursday, November 17.** The day includes a tour of the UN facility and a delicious lunch in the Delegates' Dining Room. The highlight is the two briefings presented by experts from the UN. This year's briefings are on Anti-terrorism and Sexual Assault in Conflict Areas. A registration form is attached and people may register online at: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/INvmPPc4Hpebf0PLNzaRnw. Join us for a fun, educational and delicious day!

New State Membership Brochure

All Presidents and one Co-President of each local League should now have received a package from the state League with 50 copies of the new LWVNYS Membership Brochure. The brochure is generic for NYS. The activities listed are general as to what all Leagues perform and the quotes and photos are from members in NYS. We included a list of all local Leagues in NYS, as well as instructions to go to the state website to join or find a local League and join that local League.

We also provided a template for an insert that you might want to consider. I attached an electronic version of the template to the email last week. The idea is that you can put local info, eg, board, officers, upcoming events and programs, on one side and a membership application or dues info on the other side. The insert would be the size of one of the panels of the brochure so it could be slipped into the brochure for your local League. You can also update the insert each year – yet the brochure remains timeless. If you need help formatting or printing the insert, call Katrina at the office (518-465-4162) and she can help you.

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

Vote 411 (<http://www.vote411.org/>)

Vote411 is now live! Currently all federal and state races are live on the website. You will also find many local races happening in towns, villages, and cities throughout the state. Thank you so much to all our local Leagues that worked so hard to get candidates to participate. This really is a fantastic resource and I encourage all of you to take a few minutes and find out who is on your ballot. I was surprised to see just how many local races I would be voting on here in Albany and was very happy that I had the opportunity to survey these candidates before I head to the polls on November 8th.

We've had great publicity on Vote411 this year. Stewart's once again has advertised the program on their **milk cartons** for the month of October. We also distributed **rubber bracelets** with the website listed on the side. This month we ordered **license plate frames** with the League name and website. You can order a license plate cover for yourself through the state League office. Our local Leagues have done advertising of their own with many Leagues sending press releases out to their local media outlets and talking about the program at their candidate forums.

I have some unfortunate news about our partnership with Google this year. After reviewing the different state's guides Google decided not to partner with us this year because they felt some states had questions that appeared partisan. Luckily it was not any League in this state but we are disappointed that Google chose not to work with us. National has informed us that next year Google will reevaluate our questions and responses and may work with us in the future. Nevertheless, we are proud of what you all accomplished this year and we hope that there will be a lot of traffic on the site as we come into the final stretch of election season.

Campaign for Fiscal Equity Walk from NYC to Albany

Alliance for Quality Education (AQE) finished their march to Albany this month to protest the unfulfilled court-mandated state education funding with a large rally outside of the Court of Appeals building in Albany. Laura, and our Education and Finance Specialist, Marian Bott, and I were in attendance. A special shout out to Marian who participated in a significant portion on the march. Also thank you to our Long Island, Mid-Hudson, and Saugerties Leagues who participated in the events surrounding the walk.

After the rally, the walkers marched to Governor Cuomo's Albany office. They flooded his waiting room with "overdue" notices and chanted their demand for full funding for CFE. It was truly an unforgettable display and it received significant media coverage in Albany. Kudos to AQE and their supporters for organizing such an impactful event!

Foundation Aid Forum at Rockefeller Institute

On October 18th Marian Bott and I attended a forum at the Rockefeller Institute on New York State's Foundation Aid Formula. The panel included a school finance strategist who advises states on the best way to improve their formula to maximize results, the chief financial officer for the Syracuse City School District, director of education and research of NYSASBO (New York State Association of School Business Officials), and the chair of the Regents Subcommittee on State Aid. The event focused on the improvements that could be made to our state formula for education funding and the specific challenges New York faces because of our diversity. For more information about the forum visit the Rockefeller events site [here](#).

100th Anniversary Celebration Committees

Events Subcommittee: Joan Johnson, jaj62@twenvy.com; Barb Thomas, barb.lwv@nycap.rr.com

The responsibilities of the 100th Anniversary Events Committee include organizing and implementing educational programs to celebrate women's suffrage history beginning in 2017 (women in New York State were granted the right to vote on November 6, 2017) and the NYS League centennial in 2019. Our goals include organizing and assisting with celebratory activities sponsored by the state League and other organizations including the New York Museum, New York State Council for the Humanities, New York State Archives Partnership Trust, National Women's Hall of Fame, Women's Rights National Historic Park and numerous local organizations across the state. We also will work

with local Leagues assisting with programs and providing toolkits for local Leagues to plan and carry out programs including regional events among local Leagues.

We have had several conference calls beginning in June 2016 and now are on a schedule for monthly calls. The discussions have been productive and ideas for events are endless. They include bus tours to various sites connected with women's suffrage, re-enactments by actors portraying suffragists, speakers and participation in parades etc. across the state. Several events are already in the works including events in Albany and in connection with the LWVNYS Convention in Syracuse next spring. Committee members Barbara Thomas, Pattie Garrett and Joan Johnson along with League President Dare Thompson and LWVNYS staff member Jennifer Wilson attended the Women's Suffrage Conference in Waterloo (Seneca Falls) on October 7th. We were pleased to learn that there are so many resources available to us and that so many organizations have planned events to celebrate New York State's role marking this historic event.

The key to our work as a committee will be publicity. The committee has discussed the design of a logo/tag line, Face Book and Twitter accounts, and a YouTube video and other methods to reach out to the public. Our goal is not only to bring attention to our past, but to look to the future and reach out to the next generation.

Local Leagues can apply for funding of activities and programs from the NY Council for the Humanities (it will actually be through your grants management account so be sure to contact the state office if you decide to apply). There are grants for your activities, but also two special programs that are fully funded by the Council: Community Conversations, which promotes thoughtful, engaged community dialogue of a specified topic, using a short text and a facilitator from the local community; and Public Scholars, offering a selection of dynamic, compelling presentations facilitated by humanities scholars. For more information, go to their website at: <http://www.nyhumanities.org/>.

LWVUS

Get out the Vote! Sample Visibility Materials

Want to do your part to alert the media to your great election year resources? Please utilize our brand-new [Get-Out-the-Vote sample social media graphics and content](#), as well as our VOTE411.org/Get-out-the-Vote [template press release](#)! Make sure your community is ready to cast a vote, and help gain visibility for your League.

LWV.org has a new look!

You might notice some changes to the LWVUS website. This refresh to our online look, timed to take advantage of the uptick in traffic as we approach Election Day, is the first of many steps we plan to take to improve our engagement with new audiences. One major change of note is that instead of appearing at the top of the page, the "League Management" button, taking you to all the valuable members-only resources we have to offer, now appears as a red box at the bottom left of the www.lwv.org homepage. No changes have been made to the League Management (members-only) area of the site.

IRS Filing Deadline Fast-approaching for Many Leagues

Leagues – both operating funds (501c4) and education funds (501c3) – that receive less than \$50,000 in income must file an *e-postcard* return (also known as Form 990N) every year with the IRS. The *e-Postcard* is due every year by the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of your tax year. For

example, if your [tax year](#) ended on June 30, the *e-Postcard* is due **November 15**. For more information, please visit state League website for instructions:
http://www.lwvny.org/LLresources/inLeague/2013/UpdatedInstructions-%20990-N_62013.pdf