



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: April 2017*

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

- Join LWVUS in DC on **Sat (April 29)** for the Climate March or join a sister march; see more info at bottom of this email.
- Nominate your local League, committee or members to win an award at Convention; complete and return forms **by Monday, May 1 (deadline extended)**.
- Register for **LWVNYS State Convention, June 9-11, 2017, in Liverpool, NY** (read more details below) by May 18th.
- Mark your calendar for **Saturday, Nov 4<sup>th</sup>, to be in Albany!** We are hosting an opening reception at the NYS Museum to kick-off their special exhibit on women's suffrage history. Be sure to join us – it'll be a great celebration! More details shortly.

#### **100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dates**

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

A new packet of resources for local Leagues to organize programs and events on women's suffrage history has been mailed to every local League – and a new page has been created on the state website with links to all the info, as well as a calendar to see what events are scheduled, and a blog on significant events and locations in women's history in NYS. Check it out at: <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/womens-suffrage/index.html>.

#### **President's Report: Dare Thompson, [darethompson@gmail.com](mailto:darethompson@gmail.com)**

What a whirlwind these last few days have been for me as League president and how proud I've been of all of us - and of our past, present, and future.

Our past includes being a training ground and a life-long connection for Eleanor Roosevelt who served on the state board in its early years. It was "all Eleanor all the time" last Friday as 50 of us gathered at the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill, her home at Hyde Park, to have lunch with our new-ish LWVUS executive, Wylecia Wiggs Harris, hear some inspiring words from her (see elsewhere for more on that), and tour Val-Kill. You came from all over to be there - three of you from Chautauqua! - and there was much joy and excitement.

At 4 pm that day many others of you joined a crowd at the Wallace Center on the FDR site not far from Val-Kill as the "Women in Politics: Past, Present & Future" conference that we helped plan with SUNY New Paltz got underway. Everywhere I looked in the crowd I could spot familiar League faces including many who had not been able to be at the lunch. A rather disturbing report on polling done by SUNY New Paltz on women's values and a powerful talk by US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand followed. See here: <http://www.twcnews.com/nys/hoodon-valley/news/2017/04/21/senator-kristen-gillibrand-helps-celebrate-100th-anniversary-of-ny-women-s-suffrage-movement.html> for TV coverage on the talk. We will report later on the polling.

During the wine and appetizer period that followed, "our" Wylecia gave a toast in which she expressed delight at being able to visit Val-Kill and learn more about the trailblazer that Eleanor was. "You are all trailblazers in your own right," she said as she encouraged us to keep fighting to make the hopes of our foremothers a reality and to honor "the past, present, and future" of women.

Allida Black, Research Professor of History and International Affairs at George Washington University and an expert on Eleanor Roosevelt, was the keynote speaker at dinner, and afterwards when we talked she said she'd help us create a program to train women to run for office, something she does in a week-long summer program at Yale.

The next day Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul greeted us and spoke in a very personal way about the need for women to believe in ourselves and to get out there and make a difference. A wonderful selection of panel discussions followed and after I debrief with the SUNY organizers, I'll try to share more with you about them.

And then Tuesday I saw a whole new gathering of League members at the Capitol as we got updates on our issues from Barb Bartoletti, Jennifer Wilson and Laura Bierman; watched Jennifer manage a well-attended press conference on election law reform; and then go lobby our legislators. It's always a little crazy in Albany on Tuesdays but a lively time was had by all.

What a pleasure to see so many of you during these few days. Keep up your enthusiasm and very good work. We're a pretty lively bunch for being almost 100!

### **LWVUS CEO Talks to Us At Val-Kill**



At a luncheon for 50 League members at the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill ([ervk.org](http://ervk.org)), Wylecia Wiggs Harris expressed enthusiasm about her job as CEO of the national League and was honest with us about the significant challenges we face.

She was happy to report that at the end of January, even before the full effects of the November election were felt, **our membership was already up 7% while new Leagues were being formed and more new members were still coming.**

But while we end the first century of LWV history strong, she challenged us to start our next century even stronger. We have always been evolving, but **as change picks up speed, we need to move beyond evolution to transformation.** Many new members are younger and more action-oriented than current ones. We want to retain them and to prepare for the next generation of members. We also need to be sure that our relevance is evident to those outside the League. We need greater diversity in age, ethnicity, and perspective.

Wylecia spoke of letting go of past mistakes - "There are no perfect organizations, no perfect people." We also need to evaluate which elements of our deep culture serve us well and which don't.

Finally she spoke with passion about reclaiming **our role at all levels of League as the premier authority on election reform**. With increased competition from younger, more agile organizations, we must vigorously defend our core issues and our role in election reform at the national, state and local levels.

The conversation about our "transformational journey" began with LWVUS board and staff and continued with the 2016 Convention, a board-appointed committee tasked with elevating the discussion, and a retreat in Pocantico Hills (NY) early this year. Our board president and secretary, Dare Thompson and Jane Park, and our executive director, Laura Bierman, were among the 30 or so Pocantico participants.

Questions included in all this talk:

1. How do we provide more community facing time for local Leagues by shifting administrative responsibility elsewhere?
2. Do we need to engage individuals differently in micro volunteer activities to hook them into League.
3. How might we need to change our economic engine to ensure all levels of League are success

The conversation will continue at LWVUS Council 2017 in June.

## **League's State Convention Is Coming!**

**HAVE YOU REGISTERED FOR CONVENTION AND/OR THE SENECA FALLS TRIP? DO IT NOW!**

The 57<sup>th</sup> State League Convention is scheduled for June 10-11, 2017, at the Holiday Inn Express in Liverpool, NY (just off the Thruway near Syracuse). The Registration Kit is now available on the state website (<http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Registration-Kit-2017.pdf>) and has been attached. If you are unsure as to how many delegates your local League is entitled, please call the state office. Encourage all members to attend, even if as Visitors or for free to the workshops!

### **Pre Convention Kit**

The Pre Convention Kit is available today (attached) and will be posted on the state website. Members who have registered for Convention will review a paper copy in the mail. This document has all the important information to be discussed at the Convention's plenary session: Nominations for State Officers and Board, Proposed 2017-18 Budget, Proposed Bylaw Amendments, and Proposed Program (including a proposed update to an existing position and a proposed concurrence). Attendees are URGED to bring this Kit with them to Convention. This Kit also describes the many workshops and information session that will be available – come join to learn what other local Leagues are doing! All members should review the Kit from the website and discuss their concerns or support with their delegates attending convention.

### **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. The Registration Form for this tour is also posted on the website (<http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Suffrage-Tour-Registration-Form.pdf>) and attached to this email.

### **Volunteers are Needed!**

Volunteers are needed to help at the state Convention. You should all send as many voting delegates as you are entitled, but if you have others that want to attend only part of Convention, encourage them to become volunteers. Here are some reasons why:

- Delegates can volunteer during non-plenary hours.

- Visitors can volunteer during plenary and observe plenary at no charge.
- Volunteering is a great way to meet and network with fellow Leaguers.

Contact Joan Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator, at 315-488-4339 or by email at [jaj62@twcny.rr.com](mailto:jaj62@twcny.rr.com).

Anyone can attend the workshops on Saturday, June 10, in the morning, and, if they register as a Visitor, may observe the plenary sessions. Volunteers will be allowed to attend plenary also, as space permits.

## **Awards**

**The deadline for the forms is this Friday, but we'll give you until Monday to get them into the state office!**

Your local League has accomplished some amazing things these past two years! You know it, and you need to get recognized for your hard work. Submit a Nominating Application to win an award for your hard work. The award categories are as follows:

- Carrie Chapman Catt Visibility And Leadership Award
- Inez Milholland Women's History Award
- Susan B. Anthony Making Democracy Work Award
- Victoria Woodhull Get Out The Vote Award
- Eleanor Roosevelt Youth Program Award
- Harriet Tubman Off The Beaten Path Award

The forms are attached and available on the state website homepage at: <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Award-forms-2017.pdf>.

**State Office, Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director, [Laura@lwvny.org](mailto:Laura@lwvny.org)**

### **Local League Updates**

Attached please find the annual form to complete to update your officers and board with the state office. It is very important that you complete and return this form – this is the list we use to send out information, alerts, etc, to the local Leagues. Don't miss receiving our emails! Please also provide the name of the person in your local League who is researching your own local League history and helping to celebrate the centennial of women's suffrage and of the League of Women Voters in NYS.

### **Voter Guide Part I – Taking Orders Now**

Part I of the League's Voter Guide will be available in the next few weeks. Please complete the attached order form to ensure that your League receives this Guides. They are especially helpful at voter registration drives throughout the summer. Order yours now! As in the past, local Leagues who are participating in the organ donor registration project can obtain 300 Guides for free – and reduced cost for additional Guides.

### **Organ Donor Registration Project**

Stipends for participating in the organ donor registration project are again available. The stipends are the same as last year: **\$25** for each voter registration drive in which you return the form (attached) up to a maximum of \$200 (BUT don't stop sending the forms in after you reach the \$200 – NYAD still needs the statistics on how many registered for organ donation); **\$100** if you coordinated a drive with the area organ donor organization (contact the state office if you need their contact info again); **up to \$250** to reimburse the expense of hosting a voter registration drive at a NEW location in your area. Earn money for your local League while also helping to educate the public about this other type of registration! And, you have the extra bonus of getting Voter Guides for **free**! If your local League isn't participating, contact the state office and we'll tell you how you can join the partnership.

## **End of Year Gifts**

For end of year gifts to outgoing board members or speakers, don't forget that we have delicious chocolates in the shape of the League logo for sale at \$2 each. Call Katrina at the state office to place your order.



We also have 2 new buttons for sale. The first is similar to the regular League button but has OBSERVER CORPS across the bottom – this is great for members of your local Observer Corps to be recognized at local public meetings.

We also are selling the new 100 Year Anniversary buttons from the state office. All buttons are \$1 each plus tax and shipping.



## **Legislative Action, Jennifer Wilson, Director of Program and Policy,**

**[jennifer@lwny.org](mailto:jennifer@lwny.org)**

### **Advocacy Training/Lobby Day**

This year's Lobby Day was a major success! Thank you to all of the members who spent their Tuesday in Albany lobbying for voting reforms, health care, women's issues, and environmental conservation. Although the day was a bit chaotic, we managed to fit in a very exciting press conference on the need for comprehensive voting reforms. Several legislators attended and spoke at the event including Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins. Many media outlets attended and we received a significant amount of attention on social media. Over all it was a very fun day and we were delighted to see so many eager League members meet with their legislators. Photos and the handouts from the training will be available on the website shortly. If you attended Lobby Day please don't forget to send your Lobby Report to Jennifer at [Jennifer@lwny.org](mailto:Jennifer@lwny.org)

### **Legislative Update**

The budget passed earlier this month after a 9 day delay. The legislature included many progressive reforms in the budget package including Raise the Age, College Affordability Plan, Uber for Upstate NY, and a \$2.5 billion investment in water infrastructure. Unfortunately ethics and voting reforms were not included in the final package. You can read our full analysis of the final budget package on our blog [here](#).

Now that the budget has passed and session has resumed, we will be focusing on our push for voting reforms. We are adamant about getting something done on voting before the end of session. We have already held a large press conference on the issue and will now focus our efforts on trying to work with Senate Republicans and the Independent Democratic Conference.

### **VOICES App**

You can help us with our advocacy agenda by downloading our new app on your phone (iPhone or Android). **Voices is a political advocacy app that shares action alerts from the League directly to your phone.** These action alerts will allow you to quickly call, email, or tweet at your legislator with the touch of a button. The alert will provide you with a sample script, email, or tweet and give you the power to lobby on these issues quickly and easily. You can download the app to your smart phone or tablet by using this link: <https://tryvoices.com/lwnys> or by searching "Voices: Political Advocacy" in the **Apple App Store** or **Google Play** on your cell phone. Please download the app so that you can help us take action as we move forward this session.

## **\Vote 411**

Elections are coming up this spring! Ensure that you have the current login and password for your Vote 411 page. Contact [Jennifer@lwny.org](mailto:Jennifer@lwny.org) for your login, help with your pages, and information about how to participate. The state League pays \$9,000 for the full license, but only charges the local Leagues \$25 for their access. Don't wait until this summer to set up your election page.

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

This is the time Leagues should be reviewing and amending their policies for candidate nights. Remember that a carefully written statement that is shared with candidates and the press is the foundation for a successful event and can prevent problems from occurring. There will be a caucus the Friday night of LWVNY convention where League members can share their concerns, solutions and recommendations for updating Road To The Voting Booth II. If you will not be able to attend the caucus and have ideas you would want to be discussed, please email them TO [JUDIEL728@AOL.COM](mailto:JUDIEL728@AOL.COM).

This is also the time that Leagues should be reaching out to their local high schools to register seniors. Leagues are encouraged to get contact information for the students in order that you may send them a reminder to vote. This is especially important this year when we are having local elections that are not as publicized as a presidential election. Do you want some new ideas on getting out the youth vote? Attend our Saturday morning workshop at convention.

Voter Guides Part I has been finalized and will be available. In it, we mention the two propositions that will definitely be on the ballot. One is the NYS constitutional Convention. The second is reducing or revoking pensions of public officials who have been convicted of felonies related to their official duties.

LWVNY certainly does make a difference. On May 3<sup>rd</sup> we will be receiving the Making THE Difference Award from Live On NY for our work in enrolling organ donors at our registration drives. Thanks to all the Leagues who have participated in getting donors through this program. We encourage all Leagues to continue enrolling donors. This program not only helps save lives but can earn money for your League.

## **From LWVUS**

### **New Google Discussion Group: Health Care Reform**

As the fight for health care continues, what is next for advocates at the state and national levels? The LWVUS Board recently approved a new a Google discussion group for Health Care Reform. This discussion and sharing group for League members on health care reform, including behavioral health, welcomes ideas, resources, successes and questions. To receive an invitation to the group please contact Linda Hawkins at [abitahawk@gmail.com](mailto:abitahawk@gmail.com) or Linda Mahan at [Lmahan78@gmail.com](mailto:Lmahan78@gmail.com).

### **Last Chance and DC Meeting Spot: Climate March April 29**

This Saturday, the League will participate in the 2017 People's Climate March (Washington, DC). We will meet in front of The Newseum at 10AM. If you are planning to attend the March in Washington, please let us know by filling out this form. We hope to see you in DC on April 29 or at a Sister March! Questions may be directed to Emily Yost ([eyost@lww.org](mailto:eyost@lww.org)).