



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: January 2017

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

- 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 and response form is attached)
- 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 **LWVNYS 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

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

For almost two days of intense small group discussions, scribbling on big sheets of paper, sending friendly spies to get info from other small groups, voting some big ideas up or down, laughing, swapping League stories, and eating wonderful food, a group of 30 League leaders from all parts of the US met last week at the Rockefeller Bros. Fund's Pocantico Center in Tarrytown, NY.

Our mission was to create a blueprint for Impact, Engagement and Sustainability for the League's second century and we felt pretty "pumped" about having done so much in so short a time. We were

building on work that was done by others since last June's Convention, and we'll continue to stay in touch and share new ideas as they come.

I want to tell you so much more but due process requires that this be shared in an orderly way. So I can just say to watch for more. We did all agree that we could share right now the three broad goals:

- 1) lessen the administrative burden on Leagues (I hear you cheering)
- 2) enhance engagement by offering and embracing multiple paths to affiliation with the League, i.e., make it easier to join, easier to get active (do I hear more cheering?)
- 3) strengthen our overall structure by re-imagining our financial structure (well, of course)

You know that the devil's in the details - mostly the How's - and those are to come.

But, as we glanced now and then at our phones and groaned, "Oh no!" about the latest news from D.C., we were all feeling so strongly that the League is needed now more than ever. We're being told so by the new people coming to us to say, "I've never been political before. How do I get involved?" They trust our information and they trust us. And we need to be our best selves both to meet their needs and to maximize this opportunity to grow.

I'm grateful to Laura Ladd Bierman and Jane Park for being there with me from LWVNYS and to all the other lively leaders. And being at the Rockefeller estate and actually staying in a room in Kykuit, JDR's former home, was such a treat. (Laura's even had a balcony). Among so many things, I will always remember the glittering view across the Hudson at night from the Pocantico Hills and the perfect warm-from-the-oven scones at breakfast. We sing praises to the Rockefeller Brothers Fund for their very generous hospitality and to LWVUS for organizing it all. We feel sure it will all pay off. "Stay tuned."

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 late 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@lwny.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.

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

The state League is already hard at work in the Capitol, meeting with legislators, presenting testimony and submitting memoranda. You can visit the state website every day to see what new action has been taken. Also, watch for weekly updates on [Capitol Beat](#), a blog written by Barbara Bartoletti, LWVNYS Legislative Director, and Jennifer Wilson, LWVNYS Director of Policy and Program during the legislative session. The blog link is on the state website and here: <http://www.lwvny-capitolbeat.blogspot.com>

New Legislative Procedures Position

The state board approved a new updated Legislative Procedures position at its January meeting which is attached and will be posted on the state website today. Many thanks to update committee chair, Suzanne Stassevitch of the New York City League and committee members Lorrie Smith (Rensselaer) and Judy Weinstein (Rochester), and to all the local leagues who participated in the update. Our new position should be a great help for lobbying this session and in the future. Local leagues felt legislators should have longer terms but were concerned that legislators be held to a higher ethical standard than has been demonstrated recently. And, the state board may now consider supporting limits on the outside income of legislators.

Not Too Early to Schedule 2017 Lobby Visits

As in the last few years, we are asking local Leagues to set up appointments with their local legislators to lobby for League issues in their home districts during the legislative break, which this year is the middle two weeks of April, <http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy/2017/2017-Session-Calendar.pdf>, after the state budget is done. If more than one local League is covered by the member, please try and coordinate to have as many Leagues involved as possible.

These meetings are very important and they give the legislators an opportunity to learn about League positions from their constituents. Ask for 1/2 an hour, but be willing to take less and seeing a staff person is fine. We will be sending out information and response forms for the visits later in the session.

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.

Transportation Specialist: Gladys Gifford (schuford@earthlink.net)

The NYS Legislature has its opening session on January 4, 2017, and there are transportation issues to address this year.

First, a review of 2016:

The bad news: two bills we were following failed in the 2016 session. The O’Mara/Brindisi bill (S5794/A8202) was vetoed by Gov. Cuomo. Apparently he did not see the need to set up an interagency committee on rural public transportation and expects to deal with the issue during budget deliberations. The Rozic/Lanza bill (S07608/A09872) died in committee. This bill would require the NYSDOT Commissioner to develop a five-year capital plan subject to public review. One can only hope that it will be revived for the 2017 session.

There is good news. A bill to remove the mortgage recording tax from IDAs tax exemption packages (S07442/A09490) was signed into law by Gov. Cuomo on September 30th. This is good news for transit authorities across the state, so that this small revenue stream is protected. Transit authorities receive 0.25% of mortgage recording tax revenues generated in their local areas.

Going forward, there is momentum to do planning for a new Amtrak station in Buffalo, motivated by the decrepit condition of the downtown station. Senator Chuck Schumer and Rep. Brian Higgins are champions for this effort, so federal dollars will flow.

Meanwhile, the Tappan Zee project moves along and decisions are being made concerning the I-81 interstate that crosses Syracuse. Our local leagues— please let us know how to be involved!

Save the date: Transit Awareness Day in Albany on January 31, 2017, organized by New York Public Transit Association. I am planning to attend, and will carry the transportation concerns of the LWVNY with me. The day includes a briefing, legislative appointments, and a rally at the Legislative Office Building. Please contact me if you have any specific items for me to bring to the meeting and to our legislators at that time.

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

jennifer@lwny.org

Legislative Agenda Booklets

The 2017 Legislative Agenda is now available and posted on the state website. Copies have been mailed to each local League. Additional copies are available by contacting Katrina at the state office at 518-465-4162 or katrina@lwny.org.

NEW Advocacy Google Groups!!

The NYS League has set up two Advocacy based Google Groups. Members of the groups can share their ideas, articles, statewide bills of interest, and whatever else they feel is appropriate. We will also be arranging monthly conference calls as an opportunity to share ideas and for members to hear what we are doing at the state level. The most exciting part of these groups is it will be an excellent opportunity for the League to use its membership to lobby on pertinent legislation. We will send out

action alerts on specific bills in real time so that those interested in calling their legislators can do so exactly when the time is right.

We have already formed 2 groups - the first is a General Advocacy Group that will be headed by Jennifer and Barbara. We will use this group to keep you all up to date on the general happenings at the Capitol. The second group focused on Education issues. This group will be headed by our Education Finance Specialist, Marian Bott. If you are interested in either of these groups please email Jennifer@lwvny.org. She will add you to whichever group you would like to join - feel free to sign up for both!

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

LWVNY continues to strive to help our local leagues run successful candidate nights and also successful voter registration drives. More people than ever before appear to be paying attention to the election process. The LWV continues to get accolades about how well we run candidate debates/forums. Our Road to the Voting Booth has been a guide for our leagues but most recently questions as well as issues have arisen that this manual may not have adequately addressed. Therefore, this year we will be making revisions to Road to The Voting Booth and are looking to our local leagues and members for their ideas. Let's start the conversation!!!

- 1. What additional information do you need run a successful candidate night?*
- 2. What would you like to see covered in road to the Voting Booth that is not be there now?*
- 3. How can we capitalize on using social media and minimize the problems that it can present?*

Development: Kate Jankowski, kate@lwvny.org

Thank you to our many donors and supporters for their generous yearend contributions. Over 17% of our donors increased the amount of their yearend donation – that is especially good news because of all the new activities that are being planned in the office to educate the public on the issues. During the yearend match Challenge alone, we inspired 27 new donors to support our efforts. We couldn't do all that we do without your continued support, so thank you very much!

LWVUS

The national League has been incredibly busy recently issuing statements on voter fraud claims, the pipeline issue and the immigration ban. Follow their statements on their (and our) Facebook page or their website at www.lwv.org.