



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: June 2017**

**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](mailto:lwvny@lwvny.org) or call 518-465-4162)**

- 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.
- **Complete and return your Local League Officer and Board list to the state office by June 30.**
- Order the Voter Guide Part I **NOW** – it is available (order form attached)
- Sign up to receive the weekly LWVUS League Update from LWVUS President Chris Carson by emailing [database@lwv.org](mailto:database@lwv.org). It provides a wealth of info each week about LWVUS – do it now!

**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)**

I write this from outside Washington, DC where Judie Gorenstein (VP, Voter Services) and I are among the 1 or 2 delegates from each of 42 (!) states - from Alaska to Florida - that are here for the **LWVUS Council**. The whole 3-day event is devoted to transforming the League for our next century and builds on conversations started at Convention 2016 and continued at the Pocantico conference in

January which involved 30 LWV members and staff (including Laura Bierman, Jane Park, and me from NY).

Judie and I talked non-stop on the drive down about our state Convention and the forward-looking themes it embodied and about the issues local Leagues as well as the state League are dealing with. We still have many topics left for the drive home and will be eager to share with you many of the insights we'll glean here this weekend. The agenda is packed.

Meanwhile we are both so grateful to all of you who managed to get to Liverpool (Syracuse) earlier this month for the **state Convention**. An evaluation form was sent to you recently and we hope you'll respond. We always want to know how well we met your needs and what we can do better or just differently next time.

I could only attend the workshops that I was helping present, but the discussions that I heard there and in caucuses were very lively and always thoughtful, even when you had serious concerns to share. We know that **hearing from one another** is what you most love about Convention, so I hope you had plenty of opportunities for that and got many new ideas.

I also hope you enjoyed **Sally Roesch-Wagner's** speech about dangerous women, about the influence of the Native American's matriarchal culture on the suffragists, and about Matilda Joslyn Gage, who gets way too little credit for her brilliant contributions to the movement. We thank HumanitiesNY for sponsoring a talk that was full of surprises and challenges to us today.

The new board met only briefly after the Convention closed, with too little time to review all the "**directions to the board**," but these will be the topic of our July meeting. We will consider all of them and share our responses as soon as possible.

Many of us went to Seneca Falls the day before Convention and were incensed that recent federal funding cuts made some spaces less accessible to us (and in this important year, no less) but I'm hearing that the inspirational comments by **Elizabeth Cady Stanton (Melinda Grube)** really eased the blow and I've let her know how much many of you said you appreciated her. She donated personal time to sit and answer questions with each table during our good dinner at the beautifully restored **Gould Hotel**, and I think she enjoyed it as much as many of you did.

We are also grateful to our very warm and engaging organizer and tour guide, **Lynn "Spike" Herzig**, and we've made him a member of the **Geneva LWV** in appreciation. I also know we were all interested to hear from **Katie MacIntyre** that the first president of our trip's sponsor, Generations Bank, was a signer of the Declaration of Sentiments presented at the 1848 Convention there in Seneca Falls by Stanton et al. We thank **Generations Bank** for their good support of a great warm-up for our Convention.

I'm falling in love with Seneca Falls and will be heading back there for **Convention Days** July 14-16 which has an amazing assortment of lectures and other presentations. Melinda (Elizabeth Cady Stanton) says that the **Frederick Douglass** whom they're bringing in from some distance away is especially impressive - come see her interact with him. And no, he's NOT still alive - it's reenactor Nathan Richardson. Let me know if *YOU* will be there. I'll look for you.

## **League's State Convention CAME and WENT!**

The State Convention was held June 9-11 at the Holiday Inn in Liverpool, NY. Approximately 100 people attended the workshops, information sessions, plenary, tour of Seneca Falls, speakers and awards presentation! Fun was had by all!

Handouts from the workshops, caucuses and info sessions are being posted to the state website, under the Convention and Council tab on the left. We will be adding lots of photos, too, but for now, go to our Facebook page to see all the friendly faces. Moments in the Sun, local League accomplishments reported at the Convention, are attached to this email, but also posted on the state website. Don't forget to contact a local League if you'd like to copy a program idea – we all should be sharing our expertise and experience to strengthen all local League activities. Anyone who isn't listed, feel free to email [Laura@lwvny.org](mailto:Laura@lwvny.org) your accomplishments and we'll add them to the document.

## **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 by June 30 – 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 is now available and posted on the state website. 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.

## **Legislative Action, Jennifer Wilson, Director of Program and Policy, [jennifer@lwvny.org](mailto:jennifer@lwvny.org)**

### **Legislative Session Wrap-Up**

We made it to the finish line! Unfortunately, there were no trophies at the end of this race. The legislature went home with a pile of unfinished business related to mayoral control and taxes. Not much was accomplished this year. Not just for the League but also for other organizations.

**Here's what did get done:** Raise the Age, including e-cigarettes in the Clean In-Door Air Act, and regulations for Paid Family Leave.

**Here's what didn't:** voting reforms, procurement reforms, Reproductive Health Act, Comprehensive Contraceptive Coverage Act, and Single Payer Health Care.

We are disappointed but also hopeful. This year we made great strides toward achieving our goals. We had significant progress on early voting and the reproductive health care legislation, and we were able to build new coalition partnerships with other organizations. We are already looking ahead to next session and strategizing how to make even more progress. But first, let's reflect on what happened this year.

This session we pushed hard on early voting, and for the first time ever the bill moved from the Senate Elections Committee to the Senate Rules Committee. The League was instrumental in making this happen. Our members lobbied their Senators for weeks leading up to its vote in the Senate Elections Committee. On the day the bill was taken up, nearly 20 of our members filled the committee meeting room to watch the Senators vote. Originally the bill was referred to the Senate Local Government Committee, but after a week of our members urging the committee's chair to move the bill, it was sent to Rules. Although we were disappointed that the bill was never taken up in the Rules Committee, this was still a major win.

In May, the Assembly passed early voting in their house for the second year in a row. They also passed electronic poll books, no-excuse absentee voting, the Voter Friendly Ballot Act, and consolidation of primary elections. In total, they passed 11 voting reforms that would make voting easier and more accessible. We were very happy to have so many reforms pass in their house this year and expect to see even more reforms to pass in the Assembly next session.

In November, eight individuals, including state employees, were indicted related to a bid-rigging scandal that involved \$800 million in state contracts. The League partnered with several good government groups, economic think tanks, and the Comptroller's office to put together a list of clean contracting reforms that would prevent future bid rigging scandals from occurring. The reforms included creating a publically available database of deals to track how state funds are spent, implementing safeguards to ensure individuals applying for state contracts cannot bribe decision makers with dark money through campaign donations, and restoring the Comptroller's oversight authority of state contracts. Although we lobbied both houses right up until the final days of session, the bill did not pass.

At the beginning of session we joined Planned Parenthood for their annual lobby day. The event had more than 1,000 attendees who were all ready to fight to pass the Reproductive Health Act (RHA) and the Comprehensive Contraceptive Coverage Act (CCCA). The CCCA would mandate that insurers cover all forms of birth control, not just those they choose to cover. It would also allow 12 months of birth control to be dispensed at one time. The law would ensure all women and men have adequate contraception that must be paid for by their insurer. The RHA would codify Roe v. Wade in New York so that if federal laws were to change, New York women would still be guaranteed their right to choose.

The two bills passed in the Assembly early in the session. We worked with Planned Parenthood and NYCLU on moving these bills in the Senate for the remainder of the six months. We met with members of the Senate throughout the session, nearly every day, urging them to bring these bills to the floor for a vote. Unfortunately, the two bills were never taken up and women's reproductive health remains in the balance.

## **LWVUS**

### **Sign up for National Voter Registration Day 2017**

National Voter Registration Day is Tuesday, September 26! [Sign up your League as a partner in this incredible celebration of democracy.](#) All you need to do is agree to host a registration event in your community on 9/26, or otherwise publicize the importance of voter registration. Join thousands of

organizations, elected officials, celebrities, and other partners—including hundreds of participating state and local Leagues—by signing up today! *The League has been the single largest on-the-ground partner for NVRD since 2012. Let's keep up the trend!*

### **Opportunity to attend UN Climate Change Conference**

LWVUS has the opportunity to send delegates to the [2017 UN Climate Change Conference in Bonn Germany](#). The deadline to register for the conference is Thursday July 6, 2017. LWVUS delegates will have the ability to attend both the official UN meetings as well as the side events. Please contact Robin Tokmakian at [trillerud@mindspring.com](mailto:trillerud@mindspring.com) for registration. Note: There is no fee to attend the conference. All travel and related expenses are not covered and up to the individual to arrange.

### **Membership/Roster Considerations**

Please remember to make any changes to your league's leadership status in the roster. It is essential that this information is diligently updated and kept current so that we here at the national office have current leadership contact details so we can quickly communicate important information. We would also like to note that our Database Manager Lela Sallis had her last day at the LWV national office on this past Friday, June 16th. We would like to encourage everyone to continue to submit any support questions related to their roster or database to [rostersupport@lww.org](mailto:rostersupport@lww.org) and would also ask for your continued patience as we search for a qualified replacement. Thank you!

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