



**The**

**August 2015**

# **LOCAL VOTER LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN AREA**

Syracuse Metro LWV  
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Local: [www.lwvsyr.org](http://www.lwvsyr.org)  
State: [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)  
National: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

### **Calendar**

**Tuesday, August 26th**  
Women's Equality Day  
**Tuesday, Sept. 10th**  
Primary Day  
**Thursday, Oct. 8th**  
Syracuse Board of Education Forum

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**Tuesday, September 22, 2015**

## **2015 ELECTION INFORMATION**

Primary Election  
Thursday, September 10, 2015  
Polls Open Noon to 9:00PM

General Election  
Tuesday, November 3, 2015  
Polls Open 6:00AM to 9:00PM

## **TENTATIVE OFFICES TO BE FILLED**

Supreme Court (1)

NYS Assembly Member 128th District

Onondaga County Offices:  
17 County Legislators  
County Executive  
County District  
County Comptroller

City of Syracuse Offices:  
City Auditor  
2 City Councilors-at-Large  
5 City Councilors  
4 Commissioners of Education

Town Offices:

All 19 towns will hold elections to elect various officers including supervisors, council members, clerks, justices, highway superintendents and tax collectors.

Village of Camillus:  
Mayor  
2 Trustees

Delegates/Alternatives to the 5<sup>th</sup> Judicial District  
Male & Female Members of the State Committee (Republican Party only)



# BOARD NOTES

## MEMBERSHIP NOTES

### REMINDER

Membership renewal letters for the 2015-2016 League year were mailed in late June. If you have not renewed your membership, we hope you will do so. If you have misplaced your letter, you can use the form on the last page of this newsletter.

### THANK YOU

## HAVE YOU BEEN A MEMBER OF THE LEAGUE FOR 50 YEARS?

If so you qualify for a Life membership in the League and you are not obligated to pay membership dues.

Please contact us at:

315-396-8225

or

[league@lwvsyr.org](mailto:league@lwvsyr.org)



August 26

By the summer of 1920 most states had ratified the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment with politicians in eight states, mainly in the conservative south voting against it. Then the mother of a young Tennessee lawmaker, Harry Burn, who previously had backed the anti-suffragist bloc, carefully weighed a letter from his mother.

*Dear Son, Hurry and vote for Suffrage and don't keep them in doubt... I have been waiting to see how you stood but have not seen anything yet... Don't forget to be a good boy and help Mrs. Catt with her "Rats." Is she the one that put rat in ratification? Ha! No more from mama this time. With lots of love, Mama.*

Mamma won out and Tennessee Senators voted to approve the amendment and deliver the crucial 36<sup>th</sup> state vote necessary for final adoption of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment.

The 19th amendment simply reads:

*The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.*

## Officers

Leadership Team  
Joan Durant  
Joan Johnson

Secretary... Diane Dwire  
Treasurer.... Roberta Millert

## Directors

Education Margrit Diehl  
Membership ... Sylvia Matousek

Publications/Public Relations... Joan Johnson  
Voter Service... Joan Durant

Directors-at-large  
Mary Ann Barth  
Harold Bertram  
Michele Jones Galvin  
Ann Jamison  
Hasoni Pratts

## Off-Board Positions

Budget Director.... Vacant  
Nominating Committee..... Lisa Alford  
Ona Bregman  
Diane Chappell-Daly

Technical Support... Roberta Millert

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information please call the League office at (315) 396-8225 or e-mail to [league@lwvsyr.org](mailto:league@lwvsyr.org)

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## Diversity Statement

The Syracuse Metropolitan League of Women Voters is committed to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any League activity on the basis of age, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, or national origin.

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Please let us know your email address or if your address has changed. It is the most efficient way to communicate . You will be notified of upcoming local events and LWVUS and LWVNY National & State Action Alerts and news. **Your e-mail address will not be shared or sold. Please respond to [league@lwvsyr.org](mailto:league@lwvsyr.org) if there has been a change on how we can contact you.**



# FROM YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

I hope everyone is enjoying our Central New York summer. As I write this, the weather people are telling us today will be the warmest day of the year but as we know summer will soon be over and election season will heat up the cool days of autumn. As you see from the front page of this newsletter, on election day we will choose most of our city and town officials. Local elections also tend to turn out fewer voters than years where we vote for our national and state leaders. This does not mean these local elections are less important to our democracy. In fact they are more important. The leaders you elect on the local level determine the future of our communities. If voters approve of their work, it is a stepping stone to higher office.

As members of the League we have our work cut out for us, encouraging citizens to engage in the process by learning who the candidates are and where they stand on the issues in our community. We depend on the work of our members, even for a short task to take part in our voter service activities. Below, please see where you can help us this fall to *Make Democracy Work* in our community.

## VOTER SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

- Volunteer to register voters at naturalization ceremonies, high schools, colleges and special events
- Monitor Syracuse Housing Elections
- Work on candidate forums with co-sponsors and political candidates
- Help with getting our electronic voters guide, [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org) online

Please call or email us at  
315-396-8225

or

[www.league@lwvsyr.org](mailto:www.league@lwvsyr.org)

Democracy is not a spectator sport.  
It takes all of us to make the system work.



Please Volunteer

*Joan Durant  
Joan Johnson*

*The League of Women Voters of New York State and the New York Alliance for Donor Organs have partnered to encourage citizens we register to sign up for organ donations. The Voter Registration form offers the opportunity to do this. New York State lags behind all other states in donor designations. Scarcity of organs for transplant leaves over 10,000 individuals waiting for needed organs. Over 500 people die each year in New York while waiting for an organ transplant.*



## UPDATE ON CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

On November 7, 2017 New York State Voters, in a public referendum, will be asked whether or not to hold a convention to revise the State Constitution. Local Leagues across the state have reached consensus on the following change to our position on constitutional conventions:

The League supports the following reforms as positive factors in deciding on support for a constitutional convention. Delegates should be elected by a fair nonpartisan process that complies with federal voting rights provisions and eases ballot access to encourage participation by racial and other minorities. Public financing should be provided for candidates and their positions on issues and convention goals should be widely publicized to enable voters to cast informed votes at their election. Statewide office holders, state or federal legislators, and state judges should not serve as delegates.

The following letter has been sent to Governor Cuomo urging him to create a commission regarding this revised position.



June 12, 2015

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo  
Governor of New York State  
NYS State Capitol Building  
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

The New York State Constitution requires a public referendum every 20 years to put before the voters the question of whether or not to hold a convention to revise the State constitution. On November 7, 2017 New Yorkers will be asked that question once again.

In anticipation of the last constitutional convention referendum in 1997, the late Governor Mario Cuomo created the Temporary New York State commission on Constitutional Revision, chaired by Peter C. Goldmark, Jr., (the "Goldmark Commission") to evaluate the processes for holding a State constitutional convention as well as to develop an agenda of public policy issues that might be considered by a convention. The Goldmark Commission issued a final report in February of 1995, two years and nine months before the question was to come before the voters. We are already well past that point in time with respect to the upcoming 2017 vote.

The League of Women Voters of New York State asks that you immediately appoint a Commission, representing New Yorkers from across the state and from all backgrounds, and task it with the responsibility to prepare and educate the state Legislature and voters for the November 7, 2017 vote with respect to both process and agenda. The League believes that education and involvement of the public must be an integral part of each phase of the constitutional convention process. In particular, the League is concerned that the Legislature and voters be aware of the need for an open and fair process by which Convention delegates would be selected if a Convention were to be called.

Sincerely,

Dare Thompson, President  
LWVNYS

## 2015 LWVNYS Convention Wrap-up

### **Program**

The convention delegates approved the two board-recommended program items:

- An update of the League's position on Legislative Procedures
- A concurrence on raising the minimum age to be tried as an "adult" from 16-18 in the criminal justice system.

### **State Committees on Minimum Wage and Program Planning Announcement**

A recent LWVUS announcement interpreted the Meeting Basic Human Needs position to permit state and local Leagues to lobby in support of raising state or local minimum wages or adopting a living wage position. The state League is forming a committee of League volunteers to look at the issue and possibly make a recommendation on a state minimum wage to the Board.

### **Action Motion**

The delegates approved an action motion to send a letter to the Governor asking him to appoint a commission to examine holding a state constitutional convention following the 2017 vote.

### **Constitutional Convention Panel**

Former state legislators John Faso and Richard Brodsky gave delegates a lot to think about with a very fast-paced and challenging discussion on issues related to the upcoming constitutional convention referendum that will be on the 2017 state ballot. Look for much more on this issue in the next 18 months.

## ***A Message From Our New LWVNYS President—Dare Thompson***

What a pleasure to see so many of you at Convention! It was a frustratingly brief time but I especially remember the Moments in the Sun period when local Leagues shared a few highlights from their past year.

I also enjoyed seeing many of you in workshops on membership and leadership issues that I did with Georgia DeGregorio and LWVUS board liaison to NY, Anne Schink. The questions we had in NY were echoed two weeks later at the LWVUS Council meeting attended by leaders from each state, from Hawaii to Florida to Maine - and most states in between. How do we restructure our leadership teams to avoid leader burn-out and still get the work done? How do we diversify our membership? How can we use technology better from websites to Facebook and Twitter and beyond? And above all, how do we strengthen the communities we serve?

No one solution fits all, but successful Leagues focus on assets not deficits and they don't try to do more than they actually *can* do. They are likely to be comfortable with change, flexible, and not afraid to have fun! They reach out and connect with other community groups and resources. They know what they need and want and they ASK! And they make a difference, whether it's getting voters registered and engaged or getting a good bill passed or a bad one killed.

Back in NY again after Council, I saw many of these assets at work when I joined Barbara Bartoletti a couple times at the Capitol as the legislative session was drawing to a close - i.e. getting crazy! We huddled around a table in the Capitol's Dunkin' Donuts and strategized with our allies about who would visit which legislators. We sent requests to key legislators to leave the Assembly Chamber to speak to us, which they usually did. Barbara caught a glimpse of Shelly Silver and went chasing after him for a nugget of news and came back with more than one. We played well with others, we asked, and we had fun. And at least on one very important issue we had a significant impact (public education funding) It sure does feel good to make a difference.

***Dare was elected president at the 2015 LWVNYS Biennial Convention in June. She first joined the League in Swarthmore PA in the early 70's. As her young family moved, she joined leagues in Providence, Rhode Island, Clinton, NY, Columbus Ohio and finally the Mid-Hudson Region LWV.***



**LWNYS END OF SESSION STATEMENT**

***“League Applauds Legislature for Support of Public Education and Women’s Issues but Demands Further Action on Reform of Ethics and Campaign Finance Laws”***

The League of Women Voters of New York State applauds the state Legislature for their steadfast commitment to public education. We are heartened that public taxpayer dollars will continue to go to fund quality public education. We encourage the Legislature and the Governor to focus their attention next budget session on the billions of dollars owed our high needs districts under the 2007 settlement of the Campaign for Fiscal Equity case.

The League also commends the Legislature for securing stronger laws for women, including strengthened equal pay laws, physical harassment laws and improved measures for trafficking survivors.

We are, however, greatly disappointed that the Governor and Legislature have yet again failed to fully engage in long-overdue ethics and campaign finance reforms, even in light of the indictment of both of the state’s legislative leaders. They must act as soon as possible to strengthen enforcement of the state’s ethics laws and reform the state’s extraordinarily lax campaign finance laws including closing the LLC loophole. “We must restore trust and dignity in State government” said Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director.

Until we get critical reforms to take money out of politics and have meaningful ethics oversight, we will continue to have voter apathy and public disdain for our state government.

***Barbara Bartoletti  
LWNYS Legislative Director***

***Congratulations are in order to the League of Women Voters of Florida—***

The state’s highest court in ***League of Women Voters of Florida v. Detzner*** ruled that Florida must redraw its map of congressional districts before next year’s election. Pamela Goodman, the league president, said “The old maps were made so the legislators could choose their voters instead of the voters choosing the legislature. We are just beyond thrilled that the Florida Supreme Court has taken our Legislature to the woodshed on this. We can only hope they have learned their lesson.”

**THE NEW YORK HEALTH BILL  
PLANS FOR THE FALL**

The League of Women Voters of NYS was elated that the New York Health bill passed in the State Assembly (92 to 47) this past legislative session. Our next goal is to get it passed in the State Senate. This will require a grass roots effort on the part of the League across the state. Thank you to **Madeline Zevon**, Chair of the League’s Health Care Committee, and all who worked for its passage.

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***The following letter was posted by League member Betty Gallagher in the Glens Falls Post Star on June 19, 2015:***

Contrary to a recent letter stating that single payer health care is “socialized medicine,” it is not. The single payer proposal passed recently in the New York Assembly is socialized insurance, not socialized medicine. This is an important distinction. Medical services would continue to be delivered privately. Instead of forking over payments to insurance companies, we would pay for health insurance through our system of progressive taxation. Rumors, news reports, and radio commentary are not the best way to learn the facts about health care in America. If you seek to be accurately informed, go to one of the many websites that contain factual information and studies. Try “Compare American and Canadian Health Care” or “Global Health Care.”

Obamacare is not a single payer insurance system. In fact, it only complicates health insurance coverage. Although insurance has been extended to many who were previously uninsured, many Americans still go without health insurance. Insurance companies have raised, not lowered rates on many policyholders. It is definitely not universal health care, and it still gives insurance companies the control and profits that make American health care the most expensive in the world. For this great expense, our nation gets relatively poor health results.

Do you believe that health care should be a human right as it is in most of the rest of the advanced world — including many countries that we consider less advanced? Or do you believe that it should only be available to those who can pay the cost? Is health care less important than, for example, public education, public parks, public roadways or civil defense? We pay for these, as a society, through our progressive tax system. Should we do less for health care?

Support single payer health insurance, improved Medicare for all, universal health care!

## *What State League Does for the Local Leagues*

*Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director, LWVNYS*

At Convention, the delegates voted to raise the PMP by \$2 starting July 1, 2015. We often hear, what do we get for our PMP? The League of Women Voters of New York State helps keep you strong by:

### **ADVOCACY**

- overseeing **state studies** for new or updated positions
- **lobbying** at the state level
- maintaining **coalition partnerships with many organizations** for stronger advocacy efforts.
- coordinating **Advocacy Education Days** for members statewide

### **EDUCATION**

- funding for each local League to send one student free to **Students Inside Albany**
- providing **speakers** on current issues for community events
- developing ready-made Powerpoint educational presentations and briefing papers on various “hot topics” for community presentations and discussions

### **VOTER SERVICE**

- paying **license fees** for all local Leagues and having staff **support for [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org)**.
- creating and distributing low-cost **Voter Guides**
- making **stipends** and reduced cost voter guides available through grant programs
- hosting statewide **candidate events**
- providing **ready-made presentations** on issues for statewide studies and voter education

### **SOCIAL MEDIA/VISIBILITY**

- maintaining an up-to-date **website** with links and resources for running and promoting local Leagues
- supporting a **Facebook page** and “Liking” any Facebook page of our local Leagues
- sending **State Board Updates and VOTERS** monthly and including local League news
- providing **spokesperson** to media statewide on state issues
- developing **template Letters to the Editor** for local Leagues to submit to local media

### **LEADERSHIP/TRAINING**

- **advising local Leagues** on a one-on-one basis and through regional training
- organizing state **Convention**
- nurturing and giving start-up funding for **MAL units**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

- hosting **grants management** accounts for each local League in state Education Foundation to allow tax-deductible donations at no charge
- providing **insurance** for events held by local Leagues at no charge
- creating an **easy local League online giving** link you can use to accept tax-deductible donations online



**The League of Women Voters**

**Nonpartisan**

**Political**

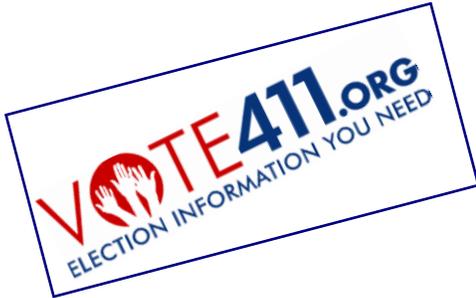
**Grassroots**

**Volunteer**



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
 SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN AREA  
 PO BOX 11866  
 SYRACUSE NY 13218**

**August 2015**



**JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

**MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK FOR 95 YEARS**

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Member \$55.00    \_\_\_\_\_ Household\* \$80.00    \_\_\_\_\_ Student\*\* \$25.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**To join call us at (315)396-8225, email us at [league@lwvsyr.org](mailto:league@lwvsyr.org) or mail this form to Syracuse Metro LWV PO Box 11866 Syracuse NY 13218.**

**ANNUAL DUES—July 1, 2015-June 30, 2016**

\* Two members in the same household    \*\* Full time student under 25

**Please share this information with others who have expressed interest in our work or who have thought about becoming a member of the League..**