

LWV of Southwest Nassau

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SAVE THE DATES

Topic: Ballot Access
When: Sunday, Jan. 11th, 2 pm

Topic: Term Limits
When: Wednesday, Jan. 21st,
6:30 p.m.
Where: 385 Daub Ave,
Hewlett (516) 295-1325

Inside this Issue

- President's Letter
- League Praises Immigration Step Support for Family-Focused Executive Order Washington, DC
- Event Calendar
- Getting on the ballot in NYS – How Does It Work Now?
- Ballot Access Glossary
- A Year-End Message from Elisabeth MacNamara
- From the Desk of Sally Robinson

THE STUDY OF TERM LIMITS AND BALLOT ACCESS

There are two studies being done by the LWV of NY: one on ballot access and one on term limits. Our League will respond to consensus questions for each of these studies at the January 5th Board meeting. Here are a few points which will be covered:

- How do candidates for elected office gain access to the general election ballot?
- What is the role of the Democratic and Republican Parties in this process?
- What is the role of third parties in this process?

All materials can also be found on the state website lwvny.org. (Click on *Programs* and *Studies* on left side of homepage, look for term limits and ballot access).

The direct URL for Ballot Access is: <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/ballot-access/2014/Final-Ballot-Access-Study-Guide.pdf>

The direct URL for Term Limits can be found at : <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/term-limits/2014/Final-Term-Limit-Study-Guide.pdf>



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE — JANUARY 2015

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The Eager Leaguer is published 10 times per year. Items for the February issue are due January 20th.



Hope everyone had a great Holiday season!

January will find us making important decisions on our League's positions on term limits and ballot access.

Studies have been completed on each of these issues and it is now time for our League to decide our position on each which will be forwarded to the state office by January 31st. The State Board will then look at each League's response throughout the state and decide if LWVNY will take a position on either or both issues.

On Wednesday, January 11th at 2pm we will meet to discuss term limits and on Wednesday, January 21st at 6:30pm we will meet to discuss ballot access. Both meetings will be held at my home.

Alisa Henderson has resigned as our newsletter editor--anyone interested in taking on this important function of League communications, please give me a call at 516-297-7847.

Thank you to everyone who helped with all of our work in 2014! I know already our League's voter service is preparing to register students at local high schools in the next few months with many members assisting in this effort.

As we get these students and others registered, we must also wrestle with voter turnout at the polls. November's election saw the worst voter turnout for elections since Harry Truman's election, and we must increase our efforts in this area.

Nancy Rosenthal

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

The League of Women's Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information please call the League office at 516.295.1325 or email us at flora@lwvofsouthwestnassau.org.

LEAGUE PRAISES IMMIGRATION STEP SUPPORT FOR FAMILY-FOCUSED EXECUTIVE ORDER WASHINGTON, DC



The League of Women Voters of the U.S. reacted to today's announcement by President Obama that he is using his executive authority to limit deportation of many undocumented immigrants.

"President Obama's executive order is a good and important step toward a realistic and humane immigration policy for the United States," said Elisabeth MacNamara, President of the League of Women Voters of the U.S.

"The order focuses mainly on families – keeping them together rather than breaking them up through unnecessary deportation," MacNamara said. "The League has exhaustively studied this issue and agrees that deportation is not appropriate for unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity." The League believes that immigration policy should focus on meeting the economic, business and employment needs

of the U.S. and promoting reunification of immediate families.

"Congress still must act on a comprehensive immigration policy," added MacNamara. "The President's executive action, while a good start, is just a temporary first step. Congress needs to stop pointing fingers and get to work on this vital issue. Congress should face reality and act humanely in the long run best interests our nation."

"The President's action is a positive step forward on immigration policy because it is a humanitarian effort aimed at families, but more needs to be done," concluded MacNamara.

January 2015

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Ballot Access Meeting—2pm	12 Board Meeting— 6:30 pm	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Term Limits Meeting—6:30 pm	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

GETTING ON THE BALLOT IN NYS – HOW DOES IT WORK NOW?

By Barbara Thomas, Ballot Access Study Chair, LWV of Saratoga



You are invited to participate in League’s consensus on the LWVNY Ballot Access Study Questions. But before you can decide whether LWVNY should support changes to the system you have to understand how candidates get on the general election ballot now. It’s a complicated process and there are many routes:

Voters register as members of a party or as “blanks.” Parties make their own rules about who may vote in their primary, but right now except for the Independence Party, they all require registration in their party.

Any party whose gubernatorial candidate garnered 50,000 votes or more in the previous gubernatorial election is guaranteed a line on the general election ballot (and they are listed on the ballot in order of the number of votes their candidate for Governor received statewide).

Candidates must submit nominating petitions signed by voters registered in the party line they are seeking (the number depends on the number registered in that party in the area that the office represents). If more than one candidate from the same party submits qualified petitions there will be a primary. If the candidate is not a member of the party whose line s/he seeks s/he must get the permission of the party committee to run on that line (this is done with a Wilson-Pakula certificate).

Candidates may also submit nominating petitions to run on a party line that they create (usually only for that election). For first-time parties the petition signers are not required to be registered in that party, but may not have signed any other nominating petition for that office.

Candidates may also get onto the ballot by being nominated by a party convention or a party caucus.

Party members may also circulate petitions to create the opportunity to write in a name for an unspecified person for an office in which there is no contest for the party endorsement. This is known as “opportunity to ballot.” In NYS candidates can be listed on the ballot multiple times (once for each party whose candidate they are). Candidates supported by several parties are called fusion candidates.

The Wilson-Pakula Law (1947) both requires that a candidate be a registered voter in the party whose nomination s/he seeks, and provides a way around this requirement with a Wilson-Pakula certificate.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters of Southwest Nassau, in both its values and practices, is committed to inclusion and diversity. This means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of economic position, marital status, gender (women, men and transgender), race, creed, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation, such as gay, lesbian, and bisexual. We believe that democracy is enhanced when there is full inclusion of the diversity of all people in our society.

BALLOT ACCESS GLOSSARY

- **Ballot Access:** The conditions under which a candidate is either entitled to stand for an election or to appear on voters' ballots.



- **Closed Primary:** Only voters who are registered as members of a political party prior to the primary date may vote in the party's primary.
- **Open Primary:** Registered voters of any affiliation may vote in the party primary of their choice.
- **Hybrid Primary:** (Somewhere in between an "open" and a "closed" primary) Procedures are unique from state to state. Some states allow voters to cross party lines to vote. Depending on the state, choosing a ballot may actually be a form of registration in the party. Unaffiliated voters may or may not be permitted to vote in the primary (depends on the state). In some states, political parties may decide for themselves whether to permit unaffiliated voters or those of other parties to vote in their primary.
- **Semi-Closed Primary:** Registered party members can only vote in their own party's primary, but unaffiliated voters can vote in a primary of their choice. Depending on the state, unaffiliated voters make their choice either by publicly registering with a party on election day or inside the voting booth. A semi-closed primary is a type of hybrid.
- **Top-Two Primary:** (Known also as a nonpartisan blanket primary) All candidates, regardless of party affiliation, are listed on one ballot. Voters choose their favorite and the top two vote getters become the candidates in the general election. Two candidates from the same party can advance to the second round. (Used in California, Washington, Louisiana and Nebraska. In Louisiana, a second-round runoff only takes place if a candidate fails to win more than 50% of the vote in the first round.) Sometimes called an Open Primary.
- **Instant Runoff Voting (IRV): (Also called Ranked Choice Voting.)** Requires voters to vote for every candidate by ranking them. If no candidate receives a majority, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is removed. That candidate's ballots are then recounted and go to the second choice. The process continues until a single candidate secures a majority. IRV is a way of electing a single winner among a field of three or more without allowing a candidate to win without a majority of the votes.

A YEAR-END MESSAGE FROM ELISABETH MACNAMARA



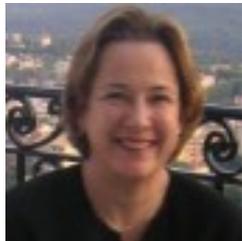
You, together with all of the League's supporters, have made this an amazing year for the League of Women Voters and for our democracy.

Here are just a few of the things we were able to accomplish this year with your help:

- Provide 1.5 million people with the information they needed to vote in this year's midterm elections through VOTE411.org;
- Defeat two dozen anti-voter laws in states across the country;
- Register tens of thousands of new voters;
- Hold hundreds of candidate debates around the country;
- Send over 50,000 letters to Congress in support of the Voting Rights Amendment Act; and
- Submit 40,000 comments (and counting) from our supporters to the Environmental Protection Agency in favor of regulations that limit carbon pollution.

None of this would have been possible without you. Thank you for helping the League. Together we are Making Democracy Work®.

FROM THE DESK OF SALLY ROBINSON



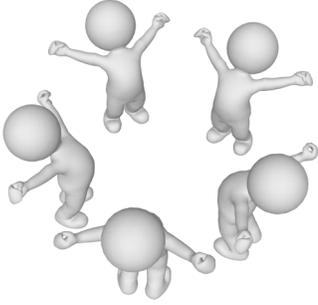
From Sally Robinson, President League of Women Voters of NYS

Thank you for everything all of you did this fall to register voters, distribute voters guides, organize Vote 411 and hold candidate forums for the general election. We also very much appreciate your help and support in our successful effort to pass Proposal 1 on the ballot, reforming how redistricting is done in this state. The League and Citizens Union issued the following statement after Election Day:

"We are pleased that voters seized this once in a fifty-year opportunity to fix our state's rigged redistricting process and end the practice of drawing districts to favor incumbents, protect majority party control, and discourage. The constitution now guarantees New Yorkers fair redistricting rules and the ability to hold the legislature accountable to end partisan gerrymandering. It is a real change from the system we have now, and we look forward to following this enacted reform through to reality in 2021, when the time comes again to draw new state legislative and congressional districts that will bring fair and competitive elections back to New York State."

I believe that this joint effort by the state League and local Leagues exemplified what is best about the League and our truly nonpartisan approach to making elections work and protecting voters. I was also very pleased that we were supported in this effort by the national League and the state League in Florida, another state in which the League has been and continues to be a leader in redistricting reform.

THREE WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL LEAGUE



Here are the three ways that you can help our educational and community endeavors:

1. **Join Us in Our Work.** Visit to www.lwvofsouthwestnassau.org and click "Join Now!" to begin your membership. New signups get a Starbucks gift card. We can always use help to spread the word.
2. **Become a sponsor.** We're rolling out a brand-new classifieds ad center on our website. Sponsors will be able to log-in to the site, place their ads, include pictures and links to their business websites, in addition to being included in our physical monthly newsletter.
3. **Donate.** The League also accepts donations from people in the community who may not have the time to volunteer, but appreciate the work that we're doing.

Whichever method you choose, we appreciate your help.

League of Women Voters Southwest Nassau

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Attn: Selma Ruderman

Thank you to all our members who have already renewed their membership for 2013-2014!

- \$50 Individual membership
- \$25 Additional Household membership
- Contribution to support our League's ongoing efforts and activities _____ Total

Full Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Tel#: _____

Email Address: _____

I read my email regularly occasionally rarely I would like to volunteer.

I would like to receive my monthly Eager Leaguer via email