



League of Women Voters of NYS 60th Biennial Convention Summary and Recap



PRE CONVENTION

The League of Women Voters of NYS started its 60th biennial state Convention with a pre-convention workshop on Friday. Libby Post, President of Progressive Public Affairs and Government Relations at Communication Services, presented *The Power of Communication: Turning Values into Action*. Over 80 attendees learned the importance of communication and the best methods for impacting the most people with the work of the League. To see her Powerpoint presentation, [click here](#).

The attendees were invited to a reception following the workshop.

WORKSHOPS



On Saturday morning, attendees participated in multiple workshops, including:

- **How to Become a More Effective Moderator**, presented by *Maureen Murray, LWV of Cooperstown*
- **How Can We Expand our Impact by Working Together?** presented by *Regina Goutevenier, LWV of Port Washington-Manhasset*
- **Membership: Everything, Everywhere, All at Once**, presented by *Joy Rosenzweig, LWWNYS Board Member*
- **How to Strengthen our Visibility with Social Media**, presented by *Milly Czerwinski, LWWNYS Communications and Development Associate*
- **What's Changed in Elections Procedures?** presented by *Jennifer Wilson, NYS BOE Deputy Director of Public Information*
- **Successes, Missteps & Next Steps in our journey to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion!** presented by *Regina Tillman, LWWVYS VP for DEI and DEI Task Force Steering Committee*
- **Can Detainees in our Jails Have Better Access to Elections?** presented by *Hazel Weiser, LWWNYS Committee on Criminal Justice*
- **How Do We Engage More College Students?** presented by *Nick Doran, LWWNYS Board Member*

Powerpoint presentations and handouts from these workshops are available on the state League website at: lwny.org/state-conventions-council



LUNCH SPEAKER

During the lunch on Saturday, former Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, spoke to the attendees about her work on the national Equal Rights Amendment. She reminded the group of the history of its passage and ratification and the need to still advocate for acceptance of the ratification and certification of the amendment. She also offered numerous stories of her many years of

service in Congress. Ms. Maloney, now with the ERA Coalition and the Fund for Women's Equality, is working to get signatures on a petition to support legislation removing the deadline standing in the way of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) becoming the 28th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. For more information on her work and to sign the petition, see sign4era.org

PLENARY SESSION



The League of Women Voters of NYS plenary session opened at 1:45 pm on Saturday with 86 delegates representing 28 local Leagues, 2 ILOs, 2 MAL Units and 9 delegates representing the state board. Albany Chief City Auditor, Dr. Dorsey Applrys, welcomed the attendees to Albany.

Judie Gorenstein, LWWNYS President, chaired the following actions taken at the state Convention.

The LWWNYS 2023-24 Budget was adopted; see in the Pre Convention Kit at:
<https://lwwny.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Pre-Convention-Kit-2023.pdf>

The 2023-24 PMP at the current rate of \$23 per individual, \$11.50 for additional household members, and \$0 for students or life members was adopted.

The 2023-2025 Officers and Board were elected:

Officers

President Nancy Rosenthal

1st VP Issues and Advocacy Sally Robinson

2nd VP Voter Services Kathy Meany

3rd VP Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Regina Tillman

4th VP Youth Programs Nick Doran

Secretary Pattie Garrett

Treasurer Nancy Agen

DIRECTORS

Jane Colvin

Kate Doran

Michelle Lamberti

Marjorie McIntosh

Joy Rosenzweig

Nominating Committee

Chair Judie Gorenstein, LWV of Rivertowns

Committee Member Crystal Joseph, LWV of NYC

Committee Member Lori Robinson, LWV of Buffalo/Niagara

The 2023-25 Board recommended program was adopted including:

Concurrence with the Waste position of the 4 Capital District Leagues

Members of the League of Women Voters of NYS agree that effective policies concerning waste are integral to ensuring the clean water, clean air and healthful environment guaranteed in the Environmental Rights Amendment to the New York State Constitution. We also agree that we're embedded in an ecosystem, and that the land, water, air, energy, waste, and biota in our ecosystem are dynamically interrelated. We agree that the concept of waste includes greenhouse gases, that waste management practices can themselves emit these gases, and that we urgently need to reduce the production of these gases in society and in waste management in order to preserve and restore the world's climate.

We agree that human health and safety, the wellbeing of wildlife, the preservation and restoration of habitat, and the conservation of primary materials such as timber, minerals, ores, and energy are deeply affected by our practices concerning waste. To protect these resources, the League supports policies that promote: the reduction of waste, the reuse of products and materials over disposal, and the responsible management of waste that can't be reused. We agree that our ultimate goal is a circular economy with zero waste.

The League supports, first, the following policies aimed at minimizing the production of waste:

1. Products and buildings designed to accommodate deconstruction and reuse of component parts;
2. The use of durable materials and designs that prioritize longevity in product manufacturing and construction;
3. Support for repair, rather than disposal, of products;
4. Reduction of single-use plastics and items that cannot be recycled, and promotion of reusable packaging for products;
5. Limitation of greenhouse gas emissions and processes that produce them, such as the burning of fossil fuels, excessive fertilizer use, disposal of items containing refrigerants in a way that causes those refrigerants to leak, reliance on landfills for organic waste disposal; and
6. Regular monitoring of sources of potential greenhouse gas leaks and speedy fixes of leaks in lines carrying greenhouse gases (such as methane and refrigerants), and reduction of fugitive emissions from solid waste landfills, wastewater treatment plants, and appliances.

We also support the following policies aimed at facilitating the transfer of discarded items and components to entities that can use them:

- The development and strengthening of easy-to-participate-in civic infrastructures for:
 - Recycling items to extract useful material for reuse in new products; and
 - Collecting, processing, and transferring reusable items to new owners, including excess edible food from restaurants, grocers, and farms to groups addressing food insecurity; and
- The expansion of community-based operations and facilities (e.g., composting, anaerobic digestion, and biochar pyrolysis) that enable communities to create useful products out of non-toxic organic waste, and the diversion of non-toxic organic waste from landfills (where it can produce fugitive methane emissions), towards beneficial use through these processes.

For items that cannot be reused or redistributed, the League supports waste management policies that promote:

1. An end to the processing of hazardous waste in ways that can spread its toxicity, including the use of incineration for waste that contains toxins;
2. Careful recovery, processing, and safe disposal of hazardous materials in the waste stream, including in biosolids and digestate byproducts of sewage

treatment and biodigesters, and at concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs);

3. Careful capture and safe disposal of greenhouse gases, including refrigerants from products at time of disposal, and methane and nitrous oxide from large producers, including industrial sites, landfills, and CAFOs;
4. Corporate responsibility with public oversight for the end-of-life processing of products and packaging, including all related costs;
5. Limited miles of waste transport from its source to where it is processed and stored, with communities encouraged to take responsibility for their waste by, as much as possible, locating needed facilities within their boundaries;
6. Collaboration among communities in the siting of regional high-tech waste management facilities as needed to support reuse and recycling;
7. Environmental Justice in the siting of waste facilities and provision of services;
8. Easy resident access to legal and responsible waste disposal methods.

To reinforce these efforts, we also support:

1. Green procurement policies that boost the market for products made with recycled, recyclable, and non-toxic de-constructable content;
2. The expansion of opportunities to purchase items with either reusable, returnable, or purchaser-provided packaging;
3. Adequate monitoring and enforcement of waste regulations;
4. A rapid transition away from fossil fuels to renewables, and away from high global warming potential (GWP) refrigerant gases to low GWP refrigerant gases;
5. The transformation of wastewater treatment plants from simply waste processing centers to facilities that emphasize the capturing of beneficial products (e.g., biogas) while ensuring removal of hazardous waste before returning to the environment;
6. Reduction in the use of CAFOs and promotion of more sustainable farming methods;
7. Opposition to corporate secrecy about the toxicity of their products and processes;
8. The embedding of sustainability principles into public information campaigns, school curricula and licensure certification programs.

The League supports direct involvement of citizens and local governments at all stages of planning, development, operation, and monitoring of waste management plans and projects. The consumer should be educated to exercise care in purchasing, to demand quality products, to participate in reuse policies, to recycle, and to resist throw-away cultural practices. Standards for operation of these facilities should be established and enforced by the public sector, whether actual operations are conducted by private or public entities.

Also adopted were two new studies:

1. New Study on the use of RCV and alternatives to party primaries for state, congressional and local office

2. New Study on the process used by the state Board of Elections to approve voting systems with the purpose of seeing if the process can be improved to be more effective in ensuring that approved voting systems meet a balance of the SARAT (“secure, accurate, recountable, accessible and transparent”) criteria.

See below if you'd like to join the statewide study committees.

At the beginning of the plenary session on Sunday morning, **Ayo Atterberry, Chief of Culture at LWVUS**, presented information on data collection and program evaluation at LWVUS as well as an update on the transformation process, including the new bylaw amendment concerning dues and membership. See her Powerpoint presentation by [clicking HERE](#).

Ayo also provided links to key information from LWVUS:

- Election Impact Report <https://www.lwv.org/elections/2022-election-impact-report>
- Framing the Future FAQs: <https://www.lwv.org/FramingTheFuture>
- Members Rights and Responsibilities and League Responsibilities here: [League Policy](#) and [Member Policy](#)
- Hate report: [Cause for Concern 2024: The State of Hate](#).
- Denialism report: [How Election Denialism Threatens Our Democracy and the Safeguards We Need to Defend It](#).

During the session, Judie then thanked the **volunteers** who assisted with the plenary session:

Audrey Capers, Alycia Bacon, Lars Dahl, Mary Lou Classen, Pat Partello, Virginia Fletcher, Joanne Shawhan, Karen Chisolm, Pat Maxon, Lacey Putnam, and Kathleen Stell. Judie also thanked Barb Thomas and Kathy Koebrich who trained and supervised the volunteers during the plenary session.

Judie also thanked the following people who assisted in the operation of the plenary session:

- Lori Dawson (LWV of Saratoga), Chair the Elections Committee
- Jane Colvin (LWV of NYC) and Margie McIntosh (LWV of Cattaraugus & Allegany MAL Unit), Minutes Review Committee
- Kai Rosenthal, (LWV of NYC), Chair the Credentials Committee.
- Sally Robinson (LWV of NYC) and Michele Lamberti (LWV of Port Washington/Manhasset), Action Motions Committee
- Jill Nagy (LWV of Rensselaer), Parliamentarian

Before closing the plenary session, Judie presented gifts to the outgoing board members: Lori Robinson and Sheila Bernson (Crystal Joseph and Kathy Stein could not attend). Judie handed the gavel to Nancy Rosenthal, the new state League President, who provided remarks asking the members to inspire others to empower voters and defend our democracy.

The 60th biennial state Convention was adjourned on Sunday.

2023-25 LWVNYS Board of Directors



Judie Gorenstein, President 2021-2023 and Nancy Rosenthal, President 2023-2025



STATEWIDE STUDY COMMITTEES

At the state Convention, the delegates adopted two new studies. The Board of Directors will be appointing members to each of these committees. If you would like to apply for either, please click on the link below and complete the online survey. Please understand that the Board will be appointing members to ensure diverse representation, geographically, knowledge-based, and more, on each Committee. Also, please know that the committees will work for full maximum anticipated time frame of 18 months and members must be willing to serve for the entire time frame. Applications will be accepted until July 15.

Apply for the study on the use of RCV and alternatives to party primaries for state, congressional and local offices: <https://forms.gle/MN4HQ6PFtLbkRipKA>

Apply for the study on the process used by the state Board of Elections to approve voting systems with the purpose of seeing if the process can be improved to be more effective in ensuring that approved voting systems meet a balance of the SARAT (“secure, accurate, recountable, accessible and transparent”) criteria: <https://forms.gle/qiTjk8N8tKCXHq6>

AWARDS



On Saturday evening, the state League presented awards to local Leagues in different categories. The winners are as follows:

Membership awards by the numbers

Based on LWVUS Roster Membership Numbers from February 1, 2021 to January 31, 2023.

Audrey Price Memorial Membership Award

For outstanding membership growth in small Leagues (membership under 50)

Winner: LWV of Oneonta

Honorable Mention LWV of Rockland County, LWV of Cortland County

Anna Lord Strauss Membership Award

For outstanding membership growth in medium-sized Leagues (membership under 50-150)

Winner: LWV of North East Westchester

Honorable Mention LWV of Tompkins, LWV of Cooperstown, LWV of Syracuse

Harriet D. Goldberg Award

For outstanding membership growth in large Leagues (membership over 150)

Winner: LWV of Mid Hudson Region

Honorable Mention LWV of Scarsdale

Educating Voters to Action Award (Citizen Education)

Winner: LWV of NYC Adult Civics Program

Created a series of Adult Civics presentations for the purpose of civically engaging New Yorkers. The presentation module focuses on different topics including Adult Civics, Voting, Ranked Choice Voting and Who Makes New York City Run. The League has been invited to several high schools, community groups, and colleges in target communities, and since this past Fall, has conducted over 20 presentations.

Honorable Mention: LWV of Utica/Rome, LWV of Cattaraugus & Allegany MAL Unit, LWV of Central Nassau, LWV of Westchester ILO

Mobilizing Democracy into Action Award (Get Out the Vote)

Winner: LWV of Mid Hudson

The League sued the Dutchess County Board of Elections and specifically one commissioner who refused to let a polling site be placed on the Vassar Campus in spite of the new law requiring it. Within four days of filing our suit we were granted a victory and a polling place opened at Vassar.

Honorable Mention: LWV of Rochester, LWV of NYC, LWV of Buffalo

Lighting the Way Award (Membership and Leadership)

Winner: LWVs of Oneonta and Cooperstown

Their innovative acting President and leadership task-force arrangement along with the related activities they organized, have saved the Oneonta League by recruiting an impressive number of new members and mentoring new leadership for it. In the process they have preserved League representation of a diverse area unlike that represented by the Cooperstown League.

Honorable Mention: LWV of Huntington, LWV of Rochester

Building Bridges to Excellence Award (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion)

Winner: LWV of Rochester

The League sponsored a statewide 2-part webinar series “What Do NY Kids Learn About Our Racist History? And What Do You Know?” The presenter was Kesha James, who is part of the Anti-Racist Curriculum Project, which originated in Rochester but has been spreading statewide.

Thinking Out of the Box

Winner: LWNYS Rural Caucus Committee

The state League’s Rural Caucus (NYSRC) was formed in the spring of 2020 at the instigation of the St Lawrence County MAL Unit, to create a space where local Leagues in rural areas, or in counties that include large rural areas as well as more urban ones, could the share their experiences of doing League work in rural communities. Caucus members worked with League members in other states to form a fledgling National Rural Affairs Caucus (RAC).

Honorable Mention: LWV of the North Country, LWV of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and North Fork

Shaping Our Future Award (Youth Award)

Winner: LWV of Suffolk County ILO (with assistance from LWV of Smithtown and Huntington)

A program in which a group of high school students from six western Suffolk districts participated in the League’s “Student Day at the Suffolk County Legislature.” The program is designed to introduce students to the workings of the county legislature through hands-on experience culminating in a mock legislative session debating and voting on a controversial resolution.

Honorable Mention: LWVs of New Rochelle and Scarsdale, LWV of Westchester ILO, LWV of the Hamptons, Shelter Island and North Fork, LWV of Cattaraugus & Allegany MAL Unit

Inspiring Citizens into Action Award (Citizen Engagement)

Winners: LWV of Rochester Metro Area and LWV of Albany County

Both of these Leagues organized programs to fully engage members of the community in the redistricting process. In Rochester, the League held webinars to educate the public, collaborated with neighborhood organizations, used social

media and even held private zooms with individuals trying to understand the maps. Over 100 people participated in the public hearings to provide comments. The Albany league collaborated with other organizations, too, and invited area local leagues to join them in educating the public on the issue. The coalition invited Redistricting Commissioners to meet with them, answer questions and provide input. League visibility and even membership was increased through their efforts. **Honorable Mention:** LWV of Port Washington/Manhasset, LWV of NYC, LWV of St. Lawrence MAL Unit

Convention Kit

Read all about what the state League has accomplished during this past year!

[Read the Convention Kit here.](#)



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Foundation

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