

STATE VOTER

Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy
January 2023



President's Message

Judie Gorenstein, judieL728@aol.com

As we begin 2023, I have to say how proud I am to be president of LWVNY. We accomplished so much in the past year and 2023 appears to be a year of opportunities for LWVNY and our members.

This year in New York, voters can register up until 10 days before Election Day. The 10 day voter registration bill became law on Dec. 23, 2022 and became effective January 1, 2023. While we still do not have same day registration, this change did not require a constitutional amendment and certainly make it easier for people to register and voter. New Yorkers need to know and who better than the LWV to educate and register them.

On January 24th, both houses passed the ERA amendment which New York one step closer to our goal of codifying basic protections to all New Yorkers. Although this will not be on the ballot until 2924, now is the time to begin educating voters about all the rights that need to be and can be protected by this bill.

On Feb 14th, LWVUS will celebrate its 103rd birthday. This is a day to celebrate and for action. Find out what your league is doing and join in the celebration and actions. Be proud to be a member of the LWVNY.

June 3rd-June 4th is LWVNY Convention. After three years of virtual conventions, this will be in person and a wonderful opportunity to meet members from all parts of the state and participate whether you are a delegate or not.

LWVNY is making major efforts to keep our members informed on not only what is happening in Albany but what our members can do.

On January 21, we held a Hot topics webinar where 100+ attendees learned how LWVNY adopts and takes action on issues as well as hearing from each of our issues specialist. If you were not able to attend, the recording is available.

Every Friday you will be emailed the Legislative Update. If you are not receiving them, make certain you have given your local league your current email address so they update LWVUS database.

Throughout the year, you will be receiving Action Alerts. When you receive them, take action.

How will you take advantage of these opportunities?

- Stay informed and inform others.

The League of Women Voters of New York State has moved!!!!

NEW ADDRESS

The Blake, 1 Steuben Place
Albany, NY 12207

same Tel: 518-465-4162

same website: lwvny.org

same email: lwvny@lwvny.org

1919 Society and More Ways to Give

The state League recently received a gift from a former member who recently passed away. She had listed the state League as one of the beneficiaries on her IRA.

Naming a charity as a beneficiary to receive all or part of your IRA or other retirement assets upon your death has significant tax benefits. Unlike other inheritances, distributions from inherited retirement plans are taxable as ordinary income to a recipient. But the full designated amount of a retirement account will benefit the charity of your choice.

Remembering a charity in your will is a powerful way of ensuring that your values survive you. Charitable gift planning can help you save gift and estate taxes and shape your retirement income. In addition to providing a wonderful legacy for the community, bequests decrease the size of your taxable estate.

We invite you to join our 1919 Society by including LWVNYS Education Foundation in your estate plan. Be sure to discuss your estate plan with a qualified professional advisor.

Thank you to the following members who have joined the 1919 Society:

Barbara Bartoletti
Helen Bailey Bayly
Laura Ladd Bierman

- Volunteer in your local leagues.
- Encouraging others to join the LWV
- Attend convention if you can

Help us Empower Voters and Defend Our Democracy in 2023. We can and we will!

Paula Blum
 Anne Burton
 Lori Dawson and
 Michael LaBelle
 Pattie Garrett
 Katharine W. Lloyd, MD
 Sally Robinson
 Evelyn Stock



State Convention is Coming!

The LWVNYS Biennial Convention will be held on **June 2-4, 2023** at the Crowne Plaza Albany – Desmond Hotel (yes, it'll be an in-person Convention). We have started to make plans for the Convention and your local League should, too. The Registration Kit will be emailed in late February so start thinking about who might represent your League.

If you have any specific topics that you would like to see for **workshops**, email laura@lwny.org your ideas.

If you have any suggested **amendments to the League's bylaws** (<https://lwny.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Bylaws-as-Amended-June-2021-Convention.pdf>), email laura@lwny.org.

If you have any suggestions for **officers or members of the state League's board of directors**, email Kate Jankowski, Nominating Committee Chair, at kwillower@hotmail.com. You can nominate yourself or someone else.

If you have ideas for **new positions, updates to positions**, etc, contact your local League board to see how and where you can provide input. **See the program planning packet here** but talk with your local League Board about providing input.

Issues and Advocacy

Sally Robinson, VP for Issues and Advocacy, Sally.s.robinson@gmail.com
Erica Smitka, Deputy Director, Erica@lwny.org

State of the State

The Governor gave her annual State of the State on Tuesday of this past week and we were watching from the overflow room in the Legislative Office Building.

Governor Hochul started off by reviewing several accomplishments from the past year before discussing her priorities for the upcoming year. Largely, the focus of the speech was what we expected. Below are a few of the highlights. [Click here to read her speech in full.](#)

- Introduction of the New York Housing Compact, which will build over 800,000 new homes over the next decade.
- A plan to fix New York State's continuum of mental health care
- Several public safety initiatives
- A plan to index NY's minimum wage to inflation
- A cap-and-invest program to combat climate change
- Making child care more affordable and accessible

It was the first time in many years that neither democracy nor ethics was mentioned in a State of the State speech.



Senate Voting Rights/Election Reform Package

As they have for the past four years, the Senate introduced a package of bills last Monday to address voting rights and election reform. Read more about the package [here](#). The League was quoted in a press release that went out about the package- [click here](#) to read the press release.

All of the bills introduced were passed in the Senate with several receiving bi-partisan support. A huge win was the passage of S657, which establishes the New York voting and elections database and institute to maintain a statewide database of voting and election data. This bill is the companion bill to the John R. Lewis New York Voting Rights Act, which the League supported last session. There has not been much movement on any of the bills in the Assembly.

NYS Election Commissioners Association Conference

This week the State League attended the NYS Election Commissioners Association Conference in Albany. We spent multiple days with commissioners from across the state, attending sessions led by the State Board of Elections and county commissioners.

The League also staffed a table with several of our coalition partners where we were able to distribute information on election security and talk with county commissioners about how we could best support their efforts to reach voters across the state.

NYS Equal Rights Amendment Taskforce

The week of January 9th, the State League launched the statewide LWV ERA Taskforce to work on second passage of the New York State Equal Rights Amendment. We have representation from 30 Leagues and 36 members. We expect to add more delegates as we get closer to a vote in 2024. If you would like to join the Taskforce, contact your local League President and then email Erica@lwny.org.

The bill passed for a second time in both the Senate and Assembly on January 24th—two days after the 50th anniversary of Roe v. Wade. The taskforce will now launch a statewide voter education campaign before voters have a chance to vote on the bill in November of 2024. If voters approve the amendment it would prohibit discrimination against groups who have been historically targeted, including those with disabilities, LGBTQI+ individuals, immigrants, women, and pregnant people. It would also codify abortion access in our state constitution.

Legislative Hot Topics Webinar

On Saturday, January 21st the LWVNYS and the Albany County League held a Legislative Hot Topics webinar for all members. We had 8 issue specialists and issue committee chairs on the call in addition to the State Issues Committee. The presentation focused on how NYS does advocacy and how members can get involved. Each issue specialists/committee co-chair had time to talk about their committee's priority bills and which legislative issues will have the most traction this session. [Click here](#) for a recording of the session and [click here](#) for the PowerPoint, both of which have been posted on our homepage.

10 Day Voter Registration Bill Signed

Governor Hochul signed the 10-day voter registration bill into law on December 23, 2023. The law took effect January 1, 2023. Chapter amendments to the law recently passed in the Senate (S1327/A972) and are in committee in the Assembly. The chapter amendments make changes to current election law to account for the new 10-day registration deadline. We are looking more closely at the chapter amendments to ensure there are no unexpected implications. In order for a 10-day registration deadline to be enacted effectively implementing legislation must be passed and signed into law this session. The most popular implementation bill is one introduced by Senator Myrie last session (S1552 (2021-2022 session)). This bill would allow for affidavit voting at poll sites on the first day of early voting and require local BOEs to confirm eligibility on the back end.



Voter Services

Nancy Rosenthal, VP for Voter Services, nancyrosenthal9@gmail.com

February 14th — Valentine's Day — of each year is the final day for voters to change their party registration before a primary election (this June). Voters wishing to change their party affiliation, as with any new voter registration or address change, can use the online voter registration form available through the state Department of Motor Vehicles New York at <https://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/electronic-voter-registration-application> or can fill out and mail a new voter registration form New York State Voter Registration Form available on the state League website or the state Board of Elections website. Remind members and the voting public of this important annual date to change party affiliation!

Voter Service Survey

We had a 100% return of the Voter Service Surveys from our local Leagues! Thanks to all for this valuable information we will be using as we plan upcoming voting efforts and look for additional grants and opportunities. Last month's SBU provided an overview of the responses; below you will find the numeric responses to questions asked in the survey. If anyone would like the actual spreadsheet with all the data and enter text responses, contact me and I will send you the extensive spreadsheet! Much thanks to the office staff, the Voter Service Committee, and especially Jane Colvin and Sheila Bernson for the compilation of this data!

VOTER REGISTRATION

1. How many in person voter registration drives did you conduct?
 - Number of drives: 481
 - Number of voters registered: 4566
 - Number of forms taken: 5493
 - How many volunteers participated in voter registration drives? 976
 - How many drives were in or targeted under-resourced communities? 213
 - How many times did you partner with other groups to do a drive? 334
2. How many high school voter registration drives did you do?
 - How many schools? 68
 - Number of voters registered: 3110
 - Number of forms taken: 1513
3. How many naturalization ceremony drives did you do?
 - Number of voters registered: 48-1591
 - Number of forms taken: 1653
4. How many voter registration trainings for League members did you have? 47
5. How many voter registration trainings for other organizations or groups did you have? 25

CANDIDATE EVENTS

1. How many in-person candidate forums did you organize? 41
2. How many virtual candidate forums did you organize? 53
3. How many hybrid candidate forums did you organize? 11
4. How many volunteers participated in candidate events? 328
5. Did you provide translations? If so, how and in what languages? 33 No 6 Yes
6. What is the total number views for all candidate forums in person and virtually during and virtually after event?
 - In-person: 2724
 - Virtually after the event: 24,856
7. How many events did you need to cancel due to the No Empty Chair policy (requirement needing more than one candidate for a race)? 17
8. Did you need to cancel for any other reason? If so, how many and why? 33 No 6 Yes
9. How many candidate forums did you co-sponsor with other leagues, or other organizations? 5

GET OUT THE VOTE

1. What activities/materials did you use to Get Out the Vote? Please indicate the number distributed in the space provided.

Flyers 14238
Workshops 33
Postcards 66439
Doorhangers 7255
PSAs 46
Posters 593
Videos 47
Digital Signs 65
Lawn Signs 237
Voter Guide II Data in English and Spanish
English 13045
Spanish 1043
Other Bengali Mandarin
Palm Cards 15515

2. Did you use social media/digital engagement in your GOTV efforts?
- How many posts related to GOTV did you post on your website? 7 No 31 Yes
- 1 No Answer for using social media; 142 posts related to GOTV
- How many Instagram posts? 344 How many likes did your posts get? 4002
 - How many Facebook posts? 591 How many likes did your posts get? 2360
 - How many Twitter posts? 61 How many likes did your posts get? 419
3. How many volunteers participated in GOTV? 561

VOTE411

How many races did you post to Vote 411 this year? 227

OTHER

1. Does your League meet with the County BOE before and/or after the election? If so, please describe? 14 No/No Answer 25 Yes
2. How many new volunteers or members did your League recruit through all activities? 221



Want to learn more about Vote 411 - or even be trained on this important program? This is an important program to educate the voters about the candidates on their ballot. We always need people to help work on this program.

Join the LWVUS VOTE411 staff to learn about the VOTE411 website and how you can participate in the voter guide program. Webinars are every other Tuesday at 7pm ET. Find the full schedule by [clicking here on the League Management Site](#).



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)

Regina Tillman, 3rd Vice President for DEI, rmt370@gmail.com, and Crystal Joseph, DEI Task Force Co-Chair, campus@lwnyc.org

On behalf of the entire DEI Task Force, we wish a Happy New Year to all. We had a slew of holidays we just passed through, the most recent being the Chinese Lunar New year that began on January 22nd. This is the year of the Rabbit with the associated element of water! (All the elements being earth, fire, wood, water, and gold.) Let us hope that the year fulfills its designated characteristics for the Water Rabbit, that is, symbolic of longevity, peace, and prosperity with 2023 predicted to be a year of hope, according to Chinese culture.

In terms of racial and social healing, we also see rays of hope. So many excellent programs were conducted in and around the national holiday observing the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, January 16th. And this year, along with calling for Dr. King's Birthday to be an opportunity to perform serve within our

communities, the day after really seemed to take off this year as the “Day of Racial Healing”. Programs in communities and on national TV networks excelled in pointing out that we are a better and stronger America when putting aside our underlying caste system that minimizes the contributions of BIPOC, disabled, LGBTQ, women, poor, youth, and elderly. Hopefully you did catch one of these January programs and are willing to talk about their content to your friends and colleagues.

"We must rapidly begin the shift from a 'thing-oriented' society to a 'person-oriented' society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered... A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth." Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, 1967

Your DEI Task Force met in December, preparing to have a busy year in 2023, beginning with:

- DEI Self-Assessment Survey: To be issued shortly to all NYS League Chapters and for individual member inputs. It was completed initially back in 2020 by those NYS Leagues that had representation on the Task Force and by the State League Board. And since then, the LWVNYS Task Force and this Office of the 3rd Vice President for DEI, have provided numerous methods to learn about DEI in support of National's stance that DEI is as important to uphold - in principle and practice - as is our concept of nonpartisanship. The Assessment Survey will need to be completed by April 1st by all of our local league chapters through the consensus of their Board of Directors. Members not on Boards are invited to submit individual surveys. You will be notified when the final version of the DEI Assessment is ready for your input and submission.
- Education: Is a nonending endeavor as we transform into a “continuous learning” organization. Our bimonthly virtual DEI Drop-In Sessions will continue (look for a February announcement for the next date) and we continue to share articles, information, and impressions on our FaceBook Group which is open to all NYS League members interested in DEI: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/lwvnysdei>

We are also actively seeking funding in support of:

- upon popular demand, to secure a second round with educator Kimberlee Williams (“Dear White Woman” Workshop, October 2022) to cover in-depth the tools for better communications in the effort to cross the racial divide.

And there is more but these are on the top of our agenda! We appreciate all those that followed our efforts and participated in our educational offerings through 2022! Let us “keep hope alive” that every step we take collectively - and individually - toward appreciating our differences makes the world a better place!

Local League Support Committee

Joy Rosenzweig, joyrose6@gmail.com, and Kathy Stein, kstein1@twcny.rr.com, Co-Chairs

The Committee has decided to initiate a program to revive a regional approach to League communication and collaboration. The new Regional Directors' meetings, discussed at the most recent Presidents' Call on January 19, will provide the opportunity for local Leagues to support each other, share ideas, and more. Members of the Committee will be the facilitators for the five regions: Capitol Region, Central Region, Long Island, Westchester County, and Western Region/ Southern Tier. Contact your local League President and Board for more information about their participation.

Local League News

Rochester Metro Area

The Rochester Metro League recently hosted an educational webinar panel titled *Mental Health Crisis Response: How Has It Changed Since Daniel Prude?* In the wake of Daniel Prude's death at the hands of the police, the city of Rochester established the Person In Crisis team (PIC) to handle 911 cases that involve mental health crises that don't involve a crime or a weapon. The panel discussed PIC's work so far in taking mental health calls off the hands of police. Panel members included Manager of Crisis Intervention Services in the City of Rochester Alia Henton-Williams, Vice President of Rochester City Council Mary Lupien, co-

founder of MC Collaborative Andy Carey, Person-Centered Housing Options Outreach and Engagement Team Lead Lisa Kuhmann, and a member of the PIC team.

New York City

The New York City League hosted its first Lunch with the League event of 2023 titled *What to Know about NYC's Migrant Crisis*. New York City Mayor Eric Adams declared a state of emergency to address a "crisis situation" over an influx of migrants, many of whom are families with school-aged children and are in serious need of medical care, to the city from the border states. The League heard from Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Manuel Castro as he discussed how the situation is being handled.

Albany County

The League of Albany County hosted *Pinocchio Revisited: Separating Fact from Fiction*, which explored the evolution of mis and disinformation on social media. Director of Communications at the University at Albany and former Times Union reporter Jordan Carleo-Evangelist discussed the spread of misinformation and how it has contributed to a radically divided country. After a luncheon, attendees shared stories of misinformation and/or disinformation they had come across in the past, with the most egregious tall tale winning the "fisherman's award."

Cooperstown

After a two-year hiatus, the Cooperstown League hosted its annual Winter Doldrums Party! For more than thirty years the League's Winter Doldrums party had been the highlight of the League's year. League members participated in a silent and chased away winter blues while getting to know fellow League members outside of the constraints of a meeting.

Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, and Schenectady

The capital region Leagues hosted a virtual panel discussion about religious medical systems and bodily autonomy. With the rise in mergers between secular community hospitals and religious hospitals, more and more people are being denied the care that they are otherwise lawfully able to obtain. The League was joined by experts who discussed the impact of religious directives that dictate the kinds of care that healthcare facilities that are owned or affiliated with religious institutions can and cannot deliver to their patients.

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EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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