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## ***State Board Updates May 2023***

### **Local League To Do's (email: [lwvny@lwvny.org](mailto:lwvny@lwvny.org) or fax 518-465-0812)**

- **STILL TIME TO REGISTER FOR CONVENTION – AS A DELEGATE OR OBSERVER! JOIN THE FUN.**  
**Register at:** : [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/UwzMev163ozyAruVNgXTjw](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/UwzMev163ozyAruVNgXTjw)
- Submit data tracking form to LWVNYS by **June 10** (and the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month); questions attached in word document but must be completed online at:  
<https://forms.gle/jvfv1kFwbGC8QDsX7>
- Order 2023 Voter Guide Part I in English and Spanish now for this spring and summer voter registration drives (see order form attached)
- Complete and return the Local League Update form (attached or online at <https://forms.gle/dvw2KDchZXTRsMbXA> ) by **June 30, 2023**

### **Events Calendar (see more about each in reports below)**

- June 2-4, 2023           LWVNYS Convention, Desmond Hotel, Albany

### **President's Report, Judie Gorenstein, [judieL728@aol.com](mailto:judieL728@aol.com)**

What an honor it has been to serve as President of LWVNYS for the past two years. We have achieved so much working with Local Leagues and LWVUS and moving forward. It is imperative that we do this! There are several good examples of what was accomplished just this past month when we all worked together. On May 2, League members and leaders attended League Advocacy Day, the LWVNYS staff and board members did the preparation, but it was the members who came from all over the state that made this day the success it was. Then on May 21-May 24, 60 students attended Students Inside Albany. Once again, the LWVNYS staff and board made the preparations, but it was the local leagues working with their schools and other community agencies that sought out and selected the students. It took everyone working together to give these students an experience that can be life changing and one they certainly will remember but it was these highly motivated students, eager to learn more about their government, eager to meet their senators and assemblyman and shadow them, eager to learn how to lobby and make a difference, and eager to engage with one another to make SIA a huge success this year. Hopefully these students will work with their local Leagues and engage other students to get involved also.

Another example of us working together this month is our relationship and open communication with LWVUS. You may remember how very concerned most of us were when LWVUS provided the first draft of a League Rights and Responsibility Policy and a Member Rights and Responsibility Policy.

However, LWVUS knows the importance of working with us. After all, the LWV is and needs to remain a grassroots organization and we are the boots on the ground. Therefore, LWVUS looked for feedback from state and local leagues throughout the country before finalizing and implement these policies. LWNYS realized the importance of providing that feedback. During the September presidents' zoom meetings these policies were presented and discussed. Presidents were asked to have discussions with their boards and provide feedback to LWVUS. At the LWNYS October board meeting, board members engaged in a thorough discussion of these policies considering intended as well as unintended consequences and how these could be improved. LWNYS sent in our feedback as did our local Leagues, MALS and ILOs. We all spoke and our voices were heard. The LWVUS board approved revised and improved League and Members Rights and Responsibilities policies at their most recent board meeting. If you have not yet received them, they are available on the League Management Site along with guidelines for implementation. See the approved policies at <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/league-fundamentals/league-responsibilities-policy> and <https://www.lwv.org/league-management/league-fundamentals/member-rights-responsibilities-policy> . It is important these policies be shared with your boards and members so we are all working together to in sure the integrity of the LWV.

Now on June 2-June 4<sup>th</sup>, we will all be coming together for the 60<sup>th</sup> LWNYS Convention. LWNYS staff and board are doing the final preparations. We sent out the Pre Convention Kit and reminders for registration. Over 90 delegates have already registered. We sent out the application for the awards. You sent in your applications and the winners have been selected but will not be announced until the awards dinner on Saturday night. We sent out emails with the items we are selling at the silent auction. Many of you have put in your bids. We arranged for an informational zoom meeting for delegates on May 25<sup>th</sup> and you attended asking your questions. Of course, you may have more. You can contact us before convention with them but be assured there will be many people to answer questions. We are committed to making this Convention a huge success. It will help if you all come prepared, having read the materials. If there are several delegates from your League, be sure to choose different caucuses and workshops. Come eager to learn, to meet and form relationships with delegates and members from all over the state, to share your successes at Moments in the Sun, to move the League forward and to leave the convention inspired and motivated to work even harder to Defend Our Democracy and Empower Voters.



## LWNYS Convention is Coming!

The LWNYS Biennial Convention will be held on **June 2-4, 2023** at the Crowne Plaza Albany – Desmond Hotel. The Registration Kit and the Pre Convention Kit are available on the state website

(<https://lwny.org/state-conventions-council/> ). Hotel room block ends May 25 ( [click here to make a hotel reservation](#) ).

**Register online at:** [https://secure.lglforms.com/form\\_engine/s/UwzMev163ozyAruVNgXTjw](https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/UwzMev163ozyAruVNgXTjw)

The **Pre Convention Kit** is also attached and contains information about the items to be voted upon at the Convention (all delegates should read in advance to be prepared to vote at Convention):

- Proposed Slate of Officers and Board of Directors

- Proposed 2023-24 LWVNYS Budget
- Proposed 2023-25 Program
  - Board Recommended Study on the use of RCV and alternatives to party primaries for state, congressional and local offices
  - Board Recommended 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.
  - Board Recommended Concurrence with Waste position of the 4 Capital District Leagues

**The Agenda for the Convention is as follows:**

**Pre-Convention (separate registration and fee)**

**Friday, June 2**

- 2:00 – 4:30 Speaker and Workshop: Libby Post, President of Progressive Public Affairs and Government Relations at Communication Services
- 5:00 – 6:30 Welcome reception
- 9:00 – 10:00 Evening information sessions/caucuses

**Convention**

**Saturday, June 3**

- 8:30 – 10:00 Workshops
- 10:15 – 11:30 Workshops
- 12:00 – 1:30 Lunch with speaker: Former Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney
- 1:45 – 5:00 Plenary Session
- 5:30 – 6:30 Reception
- 6:30 – 8:30 Dinner with awards
- 8:30 – 9:30 Evening information sessions/caucuses
- 9:30 – 10:30 Evening information sessions/caucuses

**Sunday, June 4**

- 7:30 – 8:45 Breakfast: New Local League Presidents
- 7:30 – 8:45 Non-President Breakfast
- 9:00 – 10:00 Speaker: Ayo Atterberry, LWVUS Chief of Culture
- 10:00 – 12:00 Plenary Session

Please **send any photos of events, activities, rallies, etc**, that you hosted during the past two years and we’ll add them to a slide show for the dinner. Send the photos to [Milly@lwvny.org](mailto:Milly@lwvny.org). Thanks!

Be prepared to share 1 minute of highlights of activities that your League undertook this past year. We will call up one person from each League to share their **Moment in the Sun** (at the end of each plenary session on Sat and Sunday).

**State Auction**

The League of Women Voters of New York State is thrilled to announce our spring auction! By participating, you can directly support the League's educational efforts. Plus, you have the chance to win some fantastic prizes! Check out the items and make your bid at:

<https://lwnyns.betterworld.org/auctions/LWVNYS> and encourage others to bid on items! It's a great way to help raise funds for the state League's Education Foundation.

## **State Office**

### **Local League Update Form**

As you are holding annual meetings and electing new or reelecting officers and board members, **PLEASE COMPLETE THE ATTACHED LOCAL LEAGUE UPDATE FORM.** The email lists for the different portfolios, eg, voter services, advocacy, etc, are created from the information on this form. You won't receive the key information from the state League if we don't know who to send it to. So, please have someone complete the form (ask the new officers if you are not returning) and return it to [Aimee@lwny.org](mailto:Aimee@lwny.org) or complete the form online at <https://forms.gle/dvw2KDchZXTRsMbXA>.

### **LWVUS Data Tracking**

I assume you all have a lot to report again now – between educational meetings for members and/or the public, candidate events, etc, please share the numbers and details! Be sure to complete the form for your March activities **by June 10** online at: <https://forms.gle/jvfv1kFwbGC8QDsX7>. And, let's see if we can get more Leagues and even more data to show our tremendous impact in our communities!

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

### **New York State Budget Passed**

On May 2, the NYS budget was finally passed.

*What we were glad to see:*

*State Board of Elections:*

- Funding of \$14.5 million in administrative funds and \$25 million in matching funds for the public campaign finance program
- Inclusion of \$15 million for local boards of elections for new voting equipment and software/technology upgrades
- Funding for the Attorney General's office to support pre-clearance for the New York Voting Rights Act.
- \$15.2 million in re-appropriated funds to continue to build New York's online voter registration system

*Elementary and Secondary Education:*

- \$24 billion to fund Foundation Aid
- *Environmental Conservation:*
- Take a look at our Bond Act Coalition statement on the budget outcomes here
- \$500 million for the Clean Water Infrastructure Act.
- \$400 million for the Environmental Protection Agency
- The inclusion of the All Electric Building Act

- The inclusion of the Build Public Renewables Act

*Department of Health:*

- \$8.3 million to support School Based Health Centers
- Increased Medicaid reimbursements for abortion access

***What we were disappointed to see:***

*Environmental Conservation:*

- Exclusion of the Bigger Better Bottle Bill

*Department of Health:*

- The budget walks back last year's important win by removing the 2022 law that mandates home care workers are paid at least \$3 above the minimum wage. Instead the budget caps home care wages at \$3 above the minimum wage — showing \$3 is not 'a start' but rather the absolute limit. There is also no accountability for insurance companies.

*Division of Criminal Justice Services:*

- Changes to the bail laws. For the last several years, judges have been required to impose the "least restrictive" conditions to ensure someone will return to court. The new rules would eliminate that requirement and give judges more discretion to set the conditions they think are appropriate. We believe not enough research has been done on the effectiveness of the current law in order for changes to be made. Read more about these changes here.

*Elementary and Secondary Education:*

- New York City will be allowed to add 14 new charter schools and 8 others will be allowed across the state. Reviving what some refer to as "zombie charters". Read more about zombie charters here.

***Other notable items:***

- Exclusion of all mention of housing related reform
- Minimum wage in NYS will increase
- Exclusion of the proposal to expand taxes on ultra-wealthy New Yorkers

**Online Action Party to Pass Packaging Reduction in NYS**

On May 25 we co-sponsored an online action party with Beyond Plastics to Pass Packaging Reduction in NYS. Attendees registered with the app Climate Action Network to make calls to help NYS pass landmark legislation to cut packaging waste by 50%, stem plastic pollution, slow climate change, and support recycling and composting programs.

**Bill Status Update**

We are nearing the end of session and have only a few legislative days left before it is scheduled to adjourn on June 8<sup>th</sup>. Below is an overview on some of the initiatives from our post budget lobby packet and where we stand on each.

**Mandatory Training Curriculum for Poll Workers ([S587 Comrie](#)/[A268 Walker](#))**

Relates to mandatory training curriculum for poll workers; requires the state board of elections to develop and provide to each county materials for a model poll worker training program which the counties may use to train individuals to serve as poll workers in state and county elections. **This**

**legislation passed the Senate and has been referred to Ways and Means in the Assembly. Likely to pass.**

**Absentee Ballot Illness Expansion** ([A3291](#) Dinowitz/ [S7046](#) Fernandez)

This bill would make permanently change the definition of illness for purposes of absentee voting to include in cases where the voter is unable to appear personally because of a risk of contracting or spreading illness. **This legislation is in the Election Law committee in both the Assembly and Senate.**

**Plain Language Ballot Initiative** ([S1381](#) Comrie/[A1722](#) Zinerman)

Requires proposed amendment to the constitution or other question provided by law to be submitted to a statewide vote be submitted to the people for their approval in plain language. **This legislation has passed in the Senate and is in the Election Law Committee in the Assembly.**

**10-day Voter Registration Implementation** ([S2381](#) Myrie/[A5007](#) Burgos)

Relates to enabling constitutionally-qualified electors to register to vote and to cast a ballot on the same day at a polling location. This bill would allow for the effective implementation of the 10-day voter registration bill that was passed last session. It would allow voters to complete a conditional voter registration application and cast an affidavit ballot. The conditional registration would then be validated by the board of elections, and if the individual is deemed eligible to register, and their information can be validated in conjunction with the state DMV or federal SSA, then their ballot would be canvassed. **This legislation was not moving forward. However, there is similar legislation that is moving forward [A6132A](#) Carrol/[S5984A](#) Kavanagh. This bill is on the floor calendar in the Senate and is in Ways and Means in the Assembly. LWVNYS supports [A6132A/S5984A](#).**

**Bigger Better Bottle Bill** ([S237](#) May/[A6353](#) Glick)

This bill would expand the Bottle Bill passed in the 80s to include wine, spirits, hard cider, and most non-carbonated beverages. It would also increase the deposit from 5 cents to 10 cents and use revenues to support recycling equity. **This legislation is in the Senate and Assembly Environmental Conservation Committees.**

**The Packaging Reduction and Recycling Act** ([S4246](#) Harckam/[A5322](#) Glick)

Plastic accounts for nearly all packaging that cannot be reused or effectively recycled - but two bills in New York could transform that. The Packaging Reduction and Recycling Act would require companies to reduce their packaging by 50% in 12 years, make the remaining packaging truly reusable or recyclable, get certain toxic chemicals out of packaging, and pay to clean up their packaging waste by reimbursing municipalities and taxpayers for the collection and processing of those materials. The bill would also prohibit incineration and "chemical recycling" (waste-derived fuels) from counting as recycling. **This legislation is in the Senate and Assembly Environmental Conservation Committees.**

**Reproductive Telehealth** ([S1066A](#) Mayer/[A1709](#) Reyes)

Provides certain legal protections for reproductive health service providers who provide legally protected health activities including protection from extradition, arrest and legal proceedings in other



states relating to such services; restricts the use of evidence relating to the involvement of a party in providing legally protected health activity to persons located out-of-state. **This legislation has been amended and is on the floor in the Senate. It's currently in the Assembly Codes Committee.**

**Voter Services, Nancy Rosenthal, VP for Voter Services,**  
**[nancyrosenthal9@gmail.com](mailto:nancyrosenthal9@gmail.com)**

**Voter Guide Part I**

Voter Guide part 1 in English and Spanish is available! Order yours for voter registrations and other upcoming events in your community. They are also posted on the Voting page of the state website: <https://lwny.org/voting/>

**June 27, 2023 Primary Election**

Mark the date: Tuesday, June 27 Primary Election for county and local races. Log on to [Vote411.org](http://Vote411.org) to find out if you have a Primary in your county or town.

**Note the following dates and deadlines:**

- Saturday, June 17-Sunday, June 25: Early voting. Check your local Board of Elections to find the location of Early Voting poll sites.
- June 12: Last day change of address must be received by the Board of Elections.
- June 17: Last day a voter registration application must be received by the Board of Elections.
- Tuesday, June 27: Primary Election Day

**Absentee Ballots**

Due to a recent change in law, voters will no longer be permitted to cast a ballot on a voting machine if they have already been issued an absentee ballot for that election. Instead, voters who show up in person who have already been issued an absentee ballot will be able to vote in person using an affidavit ballot, which will be kept separate until the election is completed. Election officials will then verify whether or not the voter's absentee has been received.

- June 12 is the last day for the BoE to RECEIVE an application by mail or on the online portal.
- June 26 is the last day for applicant (or agent) to apply in person at the BoE for the absentee ballot.
- June 27 is the last day to postmark the Primary Election absentee ballot. The absentee ballot must be received by the BoE no later than July 4.
- June 27 is the last day to deliver the Primary Election absentee ballot to the BoE , or at any poll site throughout your county (all 5 boroughs in the case of New York City), by the close of the polls on election day.

Please refer to the board of elections website for your county, or NYS BOE for detailed information about requirements for applying for an absentee ballot

**Vote 411**

Vote411.org is THE tool and website to empower and educate voters in their communities. It provides up to date information on candidates and elections. We will continue our ongoing conversation about “best practices” at Convention.

Ahead of the 2024 election, LWVUS will be offering trainings on all things VOTE411. To register for upcoming trainings, click the links below. For questions, please reach out to Megan Brown at [mbrown@lwv.org](mailto:mbrown@lwv.org).

**August 9, 2023, 6pm ET | VOTE411 + League in Action: Your Tools for Election Season:**

VOTE411 and League in Action are powerful digital tools for election season. They are especially effective when paired with one another! Join the VOTE411 and Organizing Team to learn how to use these tools to strengthen your voter and community outreach in 2024 and beyond.

**September 13, 2023, 6pm ET | Engaging Volunteers for VOTE411:** 2024 will be a big year for the League, and we want to help you engage your volunteers to reach more voters in your community. The VOTE411 Team and the Digital Organizing Team will share resources and tips for engaging volunteers to promote your VOTE411 voter guide.

**November 15, 2023, 6pm ET | VOTE411 Branding and Promotions:** VOTE411 will be a powerful tool for voters in the 2024 election season! Join the LWVUS Communications team and VOTE411 team to learn more about the resources available to help make promoting your voter guide easier.

**December 13, 2023, 6pm ET | Getting More Candidates to Respond:** The more candidates fill out your voter guide, the better it is for voters! Join the VOTE411 Team as they share seven ways to get more candidate responses to your voter guide.

Looking forward to seeing many of you at Convention!

**Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI), Regina Tillman, VP for DEI, [rmt370@gmail.com](mailto:rmt370@gmail.com), and Crystal Joseph, DEI Task Force Co-Chair, [campus@lwnyc.org](mailto:campus@lwnyc.org)**

It is indeed a pleasure that we are welcoming you to yet another DEI education piece that was developed by a NYS League in conjunction with a local partner. Beginning on June 1<sup>st</sup>, if you want to learn a little more about the challenges facing refugees around the world, you are invited to register for the LWV Buffalo/Niagara’s 21 Day Challenge entitled, “**Seeking Safety, Seeking Welcome: A 21-Day Challenge About Refugees and Their Journeys**”. It is presented by the League of Women Voters of Buffalo-Niagara and Journey's End Refugee Services. It is timed well to allow us to “walk in someone else’s shoes” considering the concerns of late tied to refugees being bussed around the country to various destinations without explanation, and into New York State in particular.

This Challenge is open to all, so we ask you to broadcast its availability widely - to members and to the public - at your local level as the latest DEI education effort. It introduces participants to local, national, and international aspects of the global refugee crisis, a major humanitarian and national security issue of our time.

If you register by May 31st, you will receive a daily email for 21 days as of June 1<sup>st</sup>, with links to videos and readings to explore at your own pace. Register here --> <https://lnkd.in/eKvRNWCf>



Following that, we have a scheduled **ABA (American Bar Association) 21-Day Disability Equity Habit Building Challenge** © which was developed in honor of Disability Pride Month. The month of July was designated as a time to celebrate and recognize the contributions of people with disabilities in society. It is a month to also raise awareness about the challenges and barriers that people with disabilities face, while also promoting acceptance, inclusion, and respect.

Disability Pride Month was first celebrated in 1990 and coincides with the anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a landmark civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life. To ensure we are aiding in that mission, our DEI education includes this opportunity for all members, and the public as well, to participate in this Challenge. Registration info will be forthcoming shortly but please mark your calendars. The challenge will begin on July 9<sup>th</sup> for those that pre-register so that the daily suggestions for materials can be received via email. And look for another DEI Virtual Drop-In Session to be scheduled thereafter so we can talk about these Challenges you just undertook.

**Solicitation for the Task Force:** If a local League wishes to have a representative on the Statewide DEI Task Force, please contact me asap: [rmt370@gmail.com](mailto:rmt370@gmail.com). We will be planning a more formalized on-boarding for 2023 than we have had previously, thus, I would like all who are new on the Task Force, or requiring a refresher, to be accounted for soon! If you have had any participation in our DEI educational events, you know that there is so very much to learn and to share, beyond DEI definitions, to help the League become a more diverse and equitable organization.

And our team hopes to see you at the NYS Convention and at our workshop, “Successes, Missteps, and Next Steps in Our DEI Journey”, to be held on Saturday, June 3rd at 10:00am.

**2023 Students Inside Albany Conference: Laura Ladd Bierman, Laura@lwvny.org**

The 2023 Students Inside Albany Conference was held May 21-24 at the Hampton Inn in downtown Albany. The students were excited to learn how to engage with their state and local governments and how to make their voices heard. A full summary and photos will be shared and posted on our website – so watch for more!