



# League of Women Voters of NYS

## STATE VOTER

December 2016



### From the State Office

(l to r: Kate, Katrina, Laura, Jennifer and Lisa)

Happy Holidays to all from the state office!

We've had a busy fall and we're preparing for a busy winter and spring. Thanks for everyone's help on the elections - all 4 (3 primaries and a general election) that there were. You all did amazing work on registering voters, answering questions, providing candidate information and debates or forums, and participating in Vote 411. Once again, we couldn't have done it all without you. The public counts on the League to provide unbiased, nonpartisan information - and you did!

We're gearing up now for a busy legislative session. The date for the State of the State is still not confirmed, but the Legislative Calendar is available [here](#) and the first day of the legislative session is January 4. Our Legislative Agenda booklet won't be available until late January as the leadership of the Senate is still a bit undecided. Watch for our blog, [Capitol Beat](#), with weekly inside information on happenings at the Capitol. And, we're creating new google groups on specific topics so you can talk with others here in Albany and around the state on particular issues of interest - we'll have those ready in January, too.

Your local League is hopefully organizing a community forum on the 2017 ballot proposal concerning whether to hold a constitutional convention. Educational materials and resources are posted on the state website for all to see, but help your local League educate the public by offering to participate in this discussion.

And, our statewide history subcommittees are hard at work, exploring resources to celebrate 100 years of women gaining the right to vote in 2017 (watch for info distributed in January) and then the state League's 100 year anniversary in 2019. There are lots of ways to participate so ask your local League or contact us!

Another busy year to come so make sure you're active in anyway that is of interest to you. The League has lots to offer - from one-time jobs to monitoring public meetings on an ongoing basis. See how you can become more active in 2017 - we need your help!

Happy Holidays, and peace and joy to all in 2017!

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director  
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### T r a v e l L e a g u e



Click [here](#) for trips and itineraries.

### S u p p o r t T h r o u g h

You can support the League's Education Foundation with every purchase you make on Amazon.com. Just select the LWVNYS Education Foundation as the organization you want to support, and Amazon provides .05% of each purchase price to the EF. An easy way to support us! More info at: <https://org.amazon.com/>

### Good Read

#### Want a "Read" That Challenges You?

This book delivers what its title says: ***The New Breed, 2nd edition: Understanding and Equipping the 21st Century Volunteer*** by Jonathan McKee and Thomas W. McKee.

We are all challenged locally in recruiting and retaining members. This book offers a shift in thinking that could bring new energy to your local planning. Certainly it is worth a discussion among your board members. Feedback to your State Board Membership Committee would be most appreciated.

### L o b b y C h o i c e

#### FPA Lobby Day

On January 30<sup>th</sup> Family Planning Advocates will be having their annual lobby day at the Convention Center in Albany. The group anticipates more than 1,200 people will be in

attendance. If you wish to sign up to help the group **advocate for reproductive choice and contraceptive coverage** visit their [website](#).

## F R O M L W V U S

### **March in DC on January 21 - UPDATE as of Dec. 15, 2016**

Thank you for the feedback that we have received from members both thanking the LWWUS Board for the decision to not officially participate in the Women's March on Washington and for those who have requested the Board reconsider the decision. There is tremendous passion and strong sentiments on both sides of this issue.

As leaders for our respective League organizations, we need to consider our participation through multiple lens - activists, influencers, and organizational leaders. As organizational leaders, protecting our brand and assets, as well as considering the safety of members and staff must be at the forefront of our thoughts. We have continued to monitor the media as well as engage in conversations with leaders of other organizations. Based on the information now available, we note:

- The national march organizers have obtained a permit and have engaged three veteran organizers of color into their leadership ranks.
- While the Women's March on Washington developed organically in the spirit of sisterhood post-election, there is a very real perception problem with the timing of this march. The day after inauguration, this event will be viewed by many as a protest against the incoming Trump administration. Because the League is a non-partisan organization, and we never endorse or oppose specific candidates, we cannot risk appearing to be an anti-Trump organization.
- March organizers have yet to release any details of safety or security measures being taken to protect the women and men who plan to march. The issue of risk and the seriousness of liability for organizations who elect to officially participate in the march is something we all need to consider especially since the national organization (s) planning the march are not visible. The issue of risk and liability is an issue for all Leagues.
- Organizers have not shared the names of any organizations officially partnering and participating in the festivities. While they promise to include nationally recognized advocates, the League has not been officially approached in any capacity.

We believe the intentions of the Women's March organizers are good - and we do not discourage private citizens from taking part in this event. At this time, LWWUS continues to monitor the plans for this event but we will not officially participate in the Women's March on Washington nor should state and local Leagues officially participate. There are still too many unanswered questions to help us safeguard our brand, assets, and the safety of members, volunteers and staff.

Chris Carson, President/Chair  
League of Women Voters of the United States

## V O T E R S E R V I C E S J u d i e G o r e n s u t d e i i e n L 7 12

Twenty-seven (27) local Leagues submitted their completed voter service surveys. Here is some of the data that has been collected.



### **VOTER REGISTRATION**

- 26 of the leagues collected completed voter registration forms. (Only one did not) Most of the leagues delivered them to their Board of Elections.
- 2 to 100+ drives were conducted.
- 20 to 3,000+ people were registered.
- 24 leagues distributed absentee ballot applications.

### **VOTER GUIDES**

Leagues distributed them at their events, town halls, libraries, naturalization ceremonies, health clubs, senior residences, colleges, post offices and train stations as well as on facebook.

- 4 local Leagues published a local voter guide
- 1 league had a guide to explain the propositions on their 2016 ballot.

### **CANDIDATE FORUMS/DEBATES**

Leagues scheduled from 1 to 5 candidate nights.

- 3 leagues had to cancel candidate nights
- 1 cancelled because of a health problem at the location
- 1 cancelled because of empty chair policy, ie, one of 2 candidates would not attend

Leagues held forums for primaries, state offices, congressional offices, judges, trustees of school board, and for one county executive. Nine (9) leagues co-sponsored with other organizations such as AAUW, NAACP, libraries, media, civic associations, Chambers of Commerce, Zeta Phi beta, JCC, and the Children's Advocacy Network.

- Attendance at these forums ranged from 12 people to 250.
- 24 leagues had questions from the audience
- 1 league had questions that were not screened.
- 4 leagues had questions asked by individuals at a microphone.

- 2 leagues noted small problems that occurred during the Q and A.

The majority of the leagues had their events covered by the media, videotaped and aired. They were aired on public access tv, local tv and radio stations, on websites, in social media, and also live streamed.

Eight (8) leagues provided services such as moderating for other organizations including SUNY, PTAS, Democratic Club, and Chambers of Commerce.

#### **GET OUT THE VOTE EFFORTS**

There were more leagues that did not use TV or radio than did use it. The same was true for letters to the editors and PSA.

- 11 leagues sent letters to the editor,
- 10 leagues used TV or radio appearances and only three used PSAs.
- 4 leagues collected contact information during voter registration drives but only two used these for follow calls or emails.

Some leagues tried to turn out the Vote by using twitter, bus signs, others by having mock elections at high schools, others were involved in phone banks for the primary, and one by having a banner "Vote It Counts" at a busy intersection.

#### **SWEARING IN CEREMONIES**

13 leagues participated in swearing in ceremonies. Many who did not indicated there was none held in their area.

We know that a lot of other Leagues did similar activities but just didn't complete and return the voter service survey. Thanks to all who did!

## *P a n e l D i s c u s s i o n o*

### **Free and Independent States: The History of the New York State Constitution**

The original NYS Constitution was on display as a special exhibit at the NYS Museum (in Albany) from November 8-27, 2016. The state League and the NYS Archives Partnership Trust Foundation organized a panel discussion on the creation and adoption of this important document. Susan Arbetter, Director, News and Public Affairs at WCNY and Host of The Capitol Pressroom moderated the discussion of panelists Gerald Benjamin, Associate Vice President for Regional Engagement and Director of the Benjamin Center for Public Policy Initiatives at SUNY New Paltz and Peter Galie, professor emeritus of political science at Canisius College in Buffalo, talked about the history of the NYS Constitution, including its original creation and adoption - and changes since first ratified in 1777.

Watch a video of the presentation [here](#).

## *5 7 t h B i e n n i a l S t a t*

### **LEAGUE'S STATE CONVENTION IS COMING!**

The 57<sup>th</sup> State League Convention is scheduled for June 10-11, 2017, at the Holiday Inn Express in Liverpool, NY (just off the Thruway near Syracuse). We will be sending out the registration kits in February.

#### **Field Trip!**

To celebrate women achieving the right to vote in 1917 in NYS, the state League is organizing a field trip from Liverpool to Seneca Falls on Friday, June 9 (day before Convention actually begins). This is will a separate charge and everyone is welcome (not just convention attendees); tours of the Elizabeth Cady Stanton home, Women's Hall of Fame and the Women's Rights National History Park (and Wesleyan Chapel), as well as dinner and a speaker at an historic restaurant in Seneca Falls, will be included. You will need to be in Liverpool by noon on Friday to join this trip. Watch for more information in the registration kit.

#### **Workshops**

Workshops will be organized for Friday evening, June 9, and Saturday morning, June 10. Please email the state office ([Katrina@lwvny.org](mailto:Katrina@lwvny.org)) with specific topics you would like us to offer as a workshop during Convention. Local Leagues and members can also offer caucuses or info sessions to share their own concerns or successes and times will be available for these also.

#### **Mark your calendar to join us NOW!**

## *S t a t e N o m i n a t i n g C o*

It's never too early to think about leadership... defining roles, evaluating performance and planning for the future. **We need your help!**

As your LWWNY 2017 Nominating Committee, our charge is to present a slate of officers/directors at Convention in Syracuse next year (June 2017).

If you, or anyone you might recommend from your local League are interested in knowing more about getting involved in the wonderful and productive group of state leaders we have, please get in touch with Lisa Scott, Chair, at [lisawscott@gmail.com](mailto:lisawscott@gmail.com).

## DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

**Kate Jankowski, Director of Communications & Development,**  
**[Kate@lwny.org](mailto:Kate@lwny.org)**

### **Online Gift Matching Challenge by the Board**

From now until midnight on December 31, 2016, the LWWNYS Board will match any gift we receive online up to \$10,000. Please help us meet their challenge by donating online today. Click here to make your gift: [https://secure.lgiforms.com/form\\_engine/s/pVB04finW649ZRVDNXGxIw](https://secure.lgiforms.com/form_engine/s/pVB04finW649ZRVDNXGxIw)

**If you have already made a gift to the Education Foundation this year, thank you!**

### **Other Ways to Give:**

#### **Monthly Giving**

Over the past several years, many donors have discovered the ease and opportunity of making a monthly gift to the state League. Year-end is a great time to consider joining a monthly giving program. When you sign up for monthly giving, your gift is charged automatically to your credit card each month, you will no longer get appeal letters so you save paper and postage, and you can often give more to your favorite charities by spreading out your gift than you would be able to give in one lump sum. It's also a win for your favorite charities because they know they can depend on that income each month and they save on printing and postage.

For monthly gifts to the LWWNYS Education Foundation:  
[https://secure.lgiforms.com/form\\_engine/s/YDtdm48AXX7FVVV4H3JnXSw](https://secure.lgiforms.com/form_engine/s/YDtdm48AXX7FVVV4H3JnXSw)

If you become a monthly donor before 12/31/2016, your gift will also be eligible for the Board match so you can double your monthly impact!

#### **Stock Gifts**

If you are someone who has invested in stock over the years, donating appreciated shares is a great way to make a gift. You can support your favorite charities and get a tax benefit from your donation while avoiding the capital gains taxes on the shares you donate. If you are interested in transferring stock as a gift to the Education Foundation, please contact Kate Jankowski, Communications and Development Director, by phone at (518) 465-4162 or by email at [kate@lwny.org](mailto:kate@lwny.org).

#### **IRA Gifts**

You can lower your taxable income by gifting your minimum required distribution to a charity of your choice. When you gift this distribution, it is removed from your taxable income and helps a cause you care about. To make a gift from your IRA distribution to the Education Foundation, please contact Kate Jankowski, Communications and Development Director, by phone at (518) 465-4162 or by email at [kate@lwny.org](mailto:kate@lwny.org).

#### **And Give to Your Local League, Too**

Please consider joining in the year-end giving season by making a gift to your local League, too. To give a tax-deductible gift to your League's educational grants management fund, click here: [Local League EF Donations](#). You will be prompted to choose your local League when making your gift.

Should you have any questions about making a gift, please contact Kate Jankowski, Communications and Development Director, by phone at (518) 465-4162 or by email at [kate@lwny.org](mailto:kate@lwny.org).

Thank you for your support of the LWWNYS. You are making democracy work!

## Attend UN Commission on the Status of Women Events

### **An Invitation to LWW members for the Commission on the Status of Women Events (CSW61) at the United Nations March 13-24, 2017**

The focus of the United Nations turns toward women and gender issues during the sixty first session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations in New York, March 13-24, 2017. The priority theme of the meetings will be 'Women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work'. Meetings and events will also discuss the 'Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Sustainable Development goals for women and girls'. The 2030 sustainable development goals and targets include gender equality and empowering women and girls.

The League of Women Voters of the United States has been an active participant in the meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women at the UN since its inception, presenting and commenting at Commission meetings, sponsoring panels and events, and having League members involved and in attendance. Most events are free, but attendees must be registered with either UN WOMEN, to attend the Commission meetings inside the UN and/ or NGO CSW New York Forum to attend the external parallel events. The NGO CSW/NY supports the work of the UN Commission on the Status of Women and UN Women.

Pre-registration for LWW UN Delegates: The League can register (November 11, 2016-January 27, 2017) up to 20 members to attend Commission meetings and events in the UN. League registered delegates should plan on attending several days of events and coordinating activities with the LWWUS UN Observers.

Contact Suzanne Stassevitch at [smstass@mac.com](mailto:smstass@mac.com) if you're interested in attending as a LWW UN Delegate. LWW delegates should also self-register with NGOCSW NY Forum (see below).

**All League members can self-register [here](#) to attend more than 450 NGO CSW events, panels and trainings conducted outside the UN complex and in parallel with the Commission meetings.**

Registration is open November 28, 2016 - March 3, 2017. We encourage you to notify the LWWUS UN Observers if you plan to attend, so we can invite you to attend LWW events and join us informal chats about the events during the CSW61 meetings. Please contact Suzanne Stassevitch, at [smstass@mac.com](mailto:smstass@mac.com) for more information.

## L W V U S A c t i o n

### Sign our Voter Suppression Petition

Our [petition to stop voter suppression](#) has received over 10,000 signatures in the last 2 weeks. We continue to share the message on social media: "I will work with the League to stop voter suppression tactics that threaten our democracy and the right to vote." If you haven't already, please sign and share it!

### LWW on the Radio: New Partnership

The League is excited to partner with [The Union Edge](#), the only nationally-syndicated labor talk radio program in the country. Twice a month, the League will provide guests for 20 minute segments about issues pertaining to voting rights. We will be asking state League leaders to participate in the rotation along with LWWUS board members and staff. This is a great opportunity for us to reach a new audience and highlight the work we do all year long.

## L O C A L L E A G U E N E W S

Happy Holidays to all local Leagues - we'll share again in January!



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