



The League of Women Voters of New York State
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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

State Board Updates **May 2019**

Local League To Do's (email: lwvny@lwvny.org or call 518-465-4162)

- Complete and return the **Local League Update form by June 30th** – this is crucial to maintaining communication with the state League.
- Register for the League's State Convention **NOW!** We will still accept registrations.

President's Report: Dare Thompson, Darethompson@gmail.com

It's not too late to sign up for Convention - we even take walk-ins! Yes, it's at least one day (if not three) away from home and we know it's not free. But here are just a few reasons why I hope your League is sending as large a delegation as possible:

- 1) **Convention won't happen again for two years!** That's 24 months! Don't "throw away your shot"!
- 2) There is **an impressive ROI** (return on investment) for each attendee and for the local Leagues they represent - in contacts, in information, in tips on how to do things faster and better....I could go on.
- 3) **It's inspiring.** I still remember speakers I heard years ago and some I got to chat with personally. I also still remember some League leaders who seemed to know EVERYthing. I was in awe. And over the years, many of us newbies gradually became those leaders, amazed at what we've absorbed from the League.
- 4) **It's historic.** We turn 100 on **11/19/19** and it'll never happen again. At the last convention we celebrated what happened in Seneca Falls in 1848 and how NY won the vote for women in 1917. This year the remarkable **Elaine Weiss** will bring 1919 and 1920 to life for us and we'll share ideas for our own local celebrations this fall and into 2020. **And our state League history ("A Force to Reckon With") and collected local League histories will be for sale!**
- 5) **It's fun!** Yes, we think hard, stay up late/get up early, argue passionately - but we are with others who share our concerns and are determined to make a difference. So there is joy in the air and no small amount of laughter.
- 6) **I (and the whole state board and staff) will be so happy to see you!** We delight in seeing old friends, in having phone voices become actual people, and seeing a brand new batch of convention-goers we can get to know.
7. The times are asking a lot of us all. **By getting to know and learn from one another we will become an even fiercer "force to reckon with" for the century ahead!**

Executive Director: Laura Ladd Bierman, Laura@lwvny.org

State Convention

State Convention is Coming! The League's state Convention is scheduled for June 7-9, 2019, at the Hilton in downtown Albany.

Register here (https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/MPjzKWEH_gPayLis8Y0EQ) if you haven't – make sure your local League is represented.

Pre Convention Kit

The Pre Convention Kit is now available (attached, emailed to all registered delegates and posted on the state League website). In this Kit is the information you need to be an educated voter at Convention: Proposed 2019-20 Budget, Proposed Bylaw Amendments, Proposed 2019-2021 Program Planning, and Nominating Committee report for the 2019-2021 LWVNYS Officers and Board of Directors. There is also information about our fantastic speakers and training workshops, as well as workshops on League matters and information session on what other local Leagues are accomplishing. There is something at Convention for everyone to learn – new members and long-time members! **Bring this kit with you to Convention – you will need it during discussions at plenary sessions.** If you're not attending Convention, read the Kit and tell your delegates how you want them to vote. We are a membership organization and need your input.

Volunteers Needed at Convention

Delegates can volunteer at times other than plenary session and volunteers for plenary can observe plenary session. Volunteers may also sit in on workshops and other events, excluding meals, without paying. Unfortunately, the meals are expensive so they would have to register and pay to attend a meal event. Volunteers are usually booked for a 2 hour slot, but we'll take whatever time people can give us. Please email Britt Westergard, Chair of the Volunteer Committee (brittlwv@gmail.com), with names and contact info for anyone willing to volunteer. We can't have a successful convention without our volunteers!

Featured Speakers at Convention

(register online at https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/MPjzKWEH_gPayLis8Y0EQ)

"Civil Discourse: How Can We Achieve That Today?"

Friday, June 7, 6:30 pm

Robert Boatright, PhD, Director of Research, National Institute of Civil Discourse and Professor and Chair, Political Science Department, Clark University

"Action Civics: A 21st Century Approach to Educating Youth for Democratic Participation"

Saturday, June 8, 12 noon

DeNora Getachew, Executive Director, Generation Citizen

"The Woman's Hour Has Struck: Winning the Vote"

Saturday, June 8, 5:30 pm

Elaine Weiss, Journalist and Author, *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*
Co-sponsored by NYS Archives Partnership Trust

2019 Students Inside Albany Conference

Just last week, 60 high school students from across the state came to Albany to learn how to engage with their state government. The students were excited and interested in learning how to become part of the governmental decision-making process. The 60 students came from 43 local Leagues, MAL Units and ILOs; 16 boys and 44 girls. We will have a full summary of their activities posted on the state website under Youth Programs in the next week – but as usual, the highlight was shadowing their Assemblymember and Senator each afternoon. They also visited the Court of Appeals and heard speakers on running for office and from other lobby groups. The comments from the students at the end justified the hard work:

- *It really gave me an in-depth look at the inner workings of our government*
- *I've become more motivated to bring up issues that matter to me and start change in my community*
- *A lot of my opinions were challenged and it was a great learning experience*
- *I was surprised how closely my assemblymember and senator work together for my community*
- *Politicians are real people, too! I wasn't afraid to ask any kind of question.*
- *I learned that the politicians are actually there for the people, not themselves*

- *I was surprised at how much Democrats and Republicans compromised and worked together*
- *I want to run for state assembly now!*
- *It change my view on politics from why don't they pass that bill to where are they getting the funding for that bill.*
- *It shed light on the legislative process and made me rethink things.*

Local League Updates

EVERY local League MUST complete and return the attached Local League Update form, even if no one on your board has changed! This is crucial for the state office to know who to contact for what and who to include on group emails, etc. The people you list do NOT have to be on your board and it can include multiple people for any one position. We use this form to develop our group email lists, so it's really who do you want to receive the info on membership, advocacy, voter services, etc? Please do not assume someone on your board has returned this form – ask your President(s) or leaders if someone has completed and returned the form. Thanks!

Sustainer Plaques and Chocolates



Don't forget that you can honor Leagues leaders with an engraved plaque at the state office. With a \$200 donation (through League or your Education Funds), we will engraved the wording you choose, send you a certificate with that wording to present to the honoree, and engrave the wording on a plaque hanging in the state office. More information is attached.

Also, to honor outgoing board members, etc, we have delicious chocolates available at \$2 each in the shape of the LWV logo. Just call the office to order.



Advocacy: Sally Robinson, sally.s.robinson@gmail.com

League Testimony

During the past month, the state League provided testimony on many issues (see the testimony on the state League website homepage):

- NYS Complete Count Commission on the 2020 Census
- NY Health Act
- Automatic Voter Registration (to be given on Thursday this week)
- Before NYC BOE: Early Voting Implementation

Issues and Advocacy at Convention

There are a number of workshops at Convention on advocacy topics.

- On **Friday evening**, Jennifer Wilson, former LWVNY Legislative Director, will lead a workshop on **advocacy training and current hot topics in the legislature**.
- Beth Radow, LWVNY Chair of the Energy, Environment and Agriculture Committee, will lead a workshop on **Food Waste and Food Insecurity on Saturday morning** with special guest speakers.
- On **Saturday evening**, Carol Mellor and Sally Robinson will talk about the **new process** adopted by the board to facilitate changes to our current positions and any possible new issues.



Lobby Day for Automatic Voter Registration – May 30 in Albany

Join us! Register here

(<https://www.mobilize.us/letnyvote/event/92487/>) – transportation is provided from across the state.

Voter Services: Judie Gorenstein, judiel728@aol.com

This month the challenges as well as the opportunities for voter service have continued. The challenge is to gather information and progress that state and county BOEs are making, find out more specifics, and disseminate it to first our local Leagues and then to the voters. The Making Our Democracy Grant we received from LWVUS had enabled us to begin our Early Voting Educational Project. Counties are mandated to begin Early Voting 10 days before the Nov. 5 general election. Each county BOE was suppose to designate their early voting sites by May 1 to NYSBOE. I am happy to report most of the counties have selected their sites and the hours they would be opened for early voting. Local Leagues have been emailed a spreadsheet of the information provided by the state BOE and asked to contact their county BOE to find out specific information and report back to LWVNY. We will be creating a website along with printed brochures with information specific to each county on early voting.

Early voting offers an opportunity to New Yorkers. Voting can be easier. Early voting offers an opportunity to LWVNY to engage voters this years with local elections where there usually is the lowest turnout. In order to do this effectivley, we need accurate and timely information. In addition to speaking with your BOE, Leagues are urged to update their websites with current information.

- Publicize the June 25 primary date. Remind people of NY's closed primary. Remember if you are holding a candidate event for one party's primary race, you need to offer the same if another party in that particular race is having a primary
- Make certain you have the new voter registration form which has Libertarian Party and SAM Party
- Have calendar with deadlines for this year's Elections dates and deadlines including dates for Early Voting

Learn more about what VS is doing at our workshops at convention. Democracy works best when everyone participated. We can and will educate voters.

Voter Services at State Convention

Voter Services on the state, county, and local level are and will continue to be extremely busy this year. With the new reforms in our election laws, increased interest and involvement of young people in civics, and our highly polarized political climate where it is often difficult to get the facts, our mission to involve and educate people in government is all that more important.

- On **Friday afternoon** at the request of the LWV of Rochester, there will be a discussion on LWVNY's "**No Empty Chair**" policy for candidate forums. This is a time for members to share your League's experiences with this policy. Some Leagues continue to see this policy as problematic, while others see the benefits. We all can learn from another.
- On **Friday evening**, there will be a workshop on **moderating candidate forums**. We would love to have a panel of our experienced moderators. Please contact Judie Gorenstein at Judiel728@aol.com if you are willing to be on the panel. For those who are looking to become moderators or who want to run successful candidate forums, this is an excellent opportunity to learn what you should and should not do.
- On **Saturday morning**, there will be an informational workshop on the **new election laws**. Get the facts, learn about the grant we were awarded by LWVUS, ask questions and share your ideas as to how to help make New Yorker's first experience with early voting successful.
- On **Saturday evening** there will be a **Q & A workshop** where attendees can ask questions concerning voter registration, candidate forums, turning out the vote, educating voters or anything relating to voter services. We are hoping to have a panel of League members who have had successes or want to share innovative ideas. Displays of materials, banners, flyers are encouraged. These will not only be shown at workshop but will be in display throughout the convention in the sale and exhibit room. Please contact JudieL728@aol.com if you either have display, want to be on panel, or both.

Youth Programs: Betty Ann King, bking8213@charter.net

Wow! Wow! Wow! Convention is here!!! This is your time to shine! Youth Programs that you and your League have supported are being showcased with displays and write ups in the sales room. Make sure you enjoy not only your own display but also the displays of others throughout the state. Not able to attend convention? Thanks to the suggestion of Lisa Scott from the Suffolk County League, pictures of each League's display will be posted on the LWVNY website!

That being said, this is such a busy time for all League involvement throughout the state. Please make sure you send a description of these inspiring efforts so they may be published in either updates or on the LWVNY website.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the incredible success of the State's premiere Youth Program, *Students Inside Albany*. The 2019 conference included 60 involved students absorbing the functioning of the components of NYS government with an eye to becoming a visible participant and advocate for the political process.

As we come to the end of the League's fiscal year and new presidents and new youth chairs are elected, please remember to update this information with state League in order for a continuum of communication among Leagues to occur seamlessly. A special thank you goes to the State Youth Board Committee for facilitating ideas and strengthening inter-League communication.

Youth Programs at Convention

Plans for showcasing our youth programs at convention have progressed. Convention **workshop for Youth Programs is scheduled for Saturday, June 8, from 8:30 -9:45 AM**. The three programs that youth chairs chose to be highlighted are:

1. Youth Engaging Youth, Next Step (LWV of Huntington)
2. Citizenship and Political Activism (CAPA) (LWV of the North Country)
3. Running and Winning (LWV of the Hamptons)

Women's History Projects: Joan Johnson, jaj62@twcny.rr.com; and Barb Thomas, bkoepicust@gmail.com

Happy Birthday to us all! We're sure that many of you have planned celebrations, events and activities to celebrate the League's 100th anniversary. We will be posting a new resource kit on the state website in the next week, with examples of many of the great ideas already implemented. We hope others will share these ideas and create their own programs. Please email us any new ideas or programs your League has organized.

And, be sure to join us at the state Convention on Saturday evening to hear Elaine Weiss, author of *The Woman's Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote*. Register here:

https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/MPjzKWEH_gPayLis8Y0EQ