



League of Women Voters of NYS **STATE VOTER**

November/December 2017



From the State President

Election Day, and the days leading up to it, were filled with celebrations of the women's suffrage centennial that were exciting and educational.

On Saturday, November 4th, a conference was held in Albany at the NYS Museum on the centennial and women's issues today. Jennifer Wilson and I both coordinated and moderated panel discussions during the women's conference. Mine dealt with the issues women should address moving forward, and Jen's dealt with how to advocate. Both included impressive speakers.

That evening the League's Education Foundation, in coordination with the NYS Archives Partnership Trust, held a reception to kick off the opening of the special exhibit on women's suffrage history at the Museum. This was a great success with over 200 people in attendance. Coline Jenkins, great-great-great granddaughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, shared family stories and anecdotes with the group. Museum staff provided tours of the new exhibit as well. The exhibit is open until Mother's Day 2018, and we encourage all to find the time to visit it. (see photos from conference and reception below)

The following Monday, November 6, the actual 100th anniversary of NY women winning the vote, many buildings in NYC and Syracuse and perhaps elsewhere were lit up in purple and gold, and Lt Gov Kathy Hochul and the Women's Suffrage Commission (which she chairs and on which I sit) hosted a lavish and crowded party on the 48th floor of a building in Hudson Yards where we could see the lit-up Empire State Building easily. Many NYC LWV members joined in the celebration.

The next day, Election Day, I drove to Fayetteville where the Lt Gov, Sally Wagner (Gage House executive) and I put I VOTED stickers on Matilda Joslyn Gage's grave and then participated in a reception at the Gage House. Joan Johnson, Erin-Leigh Darnley, and many other Syracuse LWV members were there, and Sally was grateful that we helped make the event so festive. The Lt Gov made "sticker" stops at Mary Burnett Talbert's grave in Buffalo (where Terri Parks and other LWV members helped) and at Susan B. Anthony's grave in Rochester earlier that day, but there were no other receptions. (Note: if you don't know who Talbert is, check her out! Amazing.)

It was delightful to celebrate this important women's suffrage centennial in multiple places and with so many people, especially many League members. It's been so good to be reminded of our foremothers' sacrifices and what those sacrifices demand of us today and into the future! The vote was won, but it will forever need protecting.

Happy Holidays to all! And, best wishes for a peaceful and healthy 2018!

Dare Thompson, President, League of Women Voters of NYS
darethompson@gmail.com; Tel: 518-465-4162
Facebook: League of Women Voters of NYS
Twitter: @LWVNYS

IN THIS ISSUE

[Women's Suffrage Conference and Reception](#)

[Voter Services](#)

[Constitutional Convention](#)

[League Day at the UN](#)

[Local League News](#)

LWVNYS Advocacy Training Day

Save the Date!
Tuesday, April 24th
in Albany!

Come learn about our current advocacy agenda and how you can help make our voice heard in the NYS Legislature. More info coming soon to register.

Support the League's Education Foundation while shopping!

Use Amazon Smile when you purchase gifts online and Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the EF. It's the same Amazon and you will have the same account as your regular Amazon account. Support the EF by starting your shopping at smile.amazon.com

First Call to LWVUS Convention in June 2018

First Call to National Convention 2018

The League of Women Voters' 53rd National Convention will be held at the Hilton Chicago in Chicago, IL, from Thursday, June 28 through Sunday, July 1, 2018. We invite our League members to save these dates and plan to join

UN Conference on the Status of Women

League members interested in participating in the UN's annual Conference on Women should contact Suzanne Stassevitch, LWVUS UN Observer, as soon as possible. During the Commission's annual two-week session at UN headquarters in New York, representatives of UN Member States, civil society organizations and UN entities gather to discuss progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#), the key global policy document on gender equality, as well as contributing to the follow up to the [2030 agenda for Sustainable Development](#) so as to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women. [Click here for more information.](#)

Environmental Info

Message from Beth Radow, LWVNYS Chair of the Energy, Environment and Agriculture Committee

Here's a great article entitled: *Lessons Learned from Launching a Composting Collection Program*. Please share with others:

<http://www.gracelinks.org/blog/8313/lessons-learned-from-launching-a-composting-collection-prog>

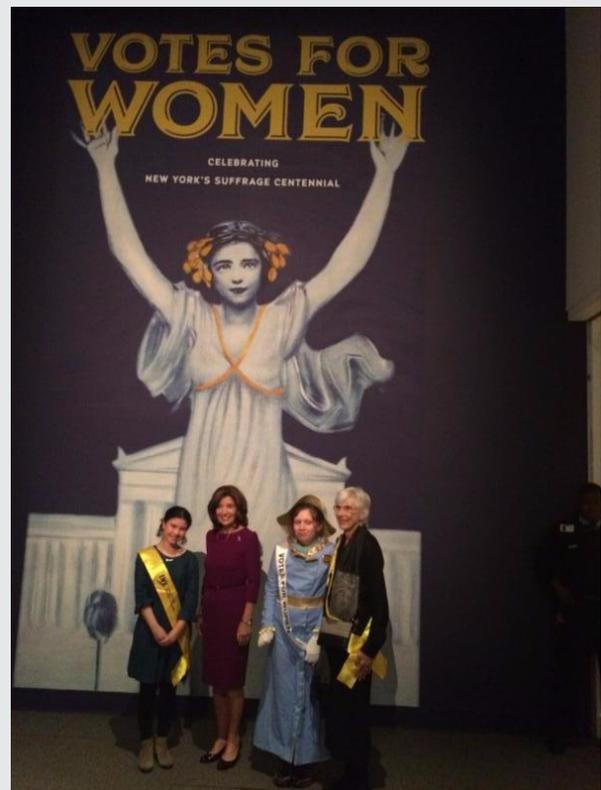
hundreds of passionate and engaged leaders for our biennial national gathering. More information and the full "first call" is [available here](#).

New LWVUS Website

Check out the newly redesigned LWVUS website at www.lwv.org.



Photos from Women's Suffrage Conference and Reception, November 4, NYS Museum





Voter Services

Judie Gorenstein, judieL728@aol.com

I would like to thank all those Leagues, ILOs and MAL that completed voter service surveys. We have 27 responses are from 23 local Leagues, 2 MALS and 2 ILOs. Here is a summary of what the surveys revealed.

VOTER REGISTRATION

All but two Leagues hold voter registration drives. Most deliver them to the BOE by mail or in person.

Number of drives Leagues held ranged from 1 to 109.

Only 3 Leagues collected information which they used for follow up. One League plans to next year.

VOTER GUIDES

All Leagues but one distributed the state voter guide.

One League published their own local guide and one League provided theirs on line.

Most Leagues were please with appearance of state VG, welcomed changed next year of different appearances between part I and II.

Some Leagues expressed desire for VG to come out earlier, bolder titles, larger logo, etc. One asked that both parts be combined

CANDIDATE FORUMS/DEBATES

Only 2 Leagues did not schedule; one because races were not contested and other held conversations with candidates that were aired.

Number of events they held ranged from 1 to 8.

The majority followed the No Empty Chair completely and two did not. There were two others that partially followed it, one of them indicating that next year would follow it totally.

There was a total of four events cancelled because of no empty chair policy. Leagues used pressed releases, candidates' guides, and social media; ie, facebook, web page to educate public about cancellations.

There were three events cancelled for reasons other than No Empty Chair.

The majority of Leagues used used questions from the audience that were written and screened.

Five Leagues did not have their candidate forums videotaped and aired. One had it taped by their cosponsor. Five Leagues do not have a videotaping policy.

There were only five issues that Leagues had recording. (This is less than in past) One League was live streaming it and fire wall at venue prevented it. One League had to ask a person to stop recording and person did. One host had to stop a young woman from recording; she was with someone who was supporting a candidate. By far, biggest issue was when attendee in audience live streamed event and refused to take it down from Facebook. There was also complaint from a candidate who wanted to record event.

Most events were covered by the media.

17 Leagues would like "Candidate Forum Kits.

16 Leagues would like training workshops for moderators.

Four Leagues do not have a debate policy.

ORGAN DONATION

14 Leagues participated in Organ Donation awareness program

VOTE 411

16 Leagues participated in Vote 411

Number of races posted ranged from 4 to 99.

While Nassau county ILO had a 98% response from candidates and Rye Rye- Brook had

90%, most of the Leagues participating had a much lower response. Saratoga differentiated



between races that were contested when they had 60% response from over all races when there was 31%.

No Leagues included write in candidates.

GET OUT VOTE EFFORTS

Most Leagues did not use TV, Radio, letters to editors or PSAs to get out the vote.

Eight Leagues did have follow up calls or emails reminding people to vote collected at VR drives but not necessarily off voter forms.

Congratulations to LWV of Saratoga that distributed 1300 Voter Guides Part II. There were some suggestions for improving the guides which will be considered which ranged from enlarging LWV logo, renaming it to Voting in NYS, bolder titles, and more. Congratulations also goes to the Nassau ILO which had 98% response from candidates and to Rye, Rye-Brook and Port Chester that had 90% response from candidates in Vote 411.

No Empty Chair Policy

There are several local Leagues that have requested the state board reconsider our No Empty Chair Policy applying to all candidate debate/events. At our November board meeting, we did review this policy. We discussed your concerns in great detail and, although we do understand your concerns and some of the criticisms your Leagues have faced, we as a board are in agreement that the No Empty Chair Policy needs to remain. We believe it is the LWVNYS's priority to not only be nonpartisan but to be perceived as nonpartisan.

The LWVNY board wants to help all our Leagues implement and follow through on the No Empty Chair Policy. The vast majority of the 25 Leagues who returned a completed voter service survey did comply with policy and handled the few difficulties when they did arise. We are pleased that Leagues have shared their concerns and especially grateful to those who implemented the policy in spite of concerns.

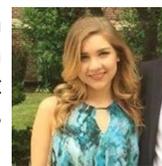
We plan on developing a full toolkit to assist the local Leagues in implementing this policy, including many suggestions for procedures, media work, etc. We are also planning a conference call for all so you can discuss with us how to proceed with this policy. Finally, during regional training workshops, we will provide time to discuss this with other Leagues in your area to share successes. We look forward to hearing how we can help you with this whether it be through workshops, templates, conference calls, etc. We can accomplish so much when we all work together.

Constitutional Convention

***Sally Robinson, sally.s.robinson@gmail.com, and
Jennifer Wilson, jennifer@lwvny.org***



When we first announced our pro-con con position, we received opposition from a number of our members. However, in the end, we believe that our pro position gave us a unique voice in this process and gave the State League a significant amount of publicity. In addition to the public forums held by our local Leagues all over the state, the State office participated in more than 20 public sessions, we were quoted in countless media outlets, invited to participate in editorial



board meetings, and even included in Susan Arbetter's PBS special on the questions which was aired all over the state.

Throughout the campaign, the biggest argument in opposition was the fear that a significant number of protections would be stripped from the Constitution. We countered this argument with the fact that this has never occurred at a convention. The other argument was the potential for dark money to influence a convention. We shared this fear but believed that there was no greater risk of dark money's influence than what we already experience at the state legislature. The final biggest argument was that delegates would be selected based on gerrymandered Senate districts and would likely be the same corrupt politicians currently serving. Although we agreed that the gerrymandered Senate districts were a real issue, we believed that this convention would not have the same reform gridlock currently plaguing our legislature. We were able to counter each argument made by the opposition but we were vastly outspent.

After the convention vote failed we put out a [press statement](#) reaffirming our commitment to amending our state Constitution and calling for widespread reforms. A copy of the press release is [here](#) and posted on the state website. We are still working in partnership with other reform organizations to advance priority Constitutional amendments through the legislative process. In December, we will be discussing what these priority amendments are and how we can have the best chance of moving these proposals forward.

League Day at the United Nations, Nov. 16th



League Day at the United Nations A Briefing on Forced Labor and Human Trafficking

The annual day at the UN was held on Nov 16. Approximately 64 people attended to hear speakers on the topic of Forced Labor and Human Trafficking after a wonderful lunch in the Delegates' Dining Room and tours of the UN facility. Although one speaker canceled the week of the event, there were 2 interesting speakers: Simone Monasebian, Director, UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); and Rosalee Keech, LWVUS UN Observer. Information and website links on human trafficking have been provided by Simone and posted on the state website at: <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/un-report.html>. For the 2nd hour, Saphira Rameshfar, Member of the Exe. Comm., NGO Committee on the Status of Women, spoke about the Committee's work to increase the number of women in staff positions at the UN while also increasing awareness globally of women's issues. She discussed the annual conference on women to be held in March, 2018, and invited all attendees to consider participating in this conference. Information on registration was distributed and is attached. Thanks to Zonta International District 4 again for providing co-sponsorship of the day.



Local League News

The **Cortland County LWV** held a "Meet your elected officials" meet and greet reception in a popular Cortland watering hole. Not enough just to get elected but more importantly to hear, in an informal and social setting, what the constituents want from their newly elected and re-elected county and city officials.

The **LWV of Tompkins County** organized a panel to learn ways to identify the source and verify the truth of items offered through today's media. They also heard about a youth-targeted curriculum that integrates media literacy and critical thinking. And, finally, heard a few of the limitations on today's news media, including reduced funding and staff. The League is grateful to our panelists: Michael Engels, Cornell University; Chris Sperry, Project Look Sharp, Ithaca College; and Neill Borowski, Ithaca Journal.

LWV of Schenectady also hosted a panel discussion on the issue of media and news. "*The Scoop on Fake News*" with Rex Smith, Editor of the Times Union and Judy Patrick, Editor of the Gazette, helped attendees understand what is going on in the world of news both fake and real.

On Election Day, **LWV of the Hamptons** went to the graves of our Southampton and East Hampton suffrage leaders, to place the "I Voted" stickers. Our Hamptons LWV had our last 100th anniversary event, a suffrage musical revue titled "Ladies of Liberty"!

At the holiday gathering for **LWV of Albany County**, a presentation on "Citizenship 101: Educating Citizens for Participation in Democracy. What Does It Take?" was organized. The speakers addressed the following: What are the current NYS Education requirements for civics education, particularly for the Participation in Government (12th grade) course? How are the requirements being taught? What more is needed to prepare students for participation in democracy? How can the League facilitate authentic learning experiences?

The **LWV of Rochester** continued its forum series on eliminating barriers to voting with a discussion of NYS laws that inhibit the ability to actually vote. Panelists leading the discussion were Tom Ferrarese, Monroe County Board of Elections Commissioner; Jennifer Wilson, League of Women Voters of New York State, Program and Policy Director; and Scott Forsyth, Esq., Counsel, Genesee Valley Civil Liberties Union, and Member of NYCLU and LWV.



Leni Vradelis (left) and Ellen Adams participate in the recent Great American Women's Suffrage Trivia Challenge, sponsored by the Clinton County Historical Association and the **League of Women Voters of the North Country**, at the American Legion Post 20 in Plattsburgh.

Other visible ways to celebrate the women's suffrage centennial in NYS was with media attention. Lisa Scott, President of the **LWV of Suffolk County ILO**, published an article in Times Beacon Record News Media. See the great article, entitled Making Democracy Work: Women in New York State

won the vote 100 years ago next week, here: <http://tbrnewsmedia.com/66726-2/>

The **LWV Broome Tioga** co-sponsored a reenactment of the VOTES For Women Parade and Conference held in Binghamton in October 1913. We had special reenactors portray leading personalities of the period. Donna Lupardo our assemblywoman chaired the committee. Fun was had by all! (see photos below)



Great job, **LWV of Rockland County**. They had a huge turnout at their annual Candidates' Forum with 8 cosponsors in the driving wind and 3 inches of rain on Sunday, Oct 29; over 250 people showed up to hear from the candidates!

League of Women Voters of New York State
62 Grand Street, Albany, NY 12207
Tel: 518-465-4162; FAX: 518-465-0812
Website: www.lwvny.org
Email: lwvny@lwvny.org
Facebook: League of Women Voters of NYS
Twitter: @LWVNYS