



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: November/December 2017
We decided to combine the months into one report
Happy Holidays to all!

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

- **Update the LWWUS database with any changes to your membership by January 31; the members listed as *active* members in the LWWUS database on Jan. 31 will be used to calculate the PMP your League will owe in July 2018 (more info, links to helpful hints, etc, below).**
- Complete and return the 2018 Legislative Priorities form **by January 31**
- Schedule membership meeting **before Feb. 15** to discuss state Update and Concurrence (see info below)
- Send a copy of your local League bylaws and current budget to the state League office (mail, email or fax is fine) – thanks to those who have already done this.

100th Anniversary Dates

November 6, 2017	100 th Anniversary of Woman Suffrage in New York State
November 19, 2019	100 th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters of New York State
February 14, 2020	100 th Anniversary of National League of Women Voters
August 26, 2020	100 th Anniversary of the official certification of the ratification of the 19 th amendment by the US Secretary of State

Check out the resources on the state website to help plan your events: <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/womens-suffrage/index.html>.

President’s Report: Dare Thompson, darethompson@gmail.com

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.

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.

Voter Service Report, Judie Gorenstein, judieL728@aol.com

Voter Service Survey Results

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 (you can still submit your response if you haven't yet – email it to cyndi@lwny.org). 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 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.

Issues and Advocacy Report: Sally Robinson, robintwins@gmail.com

Reminder: State Update and Concurrence

Please Schedule A Time In Your Calendars Before February 15 To Consider The Update On The Charter School Position And The Concurrence On The Death With Dignity Position. The update should be

easy and short and may be accomplished during another meeting. The Concurrence maybe require more discussion and take longer, but it is your decision as to how to present the materials and how to schedule this discussion.

Materials for each of these have been mailed and emailed to all local Leagues. One paper copy has gone to a President or one co-President of each local League – we emailed all leaders with the electronic versions and all materials have been be posted on the state website.

Legislative Agenda

The 2018 Legislative Agenda will again be published and available to all local Leagues. We encourage you to use this booklet for education of members, legislators and the public on the issues of concern during the upcoming legislative session. As in the past, we are asking the local Leagues what issues are most important to them and their members. **Please complete and return to the state office the attached Legislative Priorities form by Jan. 31.** We will use this input during our direct lobbying of the legislators and how to prioritize League resources for advocacy work.

State Office, Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director, Laura@lwny.org

Update LWVUS Database

Local Leagues MUST update the LWVUS database to reflect current members as of Jan. 31!!! Members listed as “active” members on Jan 31 will determine how much you will pay for PMP for the fiscal year beginning July 2018. If members haven’t paid dues, mark them as “INACTIVE” in the US database so you won’t have them count in your PMP fees. Don’t wait – start updating it now! If you have trouble or need assistance, call Cyndi in the state office (518-465-4162). Here is a link to a User Guide for the LWVUS database – it includes videos and instructions: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/lwvus-online-database-user-guide-and-other-materials>. Here’s also a link to some questions and answers about the LWVUS database that might help you with your update: <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/faq-lwvus-online-database>. **Ask at your board meeting who is doing this to ensure that someone in your League is updating the US Database – it affects your PMP payments next year!**

Students Inside Albany Conference, May 20-23, 2018

We have had a tremendous response from local Leagues asking to send students to the 2018 SIA. We are still waiting for the Dec. 15 deadline, but there will be Leagues who will NOT be able to send 2 students. Each local Leagues is guaranteed a spot for one student and then based on the date you told us you want to send a 2nd student, we will accept more students up to our maximum of 60 attendees. We will inform all on Dec 16 as to how many students each local League can send. The forms to be completed by the selected student and parents will be emailed to all in early January.

Local League Bylaws and Budgets

The state League would like to review every local League’s bylaws and current budget. Please send a copy of each to the state office by snail mail, email, fax or whatever is easiest for you. Thanks.

Grants and Programs Available for Local Leagues

Humanities New York is currently accepting applications for \$1,000 Reading & Discussion Grants. The deadline for applying is December 18. You can find all the information to apply [here](#), along with sample reading lists and discussion topics. Trained facilitators will guide discussion, and HNY offers facilitator training for those who are interested.

Additionally Humanities NY is also offering \$200 micro-grants to fund [Community Conversations](#); these are similar to town-halls, designed to focus on any number of public issues. These can include Democratic, Voter

Registration, Segregation, Sexual Harassment, Grassroots Organizing, etc. Many of our local Leagues have used these programs successfully.

And lastly, Humanities NY offers [two types of grants from \\$1500 to \\$5000](#). Vision Grants are intended to fund emerging programs, and encourage experimentation. For those organizations who have mature programs, or already-planned events, Action Grants provide a higher level of funding.

Development – A tax deductible donation to your local League through this LINK

During this year end time, don't forget to post on your website, include in emails to members or announce at meetings that anyone can donate a tax deductible contribution to your local League. Here's the link: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/LzxNifgwHedZPbpqOOCfBw. Any donation will be deposited into your local League's grant management account which you can then use for any educational expenses.

The state League's Education Foundation is extremely grateful for any contributions (tax deductible) made to it as well; the link for online donations to the state League is: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/ai-Wav_MMuwE6lJy8s8rBg.

New LWVUS Website

The LWVUS website has been totally revised and updated. On the new website, there is a section where a person can enter a zip code and it will tell them if there's a local League in their area. I have heard from others that this is not inclusive of all zip codes in a local League area. **I suggest you develop a list of zip codes for your local League, test them on the LWVUS website, and then share with me any that don't link to your local League and should be added on the US website.** I'll forward those to LWVUS for updating this important link. The state League is also looking to update its website soon.

League Day at the United Nations, Nov. 16th

Briefing Topic: 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.

Legislative Action, Jennifer Wilson, Legislative Director, jennifer@lwvny.org

Advocacy Day

We have finally set a date for Lobby Day 2018! This year we will hold our annual Lobby Day on Tuesday, April 24th, 2018. We will convene in Meeting rooms A and B of the NYS Museum. We will have advocacy training and lobby visits with legislators. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details!

ConCon

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 attached 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.

Vote411

In 2017, 35 Local Leagues participated in Vote411. These 35 Leagues posted nearly 800 local races. Several of these Leagues also posted primary race information. Response rates from candidates varied throughout the state. The State League also posted all three state-wide ballot proposals and pros and cons for each proposal. Overall the Leagues were able to cover a wide range of races.

We have not yet received the usage results from National but we did hear early on Election Day that the usage rates for 2017 had already more than doubled the 2015 rates.

From LWVUS

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