



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: September 2017

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

- Mark your calendar for **Saturday, Nov 4th, to be in Albany!** We are hosting an opening reception at the NYS Museum to kick-off their special exhibit on women's suffrage history. Be sure to join us – it'll be a great celebration! A flyer is attached that you can share to help promote the reception.
- Order the Voter Guide Part II and the NEW brochure on the constitutional convention – **now available – call or email the office to have a supply mailed to you**
- Register for League Day at the United Nations on Nov. 16th (see below and attached)
- 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).

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

Happy fall, friends! League work is never more valuable than right now, and we really appreciate all of you who are registering voters, distributing Voters Guides and our new Constitutional Convention brochure, moderating candidate events, and holding forums on the ballot issues.

Don't forget to share our information in your local papers, radio and TV shows, and via social media.

And be sure to send any good pictures and/or stories about League members in action to Jennifer Wilson in our state office at jennifer@lwvny.org so we can share them with the world via Twitter, Facebook, and our next newsletter.

Thanks for all you are doing in these next six weeks. In a time when democracy feels fragile, you are keeping the faith and doing your part to keep our country and state strong.

We're so glad you're there.

Votes for Women: Celebrating New York's Women's Suffrage History

Nov. 4, 5:00-8:00 pm, NYS Museum

The LWV of NYS Education Foundation & The NYS Archives Partnership Trust invite you to a special evening reception celebrating the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote in New York State and the opening of the State Museum's *Votes for Women* Exhibit.

Coline Jenkins, great, great granddaughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, will speak about growing up in a family of women activist. In addition to Stanton, her great grandmother Harriot Stanton Blatch, worked as a major organizer of New York State woman suffrage during the Militant Period of 1913-1915. Her grandmother, Nora Stanton Blatch DeForest Barney, was the first female civil engineer to graduate (1905) from Cornell. Jenkins' mother was born one month prior to the passage of the 19th Amendment of the US Constitution in 1920. Jenkins grew up in an atmosphere of suffrage and women's right campaigning.



Museum staff will also serve as guides as we have private access to this new exhibit on women's suffrage history.

You can purchase tickets to the reception online at:

https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/7MenLR3YUpmX2yVcmFXCcg or the registration form is attached and can be printed out for those without computer access. Join us!

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

September has been a busy month for voter service. This being a local election year when there is the lowest voter turnout, it is more important than ever to engage and educate our voters not only about the election of the candidates but also about the three proposals on the back of the ballot, one being the constitutional convention. Over twenty Leagues participated in National Voter Registration Day with most, if not all Leagues, doing voter registration drives. Many Leagues held candidate nights for the primaries and now most Leagues are under way planning for their candidate events for the general election. Remember a good written policy for your candidate events lays the foundation for successful programs. All written policies should include the "no empty chair."

All presidents, voter service chairs and members received the revised voter service policy not allowing any open chair candidate events for races in any level of government. After receiving some questions and complaints about the policy change, this month we emailed a detailed explanation. Our goal has been for our Leagues to speak with one voice, have clear and consistent policies, and adhere to our nonpartisan policy. We knew that some Leagues would be resistant to change and sought to help in any way we could to make the transition easier. I am happy to report that of the feedback we have gotten, most has been positive and in fact one League, who had been strongly against the change, has adopted the new policy. A big thank you to all those Leagues.

For those Leagues who continue to struggle with the revised policy, I have attached a letter that the LWV of the North Country sent explaining the no "empty chair debate" concisely and clearly in the hope it will allay any of your concerns about the change. Having a clear and consistent policy and informing the candidates of that policy beforehand (it is best to have them agree to and sign the policy when they are invited) avoids confusion the night of the event. Remember also the importance of including a policy on taping and airing candidate events. This policy remains the same as in past and can be found on our website.

As you prepare for and hold your candidate night, know that we are available to answer your questions. Although the lwny.voterservices.org google group has not been active recently, a message will be sent out to

members already in this group asking you to share their experiences. If you are not a member of the group and wish to be, contact JudieL728@aol and ask to be invited and join the conversation. In November all Leagues will be asked to complete a voter service survey which will enable us to evaluate if we have been successful and what else is needed to achieve our goals.

LWV of Huntington Program with Suffolk County BOE

The LWV of Huntington coordinated a program with the Suffolk County Board of Elections at Wyandanch High School. The BOE did an excellent three part presentation. They first explained the importance of local elections and voting in those elections. The students then completed a voter registration form and voted on a ballot for their favorite ice cream flavor. They even scanned the ballots and provided the results after the presentation.

The BOE also covered a number of other issues with the students, including the following:

- Voting being your voice and it mattering more in local elections
- Primary and general elections and political parties
- Absentee ballots
- Cross endorsements
- Front of ballot being candidates and back being ballot proposals
- Being an educated voter

For more information or to create a similar program in your League, contact Judie at JudieL728@aol.com.

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

Constitutional Convention

Our new brochure on the constitutional convention ballot proposal is now available. A copy is attached and is also posted on the state website. A wealth of information on the ballot proposal question on whether to hold a constitutional convention, including articles in favor and against the proposal, is available on the state League website at <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/con-con-edu.html>. This page is often updated with new articles and one concerning the myth of losing public pensions has just been posted and has been attached to this email. Feel free to share part or all with your members and the public. It summarizes the issue very well.

State Update and Concurrence

At the State Convention, delegates approved two program items:

1. An update on the Charter School position adopted in 2006 to delete the following sentence. "In lieu of amendment of the Charter School Act to increase the total number of charters that could be granted, it supports retention of the current total (100) with amendment of the Charter School Act so that a charter could be reissued if a charter school ceased to function for any reason." The 100 charter school cap has been exceeded over the years and is no longer a relevant number.
2. A concurrence with a LWV of Utah's position on Death with Dignity.

Materials for each of these have been mailed and emailed to all local Leagues this week. 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 will be posted on the state website.

PLEASE SCHEDULE A TIME IN YOUR CALENDARS BEFORE FEBRUARY 15 TO CONSIDER THIS UPDATE AND THIS CONCURRENCE. 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 (coming in Sept) and how to schedule this discussion.

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

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.

New Staff at the State Office

Welcome to our two new staff members: Cyndi Jacobson, Office and Local League Coordinator; and Celeste Steinke, Development and Communication Coordinator.

Celeste Steinke



Celeste has always been drawn to advocacy and change since her first personal protest against plaid jumpers in Catholic school. Having graduated with a B.A. in Political Science and Psychology from SUNY Albany and a passion for public service- She found her professional path within the nonprofit community.

When asked why she wanted to work for LWVNYS, she said:

"I believe in the democratic process because it works if people use it correctly. They need access and education to have their vote heard and League of Women Voters New York State has always been there to provide the tools necessary to further the voice of the people."

When she isn't working to further a cause, you can find Celeste making a big cup of coffee so she can keep up with her husband, Tom and their four children.

Cyndi Jacobson



Cyndi is a recent graduate from the Rockefeller College of Public Policy and Political Science at the University at Albany. Her concentrations in her undergraduate career involved politics, law and civil rights, and environmental sciences. She is a passionate supporter of women's and LGBT rights, as well as environmental justice. She recently completed a session at the State Assembly in the office of Assemblyman Al Stirpe, Jr. and is working hard to remain engaged with legislative issues and public policy creation. She is elated to begin in her new position as the Office and Local League Coordinator out of the Albany office and cannot wait to get involved within the League!

Voter Guide Part II – Ballot Proposals

The Voter Guide Part II is now available and has been shipped to many local Leagues. If you need more copies, just call or email Cyndi at Cyndi@lwvny.org. It's also posted on the state website. Part II includes general election information, but also has descriptions and pros and cons of the 3 ballot proposals that will be on the ballot statewide in November.

League Day at the United Nations, Nov. 16th

Briefing Topic: Forced Labor and Human Trafficking

The Annual League Day at the United Nations (NYC) will be held on Thursday, November 16. We will again offer a delicious lunch in the Delegates' Dining Room, tours of the facility (General Assembly room, Security Council Room, etc) and then a briefing by UN experts. This year we will have a panel of UN experts discuss the issue of Forced Labor and Human Trafficking. The panel will also discuss what individuals can do to help reduce this problem.

The State League will also be offering a group bus option from Albany to NYC with a stop in Poughkeepsie.

To register online, go to: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/INvmPPc4Hpebf0PLNzaRnw and a form is attached that you can download and print out for those without computer access.

Legislative Action, Jennifer Wilson, Director of Program and Policy,

jennifer@lwvny.org

Vote411

Campaign season is upon us! This year we have 30 local Leagues participating in the online voter guide, Vote 411. Contact Jennifer at Jennifer@lwvny.org if you need any assistance. Many of the local Leagues are going live this weekend or early next week! Great job, all.

Publicize Vote 411 on your Facebook page, twitter, website and anywhere you can – Vote 411 is only strong if people are using it. We've attached **sample press release** templates that you can distribute to the media as soon as your Vote 411 site goes live – and **sample flyer** templates you can use to print off and have available at voter registration drives, candidate forums or League meetings. If your media doesn't cover it, write a letter to the editor telling people it's live and available.