



January/February 2017

THE LOCAL VOTER **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS** **SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN AREA**

Syracuse Metro LWV
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Web Sites:
Local: www.lwvsyr.org
State: www.lwvny.org
National: www.lwv.org

Calendar

Saturday, Jan 21st
Cazenovia Forum on Con Con
Saturday, Feb 25th
LWVSyr Consensus Meeting
Saturday, March 25th
LWVSyr Board Meeting
Friday, April 7th
Legislative Breakfast
June 9th-11th
LWVNYS Convention

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2017 Annual Breakfast With Our State Legislators

Friday, April 7, 2017
Craftsman Inn
Fayetteville NY
7:45-9:30AM

*Details in our
next Local Voter*



SHOULD THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE

SUPPORT A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION ?

OPPOSE A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION ?

Or

REMAIN NEUTRAL ON THE QUESTION ?

HELP US HELP THE STATE LEAGUE BOARD MAKE THIS DECISION

**You are invited to attend a consensus meeting to learn
the pros and cons of convening a convention to amend
the New York State Constitution.**

Saturday, February 25, 2017

12:30- 2:30 pm

**Liverpool Public Library
Tulip Street, Liverpool NY**

Bring your lunch and we will provide drinks & snacks

RSVP: 325-396-8225 or league@lwvsyr.org

More information on pages 6 & 7 of this newsletter.

BOARD NOTES

Welcome New Members
John & Susan Edwards Harvith
Joyce Ucci

Women's March on Washington

The LWV after careful thought has decided to participate in the Washington March on January 21st. The League will coordinate a meeting place in DC and march as one unit. Events are also planned for Seneca Falls and downtown Syracuse.

The Seneca Falls March starts at the Women's Rights National Historic Park Visitors Center at 10:00am on January 21st. Contact Melina Carnicelli at mcarnice@roadrunner.com for more info.

Syracuse in Solidarity: If you are unable to make it to Washington, or Seneca Falls, there will be a peaceful assembly at 10:00am on January 21st at the James M. Hanley Federal Building downtown Syracuse.



LWVNYS LOBBY DAY **TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2017** **ALBANY NY**

This year's legislative session has begun and it looks like it will be a busy year for politics in New York State. Join league members from across the state to learn about the issues and to lobby with your local legislators at the state capitol. Contact us at 396-8225 or league@lwvsyr.org and we will arrange transportation to get you there.



Do you know an area high school student who might be interested in attending the annual Students Inside Albany Conference sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc? This year's event (May 21-24th) will bring students from across the state to learn about New York State government and the process by which citizens can participate in the policy making arena.

For more info contact Margrit Diehl, our Education Director, at Margrit.diehl@gmail.com or call the league office at 315-396-8225.

Officers

Leadership Team...
 Joan Durant
 Joan Johnson
 Margrit Diehl
 Roberta Millert
 Harold Bertram

Secretary... Diane Dwire

Treasurer.... Roberta Millert

Directors

Education Margrit Diehl

Membership ...

Publications/Public Relations... Joan Johnson
 Voter Service... Joan Durant

Directors-at-large...
 Mary Ann Barth
 Peggy Chase
 Michele Jones Galvin
 Ann Jamison

Off-Board Positions

Budget Director.... Harold Bertram

Membership Data Base... Rhonda Hungerford

Nominating Committee.....
 Lisa Alford
 Ona Bregman
 Diane Chappell-Daly
 Diane Dwire
 Michele Jones Galvin

Technical Support... Roberta Millert

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information please call the League office at (315) 396-8225 or e-mail to league@lwvsyr.org

Diversity Statement

The Syracuse Metropolitan League of Women Voters is committed to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any League activity on the basis of age, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, or national origin.



SEVEN IDEAS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES THAT COULD IMPROVE U. S. ELECTIONS

1. Allow people to register to vote on Election Day

13 states already allow same- day voter registration; Canada already does so.

2. Automatically register people to vote

Let the government do it instead of the voter through renewing of drivers' licenses (Oregon does this); or automatically at age 18 (France & Sweden allow this).

3. Make campaign season shorter

Election season in the U.S. lasted 600 days in 2016; in comparison, Canada had its longest election last year at 11 weeks; in Japan, elections last just 12 days.

4. Allow people to vote for 'None of the Above'

India, Greece, Ukraine and Columbia have the option to allow voters to indicate disapproval of all candidates thus allowing citizens to make their voice heard; Nevada is the only state that has this option.

5. Let people rank the candidates instead of picking one

Many voters who don't like the major-party nominees worry that voting for a third-party candidate will mean 'throwing their vote away.' Australia, India and Ireland avoid this problem by allowing voters to rank their choices. If their first choice doesn't make the cut, then their vote goes to their second pick, until one candidate reaches a majority.

6. Require people to vote

More than 22 countries around the world, including Uruguay (which has 96.1% turnout) and Australia (which has 94% turnout) have mandatory voting, where eligible voters are required to vote. Non-voters are subject to fines or community service if they do not vote.

7. Hold Election Day on a weekend

Since the 19th Century, U.S. elections have been held on a Tuesday in November, a day originally chosen because it would allow farmers to travel on horseback to the polling place. Several countries hold election on the weekend including Greece, Australia and Brazil.

Information from Time, Inc.

ConCon – Yes or No?

Should we vote for a NY State Constitutional Convention?

Dr. Henrik Dullea

author of *Charter Revision in the Empire State: The Politics of New York's 1967 Constitutional Convention*

co-editor of *Decision 1997: Constitutional Change in New York*

Saturday, January 21, 10:30 AM

Cazenovia Public Library

100 Albany Street

All are welcome to attend

Sponsored By: The League of Women Voters of Cazenovia

“A Man May Work From Dusk To Dawn, But A Woman’s Work Is Never Done”

This quote goes back to the American Revolution and it still holds true today especially if you are a member of the League of Women Voters. We also recognize that there are men (league members) who can relate to this quote.



League work is never done as you can see from the various activities planned for 2017. Our annual Legislative Breakfast, forums on whether to support a constitutional convention, celebrations involving women’s suffrage and the founding of the League and the State League Convention here in Syracuse all add up to a busy year for the League.

Registering new voters including newly naturalized citizens will also be a major part of our agenda. All this and a general election in November when we will elect most of our county and local officials.

There is something here for everyone. We hope you will participate in many of these activities.

LWVSYR Co-Leaders Report

LWVSYR CALENDAR

Saturday, January 21, 2017, 10:30 am Cazenovia Public Library	Constitutional Convention Info Meeting Sponsored by the Cazenovia LWV (see page 3)
Saturday, February 25, 2017, 12:30-2:30pm	LWVSYR Consensus Meeting on Constitutional Convention
Saturday, March 25, 2017 Dunkin Donuts. 1909 Teal Avenue	LWVSYR Board Meeting (all members welcome)
Friday, April 7, 2017, 7:45-9:30am Craftsman Inn, Fayetteville	Annual Legislative Breakfast
April 27, 2017	Lobby Day in Albany - Save the Date
June 9-11, 2017 Holiday Inn, Liverpool	LWVNYS Biennial Convention

It’s time to plan our annual meeting. The Nominating Committee will soon meet to prepare a slate of officers and directors. Please consider volunteering to sit on the Board. To our new members, this is a great way to learn more about the League and to help plan our programs and activities. Contact us at 396-8225 or league@lwvsyr.org for more information. You are also invited to attend our next Board Meeting on March 25th to discuss opportunities for serving on the Board.

NATURALIZATION CEREMONY AT ONONDAGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE



On November 17, 2016, 37 candidates became new United States citizens at OCC. They came from 23 different countries, all with a story to tell on why they chose to become US citizens. The League was there to welcome the new citizens, provide information on voting, and help them register to vote.



The occasion also marked the 100th birthday of **Ruth Colvin**, founder of Literacy Volunteers of America. Literacy Volunteers began in 1962 in Syracuse when Ruth began her efforts of training tutors in reading and English as a Second Language to combat illiteracy. Originally focused on the local community, Literacy Volunteers expanded across the country and eventually internationally.

In December of 2006 Ruth was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nations highest civilian honor. The people of Syracuse are honored and proud to recognize such an outstanding member of our community.



During the 2016 Election cycle www.vote411.org and voter service activities conducted by Leagues across the country proved to be a valuable resource for millions of Americans who went to the polls on November 8th. Below are statistics from LWVUS:

-  Provided data for more than 45,000 candidates in 24,000 races across the country and helped voters make their choices on Election Day.
-  350 state and local leagues participated in National voterRegistration Day on September 27th.
-  Nearly 19,000 new Americans registered to vote at Naturalization ceremonies.
-  Nearly 15,000 high school and community college students registered to vote.

Our appreciation to all our members and friends who volunteered to provide voter services to our community.

THANK YOU

COMING TO SYRACUSE 2017 LWVNY'S BIENNIAL CONVENTION HOLIDAY INN - LIVERPOOL JUNE 9-11, 2017

As the host location, we will need to provide volunteers to assist the State League in staffing the event.

Volunteers are needed to help with registration, staffing the sales and publications room, and hosting the hospitality room. We will also need members to serve as time keepers, floor pages, ushers and door keepers during the Plenary Sessions on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning.

This is a great opportunity to meet leaguers from across the state and learn more about how the league functions.

Training will be available by state league people to help you.

Please let me know if you can help.

Joan Johnson

488-4339

jaj62@twcny.rr.com

Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?



Every 20 years New York voters are asked if a constitutional convention should be convened to amend the state constitution. On the November 2017 ballot you will be given the opportunity to answer yes or no. The League of Women Voters of New York State has partnered with the Rockefeller Institute, the Government Law Center at Albany Law School and the Siena Research Institute, to implement a program to educate and give voters a clearer sense of what a Constitutional Convention could potentially achieve.

There are two ways to amend the State Constitution. The first way is having an amendment proposed by a state legislator. A legislative proposed amendment must be passed by two consecutive legislative sessions and is then submitted to voters as a ballot proposal for approval. An example of this process is the passage of a ballot proposal to legalize private casinos as was the case in 2013 when voters approved of the measure.

The second method to amend the State Constitution is through a Constitutional Convention. This is a more comprehensive way and would involve several issues not merely one question as happens when it is done through the legislative amendment process. Issues that could be considered at a convention include election law and ethics; issues of governance and judiciary, government funding and taxation; forever wild lands; reproductive rights; education funding; and public employee pensions.

There are several key questions that need to be considered before a convention is authorized and scheduled. They include:

- When would a convention be held?
- Where would it be held?
- Who can be a delegate?
- Should government officials or legislators be permitted to serve?
- How are delegates elected?
- How will the delegates organize themselves?
- What will be the cost?

At this point, the League of Women Voters of New York State does not support or oppose the holding of a Constitutional Convention. The League recognizes that a Constitutional Convention is an acceptable (legal) method of amending the New York State Constitution and that the provision requiring periodic mandatory submission on the question of calling a convention is a proper procedure. Education and involvement of the public must be an integral part of each phase of the process. Planning should be given adequate time and sufficient funding. Non-partisanship is essential.

The State League, working with other organizations, has prepared several documents addressing this important and complicated issue. Please visit www.lwvny.org and you will find the information on the homepage.

Plan to attend the forum sponsored by the Cazenovia LWV on January 21, 2017 (page 3) and join us for our consensus meeting on February 25, 2017 (page 1). We are also working on holding a regional informational meeting with several constitutional scholars for late April (more on this in the next local Voter).

2017 Naturalization Ceremonies
Please help us by volunteering to register our new citizens

Location	Date & Time
Bishop Grimes Jr/Sr High School	Wednesday, February 8 1:30pm*
County Court House Room 400	Thursday, March 23 2:00 pm*
Skaneateles High School	Wednesday, April 26 12:00*
Federal Building Ceremonial Courtroom	Thursday, May 18 11:00am*
County Court House Room 400	Thursday, June 15 2:00 pm*
Federal Building 12 th floor, Courtroom 5	Thursday, June 15 11:00am*
State Fair	Friday, August 25 Time to be determined*
Federal Building Ceremonial Courtroom	Monday, September 18 11:00am*
Federal Building Ceremonial Courtroom	Thursday, October 19 11:00am*
Federal Building Ceremonial Courtroom	Thursday, November 16 11:00am*
County Court House Room 400	Thursday, December 14 2:00 pm*
Federal Building Ceremonial Courtroom	Thursday, December 21 11:00am*

***Please arrive 45 minutes early for all ceremonies & have 100 voter registration forms**

If you have never done a ceremony, training is available on January 26, 2017 during the Naturalization Ceremony at the County Court House at 1:30 or by calling/emailing Joan Durant at joandurant69@gmail.com or 315 345-5860.

UPDATE ON 100TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS

The League continues working on plans for the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment and the founding of the League of Women Voters. As co-chair of the Events Committee I have participated in several conference calls since last summer.

There are several state-wide events in the works including the reading of an Elizabeth Cady Stanton speech in a ceremony planned by the NYS Senate and Assembly Women's Caucus groups in both houses of the Legislature during Women's History Month this March.

The LWVNY Convention in Syracuse (Liverpool Holiday Inn) will offer a bus trip on Friday, June 9, 2017 to Seneca Falls. The luncheon speaker at the convention on Saturday, June 10th will be Sally Roach Wagner, Executive Director of the Matilda Joslyn Gage Center.

On November 4, 2017, a major exhibit at the NYS Museum in Albany will open featuring women's history items. The League plans a reception at the event. League members from across the state are encouraged to attend.

The Events Committee is also charged with assisting local leagues in preparing programs, day trips and other events. A Resource Kit will be available to local leagues to help them plan activities. As you can see, there are many opportunities to celebrate. Locally we welcome your ideas and thoughts on celebrating these milestones in central New York.

Joan Johnson





**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
 SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN AREA
 PO BOX 11862
 SYRACUSE NY 13218**

January-February 2017

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK IN NEW YORK SINCE 1919

_____ Individual Member \$55.00 _____ Household* \$80.00 _____ Student** \$25.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Cell _____ Email _____

Date _____

To join call us at (315) 396-8225, email us at league@lwvsyr.org or mail this form to Syracuse Metro LWV, PO Box 11862, Syracuse NY 13218.

ANNUAL DUES—July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017

* Two members in the same household ** Full time student 16-25

Please share this information with others who have expressed interest in our work or who have thought about becoming a member of the League..