



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TOMPKINS COUNTY

MARCH 2017

PRESIDENT: KAY SHARP 272-4748

lwvtompkins.org

EDITOR: ROBERT SILSBEE 273-1436

League of Women Voters of Tompkins County

ROCKEFELLER DRUG LAWS & ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

PUBLIC MEETING

MONDAY, MARCH 27, 7:00 – 9:00 PM
TOMPKINS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Details on Page 3

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

March is Women’s History Month. It is a time to review the past and to plan for the future.

One hundred years ago, women in New York won the right to vote. Suffragists had fought for this for more than 80 years. The League of Women Voters of New York was born out of that suffragist movement two years later, in 1919. Its goal was to make sure women were able to use that right effectively. Our League was established in 1920, the year of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.

In 1935 the Social Security Act, which was part of FDR’s New Deal, was created to promote economic security for the Nation’s citizens. It has served a vital role in women’s lives for over 80 years. At the present more women work, pay Social Security taxes, and earn credits toward monthly retirement benefits than any other time in our Nation’s history. And, with longer life expectancies than men, women tend to live more years in retirement. Women will depend

on Social Security in their later years as their other sources of income become depleted. The Social Security Trust Fund is fully funded through 2034.

Though not considered a suffragette herself, I think of Eleanor Roosevelt as a woman to be considered a powerful force in our Nation’s history. Politician, human rights’ activist and the longest-serving first lady, Eleanor was not content to simply accompany her husband at special events. She held her own press

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conferences, wrote a weekly news column and spoke at numerous conferences. She was a staunch supporter of many of the New Deal programs. In Blanche Weisen Cook's book, *Eleanor Roosevelt: The War Years and After*, it is reported that Eleanor's speech on *Humanistic Democracy – The American Ideal*...stated that "... everyone should be able to come into the world healthy and strong, but too many mothers were without adequate food or medical care. Every child should have the opportunity to be educated and to earn a living under decent working conditions." These beliefs are similar to the League's Social Policy positions (see the League's *Impact on Issues*).

We are the living legacy of women who were not afraid to put themselves on the line for their beliefs. Our non-partisan efforts to increase and strengthen voter participation are needed now as much as ever. As Eleanor Roosevelt said, "The right to vote must be open to our citizens irrespective of race, color or creed—without tax or artificial restrictions of any kind."

It is now up to us to forge a straight path to the many rights endorsed by women throughout the past and to hope that all people will have a clean

place to live, adequate food to eat, a means to earning a living wage and a healthcare plan. This is our challenge for the future.

Kay Sharp

PROGRAMS

Soup & Bread Luncheon: Member Meeting On March 4, a blustery Ithaca Saturday, about 30 members and guests gathered in the Unitarian Church Annex for a hearty lunch, conversation with friends, and a look back at some of our historical programs and early publications. Many thanks to Flo Smith, Lucia Sciore, Kathy Burlitch, and Kathy Yen for their involvement with the current History Project and their willingness to share some of their findings with us. In advance of the NYS League Convention, Kay Sharp solicited suggestions of topics that should be studied in the coming year.

The event was a nice way to celebrate Women's History Month, to support the Suffrage Centennial and to reinforce our group's commitment. A special applause for those who furnished food: Kathy Burlitch, Charlotte

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TOMPKINS COUNTY: BOARD 2015-16

LWV NYS website

www.lwvny.org

LWV US website

www.lwv.org

LWV-Tompkins County

contact
website

272-4748

lwvtc@twcnny.rr.com
lwvtompkins.org

Board Members

6/17	President		Kay Sharp	272-4748	phylliskaysharp@gmail.com
6/17	Secretary	(January-June)	Ann Warde	241-0192	amw38@cornell.edu
6/18	Treasurer		Diane Kelleher	257-5551	diane2110@icloud.com
6/18	VP1	Program	Charlotte Coffman	272-7551	cwc4@cornell.edu
6/18	Co-VP2	Co-Membership	Lory Saltzman	257-7240	lorysaltz@gmail.com
6/18	Co-VP2	Co-Membership	Alene Wyatt	257-1894	alene@lightlink.com
6/18	Co-Director	Co-Voter Services	Mandy Qualls	405-210-6598	mandyqualls@gmail.com
6/18	Co-Director	Co-Voter Services	Amy Panek	617-448-6841	amy.panek@gmail.com
6/17	Director	Natural Resources	Kay Wagner	539-3322	cmw18@cornell.edu

Off-Board Chairs:

Co-Webmaster; Action	Linda Duttweiler	277-0006	ldutt@twcnny.rr.com
Co-Webmaster	Michael Duttweiler	277-0006	mduttweiler@twcnny.rr.com
Bulletin	Robert Silsbee	273-1436	rhs1@cornell.edu
History	Florence Smith	273-6147	fbarrthims@gmail.com

Coffman, Linda Duttweiler, Lory Saltzman, Kay Sharp, Lucia Sciore, Flo Smith, Sheila Stone, Alene Wyatt and Kathy Yen.

The Rockefeller Drug Laws — Alternatives to Incarceration: Member and Public Meeting
 Date: Monday, March 27, 7:00 pm
 Place: Borg Warner Room, Tompkins County Public Library, 101 East Green St., Ithaca, NY.

The so-called Rockefeller drug laws have resulted in a massive increase in the number of incarcerated perpetrators of minor drug offenses, particularly of members of minority communities. Our March program, open to the public, addresses this problem and explores alternatives to incarceration intended to lessen the impact of the drug laws on these communities.

. The Health Committee has put together an excellent panel to discuss what is happening in our area:

- Professor Julilly Kohler-Hausmann, Cornell History Department;
- Matthew VanHouten, Tompkins County District Attorney;
- Honorable Judge Joseph R. Cassidy, Felony Drug Court;
- Angela Sullivan, MPA, MAIR, Executive Director, Alcohol/ Drug Council of Tompkins County;
- Bill Rusen, Chief Executive Director,

Cayuga Addictions Rehabilitation Services (CARS).

This event is free of charge and open to the public. Please mark your calendars, publicize the event, and bring a friend.

Annual Meeting, Dinner and Matilda Gage: Member Meeting
 Date: Monday, May 8
 Place: Salvation Army, 150 North Albany St., Ithaca, NY.

The final formal meeting of this 2016-2017 year takes place in May. In addition to sharing a meal, we will recap the year’s activities, honor our lifetime members, introduce the 2017-2018 board and welcome special guest Matilda Joslyn Gage. Mrs. Gage was a writer, editor, and women’s rights advocate. In 1876, she co-authored (with Elizabeth Cady Stanton) the Declaration of Rights of the women of the United States. Matilda Gage will be portrayed by Pamela Poulin, Professor Emerita, Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Poulin is a soprano soloist, historian, and actress well known for her first-person portrayal of NYS suffragists and abolitionists.

This fun and informative event is open to members and guests. A small fee will be charged for the dinner.

Charlotte Coffman, VP for Programs

LWV-TC CALENDAR—2016-2017			
Mar 27	Mon	7:00 pm	ROCKEFELLER DRUG LAWS: ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION TCPL
Apr 4	Tue	7:00 pm	Board Meeting Kendal
May 8	Mon	6:00 pm	ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER Salvation Army
Jun 6	Tue	7:00 pm	Board Meeting Kendal

ANNUAL REPORT, PROGRAMS 2016-2017

The Tompkins County LWV strives to provide members and the public with factual, non-partisan information on topics of current interest. Thanks are due to the Natural Resources and Health Committees, as well as the past and current boards for assistance in offering these programs.

(continued)

2016-2017 Programs

Date	Topic	Speakers/Exhibitors
September 26, 2016	The Struggle for Voting Rights	Dr. Donathan Brown, Associate Professor, Ithaca College
October 24	Gun Violence	Film: Making a Killing--Guns, Greed and the NRA Speaker: Barbara Lifton, NYS Assembly Representative
November 14	Tompkins County Energy Roadmap	Katie Borgella, Deputy Commissioner of Planning for Tompkins County; Jonathan Comstock, a leader in developing the Heat Smart Program for 2016-2017. The co-sponsors were The Campaign for Renewable Energy, Fossil Free Tompkins, Sustainable Tompkins and The Tompkins County Environmental Management Council.
January 23, 2017	Does New York Need a Constitutional Convention?	Dr. Henrik Dullea, Vice President for University Relations Emeritus, Cornell University
March 4 (postponed from Feb)	Soup & Bread Luncheon The Suffragette Spirit Lives	Members involved in the Women's History Project in collaboration with the History Center, Ithaca, NY: Florence Smith, Kathy Burlitch, Kathy Yen and Lucia Sciore.
March 26	The Rockefeller Drug Law – Alternatives to Incarceration	Professor Julilly Kohler-Hausmann, Cornell History Department; Matthew VanHouten, Tompkins County District Attorney; Honorable Judge Joseph R. Cassidy, Felony Drug Court; Angela Sullivan, MPA, MAIR, Executive Director, Alcohol/ Drug Council of Tompkins County; Bill Rusen, Chief Executive Director, Cayuga Addictions Rehabilitation Services (CARS)
May 8	Annual Meeting Tribute to Lifetime Members Matilda Gage (portrayal)	Pamela Poulin, Professor Emerita, Johns Hopkins University and portrayer of NYS suffragists and abolitionists.

2016-2017 Programs (proposed)

Date	Topic	Speakers
September	The Constitutional Convention Debate	TBA
October	What Are the Facts?	TBA
November	History	Co-sponsor with History Center
January	Natural Resources	Natural Resources Committee
February	Mental Health	Health Committee
March	Soup & Bread Luncheon	TBA
May	Annual Meeting	TBA

Other topics on our “under consideration” list include: Tompkins County Emergency Response System, School Finances, Dental Care for Children, Governance – Redistricting, and the Influence of Big Money in Elections. As always, we are eager to hear from all members as to topics that you would like to support. **MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!**

Charlotte Coffman, VP for Programs

VOTER SERVICES – 2016 Annual Report

The presidential election cycle led to a very active year for Voter Services. In addition to registering new voters, we held two candidate forums and volunteers with the League continued to take opportunities to present to youth and community members on the importance of voting.

Over 16 Voter Services volunteers represented the League at many festivals and events around the county including: Naturalization Ceremonies; Ithaca Festival; Streets Alive!; Juneteenth at Southside; Porchfest; Apple Festival; National Voter Registration Day; Roller Derby; Ithaca Farmers’ Market; TC3 and Cornell University.

As part of our voter registration activity, we participated in the NY State League Drive to increase Organ Donor lists. New York State has one of the LOWEST number of organ donors! When we register people for voting, we encourage them to spend two more minutes and register as an organ donor.

The League also held candidate forums for the 58th Senate District and the 125th Assembly District races. We had media covering both forums.

We continue to maintain a Facebook page to keep everyone informed and encourage all members to visit the page and share it with others.

We welcome your feedback on places and events to register voters across the county and we encourage you to get to know the League and the community by volunteering for a tabling event this year. This year’s focus will be on local elections at the village, town, city and county levels. A new schedule of voter

registration events will be set soon and shared with the membership. If you have any questions or comments on Voter Services, please contact Amy Panek (amy.panek@gmail.com) or Mandy Qualls (mandyqualls@gmail.com).

Amy Panek, Co-Chair

NEW YORK STATE’S CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION – WHAT AND WHEN

The summary below is taken from the materials provided by the NYS League of Women Voters.

What?

State constitutions prescribe how to govern, and reflect the values and priorities important to people in that governance. The NYS Constitution covers a wide range of topics, from voting and finances to schools and canals.

The NYS Constitution can be changed in two ways:

1) Legislative Amendments

Amendments to the state Constitution are proposed in the state legislature. Identical resolutions must be introduced in both houses. The amendment is then considered by its assigned committee and later referred to the Attorney General for opinions on the language of the bill. The amendment may be redrafted or sent to the floor for a vote. The amendment then must pass in two consecutive legislative sessions, with an intervening statewide election. If the amendment makes it this far, it is put on the statewide ballot for voters to approve or disapprove. If approved by the voters it becomes part of the Constitution, beginning in the following January.

2) Constitutional Convention

The NYS Constitution mandates that every 20 years voters be presented with the ballot question: **“Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?”** A constitutional convention allows delegates, elected by the people, to gather and examine our state’s Constitution. The delegates can delete, streamline, revise or expand current text. They can add new provisions to address issues that the current constitution does not include.

Proposed changes are adopted by the delegates and later subjected to a yes/no vote by the people.

Since 1777 New York State has held nine Constitutional Conventions, four of which resulted in the adoption of new constitutions. We are now governed by the 1894 Constitution, which has been amended over 225 times. Each new constitutional amendment added bulk to the state Constitution that is now seven times longer than the US Constitution. A constitutional convention could allow changes that:

- ❖ address modern issues
- ❖ differ from amendments likely to be proposed by the legislature
- ❖ engage “the people” rather than relying solely on government officials
- ❖ reduce bulk and improve clarity

s?

The convention would begin April 2, 2019 at a location in Albany NY, but the road to constitutional changes via convention is quite lengthy. The voters are presented with a total of three votes taking place over the course of three (or more) years:

- ❖ **November 7, 2017.** New Yorkers vote on whether to convene a state constitutional convention.
- ❖ **November 6, 2018.** New Yorkers elect convention delegates.
- ❖ **November 5, 2019.** New Yorkers vote to accept or reject the amendments.

*At this point, the League has not taken a position on whether to support, oppose or remain neutral on the question of holding a constitutional convention and so **the League’s goal at this time is to educate members and the public about important aspects of the question and to assist the League in its decision on what, if any, position the League will take on the constitutional convention question.***

CLIMATE MARCH, APRIL 29: ITHACA BUS

We Resist. We Build. We Rise. Those are the themes of the People’s Climate Movement that grew out of the September 2014 People’s Climate March that brought over 300,000 people to the streets of NYC and will bring thousands more to Washington, D.C. on April 29 to march for climate, jobs and justice. Now facing unprecedented threats to the survival of the planet, we need to be there.

ICAN (Interfaith Climate Action Network) has reserved a bus to go round trip from Ithaca that day. It will leave Stewart Park around 4 a.m., depending on schedule in Washington which is not yet final. Cost is \$53 per seat, but no one will be excluded for lack of funds.

Reservations will NOT be made on line in order to 1) avoid the fee, 2) enable us to use scholarship donations for riders who need them, 3) let people cancel as late as two days before the trip and get full refund, and 4) move others from waiting list at that time. You can make a reservation in one of these two ways:

A. Write check for \$53 (or more to assist others or less if that’s all you can afford) to Susan Multer and send to her at 15 Penny Lane, Ithaca 14850. Include email address so receipt will be acknowledged and cell phone number for day of travel. If you don’t have a checking account, give money to a friend to write check for you. Checks will not be deposited or returned until after the trip. OR

B. Send email to smulter@twc.com making reservation and providing cell phone number. Bring cash for ticket the day of the trip.

There are only 39 seats on the bus; so make reservation soon. Then go to www.peoplesclimate.org and sign up so organizers will know how many are coming and can send you updates. Please forward this message to friends. Thanks, and hope to see you on the bus!

ICAN steering committee (Karim Beers, Laurie Konwinski, Margaret McCasland, Brad McFall, Louise Mudrak, Susan Multer, Jeff Shepardson and Raymond Stiefel)

League of Women Voters of Tompkins County

Proposed Budget for 2017-2018

	Adopted Budget 2016-17	Actual through January 2017	Proposed til June 2017	Proposed Budget 2017-18
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Income

Membership dues	\$3,500.00	\$3,480.00		\$3,500.00
Income from donations	\$500.00	\$555.00		\$500.00
Internet website donations	\$375.00	\$375.00		\$375.00
Income for mailing Bulletin*	\$150.00			\$150.00
Income from annual meeting	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
Miscellaneous income**		\$120.00	\$75.00	\$200.00
Transfer from reserve (Checking Acct.)	\$2,250.00			\$2,550.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$7,175.00	\$4,530.00	\$375.00	\$7,575.00

Expenses

Bulletin	\$150.00	\$70.00	\$70.00	\$150.00
Convention (State 2017, National 2018)	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
Voter Services	\$300.00	\$364.00		\$300.00
Administration (including treasurer)	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$100.00
Membership	\$100.00	\$57.00	\$25.00	\$100.00
Meetings/Programs	\$800.00	\$0.00	\$800.00	\$800.00
Annual Meeting	\$400.00	\$462.00		\$500.00
Committees	\$50.00		\$50.00	\$50.00
PMP State	\$700.00	\$720.00		\$800.00
PMP National	\$1,200.00	\$1,312.00		\$1,400.00
Internet website	\$375.00	\$375.00		\$375.00
Youth Programs	\$0.00			
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$7,175.00	\$3,360.00	\$3,995.00	\$7,575.00

Community Foundation of Tompkins County

Contributions to Community Foundation	\$900.00	\$925.00		\$900.00
Payments made out of CF:				
National PMP	\$1,200.00		\$1,024.00	\$1,400.00
State PMP	\$700.00		\$720.00	\$800.00
Educational Materials	\$0.00		\$100.00	\$200.00
Students in Albany	\$0.00		\$350.00	\$0.00
TOTAL FROM CF	\$1,900.00		\$2,194.00	\$2,400.00

*2016: print 25 copies

10 Kendal requires \$5	\$50.00
15 Postage required \$10	<u>\$150.00</u>
	\$200.00

**Miscellaneous income

Organ donation stipend	\$50.00
AP Reporting	<u>\$145.00</u>
	\$195.00

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES IN WASHINGTON

SENATORS:

Kirsten E. Gillibrand 202-224-4451 e-mail and web-site: www.gillibrand.senate.gov

Charles E. Schumer 202-224-6542; senator@schumer.senate.gov ; www.schumer.senate.gov

REPRESENTATIVES:

Tom Reed 202-225-3161; 607-654-7566; e-mail and web-site: reed.house.gov

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES IN ALBANY

SENATORS

James Seward 518-455-3131; 607-758-9005 www.nysenate.gov/senator/james-l-seward

51st—Towns of Groton, Dryden, Caroline, Danby

Pamela Helming 518-455-2366, 315-568-9816 helming@nysenate.gov

54th—Town of Lansing

Thomas O'Mara 518-455-2091; 607-735-9671 www.nysenate.gov/senator/thomas-f-omara

59th—Towns of Ithaca, Newfield, Enfield, Ulysses, & City of Ithaca

ASSEMBLYWOMAN

Barbara Lifton 518-455-5444; 607-277-8030 www.assembly.state.ny.us/mem/Barbara-Lifton

League of Women Voters of Tompkins County

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