



The League of Women Voters of New York State

STATE BOARD REPORT

March 2008, Issue #4

Presidents Report

~Attention: League Presidents

Advocacy & Issues

~Attention: League Presidents and Vice Presidents of Action

Membership

~Attention: League Presidents and Membership Chairs

Voter Service

~Attention: League Presidents and Voter Service Directors

Finance and Development

~Attention: League Presidents

Program and Education

~Attention: League President and Issues/Action Chairs

Additional Materials

~Attention: League Presidents

**STATE BOARD REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE—
www.lwvny.org**

(Click on *Local League Resources* to get to the link for State Board Reports)

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MARTHA'S MEMOS

TO: Local League Presidents
FROM: Martha Kennedy, President
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“Sweet”. My daughter’s husband introduced me to the use of this minimalist expression and sometimes it just seems the appropriate way to respond to certain situations. I am delighted to send double “sweets” this month.

First, as you all know, at the NYS Election Commissioners Association meeting in Saratoga Springs at the end of January, the NYS Board of Elections commissioners approved three paper ballot scanner systems and rejected DREs for use in 2008. This victory for the voters of New York State was truly “sweet” and the result of tremendous ongoing work by so many League members and coalition partners, especially Bo Lipari and NYVV. However, everyone who has participated in this five-year struggle knows that the success of this campaign is largely the result of the Herculean efforts of our own Election Specialist, Aimee Allaud. On behalf of not only League members, but also supporters of our democratic electoral process throughout the state, I offer congratulations and thanks to Aimee “SARA” Allaud.

(How quickly things change: just after writing this report, we learned of the judicial decision allowing the Liberty Election Systems’ previously rejected DRE ballot marking machine on the list of approved models. Regardless of this disappointing decision, I decided not to rewrite my report because, while apparently the war is not over, this victory in this battle still was sweet and the kudos valid. We are yet again reminded of the need for constant vigilance in our efforts and how critical the League’s role remains)

Our next “sweet” came with news that the LWVUS has nominated one of “our own” - our most recent past LWVNYS president, Marcia Merrins has accepted the nomination to serve on the LWVUS Board! With nearly nine years of experience on the LWVNYS board in addition to her ongoing work on her own Chautauqua League board, Marcia is keenly aware of the concerns and issues of league members in our state and will without doubt ensure that LWVUS is likewise made aware. We offer our special congratulations to Marcia for a well-deserved recognition of her contribution to our organization and look forward to participating in her election at National Convention in Portland, Oregon in June.

Unfortunately, all our news is not as upbeat. Because of family issues, Ruth Bonn has determined she will not be able to continue serving on the State Board as our Membership Outreach Director. She will, however, maintain her role of Off-board Specialist (OBS) for Urban Sprawl along with Anne Huberman, and has even offered to continue to prepare the local League news page of our State Voter. We certainly thank Ruth for her ongoing work for the League and value her contributions and dedication.

Our Off-Board Specialist team continues to grow. Valerie Moliterno from the Buffalo/Niagara LWV has been appointed to serve as our Great Lakes Water Quality specialist. This very important issue of water quality will be in good hands with Nancy Heinzen and Valerie focusing on their particular areas of expertise on this topic. We thank Valerie for accepting this role and welcome her to our team.

Subsequent to the last State Board Report (SBR) it was determined that Deb Winslow's role in dealing with Issues Analysis and Research was best served as an Off board specialist (OBS) position, and this change was approved at our recent board meeting. With Valerie and Deb's appointments, we have brought the number of topics addressed by our Off- board Specialists to roughly 20 areas. We look forward to utilizing this valuable resource for both our educational and advocacy work and thank each of them for their support to both local and statewide issues in their areas of expertise.

This extra focus on the critical role of individuals in our state board structure inspires me to remind each of you that the time is upon us for our local League nominating committees to be at work preparing a slate of candidates for election at the local League Annual meetings this spring. As with so many league roles, the members of the nominating committee cannot work in isolation. To build the best board and guarantee the development of future leaders and thus ensure the health of your league, they need the support and active contribution of all. Ideally, two candidates should be presented for each position with one serving as the director while training the other to take over the position for the subsequent term while mentoring their own successor. However your local League has determined its most successful board structure, please remember that mentoring board members and providing a comprehensive orientation program to even the most seasoned directors will contribute greatly to reducing the workload for all with the guarantee that everyone truly understands their role and is prepared to fill it. Being asked to serve on a league board is an honor and the invitation to do so should be extended with proportionate professionalism.

Even though it is still 15 months away, I believe in planning ahead. To that end, I am delighted to tell you that we have a venue for our state Convention 2009. It will be May 15-17, 2009 at the Doubletree in Syracuse, New York. Of course, we have one other Convention to address first. I hope each of our New York State Leagues is planning to send delegates to the LWVUS Convention in Portland June 13-17. With the NPV issue and Marcia's nomination, the reasons to make the trip just keep growing.

Please take the time to carefully read the reports of your state board members in this SBR. I continue to marvel at the commitment each of each of these individuals to their part in making our organization strong and vibrant. As always, you are encouraged to visit the state league website www.lwvny.org, to communicate directly with other LL presidents via our listserve: localleaguepresidents@yahogroups.com, to participate in action alerts, and to contact the office or any board member with your concerns.

With that, I wish you many more "sweets" during the coming months.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
FROM: Edna Vincent, Vice-President, Advocacy & Issues
99 Elderfields Road, Manhasset, NY 11030
E-mail: edna.vincenti@vincenti.com

TAKING ACTION ON THE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

LEGISLATIVE BROCHURE

The Legislative Priorities Brochure has been printed and sent to all local Leagues who requested them. They have been distributed to league members and supporters, and will be distributed legislators during our lobbying efforts in March and April. We hope you will also use these brochures in your campaign for new members.

LEGISLATIVE PACKET

The Legislative Packet sent to all Local League Presidents is an invaluable manual to be used to train lobbying committees on how to plan and conduct interviews with their State Senators and Assembly Persons. The Packet contains the background materials on the three priorities, the approaches you should take and questions you should ask.

MEETING WITH YOUR LOBBYING COMMITTEE

Recruit the members of your lobbying committee as soon as possible. I urge all action chairs to hold a meeting with their lobbying committees and go over the Legislative Packet. Assign an issue to each member, give him or her a time limit, and appoint a recorder for each issue

Review the suggestions in the Packet and read the material included in this publication on the priority issues.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
FROM: Georgia T. DeGregorio, Off-Board Specialist, Domestic Violence
337 Reef Point Circle, Webster, NY 14580
E-Mail: georgiatd@frontiernet.net

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

For 20 years, the New York State Senate has refused to pass what is commonly known as the “Expanded Access to Family Court Act” for Domestic Violence victims. You have read many League articles in the State Board Report and the Voter about this. Now a new effort has been initiated:

LWVNYS has joined the New York Statewide Coalition for Fair Access to Family Court. Your state board supports this focused attempt to correct a long-standing wrong.

As your Off-Board Specialist, I am offering to come to any League in the State to give a power point presentation on this topic and other legislation related to Domestic Violence that is before the NYS legislature.

As a reminder, what we are talking about is one simple paragraph:

“unrelated persons who are or have been in an intimate or dating relationship regardless whether such persons have lived together at any time. For purposes of this article, neither a casual acquaintance nor ordinary fraternization between two individuals in business or social contexts shall be deemed to constitute a ‘dating relationship’.”

If you have any questions or you would like to take me up on my offer to come to your League, please call or e-mail me at: georgiatd@frontiernet.net or 585-787-9662.

TO: Local League President; Advocacy & Issues Directors
FROM: Lois Haignere, Off-Board Specialist, Pay Equity
28 Bentwood Court, Guilderland, NY 12203
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PAY EQUITY UPDATES

Background – This SBR focuses on the activities of the NYS Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC), of which the LWVNY is a primary member.¹ With League guidance, NYSPEC takes actions to provide pay equity for equally evaluated job titles and equal pay to employees in New York State.

THE 2008 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

In October, NYSPEC put out the call to locate constituents in Senator Maziarz's district to write and call his office to ask why he has not supported the Fair Pay Bill and moved it out of the Labor Committee. Many of our member organizations helped us in this effort including AAUW, the New York State Nurses' Association, and the League. Our thanks to all those who responded to the call. In one or two cases pay equity supporters were able to speak directly to Senator Maziarz. Alan Lubin, NYSUT's, Executive Vice President, spoke to Senator Maziarz following the targeted constituent contacts and Senator Maziarz has indicated willingness to consider bill sponsorship and perhaps other support of this issue during this legislative session.

FILLING THE WELL FOR GLORIA STEINEM'S ALBANY VISIT

NYSPEC has devoted most of its energies since the fall to planning a day of events with Gloria Steinem on April 2, 2008. These activities will raise the visibility of pay equity and encourage the passage of the Fair Pay Bill.

In the morning from 9:45 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. we will host an educational program featuring Gloria Steinem speaking on pay equity in *the Well of the Legislative Office Building*. This session, moderated by Dr. Helen Desfosses, will also include a press event. The Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the legislative leadership, and the bill sponsors have been invited to speak. *Now that we are getting the attention of the Republicans as well as the Democrats in the Senate, please do what you can to get League members to this April 2nd event.*

Participants who attend the morning session will be encouraged to visit their State Senator and Senate Majority Joseph Bruno during the day to urge them to allow the Fair Pay bill on to the floor for a vote.

¹ Other organizational members include NYSPEC's founding organization, Women on the Job Task Force (based on Long Island), many unions including NYSUT, UUP, UPSEU, SEIU, and DC37, many women's and civil rights organizations such as AAUW, NOW, BPW, and NAACP, Girl Scouts of America, Women's Sports Foundation, Capital District Labor and Religion Coalition, the NY Women's Agenda and the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE).

At 12:30 p.m. there will be a fundraising luncheon (limited to 60 guests) featuring Ms. Steinem at 74 State Street, a boutique hotel in downtown Albany. Cost to attend - \$150 (\$100 of which is tax deductible.) Your donation will help to cover the expenses of this day. To make a reservation – 518-464-0991 or haigner@nycap.rr.com

At 5:30 p.m., there will be a Town Hall meeting free and open to the public at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, 405 Washington Avenue. Ms. Steinem will participate in a panel discussion “Feminist Perspectives on Work, Immigration, and Health Care.”

To promote these events we will be speaking at an AAUW/LWV event in Kingston on February 23 and an AAUW event in Albany on March 6.

Want to know more about this issue and how it relates to equal pay? A PowerPoint presentation is available, as well as speakers.
Call 518 464 0991

NEW YORK STATE PAY EQUITY COALITION

Presents

A GLORIA STEINEM DAY FOR FAIR PAY

Wednesday April 2, 2008

Albany, NY



If you can do only one thing ...

Come to the Well of the LOB (Legislative Office Building)
9:45-11:30 a.m.— program begins at 10, light refreshments at 9:30

Hear Gloria Steinem speak and field questions from the press.

Other invited speakers: Governor Eliot Spitzer, Lt. Governor David Paterson, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Senate Democratic Leader Malcolm Smith, Assembly Minority Leader James Tedesco, Senator George Maziarz, Senator Craig Johnson, Assemblymember Susan John.

Your presence is important to demonstrate the public support for pay equity. Do you or friends or family members work as a clerk, social worker, librarian, library clerk, a food service worker, nurse, nurse administrator, or teaching assistant? Come find out what pay equity means to people in these careers.

Attendance is free. For parking information – barbandbob220@verizon.net
Yes, you can reserve a parking space!

LUNCH WITH GLORIA
(Limited to 60 guests)

12:30-2:00 p.m. **74 State**
74 State Street
Albany, New York

Cost to attend \$150 (\$100 of which is tax deductible.) Thank you in advance for your donation, which helps to cover the expenses of this day. To make a reservation – 518-464-0991

TOWN HALL MEETING WITH GLORIA

5:30-7:00 p.m. **First Unitarian Society**
405 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York

Gloria Steinem is a writer, lecturer, editor, and feminist activist who is a frequent media spokeswoman on issues of equality. She was instrumental in **founding Ms. Magazine**, Voters for Choice, Women's Action Alliance, the National Women's Political Caucus, the Ms. Foundation and Take Our Daughters to Work Day, among others.

Her books include the bestsellers *Revolution from Within: A Book of Self-Esteem*, *Outrageous Acts and Everyday Rebellions*, *Moving Beyond Words*, and *Marilyn: Norma Jean*, on Marilyn Monroe' life.

Contact:

NYSPEC at Women on the Job, a project of Long Island Fund for Women and Girls—
wojtf@optonline.net 516-396-9857 Ext. 9 or in Albany— 518-464-0991

Thank your State Assemblymember and Speaker Silver for their support of the NYS Fair Pay bill. Visit, write, or call your State Senator and Senator Bruno to urge them to allow the Fair Pay bill on to the floor for a vote.

TO: Local League Presidents, Judicial, and Action Directors
FROM: Lenore Banks, Off-Board Specialist Judicial
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JUDICIAL SELECTION & PUBLIC DEFENSE REFORM

JUDICIAL SELECTION

League position: a state constitutional amendment to replace the election of state court judges with a qualification commission- based appointive system, (what we, in League have long referred to as a merit selection system.).

The U.S. Supreme Court has spoken: New York State's current party judicial convention system for nominating candidates for state Supreme Court Justice does not violate the U.S. Constitution. But is it wise policy or good law?

Justice Stevens, in a concurring opinion joined by Justice Souter, wrote when referring to the nominating system under review, "...I think it appropriate to emphasize the distinction between constitutionality and wise policy."

Justice Kennedy, in a concurring opinion joined by Justice Breyer, wrote, "If New York statutes for nomination and electing judges do not produce both the perception and the reality of a system committed to the highest ideals of the law, they ought to be changed and to be changed now."

The League has long supported a state constitutional amendment that would establish a qualification commission-based appointive system for all the state judges.

League is opposed to the present system of electing judges because of the very concerns in *Justice Kennedy's concurrence when he emphasized that, "When one considers that elections require candidates to conduct campaigns and to raise funds ..., the persisting question is whether that process is consistent with the perception and the reality of judicial independence and judicial excellence."*

The League continues to believe that no system, which involves the election of judges, can escape the need of candidates to solicit campaign contributions. To ensure an independent, competent and diverse judiciary League urges the state legislature to give first passage to a state constitutional amendment to establish a qualification commission-based appointive system, (i.e. merit selection) for the state's judges.

PUBLIC DEFENSE REFORM HAS SUPPORT ACROSS THE STATE, IN ALL THREE BRANCHES

Statewide we see growing support for the recommendations of what has come to be known as the Kaye Commission. Their final report in 2006 called for creation of a statewide system of public defense services headed by an independent commission. Chief Judge Judith Kaye continued to call for implementation of those reforms, saying in

her 2007 State of the Judiciary Address: "With the Commission's recommendations to guide us, we are currently working with the Governor's office, with county governments and indigent defense providers, to achieve consensus on a framework for a new indigent defense system in New York State . . ."

The Chief Judge's recommendations are moving the other branches of state government. A same-as bill introduced by Senator Dale Volker and Assemblymember Joseph Lentol (with 85 others signing on) would implement the proposed reform (S.4311-A/ A.9087-A). The Spitzer Administration also announced its support of the Kaye Commission recommendations. The Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic, and Asian Caucus recently called on the Governor to take concrete steps to carry out those recommendations. I submitted written testimony for a Division of the Budget hearing on November 17, 2007, asking that money be put in the budget to begin implementation of the Kaye Commission recommendations.

The New York Civil Liberties Union, as you probably have heard, filed a class action in November against the State, citing the deficiencies in representation experienced by 20 named plaintiffs in 5 counties and numerous reports – particularly that of the Kaye Commission – to show that the failure is systemic.

Locally and on a state level the League will press in 2008 for Executive support for state legislation creating an Independent Public Defense Commission to head a state public defense system. With action on the Kaye Commission's recommendations becoming increasingly likely, it is more important than ever that the League and League members press for this needed reform.

INFORMATION TO USE IN TALKING ABOUT THE ISSUE ABOUNDS.

The League has long worked with the New York State Defenders Association (NYSDA) to compile information about the many problems in public defense across New York State. In October 2007, NYSDA released a report on public defense problems in Franklin County. After describing Franklin County's efforts to improve representation there, the report concludes that without state funding and oversight, real reform is impossible. The County Manager participated in a press conference in which he expressed hope that the report, available on the NYSDA website, will help bring about statewide reform. Press attention to the report was heightened by release at the same time of a Zogby poll showing that nearly two-thirds of New York State voters support creation of an independent public defense commission, and a majority favor state takeover of all public defense costs.

Another report about studies in nine other counties is underway. Interim "report cards" comparing six of those counties – Cattaraugus, Niagara, Ontario, Schuyler, Tioga, and Washington – to the American Bar Association's Ten Principles of a Public Defense Delivery System found the county systems were not in compliance. Those report cards are available at www.nysda.org.

The State League is a member of the Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission, a project of the New York State Defenders Justice Fund. Local Leagues may join the growing list of supporters by contacting Katie Blackburn (Upstate) at kblackburn@newyorkjusticefund.org or Keith Kinch (Downstate) at kkinch@newyorkjusticefund.org.

Other actions that Leagues and League members can take include:
Seek passage in county legislatures and city councils of resolutions supporting implementation of the Kaye Commission recommendations.

If you see local media coverage of public defense topics, pass that along to the Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission.

For copies of a generic resolution, or to pass on clippings or other information, contact Mardi Crawford at the Justice Fund; 518-465-0519; fax: 518-465-0520; or e-mail mcrawford@newyorkjusticefund.org.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
FROM: Off-Board Specialists for Urban Sprawl
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Anne Huberman, 303 Highland Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222
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REPORT ON SPRAWL AND LAND USE ISSUES

A reminder: Our state position on land use and sprawl is

In order to conserve natural resources and improve the quality of life for its residents, New York State should take a proactive role in regional land use planning, enhancing urban neighborhoods, containing urban sprawl, and protecting agricultural land, open space, watersheds and other sensitive areas.

National LWV position on global warming:

Impact on Issues, p.45.

The LWVUS believes that global warming is a serious problem that requires immediate action. ... The U.S. government should move ahead immediately, without waiting for Senate ratification of the Kyoto agreement, on initiatives to reduce emissions of heat trapping gases; such actions will reduce the threat of global warming, combat air pollution, increase energy security and create new jobs.

SPRAWL AND GLOBAL WARMING

In the November State Board Report, we described a recent report that links sprawl to global warming. The connection seems obvious. Spread out development that separates housing, commercial centers, and work locations require residents to get in their cars for almost every activity. The more miles we drive, the more heat trapping gases are released to the atmosphere.

Clearly one component of the campaign to reduce the threat of global warming, a campaign supported by the National League position quoted above, must be to reform land use planning to discourage sprawl and encourage more compact, mixed use, walkable development. Good land use planning will reduce the total number of miles we drive, the amount of gasoline we use and the quantity of CO₂ we release into the atmosphere.

PROGRESS IN NEW YORK STATE

The State of New York has been slow to take a proactive role in improving land use planning in the state. Under Governor Spitzer, steps are being taken to discourage sprawl and to bring jobs and people back into the cities. Recent developments illustrate the new direction and provide reason for hope.

First, as we reported in the January State Board Report, Governor Eliot Spitzer has signed an Executive Order creating a Smart Growth Cabinet consisting of high-level policy makers from various state agencies that have an impact on growth and development patterns. The Cabinet will review state agency spending and policies to align agency's actions with statewide policies, which promote smart growth. It will coordinate cross-agency activities and develop "smart growth" policies that cater to New York's unique regional needs.

Second, the newly formed Empire State Future, a statewide coalition of organizations supportive of smart growth policies and practices, has obtained grant money to hire an executive director. The organization's mission is "to help New York promote 'smarter patterns of growth across the state.'" Soon to be operating throughout the state, it will serve as a strong advocate for smart growth and a watchdog for the Governor's Smart Growth Cabinet.

In addition, Governor Spitzer's State of the State Address reflected his understanding that *"New York's economy and environment are inextricably linked. Quite simply, smart growth is smart business. As our economy and population grow, it is vital that we ensure the development of vibrant, livable communities."* The governor focused on housing, safety, and parks as being needed to build livable communities. A \$400 million Housing Opportunity Fund will fund housing for working people and will also include \$100 million for housing rehabilitation. He proposed \$100 million for revitalizing the state's aging parks. He admitted that the state's Brownfields legislation needs clarification and that uncertainty "can only hamper smart growth planning and drive development to the suburbs." He added that the state needs to look at its road building policies because "residential, retail and commercial development usually follows new highways and the result is more traffic and more sprawl."

TO: Local League Presidents, Membership Chairs
FROM: Marcia A. Merrins, Vice-President Membership
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MEMBERSHIP MINUTE

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Are you in arrears? Have you paid your dues to state and national? The dues (\$26.80 to LWVUS and \$18 to LWVNYS) collected from each member each year **does not belong to your League** to paid hired staff, rent, postage, or anything else. LWVUS and LWVNYS count on this payment to meet their fiscal obligations. We all have to “live within our means”.

From LWVNYS Bylaws-Article VIII, Sec. 3. Qualifications of Delegates and Voting. All delegates shall be voting members of the League. Each delegate representing a local League, ILO, or MAL unit shall be entitled to vote only if that League, ILO, or MAL unit has met its per-member-payment responsibilities. The LWVNYS board may make an exception in the case of proven hardship.

Therefore, if your PMP is up to date, I will see you at the LWVUS Convention in Portland, Oregon, June 12-17th! We know how important it is for your local League to be a part of national and state conventions. It is inspiring and energizing! See you there!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT LWVUS MEMBER DATABASE!

When you are entering a new member on the LWVUS database **BE SURE TO CHECK THE INACTIVE LIST** for your League. Sometimes members join at the national level (NRM). Sometimes members rejoin after a few years. If you have not checked the inactive list, we can get duplicate files. This takes a long time for Stephanie to purge.

Also, please check to be sure emails addresses you enter are correct! Our members' emails are coordinated with LWVUS. If it is wrong on the LWVUS database it changes the correct one we have in the office.

HANDLE WITH CARE

When someone has accepted your invitation and joined League, it is not enough to have her on your membership list and a check for dues. Now you must make sure that you have HER, too - that her interest not wane, that she continues to relate herself to League activities.

Make definite plans to **orient** ALL members – newcomers and not-so-new-members who frequently need to have their own interest revitalized. This can be done at special meetings: a luncheon, a tea, an annual meeting, through interviews, or by means of a chatty and informative leaflet. One tool you can use is new and available to you on our website. It is an **Orientation PowerPoint Presentation**. Look for it on our website under member resources. It can be altered by you to fit your local League of Women Voters.

CONNECT WITH EMAIL

I also email members of my local League (whose email addresses I have) different items at different times. It could be a synopsis of the board meeting, renewal reminder, registration reminder for a luncheon meeting, timely information from the state office etc. I recently received an email from one of my local League members who was annoyed because even though I had the members in a group (LWV Chautauqua) when the email was sent all of the emails were listed. So, when you send mass emails be sure to blind copy (bc) the group list!

PLACEMENT OF MEMBERS

USE ALL YOUR MEMBERS. Jobs and assignments should be broken down and apportioned among several in the group, instead of being held tenaciously by two or three members. **Don't perpetuate the same officers, directors, boards, and committees.** Make your League a democracy with equal opportunity for each member to be active - not a dynasty where only the same select few ever get a chance.

ARE YOU TIRING OUT?

The problem heard most often during conversations with state board liaisons is that board members are tired. Few members want to take on a meaningful role. One reason is that new members are neither asked nor oriented to what they can do within the League framework. Another reason may be the moaning and groaning from board president and board members.

- It is extremely important to get new members active in League activities immediately. Involvement creates interest.
- Regular members who failed to renew their membership should be contacted, followed by personal phone calls if necessary. Let them know they have been missed. Regular members who have missed a meeting should also be called and told: "We missed you." This should encourage them to return.
- Members who have been active in the past might be persuaded to become active again with a personal telephone call or by being asked to do a specific job.
- Perhaps if contacted, former members might like to rejoin.
- Form an active telephone committee to remind members of meetings and arrange for transportation if needed.
- Remember to give credit to committee chairperson and members. A "thank you" is always appreciated.
- Assign a hostess/mentor for each new member for a few meetings, so that she has someone to sit with.

GREAT IDEAS

Here's a "Get-Acquainted Activity" created by Mary Lou Green from LWV Syracuse.

Introduce yourself to others. Learn who they are and an issue they are concerned about. Ask them to sign one appropriate block on your grid. Use each name only once. See how many blocks you can get signed. Your reward is getting to know many interesting people.

Grew up in your (city or town)	Attended a town, city, or county meeting	Voted in the last election	Joined the LWV this year
Grew up in your (county)	Served on a jury	Helped a candidate run for office	LWV member for more than 5 years
Has voted in 3 or more elections	Attended a naturalization ceremony	Has run for public office	Knows when and why LWV was founded

ANOTHER GREAT IDEA! - TRIAL MEMBERSHIP

Choosing the time for membership renewal can be viewed as a great "recruiting" tool. One League changed their dues renewal date to Sept. 1 for all members. In reality, this gives membership committee & other board members at least 3 months to actually collect the dues before having to turn in the official membership count in to LWVUS in late January.

Beginning immediately after those numbers are submitted to LWVUS in January, **they ran** a promotional campaign to recruit members for trial memberships. They offered these for \$20 - \$25 and sent letters to as many persons as they could think of including all those on a potential member list. The letter is very upbeat and offered them an opportunity to "try League out" at this reduced rate. The also mentioned that they will be given an opportunity to join in Sept. at the regular rate. The offer runs from mid-January thru March.

Members who join after March pay the regular dues rate, but they don't pay again in September, so they get a few months free (not much happens during the summer months in many Leagues, so this is OK).

The special "trial" offer is a combined fundraiser/recruiting effort. The money collected from these persons is stay within the local league--no PMP to state or national.

The first year these trial memberships were offered for \$20, 32 people joined – an income for the treasury. The best part of all is that a high percentage of those people renewed in September, and a few were asked and accepted positions on the board in July of that year while they were still "officially" trial members--one of the best ways I know to guarantee that they'll renew is to get them on board!!

I believe this is an example of a perfect opportunity for local/state/national to join together in a recruiting effort. When these people join at this special rate, immediately get them listed in our state/national membership databases so that they can receive at least 1 or 2 copies of the state & national Voters. **IMPORTANT:** enter their expiration date as 9/1/current year on the form. The Voters from both state and national are excellent publications and one of the most important recruiting tools available to local League membership chairs.

TO: Local League President, Voter Service Directors
FROM: Maggie Moehringer, Vice President, Voter Service
12 Coventry Road, Glenmont, NY 12077
E-mail: mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com

RESULTS OF THE VOTER SERVICE SURVEY:
HIGHLIGHTS AND GOOD IDEAS

Thanks to all of you that took the time to fill out the survey of your voter service related events. We had a very good response rate, and here are some of the highlights. For those of you that did not respond please feel free to send in your form now; they are always helpful.

CANDIDATE FORUMS

- **Media Involvement:**
 - Many were televised, live or rebroadcast.
 - Many rebroadcast multiple times.
 - Broadcast services from PACTV, local PBS affiliates.
 - College media departments helped with the recording.
 - Some radio broadcast.
 - Web casting – digitally recorded and posted to the League’s web site!
 - Most received some coverage in the local papers, but some frustration with the superficiality and selectivity of that type of coverage.
- **Sponsorship:**
 - In many cases, Leagues co-sponsored with another organization; felt that that contributed to the success of the event.
 - Interesting co-sponsor: YMCA
 - Frequent co-sponsor: AAUW
- **Venues:** College campuses not only donated space but also provided recording crew, media assistance.
- **Incidents:**
 - Leagues did not have policies in place on the participation of write-in “candidates”.
 - Leagues were not careful about the real or perceived non-partisanship of partners.
 - Leagues had questions about the right to participate of invited candidates who pulled out of the race before the forum.
 - Leagues had candidates that did the unexpected – showed up with Power Point presentations for example – and they were not sure how to handle them.
 - Leagues that braved un-screened questioners had pugnacious questioners in the audience and had to quell them.
- **Participation:**
 - Many frustrations with unresponsive candidates, but in most cases all parties participated or the forum did not happen.

- A few judicial forums, with good understanding by the LLs of the special requirements for those forums.
- **Formats:**
 - Overwhelmingly traditional with questions, mostly screened. If the questions were not screened, a moderator announced the criteria and reserved the right to reject a question. Some cross-questioning. Some panel questioners. One League allowed candidate-specific questions.
 - Some used cumulative time for lively issues, and fixed time for more mundane issues.
 - Live televised had telephone call-ins too!
 - Some “all in one” forums seemed to work well – invited all candidates for all offices, and questions could be addressed to the candidates for a particular office.

VOTERS GUIDES

- **LWVNYS Voters Guides:** Comments by the Leagues that used them:
 - “Well received, well done, well written, useful, timely” – more than one local BOE said that it was the only good source for ballot issue discussion.
 - “Make the parts look different” came up again; we need to work on that.
 - “Add basic statements about the League, mission, how to find a local League, and take out the State dues numbers since they can be different from the LL’s.”
- **Unusual Distribution Ideas:**
 - BOEs!
 - High Schools or Middle Schools, to go home to parents
 - NYPIRG
 - Prospective contributors, League members too, sent out with the fund drive solicitation
 - Elected officials, to go out to their constituencies
 - Hospital waiting rooms, Laundromats, public housing/apartments houses
- **Local League Voters Guides**
 - Many no longer do them
 - Some do them only on the Web but get the word out about the Web version through PSAs, etc.
 - ILOs do them for a collection of Leagues.

VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES

- **Success:**
 - Great variability; sometimes very few registered
 - Most successful events: High schools, colleges, and new citizen drives
 - Overall, many drives, relatively few voters; success of “Motor Voter”?

SPECIAL PROJECTS:

Vote 18: LWV of the Hamptons used in 2006; Huntington in 2008

- “Vote 18 is a fun fast-paced voting game that takes students on an interactive journey through the history of voting graphically demonstrating the economic and

social impacts of voting then registering eligible students to vote or training them on the registration process.”

- 3 parts: historical survey of enfranchisement, mock election, voter registration
- Look into a statewide version.

“Take Me to Vote”:

- Saratoga
 - Involvement of BOE commissioners.
 - Asked all public and private school 5th grade teachers (73) if they wanted to participate; 22 did.
 - Sent home flyers, certificates to be filled out and returned.
 - Considering prizes for top private and public school
 - Considering having Assemblyman visit the school.
- Revive this statewide?

High School Projects

- Write the PIG teacher/SS supervisor and ask if they’re interested
- Prepare packages of “First Vote”, “Questions from College Students...”, registration and absentee ballot forms.
- Enable students in conducting drives (preferable) or LWV does drive.

Explanation of the Primary Process in NYS

New York State has a confusing primary process. Democrats vote for candidates, vote for delegates, and do not know what happens with the super delegates. Republicans have a less confusing ballot, since the delegates aren’t listed, but there are still unpledged delegates after the primary. What happens at the convention? This document is a work in progress, to be refined for the next time we go through “Super Tuesday”!

Presidential Primaries in New York State

The Democratic and Republican primaries in New York State are different in important ways, but have similarities. Both are “closed” primaries; participation is limited to the voters who have registered in the party that is sponsoring the election. While delegates are not bound by any law to vote for any particular candidate at the party’s national convention, both parties have “pledged” candidates who vote for the candidate to whom they are “pledged”. Both parties also have “un-pledged” and/or “super” delegates, who are not committed to a particular candidate. A certain number of delegates in each party participate because they occupy a particular elective or party position. Before the primary, candidates submit to the board of elections a list of delegates from each congressional district that are committed to them. These delegates actually appear on the ballot in the Democratic primary, along with a statewide presidential democratic candidate, but do not appear on the ballot in the Republican primary.

Details of the Nominating Process

Democrats: “Proportional” Primary, 281 delegates at stake

The Democratic Party primary in New York is really a “dual primary.” Candidates for president appear on the ballot and run against each other in a statewide primary, and

delegates and alternate delegates run in each congressional district. Delegates and alternates are either committed to a presidential candidate or uncommitted, and males and females are equally represented among the delegate choices for a candidate.

New York Democrats have a total of 281 delegates, 151 of whom are “pledged” and allocated proportionally based on the results of the February 5th primary within each Congressional district; these delegates appear on the ballot. In addition, 81 “pledged” delegates are allocated according to the candidate’s proportional share of the statewide vote; they do not appear on the ballot and are chosen at a state Democratic committee meeting in May. The remaining 49 delegates are unpledged (“super delegates”).

Republicans: “Winner-take-all” Primary, 101 delegates at stake

The National Republican Party, unlike the Democratic Party, allows each state to decide whether to use a “winner-take-all method” or the “proportional” method. In the winner-take-all method, the candidate whom the majority of caucus participants or voters support receives all the delegates for the state. New York is a “winner take all” state.

In New York, the selection of delegates and alternate delegates to the Republican National Convention is determined by a statewide primary of candidates for the office of President. Unlike the Democratic primary ballot, the names of the delegates and alternate delegates do not appear. Based on the results of the February 5th presidential primary, 87 of the state’s 101 Republican delegates are allocated to the presidential candidate with the most votes statewide. At a Republican state committee meeting, the remaining 14 unpledged delegates are selected from party leaders.

Technology Focus: A Word about the Web

During the Ida Trager conferences, we heard from local Leagues about difficulties they are having creating a web site using their own resources. Time, expertise, funding and an understanding of how to get started were all issues that proved to be too hard to overcome for 37 of our 56 local Leagues. State League was asked if it could be helpful in creating a simple web presence for these Leagues.

A group consisting of State and local League representatives and our State League Webmaster has been convened to begin to address the possibility of State League hosting simple web sites for local Leagues unable to “grow their own.” The group members are:

- Adam Gaus - LWV Smithtown
- Valerie Castleman – LWV Westchester ILO/New Castle
- Deb Drake – self employed web designer/developer/LWVNYS tech support
- Kris Myers – Executive Director, LWVNYS
- Martha Kennedy – President, LWVNYS
- Maggie Moehringer, VP Voter Service/Technology, LWVNYS.

We have had an initial conference call to discuss:

- The possible role of the State League office in providing web services for local Leagues:
 - Host provision
 - Web page design/maintenance.

- Functional options for inclusion on these hosted web sites:
 - What would a very simple web page look like?
 - How can we standardization for mass production and still tailor the site to the local League?
 - How feasible/advisable would it be to provide web sites that are more complex for local Leagues that cannot do their own?
- Technical Options for LWVNYS establishing/maintaining web pages for LLs:
 - Host space only – LL design and maintenance
 - Minimal web site design and maintenance; content prepared by LL, managed by LWVNYS
 - In the future possibly, more robust web site design and maintenance; content prepared by LL, managed by LWVNYS
 - Naming services (for http://... addresses in user friendly format).

- Funding Issues/Models

The key will be to find a sustainable, affordable model that local Leagues can support, and that will provide minimal services that get local Leagues started in developing the ability to “grow their own”. Simple services such as information about how to contact the local League for membership purposes are envisioned for these first efforts. The group will work on developing a model and trying it out with some local Leagues that:

- Do not currently have a web presence
- Will be, at least temporarily, satisfied with a very simple presence
- Will use the URL for the web site on their membership materials and consent to having it posted on the LWVNYS site
- Have at least one person who is willing to field email generated by the page “contact us” feature.

TO: Local League Presidents, Development Chairs
FROM: Betsey Swan, Vice President, Development
10 Norwood Drive, Menands, New York 12204
E-mail: faircamp@nycap.rr.com

DEVELOPMENT REPORT

I. CENTENNIAL FUND NEWS

A. Approval of Policies

At its January board meeting, the Education Foundation approved policies to implement the Centennial Fund endowment.

B. Board Donations to Centennial Fund

As of this writing the board has pledged \$38,750 to the Centennial Fund, with an additional \$3,000 pledged for the benefit of two local Leagues. We expect to have pledges from all board members by the time this goes to press. For the board that has given so generously, a big round of applause.

C. Draft of Centennial Plan

Although it has taken longer than expected, the process of re-envisioning the League is proceeding apace, with the suggestions from local Leagues provided in the SWOT Analysis and at the Ida Trager Workshops incorporated into a draft of the Centennial Plan, a road map for the League's future programmatic and financial development. The Centennial Plan emphasizes raising an endowment, which, when fully funded, will enable the state League to support local Leagues by taking over many of the more mundane secretarial and administrative tasks for which many Leagues are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit volunteers.

The draft Plan is being reviewed by the board and a development committee and will then be circulated to local Leagues for their input. Once the plan goes out for general comment, we need further input and fine tuning from all League members. We urge you to give this document the attention it deserves. Remember. This is our future, and it is essential we get it right.

II. DEDICATION OF LEAGUE BUILDING

The League will formally dedicate its new building in Albany after its board of directors meeting at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 15, 2008. Proceedings will begin with a ceremony naming the building after Anne Holtzmann, whose generous help during our original building drive made its purchase possible. The building's conference room will then be dedicated as a room of honor, in which plaques honoring those who have benefited the League over the years will be displayed. There will be a dinner at the home of Betsey Swan on the evening of May 15 for those who wish to continue the celebration.

This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate League history, renew old friendships, and sow seeds for the future. Members from around the state are invited to attend the board meeting and stay for the dedication. Overnight accommodation will be provided upon request. Please call Stephanie at the League office if you will be able to attend.

We seek anecdotes about Anne Holtzmann and League history over the past 25 years to share during the dedication. Please send to Betsey Swan at the League office or e-mail to faircamp@nycap.rr.com. We encourage people to speak at the dedication. If you would like to do so, please let Stephanie know.

TO: Local League Presidents, Program/Education Chairs and SIA/LeaderSpark Coordinators
FROM: JoAnn Ross, Citizen Education Director
116 Cranburne Lane, Williamsville, New York 14221
E-Mail: jross18@roadrunner.com

CITIZEN EDUCATION REPORT

LEADERSPARK UPDATE

LeaderSpark 2007-2008 has five local leagues hosting the program including: Geneva, Saratoga, Schenectady, Smithtown, and Buffalo/Niagara. All New York leagues not included in this list are once again invited to join the growing LeaderSpark team. It is a wonderful program that offers leadership opportunities for the youth of your community and at the same time creates membership opportunities for your league. Many of the community organizations and businesses contacted relating to LeaderSpark have had members of their organizations join the local league.

STUDENTS INSIDE ALBANY

Students Inside Albany is a student conference sponsored by the Education Department of the League of Women Voters of New York State. This conference brings together high school students from across the state to learn about New York State Government.

This years Students Inside Albany Conference will be held April 27-30 at the Hampton Inn and Suites, downtown Albany. Local leagues will choose their own criteria for sending a student to the conference. Including, but not limited to the traditional essay contest. Additional spots at the conference will filled from two students from within each current LeaderSpark project.

For more information on how to participate in the Students Inside Albany Conference or the LeaderSpark Student training program contact:

LWVNYS office at: 518-465-4162 or email: lwvny@lwvny.org

Or

JoAnn Ross

LWVNYS Citizen Education Director

716-631-9351 or e-mail: jross18@roadrunner.com

TO: Local League Presidents, Local Study Committee Chairs,
Action and Issues Chairs
FROM: Lori Dawson, LWVNYS NPV Study Chair,
4 Marion Place, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
E-Mail: lddawson@skidmore.edu

JoAnn Ross, Citizen Education, Director
E-Mail: jross18@roadrunner.com

UPDATE ON LOBBYING EFFORTS FOR NATIONAL NPV STUDY:
**“The Advisability of Using the National Popular Vote Compact among the States as
a Method for Electing the President.”**

1. We have not heard much interest from Leagues to do a National study on NPV. Many Leagues believe that this is a state issue and should be treated as such. Below I copy some responses that have been posted on the program planning list serve and/or sent directly to us.

a. Some state Leagues have studied this issue and may wish to promote a national study. This is a rather simple concept, which could easily be studied. However, if we take this on as a national study we will not have a position (either way) until 2010. I fear that once again we (as an organization) will be rather moot in the debate (on both state and national levels) as the compact could be complete by that time.

To get the subject on the radar screen of the national board, we may have to submit NPV as one of the issues that should be studied (as I believe the NY state League may be doing).

However, to best serve our states, save our money and effort for other studies and give the League a real voice in this debate, I would suggest a resolution be made at conference. The resolution *might* be stated something like:

In keeping with the spirit of the LWVUS position on abolishing the Electoral College, LWVUS resolves to allow each state League to support or oppose the National Popular Vote plan as they find it to best serve their voters.

Barbara Klein, 1st VP LWVAZ, program planning

b. Ditto: *Karen Michael, Development Coordinator, Metro Phoenix LWV*

c. I am certain my League would support a resolution such as this. This is a state issue. Let's try to get some support from State Leagues for this. I agree a national study would be too late to be meaningful. It was standing room only at the last LWVUS convention at our caucus on the National Popular Vote proposal. *Paula Lee, LWV El Dorado County, Ca.*

d. Take a look at Impact on Issues on the LWVUS website:

http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Action_Chair&CONTENTID=9599&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm

Click on "Representative Government" and go to p. 13 of 20. I think this sentence is the current stumbling block: "The League also does not support reform of the Electoral College on a state-by-state basis because the League believes there should be uniformity across the nation in the systems used to elect the President."

A resolution is a great idea, but I believe the sentence quoted above has to be qualified so that it cannot be used to prevent state Leagues from supporting NPV. NPV was not a proposal and was not considered by us when we reached consensus on that part of the Position and the "uniformity" we were concerned about is not hindered by NPV.

Barbara Wardenburg, LWV Los Altos/Mtn. View Area, CA

e. This is where I was when I came home from Convention last time. I still think that we could support the Compact using the LWVUS position, but I am not confident that LWVUS wouldn't then demand that each state do a study of whether their state should join the compact. We would need careful wording to eliminate that possibility - which would put us even further behind. I do like the idea of instructing the LWVUS Board to interpret the National position as supporting the compact.

Barb Thomas, President Saratoga County LWV

2. Also we learned more information about the 2 Leagues who have undertaken a NPV study. I had inquired as to their progress with their study and whether they had plans to hold a workshop or caucus on NPV at Convention:

a. I am a member of LWVOR's Election Methods Study Committee. NPV is just one of several subjects in our state study. We are scheduled to have a report printed by July (08) with consensus and position by December (08). We have no plans for a caucus or workshop on NPV at Convention. I am copying our committee co-chairs on this message so we could discuss during one of our study meetings. I will also ask our state Board to support this national study with a program planning reply.

Norman Turrill, First Vice-President and Action Committee Chair, LWV of Oregon

b. We will be studying NPV in our unit meetings in April. I plan to use your materials and web site. I have been sending out background material in our *Voters*. I do not have plans for a caucus; I do think we will send NPV in as our national priority but I don't want to get ahead of the process. The Salt Lake League is at least half the membership of the state. I suspect that only the Ogden League and ourselves will actually study NPV but more of us may come to the convention. We are pushing hard to have a full delegation. *Ann O'Connell, Natural Resources Chair, LWV of SL Legislative Chair, LWVUT*

3. Many questions remain: Do we support the suggested resolution? Do we want to write our own resolution? Will giving Direction to the Board be enough? Or do we want to continue to push for a national NPV study? I don't have the answer at this time. I need more information. I have a call out to some of the people quoted above. I am open to suggestions.