



*The League of Women Voters of New York State*

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# STATE BOARD REPORT

September 2008, Issue #1

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## Presidents Report

~Attention: LL President

## Issues & Advocacy

~Attention: LL President & LL Action Chairs

## Membership

~Attention: LL President & LL Membership Chairs

## Voter Service

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Voter Service Chairs

## Finance & Development

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Finance/Development Chairs  
(Fundraising)

## Program & Education

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Program Chairs  
(SIA/LeaderSpark/NPV Study)

STATE BOARD REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE:

[www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)

*(Click on Local League Resources)*

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## *MARTHA'S MEMOS*

TO: Local League Presidents  
FROM: Martha Kennedy, President  
214 Winne Road, Delmar, NY 12054  
Telephone: (518) 439-4559  
E-Mail: [dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com)



Welcome to all new and returning LL presidents!

Recently, I read something that made me think of league leaders and I wanted to share it with all of you at the beginning of this new league cycle: “Some people succeed because they are destined to, but most people succeed because they are determined to.” If ever there was a determined group, it is league. With that in mind as we begin this year, I am confident that this will be a very successful year

We are off to a great start “in house” with the hiring of our new Executive Director, Laura Ladd Bierman. As reported in my earlier announcement via our listserves, Laura comes to us with vast league, administrative, and management experience and has herself been an active league member for over 25 years. You are reminded to add her contact information [laura@lwwny.org](mailto:laura@lwwny.org) to your address books and I know that she looks forward to becoming acquainted with all of you.

Our other announcement is the addition of a new director to our State Board. Toni Coffee (former LWVNYC co-president) has accepted the appointment and, in addition to providing representation from our largest League, will focus on publications updates and web content development. We are delighted to welcome her to the board and look forward to her contributions to our busy team.

National Convention in Portland, Or was a great experience for the 35 NYS delegates in attendance who delighted in the passage of the NPV study, the election to the LWVUS board of our own Marcia Merrins, and the presentation of the Pioneer Award to our NYC League. Congratulations on all counts!

Please be sure to plan educational meetings for the fall on the new National Study on the Compact for a National Popular Vote keeping in mind that it was proposed by NYS and passed as a non-recommended item. Now we want to make sure that our NYS leagues participate to help ensure a valid consensus. (Details to follow but we expect that “fast-tracked” study to be completed by the end of Feb)

Our biennial State Convention will be held at the Doubletree Inn in Syracuse May 15-17. As was announced recently, we have decided to replace the fall Ida Trager Regional Workshops this year with a major single pre-convention workshop to be held on the afternoon of May 15 beginning with lunch for all those participating in that workshop. We have been aware that a significant

number of LLs have not been able to participate in the fall workshops, so with the expectation and hope that all of our Local leagues plan to come together for convention; this seems like a wonderful opportunity to reach the greatest number of LLs. Please start publicizing this event to your members and plan to be part of this most exciting, informative, and enjoyable event.

The Regional Directors program has been reinstated thanks to the efforts of Marcia Merrins. While this program was active in the past, it had dissolved prior to my league involvement, but I have heard it referenced fondly by various members throughout the state and again at our league retreat in May. In an attempt to meld some good old ideas with our good new ideas, Marcia took the initiative to reinstate this and her request for volunteers to serve in that capacity was well received. See the “assignment list” in her report and PLEASE be sure to participate and support this when your Regional Director (RD) contacts you.

All LL presidents were recently sent, via our local league presidents’ listserve, a copy of the “LWVNYS Workshops for Local Leagues”. This, too, was generated thanks to the efforts of Marcia and is an excellent piece to add to your tools for training your board and preparing for the upcoming year. In addition, we continue our work to update league materials and have added the most recent update of “In League” to our website: [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org). You will also find board and Off Board Specialists contact information, the league calendar, updates on legislative and advocacy areas, and many other helpful links to items of interest. As always, I urge you to use the materials on that site and to utilize our listserves. If you have any questions about any of these resources, please do not hesitate to contact the office, any board member, or your Regional Director. We are all eager to help however we can to ensure that everyone is comfortable with the role of local League president.

Finally please remember to send your updated board lists to the office. If you have absolutely no changes in your board from last year, please send a message to that effect to the office [lwvny@lwvny.org](mailto:lwvny@lwvny.org), so that we will know that everything is correct.

With that, and the hope that you will now read all of the other reports included in this September State Board Report, I thank you for all you do for the league and for all I know you will be doing during this year. It will be a busy and exciting one and just a great opportunity to use that league determination to SUCCEED.

TO: Local League Presidents  
FROM: Martha Kennedy, President  
214 Winne Road, Delmar, NY 12054  
E-Mail: [dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com)

**AMENDING THE BYLAWS**

In preparation for our state League convention coming up in mid May, it is time to think about possible changes to our bylaws. The state League bylaws are the basic set of rules under which the state league operates. Therefore, it is important for local Leagues to evaluate carefully the existing bylaws. Do they reflect what we are actually doing? Are they too flexible or restrictive? What changes should be made to enable the League to operate efficiently and effectively in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Amendments to the bylaws can only be made at state conventions, as provided in Article XIV.

Our bylaws committee will review the current bylaws and any changes suggested by local Leagues. Proposed amendments will be reported to the board at its February meeting. The board will consider the changes and make recommendations, which will be sent to local Leagues. All proposed bylaw amendments will be included in the Convention Kit. Those amendments that are recommended by the State Board will be voted upon by the delegate body. Non-recommended amendments may be brought to the floor by a motion.

In order for the bylaws committee to consider changes being proposed by local Leagues, such changes must be sent to the state League office by December 12, 2008. Please use the following format:

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**The following changes in the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of New York State are proposed by:**

*Name of Local League*

*Signature of President*

***PROPOSED BYLAW AMENDMENTS: Material to be deleted should be indicated by putting it in parentheses. Material to be added should be underlined. Please give the reasons for your proposed change.***

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE BYLAWS**  
(AS AMENDED MAY 2007)

*Article I*  
Name and Office

**Sec. 1 Name.** The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of New York State, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as “LWVNYS.” The LWVNYS is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as “LWVUS”.

*Article II*  
Purposes and Policy

**Sec. 1 Purposes.** The purposes of the LWVNYS shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

**Sec. 2 Political Policy.** The LWVNYS shall not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

*Article III*  
Membership

**Sec. 1 Eligibility.** Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the LWVNYS shall be eligible for membership.

**Sec. 2 Types of Membership.**

- a. Voting members. Citizens at least 18 years of age who join the LWVNYS at any level shall be voting members at all levels of League.
  - i. individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League; those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or may be state members-at-large;
  - ii. those who have been members of the LWVUS for 50 years or more shall be honorary life members excused from the payment of dues.
- b. Associate Members. All others who join the LWVNYS shall be associate members. Associate members are non-voting members.

*Article IV*  
Officers

**Sec. 1 Enumeration, Election and Term.** The officers of the LWVNYS shall be a president, a first vice-president, with up to but no more than three additional vice-presidents, and either a secretary and a treasurer or a combined position of secretary/treasurer. The number of vice-presidents and whether the offices of secretary and treasurer shall be combined shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee. Any of those offices may not be eliminated or combined until the term of an elected officer is concluded. The Officers shall be elected by the convention and hold office until the conclusion of the next convention or until their successors have been elected and qualified.

**Sec. 2 Qualifications.** Only voting members in the state of New York shall be elected or appointed to serve as officers or directors of the LWVNYS.

**Sec. 3 President.** The president shall preside at all meetings of the LWVNYS and of the board of directors, hereinafter referred to as “the board”, unless the president is absent or designates someone else to preside. In the absence or disability of the treasurer, the president may sign or endorse checks, drafts, and notes. The president shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees except the nominating committee and have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and perform other duties designated by the board.

**Sec. 4 Vice-presidents.** In the event of the absence of the president, the first vice-president, or any of the vice-presidents, in order of rank, shall assume that office until the president’s return. If the board declares the office of president vacant, the first vice-president shall assume the office. If the first vice-president is unable to serve as president, any of the vice-presidents, in order of rank, shall assume that office until the next convention. In the event that none of the vice-presidents is able to serve in this capacity, the board shall elect one of its elected members to fill the vacancy. The vice-presidents shall perform such other duties as the president and board may designate.

**Sec. 5 Secretary.** The secretary shall keep, or cause to be kept, minutes of convention, council, and meetings of the board; shall notify all officers and directors of their election; shall sign with the president all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the board; and shall perform such other functions as the president and board shall direct.

**Sec. 6 Treasurer.** The treasurer shall, at the direction of the president and the board, perform such financial oversight of the professional staff of the organization, as is appropriate under the circumstances, and such other duties as may customarily pertain to the office; and shall arrange for an annual audit of the books by a certified public accountant.

*Article V*  
Board

**Sec. 1** Number, Selection, and Term. The board shall consist of the officers of the LWVNYS, up to five but not less than three elected directors, and up to four appointed directors. The number of elected directors shall be recommended by the Nominating Committee. The elected directors shall be elected by the convention and shall serve until the conclusion of the next convention or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The elected members of the board shall appoint such additional directors, not exceeding four, as they deem necessary to carry

on the work of the LWVNYS. The terms of office of the appointed directors shall expire concurrently with the terms of office of the elected directors.

**Sec. 2** Absences and Vacancies.

- a. Absences. In the event that a board member is absent from two consecutive meetings of the board, without excuse accepted as satisfactory by the directors, that position may be declared vacant by a majority vote of the remaining board members.
- b. Vacancies. A board position shall be vacant in the event a board member dies or resigns, a position is declared vacant pursuant to Section 2a of this Article, or a board member is determined to have engaged in misconduct by three-fifths of the remaining board.
- c. Any vacancy in the board other than in the presidency may be filled until the next convention by a majority vote of the remaining members of the board.

**Sec. 3** Powers and Duties.

- a. The board shall have full charge of the property and fiscal business of the LWVNYS with full power and authority to manage and conduct the same, subject to the instructions of the convention.
- b. The board shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program on state governmental matters as adopted by the convention.
- c. The board shall accept responsibility delegated to it by the board of the LWVUS for:
  - i. the organization and development of local Leagues;
  - ii. carrying out of a program;
  - iii. providing assistance to the local Leagues in obtaining funds to further the work of a local League or the LWVNYS; and
  - iv. guidance of intrastate inter-League organizations hereinafter referred to as ILOs.
- d. The board may create member-at-large (hereinafter referred to as MAL) units, and establish rules and regulations for their operations.
- e. The board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary.
- f. The board may appoint an executive committee consisting of no fewer than five members of the board. The executive committee shall exercise such power and authority as may be delegated to it by the board and shall report to the board, at the earliest opportunity, on all actions taken by it between regular meetings of the board.

- g. The consent of the board and the signature of two officers shall be necessary to endorse, transfer, and deliver any certificate of stock, bond or other security or real property in the name and in behalf of the LWVNYS. The board may delegate such authority to sign or endorse checks, drafts, and notes as it may from time to time see fit.

**Sec. 4 Regular Meetings.** There shall be at least two regular meetings of the board annually. At the direction of the president, at least two weeks before each regular meeting, each board member shall be sent a written notice giving the time and place of such meeting.

**Sec. 5 Special Meetings.** The president may call special meetings of the board, and/or shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five members of the board. Members of the board shall be notified of the time and place of special meetings by fax, e-mail, or letter sent at least six

days prior to such meeting. During convention or council, however, the president may, or upon the request of five members of the board shall, call a special meeting of the board by giving members of the board a written notice of the time and place of said meeting.

**Sec. 6 Quorum.** A majority of the members of the board shall constitute a quorum and a majority of the members in attendance at any board meeting shall, in the presence of a quorum, decide its action. Any member of the board may participate in a meeting by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment that allows all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time; participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting.

**Sec. 7 Compensation.** Directors shall not receive compensation for services rendered to or on behalf of the LWVNYS except that members of the board may be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred on behalf of the LWVNYS upon presentation to the treasurer or secretary/treasurer of reasonable detailed receipts thereof.

#### *Article VI*

#### Recognition of Local and Provisional Leagues

**Sec. 1 Local Leagues.** Local Leagues are those Leagues which have been so recognized by the LWVUS.

**Sec. 2 Recognition of Local Leagues.** The LWVNYS board shall recommend to the LWVUS board recognition of any group in the state which fulfills recognition requirements for local Leagues as adopted by the national convention. When such recognition is granted, the local Leagues shall become an integral part of the LWVUS and the LWVNYS.

**Sec. 3 Withdrawal of Recognition.** When a local League recurrently fails to fulfill recognition requirements, the board shall recommend to the LWVUS board that recognition be withdrawn.

Final action rests with the LWVUS board. All funds held by such dissolved Leagues shall be paid to the LWVNYS after payment of all liabilities.

**Sec. 4 Member-at-Large Units.** When a group of people in a community in which no local League exists wishes to form a League of Women Voters, it may be organized into a Member-at-Large unit by the board under the requirements adopted by the convention of the LWVUS. It shall remain a MAL unit until such time as it has fulfilled the recognition requirements for local Leagues, or until its recognition has been withdrawn. All funds held by a MAL unit from which recognition has been withdrawn shall be paid to the LWVNYS.

**Sec. 5 Inter-League Organizations-ILOs.** Members enrolled in local Leagues may organize ILOs in order to promote the purposes of the League and to take action on county, metropolitan or regional governmental matters. The LWVNYS board shall recommend to the LWVUS board that such ILO be recognized, provided requirements adopted by the national convention have been met. The board has responsibility for the guidance of ILOs. In the event of recurrent

failure of an ILO to fulfill these requirements, the board shall recommend to the LWVUS board that it withdraw recognition from such ILO. All funds held by an ILO from which recognition has been withdrawn shall be prorated among its member Leagues.

*Article VII*  
**Financial Administration**

**Sec. 1 Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the LWVNYS shall be from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.

**Sec. 2 Financial Support.** Each local League shall make an annual per-member and household payment to the LWVNYS in the amount to be determined by a 3/5 vote of those present and voting at each convention. Local Leagues shall be excused from making per-member payments for paid life or honorary life members. Member-at-Large Units shall pay dues to the LWVNYS in an amount to be determined by the LWVNYS board.

**Sec. 3 Budget.** The board shall submit to the convention or council for adoption a proposed budget for the ensuing year. This proposed budget shall provide for the support of the LWVNYS. A copy of the proposed budget shall be sent to the president of each local League and ILO and MAL unit chair at least six weeks in advance of the convention or council. A budget shall be adopted by a majority vote, except that the per-member-payment shall be approved as provided in section 2 of this article. The practice of preparation and implementation of a two-year budget may be adopted by a vote of two-thirds of the delegates present at convention. Should a two-year budget be implemented, in the interim year, the board shall report to the delegates at council on the status of the finances of the organization and budgetary items.

**Sec. 4 Budget Committee.** The budget shall be prepared by a committee which shall be appointed for that purpose by the board at least four months in advance of the convention or council. The budget committee shall consist of no fewer than five members including a chair and the treasurer. The majority of the members of this committee, including the chair, shall not be members of the state board. Except for the treasurer, each member of the budget committee shall be from a different local League.

**Sec. 5 Distribution of Funds on Dissolution.** In the event of the dissolution of the LWVNYS, all moneys and securities which may at the time be owned by or under the control of the LWVNYS shall be paid to the LWVUS after the state board has paid or made provision for the payment of all the liabilities of the LWVNYS. All other property of whatsoever nature, whether real, personal, or mixed which may at the time be owned or under the control of the LWVNYS shall be disposed of to such a person, organization, or corporation for such public, charitable or educational use and purposes as the state board in its discretion may designate.

**Sec. 6 Indemnification.** Every LWVNYS director, officer or specified representative of the LWVNYS shall be indemnified against all expenses and liabilities, including counsel fees, reasonably incurred or imposed upon them in connection with any proceeding to which they may be made a party, or in which they may become involved by reason of being or having been a director, officer or specified representative, or any settlement thereof, whether the person is a director, officer or specified representative at the time such expenses are incurred, except in such cases wherein the individual is adjudged guilty of willful misfeasance or malfeasance in the performance of duties. The foregoing right of indemnification shall be in addition to and exclusive of all other rights to which the indemnified may be entitled. Indemnification will be up to the amount insured.

### *Article VIII* Convention

**Sec. 1 Place, Date, and Call.** A convention of the LWVNYS shall be held biennially. The time and place of the convention shall be determined by the board. At the direction of the president, a call for the convention shall be sent to the president of each local League and ILO, and chair of each MAL unit not less than three months prior to the opening date of the convention fixed in said call. Thereafter the board may advance or postpone the opening date of the convention not more than two weeks from the date fixed in the first call. A final call for the convention shall be sent by the president to the president of each local League, ILO, and to the chair of each MAL unit, at least 30 days before convention.

**Sec. 2 Composition.** The convention shall consist of the delegates of the local Leagues, ILOs and MAL units, as provided in section 4 of this article, and the members of the board.

**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. No delegate shall be entitled to more than one vote, and absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted. Final determination of a delegate's qualifications or credentials shall be made by the convention.

**Sec. 4 Representation.** The members of the LWVUS who are organized into recognized local Leagues, ILOs, and MAL units in the state of New York shall be entitled to voting representation at the convention as follows: each local League shall be represented by the president or an alternate. In addition to the president or alternate, each local League is entitled to one delegate for the first 40 members. Leagues having more than 40 members shall be entitled to one delegate for each additional 40 members or major fraction thereof. The record in the state office of paid-up voting members as of January 1 of the year of the convention shall determine the official membership count for this purpose. Each recognized ILO shall be entitled to one voting delegate to be elected by its board of directors. Each MAL unit shall be entitled to one voting delegate to be chosen by its members.

**Sec. 5 Authorization for Action.** The convention shall consider and authorize a program for action; shall elect officers, directors, the chair and two members of the nominating committee; shall adopt a budget for the ensuing year; and shall transact such other business as may be presented.

**Sec. 6 Quorum.** A quorum shall consist of a majority of the delegates registered at the convention provided that not less than one-half of the local Leagues are represented at convention.

### *Article IX* Council

**Sec. 1 Place, Date and Call.** A meeting of the council shall be held in the interim year between conventions, approximately 12 months after the preceding convention. The time and place of the meeting shall be determined by the board. At the direction of the LWVNYS president, a formal call shall be sent to the president of each local League and ILO, and to the chair of each MAL unit. This call shall be no more than 50 nor less than 10 days before a council meeting. Council business may be conducted by mail, if so determined by the board. A special meeting of the council by approved forum may be called by a majority of the local Leagues, or by the President upon the vote of a majority of the board.

**Sec. 2 Composition.** Delegates to council, conducted by approved forum, shall be comprised of the board, each of whom shall have one vote, the president of each ILO or an alternate, the president of each local League or an alternate, and the chair of each MAL unit or an alternate.

The delegates representing each ILO, local League, and the chair of each MAL, shall each have two votes at council. Local Leagues with membership over 500 shall be entitled to one additional delegate at a council meeting. At council conducted by approved forum, those delegates of local Leagues with membership over 500 shall each be entitled to one additional vote, making a total of three.

**Sec. 3 Qualifications of Delegates.** Each delegate shall be a voting member of the LWVNYS.

**Sec. 4 Authorization for Action.** The council shall consider program, methods of operation and the financial status of the organization, including a proposed or ongoing budget, as presented by the LWVNYS board. The council is authorized to make such modifications of the program and, if applicable, an ongoing budget, as shall be necessary to meet altered conditions, provided that notice of proposed modifications shall have been sent by the LWVNYS board to the president of each local League and ILO, and to the chair of each MAL unit, at least six weeks in advance of the meeting of the council. A two-thirds majority of the delegates present and voting at a council meeting shall be necessary to adopt the changes. A two-thirds majority of the votes cast by delegates to council conducted by mail shall be necessary to adopt such changes. The council shall transact such other business as shall be presented.

**Sec. 5 Quorum.** A quorum for the transaction of business at a council meeting shall consist of a majority of the delegates registered at the council. A quorum for the transaction of business at council conducted by mail shall be not less than one-half of the local Leagues.

*Article X*  
Nominations and Elections

**Sec. 1 Nominating Committee.** The nominating committee shall consist of five members, two of whom shall be members of the board. The chair and two members who shall not be members of the board shall be elected by the convention. Nomination for these offices shall be made by the current nominating committee. Further nominations may be made from the floor of the convention. The other members of the committee shall be appointed by the board immediately after the convention. Vacancies occurring in the nominating committee shall be filled by the board.

**Sec. 2 Suggestions by Local Leagues and MAL Units.** The nominating committee chair shall solicit from the president of each local League, ILO, and the chair of each MAL unit, suggestions for nominations for the offices to be filled.

**Sec. 3 Suggestions for Nominations.** Suggestions for nominations shall be sent to the chair of the nominating committee at least six months before convention. Any member may send suggestions to the chair of the nominating committee.

**Sec. 4 Decisions of the Committee.** Decisions of the committee shall be by the concurrence of the majority of the full committee.

**Sec. 5 Report of the Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor.** The report of the nominating committee of its nominations for officers, directors, and the chair and two members of the succeeding nominating committee shall be sent to the president of each local League and ILO, and to the chair of each MAL unit, six weeks before the convention. The report shall be presented on the first day of the convention. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any member of the convention, provided that the consent of the nominee has been secured.

**Sec. 6 Election.** The election shall be under the direction of an election committee appointed by the president on the first day of the convention. The election shall be by ballot, except that when there is but one nominee for each office, it may be by voice vote. A majority vote of those present and qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election.

*Article XI*  
Program

**Sec. 1 Principles.** The Principles, adopted by the national convention and supported by the League as a whole constitute the authorization for the adoption of the LWVNYS program.

**Sec. 2 Program.** The program of the LWVNYS shall consist of:

- a. action to implement the Principles, and
- b. concerted study and action on those state governmental issues chosen by the LWVNYS convention.

**Sec. 3 Convention Action.** The convention shall act upon the program using the following procedures:

- a. Local League, ILO and MAL unit boards may make recommendations for a program to the board at least three months prior to the convention.
- b. The board shall consider the recommendations and shall formulate a proposed program which shall be submitted to the president of each local League and ILO, and to the chair of each MAL unit, at least six weeks prior to the convention.
- c. A majority vote shall be required for the adoption of the program proposed by the LWVNYS board.
- d. Any recommendation for the program submitted to the board at least three months before the convention, but not proposed by the board, may be adopted by the convention, provided consideration is ordered by a majority vote and the proposal for adoption receives a three-fifths vote.

**Sec. 4 Council Action.** The council may modify or change the program as provided in Article IX.

**Sec. 5 Member Action.** Members may act in the name of the LWWNYS only when authorized to do so by the board.

**Sec. 6 Local League, ILO and MAL Unit Action.** Local Leagues, ILOs, and MAL units may take action on state governmental matters only when authorized to do so by the LWWNYS board. Local Leagues, ILOs, and MAL units must act only in conformity with, or not contrary to, the position taken by the LWWNYS.

*Article XII*

National Convention and Council

**Sec. 1 National Convention.** The board shall elect the number of delegates to the national convention that was allotted to the LWWNYS under the provisions of the bylaws of the LWWUS.

**Sec. 2 National Council.** The board shall elect the number of delegates to the national council that was allotted to the LWWNYS under the provisions of the bylaws of the LWWUS.

*Article XIII*

Parliamentary Authority

**Sec. 1 Parliamentary Authority.** The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the LWWNYS in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

*Article XIV*

Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any biennial convention by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present and voting. Proposed changes shall be submitted to the board at least three months prior to a convention. All such proposed amendments shall be sent by the board to the president of each local League and ILO, and to the chair of each MAL unit, at least six weeks prior to the convention, together with the recommendations of the board. The presidents of all local Leagues shall notify the members of their respective Leagues of the proposed amendments. The failure of a local president to give such notice or failure of any member to receive such notice shall not invalidate amendments to the bylaws adopted at any convention.

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS -- May 2007/May 2009**

**OFFICERS**

PRESIDENT

**Martha Kennedy**, 214 Winne Road, Delmar 12054

518-439-4559

Email: [dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com)

1<sup>st</sup> VICE PRESIDENT/ ADVOCACY & ISSUES

**Edna Vincenti**, 99 Elderfields Road, Manhasset 11030

516-627-1987

Email: [edna.vincenti@vincenti.com](mailto:edna.vincenti@vincenti.com)

2<sup>nd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT/MEMBERSHIP

**Marcia Merrins**, 42 Rosalyn Court, Fredonia 14063

716-672-4275

Email: [mmerrins@netsync.net](mailto:mmerrins@netsync.net)

3<sup>rd</sup> VICE PRESIDENT/VOTER SERVICE

**Maggie Moehringer**, 12 Coventry Road, Glenmont 12077

518-475-0969

Email: [mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com)

4<sup>th</sup> VICE PRESIDENT/DEVELOPMENT

**Betsey Swan**, 10 Norwood Drive, Menands 12204

518-426-3711

Email: [faircamp@nycap.rr.com](mailto:faircamp@nycap.rr.com)

SECRETARY/TREASURER

**Debbie Shichtman**, 4811 Concord Avenue, Great Neck 11020

516-466-3126

Email: [DrDebbie@aol.com](mailto:DrDebbie@aol.com)

**DIRECTORS**

CITIZEN EDUCATION

**JoAnn Ross**, 116 Cranburne Lane, Williamsville 14221

716-631-9351

Email: [jross18@roadrunner.com](mailto:jross18@roadrunner.com)

GRASSROOTS LOBBY

**Georgia T. DeGregorio**, 337 Reef Point Circle, Webster 14580

585-787-9692

Email: [georgiatd@frontiernet.net](mailto:georgiatd@frontiernet.net)

LEGISLATIVE

**Barbara Bartoletti**, 52 Brinker Drive South, N. Greenbush 12144

518-286-1536 Home/518-469-8905 Cell

Email: [bbheck1@yahoo.com](mailto:bbheck1@yahoo.com)

MEMBERSHIP OUTREACH

**VACANT**

PUBLICATION

**Toni Coffee**, 160 West End Avenue, New York 10023

212-873-5410

Email: [tonicoffee@aol.com](mailto:tonicoffee@aol.com)

OFF-BOARD SPECIALIST

ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

Debra Merryweather, 327 Wilmore Place, Syracuse NY 13208

315-455-5210

Email: [dapearlie@earthlink.net](mailto:dapearlie@earthlink.net)

CHILDREN'S ISSUES

Ellen Kotlow, 205 Forest Haven Drive, Slingerlands 12159

518-765-3275

Email: [ekotlow@aol.com](mailto:ekotlow@aol.com)

COURT RESTRUCTURING

Helga Schroeter, 1436 Lowell Road, Schenectady 12308

518-370-5042

Email: [helgasasquith@verizon.net](mailto:helgasasquith@verizon.net)

DEATH PENALTY

Ann Brandon, 64 Salisbury Rd, Delmar 12054

518-439-4332

Email: [ambrandon2@verizon.net](mailto:ambrandon2@verizon.net)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Georgia T. DeGregorio, 337 Reef Point Circle, Webster 14580

585-787-9692

Email: [georgiatd@frontiernet.net](mailto:georgiatd@frontiernet.net)

EDUCATION FINANCE

Marian Bott, 1148 Fifth Avenue, New York 10128

212-534-4076 Home/914-588-4212 Cell

Email: [sydneyfab@aol.com](mailto:sydneyfab@aol.com)

GOVERNMENT/CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM/GUN CONTROL

Aimee Allaud, 85 Melrose Avenue, Albany 12203 (HAVA)

518-482-2617

Email: [85Aimee@nycap.rr.com](mailto:85Aimee@nycap.rr.com)

GREAT LAKES

Valerie Moliterno, 262 Ruskin Road, Amherst, 14226

716-837-8266

Email: [fran33@infionline.net](mailto:fran33@infionline.net)

HEALTH CARE

Donna Packard-Mahoney, 107 Pine Street, Rensselaer 12144

518-283-6423 Home/518-221-1904 Cell

Email: [dmahoney@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dmahoney@nycap.rr.com)

HISTORIAN

Sydelle Herzberg, 46 Longue Vue Avenue, New Rochelle 10804

914-632-7745

Email: [sherzb@aol.com](mailto:sherzb@aol.com)

ISSUES ANALYSIS & RESEARCH

Deb Winslow, 182 Garner Road, Averill Park 12018

518-674-2763

Email: [deb182@earthlink.net](mailto:deb182@earthlink.net)

JUDICIAL

Lenore Banks, 151 Alberta Drive, Amherst 14226

716-836-5240 Phone

Email: [lenorebanks@gmail.com](mailto:lenorebanks@gmail.com)

LEAD POISONING

Joan S. Rosenthal, 133 Dunrovin Lane, Rochester, 14618

585-244-6255

Email: [joanmarv@rochester.rr.com](mailto:joanmarv@rochester.rr.com)

LEGISLATIVE ANALYST

Betsy Swan

LWVNYS NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE STUDY CHAIR

Lori Dawson, 4 Marion Place, Saratoga Springs, 12866

518-580-0547

Email: [ldawson@skidmore.edu](mailto:ldawson@skidmore.edu)

NATURAL RESOURCES

Roberta Wiernik, 43 Longview Lane, Chappaqua 10514

914-241-7242

Email: [RFWiernik@aol.com](mailto:RFWiernik@aol.com)

PAY EQUITY

Lois Haignere, 28 Bentwood Court, Guilderland, NY 12203

518-608 4196 Home/518-464-0991Office

Email: [haigner@nycap.rr.com](mailto:haigner@nycap.rr.com)

REPRODUCTIVE CHOICES

Barbara Bartoletti

TRANSPORTATION

Gladys Gifford, 174 Capen Boulevard, Amherst 14226

716-836-2825

Email: [schuford@earthlink.net](mailto:schuford@earthlink.net)

URBAN SPRAWL (CO-CHAIRS)

Ruth Bonn, 47 Bruce Drive, Alplaus 12008

518-384-0804

Email: [rooty@nycap.rr.com](mailto:rooty@nycap.rr.com)

Anne Huberman, 303 Highland Avenue, Buffalo 14222

716-882-3083

Email: [anne.huberman@gmail.com](mailto:anne.huberman@gmail.com)

VOTER

Patty MacLeish, 31 Walnut Street, Newport, RI 02840

401-846-7542

Email: [PMacleish@verizon.net](mailto:PMacleish@verizon.net)

WATER QUALITY

Nancy Heinzen, 20 Glendale Avenue, Delmar 12054

518-478-9407

Email: [nheinzen@nycap.rr.com](mailto:nheinzen@nycap.rr.com)

Nominating Committee

Therese Lowenthal, Chair

Saratoga LWV

12 Mystic Lane, Saratoga Springs 12866

518-587-2516

Email: [terrylowenthal@aol.com](mailto:terrylowenthal@aol.com)

Nominating Committee Board Members

Marcia Merrins

Maggie Moehring

**LWVNYS STAFF**

Phone 518-465-4162

Fax 518-465-0812

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director

Stephanie Lopez, Program Coordinator

Neil O'Brien, Administrative Assistant

Michael Durocher, Staff Accountant

[laura@lwvny.org](mailto:laura@lwvny.org)

[stephanie@lwvny.org](mailto:stephanie@lwvny.org)

[lwvny@lwvny.org](mailto:lwvny@lwvny.org)

[lwvny@lwvny.org](mailto:lwvny@lwvny.org)

## LWVNYS 2008-2009 Calendar

### July 2008

9 Board Meeting # 1 via conference call

### August 2008

1 SBR #1 Deadline for Submission  
5 LeaderSpark Orientation Training (Conference Call)  
11 SBR #1 Mailed (Convention/Bylaws Amendment/Calendar/Nominating Committee/Election Information/LeaderSpark/UN Information)

### September 2008

10 Voter # 1 Deadline for Submission (Convention/Bylaws Amendment/Nominating Committee/Election Information/LeaderSpark/UN Information--(The Effects of Global Warming on Women and Children Around the World)  
10 Board Meeting #1 Start: 4:00PM  
11 Board Meeting #2 Start: 8:00AM

### October 2008

2 SBR # 2 Deadline for Submission (Impact on Issues)  
12 Voter # 1 Mailed  
12 SBR #2 Mailed

### November 2008

5 Education Foundation Appeal  
12 Legislative Priorities Meeting (with off-board specialists) Start: 2:00PM  
12 Board Meeting #3 Start 4:00PM  
13 Board Meeting #3 Start 8:00AM

### December 2008

2 UN Fund Raiser (The Effects of Global Warming on Women and Children Around the World)  
11 SBR #3 Deadline for Submission (Legislative Priorities/SIA)  
15 Reminder --- Local Leagues Update National Database

### January 2009

5 SBR # 3 Mailed (Legislative Priorities/SIA)  
5 Voter # 2 Deadline for Submission (Legislative Priorities/SIA)  
14 Budget Committee Meeting Start 1:00PM (Chair)  
14 Board Meeting # 4 Start: 4:00PM  
15 Board Meeting #4 Start: 8:00AM  
23 League Appeal to Printer  
26 SIA Packets to Coordinators

**February 2009**

4 Voter #2 Mailed  
4 SBR #4 Deadline (Convention/SIA)  
14 SBR #4 Mailing (Convention/SIA)

**March 2009**

2 Convention Registration Kits Mailed  
9 Voter #3 Deadline (Convention/Silent Auction//SIA)  
10 Board Meeting #4 Start: 4:00pm  
11 Board Meeting #4 Start: 8:00am  
11 SIA Student Packets to Coordinators  
23 Raffle Tickets Mailed

**April 2009**

6 Pre-Convention Kits Mailed  
9 Voter #3 Mailed  
20 SBR # 5 Deadline  
29 SBR #5 Mailed  
19/26 SIA Start

**May 2009**

15-17 Convention, Syracuse

**June 2009**

1 Voter #4 Deadline (SIA/Convention Highlights)  
5 Update Impact on Issues  
30 Voter # 4 Mailed (SIA/Convention Highlights)  
8-11 National Council  
30 Voter # 4 Mailed (SIA/Convention Highlights)



*WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD LEADERS!!!*

**CALL FOR RECOMMENDATION FOR NOMINATION TO  
THE LWVNYS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Every two years, the members of the League of Women Voters of New York State elect their Leaders for the next board term. The nominating committee invites, welcomes, and depends on nominations by League members and local League boards.

The process begins **now** with the formation of a slate of nominees, which will be presented at Convention 2009.

Candidates for the LWVNYS Board should be:

- Committed to the mission of the League
- Experienced local League leaders
- Skilled in organizational development
- Cooperative, responsible, results oriented, visionary

In accordance with our current bylaws, the positions to be filled for the 2009-2011 term are:

- President
- Four Vice-Presidents (Advocacy & Issues, Membership, Voter Service, Development)
- Secretary/Treasurer
- Four Directors (Legislative, Citizen Education, Grassroots Lobby & Membership Outreach, Publication)
- Nominating Chair and Two Nominating Committee Members.

For each candidate you recommend, please complete a separate “**Recommendation For Nomination to the LWVNYS Board of Directors**” Form. Make as many copies of the form as you need. You may nominate any number of candidates, including YOURSELF!

**Send forms directly to *Nominating Committee c/o, Therese (Terry) Lowenthal, 12 Mystic Lane, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.* Please contact Terry if you have any questions at: 518-587-2516 or [terrylowenthal@aol.com](mailto:terrylowenthal@aol.com).**

**\*\*DO NOT SEND RECOMMENDATION FORMS TO THE STATE LEAGUE OFFICE,  
SEND THEM DIRECTLY TO THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE CHAIR,  
THERESA LOWENTHAL.\*\***

**RECOMMENDATION FOR NOMINATION  
TO THE LWVNYS BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**\*\*DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM TO THE STATE LEAGUE OFFICE\*\***

**NOMINEE INFORMATION**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Local League: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

***Recommendation for Officer***

- \_\_\_ President
- \_\_\_ VP Voter Service
- \_\_\_ VP Advocacy & Issues
- \_\_\_ VP Development
- \_\_\_ VP Membership
- \_\_\_ Secretary/Treasurer

***Recommendation for Director***

- \_\_\_ Citizen Education
- \_\_\_ Grassroots Lobby
- \_\_\_ Legislative
- \_\_\_ Membership Outreach
- \_\_\_ Publication
- \_\_\_ Nominating Committee

**Relevant Experience of Nominee (*Attach a resume if possible.*)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Current local League position(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

*Past League experience:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Primary League interest/expertise:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Special skills/qualities:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional relevant experience (career, nonprofit boards, public service, etc)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Why do you think League member would be a good LWVNYS Board member?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Recommendation submitted by: \_\_\_Local League Board; \_\_\_League Member (please check one)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN BY NOVEMBER 15, 2008**

**\*\*DO NOT RETURN THIS FORM TO THE STATE LEAGUE OFFICE\*\***

**RETURN TO: Nominating Committee c/o, Therese (Terry) Lowenthal, 12 Mystic Lane,  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.**

**Telephone: 518-587-2516 or E-mail: [terrylowenthal@aol.com](mailto:terrylowenthal@aol.com)**

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](mailto:edna.vincenti@vincenti.com)

## **ISSUES AND ADVOCACY PROCEDURES**

### **I. ISSUES AND ADVOCACY COMMITTEE**

The Issue and Advocacy Committee including the Off-Board Specialists work as a team! If you have any questions about this SBR, issues and/or advocacy and requests for action alerts, please contact the Issues and Advocacy Committee:

- Edna Vincenti, LWVNYS V.P. Issues and Advocacy  
[edna.vincenti@vincenti.com](mailto:edna.vincenti@vincenti.com)
- Georgia DeGregorio, LWVNYS Grassroots Lobby Director  
[georgiatd@frontiernet.net](mailto:georgiatd@frontiernet.net)
- Barbara Bartoletti, LWVNYS Legislative Director  
[bbheck1@yahoo.com](mailto:bbheck1@yahoo.com)
- Betsey Swan, LWVNYS Legislative Analyst  
[faircamp@nycap.rr.com](mailto:faircamp@nycap.rr.com)
- Off-Board Specialist on the topic/issue in question (see LWVNYS Board of Directors/Off-Board Specialists)
- Martha Kennedy, President  
[dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com)
- Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director  
[laura@lwnvy.org](mailto:laura@lwnvy.org)
- Stephanie Lopez  
[stephanie@lwnvy.org](mailto:stephanie@lwnvy.org)

When all the members of the State Issues and Advocacy receive your e-mail on the same day, an answer can be given in one to two days.

### **II. AN OVERVIEW OF THE LEAGUE'S ADVOCACY PROCESS**

[This material was drawn, in part, from the NYS Division of Budget's *State Government Structure*, at <http://www.budget.state.ny.us/citizen/structure/structure.html#top>.]

(Updated July 2008)

#### **PARTICIPANTS IN THE LEAGUE ADVOCACY PROCEDURE**

*The issues and advocacy function is overseen by the League board with recommendations from the State Issues Committee. All plans and other written documents going out on behalf of the state League must be first approved by the board or the State Issues Committee. The makeup of the committee, time in which it must act, and quorum for purposes of action varies with the time framework involved. Anyone may call a meeting of the State Issues Committee. [For further*

*details, see Guidelines for ACTION THROUGH THE STATE ISSUES COMMITTEE, in this publication.]*

The Single Issue Off-Board Specialists are experts in particular areas but may not have expertise about how government works in Albany. The League has many individuals involved in its education and advocacy operations. Therefore, Single Issue Off-Board Specialists should feel free to call on League generalists such as Issues & Advocacy V.P., the Legislative Director or Legislative Analyst for help they might need in planning or implementing educational and advocacy strategies and activities. On the other hand, some Single Issue Off-Board Specialists come to the League with extensive professional experience in the State government arena. The entire issue and advocacy function is strengthened when those individuals can share their expertise.

The opportunity for advocacy at the state level occurs in many different arenas. This document is a summary of both the League's approach to advocacy and advocacy opportunities in three areas of State government - the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial branches. It is not a description of the local advocacy process or of public relations as an advocacy tool.

#### LEAGUE POSITIONS – THE BASIS FOR ACTION

The League is unique among organizations in that it arrives at its grassroots positions after study and consensus among members. These members at the local level study issues that can be implemented at all three levels – national, state, and local. National positions and the history of action under those positions are contained in LWVUS *Impact on Issues*, located on-line at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) (to find, type, Impact On Issues in search). At the state level, these are found in LWVNYS *Impact on Issues*, located on-line at [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org) (under Advocacy and Issues).

League action can occur only in support of one or more League positions. If there is not a position to support the proposed action, the League cannot act. Whether or not there is a position to support a proposed action can result in considerable debate, with some League members acting as strict constructionists of our positions and others taking a more organic approach. If you are unsure of whether a proposed action has a basis in a League position, call a meeting of the State Issues Committee.

#### INTERRELATIONSHIP OF STATE AND FEDERAL ACTION

In its advocacy function the League replicates the relationship of our national and state governments in many respects. Some matters are solely within the purview of the LWVUS. This was the case with the LWVNYS's proposed study on whether the State should enter the Compact for a National Popular Vote. LWVUS advised LWVNYS that, although it could study the issue, it could not formulate a state position on this matter because how we elect the President is a matter for a national position only. Similarly, some areas are solely within the purview of state Leagues. In most cases, however, the LWVNYS may take action at a state level under both national and state positions.

### III. GUIDELINES FOR ACTION THROUGH THE STATE ISSUES COMMITTEE

*(Updated July 2008)*

The board of directors bears the ultimate responsibility for all action decisions made by LWVNYS. The board must assure itself that League positions support the action to be taken. In controversial matters, the board must determine that it has the understanding and agreement of local Leagues.

The board has established procedures for delegating these responsibilities to the State Issues Committee consisting of the vice president/ issues and advocacy, legislative director, legislative analyst, grassroots lobby director and the appropriate off-board specialists. The president is an *ex officio* member of the committee, meaning that he/she receives notice of meetings and can participate in discussion but does not vote. Although the Legislative Analyst acts only in matters involving substantive or policy (as opposed to political) considerations, he/she receives notice of all meetings. For those meetings in which participation is inappropriate, the legislative analyst may elect to remove him or herself or be removed as a matter of procedure by failure to respond by the designated time in which to respond. Off board specialists shall be given notice only of meetings dealing with their areas of expertise.

“Calling a meeting” consists of emailing the State Issues Committee, the President and the office staff with the relevant details. Clearly state your goals, the position you are advocating for, what action you wish to take, your deadline by which must receive an answer. All on-line discussion related to an Action Issue should be responded to by REPLY ALL. After all participants respond, the V.P. Issues and Advocacy will email the final decision so that the OBS can then proceed.

#### *Action Requiring Board Approval*

All action that requires board approval should be decided based on discussion by and recommendations from the State Issues Committee. Other members of the board should be informed immediately of the decision. Types of action requiring approval of the full board include the following:

- Major action, such as mass mailings, lawsuits, and action plans requiring significant commitments of staff time and League money.
- Joining coalitions.

In cases of action requiring full board approval, no action shall be taken until board approval has been obtained.

#### *State Issues Committee Procedures*

The State Issues Committee screens bills, regulations, and other proposed governmental actions for potential action based on the following criteria:

- Basis in state or national League position,
- Substantial likelihood of receiving legislative attention,
- Potential for heightening League visibility,
- Timeliness,
- Long-term commitment, and;
- Building a constituency.

The State Issues Committee also screens League publications for content, as reflected in the guidelines and style pages.

*Legislation, Regulations, or other Governmental Action, Which League Has Supported/Opposed in the Past – No State Issues Committee Approval Necessary*

If the League has previously taken a position, no further review is necessary barring a change in League position. Previously written materials, such as memos, testimony, or other publications that are in the League files can be accessed, adapted to the current proposed activity and re-circulated. To use these materials, the specialist submits an updated memo or other document to the office staff and asks that it be delivered to the appropriate legislators/committees or other individuals. Care should be taken to ensure that no major changes have been made in the bill, regulations, or other proposal. Timely notification of action taken should be made to the president, issues vice president and legislative director.

The specialist may decide on a verbal acknowledgement of support in response to inquiries rather than a memo.

*Legislation, Regulations or other League Action (Including Approval of Written Materials) Having No League History*

Any League member wishing the State Issues Committee to have a meeting about a potential action item on which the League has no previous history of supporting or opposing may call such a meeting. Members of the State Issues Committee may convene a meeting by sending notice and relevant materials to members of the committee. The preferred method of communication is e-mails, using THE “REPLY ALL” button, with telephone conversations or conference calls as may be necessary. The procedures followed by the committee will be determined by the time framework for approval.

- One Week or More  
Send bill, regulations, or description of matter on which action is proposed, along with analysis in format provided by the *Legislative Memo format* (See appendix) to the State Issues Committee Staff by e-mail. If a bill memo, proposed testimony, or other materials have been prepared, attach them. The e-mail should state the date and time by which action is needed. Members who have not responded within the time for action shall be deemed to have removed themselves from the committee for purposes of the matter under consideration. Decision is by simple majority of those participating in the decision, with at least three members necessary for a quorum.
- Less than One Week and More than 24 Hours  
Follow the procedures above, except that to the extent that time does not permit the completion of the Legislative Memo format????? Provide the proposed action, justification in League position, and any supportive materials that have been developed. The decision process shall proceed as above.
- 24 Hours or Less  
The nature of the notice shall be determined by the turnaround time. If it is possible to e-mail notice to the State Issues Committee, the person seeking approval shall do so. Otherwise, the person seeking approval shall obtain the consent of the President to take action in consultation with one or more members of the State Issues Committee, as

designated by the president. This emergency procedure is designated to give the League the flexibility to function in the legislative arena, where matters are often introduced and resolved without advance notice.

*Report to the Board*

If the vice president/Issues and Advocacy participates in the meeting and a recommendation for action is made, he/she shall note the date of the meeting, the date by which a decision must be reached, participants, and the result. If the VP is not a participant in the discussion, another member of the permanent State Issues Committee should be designated to prepare report to the board. (See Job Description of VP)

The issues and advocacy vice president (or her designee on the permanent State Issues Committee) shall report all decisions of the State Issues Committee to the board after the decision was made. The board retains the right to overrule any decision of the State Issues Committee on a going-forward basis.

**IV. GUIDELINES FOR ACTION ON THE NATIONAL LEVEL**

*(Updated March 2008)*

1. Local Leagues can lobby only their own congressional representative and the two U.S. senators.
2. LWNYS can lobby only the New York congressional delegation and the two senators from New York.
3. Local Leagues and the state League can respond directly to LWVUS Calls to Action or Action Alerts.

*Local League Action on National Items NOT in response to LWVUS Calls to Action or Action Alerts*

- Action approval: Consult with LWVUS as to League position, priority status, previous LWVUS action, and strategy.
- Content approval: State Issues Committee

*LWNYS Action on National Items NOT in response to LWVUS Calls to Action or Action Alerts*

- Off-Board Specialist consults with LWVUS as to League position, priority status, previous LWVUS action, and strategy.
- Content approval: State Issues Committee

**V. GUIDELINES FOR SIGNING LETTERS AND ISSUING PRESS RELEASES**

*(Updated March 2008)*

The LWNYS Board has established procedures for Off-Board Specialists and other league leaders to sign on to letters, press releases, etc. on issues that relate to our positions as outlined in “Impact on Issues.”

1. Anything to be signed must be sent to the State Issues Committee, which consists of the Issues and Advocacy Vice-President, Legislative Director, Grassroots Director, Legislative Analyst, and the particular Off-Board Specialist, if any. A copy should also be sent to the President and Executive Director.
2. When the item is sent to the State Issues Committee, the sender must indicate the date and time by which approval is sought. The State Issues Committee shall treat the sending of material as the call for an emergency meeting and the procedures shall be determined by the time framework involved. [See *Guidelines for Action through the State Issues Committee*.] The Issues and Advocacy Vice President, or her/his designee, shall immediately inform the sender of the State Issue Committee's decision.
3. Upon the recommendation of the State Issues Committee, the President must sign any writing from LWVNYS.

## VI. AGENDA FOR 2009 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

*It is time to identify our 2009 Legislative Agenda.* In November, the Issues and Advocacy Committee including all Off-Board Specialists will meet to establish our legislative priorities. In order to determine this, we will use the following criteria:

- Review of “unfinished business: of the 2008 legislative session
- Input from the League’s off-board specialists and the legislative director
- Local League recommendations.

When determining your recommended issues consider the following:

- Is this issue “unfinished business” from the 2008 legislative session?
- Is the issue likely to receive attention in the 2009 session?
- **IS ACTION ON THE ISSUE SUPPORTED BY A LEAGUE POSITION? If uncertain consult the LWVUS Public Policy Positions and the LWVNYS Positions in Brief found in this SBR. Review the “POSITIONS IN BRIEF to remind your members of our current positions.**

Please seek input from your members and determine the issues that you League believes should be considered in the deliberations. Record your selections on the form provided in this SBR.

### **PLEASE RETURN THE COMPLETED YELLOW FORM TO THE STATE LEAGUE BY NOVEMBER 1, 2009**

**Note:** As citizens in a representative government, we have a responsibility to participate in the determination of public policy. We ask all local leagues to participate in choosing LWVNYS Legislative Priorities.

Please urge members to attend the meeting to choose legislative priorities.

Please urge members, who have not already done so, to e-mail: [stephanie@lwvny.org](mailto:stephanie@lwvny.org); or send by regular mail a request to be on the Action Alert list. In this way, members will find out what actions are planned and what is happening in the legislature.

Once the Legislative Agenda is determined, it will serve as the basis for the League's action and lobbying in 2009 and will be featured in the League brochure, **2009 Legislative Agenda**, which will be sent to local leagues in January. Issues not featured in the Agenda will be treated as continuing responsibilities of the appropriate off-board specialists and the legislative director.

Local leagues

## LWVUS PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS (Impact on Issues 2006-2008...)

### REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

**Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.**

#### Voting Rights

**Citizen's Right to Vote.** Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

**DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation.** Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

#### Election Process

**Apportionment.** Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

**Campaign Finance.** Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

**Selection of the President.** Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular vote and work to abolish the Electoral College. Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

#### Citizen Rights

**Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation.** Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision making.

**Individual Liberties.** Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

**Public Policy on Reproductive Choices.** Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

#### Congress and the Presidency

**Congress.** Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability and effective performance.

**The Presidency.** Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

**Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.**

#### United Nations

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

#### Trade

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

#### U.S. Relations with Developing Countries

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

#### Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

## **Military Policy and Defense Spending**

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

# **NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.**

## **Natural Resources**

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

## **Resource Management**

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

## **Environmental Protection and Pollution Control**

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

**Air Quality.** Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

**Energy.** Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

**Land Use.** Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

**Water Resources.** Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

**Waste Management.** Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

**Nuclear Issues.** Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

## **Public Participation**

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

## **Agriculture Policy**

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

# **SOCIAL POLICY**

**Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.**

## **Equality of Opportunity**

**Equal Rights.** Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

**Education, Employment and Housing.** Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

## **Fiscal Policy**

**Tax Policy.** Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

**Federal Deficit.** Promote responsible deficit policies.

**Funding of Entitlements.** Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

## **Health Care**

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

## **Meeting Basic Human Needs**

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

**Income Assistance.** Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.

**Support Services.** Provide for essential support services.

**Housing Supply.** Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

## **Child Care**

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

## **Early Intervention for Children at Risk**

Support policies and programs that promote the wellbeing, development and safety of all children.

## **Violence Prevention**

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

## **Gun Control**

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

## **Urban Policy**

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

## **Death Penalty**

The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty.

**Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.**

## **LWVNYS POSITIONS IN BRIEF** **(Impact on Issues 2005-2007...)**

### **ELECTION LAW**

**Support** of measures to protect, extend and encourage the use of the franchise; open the political system by enacting a public campaign financing law for statewide offices; establish legal, ethical campaign guidelines; monitor campaign practices; simplify rules for ballot access. Restore integrity to the election process – specifically support for uniformity in election laws and procedures in their implementation and enforcement; promote measures that ensure the integrity of all ballots; support adequate funding for these procedures, including training of all involved election personnel.\*

**Opposition** to term limits for members of the NYS Legislature.

**Opposition** to term limits for NYS statewide elected officials.

### **GOVERNMENT**

**Support** of standards to ensure equitable representation in the State legislature and the congress.

**Support** of improved measures to provide representation for legislative districts in case of a vacancy.

**Support** of responsive and responsible legislative processes which increase the role of the individual member and the committee system.

**Support** of effective lobbying and ethics regulation.

**Support** of procedural reforms in the constitutional convention process to promote openness and nonpartisanship.

### **HEALTH CARE**

**Support** a single payor concept as an acceptable approach to implementing League positions on equitable access and cost containment.

**Support** of measures to assure a basic level of quality physical and mental health care for all state residents including regulatory incentives to encourage development of cost-effective alternative methods of delivery; funding for health promotion and disease prevention programs; provisions for effective citizen participation in health policy decisions.

**Support** of measures that enable individuals to assume responsibility for their own health and to participate in decisions including termination of extraordinary life-extending procedures.

**Support** for uniform eligibility and coverage of basic health care costs through public financing.

### **JUDICIAL**

**Support** of a unified state court system with improved provisions for judicial selection.

**Support** of statewide guidelines for law enforcement at all levels to prevent racial and economic profiling.

**Support** of measures to improve pretrial procedures in the criminal courts.

**Support** of measures to promote a fair and efficient jury system.

**Support** of alternatives to incarceration.

**Opposition** to the death penalty, with life without parole as the primary alternative

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Support** for measures to achieve watershed protection including limiting pesticide use and applying Best Management Practices.

**Support** for a state-established, intergovernmental system for land resource management.

**Support** for a proactive role for New York State in regional land use planning, containing urban sprawl and protecting sensitive areas.

**Support** of reconditioning of the New York State Erie/Barge Canal System and its development for recreational uses.

**SOCIAL POLICY**

**Support** measures to meet the needs for low-income housing through use of state funds and incentives to localities

**STATE FINANCES**

**Support** reforms for greater equity in education financing for both pupils and taxpayers.

**Support** raising funds to provide New York's children with a sound basic education through increases in the New York State personal income tax, implemented in a progressive fashion.

**Oppose** in principle the use of public funds to support non-public schools, kindergarten-twelfth grade.

**Support** a uniform equitable assessment and property tax system.

**Support** for the replacement of the existing local residential property tax relief programs in which relief goes to all with programs based on need, with annual cost of living adjustment.

**Support** of measures to provide for openness and accountability in the operation of the New York State public authority system.

**Support** of a timely and responsive state budget.

**Support** the funding of public higher education and the existing formula for financing the community system, 1/3 tuition, 1/3 state aid, and 1/3 county support.

**WOMENS ISSUES/SOCIAL POLICY**

**Support** of measures which hold marriage to be an economic partnership with a presumption of equality between the spouses.

**Opposition** to measures that contain a presumption of joint custody of the children.

**Support** for equity in employment laws and practices and equal pay for jobs of comparable worth.

**Support** of measures to reduce the incidence and effects of domestic violence.

**Support** for measures to meet the needs for affordable and accessible housing through use of state funds and incentives to localities.

*\* These state positions are based on LWVUS principles and public policy positions. State actions on other items not covered under a state position can also be taken under LWVUS positions. Reproductive choices (Government position) and welfare reform (Meeting Basic Human Needs position) are two examples.*

**SELECTION OF LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES - 2008**

List the THREE issues that your League recommends be considered in the state issues committee's efforts to determine our 2009 Legislative Priorities. **Prioritize your recommendations with "1" being the most important and return to the state office by November 1, 2008.**

**Recommendations**

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**Supporting Statements**

Please provide a brief statement supporting each recommendation listed above. If necessary attach additional pages.

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**Method of Selection**

Indicate the method your League used to select the above recommendations.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board Meeting                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Membership Meeting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tear-off bulletin for mail response | <input type="checkbox"/> Other              |

Local League: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN TO THE STATE LEAGUE OFFICE BY: *NOVEMBER 1, 2008***  
**62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207**  
**Telephone: 518-465-4162 - Fax: 518-465-0812**  
**E-mail: [lwny@lwny.org](mailto:lwny@lwny.org)**

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors  
FROM: Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director  
52 Brinker Drive South, N. Greenbush, NY 12144  
E-Mail: bbheck1@yahoo.com

### **TAXPAYERS WIN BIG WITH NEW TRANSPARENCY WEBSITES**

The Empire Center for New York State Policy, part of the non-partisan and non-profit Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, unveiled SeeThroughNY.net, a new exciting interactive website, which will allow League members and the average citizen to obtain information previously only available by filing a F.O.I.L request.

The centerpiece of the SeeThroughNY website is the 260,000 state payroll records including the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government. Legislative expenditures are also available in a digitalized format. This site will also allow the citizen to look at member items, which member or members requested that expenditure and where their tax dollars are going. SeeThroughNY.net also includes the contacts and salary for every school district superintendent and teacher in the state. In the near future, the Empire Center also hopes to have public authority's expenditures and payroll available on this website.

An overview of the missions of the three websites which provide the taxpayer with information about where their tax dollars go:

- *SeeThroughNY* ([www.seethroughny.net](http://www.seethroughny.net)) is searchable databases which includes a complete list of state government employees, job titles and salaries; teachers' union and superintendent contracts for nearly every school district in New York State; the Legislature's pork-barrel "community projects" spending for 2008-09; and internal operations expenditures by the state Assembly and Senate.
- *Open Book New York* ([www.osc.state.ny.us/openbook/](http://www.osc.state.ny.us/openbook/)) is a project by the Office of the State Comptroller that gives taxpayers unprecedented access to the financial information of State government. Easy-to-use online search tools identify spending for 113 State agencies and public authorities and display more than 60,000 State contracts. These tools will help you find out how much state government spends on everything from travel and employees' salaries to telephones and consultants. You can also search State contracts in real time to see who is doing business with the State. *Project Sunlight* ([www.sunlightny.com](http://www.sunlightny.com)) is a project by the Attorney General's Office designed to promote your right to know and monitor government decision-making. The website – which was the first of its kind in New York State - offers a new prototype for how government should make information available in today's "digital democracy." The website promotes transparency in government by making easily accessible information about individual Elected Officials, campaign finance activities, legislation, lobbyists, state contracts, and registered corporations and charities. You may perform advanced searches and examine seven different datasets or follow simple search options to easily explore governmental information. The website also offers educational videos and materials to inform you about the basic laws governing official conduct.

Together the above three websites empower New Yorkers to make informed decisions about their government and should increase dialogue between government and its citizens.

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](mailto:georgiatd@frontiernet.net)

### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACTION UPDATE**

Coalitions can work!!! The following press release given by The New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Inc. says it all: “Today, Governor Paterson took the final step to end New York’s 20 year marathon to expand access to civil orders of protection for *all victims of domestic violence*, by signing into law bill (S.6783 Winner/A.6060 Weinstein). [This] ensures New York will join the rest of the nation in providing those protections, regardless of marital, parental, or blood relative status, via Family and Integrated Domestic Violence Courts. This bill reached a critical milestone during the 2007-2008 legislative session with the highly celebrated first-time passage of the Senate bill, companion to the Assembly bill championed by Assemblywoman Weinstein for each of the 20 years.”

For a more detailed history of our League’s 20 year effort, see prior State Board Reports and Impact on Issues 2005-2007.

Many credit the final passage to the fact that a new umbrella coalition formed of over 100 organizations and individuals (including the LWVNYS) to press for passage through letters, emails, rallies, personal lobbying—to name just a few of the efforts. Our own League sent out Action Alerts through the CATT list serve. In addition, as your Off Board Specialist I was able to visit Schuyler County League [See your Summer 2008 State Voter] and present why it is so important for NYS to join the 49 other states in providing this coverage.

There are many other areas that need attention from a legislative point of view, but for now we celebrate this very important step and thank Assemblywoman Weinstein, Senator Winner and Governor Paterson for their commitment and leadership as well as the innumerable advocates who have worked tirelessly to assist victims of Domestic Violence.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors  
FROM: Aimee Allaud, Off-Board Specialist, Elections/Government Specialist  
85 Melrose Avenue, Albany, NY 12203  
E-Mail: [85Aimee@nycap.rr.com](mailto:85Aimee@nycap.rr.com)

**HAVA DEVELOPMENTS OR....THE LONG ROAD TO NEW VOTING  
MACHINES IN NYS MAY BE EVEN LONGER!**

**I. Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs) Status**

1. The May SBR reported that *acceptance testing* of the BMDs had just begun. Bo Lipari (NYVV) and I had a walk-through of that process here in Albany at the NYS Harriman Campus where a vacant building has been completely given over to inventorying and testing the 8,000+ BMDs before shipping them out to the counties. Both vendors (ES&S, Sequoia) have had significant problems in meeting the delivery schedules for their products and many machines have been delivered with defects. However, at the July 22 meeting of the NYS BOE, a more optimistic update of the status of testing and delivery to counties was given. It is projected that all counties will have their full delivery of BMDs by mid-August. However, some counties have not been able, or willing, to solve their warehousing needs because county legislatures have not recognized that new machines will need specific kinds of secure and controlled environments. These are costs which are separate from monies each county receives for purchase of equipment or upgrades to make polling places accessible. In June, the BOE commissioners approved sending an official letter to the 62 county executives, supervisors, etc. describing the urgency of the problem so that county BOEs can accept their quota of BMDs. In receiving their machines, each county must complete an extensive intake procedure (and also complete a testing procedure of each machine) prescribed by the NYS BOE.
2. In early July *Nassau County* refused to accept more defective ballot marking devices. Nassau, the second largest BOE in the state, serving over 870,000 voters, documented a very high rate of defective equipment they received. Nassau County wrote the federal district court (Judge Gary Sharpe who ordered NYS to provide BMDs this year) that they would not accept any more machines (Sequoia ImageCast) until the vendor addressed the multiple problems they had encountered. The NYS BOE ordered their contractor, NYSTEC (the NYS Technology Enterprise Corporation) to do an Audit of the NYS acceptance testing process for the BMDs to determine the causes of such a high rate of failures of the Nassau machines and how to remedy them. NYSTEC's independent report of July 10 concluded that the policies and procedures used for the acceptance testing are good and are being followed accurately; however, there have been problems with a lack of communication and coordination with the counties by both the voting system vendors and the NYSBOE. The report proposed solutions. In the case of Nassau, a Sequoia technician will now be on site during the county acceptance testing process. The problems which Nassau County has experienced with the Sequoia ImageCast can be attributed to its introduction into NYS without having had adequate testing at the factory---not ready for prime time! You may

recall that NYS is the first purchaser of this new BMD/scanner combo. In an uncharacteristic outburst of anger, NYS BOE Commissioner Douglas Kellner, in discussing the many problems New York is having with the voting machine vendors, said at the June 19<sup>th</sup> BOE meeting, “The voting machine industry sells crap. And that’s the problem.”

## II. Will We or Won’t We? (Have New Voting Machines in 2009)

1. The second part of the voting machine story concerns *the 2009 timeline for certification of the optical scanners* to count the votes (remember in 2008 we use levers to count votes along with BMDs to mark ballots). SysTest, the independent testing authority NY has contracted with to perform the certification testing, reported on July 24 that there are serious problems and risks to the testing schedule for a variety of reasons. As Bo Lipari notes in his Blog of July 24, “some of the reasons demonstrate the complete lack of quality control on the part of the vendors before they send systems out to New York’s certification site. It’s unbelievable that these machines, which cost upward of \$12,000 apiece, would be delivered for approval with the kind of problems cited in the report.” (The full SysTest report can be downloaded at <http://www.nyvv.org/newdoc/2008/KellnerOnSysTestReport072308>). The NYS BOE had no choice but to inform the Court of this report and that it is unlikely that New York can deploy new machines for the September 2009 primary as the Court has ordered. Under the Court Order, the BOE must report to the Judge and DOJ weekly on the progress of all HAVA-related implementation. The BOE status report of July 25 states that, “Overall, activities and progress toward HAVA compliance are in jeopardy...” “For the first time, and after affirmatively representing that the time line for certification testing could still be met as recently as July 17, 2008, the most recent weekly status meeting, on July 24, 2008, SysTest admitted that it was behind schedule and would not make the October 1, 2008 certification testing completion date.” Both vendors, ES&S and Sequoia, continue to demonstrate significant problems, even in these early stages of testing. And the ITA, SysTest, also has not realized, or was not prepared to test to NY’s high certification standards within the time line.

Resolution of this knotty issue now stands with the Court and the DOJ: will they agree that New York has done everything it can to comply with the Consent Order and that we should be allowed to test to our standards, not the lower standards which other states have employed, to guarantee that voting machines are SARA (remember SARA? --- secure, accurate, recountable, accessible). Or will they argue that New York has been given enough time and can’t any longer be the exception to the rule.

2. **The Otsego County and Ulster County Cases – illustrations of how vigilance to keep New York’s high certification standards for scanners is an ongoing issue.**

At their June 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, the NYS BOE commissioners indicated they would consider giving interim authorization to these two counties to use *uncertified scanners* in the presidential election as a “demonstration project.” All ballots printed on the scanners would have to be hand counted because New York law

will only permit the use of certified voting machines. The Board in rationalizing the entertainment of such a proposal referred to the DOJ Consent Order of January 16, 2008, which said that ....“where possible, New York counties be able to utilize, for the fall 2008 federal elections, voting systems that are fully compliant with HAVA. Defendants shall make all possible efforts to provide for certification of a Plan A voting systems in time for use of such system(s)....” (Plan A refers to the scanners) Note that the Court did not sanction the use of uncertified voting systems so this is a specious argument. Fortunately, Otsego County commissioners ultimately decided that it was not in the best interests of the voters that they participate in a demonstration project for an important election where voter turnout will be high and they are already engaged in implementing the BMDs. LWVNYS sent a letter to the Otsego commissioners expressing our approval of their decision. In the Ulster County case, NYVV and LWVNYS sent a letter to the Ulster commissioners (addendum to this SBR) urging that they reject such a bad idea which really amounts to using the voters as “guinea pigs.” The Ulster commissioners have decided to proceed with the demo project.

This is bad precedent even though only four election districts in the county will be used for the project. If the Judge and the DOJ decide that meeting the existing certification schedule is more important than obtaining valid elections which New York’s standards aim for, it will be a step backward for democracy.

### **III. Will the NY Voter Registration Database (NYSVoter) Disenfranchise Voters?**

The question is a valid one. Across the country another issue has emerged which equals voting machines in its potential to disenfranchise voters in the upcoming election. That issue is how the states are managing their HAVA-mandated voter registration databases.

#### **Background**

In 2007, the NYS BOE implemented NYSVoter, a statewide voter registration database in order to comply with HAVA and the subsequent amendments to the NYS Election Laws of 2005. Both the Federal and State laws require that NYSVoter perform to certain standards that SBOE is required to enforce. The State statute also required that SBOE build NYSVoter by integrating with county voter registration election managements systems (VR/EMS). “(2) The official statewide voter registration list shall be created by combining the existing voter registration list maintained by each local board of elections into a single integrated list. The SBOE, pursuant to subdivision four of section 3-100 of this chapter shall promulgate rules and regulations, which shall be binding upon each local board of elections, concerning the combining of each existing voter registration list into a single integrated.” The statewide voter registration list serves as the official voter registration list for the conduct of all election in the state.

This in effect makes NYSVoter one statewide system comprised of a database system, housed at SBOE combined with VR/EMS systems throughout the state. This gave SBOE, not only administrative control over the NYSVoter central database, but the responsibility for defining and enforcing the methods by which the local VR/EMS systems and local election officials perform as part of the overall NYSVoter system.

NYSVoter, as well as enforcement of the other provisions of HAVA (machines, etc.) were the subject of the Consent Orders between the USDOJ and the NYSBOE in 2006-08. Now that NYSVoter has been implemented statewide, the role of SBOE has moved from that of developer and implementer to the role of administrator and auditor. These functions are carried out by monitoring and maintaining the system and providing user support to the counties, and by auditing the system. Governance of the system occurs through a Database Steering Committee (internal staff at SBOE) which meets weekly and reports regularly to the co-executive directors and the commissioners of the NYS BOE. In addition, a Policy/Standards Committee consists of a combination of election officials and information technology professionals from counties to advise the Steering Committee on issues of policy and data standards. The database is an interactive one and the local databases must be synchronized to NYSVoter at least every 24 hours to meet the system data standards.

### **NYSVoter Relationship to NVRA**

Prior to HAVA, there existed provisions of both federal and state law relative to the processing of voter registration records and maintenance of the list of eligible voters in each county of NYS, including the processing of duplicate registrations. Key among these provisions is the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA). Title III of HAVA, and its requirements relative to NYSVoter requires that the SBOE and local boards of elections continue to carry out the applicable provisions of NVRA, relative to determining a voter's eligibility to remain on the statewide voter registration including the processing of duplicate registrations, the same as were previously mandated.

*The NYS HAVA Citizens' Coalition on HAVA Implementation* in a letter dated July 18, 2008, to the NYS BOE, requests that the Board take immediate action to address the local boards' current practices for processing registrants flagged as "unverified" by the statewide database. (Letter and Memorandum of Questions in Support of Letter are attached to this SBR) This letter and memorandum offer excellent descriptions of how the database should work.

### **Current Issues --- New York City**

*The New York City BOE* has been noncompliant with the requirements of the law on establishing the statewide interactive database, as reported on a regular basis at the NYS BOE commissioners meetings. As a consequence, at the July 22 NYS BOE meetings, the IT staff reported that the City had @ 253,000 voters whose registrations were "flagged" in their database. That means that they were unresolved duplicates or lacked the proper ID on their registration form. The responsibility to resolve these situations rests with the county BOEs in a process called "reverification." The reverification procedure involves contacting either the voters or the counties where a duplicate originates or establishing the proof of identity through another state database. If these questions are not resolved, the voters who are "flagged" must produce ID at the polls or will be required to vote on affidavit (paper) ballots.

A formal HAVA Complaint, a right accorded to any person under the federal and state HAVA laws, was filed in April, 2008, by Robert McFeeley, resident of Richmond

County, borough of NYC, with the NYS BOE, asserting that HAVA had been violated in not ensuring that duplicate names of voters had been eliminated from the computerized list maintained by the NYC BOE and the NYS BOE. An evidentiary hearing was held on June 25, 2008. The following three points of the seven Findings of Fact are excerpted here: 1) The City Board is not appropriately performing voter registration list maintenance upon receiving information from the NYSVoter system that a former NYC voter has registered in a new county, 2) By reason of the failure of the City Board to appropriately use and rely upon the information available in the NYSVoter system, the number of duplicate voters in the City of New York voter registration rolls is increasing, rather than decreasing, 3) The City Board failed to produce any competent evidence of any meaningful voter registration list maintenance efforts.

The Remedy ordered by the Hearing Panel, referencing NYS Election Law applicable to the dates which county boards of elections must process voter registrations prior to primary and general elections, is that NYC BOE must comply with the law. At their July 22 meeting, the commissioners of the NYS BOE directed NYC BOE to comply with the Order immediately so that accurate poll books can be prepared for the Primary election in September, 2008.

#### **IV. HAVA Complaint Procedure**

One of the requirements of the federal HAVA is to have a formal complaint procedure established under state law for the filing and hearing of complaints of violation of the HAVA. The law was passed in 2005 and recently Regulations for Administration of the Law have been approved through the Regulatory and Review process. The resulting procedure is now in effect and can be read on the NYS BOE website under HAVA.

#### **V. Poll Worker Recruitment**

“Two Million Poll Workers Wanted by November 2008,” was the headline in USA Today in a May 2008 article. More than 122 million Americans voted in 2004, up from 105 million in 2000. The number is expected to jump again because of high interest in the White House contest, which drew near-record primary turnout on a percentage basis. That means greater demands on elections officials to run smooth elections.

How will NYS meet this challenge? At the Annual Meeting of the Albany County LWV in May, Paul Collins, NYS BOE Special Counsel, asked for the League’s help in solving this problem and helping to recruit new workers. Our NYS Election Law currently requires election personnel to be 18 years old, registered to vote, and enrolled in a political party. Some states are addressing the recruitment problem in innovative ways such as, allowing 16-17 year olds to work at the polls, giving employees paid time off, and recruiting workers with special abilities (speaking another language, skill with working with persons with disabilities, split shifts, etc.). Some of these proposals would require amending NYS Election Law. LWVNYS will be considering such proposals in fall 2008 for legislative action. Note: from such research I have learned that over 40 states permit 16-17 yr. old students to be elections inspectors!

What can you do to get the word out? Contact your local BOE and find out if their website makes it easy for potential inspectors to apply. If not, let them know that this is the preferred method to recruit among college students. Look for a report on recruiting this population in the fall. You can share it with your local BOE. Marge Acosta, a Leaguer from the Island has prepared Guidelines to Recruiting College-age students for this position using information from Citizens Union Foundation (NYC) and the US Elections Assistance Commission. We will post it to the LWVNYS website later in August. The NYS BOE will have their Online Training for Poll Workers manual on their site later in August. Training materials have been prepared under a contract with a Florida firm which has several other state contracts for this purpose.

### **Conclusion**

**This year will be the first year we in New York will be using the BMDs. League members have an opportunity to lead the way in testing out the machines and the accompanying election procedures developed for their use in “real time.”**

**Learn to use the Ballot Marking Devices so you will be able to explain their operation to voters. Consider using one yourself in your polling place instead of the lever machine on Primary Day. No voter can be denied the right to use the machine. You do not have to provide any reason or documentation. And you will gain firsthand experience – and the election workers will also!**

**The procedure for counting the ballots marked by the devices is still under review by the NYS BOE but will be settled in advance of the Primary so that election inspectors can be trained. Observing the election night closing would give us the opportunity to learn how this part of the process is working around the state. However, NYS Election Law only allows Poll Watchers (a certificate issued by a candidate or party) to remain in the polling place when not there to vote. If you want to observe the poll closing, you would need to obtain that certificate, or if your League participates in election night poll reporting, you would be able to observe.**



The League of Women Voters  
of New York State  
62 Grand Street  
Albany, New York 12207  
www.lwvny.org



New Yorkers for Verified Voting  
PO Box 163  
Mecklenburg, New York 14863  
www.nyvv.org

Commissioner John Parete  
Commissioner Thomas F. Turco  
Ulster County Board of Elections  
284 Wall Street  
Kingston, NY 12401

Dear Commissioners Parete and Turco,

At the State Board of Elections meeting on June 19, 2008, it was announced that Ulster County is considering the use of uncertified scanners in this year's election. Our organizations firmly believe that voting equipment which has not completed and passed New York State's strict certification requirements must not be used in any election, and certainly not in one as important as this year's 2008 Presidential election.

We believe a decision to use electronic voting equipment which has not completed testing and is not certified by any State or Federal agency would be an egregious error which will disenfranchise Ulster County voters.

We note the following reasons why the use of uncertified equipment would be a serious error:

- The Ballot Marking Devices which Ulster County will use for accessible voting this year do not have the required "Lot 1" software to run the scanner component. Before these components could be used, arrangements must be made to install these untested software upgrades. At the Board of Elections meeting Board staff stated several times that they were uncertain which components would be required to be upgraded, and what procedures must be followed to perform the upgrades.
- The ImageCast scanners have not passed either New York State or Federal certification testing. New York has been rightfully proud that our testing standards are among the highest in the nation. This high bar set by the state is important in safeguarding the integrity of the vote. Ulster County voters must not be allowed to vote on equipment which has not yet met these rigorous standards.
- The State Board of Elections noted in their discussion of this issue that they will not be able to provide any form of support or training for Ulster County whatsoever. In essence, Ulster County will be on its own.
- The initial testing of the Lot 1 scanner components has shown an extremely high number of defects. At the State Board meeting, the ImageCast scanners were reported to currently have over 1,000 defects against the New York State standards. It was noted by several staff members that even the current Ballot Marking Device software has problems – incorrect software versions installed, constant and repeated changes being submitted, etc. We quote Commissioner Douglas Kellner's comments at the meeting:

*“ES&S and Dominion both have brought us equipment that has not been Quality Control tested before they brought it for certification to New York. That literally, thousands of defects and failure to comply with the guidelines have been identified.”*

Given that we know the Lot 1 software is currently massively failing New York’s initial testing, and Ulster county would need to use software versions which will undoubtedly contain many of these defects, using the devices in an actual election is unconscionable.

- The time frame to get the scanners up and running is far too short to guarantee that all required upgrades, procedures and training will be developed and completed in a timely fashion. Indeed, even the 5 other counties that originally considered using scanners this year have now rejected the idea, acknowledging that there is simply insufficient time to prepare.
- The State Board stated that if Ulster County were to use the scanners, they would also then be required to a 100% hand recount of ballots. But conducting a reliable and accurate hand count is not a trivial matter, indeed it takes much preparation and logistical support. Prior to the September 2008 primary a formal procedure for hand counting the ballots would need to be developed and approved by the State Board. Also, a hand count of ballots *would require at a minimum a doubling of poll workers needed on Election Day*. Indeed, these additional poll workers would need to come in AFTER the polls close to conduct the hand count on the night of the election. You must carefully consider whether or not Ulster County can find sufficient poll workers to conduct the hand count and provide a rigorous, documented hand counting methodology which would not be challenged by candidates.
- The use of uncertified equipment which does not meet New York State standards would undoubtedly provide grounds for legal challenges and litigation aimed at stopping an action that will disenfranchise Ulster County voters.

Ulster County voters must not be guinea pigs and be forced to vote on untested, uncertified systems. We strongly urge you to do what every other county in New York State has decided to do, and wait until we know that the new voting systems are able to conform to New York State Standards before using them in an election.

Sincerely,

Aimee Allaud  
Elections Specialist  
League of Women Voters of New York State

Bo Lipari  
Executive Director  
New Yorkers for Verified Voting



125 Broad Street  
New York, NY 10004  
212.607.3300  
212.607.3318  
www.nyclu.org



Douglas A. Kellner, Co-Chair  
James A. Walsh, Co-Chair  
Evelyn J. Aquila, Commissioner  
Gregory P. Peterson, Commissioner  
New York State Board of Elections  
40 Steuben Street  
Albany, NY 12207

July \_\_, 2008

Dear Commissioners,

We are writing to urge the New York State Board of Elections to take immediate action to address the local boards' current practices for processing registrants flagged as "unverified" by the statewide interactive database, NYSVoter II, because of inconsistencies between the registration information input by the local boards and state and federal records. We also ask that you clarify and improve the procedures that are applied when NYSVoter II has identified voters as possibly having registered from more than one address. We are particularly concerned about the following matters:

1. N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-210(9) requires local boards of elections to confirm that registrants identified by the state's NYSVoter II interactive database as "unverified" have not been mistakenly flagged due to administrative errors before poll workers can demand that "unverified" registrants produce ID on Election Day in order to vote. We believe that local boards are failing to comply with this requirement. At the New York City Council hearing before the Committee on Government Operations on June 23, 2008, Marcus Cederqvist, the Executive Director of the New York City Board of Elections, and Steven Richman, the Board's General Counsel, admitted that the New York City Board of Elections and other local boards have not been reviewing the original applications of flagged registrants to correct clerical mistakes that have prevented the database from matching the registrants with state and federal records. Consequently, voters are required to defend their right to vote in many circumstances where such burdens should not be imposed.
2. Local boards do not receive sufficient guidance from N.Y. ELEC. LAW §§ 5-213 and 5-614 for processing registrants whom NYSVoter II has identified as possibly having registered to vote from more than one address. The law provides only a vague mandate for the board that received the earlier-dated registration to deactivate the voter, remove the voter's name from the poll ledger, and send the voter notification of such deactivation. The law fails to articulate procedures and safeguards needed to ensure that

all voters receive sufficient notice before their names are removed from the rolls and that all boards perform sufficient due diligence before “deactivating” eligible voters.

3. The notice that the New York City Board of Elections and possibly other local boards are sending to registrants who have been flagged as possibly having duplicate registrations is statutorily-unauthorized, unclear, and unnecessarily intimidating.

These inadequacies threaten to disenfranchise eligible voters and diminish voter confidence. They also run the risk of needlessly lengthening lines and creating frustration at the polls. Moreover, current practices conflict with the thrust of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), which establishes a presumption of voter eligibility and places the burden of voter verification on election officials. 42 U.S.C. §§ 15483(a)(4)(B), 15483(a)(2)(B), 15483(b); *see* NAT’L COMM’N ON FED. ELECTION REFORM, TO ASSURE PRIDE AND CONFIDENCE IN THE ELECTORAL PROCESS 32 (2001).

Accordingly, we request that the New York State Board of Elections immediately direct local boards across the state to:

1. Comply with their obligation under Election Law § 5-210(9) to conduct the clerical inspections of registrations unmatched by NYSVoter II and suspend the practice of requesting that “unverified” voters produce ID at the polls until the registrations of all voters flagged as unverified since 2004 have been appropriately reviewed; and
2. Halt the identification of possible duplicate registrants and reactivate all registrants placed in inactive status or cancelled as part of this endeavor until the procedure for notifying and working with flagged voters is clarified and improved.

We have attached a memorandum of law that articulates the legal landscape and amplifies our concerns. We have also included a memorandum of questions in order to help us better understand the current practices and aid the State Board’s development of fair procedures that promote electoral participation.

Our organizations look forward to learning how the State Board intends to address these problems. We would appreciate if you could respond in writing. But, in the alternative, we would be happy to meet to discuss the issues raised in this letter. Because of the imminence of the November election, we urge a response by August 4, 2008. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

Joanna Shalleck-Klein  
Palyn Hung  
New York Civil Liberties Union

Gene Russianoff  
Neal Rosenstein  
New York Public Interest Research Group

Inna Arolovich, American Association of Jews from the Former USSR  
Margaret Fung, Asian American Legal Defense and Education Fund  
Dick Dadey, Citizens Union  
Steve Carbo, Demos  
Molly Krakowski, Joint Public Affairs Committee for Older Adults  
Dennis Boyd, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest  
Aimee Allaud, League of Women Voters of New York State  
Bo Lipari, New Yorkers for Verified Voting  
Marjorie Shea, Women's City Club of NY

cc: Gale Brewer, New York City Council Member  
Marcus Cederqvist, Executive Director, New York City Board of Elections  
Julie Dent, Commissioner, New York City Board of Elections  
Anthony Como, President, New York City Board of Elections  
Andrew M. Cuomo, New York State Attorney General  
Simcha Felder, New York City Council Member  
Nero Graham, Jr., Commissioner, New York City Board of Elections  
Terrence C. O'Connor, Commissioner, New York City Board of Elections  
Juan Carlos Polanco, Commissioner, New York City Board of Elections  
Steven H. Richman, General Counsel, New York City Board of Elections  
Nancy Mottola Schacher, Commissioner, New York City Board of Elections  
Gregory C. Soumas, Commissioner, New York City Board of Elections  
Frederic M. Umane, Commissioner, New York City Board of Elections  
MaryAnn Yennella, Commissioner, New York City Board of Elections



**NYCLU**  
NEW YORK CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION

125 Broad Street  
New York, NY 10004  
212.607.3300  
212.607.3318  
www.nyclu.org



**TO:** New York State Board of Elections

**FROM:** New York Civil Liberties Union & New York Public Interest Research Group

**DATE:** July \_\_, 2008

**RE:** Memorandum of Questions in Support of Letter Asking the New York State Board of Elections to Curtail Local Board's Practices Regarding Registrant Verification and Identification of Possible Duplicates

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In an effort to clarify and improve the procedures for verifying voter registrations and processing registrants identified as possible duplicates, we ask the State Board of Elections to address the following questions:

**Registrant Verification**

1. Are the standards and procedures for verifying registrants' identities consistent across the counties? If not, how do they differ? Is the state ensuring that local board's procedures and standards do not arbitrarily and disparately value one person's vote over another's?
2. If an applicant has failed to provide information on his or her registration needed for identity verification, are local board officials throughout the state consistently taking "immediate steps to obtain the missing information" as they are required to do under N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 9 § 6217.5(4)? If so, what precise actions are officials taking to obtain this information? Are all local boards taking the same action? If not, please explain the different procedures followed by the local boards?
3. Are local boards sending two notices to "unverified" registrants, informing them that they may need to provide ID at the polls, as required by N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-210(9)-(10)?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-210(9) states that the local board must mail to any registrant whose identity has not been verified "a notice of its approval which includes an indication that such board has not yet been able to verify the identity of the applicant and a request for more information so that such verification may be completed. . . . The request for more information shall inform the voter that "THE FAILURE TO CONTACT THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS AND CORRECT ANY INACCURACIES IN THE APPLICATION OR PROVIDE REQUESTD ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MAY RESULT IN A REQUEST FOR IDENTIFICATION AT THE POLLS IN ORDER TO CAST A VOTE ON A VOTING MACHINE.'" According to N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-210(10), "If the board of elections has been unable to verify the identity of the applicant within forty-five days of the application, the board shall mail a second request for more information to the applicant." See also N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 9 § 6217.6(f)-(g).

If so, may we have a copy of these notices? When precisely are they sent and how does the board determine what address to use? What is the procedure when a notice is returned as undeliverable, possibly indicating that an election official has improperly transcribed the registrant's address? Are all local boards taking the same action? If not, please explain the different procedures followed by the local boards?

4. According to N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 9 § 6217.5(b), after processing a registrant, the local board should classify an applicant as either "registered", "incomplete", or "denied." When exactly is the status of a registrant labeled as "incomplete"? Is "incomplete" synonymous with "unverified"? N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 9 § 6217.5(d)(2) mandates that "incomplete" voters' records should not be uploaded to the NYSVoter II database but instead maintained within the county election management system. If "incomplete" is synonymous with "unverified," then N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 9 § 6217.5(d)(2) contradicts both N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-210(9) and N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 9 § 6217.6(a), which stipulate that an unverified registrant should nonetheless be registered, entered into NYSVoter II, and included on the local poll ledger.
5. How many registrants have been flagged as "unverifiable" since 2004? In which counties did they register? How many of them responded to the notices altering them that they were "unverified"?

### **Possible Duplicate Registrations**

1. What information does NYSVoter II use to identify possible duplicates? According to N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 9 § 6217.8(a)-(b), the database should match registrants' first three letters of their first names; the first five letters of their last names; dates of birth; and, if available, New York State Department of Motor Vehicles driver license numbers, non-driver numbers, or last four digits of their social security numbers. Is NYSVoter II consistently complying with this requirement?
2. When NYSVoter II highlights a possible duplicate, what information does the State Board send to the local boards that processed the earlier and more recent registrations?
3. What procedure should the board that processed the earlier-dated application follow upon learning of a possible duplicate? Must that board send a notice? If so, what then must it say and to what address should it be sent? Does N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-712(2)(b)<sup>2</sup> govern this situation? How is the earlier registration coded and maintained in the board's system?
4. Has the State Board of Election reviewed, promulgated or approved the language used in letters to possible duplicates from each local board of election? Are there standard notices that all local boards should send? Are the notices compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Voting Rights Acts?

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<sup>2</sup> N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-712(2)(b) states that "[i]f a notice sent . . . is returned as undeliverable, the board of elections shall send another such notice to the address at which the voter was originally registered."

5. What procedure should the board that processed the more recent application follow upon learning of a possible duplicate? Must that board send a notice? If so, what then must it say and to what address should it be sent? Does N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-712(2)(b) govern this situation? How is the later-dated registration coded and maintained in the board's system? Does N.Y. COMP. CODES R. & REGS. tit. 9 § 6217.8 instruct the board processing the newer registration to assume the registrant to be presumptively valid? N.Y. ELEC. LAW § 5-712(2)(b) orders each local board of elections to send "a confirmation notice . . . to every registered voter or applicant for registration." What information must the local board include in this "confirmation notice" for a registrant flagged as a possible duplicate?
6. Under what circumstances are registrants identified as possible duplicates placed on inactive status? Under what circumstances are the registrations of those identified as possible duplicates cancelled? What exactly must a registrant do in order to be returned to active status? What safeguards exist to ensure that mistakes are not made and, if they are, to protect against canceling the registration of an eligible voter?
7. How many voters have been identified as potential duplicates since 2004? Of those identified, how many have been confirmed as duplicates? How many have been coded as inactive and removed from the rolls? How many have been completely purged?

TO: Local League President and Health Care Directors  
FROM: Donna Packard-Mahoney Off-Board Specialist for Health Care  
107 Pine Street, Rensselaer, NY 12144  
E-mail: [dmahoney@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dmahoney@nycap.rr.com)

## **HEALTH CARE**

As the League's position on health care is multi-faceted, you will find that this report makes a reflection of that point. To begin, early in June, the State League became aware that the Assembly health committee was going to be voting on two pieces of legislation that would implement a considerable transformation of Article 27-f, the HIV testing and consent law in New York that protects the confidentiality and privacy of anyone tested for or exposed to HIV. The two bills challenging Article 27-f were sponsored by Assemblywoman Mayersohn and Assembly Health Chair Richard Gottfried. Assemblyman Gottfried's bill A.11461, written by the NYS Health Department, undermined consent by not ensuring patients would understand what tests they were agreeing to undergo. Assemblywoman Mayersohn's bill 4813-C would have permitted doctors to perform HIV testing without informing the patient, removed the provision of CDC-recommended pre-test counseling, would not have required that health care provider to connect people who test HIV positive to medical care, removed the requirement for post-test counseling for people who tested HIV negative, did not require that the health care provider offer an HIV test to her/his patients and reduced the fine for violating confidentiality from \$10,000 to \$5,000.

The New York State League signed onto a set of principles set forth by Housing Works, a national community based AIDS organization, which stated any changes to Article 27-f must include written informed consent and pre-and post-test counseling as required by the current law. Certainly increasing access to HIV testing and streamlining the testing process easily fits under the state league position on increasing access to health care and disease prevention. However, the State League also clearly recognizes that people need to know what they are being tested for and what a positive HIV test result entails regarding treatment availability, transmission prevention, and confidentiality. The League also understands that people are more likely to seek treatment and to engage in HIV disease prevention efforts when they understand testing and its implications. The State League views written informed consent and pre- and post-test counseling as good public policy that meets the State League's health care position on health promotion, personal decision-making and disease prevention.

On the last Tuesday before the end of session, and despite a late in the game companion bill for A.11461 sponsored by Senate Health Chair Kemp, both bills A.4813-C and A.11461 failed. The League will continue to be watchful that the development of further attempts of legislation to streamline HIV testing will protect, and not decimate, the confidentiality and privacy of anyone who has been tested for or exposed to HIV. NYSLWV would like to acknowledge Housing Works as a contributing resource for this submission.

During July, LWVNYS reviewed a request by the Syracuse Local League to research possible support for S7195/A10357- the NYS Health Care Consumer and Provider Protection and Equity Act. The bill(s) would allow physicians and dentists to negotiate collectively with health benefit plans. Because State League position relates to the patient's care and access to care and not to the health care provider's ability to negotiate with insurance companies as a collective group for their reimbursement, the League could not find support within its position to support this legislation.

On another aspect of the health care issue, during the LWVUS National Convention, attendees passed motion #1609 the LWVUS Board recommended Program to adopt a Health Care program to educate members and communities in order to be better prepared to do health care advocacy as needed. According to the May 15<sup>th</sup> memo to local league presidents by Mary Wilson LWVUS President, "the National Board recommended to Convention a program item to educate members and the public about facts and issues surrounding the various health care reform proposals that we will likely see during the next session of Congress. Since the education project is not a study, it will not result in a change in the league's health care position." According to Mary Wilson, once the Board's recommendation was adopted at Convention, the education project would be designed and implemented by the next Board. With that said, and with the enthusiasm displayed by the local leagues statewide on the health care reform issue over the past couple of years, it is a safe bet to say that the local leagues are eager for this education project to begin and will hit the ground running once the materials become available from National. I would like to acknowledge the LWVUS Report of Convention Action for Monday, June 16 webpage and the LWVUS News and Events web page for the above information.

Lastly, in keeping with the League's mission to educate communities on public policy issues, the State League in concert with the Capital Region Local Leagues (Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, and Warren), is preparing to convene two events on the issue of health care reform. The first event is currently being planned for October 25, and will concentrate on the health care platforms of the presidential candidates. The program will include discussion of what the impact each of the candidates' platforms will mean for the voters once a candidate has been elected. The issues of access, cost, equity, and quality will provide a theoretical basis for discussion. The planning committee is currently seeking to have the program televised along with a webcast. We expect to have confirmation of the details such as location, time, moderator, and television station within the next two weeks. Provisional planning for the second community event involves a one-hour, state-wide, interactive televised program with the intention to be broadcast by PBS on a date, to be determined, during the first three months of the upcoming legislative session. The focus of the program will be health care reform in New York State with a view on the current effort for reform underway through the Partnership for Coverage. The details for this program remain open to consideration as much of the group's effort is presently concentrated on planning the October event.

TO: Local League President; Advocacy & Issues Directors  
FROM: Lois Haignere, Off-Board Specialist, Pay Equity  
28 Bentwood Court, Guilderland, NY 12203  
E-mail: [haigner@nycap.rr.com](mailto:haigner@nycap.rr.com)

### **PAY EQUITY UPDATE**

Background – This SBR focuses on the activities of the NYS Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC), of which the LWVNY is a primary member.<sup>3</sup> With League guidance, NYSPEC takes actions to provide pay equity for equally evaluated job titles and equal pay to employees in New York State.

#### ***Legislative Developments***

On June 12, 2008 the New York City Council unanimously passed a resolution urging the New York Legislature to pass the Fair Pay Bill. Councilmember Letitia James introduced two resolutions that were promoted by Councilwoman Helen Sears, Chair of the Women's Issues Committee and sponsor of the 2008 Equal Pay Day NYC rally and hearing. The Equal Pay Coalition NYC, a growing collective of civic organizations, advocates and experts coordinated by the New York Women's Agenda, was a driving force in this important step toward ending continuing economic discrimination in NYS and NYC. NYSPEC widely circulated the good news about the New York City resolutions to supporters all over the state.

NYSPEC is currently exploring the introduction of a similar resolution on the county and/or city level in Nassau County, Buffalo, Rochester, and Albany. If you know supporters of pay equity in these regions who would like to work on this local effort, please contact us.

#### ***Clarifications from the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Labor***

As covered in detail on page 7 of the Summer NYS Voter and my last board report, Senator Robach sponsored a so-called pay-equity bill (S7521). The bill was quickly passed by the Republican majority and the media was told that the Senate had passed pay equity legislation. Following these April events, NYSPEC representatives met with Commissioner of Labor Patricia Smith to clarify what existing laws address and to ask if the Labor Department would actually carry out the study called for in what some newspapers and supporters have called the 'Robach's Ruse' bill. Commissioner Smith verified that there is currently no pay equity legislation in New York State and that the increasing of fines indicated by S7521 would only apply to existing equal pay for equal work legislation. Commissioner Smith also indicated that the Labor Department does not have the capacity or funding to carry out the study proposed in S7521.

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<sup>3</sup> 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).

***Governor Paterson's Office Contact***

On June 5, 2008, we met with David Weinstein, Assistant Counsel to the Governor. At our request NYSUT legislative representative John Green also attended this meeting with us. We previously met with Mr. Weinstein in June 2007. We wanted to discuss the level of support for pay equity in the new administration and whether Governor Paterson would introduce a program bill. Upon learning that the two Canadian provinces across the NYS border, where two-thirds of the Canadian population resides have enacted pay equity legislation covering both public and private sector employees Mr. Weinstein requested copies of this legislation and information about how pay equity legislation is implemented in Canada. We provided this information. Mr. Weinstein suggested that we contact him again in September.

***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***

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors  
FROM: Gladys Gifford, Off Board-Specialist, Transportation  
174 Capen Boulevard, Buffalo, NY 14226  
E-Mail: [schuford@earthlink.net](mailto:schuford@earthlink.net)

**PUBLIC TRANSIT: AN ISSUE TO RAISE WITH YOUR  
NYS LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATE**

Check out [www.nysdot.gov/smartplanning](http://www.nysdot.gov/smartplanning). This is a new website announced in June by Commissioner Astrid C. Glynn. Produced by the NYSDOT, it includes a simple checklist for local planners to “coordinate infrastructure investments to create connections,” Glynn said. “That is, provide for access to transit that is easy to navigate, whether on foot, bicycle or car. In short, to develop an area in a way that maximizes the potential and use of transit.” Download the checklist, and use it as a basis for candidate questions on transportation.

The issue of transportation policy should be raise often and persistently, whenever NYS Leaguers engage in conversation with candidates for NYS legislative offices. With our national program focused on climate change and our state program focused on energy, we have a double-barreled League mandate to advocate for effective action and legislation to ensure that the transportation policy of NYS promotes energy-efficient and environmentally beneficial transportation modes, i.e., public transit in urbanized areas and energy-efficient nonpolluting cars and trucks in rural areas.

***Resources and suggestions for candidates’ forums***

Check out [www.nysdot.gov/smartplanning](http://www.nysdot.gov/smartplanning). This is a new website announced in June by Commissioner Astrid C. Glynn. Produced by the NYSDOT, it includes a simple checklist for local planners to “coordinate infrastructure investments to create connections,” Glynn said. “That is, provide for access to transit that is easy to navigate, whether on foot, bicycle or car. In short, to develop an area in a way that maximizes the potential and use of transit.” Download the checklist, and use it as a basis for candidate questions on transportation.

The draft 2008 New York State Rail Plan was examined and analyzed by the public in four extensive workshops across the state in June and July. The document is available at <http://www.nysdot.gov/2008drafrailplan> States are required to complete such a document in order to qualify for Federal rail funding. The draft version supports robust investment in improvements to rail infrastructure, such that higher-speed Amtrak service could be supported across Upstate New York. To begin the conversation with a candidate, simply ask if they intend to support higher-speed Amtrak connections for all of New York State.

Candidates for state offices must also understand the relationship of that office to the Federal system. In the transportation arena, Federal dollars are the engine which keeps the transportation wheels rolling. The current Transportation Act is up for renewal in 2009. An excellent resource for learning the issue and taking action is: <http://t4america.org/> Funding for transportation is caught in a bind, since the gas tax is its source--and as people buy less gas due to the high price, the revenue for

transportation needs is reduced. The most effective solution? Invest in public transportation! Ask the candidates for state office whether they will join in the NYS effort to lobby for investment in public transportation, as the best national transportation policy for the future.

***Rescission order took its toll***

The rescission order issued in March has finally been implemented. NYS had to eliminate \$147.2 million from its planned transportation projects. Biggest hits were: Interstate maintenance lost \$25.4 million; National Highway System lost \$29.1 million; highway bridge program lost \$59.3 million; Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality lost \$21.8 million.

As explained by our local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), these rescission orders generally eliminate many of the “earmarks” touted by members of Congress, and were allowed within the current transportation bill (due to expire next year).

Local leagues need to contact their MPO and/or the NYSDOT to learn just which projects were lost due to the current round of rescissions.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors  
FROM: Off-Board Specialists for Urban Sprawl  
Ruth Bonn, 47 Spruce Drive, Alplaus, NY 12008  
E-Mail: [rooty@nycap.rr.com](mailto:rooty@nycap.rr.com)

Anne Huberman, 303 Highland Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222  
E-Mail: [anne.huberman@gmail.com](mailto:anne.huberman@gmail.com)

## **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.*

### ***Smart Growth Bill Passes Assembly and Senate***

Over many years Assemblymember Sam Hoyt (144th Assembly District — Grand Island and part of Buffalo) and colleagues in the Assembly and Senate have submitted bills that would require the state to promote smart growth and curb sprawl in various ways. This year, for the first time, one of those bills (S.4369, A.7335) has passed both the Assembly and the Senate. The bill “directs state agencies and public authorities to adopt and utilize smart growth principles.” As of this writing, Assemblymember Hoyt reports that the bill is sitting on the Governor’s desk waiting signing.

On June 9 Ruth Bonn prepared and sent out an action alert asking League members to contact their representatives in support of this bill. Although the bill uses terms that are not binding, like “consider” and “encourage,” it is definitely a step in the right direction. We are proud of the small part the League played in its passage.

### ***State Department of Transportation “Smart Planning” Website***

The expansion of our road and highway system is one of the primary causes of sprawl. Road design with concern only for the rapid movement of automobile traffic negatively impacts the appearance of our municipalities and our quality of life. It is refreshing to see that the New York State Department of Transportation appears, at long last, to understand this. The Department has launched a “Land Use and Transportation Smart Planning” website at <https://www.nysdot.gov/portal/page/portal/programs/smart-planning> with the slogan “Smart Growth...Smart Choice.” We encourage you to view the excellent presentation on smart growth (with some fascinating statistics from the Department) and the checklist under “Useful Products.” You may find some good ways to disseminate this information locally.

TO: Local League Presidents, Membership Chairs  
FROM: Marcia A. Merrins, Vice-President Membership  
42 Rosalyn Court, Fredonia, NY 14063  
E-Mail: [mmerrins@netsync.net](mailto:mmerrins@netsync.net)



**MEMBERSHIP MINUTE**

**The Question of the Moment:**

**What are your plans for membership recruitment this fall?**

This is a very important part of what you do. Without new members, your League will not have potential leaders, be short of funds, and get stale! (If you need ideas, let me know, I have a bunch!)

**REGIONAL DIRECTORS**

Something old is new again!

Our liaison effort has been successful in some instances and failed in others. We will be trying a new approach this year. We will be using a conference call among several local Leagues, sometimes in a region about four times a year. Each group will have a regional director who will take the lead on the conference call. She will set the time and date and number to call. Their job, and yours, is to maintain communication so we can work together. Sometimes it may be to simply brainstorm about the best way to approach a problem or resolve an issue. Sometimes your League may need some face to face assistance and your regional director would be the first person to contact.

**REGIONAL DIRECTORS  
LOCAL LEAGUE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Edna Vincenti 516-627-1987**  
**[edna.vincenti@vincenti.com](mailto:edna.vincenti@vincenti.com)**

- 1. Nassau County ILO
- 2. East Nassau
- 3. Central Nassau
- 4. Great Neck
- 5. Greater 5 Towns
- 6. Long Beach
- 7. Port Washington-Manhasset
- 8. Rye/Ryebrook/PortChester

**Rosemary MacLaughlin 914-232-5735**  
**[rosem@bestweb.net](mailto:rosem@bestweb.net)**

- 1. Bronxville
- 2. Larchmont/Mamaroneck
- 3. New Rochelle
- 4. Bedford/Lewisboro/N.Salem
- 5. Westchester ILO
- 6. The Hamptons
- 7. Putnam County MAL Unit

**Helene Chaika Fausold 607-351-8024**  
**hcfausold@stny.rr.com**

1. White Plains
2. Brookhaven
3. New Castle
4. Scarsdale
5. Shelter Island
6. Smithtown
7. Huntington
8. Suffolk Co. ILO

**Kathy Dorman 315 280-0434**  
**kdorman@oneidacsd.org**

1. Schuyler
2. Chemung
3. Steuben County
4. Broome/Tioga
5. Cortland
6. Rivertowns
7. Somers

**Carol Huxtable 315-822-5283**  
**dchuxtable@peoplepc.com**

1. Cooperstown
2. Oneonta
3. Mid Hudson
4. Rockland
5. Columbia
6. Harrison

**JoAnn Ross 716-631-9351**  
**jross18@roadrunner.com**

1. Geneva,
2. Rochester,
3. Orleans,
4. Rochester
5. Plattsburgh
6. Livingston
7. Chautauqua

**Georgia T. DeGregorio 585-787-9692**  
**georgiatd@frontiernet.net**

1. Syracuse
2. Greater Oneida
3. Utica Rome
4. Buffalo/Niagara
5. Tompkins
6. Cazenovia
7. Cortland

**Barbara Thomas 518-885-9769**  
**barbandbob220@verizon.net**

1. Saratoga
2. Warren County MAL
3. Rensselaer
4. Albany
5. Schenectady
6. New York City

**[Lvw-membership@lists.lvw.org](mailto:Lvw-membership@lists.lvw.org)**

Be sure you are on this listserve! As part of LWVUS outreach, I will be emailing membership tips twice a month. It will only **take one moment** to read. It is hoped that these "tools" will stimulate fresh approaches for your League to energize visibility, recruitment, retention, and leadership practices.

I know some of you have terrific ideas as well. If you develop something that works for your League, it will probably help other Leagues, too. Please share your successes so that they can be included in future materials we give to all local Leagues. You may have a PowerPoint or publication that can be useful for all of us. Although we cannot send attachments through this listserve, we can contact each other offline and attach these "tools". I am looking to create this

"toolbox" of powerpoints, brochures, and other great things on the State and national websites as a resource for all.

Many of these ideas are stand-alone projects that can be done by a small interested group of League members. Focusing on specific activities or projects gives people a reason to get involved. Many can commit to just one thing. This change in focus to single activities or short-term projects is one way to attract busier people to the League. When you ask them to join, give them a few options for one thing they might want to do—a reason to join without being overwhelmed.

### *Solitations*

It is vitally important that we welcome into the League as many people as possible. If someone gives the LWVUS \$55 or more, they are a recruited member at the national level. Local and state Leagues are alerted if this member resides in their area. The hope is that local Leagues will encourage these members to join at the local level when their membership comes due.

Unfortunately, as with all large mailings, there can occasionally be some confusion. We try to remedy this at the LWVNYS and LWVUS levels and hope that the local League leaders will do the same. We all want people to find the League a receptive, open, interesting and fun place to volunteer their time. Some people who do not have volunteer time at this point in their lives, like to support the work of the League by donating. Who knows when they might find that they have the time to give to the League?

The main point is even with the miscommunication, we need every person who wants to be a part of the League. As part of the LWVUS Development team, I will work to find the best ways to communicate with our recruited members. When you encounter a problem, contact me or our LWVUS board Liaison or the LWVUS Member Services team to help remedy the conflict. Together we can improve how we recruit more members and increase our ways to retain them

We are approaching the end of summer and moving into fall I want to you to think about a couple of things that I believe will keep your League healthy.

### *Show—Don't Tell!*

Once you have figured out what makes the work your League does special, the next thing marketing needs to do is to show prospective supporters and members how wonderful League is.

Notice I didn't say "tell" them how terrific you are, but "show" them. This is the same approach used by food purveyors in the supermarket on a Saturday afternoon. They don't have someone at the end of the aisle to tell folks about the product; they have someone there with pizza or hot dog pieces or cheese on a stick. They want you to see for yourself how good their product is.

**The only product your League has to sell is the good work you do.** So the best marketing techniques will be the League equivalent of free pizza. You can't just tell them that League is amazing; you have to provide a way for them to see for themselves.

### 1. *Writing*

One of the best ways to show the world what you've got is to write. This can mean writing articles for newsletters and local newspapers, or it can mean writing a book. In every industry and in every community, there are publications looking for content. Find a list of all the publications within your particular niche (whether it's your geographic community, or your community of interest, such as the regional art or environmental or educational community), and then ask if they would publish an article on an issue of particular concern to their readers. It could be a column on CFE in a school PTA newsletter, or an article on the effects of urban sprawl for the local lifestyle magazine.

*Quick tip:* A great way to use your writing to show what you've got, without waiting to be published by someone else, is to write an article on a topic of interest to a wide range of potential members, and then send it to your list! Add a post-it note that says "Thought you would enjoy our latest article on the budget fiasco in Albany- Capital Beat by Bartoletti\_\_\_\_\_."

Now you have a direct mail piece that shows LWV\_\_\_\_has substance - AND differentiates you!

### 2. *Speaking*

There are always groups looking for effective speakers - speakers who know their subject and can capture an audience's attention for 15 minutes, 30 minutes, an hour. If you make clear to the group that you are NOT there to ask for money (their main fear of Not for Profits - that you will hit up their group for cash), but just to share what you know about an issue concerning the community, there are a myriad speaking engagements just waiting for someone from your League.

Speaking goes one step beyond writing, because when a prospective member or supporter sees you speak, they are getting a tangible sense of what the League is like and what you can do. They will immediately sense your League's approach, integrity, energy. They will quickly sense whether or not there is a connection between what they need and what League has to offer. Seeing someone speak is as close to snacking on pizza in the supermarket as your prospects can get!

If you are not an experienced speaker, there are plenty of places to learn, the most common being Toastmasters. (Check your phone book. There is a Toastmasters chapter in just about every community.) Toastmasters will provide you with plenty of opportunity to practice and learn in a supportive environment.

*Quick Tip:* In addition to finding speaking venues from civic organizations to industry associations, an easy way to get in front of an audience of prospective members is to put on a workshop. Can you think of one? Spend 2-3 hours teaching them what you know. What better way to show off how terrific your League is!

### 3. *Word of Mouth*

We all know that the word of a trusted friend or colleague can go miles to open doors to new prospects. But it is surprising how few people really take advantage of this marketing tool.

*How to Do It:* Take one current supporter to breakfast each week, to just chat about what's going on in your organization (and theirs!). During that breakfast, ask that supporter if he can suggest 3 other people who might want to know about your work. And then ask if he would call those 3 people to make an introduction for you, so that when you call it's not a cold call.

***The Bottom Line***

Writing, speaking and word-of-mouth will open doors for your League - doors to people who are already pre-sold, because, like the pizza, they tasted it right there in the store.

**If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you always have gotten.**

Local League Contact Information 2008

FIND YOUR LOCAL LEAGUE AND GET PLUGGED IN TODAY!

LOCAL LEAGUE	PRESIDENT CO- PRESIDENT VICE- PRESIDENT	NAME	E-MAIL	ADDRESS / WEBSITE / PHONE & EMAIL ADDRESSES
ALBANY	Co-President	Lori Keegan-Brady	<a href="mailto:lkeegan-brady@nycap.rr.com">lkeegan-brady@nycap.rr.com</a>	Albany County LWV P.O. Box 611 Slingerlands, NY 12159 <a href="http://www.lwvalbany.org">www.lwvalbany.org</a>  Email: <a href="mailto:lwvac@crisny.org">lwvac@crisny.org</a>
	Co-President	Maggie Moehringer	<a href="mailto:mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com">mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com</a>	
BEDFORD/LEWISBORO N. SALEM	President	Harry McLaughlin	<a href="mailto:harrym67@verizon.net">harrym67@verizon.net</a>	Bedford/Lewisboro LWV P.O. Box 584 Goldens Bridge, NY 10526
BRONXVILLE	President	Adelaide DiGiorgi	<a href="mailto:adiqiorgi@optonline.net">adiqiorgi@optonline.net</a>	Bronxville LWV P.O. Box 321 Bronxville, NY 10708 <a href="http://www.watpa.org/lwv/Bronxville/">www.watpa.org/lwv/Bronxville/</a>  Email: <a href="mailto:bronxvilleleague@aol.com">bronxvilleleague@aol.com</a>
BROOKHAVEN	President	Nancy Marr	<a href="mailto:enpymarr@optonline.net">enpymarr@optonline.net</a>	<a href="http://www.suffolkcounty.org/brookhaven">www.suffolkcounty.org/brookhaven</a>  Phone: 631-730-6556
	1st Vice-President	Alice Jach	<a href="mailto:joejach@worldnet.att.net">joejach@worldnet.att.net</a>	
	2nd Vice-President	Allan Aronoff		
BROOME/TIOGA	Co-President	Anne Taft	<a href="mailto:anci@stny.rr.com">anci@stny.rr.com</a>	Broome/Tioga LWV P.O. Box 944 Vestal, NY 13851 <a href="http://www.lwv-broometioga.org">www.lwv-broometioga.org</a>  Phone: 607-772-4936 Email: <a href="mailto:anci@stny.rr.com">anci@stny.rr.com</a>
	Co-President	Clare Simeone	<a href="mailto:csimeone@stny.rr.com">csimeone@stny.rr.com</a>	
	2nd Vice-President	Mary Johnson	<a href="mailto:mjohnson23@stny.rr.com">mjohnson23@stny.rr.com</a>	
BUFFALO	Co-President	Loretta Peszynski	<a href="mailto:lwvbn@buffnet.net">lwvbn@buffnet.net</a>	Buffalo/Niagara LWV 1272 Delaware Avenue Buffalo, NY 14209 <a href="http://www.lwvbn.org">www.lwvbn.org</a>  Phone: 716-884-3550 Email: <a href="mailto:lwvbn@buffnet.net">lwvbn@buffnet.net</a>
	Co-President	Margaret Brunson	<a href="mailto:lwvbn@buffnet.net">lwvbn@buffnet.net</a>	
CAZENOVIA	President	Wendy Taylor	<a href="mailto:wentaylor1@aol.com">wentaylor1@aol.com</a>	<a href="http://www.lwvcaz.org">www.lwvcaz.org</a>
	Vice-President	Anne Redfern	<a href="mailto:anneredfern@alltel.net">anneredfern@alltel.net</a>	
CENTRAL NASSAU	President	Barbara Fairfax	<a href="mailto:oma575@aol.com">oma575@aol.com</a>	
CHAUTAUQUA	Co-President	Marcia Merrins	<a href="mailto:mmerrins@netsync.net">mmerrins@netsync.net</a>	<a href="http://www.lwvchautauqua.org/">www.lwvchautauqua.org/</a>  Email: <a href="mailto:LWV@lwvchautauqua.org">LWV@lwvchautauqua.org</a>
	Co-President	Shirley Pulawski	<a href="mailto:missfabulous@verizon.net">missfabulous@verizon.net</a>	
CHEMUNG	President	Marty Oldfield	<a href="mailto:aoldfiel@stny.rr.com">aoldfiel@stny.rr.com</a>	

	Vice-President	Dr. Nancy Lane	<a href="mailto:Nlane2@stny.rr.com">Nlane2@stny.rr.com</a>	
COLUMBIA COUNTY	President	Cindy Van Alstyne	<a href="mailto:skrit@aol.com">skrit@aol.com</a>	
COOPERSTOWN	President	Ellen Tillapaugh	<a href="mailto:kuchtill@verizon.net">kuchtill@verizon.net</a>	Cooperstown LWV P.O. Box 426 Cooperstown, NY 13326
CORTLAND	President	Linda Eberly	<a href="mailto:leberly2@tcny.rr.com">leberly2@tcny.rr.com</a>	Phone: 516-221-1948
	1st Vice-President	Nancy Hansen	<a href="mailto:nancyh14@verizon.net">nancyh14@verizon.net</a>	
	2nd Vice-President	Shawn Smith	<a href="mailto:Mrs.ShawnSmith@gmail.com">Mrs.ShawnSmith@gmail.com</a>	
EAST NASSAU	President	Barbara Epstein	<a href="mailto:byeppie@aol.com">byeppie@aol.com</a>	
	1st Vice-President	Lorraine Newman	<a href="mailto:newlorr@optonline.net">newlorr@optonline.net</a>	
	1st Vice-President	Mary Price		
GENEVA	President	Judith M. Curtis	<a href="mailto:jkezdi@msn.com">jkezdi@msn.com</a>	<a href="http://www.geneva.ny.lwvnet.org/">www.geneva.ny.lwvnet.org/</a>
	Vice-President	Merry Henry	<a href="mailto:merryhenry30@hotmail.com">merryhenry30@hotmail.com</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:info@geneva.ny.lwvnet.org">info@geneva.ny.lwvnet.org</a>
GREAT NECK	Co-President	Shirley Siegal	<a href="mailto:siegalj33@optonline.net">siegalj33@optonline.net</a>	
	Co-President	Bernice Segalowitz	<a href="mailto:ivarseg@yahoo.com">ivarseg@yahoo.com</a>	
GREATER ONEIDA AREA	Co-President	Kathy Dorman	<a href="mailto:kdorman@oneidacsd.org">kdorman@oneidacsd.org</a>	
	Co-President	Kelly Rose	<a href="mailto:krose@hamilton.edu">krose@hamilton.edu</a>	
HAMPTONS	President	Carol Mellor	<a href="mailto:camellor@aol.com">camellor@aol.com</a>	<a href="http://www.suffolkcounty.org/Hamptons.htm">www.suffolkcounty.org/Hamptons.htm</a> Phone: 631-324-4637
	Co-President	Anne Marshall	<a href="mailto:apghnyc@aol.com">apghnyc@aol.com</a>	
HARRISON	President	Lola Geiger		Phone: 518-465-4162
HUNTINGTON	President	Judie Gorenstein	<a href="mailto:judieL728@aol.com">judieL728@aol.com</a>	<a href="http://www.suffolkcounty.org/Huntington.htm">www.suffolkcounty.org/Huntington.htm</a>
	Vice-President	Irene Ferrand	<a href="mailto:iferrand@optonline.net">iferrand@optonline.net</a>	Phone: 631-421-5164
	Vice-President	Katherine Hoak	<a href="mailto:khoak12737@optonline.net">khoak12737@optonline.net</a>	
LARCHMONT/MAMARONECK	President	Christie McEvoy Derrico	<a href="mailto:cderrico@soundshorelaw.com">cderrico@soundshorelaw.com</a>	Larchmont/Mamaroneck LWV P.O. Box 811 Larchmont, N.Y. 10538 <a href="http://www.watpa.org/lw/lm/">www.watpa.org/lw/lm/</a>
	Co-President	Nina Recio-Cuddy	<a href="mailto:nrc917@gmail.com">nrc917@gmail.com</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:LWV10538@aol.com">LWV10538@aol.com</a>
	Co-President	Jerri Lynn Fields	<a href="mailto:jerrilynn@fieldsburgess.com">jerrilynn@fieldsburgess.com</a>	

LONG BEACH	Co-President	Riza Laudin	<a href="mailto:rlaudin@gmail.com">rlaudin@gmail.com</a>	Longbeach LWV 248 W. Park Avenue Suite 238, Long Beach, NY 11561 <a href="http://www.lwvoflongbeachny.org/">www.lwvoflongbeachny.org/</a>  Phone: 516-889-8251 Email: <a href="mailto:info@lwvoflongbeachny.org">info@lwvoflongbeachny.org</a>
	Co-President	Jeanne Browne	<a href="mailto:jeabrowne@msn.com">jeabrowne@msn.com</a>	
MID-HUDSON	President	Jean McGarry	<a href="mailto:president@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org">president@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org</a>	Mid-Hudson LWV PO Box 3564 Kingston, NY 12402 <a href="http://www.midhudson.ny.lwnet.org/">www.midhudson.ny.lwnet.org/</a>  Phone: 845-340-2003 Email: <a href="mailto:info@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org">info@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org</a>
	1st Vice-President	Jacki Moriarty	<a href="mailto:1Vice-President@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org">1Vice-President@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org</a>	
	2nd Vice-President	Thomas Kadgen	<a href="mailto:2Vice-President@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org">2Vice-President@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org</a>	
	3rd Vice-President	Renee Sachs	<a href="mailto:3Vice-President@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org">3Vice-President@midhudson.ny.lwnet.org</a>	
NASSAU COUNTY ILO	Co-President	Paula Blum	<a href="mailto:paulablum@hotmail.com">paulablum@hotmail.com</a>	Nassau County LWV P.O. Box 539 Point Lookout, NY 11569 <a href="http://www.lwvofnassaucounty.org">www.lwvofnassaucounty.org</a>  Phone: 516-431-1628 Email: <a href="mailto:info@lwvofnassaucounty.org">info@lwvofnassaucounty.org</a>
	Co-President	Debbie Shichtman	<a href="mailto:DrDebbie@aol.com">DrDebbie@aol.com</a>	
NEW CASTLE	President	Sheila Crespi	<a href="mailto:asparks4@yahoo.com">asparks4@yahoo.com</a>	New Castle LWV P.O. Box 364 Chappaqua, NY 10514 <a href="http://www.watpa.org/lwnc/">www.watpa.org/lwnc/</a>  Email: <a href="mailto:lwvnewcastle@optonline.net">lwvnewcastle@optonline.net</a>
NEW ROCHELLE	President	Liz Richman	<a href="mailto:eckonet@optonline.net">eckonet@optonline.net</a>	<a href="http://www.watpa.org/lw/newrochelle/lwvnewro.html">www.watpa.org/lw/newrochelle/lwvnewro.html</a>
	1st Vice-President	Miriam Cohen	<a href="mailto:sbcohen1@optonline.net">sbcohen1@optonline.net</a>	
NEW YORK CITY	Co-President	Toni Coffee	<a href="mailto:tonicoffee@aol.com">tonicoffee@aol.com</a>	New York City LWV 150 Broadway, 14th Floor New York, New York 10038 <a href="http://www.lwnyc.org">www.lwnyc.org</a>  Phone: 212-725-3541
	Co-President	Elinor Miller	<a href="mailto:elinormi@earthlink.net">elinormi@earthlink.net</a>	
	Co-President	Laura Altschuler	<a href="mailto:lcaltschuler@vzavenue.net">lcaltschuler@vzavenue.net</a>	
	Co-President	Robin Bahr	<a href="mailto:rrbahr@verizon.net">rrbahr@verizon.net</a>	
	Co-President	Jane Colvin	<a href="mailto:JaneColvin914@aol.com">JaneColvin914@aol.com</a>	
	Co-President	Sheila Hosni	<a href="mailto:Sheila.Hosni@gmail.com">Sheila.Hosni@gmail.com</a>	
	Co-President	Gladys Krasner	<a href="mailto:Kgladys1@verizon.net">Kgladys1@verizon.net</a>	
ONEONTA	Co-President	Margaret Winne	<a href="mailto:mwinne003@stny.rr.com">mwinne003@stny.rr.com</a>	Oneonta LWV P.O. Box 434 Oneonta, NY 13820 <a href="http://www.lwvoneonta.org">www.lwvoneonta.org</a>  Phone: 607-436-4050
	Co-President	Catherine LaFontaine	<a href="mailto:clafontaine@stny.rr.com">clafontaine@stny.rr.com</a>	
ORLEANS	President	Lynn Phillips	<a href="mailto:lphillips@rochester.rr.com">lphillips@rochester.rr.com</a>	Phone: 585-589-9392
	Co-President	Rosalind Lind	<a href="mailto:rlind100@gmail.com">rlind100@gmail.com</a>	

PLATTSBURGH	President	Myra Decker	<a href="mailto:mystdek7@northnet.org">mystdek7@northnet.org</a>	Plattsburgh LWV 7 Woodland Hill Morrisonville, NY 12962 <a href="http://www.plattsburgh.ny.lwvnet.org">www.plattsburgh.ny.lwvnet.org</a>  Email: <a href="mailto:info@plattsburgh.ny.lwvnet.org">info@plattsburgh.ny.lwvnet.org</a>
PORT WASHINGTON-MANHASSET	President	Jane Thomas	<a href="mailto:jane.thomas@att.net">jane.thomas@att.net</a>	Port Washington-Manhasset LWV P.O. Box 305 Port Washington, NY 11050 <a href="http://www.members.aol.com/lwvoterspwma">www.members.aol.com/lwvoterspwma</a>  Email: <a href="mailto:Lwvoterspwma@aol.com">Lwvoterspwma@aol.com</a>
RENSSELEAR	Co-President	Gail DeMarco	<a href="mailto:gdemarco@nycap.rr.com">gdemarco@nycap.rr.com</a>	Rensselaer County LWV The Arts Center of the Capital Region 265 River St. Troy, NY 12180 <a href="http://www.lwvrc.org">www.lwvrc.org</a>  Phone: 518-273-0552 Email: <a href="mailto:info@lwvrc.org">info@lwvrc.org</a>
	Co-President	Diane Bell	<a href="mailto:dbell1@nycap.rr.com">dbell1@nycap.rr.com</a>	
RIVERTOWNS	President	Lindsay Feinburg	<a href="mailto:Lindsayesq@aol.com">Lindsayesq@aol.com</a>	<a href="http://www.watpa.org/lwv/rivertowns/">www.watpa.org/lwv/rivertowns/</a>
	1st Vice-President	Emma Lou Louis		
	2nd Vice-President	Jean Howell	<a href="mailto:erniejeanhowell@msn.com">erniejeanhowell@msn.com</a>	
ROCHESTER	President	Nancy Kleintop	<a href="mailto:kleintop@aol.com">kleintop@aol.com</a>	Rochester LWV 45 Exchange Blvd., Suite 508 Rochester, NY 14614 <a href="http://www.lwv-rma.org">www.lwv-rma.org</a>  Phone: 585-262-3730 Email: <a href="mailto:lwvrma@frontiernet.net">lwvrma@frontiernet.net</a>
ROCKLAND	President	Patricia Soto	<a href="mailto:mipopss@omh.state.ny.us">mipopss@omh.state.ny.us</a>	Rockland LWV P.O. Box 363 Suffern, NY 10901  Phone: 845-354-2411
	1st Vice-President	Linda Berns	<a href="mailto:linib@juno.com">linib@juno.com</a>	
	2nd Vice-President	Hermine Levine	<a href="mailto:hzevine@optonline.net">hzevine@optonline.net</a>	
RYE	Co-President	Anne Cochran	<a href="mailto:anne@carlisle-group.com">anne@carlisle-group.com</a>	Rye LWV PO Box 194 Rye, NY 10580 <a href="http://www.ryelwv.org">www.ryelwv.org</a>
	Co-President	Catherine Parker	<a href="mailto:parkersinrye@aol.com">parkersinrye@aol.com</a>	
	Vice-President	Stephen Meyers	<a href="mailto:Steve@SHMeyers.com">Steve@SHMeyers.com</a>	
SARATOGA COUNTY	President	Barbara Thomas	<a href="mailto:barbandbob220@verizon.net">barbandbob220@verizon.net</a>	Saratoga County LWV P.O. Box 1029 Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 <a href="http://www.lwvsaratoga.org">www.lwvsaratoga.org</a>  Phone: 518-885-9769 Email: <a href="mailto:info@lwvsaratoga.org">info@lwvsaratoga.org</a>

SAUGERTIES	Co-President	Sally Colclough	<a href="mailto:sacolclough@hvc.rr.com">sacolclough@hvc.rr.com</a>	
	Co-President	Mary Jane Koster	<a href="mailto:mjpackrat@aol.com">mjpackrat@aol.com</a>	
SCARSDALE	President	Adie Shore	<a href="mailto:absnyny@aol.com">absnyny@aol.com</a>	Scarsdale LWV Box 495 Scarsdale, NY 10583 <a href="http://www.lwvs.org">www.lwvs.org</a>  Email: <a href="mailto:webmaster@lwvs.org">webmaster@lwvs.org</a>
	1st Vice-President	Jane Vernon	<a href="mailto:jvatf@aol.com">jvatf@aol.com</a>	
	2nd Vice-President	Margaret Smith	<a href="mailto:reinedesaba@optonline.net">reinedesaba@optonline.net</a>	
SCHENECTADY	President	JoAnn Tobiesen	<a href="mailto:jtobiesen@hotmail.com">jtobiesen@hotmail.com</a>	Schenectady County LWV P.O. Box 9135 Schenectady, NY 12309 <a href="http://www.lwvschenectady.org">www.lwvschenectady.org</a>  Phone: 518-384-0804 Email: <a href="mailto:info@lwvschenectady.org">info@lwvschenectady.org</a>
SCHUYLER	President	Helene Chaika Fausold	<a href="mailto:hcausold@stny.rr.com">hcausold@stny.rr.com</a>	
	1st Vice-President	Mary Barnes	<a href="mailto:mbarnes@stny.rr.com">mbarnes@stny.rr.com</a>	
SHELTER ISLAND	President	Cathy Kenny	<a href="mailto:cathy_kenny@hotmail.com">cathy_kenny@hotmail.com</a>	Shelter Island LWV P.O. Box 396 Shelter Island Heights, NY 11965 <a href="http://www.suffolkcounty.org/ShelterIsland">www.suffolkcounty.org/ShelterIsland</a>
SMITHTOWN	President	Joyce Rosenthal	<a href="mailto:ejrosen@optonline.net">ejrosen@optonline.net</a>	<a href="http://www.suffolkcounty.org/smithtown">www.suffolkcounty.org/smithtown</a>
	1st Vice-President	Sondra Irvine	<a href="mailto:fsirvine@hotmail.com">fsirvine@hotmail.com</a>	
	2nd Vice-President	Lisa Scott	<a href="mailto:lisawscott@optonline.net">lisawscott@optonline.net</a>	
SOMERS	Co-President	Carol Sturtz	<a href="mailto:carmac4@comcast.net">carmac4@comcast.net</a>	
	Co-President	Harriet Leib	<a href="mailto:fitrose@aol.com">fitrose@aol.com</a>	
SOUTHWEST NASSAU	Co-President	Flora Schwartz	<a href="mailto:lesfggs@aol.com">lesfggs@aol.com</a>	
	Co-President	Patricia Sympson	<a href="mailto:psympson@optonline.net">psympson@optonline.net</a>	
Not available during the winter months	Co-President	Marjorie Latz	<a href="mailto:mjl121651@aol.com">mjl121651@aol.com</a>	
Not available during the winter months	Co-President	Eleanor Berger	<a href="mailto:ellieberger@aol.com">ellieberger@aol.com</a>	
STEBEN COUNTY	President	Susan Multer	<a href="mailto:gsmulter@stny.rr.com">gsmulter@stny.rr.com</a>	
	Vice-President	Susan Donderwicz	<a href="mailto:smdonder@syr.edu">smdonder@syr.edu</a>	

SUFFOLK COUNTY ILO	Co-President	Katherine Hoak	<a href="mailto:khoak12737@aol.com">khoak12737@aol.com</a>	Suffolk County LWV P.O. Box 1140 Stony Brook, NY 11790 <a href="http://www.lwv-suffolkcounty.org">www.lwv-suffolkcounty.org</a>  Phone: 631-862-6860
	Co-President	Lisa Scott	<a href="mailto:lisawscott@optonline.net">lisawscott@optonline.net</a>	
	1st Vice-President	Adam Gaus	<a href="mailto:adamgaus@optonline.net">adamgaus@optonline.net</a>	
SYRACUSE	Co-President	Joan Johnson		Syracuse LWV PO Box 11866 Syracuse, NY 13218 <a href="http://www.lwvsyr.org/index.html">www.lwvsyr.org/index.html</a>  Phone: 315-448-7199 Email: <a href="mailto:info@lwvsyr.org">info@lwvsyr.org</a>
	Co-President	Rae Rohfeld	<a href="mailto:rrohfeld@twcny.rr.com">rrohfeld@twcny.rr.com</a>	
TOMPKINS COUNTY	President	Kay Sharp		Tompkins County LWV Ithaca, New York <a href="http://www.lwvtompkins.14850.com/">www.lwvtompkins.14850.com/</a>  Phone: 607-273-8350 Email: <a href="mailto:lwvc@twcny.rr.com">lwvc@twcny.rr.com</a>
UTICA/ROME	Co-President	Carole Torok-Huxtable	<a href="mailto:dchuxtable@usadatanet.net">dchuxtable@usadatanet.net</a>	<a href="http://www.lwvuticarome.org">www.lwvuticarome.org</a>
	Co-President	Donna Gillette	<a href="mailto:donnagillette72@yahoo.com">donnagillette72@yahoo.com</a>	
WESTCHESTER COUNTY ILO	President	Mary Beth Gose	<a href="mailto:megose@att.net">megose@att.net</a>	Westchester County LWV 200 Hamilton Ave., White Plains Mall White Plains, NY 10601 <a href="http://www.lwvwestchester.org">www.lwvwestchester.org</a>  Phone: 914-949-0507 Email: <a href="mailto:LWVwestchester@verizon.net">LWVwestchester@verizon.net</a>
	1st Vice-President	Adelaide DiGiorgi	<a href="mailto:adigiorgi@optonline.net">adigiorgi@optonline.net</a>	
WHITE PLAINS	President	Marjorie Davies	<a href="mailto:Marpam2@verizon.net">Marpam2@verizon.net</a>	
	Vice-President	Madeline Zevon	<a href="mailto:MadelineZevon@gmail.com">MadelineZevon@gmail.com</a>	

**LOCAL LEAGUES IN NEW YORK STATE  
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Albany

**ALLEGANY COUNTY**

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Broome & Tioga

**CATTARAUGUS COUNTY**

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East Nassau

Great Neck

Greater Five Towns

Greater Westbury

Long Beach

Port Washington-

Manhasset

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Composed of Bronx, Kings (Brooklyn), Manhattan, New York, Queens, and Richmond (Staten Island) Counties

**NIAGARA COUNTY**

Buffalo/Niagara

**ONEIDA COUNTY**

Greater Oneida Area

Utica/Rome Metro Area

**ONONDAGA COUNTY**

Syracuse Metro Area

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Bronxville

Harrison

Larchmont/Mamaroneck

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New Rochelle

Rivertowns

Rye-Rye Brook-Port

Chester

Scarsdale

Somers

White Plains

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*Unorganized*

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*Unorganized*

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF  
NEW YORK STATE  
ORGANIZED COUNTIES**

(7/2008)



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Warren County  
Putnam County

**ILO (INTER-LEAGUE ORGANIZATIONS)**

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Suffolk County  
Westchester County

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East Nassau  
Great Neck  
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Long Beach  
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**SUFFOLK COUNTY**

Brookhaven  
Hamptons  
Huntington  
Shelter Island  
Smithtown

**WESTCHESTER COUNTY**

Bedford-Lewisboro-North Salem  
Bronxville  
Harrison  
Larchmont/Mamaroneck  
New Castle  
New Rochelle  
Rivertowns  
Rye-Rye-Brook-Port Chester  
Scarsdale  
Somers  
White Plains

**BULLETIN EXCHANGE 2008-2009**

Each year the New York State League sponsors a “**bulletin exchange**” between local Leagues to share information and ideas for bulletin editors to see how other VOTER editors place their publications together.

This is how the exchange works.

- 1. Find your name and League on the list below.**
- 2. Send September bulletin to the 8 names following yours.**
- 3. Send October bulletin to the 9<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup> name following yours.**
- 4. Continue to work forward in this manner with each subsequent edition of your bulletin.**

Establish a procedure to keep your mailing list current. Most importantly, take time to read the bulletins as they arrive. They are certain to be a source of ideas. Some articles may be suitable for reprinting (with credit) in your bulletin.

**Please note that the next page lists people that should receive your bulletin *in addition* to the people on this list. Please add them to your mailing list.**

League	Editor	Address		E-mail
Albany County LWV	Laura Ladd Bierman	111 Read Rd	Glenmont, NY 12077	<a href="mailto:laura@lwvny.org">laura@lwvny.org</a>
Bedford/Lewisboro/N. Salem	Jean Goldsmith	415 Route 22	North Salem, NY 10560	<a href="mailto:goldsmythj@aol.com">goldsmythj@aol.com</a>
Bronxville LWV	Janet Jaidi	130 Wrexham Road	Bronxville, NY 10708	<a href="mailto:jjaidi@optonline.net">jjaidi@optonline.net</a>
Brookhaven LWV	Nancy Marr	368 Private Rd	E Patchogue, NY 11772	<a href="mailto:enpymarr@optonline.net">enpymarr@optonline.net</a>
Broome/Tioga LWV	Jane Park	284 Ridgefield Road	Endicott, NY 13760	<a href="mailto:janepark@stny.rr.com">janepark@stny.rr.com</a>
Buffalo/Niagara LWV	Terri Parks	47 Danbury Lane	Buffalo, NY 14217	<a href="mailto:lwvoter@verizon.net">lwvoter@verizon.net</a>
Cazenovia LWV	Anne Saltman	2175 Ten Eyck Ave	Cazenovia, NY 13035	
Central Nassau LWV	Roslyn Weiss	321 Oakford Street	West Hempstead, NY 11552	<a href="mailto:roskweiss@aol.com">roskweiss@aol.com</a>
Chautauqua LWV	Priscilla Bernatz	68 Lambert Avenue	Fredonia, NY 14063	<a href="mailto:priscilla@mainalley.com">priscilla@mainalley.com</a>
Chautauqua LWV	Judy Reynolds	305 Chestnut Street	Fredonia, NY 14063	<a href="mailto:jtrpurple@yahoo.com">jtrpurple@yahoo.com</a>
Cooperstown LWV	Joyce Hickling	330 Hickling Road	Edmeston, NY 13335	<a href="mailto:jhh330@earthlink.net">jhh330@earthlink.net</a>
Cortland LWV	Sharon Stevans	29 Hamlin Street	Cortland, NY 13045	
E. Nassau LWV	Paula Blum	1385 Lyon Place	Wantagh, NY 11793	<a href="mailto:paulablum@hotmail.com">paulablum@hotmail.com</a>
Geneva LWV	Loren Gifford	5242 County Road 11	Geneva, NY 14544	
Great Neck LWV	Bernice Segalowitz	83 Allenwood Road	Great Neck, NY 11023	<a href="mailto:ivarseg@yahoo.com">ivarseg@yahoo.com</a>
Great Neck LWV	Shirley Siegal	25 Cooper Drive	Great Neck, NY 11023	<a href="mailto:shirleyjunes@verizon.net">shirleyjunes@verizon.net</a>
Hamptons LWV	Maura Lester	912 Springs Fireplace Rd	East Hampton, NY 11937	<a href="mailto:maura912@optonline.net">maura912@optonline.net</a>
Harrison LWV	Barbara Malfitano	216 Union Avenue	Harrison, NY 10528	
Huntington LWV	Irene Ferrand	37 Sherwood Drive	Huntington, NY 11743	<a href="mailto:iferrand@optonline.net">iferrand@optonline.net</a>
Larchmont/ Mamaroneck LWV	Rosita Fichtel	18 Willow Avenue	Larchmont, NY 10538	<a href="mailto:fichtel@cloud9.net">fichtel@cloud9.net</a>
Long Beach LWV	Jacqueline Zapson	93 Kerrigan Street	Long Beach, NY 11561	<a href="mailto:JZapson@optonline.net">JZapson@optonline.net</a>
Mid-Hudson LWV	Lenore Ridgway	19 Johnston Ave	Kingston, NY 12401	<a href="mailto:lwvlee@cs.com">lwvlee@cs.com</a>
New Castle LWV	Valerie Castleman	PO Box 376	Chappaqua, NY 10514	<a href="mailto:vcastleman@aol.com">vcastleman@aol.com</a>
New Rochelle LWV	Joan Silverstein	89 Harding Drive	New Rochelle, NY 10801	<a href="mailto:joan.silverstein2@verizon.net">joan.silverstein2@verizon.net</a>

League	Editor	Address		E-mail
New York City LWW	Beatrix Dinitz	250 Cabrini Blvd #2H	New York, NY 10033	
Oneonta LWW	Vivien Anderson	27 Elm St.	Oneonta, NY 13820	<a href="mailto:andersonv@hartwick.edu">andersonv@hartwick.edu</a>
Plattsburgh LWW	Stasia Arcarese	118 Prospect Avenue	Plattsburgh, NY 12901	<a href="mailto:larry.arcarese@verizon.net">larry.arcarese@verizon.net</a>
Port Washington LWW	Patricia Maher	25 Bogart Avenue	Port Washington, NY 11050	
Rensselaer LWW	Mary Muller	207 Second Street	Troy, NY 12180	<a href="mailto:mullers@mac.com">mullers@mac.com</a>
Rivertowns LWW	Emma Lou Louis	125 Bellair Drive	Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522	
Rochester LWW	Jane Schmitt	139 Campfire Rd. N.	Henrietta, NY 14467	<a href="mailto:mjane@rochester.rr.com">mjane@rochester.rr.com</a>
Rockland County LWW	Hermine Levine	8 Capri Drive	Spring Valley, NY 10977	
Saratoga LWW	Margot Ammon	238 Nelson Avenue	Saratoga Springs, NY 12866	<a href="mailto:clipon@verizon.net">clipon@verizon.net</a>
Saugerties LWW	Sherry Haluska	34 Bennet Avenue	Saugerties, NY 12477	
Scarsdale LWW	Nancy Michaels	41 Graham Road	Scarsdale, NY 10583	<a href="mailto:eatright1@aol.com">eatright1@aol.com</a>
Schenectady LWW	Helen MacDonald	224 Robinson Street	Schenectady, NY 12304	<a href="mailto:helenmacdonald@yahoo.com">helenmacdonald@yahoo.com</a>
Schuyler LWW	Maxine Neal	211 Reading Road	Watkins Glen, NY 14891	<a href="mailto:maxn@lightlink.com">maxn@lightlink.com</a>
Smithtown LWW	Lisa Scott	322 River Road	Saint James, NY 11780	<a href="mailto:lisawscott@optonline.net">lisawscott@optonline.net</a>
Somers LWW	Adelaide Hurst	572B Heritage Hills	Somer, NY 10589	<a href="mailto:AHurst160@aol.com">AHurst160@aol.com</a>
Southwest Nassau LWW	Marjorie Latz	1668 Sherbourne Road	Valley Stream, NY 11580	<a href="mailto:mjl121651@aol.com">mjl121651@aol.com</a>
Steuben County LWW	Linda Ferris	8788 Route 53	Bath, NY 14810	<a href="mailto:lindaf14810@yahoo.com">lindaf14810@yahoo.com</a>
Tompkins County LWW	Robert Silsbee	433 Savage Farm Drive	Ithaca, NY 14850	<a href="mailto:RHS1@cornell.edu">RHS1@cornell.edu</a>
Utica/Rome LWW	Krista Hartman	319 Matthew Street	Rome, NY 13440	<a href="mailto:Khartman@mvcc.edu">Khartman@mvcc.edu</a>
White Plains LWW	Jeane Garment	9 Murchison Place	White Plains, NY 10605	<a href="mailto:jgarment@optonline.net">jgarment@optonline.net</a>

### **IN ADDITION**

- **One copy to Martha Kennedy, 214 Winne Road, Delmar, New York 12054**
- **Marcia Merrins, 42 Rosalyn Court, Fredonia, New York 14063**
- **One copy to LWVNYS, 62 Grand Street, Albany 12207**
- **E-Mail copy to Adam Gaus (for the LWVNYS website) at: [webmaster-27@lwvny-bulletins.org](mailto:webmaster-27@lwvny-bulletins.org)**
- **Three hard copies or one e-mail copy to LWVUS (they preferred them e-mailed to [membership@lwv.org](mailto:membership@lwv.org) or hard copy mail to: 1730M Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036)**
- **One copy to your League's Regional Director listed below.**

**REGIONAL DIRECTORS  
LOCAL LEAGUE ASSIGNMENTS**

**Edna Vincenti**

**516-627-1987**

**[edna.vincenti@vincenti.com](mailto:edna.vincenti@vincenti.com)**

1. Nassau County ILO
2. East Nassau
3. Central Nassau
4. Great Neck
5. Greater 5 Towns
6. Long Beach
7. Port Washington-Manhasset
8. Rye/Ryebrook/PortChester

**Rosemary MacLaughlin**

**914-232-5735**

**[rosem@bestweb.net](mailto:rosem@bestweb.net)**

1. Bronxville
2. Larchmont/Mamaroneck
3. New Rochelle
4. Bed/Lewist/N.Salem
5. Westchester ILO
6. The Hamptons
7. Putnam County MAL Unit

**Kathy Dorman**

**315-280-0434**

**[kdorman@oneidacsd.org](mailto:kdorman@oneidacsd.org)**

1. Schuyler
2. Chemung
3. Steuben County
4. Broome/Tioga
5. Cortland
6. Rivertowns
7. Somers

**Barbara Thomas 518-885-9769**

**[barbandbob220@verizon.net](mailto:barbandbob220@verizon.net)**

1. Saratoga
2. Warren County MAL
3. Rensselaer
4. Albany
5. Schenectady
6. New York City
7. Harrison

**Helene Chaika Fausold**

**607-351-8024**

**[hcfausold@stny.rr.com](mailto:hcfausold@stny.rr.com)**

1. White Plains
2. Brookhaven
3. New Castle
4. Scarsdale
5. Shelter Island
6. Smithtown
7. Huntington
8. Suffolk Co. ILO

**JoAnn Ross**

**716-631-9351**

**[jross18@roadrunner.com](mailto:jross18@roadrunner.com)**

1. Geneva,
2. Rochester,
3. Orleans,
4. Rochester
5. Plattsburgh
6. Livingston
7. Chautauqua

**Georgia T. DeGregorio**

**585-787-9692**

**[georgiatd@frontiernet.net](mailto:georgiatd@frontiernet.net)**

1. Syracuse
2. Greater Oneida
3. Utica Rome
4. Buffalo/Niagara
5. Tompkins
6. Cazenovia
7. Cortland

**Carol Huxtable 315-822-5283**

**[dchuxtable@peoplepc.com](mailto:dchuxtable@peoplepc.com)**

1. Cooperstown
2. Oneonta
3. Mid Hudson
4. Rockland
5. Columbia

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](mailto:mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com)

## **VOTER SERVICE REPORT**

### *State Legislature Races*

#### **Suggested Questions for your Voters Guides/Candidates Forums**

For your voters guides and candidates forums for the state assembly and senate races, we have come up with some topics and suggested questions for candidates to address.

**We would suggest that you ask at least one question of great local importance cast in statewide terms: “How would you represent XXX on the question of XXXX”?**

**We would suggest that you ask one question on campaign finance reform on the state level. Here’s a question that asks about the candidate’s support for the elements of the LWVNY’s proposed legislation:**

- **“Do you support campaign finance reform that would:**
  1. limit individual contributions to federal levels (\$2300 per election);
  2. ban contributions from party housekeeping accounts, corporations, unions, LLPs and LLCs;
  3. strengthen transparency; and
  4. strengthen enforcement by creation of an independent enforcement agency with subpoena and random audit power, and making willful serious violations felonies?
- **On property tax reform:** “Do you think that NYS should limit property taxes through such methods as a cap or a “circuit breaker”? If so, how would you propose to ensure that education in New York State is funded at an appropriate level?”
- **On energy:** “How would you continue the work started by the legislative bodies to provide incentives for the development and use of renewable energy sources in New York State?”
- **On the global environment:** “As the third most populous state, what, if any, special efforts do you think New York State should make towards reducing the US’s contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and global warming?”
- **On redistricting:** “Do you support reform of the redistricting process to ensure fair and effective representation for all NYS citizens? What specific reforms do you propose, and how should NYS achieve those reforms?”
- **On health care:** “Are you in favor of New York State playing an increased role in ensuring that all New Yorkers, including the medically indigent and mentally ill, have access to a basic level of quality care? If so, what [legislation?] would you propose?”

### *A Desperate Need for Election Inspectors and Poll Workers*

A quick survey of county Boards of Election web sites reveals a very common issue for the 2008 elections: the shortage of poll inspectors and workers. In NYS, factors contributing to the shortage include the extraordinary length of the shift and the approximately \$10/hour pay. Workers come from lists submitted by the major parties or by the Board commissioners themselves; so, being an enrolled Democrat or Republican is part of the criteria. The election law states that they must be registered voters; so, anyone under 18 is also excluded.

County boards are concerned about the aging of the “regulars”, particularly since new technology (in the form of new voting machines) and data-base driven voter rolls (with an attendant need to understand the data flows, if not the technology that produce them) are not necessarily within the “regular’s” comfort zone.

While it might seem unusual for the League to encourage what, in this state, is somewhat of a partisan activity, we urge you to ***encourage your qualified League members to contact their political parties or Board of Elections to offer their services as election inspectors/poll workers*** (although this is not a great idea for your President or Voter Service director).

Here’s some boilerplate for your “Voter”; we’ve borrowed some language from our friends at NYPIRG:

The XXXXX County Board of Elections needs YOU!

How would you like to help protect democracy and be paid at the same time? You can by working at the polls this year!

Remember the 2000 Presidential Election — the mass confusion, turmoil, and contested vote totals that arose from a confusing ballot design, hanging chads and flawed election administration? Watch out! This year’s anticipated massive turnout at the polls, coupled with the availability of new voting systems, threatens that sort of chaos here in New York.

After reading this, who would be masochistic enough to volunteer?

County boards throughout the state are in great need of election inspectors and poll workers, especially since the technology supporting the voting process is going to change. To qualify, you must be a registered voter in XXXX County, be enrolled in either the Democratic or Republican party, and be able to speak, read and write the English language. You will be trained by the Board of Elections, and it’s a paying job! This is a great way to serve the voters of New York State. Call your XXXX County Board of Elections (PHONE or EMAIL) to find out more!

### ***Expect Problems with the Rolls at the Polls***

As you know, and as our Elections Specialist Aimee Allaud will further describe, the records of each voter on the statewide database and the voters that submit a registration form are subject to a number of automated verification routines on the statewide level. This might, through no fault of the voter, result in his/her registration being “flagged” as a problem of some sort for some reason. This can be a result of matches or mismatches on the identifying and contact information for that voter between and among various statewide databases. The information on the problematic voters is reported to the local boards of elections – often more than one – that need to be involved in resolving the discrepancies. Depending on the number and complexity of the problems and the ability of the local board to address them in a timely fashion, these problems may or may not be resolved in time for that voter to appear on the rolls for the election.

These voters will need advisement [advice?] about what to do if they go to the polls and find that they are not on the rolls. The LWVNYS Voters Guide Part 1 has printed information about what the voter should do, both before and at the polls, to ensure that their vote is recorded.

We would urge Leagues to check with their local Board of Elections to see how successful they have been locally in resolving data base issues for the voter records referred to them as problems. They have reports of the number of records in unresolved status that will give you some idea of the breadth of the problem. In general, while up-to-date boards seem to be staying on top of things, New York City and some southern counties have not been as successful.

### ***New Accessible Machines***

Voters Guide Part 1 went to press with the best information that we could gather at the time. Our available sources, vendors and advocates for the disabled provided information about the common characteristics of the new machines and voting processes that users of both the AutoMark and ImageCast machines will find at the polls this election season. However, with the training efforts being launched this summer, information about these machines and graphics associated with “how to’s” are improving daily on the local county board web sites and should only get better as the summer goes on. Stay in touch with the State Board of Elections and the local board web sites over the summer to get improving information about the machines.

### ***Voters Guide Reminders and Web Availability***

You should have received Part 1; Part 2 is in the works. You can retrieve both the text and the printer-ready format (free of charge this year) from the LWVNYS web site. Your comments and suggestions for next year are welcome. As you are aware, staffing issues at the LWVNYS office and the change in executive directors hampered our ability to do more regionally-oriented guides this year. Input from many Leagues pointed to issues with the tabloid format. The cost of printing was greatly increased over last year, making the guides hard to afford for many Leagues.

Voters Guide, Part 2 is designed to address ballot proposals.

### **New Voting Rights Pamphlet Series: “Your Right to Vote in New York State”**

We are in the final stages of reviewing and preparing for publication 5 new LWVNYS pamphlets related to voting rights for 5 different special populations. These are the product of a lot of time spent on the web looking at information for these specific populations, reviewing the election law, and rewording/updating with additional information documents we already have. The pamphlets have been reviewed by our election law/voting systems specialist and by representatives from service organizations for the populations represented. HOWEVER, PLEASE FEEL FREE TO REVIEW the text, which is provided below, AND COMMENT to me ([mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com](mailto:mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com) or 518-475-0969).

The series is entitled “Your Right to Vote in New York State” and will have a common look, feel and format, and will be clearly and prominently branded “LWV”. The individual populations are:

- 1) College Students
- 2) Individuals with Criminal Convictions and Those Detained in Jail/Prison
- 3) Homeless Individuals
- 4) Individuals with Mental Health Disabilities
- 5) Individuals with Disabilities [oriented primarily to the physically disabled]

- Each pamphlet addresses the special needs of that population.
- Each will be put on the LWVNYS web site in BOTH print-ready-pamphlet PDF format and as HTML documents. You should feel free to use the information in your local publications or to reproduce the pamphlet format at will, free of charge.

- While some basic voting information will be included, the pamphlets are not meant to be complete voter guides unto themselves. While they function reasonably well on their own for that purpose, they are meant as supplements to a more complete voter guide, such as the LWVNYS Voters Guides Part 1 and 2.
- There is standard text that will appear at the end of all the pamphlets with basic voting information; that text is only included once here. There is an item in the standard text about being called to jury duty if one registers to vote because these populations can be especially concerned about that eventuality.

The beauty of publishing to the web is that we can change these documents as our information becomes better, more accurate and reflective of the needs of these populations. We would encourage you to print a limited number, so that as the pamphlets are updated you will be inclined to re-retrieve the latest version.

### **Your Right to Vote in New York State: College Students**

The right to vote is fundamental in a democratic society. The following information will help make it easy for you to exercise this right. To be eligible to vote, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen
- be at least 18 years old on Election Day
- have lived at your present address for at least 30 days before election day
- have registered to vote.

If you are in college, the following information will help you to decide whether to register and vote in your home district/state or at your college address. There are many good reasons for registering and voting at either residence, but keep in mind, in most cases the final choice is really yours. You can, of course, register and vote in only one locality – either at your former address or at your college address.

#### ***What are the reasons for registering and voting in my college community?***

In making the choice where to register to vote, you should consider that, while you might have a close relationship with and interest in your former community, you *do also* have a stake in the local issues of your college community. Issues such as off-campus housing and zoning restrictions, the environment, taxes, transportation and personal safety all affect your quality of living. Voting in your college community also is more convenient and relieves you of the need to apply for and return an absentee ballot. Every voter needs to have information about the issues and the candidates. Registering and voting at college can give you the opportunity to become involved with, and informed about, the local issues in your college town or city. Becoming involved in the issues, and learning about local politics, are some of the ways in which you can begin to build a relationship with other residents of the community. If you consider the college community your primary residence, you should vote in the community.

#### ***Am I really a resident of my college community?***

Although there have been some historical challenges to the residency of college students by some involved in elections in New York State, the county boards of election have become aware of the legal issues involved in questioning or challenging students about their current or future intentions for residing in the college locality. If you are concerned about how you will be treated when submitting your voter registration application in your college community, check with your campus student affairs

office, NYPIRG chapter, or other student organizations involved in political activity. You can also check with the town/city clerk or the county board of elections.

Students live in their college towns anywhere from nine to 12 months of the year, for at least four years. This means that students are no more transient than the average American family, which typically moves once every four years. Moreover, the U.S. Census Bureau considers students to be residents of their college community. Federal funds are distributed to municipalities based on figures that include the student population. Students contribute to the college community in many valuable ways. They work as volunteers in a host of civic organizations, help to create jobs in the community, bolster the local economy, and pay sales and gasoline taxes.

***What are the reasons for registering at my prior address?***

If you don't consider your college community your primary residence and/or you have a special interest in the local issues at your old address, you have a good reason for voting there. The people and issues you vote for will have impact that is more lasting on you if you intend to return to this location to live. It is also possible that you are still subject to taxes and student loan/scholarship regulations at your prior address. If this is the case, having a voice in the policy decisions about these issues might be important for you. Just remember, if you want to vote at your prior residence, you must be registered at that address and be aware of absentee ballot regulations and procedures.

***How do I know how, when, and where to register and vote?***

You may register in person at your local board of elections or at any state agency participating in the National Voter Registration Act, on any business day throughout the year. You may register by mail. Forms are available from your county board of elections, town and city halls, post office, political parties, various state offices, and the League of Women Voters. Contact the League of Women Voters of New York State - 1-866-LWVNYS1, the New York State Board of Elections - 1-800-FOR-VOTE, or your county board of elections to have a voter registration form sent to you. You may also download a voter registration form in New York State. Go to [www.elections.state.ny.us](http://www.elections.state.ny.us) to find an online voter registration form that you can download.

***How do I get an absentee ballot?***

You need an absentee ballot if you are a registered voter but will be away from your county on Election Day. You can request an absentee ballot from your county board of elections or download one from the New York State Board of Elections website: [www.elections.state.ny.us](http://www.elections.state.ny.us). Upon completion, your application must be mailed or delivered to your county board of elections. Once they have received your application, your county board of elections will mail or give the ballot to you. To vote by absentee ballot in New York State, your ballot must be post-marked on or before Election Day and must be received by the board of elections no later than seven days after Election Day.

**Your Right to Vote in New York State: Individuals with Criminal Convictions and Those Detained in Jail/Prison**

Voting is an important part of being a U. S. citizen. The people who are elected this year will make decisions about things that directly affect your life, like your taxes, the education of your children and/or grandchildren, and changes in the laws of our state and nation. Voting is your chance to choose the decision makers and tell them what you want. To be eligible to vote in New York State, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen
- be at least 18 years old on Election Day
- have lived at your permanent address for at least 30 days before election day

- not be a convicted felon *who is in jail or on parole*
- have registered to vote.

***I have a criminal history. Am I eligible to vote?***

According to New York State Election Law § 5-106, individuals who are either in jail/ prison for a **felony** conviction OR are on parole for **felony** conviction cannot vote. While this means that some persons with criminal convictions are legally prohibited from voting, the majority of individuals with criminal histories *can* and *should* vote.

The following list has examples of individuals with criminal histories who **are eligible** to register and vote:

- those convicted of a misdemeanor, not a felony;
- those currently in jail awaiting grand jury action, trial or disposition of a case, but not yet convicted;
- those convicted of a felony who do not receive a sentence of imprisonment;
- those convicted of a felony who did receive a sentence of incarceration, but who are no longer in prison and not on parole.

If you meet the above criteria, you may register and vote in the upcoming election.

***Can I vote in New York if I'm on probation?***

Yes. If you are otherwise qualified to vote, anyone who is on probation, even if convicted of a felony, may register and vote in New York.

***How do I register to vote?***

You need to fill out and submit a Voter Registration form. You may register in person at your local board of elections or at any state agency participating in the National Voter Registration Act, on any business day throughout the year. You may register by mail. Forms are available from your county board of elections, town and city halls, post office, political parties, various state offices, and the League of Women Voters. Contact the League of Women Voters of New York State - 1-866-LWVNYS1, the New York State Board of Elections - 1-800-FOR-VOTE, or your county board of elections to have a voter registration form sent to you. You may also download a voter registration form in New York State from [www.elections.state.ny.us](http://www.elections.state.ny.us) . Complete, sign, and submit the form, either in person or by mail.

***Do I have to have a Certificate of Relief from Disabilities or other documentation about my criminal history in order to register to vote?***

No. You do not need to provide any documentation about your criminal history in order to register.

***What address should I put on the voter registration form if I am in jail?***

If you are in jail or prison awaiting grand jury action or trial, or confined after conviction for an offense other than a felony, you should register to vote in the county of your permanent address. Put your permanent home address on the registration form, not the address of the facility where you are incarcerated.

***How do I vote if I'm in jail?***

You will vote by absentee ballot. To get an absentee ballot, you must fill out an absentee ballot application form. You can request the application form by writing to your county board of elections or

you can download one from the New York State Board of Elections website ([www.elections.state.ny.us](http://www.elections.state.ny.us)). See the instructions below for writing to the board of elections; if the information you provide them in the letter is sufficient, they may consider the letter an absentee ballot application.

Upon completion, your application must be mailed or delivered to your county board of elections. Once they have received your application, your county board of elections will mail your ballot to you. To vote by absentee ballot in New York State, your ballot must be post-marked on or before Election Day and must be received by the board of elections no later than seven days after Election Day.

***How should I request an Absentee Ballot?***

Request an Absentee Ballot by sending a letter to the Board of Elections of the county where you are registered. The letter must be received by the county board of elections no earlier than 30 days and no later than seven days before the election. The letter must contain the following information:

- the address where you registered
- the address where the ballot is to be sent
- the reason for the request
- the signature of the voter.

An Absentee Ballot application and your Absentee Ballot will then be mailed to you. The application form must be complete and mailed with your ballot. Your ballot must be postmarked no later than the day before the election.

Alternatively, you may pick up an absentee ballot application from your county Board of Elections. Upon completion, applications must be mailed to your county board of elections no later than the seventh day before the election, or they may be delivered in person no later than the day before the election. You will then receive your ballot, which you must return to the board with a postmark no later than the day before the election.

If you cannot pick up your ballot, or will not be able to receive it through the mail on time, you have the right to designate someone to pick your ballot up for you as late as the day before the election. Only the person designated on your application may pick up and deliver your ballot.

***How do I fill out the absentee ballot application?***

Fill in your name and the permanent address where you are registered to vote.

If you are detained in jail or prison awaiting grand jury action or trial, or confined after you have been convicted for an offense that was not a felony, fill in the appropriate information in section E. Write the jail or prison address as the location where the ballot should be mailed, or designate a person to pick it up, or a person's address to receive it in the mail for you.

## **Your Right to Vote in New York State: Homeless Individuals**

### ***Do homeless people have the right to vote?***

**YES.** In 1984 a federal court in New York explicitly found that homeless persons could not be denied the right to vote just because they did not live in a traditional residence.

The Coalition for the Homeless filed a lawsuit that guaranteed the right to vote to homeless New Yorkers, whether they are living in shelters, in welfare hotels, or on the streets. All you need to do is list the address of the homeless shelter or drop-in center as your residential address. Otherwise, to be eligible to vote, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen
- be at least 18 years old on Election Day
- have stayed at your present location for at least 30 days before election day
- have registered to vote.

### ***Why Should I Vote?***

In order for our government to truly represent the people, citizens must vote.

- Voting defines our democracy.
- It is an expression of equality.
- It is your right.
- It doesn't matter if you are rich or poor.
- It gives you a voice in your community.
- When you don't vote, you allow others to speak for you.

### ***Why do people not vote?***

Many potential voters say, "My vote doesn't count, and it doesn't directly affect my life." Others say that they do not vote because those with money can influence the government. Still others say that their own vote will not make a difference.

### ***What are some reasons I should vote?***

Each election, low income and homeless individuals vote at a lower rate than people with higher incomes, despite the fact that many policy decisions directly impact people who are economically disadvantaged. Currently, issues such as raising the minimum wage and funding certain social welfare and housing programs are being debated in the U.S. Congress and in communities around the country.

- **It is your tax money.** The candidate you vote for may decide how much of your money to allocate for public services and defense AND taxes.
- **It is your health care.** His or her decisions on healthcare issues, Medicaid and Medicare determine the availability of your health care.
- **It is your job.** The candidate that you vote for may be responsible for what job training is available, health insurance through your employer, and airiness in hiring
- **It is your housing.** He or she may make decisions that influence housing subsidies and, most importantly, affordable housing.
- **It is your social programs and services.** The person that you elect makes decisions that effect how much money is given to public assistance and services like substance abuse, counseling, HIV and others.

***What should I say is my home/mailling address on the registration form?***

You should enter the location of where you stay at night, which can be a street corner, a park, a shelter, a bus station, or any other location. This address will be used by the board of elections to assign you to the appropriate polling location. In addition, you must provide a mailing address so that voter notification cards and other election materials may be sent to you. Having your mailing address also helps the boards of elections maintain current and accurate voter registration lists. The address you give as your mailing address may be that of a local advocacy organization, shelter, outreach center, or anywhere else willing to accept mail on your behalf. Your mailing address does not have to be your residential address.

***What if I don't have the required identification?***

If you register by **mail**, in order for the board of elections to verify your identity in advance of voting, you must provide a driver's license number or the last four digits of your Social Security number on your voter registration form. If you don't have these numbers or they can't be verified, first-time mail-in registrants must provide another identification document, and should bring it with them to the polls. Acceptable identification for first-time mail-in registrants includes a current and valid photo ID, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document that shows the name and address of the voter. *Since first-time mail-in registrants may have to provide some sort of identifying documentation at the polls, **homeless registrants without any of the documents listed above may want to register to vote in person** at their local board of elections or other registration location, such as a state agency office (the Department of Motor Vehicles for example).*

***What if I am not on the roles at the polling place?***

Ask the poll worker for an affidavit ballot, and ask them how to follow up to make sure that your registration information is correctly on file.

**Your Right to Vote in New York State: Individuals with Mental Health Disabilities*****Do I have the right to vote if I have a mental health problem?***

**YES!** According to New York State election law, if you are otherwise eligible to vote, **you are only prevented from voting if you have been adjudged incompetent by order of a court.** To be otherwise eligible to vote, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen
- be at least 18 years old on Election Day
- have lived at your present address for at least 30 days before election day
- have registered to vote.

**No person is prohibited from voting simply because he or she been subjected to civil commitment.** If you are not sure of your legal right to vote, the board of elections will check your status after you file your registration form and inform you of any considerations.

***Will my benefits and services be affected by my registering to vote?***

No, there is no relationship between registering to vote and your eligibility for benefits and services.

***Why should I vote?***

Each year, 44 million Americans will experience a diagnosable mental health problem. If even a fraction of these individuals were mobilized, they could form a powerful voting bloc. An educated,

voting mental health constituency could help inform policy decisions in areas such as mental health funding, involuntary outpatient commitment laws, seclusion and restraint standards, privacy rights, employment rights, and much more. Without the backing of voters, many mental health advocacy efforts are bound to fall short.

### **Your Right to Vote in New York State: Individuals with Disabilities**

#### ***Can I count on voting in New York State at a polling place if I am physically disabled?***

Polling places in New York State are required to be accessible, but polling places may apply for and be granted an exemption from this requirement for various reasons.

#### ***What can I do if I want to vote at an accessible polling place?***

If you have been assigned to a polling place that is not accessible, you can apply to have your registration records moved to an accessible polling place that has the same ballot. You must apply at least two weeks before the election, and you may specify which polling place you wish to use. If there is no accessible polling place with the same ballot, the Board of Elections will treat your application for an accessible polling place as an application for an absentee ballot, and supply you with an absentee ballot.

#### ***Can I vote if I can't get out to a polling place?***

Yes, you can vote by absentee ballot. You must first obtain an application for an absentee ballot from the board of elections, fill it out, and mail it in. You can call and ask them to send you one, or print it from their web site at [www.elections.state.ny.us](http://www.elections.state.ny.us). They will mail you your absentee ballot before the election.

#### ***Do I have to apply for an absentee ballot every time I want to vote?***

No. If you claim permanent disability or illness, you can file another application with the board of elections which contains a statement showing the particulars of your disability or illness. The board will maintain the information that you are permanently disabled and send an absentee ballot for each election, until your registration is no longer valid (if you move from your address of record, for example).

#### ***Will there be voting machines at the polling place that is accessible to people with various handicaps?***

For the last two hundred years, individuals with a mobility impairment, learning disability and/or visual impairment could not vote independently and privately. For the fall 2008 elections and thereafter, as part of New York State's implementation of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), there will be at least one ballot marking device per polling place which will be accessible to individuals with disabilities. These devices enable individuals with disabilities, who cannot use a lever machine or mark a paper ballot, to create a marked paper ballot for casting their vote on Election Day. This is accomplished through the following interfaces, features and accessories that assist voters in the independent voting process:

- For voters who cannot see or read the ballot text, an audio interface recites the ballot, including all contests and candidates, and allows the voter to make selections. It also verifies selections by reciting them back to the voter.
- For voters with some form of visual impairment or illiterate voters, a key pad with Braille enables the voter to navigate through the ballot and record their vote.

- For voters that are unable to use a pen, or who are quadriplegic or paraplegic, a “sip and puff” device allows them to navigate the ballot and make their selections.
- For voters with limited manual dexterity, accessible “paddles”, access pads, foot pads and buttons allow them to navigate the ballot and make selections.

These interfaces and features, and multi-language capability, are common to the two brands of Ballot Marking Devices (BMDs) that New York counties have chosen. New York City, Erie, Rockland, Schenectady and Albany counties have chosen the AutoMark device, and all other counties have chosen the ImageCast device. These devices will be used to assist voters in marking their ballots only; the actual reading and counting of these ballots, for this election, will be done centrally in a manner determined by each county’s Board of Elections.

### ***How do I vote using these new machines?***

Here is the process that a person voting on the new voting machines will follow at their polling place:

- The voter will check in at the registration desk and obtain a paper ballot (if not printed automatically by the machine).
- The voter will take the ballot to the ballot marking device, and will use the device to record their vote on the ballot. If requested, a poll worker can help in inserting the ballot.
- The voter will take the completed ballot to a secure deposit location to be counted later by the Board of Elections. If requested, a poll worker can insert the completed ballot in a privacy sleeve and take it to the deposit location.

If you wish, you may bring someone to the polls to help you. Poll workers are there to assist you and trained to do so, and will do so in a bipartisan fashion (both a Democrat and Republican will assist you). Be sure to communicate with them if you need help or the instructions are unclear. There are different ways available to use the machines depending on your disability. Make sure to tell the poll worker whether you are blind or visually impaired; whether you need the audio interface because you cannot read or see the ballot, or you speak a different language; or whether you have no or limited use of your hands and need to use either the paddles or the “sip and puff” device.

Poll workers can also assist a voter in inserting the blank ballot into the ballot marking device

## **TO BE PUT AT THE END OF ALL THE ABOVE REFERENCED PUBLICATIONS**

### ***How do I register to vote?***

You need to fill out and submit a Voter Registration form. You may register in person at your local board of elections or at any state agency participating in the National Voter Registration Act, on any business day throughout the year. You may also register by mail. Forms are available from your county board of elections, town and city halls, post offices, political parties, various state offices, and the League of Women Voters. Contact the League of Women Voters of New York State - 1-866-LWVNYS1, the New York State Board of Elections - 1-800-FOR-VOTE, or your county board of elections to have a voter registration form sent to you. You may also download a voter registration form in New York State from [www.elections.state.ny.us](http://www.elections.state.ny.us) . Complete, sign, and submit the form, either in person or by mail.

***If I register to vote, will I be called for jury duty?***

The roles of prospective jurors are compiled from a number of sources, so registering to vote does not necessarily mean that you will be called. If you are called, jurors can often be excused for a valid health reason.

***To obtain a Voter Registration form or Absentee Ballot Application form, or to find out dates for the elections, for registering, for filing absentee ballot applications and submitting ballots:***

- Call the NYS Board of Elections at 1-800-367-8683, or download the forms/calendar from the web site for the New York State Board of Elections (<http://www.elections.state.ny.us> ).
- Call, write to, or download forms/calendar from the web site for your local county board of elections. You can get their contact information from the NYS Board of Elections.
- Call your local League of Women Voters, or the League of Women Voters of New York State, toll free at 1-866-598-6971, or go to our web site at <http://www.lwvny.org> .

***To check your voter registration status:***

You should receive in the mail before the election a card that informs you of your polling place. If you do not receive such a card, call your local board of elections and ask them:

1. Am I registered to vote?
2. Is my registration status set to “Active”? If not, to what is it set?
3. Will my name appear in the polling place roll book on Election Day?

***If you are not on the rolls at your polling place:***

If you believe you are registered to vote and are not on the rolls, ask for an “affidavit” (paper) ballot, and ask the poll worker for advisement about following up on your status. You are legally entitled to an affidavit (paper) ballot and must be given one.

***This information is supplied by:***

League of Women Voters of New York State  
62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207  
Tel: (518)465-4162 | Fax: (518)465-0812  
<http://www.lwvny.org>  
[lwvny@lwvny.org](mailto:lwvny@lwvny.org)

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. JOIN US!

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](mailto:faircamp@nycap.rr.com)

## **DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

### ***National PMP Raised at Convention***

At the League's 2008 convention, delegates voted to raise the national per member payment by 4.5% each year for the next two years. This will result in a national per member Payment of \$28.00 for 2008-2009 and \$29.20 for 2009-2010.

### ***2008 United Nations Event – Save the Date***

On Tuesday, December 2, 2008 the League will sponsor its annual briefing at the United Nations. This year's event will be Briefings on the Impact of Worldwide Food Shortages on Women and Children. The format will be the same as last year, with a tour in the morning and briefing in the afternoon, except we will attempt to start the briefing later to allow a longer period for lunch.

Last year the state League sponsored an inexpensive bus from Albany. *Not only was it fast and convenient, but there was a delightful cocktail party on the way home.* If there is interest among one or more local Leagues in chartering a bus from another location, the state League could handle details.

Chartering busses from various statewide locations might provide fundraising opportunities if one or more local Leagues decided to do this and to sell space on the bus to non-League riders at a profit. For further details contact Betsey Swan at [faircamp@nycap.rr.com](mailto:faircamp@nycap.rr.com) or 518-426-3711.

### ***Centennial Plan***

Thanks to all who submitted comments about the draft Centennial Plan. In general, comments were very favorable. Concerns fell into a number of categories:

1. A few commentators were concerned that centralization of services would weaken local Leagues and turn the League into a top-down good government organization, like Common Cause, that discourages or diluted grass-roots advocacy or advocacy at the local level;
2. One commentator was concerned that the League should tread lightly in planning to centralize any operations because centralization of certain operations would not necessarily lead to cost or time savings;
3. A few commentators objected in principle to the state League providing free services to local Leagues and suggested that any services should be provided on a fee for service basis;
4. One commentator suggested that the state finance operations on an as-needed basis by raising the state per member payment that local Leagues pay to the state.

The concerns voiced about centralization need to be taken seriously, with revisions to the plan as are necessary to preserve the strength and character, and efficient operation of local Leagues.

We believe changes to the draft plan to accommodate the concerns of the last two sets of commentators would be ill-advised. Just as New York State is a state of great disparities, local Leagues are widely disparate. Some function as highly professional organizations, with large budgets and many members. Others have few members and limited budgets – sometimes the result of the rural nature and relative poverty of areas in which they operate. While local League responsibility for local

operations should and will remain the norm, assistance may at times be necessary to bolster the health and function, and sometimes to maintain the existence, of local Leagues. During the Ida Tragers, many local Leagues complained that they lost members every time dues were raised. It was the need to become less reliant on per member payments the impelled development of the Centennial Plan. That need was compelling over a year ago when we began to think about the plan; it is more compelling today in light of the national League's stated desire to increase national per member payments at a rate of 4 ½% per year for the indefinite future.

A revised Centennial Plan will be submitted to the board at its September meeting for approval. The proposed revisions will be available on-line at least one prior to the board meeting.

# REGISTRATION FORM

**The League of Women Voters of New York State (LWVNYS)**  
in association with  
The United Nations Department of Public Information  
(additional co-sponsors to be named at a later date)



INVITE YOU TO ATTEND

## *BRIEFINGS ON THE EFFECTS OF GLOBAL WARMING ON WOMEN AND CHILDREN AROUND THE WORLD*

**Tuesday, December 2, 2008 from \*1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

*\*LWVNYS Registration Desk will be open from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m., Briefings will start promptly at 1:00 p.m.\**  
**at the United Nations Headquarters in NYC -- First Avenue at 46th Street**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

LWV of: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

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**COST/PAYMENT INFORMATION**

- 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. *Optional* Tour of the UN \$ 12
- 4:30 p.m. -- 5:00 p.m. *Optional* Tour of the UN
- 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. *Optional* Lunch Buffet in the Delegates Dining Room \$ 40  
*Includes International Buffet, Dessert Bar and Coffee/Tea only*  
*The Delegates Dining Room Staff have reserved for the League tables of 10*  
*UN requires proper attire: jeans, shorts, sneakers will NOT be permitted*
- 1:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. *Briefings Program* in the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium \_\_\_\_\_ \$  
*\$55 League Members or Members of Sponsoring Organizations*

<b>\$65 Non-Members</b>	<b>\$45 Students</b>	
Discounted fee to members of sponsoring organization for Tour, Lunch, and Briefing		<b>\$ 100</b>
<b>ROUNDRIP BUS FROM ALBANY TO NYC</b>		<b>\$ 40</b>

**TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

My Check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed (make payable to LWVNYS) **OR**  
 Please charge my:            MasterCard                            VISA                            American Express                            Discover  
 Card Holder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN TO:**

United Nations Briefings/LWVNYS\*\*62 Grand Street\*\* Albany, New York 12207  
Fax: 518-465-0812 (Credit Card Registrations ONLY)  
E-Mail: [Stephanie@lwvny.org](mailto:Stephanie@lwvny.org)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 518-465-4162

*SPACE IS LIMITED, SO RESERVE EARLY*

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS NOVEMBER 18, 2008**

**LWVNYS HAS CHARTERED A BUS FOR THEIR ANNUAL  
UNITED NATIONS EVENT ON DECEMBER 2, 2008**

**\*\*\$40 ROUND TRIP\*\***

*(FYI—AMTRAK FROM ALBANY/RENSSELAER TO NYC IS \$72)*

- 7 a.m. Bus will leave Crossgates Commons  
(between PetSmart and Walmart)
- 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Arrive at the UN in time to register w/the LWVNYS for the  
Buffet Luncheon in the Delegates Dining room (for those who  
want the Tour, they will have to take it after the Briefings, I will  
make the arrangements w/the UN)
- 7:30 p.m. Bus will pick everyone up at Bryant Park on 42nd and 6th Street  
in NYC (*Bryant Park is situated behind the New York Public  
Library in midtown Manhattan, between 40th and 42nd Streets  
& Fifth and Sixth Avenues.*)
- 10:30 p.m./11:00 p.m. Arrive back at Crossgates Commons

**\*\*There are only 55 seats on the bus, so if you would like to take the bus, please  
call or e-mail immediately to reserve your spot  
518-465-4162 or [Stephanie@lwny.org](mailto:Stephanie@lwny.org)\*\***

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](mailto:jross18@roadrunner.com)

## **CITIZEN EDUCATION REPORT**

### ***LeaderSpark/Students Inside Albany Update***

Plans for the 2008-2009 LWNYS LeaderSpark Programs are underway and project sites have expanded significantly from the original five pilot programs. On Tuesday August 5, 2008, the State League hosted a LeaderSpark Orientation Conference call for Leagues with already established programs and for Leagues who indicated they are interested in starting a new program. Twelve leagues participated in the Conference call. Facilitators were Stephanie Lopez, LWNYS Program Director, Karen Dawson, LeaderSpark Director and JoAnn Ross, LWNYS Citizen Education Director. We were also joined by LWNYS President, Martha Kennedy. Current coordinators/facilitators shared highlights and challenges of their LeaderSpark programs and discussed plans for the 2008-2009 program years. Next on the schedule, though still in the planning process, is facilitator training by region.

### ***How is the LeaderSpark Program Different from other Youth Leadership Training?***

Programs that purport to do youth leadership training rarely include a written sequenced leadership curriculum with facilitated training geared to practical leadership group skills. Many leadership programs only focus on motivating the individual. The LeaderSpark curriculum is different because it is practical skills and tools designed to build individual leadership “awareness, practice and application” in a team or group setting. The LeaderSpark training provides all of the materials and expertise for YOU to run an effective program.

### ***What is LWNYS’ Role in LeaderSpark?***

LWNYS has the role of overall coordinator of the program, which includes:

- Coordinating the planning and Facilitator Training with the LeaderSpark Office
- Fundraising to pay for the Affiliation Fees, Materials, Training, etc.
- Overall Evaluation of the Program
- Nurturing communications and sharing information among the local Leagues. There is no use re-inventing the wheel. LWNYS can be the hub of information and samples from local Leagues that have already participated in LeaderSpark and those who are just starting up.

There is still an opportunity for Leagues to participate in the LeaderSpark training program. For further information contact: Stephanie Lopez, LWNYS Program Director at 518-465-4162, [Stephanie@lwny.org](mailto:Stephanie@lwny.org) or JoAnn Ross, LWNYS Citizen Education Director at 716-631-9351, [jross18@roadrunner.com](mailto:jross18@roadrunner.com)

TO: Local League Presidents, Local Study Committee Chairs, Action and Issues Chairs  
FROM: Lori Dawson, LWNYS NPV Study Chair,  
4 Marion Place, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
E-Mail: [ldawson@skidmore.edu](mailto:ldawson@skidmore.edu)

JoAnn Ross, Citizen Education, Director  
E-Mail: [jross18@roadrunner.com](mailto:jross18@roadrunner.com)

**NATIONAL STUDY ADOPTED ENTITLED, "THE ADVISABILITY OF USING  
THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT AMONG THE STATES AS A  
METHOD FOR ELECTING THE PRESIDENT"**

***July 3 LWNYS Leader's Update***

Delegates at the LWNYS Convention in Portland last month adopted a fast-track study of the National Popular Vote Compact. Carolie Mullan (TX), former chair of the LWNYS Immigration Study Committee, has been appointed to the 2008-2010 LWNYS Board to chair this study. During calendar planning, local Leagues are urged to save a date in January or February 2009 for a consensus meeting.

***Preparing For NPV Study***

In order for Leagues to hold consensus meetings in January or February, the LWNYS NPV study materials and consensus questions would need to be sent out to Leagues no later than September. The timeline still needs to be approved by LWNYS board and it could change. Saratoga County LWNYS has expressed our concern to Carolie Mullan that the timeline may be too fast for those Leagues who have not already held NPV education meetings. In case the timeline stands, Leagues need to be prepared to have an educational meeting in the fall or in January so that the consensus meeting can be held in January or February.

All of the LWNYS NPV study materials that we assembled can be downloaded from the LWNYS site: [www: www: www.lwnys.org](http://www.lwnys.org) Of course, the actual LWNYS NPV study and consensus questions will be put together by a national NPV study committee. But studying the materials that we already assembled should be a big jump start on preparing.

***Speakers for NPV Educational Meetings***

I recommend that Leagues check to see if their local elected officials would be willing to speak for or against the NPV compact. If that doesn't pan out, perhaps a local college or university has someone who can speak to the issue. Leagues can also inquire at [www.nationalpopularvote.com](http://www.nationalpopularvote.com) to see if a speaker might be available. I think that many Leagues will have to identify someone in their League who can take the lead on doing the NPV study presentation.