

Membership Recruitment Initiative

Are you concerned about declining League membership? Do you find yourselves recycling board members due to a dearth of new leadership? Does it sometimes seem like you are preaching to the choir? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then the Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI) is for you! The MRI is an exciting program developed by the LWVUS to increase League membership, leadership, and visibility. See State Board Report on website for more details.

Members on Co. Redistricting Commissions

As this is being written, we have heard of two Leagues, the Suffolk County ILO and the Mid-Hudson LWV, that will have members named to nonpartisan county redistricting commissions. Congratulations to Dare Thompson, who will represent Mid Hudson. Appointment of the Suffolk County ILO member will be announced as soon as vetting is complete.

Lobby Corps

The League of Women Voters of NYS is developing a Lobby Corps, similar to that of LWVUS. The purpose is to train a group of volunteers who will then communicate the League's position on proposed legislation in person directly to the members of the state Senate and Assembly. The volunteer lobbyists will receive background information, talking points and individual assignments of legislators. Come make a difference – and try something new in the League! Contact the state office if you are interested.

Capitol Beat

The League is pleased to announce the return of "*Capitol Beat*," an informative and entertaining column, written by the LWVNY Legislative Director Barbara Bartoletti with legislative updates about League issues, as well as political gossip. We welcome your comments posted on this blog page. A link to the new blog is at the top of the state League's homepage (red in the top blue banner). Get all the latest legislative info right on our website and blog!

Youth Programs

Thirty-nine local leagues, ILOs, and MALs have now responded to LWVNY's youth program survey. There are several creative programs for youth that leagues have developed. Results of this survey and information about all the youth programs conducted by local Leagues will be put on the state website and presented at state Convention so other Leagues may replicate the programs.

Observer Corps

Review of local government action has long been a strength of the League. By serving as a local watchdog, the League informs the public, attracts new members, and generally burnishes its reputation as a nonpartisan good government group. The LWV Hamptons has recently reinstated its Observer Corps. If you're interested in joining or forming an Observer Corps in your area, contact your local League President.

Advocacy on Redistricting

Legislation to create an independent redistricting commission is still very high on our list of legislative priorities. LWVNYC and LWVNY both testified in December before the NYS Senate Majority Conference Senate Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment emphasizing the need for an independent commission.

Local leagues have done an amazing job of scheduling educational forums around the state on this topic using the materials we made available in September and more forums are still on tap in the next few months. It's not too late to organize one in your community – contact your local President and offer to help!

1919 Society

Don't forget to include the state League in your will - and join the 1919 Society. If you already have included the League in your will, just let us know and we'll add you to the members of the Society. **Thanks to Barbara Bartoletti, Elizabeth Hubbard and Paula Blum for including the state League in their wills and joining this new Society.** As a member, their names will be engraved on a plaque in the state League office, listed in the *State Voter*, and on the website.

State Convention: May 20-22, 2011

The State Convention will be held at the Desmond Inn in Albany from May 20-22, 2011. We are once again organizing a Silent Auction which will be available online and at Convention so everyone, not just attendees, can participate. Start thinking of donations; be creative and think of some new items or services that can help raise funds for the League. Donations forms are available by calling the state office.

We have just learned that John Zogby, pollster of international repute and author of "The Way We'll Be," published in 2008, will be our Saturday night keynote speaker.

As usual, local Leagues, groups of members or individual members will be honored at the state Convention for their wonderful projects, programs and services. Does your League have a great youth program, voter service project or maybe a membership or action program? Don't be shy – let us know! Complete the form in the full State Board Report at the bottom of the state League's website or contact the state office. Let's celebrate those successes!

This year we are planning to sell ad space in the Awards Program to businesses and individuals as a way of raising money for the state League. We are asking members of local Leagues to sell space to local merchants, banks, and individuals. A prize will be presented to the local League that sells the largest dollar amount of ads and the local League that sells the greatest dollar amount of ads per local League member. Call the state office for more information or the Ad solicitation form.

New Greater Westbury MAL

A warm welcome to our newest MAL [Member at Large] league. Led by Angela Jenkins and Betty Hylton, as well as the able support of Nassau League member Paula Blum, the group has been approved by the LWVNY to serve the Greater Westbury area.