



State News

The League of Women Voters of New York State

May 2010

Fall 2010 Debates

We are very happy to inform our members that LWVNYS has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the NYS Association of Public Broadcasting Stations to partner in broadcasting debates for the elections for statewide office this fall. The stations, at a minimum, intend to provide live, statewide coverage of the debates for the office of NYS Governor and our two Senate races. If we can bring the candidates to the table for the other offices, or for interesting primaries, the stations have stated their intention to carry them, live or re-broadcast. This is tremendous news! Now we have to get the candidates to agree. Stay tuned!

Update on Redistricting Reform

Currently in New York, the political parties in the majority draw the lines for their respective houses. In other words, legislators chose their voters not the other way around. The only check on this system is the possibility that the Governor could use his veto power to force changes.

We believe that creation of an independent redistricting commission must be a top priority for those interested in reform. We expect to take a leading role in educating the public about this critical issue. The process began on February 9, when over 60 people from 9 local Leagues and other organizations attended the Forum on Redistricting held at the Rockefeller Institute. Videos from the Forum are now available on the Rockefeller Institute website at www.rockinst.org/forumsandevents/.

You can also get a DVD of the event by e-mailing or calling the League office. Expect to hear from us soon about more collaborative educational efforts with our good government partners, including easy to use educational materials that will be available to local leagues. *We would like local leagues to schedule an educational meeting on redistricting as early as possible in the fall to utilize the forthcoming materials.*

“Albany On the Record”

Albany on the Record was a rousing success with 300 attendees hearing from Governor Paterson, Comptroller DiNapoli and the four legislative leaders who outlined their plans to fix Albany now. Photos from the event, power point presentations on each of the issues, introductory video on why we need reform in Albany, and a video of the entire event is available on our website. Special thanks to Jay Gallagher, former Gannett Bureau Chief, who questioned each of the speakers and to John Kaehny of Reinvent Albany who produced the event.

Spring Fling Weekend in NYC

Over 70 League members and friends attended the Spring Fling fundraiser on May 14. It was a wonderful evening with a gathering of many old-time League members reminiscing and talking. Thank you to all who attended and to those who supported the event. Photos from the event can be viewed on our website.

Students Inside Albany Conference

The 2010 Students Inside Albany conference, held from April 11-14 was a resounding success with 30 students sponsored by 25 Local Leagues. Our thanks to each League who sent a student. Photos from the conference are posted under Youth Programs on our website (a button on the left side on the homepage), as well as an interview of one student by League member, Susan Henninger, and published in *Ithaca Parent and Teen*. A summary of the conference will be posted in the near future.

Membership

First we welcome a full League: LWVWC [Warren County]. This group worked hard to fulfill the requirements for the State board to recommend their recognition by National. Congratulations are in order to Rachel Clothier and her team as well as to Barbara Thomas who is their regional director.

In addition, Wayne County has been approved as a MAL [Member at Large] unit. Best wishes to Janice Fitzpatrick and her team in establishing a presence in Wayne County.

Historic Legislation Passes

Historic legislation passed the NYS legislature reforming the absentee ballot application process. This bill simplifies the absentee ballot process for all New Yorkers, no longer requiring a complicated and intimidating explanation from someone who requests an absentee ballot. The League has fought long and hard for this simplification.

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. We will not ask for either proof of the bequest or its amount - we just want to honor your future support. As a member, your name will be engraved on a plaque in the state League office, listed in the *State Voter*, and on the website.

Capitol Beat Blog

Watch and comment on a new League blog about New York State politics written by retired journalist Jay Gallagher. Spread the word - and start the dialogue! Just click in the upper right corner of our website, New League Blog. Save it on your "Favorites" and check it often; you can comment without joining.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE

62 Grand Street
Albany, NY 12207-1403
(518) 465-4162
Fax (518) 465-0812
Web Address: www.lwvny.org
e-mail: lwvny@lwvny.org
GET INVOLVED!