



The League of Women Voters of New York State

STATE BOARD REPORT

September, 2009, Issue #2

This report is published electronically six times each year. Duplicate paper copies may be ordered for an annual fee of \$35.00 by contacting the League office.

Presidents Report

~Attention: LL Presidents

Issues & Advocacy

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Action Chairs

Membership

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Membership Chairs

Voter Service

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Voter Service Chairs

Program & Education

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Program Chairs

(SIA/LeaderSpark/Government Consolidation Study)

Study

~Attention: LL Presidents, LL Program Chairs & LL Study Chairs

State News

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Bulletin Editors

APPENDIX

STATE BOARD REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

www.lwvny.org

(Click on Local League Resources)

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STATE LEAGUE NEWS

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PASSING NOTES – IN MEMORIAM

It is with sadness we note the deaths of Marion Sinek, LWVNYS President from 1985 to 1989, and Ruth Shur, LWVNYS board member from 1977 to 1989.

MARION SINEK

I was privileged to join many League members from around the state and numerous public officials, including Hillary and Bill Clinton and Nita Lowey, in a celebration of Marion's life held in Chappaqua earlier this month. I would like to share a few memories of this amazing woman who served as an inspiration to so many of us in the League.

Marion was born in Berlin and came to the United States with her parents just before World War II. She attended Syracuse University on a full scholarship, and did graduate work at the London School of Economics. Upon graduation she worked for Radio Free Europe and the United Nations Association -US. She went on to become an active member of the New York Democratic Lawyers Council, although she was not a lawyer, served as the League's president for four years, served as the Supervisor of the town of New Castle for four years, and went on to work as a staff member for Senator Hillary Clinton, specializing in election law. Her daughter Nicole noted that she began her career working with Eleanor Roosevelt and concluded it working with then Senator Hillary Clinton.

Although Marion's accomplishments were legion, it was in the accretion of small remembrances that Marion came to life. Libby Hubbard, former LWVNY president and LWVUS board member noted that we would all miss her wonderful smile. Nicole remembered the picture of Golda Meir hanging in the laundry room. Her son Ron remembered her sense of humor and reserved intellect that could bring people around to her way of thinking by making them think her ideas were theirs. He called his mother the most moral person he had ever met. Marion knew that all politics was local, and said, upon becoming New Castle Town Supervisor, "I like to think that I worked my up to local government." Marion always noted that *wimp* was not a word in her vocabulary. Toward the end of her life, after undergoing a serious operation, her first words upon coming out of the anesthetic were an inquiry about the Senate hearings into now Justice Sotomayor's appointment to the Supreme Court.

As Secretary of State Clinton so aptly noted in her remarks, it was the totality of facets to Marion's life that constituted, "a life so well lived."

RUTH SHUR

Ruth Shur died this summer after a brief and tragic illness. Ruth was born in Texas, moved to Oklahoma at an early age, and lived with her husband Walt in Port Washington from 1959 until 2007, when she and Walt moved to a retirement community in Galloway Ridge, North Carolina. As a member of the League of Women Voters of Orange, Durham and Chatham Counties, she registered voters before the 2008 elections.

LWVNYS board member Toni Coffee takes credit for bringing Ruth into the Port Washington/Manhasset League, where she rose to the office of President and served for two years beginning in 1974. In 1977 she joined the state League board, where she served in numerous positions until 1989, developing extensive expertise in election law, reapportionment, the judicial system, and state governmental operations.

During her League tenure, Ruth was known for her wonderful writing and her long stream of clever one-liners, poems and parodies. Her husband Walt says she frequently told people that, although she left college to marry, she earned a Ph.D. in government from the League. But she also had a list of substantive accomplishments, including singlehandedly leading a crusade for amendment of the election law to allow individuals out of town on election day for business reason to obtain and vote by absentee ballot.

Among the many notable “Shurisms” is:

“There are three classes of people. Those who make things happen; those who watch things happen; and the overwhelming majority who have no idea what is happening. Save a friend from the majority...bring her to a League meeting.”

Judicial Issue Specialist Lenore Banks remembers Ruth as “my mentor, my best friend on the board, and my source of endless laughter at her wicked sense of humor.” Lenore also noted that Ruth was forward thinking and one of the first state board members to become computer literate.

We thank the Port Washington/Manhasset League, Ruth’s local League, for its commemoration of Ruth by purchase of a Sustainer’s Plaque. We also thank Ruth’s husband Walter, for his wish to memorialize Ruth’s services to the League by financing a League video on redistricting in Ruth’s honor.

GOVERNMENT CONSOLIDATION/SHARED SERVICES STUDY

With the advent of fall, we are gearing up for the recently adopted study. Local League presidents should call Stephanie with the names and contact information of their study chairs. See Study Chair Noreen Fisher’s report on page 18 (also available on the League Website) for the study timetable and preliminary bibliography.

LEAGUE JOINS IN FILING AMICUS BRIEF

This month the League joined a broad coalition of 30 public interest organizations and private law firms in filing an amicus brief, prepared by the Brennan Center for Justice and Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison, in which the coalition asked the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit for en banc consideration of the standard for award of attorneys fees adopted in *Lochren v. County of Suffolk*, 08-2723-cv, and *Simmons v. New York City Transit Authority*, 575 F.3d 170 (2009). This matter involves

interpretation of the federal civil rights fee-shifting statute, 42 U.S.C. §2000e-5(k), which permits litigants with meritorious claims to retain competent counsel. The federal statute was enacted to enable successful federal civil rights litigants to recover their attorney's fees, in the belief that, without such fee shifting, many potential litigants could not afford to seek compensation for violations of their civil rights in court. At issue was the standard of proof required in order for attorneys from outside the district to recover their customary hourly fee. While this is an esoteric issue, it goes to the heart of the League's core mission of supporting the active involvement of individuals in all branches of government.

PEREGRINATIONS – TRAVELS AROUND THE STATE

I am in the middle of the state at the end September, as speaker for the Tompkins County League's September 28 fall kickoff, in which I will share my vision for the League of the future. During this trip, I will also meet with the Broome/Tioga, Cortland, Chemung, Steuben and Cooperstown Leagues. At the beginning of October, I will be in New York City meeting with the NYC Management team. If you would like me to arrange a visit to your League, just let me know.

Barbara Bartoletti will speak at the Cooperstown Area League's October 17, 2009 luncheon at the Otesaga in Cooperstown, NY. Members of other Leagues are invited to her talk. *See APPENDIX A/ Page 19 for details.*

Voter Services Director Maggie Moehringer will train members of local Leagues in moderating candidate forums. Contact Maggie to arrange a training session.

Membership Director Georgia DeGregorio and her regional membership coordinators are available to do board training and training for growth in membership. Contact Georgia to arrange a session.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

We have been notified that the League did not receive the federal \$75,000 mock election grant from the Election Assistance Commission. We will continue to develop the mock election curriculum to be used in Participation in Government classes, and will reapply to the EAC, or to other funders, at a later date.

There is little new financial news to report since last month. Citizen Education/Youth Services Director JoAnn Ross continues to work with Buffalo/Niagara League member Nuala Drescher, SUNY Distinguished Service Professor Emerita of history and social studies education, to develop a new youth services curriculum that will better meet the needs of New York's students. See JoAnn's report on page 16.

Secretary/Treasurer Adie Shore has generously offered her services as a grant writer to the state League. We have compiled a list of potential fundable projects covering all aspects of League operations and will continue to pursue funding opportunities as they arise.

The five voter's guides for special populations printed for the League by the New York State Bar Association and the newest version of *Welcome to the LWV*, printed for the League by CSEA, are available for distribution.

We have notified Karen Dawson that we will not renew the LeaderSpark license when it expires in November, for an anticipated annual savings of \$13,000. We will, however, facilitate negotiations between Karen and the Geneva and Saratoga County Leagues, who have expressed interest in continuing to run the program after expiration of the state League's license.

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ISSUES AND ADVOCACY REPORT

IMPORTANT ISSUES AND ADVOCACY PROCEDURES

What do I do if I have a question about this Issues & Advocacy report or want more information on requests for action from State or National?

Contact

Sally Robinson, LWVNYS VP Issues & Advocacy
robintwins@gmail.com or 212-879-4575

or

Cheryl Feldman, LWVNYS Grassroots Lobby Director
cfeld10284@aol.com or 914-238-7860

What do I do if my local league wants to take action on a state or national issue that is not in response to an action alert? This action could consist of contacting elected officials at the state or national level concerning the issue, or it could consist of joining coalitions, signing letters, etc. that go beyond your local League.

You should contact the **State Issues Committee** which consists of Sally Robinson, Cheryl Feldman, Barbara Bartoletti, LWVNYS Legislative Director, and the Issues Specialist (formerly Off-Board Specialists) on the topic/issue in question (see LWVNYS Board of Directors/Issues Specialists in the August SBR). The best thing to do is copy everyone on the e-mail. You can also call or e-mail the LWVNYS office, but the easiest and most direct way is to e-mail the **State Issues Committee** directly.

For detailed guidelines see An Overview of the League's Advocacy Process and Guidelines for Action through State Issues Committee (*APPENDIX B/Pages 20-23*), but please remember the following:

Local leagues must have prior approval of the State Issues Committee to take action at the State or National level not in response to State or National action alerts. Contact with your Congressional representative or Senators Schumer or Gillibrand require further approval from National which should be sought through the **State Issues Committee**.

Local leagues can still take action at the local level using State and National Positions. These can be found in LWVNYS *Impact on Issues* and LWVUS *Impact on Issues*; go to www.lwv.org and put *Impact on Issues* in the search box.

NEW APPROACH FOR THE 2010 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Past September State Board Reports have contained a *Selection of Legislative Priorities* yellow form that local leagues have been asked to fill out and return to the state office. The Issues Specialists then met in November with the **State Issues Committee** to determine each year's Legislative Agenda using these recommendations as well as an evaluation of "unfinished business" from the prior legislative session.

Given widespread dissatisfaction of League members with this summer's stalemate in the New York Senate, the **State Issues Committee** and the Issues Specialists decided to focus the 2010 Legislative Agenda on making the State Legislature cleaner and more competitive through emphasizing campaign finance, redistricting and other good government legislative and election reforms. Therefore, there is no need to fill out a *Selection of Legislative Priorities* yellow form for 2010. The legislative packet will be given to local Leagues in January 2010 as usual but will be reformatted and focused on these issues. In the meantime, you can use the *September Stick with Reform* document to lobby your legislators on these same issues or to use as a letter to the editor. *See APPENDIX C/Page 24*

The other areas in which the League has positions will continue to be listed on the Legislative Agenda and we will continue to take action on issues covered by these positions as they arise.

UPDATE ON ETHICS REFORM

The State Senate attempted but failed to pass ethics reforms during its special session on September 9th. Encouraged by the State Senate's efforts to improve the ethics bill passed earlier by the Assembly, we joined with Citizens Union and Common Cause New York to state that it was imperative that both the Assembly bill and the proposed amendments be passed as a package. *See APPENDIX D/Page 25 to view the September 10, 2009 Ethics Reform/Coalition Press Release.*

The Legislature is expected to return sometime this fall to work on revisions to the state budget because of a large expected deficit.

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HISTORY MADE 15 YEARS AGO: PASSAGE OF THE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT [VAWA]

After years of dedication and hard work by countless advocates like the League and by our Vice President, then U.S. Senator Joe Biden, and U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch, the landmark legislation now known as VAWA was signed 15 years ago. Essentially this Act provides federal funding for communities to address the needs of survivors and hold offenders accountable.

How significant was this? To quote a statement from the national Office on Violence Against Women, “thirty years ago, when a law enforcement officer responded to domestic abuse, it was considered a *family matter*. Spousal rape was not a crime.” Many States did not have domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, or hotlines.

“Thirty years ago, programs for culturally and linguistically special groups were unheard of. Disabled women and women in later life were not thought to be vulnerable to abuse. We had little understanding of the dynamics of teen relationships and the potential for sexual assault and intimate partner violence. We did not recognize the co-occurrence of child maltreatment, and sexual and domestic violence nor did we understand the devastating impact of early victimization and exposure to violence.”

Fifteen years ago the League was there, having developed a position against violence both at the state and national levels. Today we continue to advocate for victims of domestic violence by supporting legislation and educating the public through forums throughout the state. Today we know this is a “community” matter. We all suffer from these crimes in both obvious and more subtle ways.

To learn more about what is being done at the national level, go to the website www.ovw.usdoj.gov/vawa15.htm. To present a forum on domestic violence, contact your State Issue Specialist, Georgia DeGregorio, georgiatd@frontiernet.net.

As an addendum to the above report, below is a list of the legislation passed this summer in the State legislature. Essentially if it would cost money, the governor vetoed it...regardless of the merits of the legislation.

Passed and signed by the governor:

1. A.755A/S.958B Anti-discrimination in Employment (Hiring and Firing)
2. A.3468/S.4334 Privacy Protections in Name Change: seals records
3. A.7561/S.2851 Health Insurance Notification in Divorce Cases: both parties be notified a party’s eligibility under the other’s insurance.
4. A.2004/S.5697 Amended last year’s law requiring review of registry of orders of protection and arrest warrants before issuing an order of protection to apply only to checks to family court warrants.
5. A.3657/S.2091 Eligibility Requirements for child care assistance: although encouraged to apply for child support, not required to do so as condition of eligibility for child care assistance.

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HAVA UPDATE

Greetings and welcome back to another year with HAVA!

This will be the last year for using the lever voting machines unless they are allowed for school elections. Many of you will have voted on the Sequoia Dominion op scan/ballot marker device or the ESS/Automark in your county, if it participated in the pilot program, for the Primary Election. If you did not have a Primary, you will have a second opportunity to try out the machine at the General Election in November. This is a "dry run" for the 2010 Gubernatorial/Congressional elections and it's very important for elections personnel and the voters to gain experience.

If you have observations or direct experiences to share from the Primary please send on to me, as well as your county Board of Elections commissioners. They could be useful information for election administrators in getting ready for the General Election.

Following this report is a presentation I prepared for a New York State Association of Counties panel on "HAVA-- County Resolutions To Retain Lever Machines and Fiscal Implications of HAVA for Counties.," at their annual conference in Saratoga Springs on September 17. We continue to find it necessary to repeat the old arguments against the lever voting machines as counties look to solutions for the ongoing increasing costs of implementing HAVA. However, in this presentation, we (LWVNYS and NYVV) urge additional state funding for some of the costs of this unfunded mandate and for collaboration between counties to find ways to share costs, aided by NYSAC and the NYSBOE.

Please read and let us know your thoughts -- are we on the right track here? The State's fiscal climate is equally dire, but some additional funding is needed, and would help, counties in the transition.

NYSAC HAVA Panel – September 17, 2009
Aimee Allaud, Elections Specialist
NYS League of Women Voters

Thank you for the invitation and opportunity to discuss the implications for New York counties of implementing the Help America Vote Act.

Introduction – NYVV and LWVNYS

The League of Women Voters of New York State is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages informed and active participation in government and works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Voting is fundamental to being a citizen and the League has worked on the issues surrounding exercise of the franchise since women became enfranchised in 1920. We work in coalition with many other like-minded organizations to educate voters and to advocate for laws which will secure the integrity of the vote while expanding opportunities for using it.

One of our partners in the process to implement the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) has been New Yorkers for Verified Voting (NYVV). NYVV, like the League, is a nonpartisan, not for profit organization whose mission is to ensure that all eligible citizens can vote, and that their votes will be accurately counted. Both NYVV and the League endorsed a voting system based on voter-marked paper ballots. This goal was achieved when the paper ballot-scanner voting system was chosen by New York counties in 2008. We advocated for the paper ballot-ballot marker-scanner system because with rigorous procedures and citizen oversight it is effective in ensuring both access and accuracy.

Lever retention vs HAVA

Our organizations fully support the changeover from lever voting machines to the voter marked paper ballot system. While there continues to be disagreement whether HAVA requires replacement of lever machines, NYVV, LWVNYS, and many other organizations representing many constituencies, believe that newer technology can provide better verifiability and a voter verifiable paper record that is the official record of the voter's intent. Copies of the joint NYVV/LWVNYS statement, "Do Lever Machines Provide a Better Voting System for Democracy?" by Wanda Warren Berry and Aimee Allaud, February, 2009 have been provided to the Association and attendees at the panel today.

An additional resource is the NYVV paper entitled, "Lever Machines and the Help American Vote Act," February 12, 2009, available on the NYVV website, www.nyvv.org which cites the sections of HAVA that are clear and unambiguous about the requirement to replace mechanical lever machines. The primary reference is Title III, Section 301, which requires that the voting system shall produce a permanent paper record with a manual audit capacity and that the voting system shall provide the voter with an opportunity to change the ballot or correct any error before the permanent paper record is produced. The secondary citation (HAVA Title 1, section 102) requires that states which take Federal funding to replace lever machines must use the funds to replace those machines. New York State has accepted and used these funds. HAVA clearly states that in this case lever machines must be replaced.

New York State and County Responsibilities under HAVA

The familiar lever voting machine, though it has performed fairly well for over 100 years, does not meet current standards for voting systems. The League and other election integrity organizations recognized that our efforts should be directed toward selecting a voting system based on voter marked paper ballots and establishing through legislation the highest standards for certification of the new voting equipment. The Election Reform and Modernization Act of 2005 implements the Federal law and, indeed, goes beyond that law, to set higher standards for accessibility, certification of voting equipment, and post-election auditing by local boards of elections. The lever machines cannot meet these standards. They cannot truly be audited since they provide no record of individual votes. To provide accessibility, counties have to deploy another machine with completely different technology. A local elections commissioner commented, "with the optical scanner system, we now have two records to compare to verify the vote: a machine count and the paper ballots. With the levers we have had no backup to recount the vote; all we can do is rechecking the numbers on the machine to make sure the inspectors recorded them correctly."

HAVA provides a "carrot" in the amount of approximately \$220 M. dollars to New York State to purchase new voting equipment, upgrade the state's voter registration system, improve accessibility of poll sites, and improve education and training of election officials and voters. New York and the counties must also provide 5% funding matches for certain requirements imposed by HAVA.

Under the Constitution, the states bear special responsibilities to protect the right to vote and the integrity of our elections. In New York, the State Board of Elections is vested with the responsibility for

administration and enforcement of laws relating to elections. County boards of election have the primary responsibility for registration and election operations. (1)

Examples of the many functions which county boards of election perform can be found on the Albany County BOE website, at www.albanycounty.com, however, this description does not include the expanded functions and duties which county boards of elections will be obligated to perform because of HAVA and ERMA mandates.

Implied under the Help America Vote Act is joint responsibility between the State and the counties for administering the mandates to be implemented. Historically, the operations of county boards of elections have been funded solely by county legislatures through the budget processes.

(1) "Voting Matters in New York: Participation, Choice, Action, Integrity," Office of Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, February 12, 2001.

Now, the federal and state governments need to find ways to assist counties with the unexpected costs involved in the transition to the new voting system in order to achieve the goals of HAVA.

ERMA gave the counties the power to choose the new equipment, but it also placed increased responsibility for supporting a highly technical operation on the local boards of elections. The additional mandates placed on county boards of elections resulting from both HAVA and ERMA will increase the need for:

1. skilled personnel in-house to perform technical operations functions and provide additional training for poll workers
2. adequate environmentally controlled and physically secure storage for electronic voting machines,
3. intensive recruitment to increase the pool of election inspectors and provide sufficient training on new voting machines and election procedures,
4. additional personnel to perform the mandatory 3% manual audit.

Additional state funding directly to the counties for purchasing equipment such as digital printers to print ballots in-house could address the major on-going cost (paper ballots) and give counties independence from reliance on vendors. New York State Board of Elections officials have said that HAVA funds may be used to purchase these printers if they meet New York State requirements. Large counties may need to purchase their own printer but smaller adjacent counties could combine funds to purchase a "regional" printer. A resource for information on ballot printing costs is "Facts About Ballot Printing Costs," by Marge Acosta, NYVV, July, 2007, available at nyvv.org.

Collaborative arrangements among adjacent counties for purchasing equipment and services, such as privacy booths, accessories, training costs, EMS ballot programming, consultants' services, could be incentivized by state assistance. The NYSBOE should investigate authorizing the use of HAVA money for Election Management Systems (EMS) purchase, as well as other systems support funds.

New York State counties have recognized in theory that regional collaborations of government could produce economies and efficiencies of scale. County boards of elections functions in implementing HAVA and ERMA could be the opportunities needed to jump start the exploration of such efforts. The Lundine Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness (April 2008) also "encourages regional solutions, cooperative services and consolidation" where possible as one of its

recommendations for the delivery of local government services. The New York State Association of Counties could be the facilitator between the counties to explore ways of meeting HAVA and ERMA mandates efficiently and cost-effectively. The Association could also advocate with the Legislature to recognize that voter education is also the key to successful elections, especially when introducing a new system. As we transition to the new voting technology, additional funds are needed to prepare the electorate and to train election personnel.

The mandated changes to New York's election system have the ability to improve the administration of elections and the experience of voting for all voters. Anecdotal evidence from around the state suggests some unevenness in the seriousness with which election officials are taking HAVA's challenge to improve the accessibility and verifiability of our elections. We hope NYSAC will encourage realization of the importance of these goals. We also hope that we can find ways to work together to obtain federal and state financial help for the counties.

Thank You.

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NATURAL RESOURCES UPDATE

WEST VALLEY DEMONSTRATION PROJECT DEIS:

We sent letters to US Department of Energy and to our US Senators, NYS Governor Patterson and NYS legislative leaders in support of complete removal of radioactive materials at the West Valley Demonstration Project site and opposing any long term delayed action for removal. President Betsy Swan wrote: "Although there are risks involved in removing the waste from the ground, leaving it there continues the risk ad infinitum. Removing contamination creates a short-term risk, but allows long-term safe use of the property. The state-funded study, The Real Costs of Cleaning Up Nuclear Waste (A Full Cost Accounting of Cleanup Options for the West Valley Nuclear Waste Site) concluded that, in the long term, leaving buried waste on site is high risk and expensive, while full cleanup presents the least risk and the lowest cost. It is obvious that the most cost-effective and health-ensuring alternative for the site is full exhumation of the radioactive and chemical contaminants already in the ground, and removal of all sources of future contamination."

DRILLING FOR GAS IN THE MARCELLUS SHALE:

A letter was sent to Governor Patterson asking him to direct DEC to extend the time period beyond the usual 30 days as well as the number of locations around the state for hearings on the proposed regulations for issuing permits for gas drilling in the Marcellus Shale. There is much concern about the process used (hydrofraking) to extract the gas; other states have experienced severe water pollution problems with this process.

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MEMBERSHIP MINUTE

Your state membership team of regional directors and I have been preparing and revising documents for you to use for recruiting and retaining members in your local league. A memo was sent September 3 advising how to access these materials from the website.

Most of these documents are ones that have been available in the past but we hope now they are more clearly described so you can open the ones relevant to your needs.

For this year we will be focusing on implementing the Local League Job Description beginning with these two essential ideas:

1. **Membership truly is a total board responsibility.** Look at the job description and see how the Voter editor, the Voter Service team, the President, PR chair, the nominating chair, etc. all have a role to play. Please put together a written plan that incorporates all these players doing their jobs with membership in mind. And non-board members should feel part of the process as well. I hope you will put together an off-board membership team to implement the plan.
2. **Diversity is a central policy in every plan.** Every league should have a written diversity policy related to all walks of life: not only age, race, and political philosophy, but also addressing disability, national origin, economic status and gender. In the coming months I hope we can share through our regional conference calls and State Board Reports, as well as emails to me, ways you have tried to implement this policy. If you go to the website, you will find two documents on this subject from National: "Attract the Community" and "Developing & Implementing a Diversity Policy".

Other items to share from the summer:

1. Georgia DeGregorio conducted an orientation with the board members of the Buffalo/Niagara League.
2. We have had inquiries from several counties regarding setting up new MAL's. By my next report, I will be able to share with you the progress made in this regard.
3. Regional directors will be in touch with each president after the September state board meeting to discuss what was covered as well as your progress in developing a membership plan and diversity policy. [see above]
4. The question was raised about accepting "member items" from our elected representatives. It is important to remember that we cannot give the appearance of partisanship by doing this. Any time your board cannot resolve questions concerning your non-partisan policy, bring them to your regional director for guidance.
5. The State office has CD's about membership from National that Marcia Merrins handed out at the state convention. Call Laura Bierman for a copy if you did not get one.

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VOTER SERVICE

2009 VOTER'S GUIDES AND LWVNYS PUBLICATION POLICIES

The text of the *Voter's Guide Part II – Ballot Proposals* was sent out to voter service directors via the list. A camera-ready version of the Voter's Guide in PDF format was posted on the web site, so that Leagues that wished to print the guide locally could do so. You are indeed free to use the language of the Guides in your local publications. The paper copies are being shipped this week to local Leagues that ordered them; more copies are available from the state office at a price of \$10 per 100 brochures (plus tax and shipping).

The board has been reviewing our publications policies. Many of you correctly remember the policies as not allowing reproduction of State League copyrighted material or language without attribution and use of the exact same language, without additions or deletions, and have questions in light of the encouragement on our part to local Leagues to use our language. We think that the policies are somewhat out of date, given the advent of the internet, and no longer reflect what has become de facto procedure on our part. We are reviewing these policies and will be updating them this year.

“YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE IN NEW YORK STATE” SERIES

Just a reminder that these pamphlets are posted on our web site and available for Leagues to print locally or to order in quantity from the State League office. Our series of five informational pamphlets covering the voting rights of college students, homeless individuals, the physically disabled, the mentally disabled and criminal offenders looks great, and is available for Leagues to order in quantity at reasonable rates. Please contact the League office for information.

MODERATOR TRAINING

Several Leagues have taken advantage of state League's willingness to perform moderator trainings. Many Leagues find that their moderator pool has dwindled. While that first forum can be intimidating, as many of you know, moderating is not difficult if you feel you are equipped with information and know what to do in the event of problems or “misbehavior.” I am happy to travel (or at least meet you half way) to do moderator training. The PowerPoint presentation that I use “Moderating Candidate Event,” can be found on the state League's website on the Local League Resources page: <http://lwvny.org/LLresources.html>.

VOTER SERVICE SURVEY

As many of you have been aware, last year saw somewhat of an evolution in the State Board's thinking in how we prioritize voter service activities aimed at young people (“Vote 18”, “Take Me to Vote”, etc.), and other League projects aimed at young people (“Students Inside Albany” and “LeaderSpark”, etc.). To give due attention to these services for youth, we have given new responsibilities for overseeing and developing these programs to our Citizen Education Director. JoAnn Ross's reports will update you on the new curriculum being developed by the LWVNYS for youth development, so it's important to take a look at that. Also in this SBR is the traditional Voter Services Survey. *Please, please fill it out and send it in by December 1st. We read them, we use them, we report on them, we summarize them for all local Leagues, and we like to include every Leagues hard work! See APPENDIX E/Pages 26-28*

TO: Local League Presidents
LL Study-Education and/or Youth Program Chairs
FROM: JoAnn Ross, Citizen Education/Youth Programs Director
E-Mail: jross18@roadrunner.com
TELEPHONE: 716-631-9351

CITIZEN EDUCATION/YOUTH PROGRAMS REPORT

THE NYS YOUTH LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

The Youth Leadership Initiative is a series of LWVNY Education Foundation-funded programs that provide students with information, motivation, and skills to become informed voters and engaged citizens. The League's Youth Leadership Initiative currently encompasses three programs: *Students Inside Albany*, *Vote 18* and *Pathways to Civic Engagement*.

Pathways to Civic Engagement, is a new curriculum for students that is currently being developed. The program, in the form of curricular modules, consists of leadership skills, personal finance training and the traditional League components of civic engagement. The module form of training was chosen in order to meet the divergent needs of students and their communities. Local Leagues can elect to present the training modules in whole or separately, as determined by individual League interest, the needs of the students and the needs of your local community. Check the SBR's in the next few months for additional information on this new and exciting curriculum. You may also contact JoAnn Ross, Citizen Education/Youth Program Director at jross18@roadrunner.com or Stephanie Lopez, Program Coordinator at stephanie@lwvny.org

STUDENTS INSIDE ALBANY ANNUAL CONFERENCE

SAVE THE DATE: APRIL 11—14, 2010



It's time for local Leagues to begin preparations for the 10th Annual *Students Inside Albany* Conference. Our goal this year is to have a student representative from every local League in New York State.

Selection Process: Leagues choose their own criteria for sending a student to the conference. Some Leagues have used an application form; others have coordinated the selection with the High School Principals and/or Social Studies/Government teachers, while others have continued the tradition of an essay contest. Examples of materials you can use for recruitment purposes are attached.

Ideas for finding a student:

- Have SIA brochures available at your Voter Registration and Debate tables
- Put a notice in your League bulletin; one of your members may have a child, grandchild, niece, nephew, paper boy/girl, neighbor or other family member or family friend who is or who has a high school student
- Contact your PTA President and ask them to make an announcement at their next meeting (name generally can be found on school website)
- Contact the Youth Coordinator at your local YMCA or YWCA

- Call the High School Principal, Guidance Office or Social Studies Supervisor and set up meeting, send information and/or discuss the program with them (find names and contact info on school district website – google district name to find website)
- Call the state office and we will find a local contact for you with help from one of our student program sponsors, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)
- Ask the school to announce it on the morning or afternoon announcements at school
- Post a brightly colored notice (*See APPENDIX F/Page 29*) on the bulletin board at the local library, school library, guidance office, grocery store, etc...
- Put an advertisement in the local weekly or free newspaper
- Contact the youth group at local churches or synagogues

For more information on the *Students Inside Albany* Conference or to order color brochures for a minimal fee, customized with your League's own contact information, please contact Stephanie Lopez at <mailto:stephanie@lwny.org>.

TO: Local League Presidents/LL Study Chairs
FROM: Noreen Fisher, Government Consolidation Study Chair
E-Mail: NQFisher@gmail.com
TELEPHONE: 914-725-6372

STATE CONSOLIDATION/SHARED SERVICES STUDY

The LWVNYS 2009 Convention approved a new state study on local government consolidation and shared services. Now is the time for your league to start planning so you can participate fully in the study over the course of this year. The issue of increasing local government efficiency through consolidation is quite complex. Consolidation is not limited to a simple merger of two local governmental units or the merger of school districts but also contemplates the consolidation of special districts such as fire, library, water, sewer etc., the consolidation of local public authorities, the consolidation of a municipal service without the loss of the underlying governmental units, for example, civil service hiring, assessing, IT, purchasing etc. all with the intent of reducing costs.

Local Leagues have requested guidance on how they should respond to local consolidation proposals should they arise. In an effort to assist the Leagues, a State consolidation/shared services study committee is educating themselves on this issue. Based upon their research, the committee will propose a series of questions and discussion materials which will be set before the local Leagues for consensus.

The timeline is as follows:

- September: Preliminary bibliography to local Leagues described below;
- November: Full bibliography and written materials for local Leagues
- December: Consensus questions developed by committee
- January: Consensus questions go out after approval by State Board
- January to April: Local Leagues have meetings and prepare answers to consensus questions
- April/May: Committee reviews input from local Leagues and prepares a draft position for State Board approval at May board meeting

There is a great deal of material available on the internet, more than can be absorbed in a short period of time. We would recommend that all League members planning on participating in the consensus process visit the following websites to begin to get up to speed:

- www.nyslocalgov.com (a good overall explanation of the State initiatives)
- www.nytowns.org/core/contentmanager/uploads/Government.Efficiency.The.Case.For.Local.Control.pdf, (a publication of the Association of Towns)
- www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/publications.htm#SharedServices (a good site with several additional reports).

If anyone has additional material that they believe would be of value we would welcome that information. It might also be instructive for local Leagues to interview their local government managers and find out what shared services or other techniques their governments already employ to reduce costs and what they see as impediments to expanding these arrangements.

Documents containing useful information about conducting a statewide study are in *In League* (p. 105-111) in the Local League Resources section of the website and are also contained in the Appendix, beginning on pages 15-21 of the August SBR. Local Leagues should identify local chairs for the study and send their names and contact information to Stephanie Lopez at stephanie@lwvny.org.

APPENDIX A

INVITATION TO HEAR BARBARA BARTOLETTI SPEAK IN COOPERSTOWN ON OCTOBER 17th

Area League Presidents,

The LWV of the Cooperstown Area would like to invite you, your League members, guests, etc. to a luncheon on Saturday, October 17, 2009 at The Otesaga in Cooperstown, NY at noon. Barbara Bartoletti will be the featured speaker, and I am sure you know how animated and inspiring she can be! The Cooperstown League is hosting this meeting in an effort to promote membership and inspire our current members, as well as to connect with other Leagues in the Central New York region.

The cost for the luncheon is \$19.00 inclusive (great buffet, beverage, fabulous desserts - tax & tip included). Reservations to: LWVCA, Vicki Gates, Treasurer, PO Box 426, Cooperstown, NY 13326 or telephone 607-547-1943.

We hope you will promote this luncheon, perhaps make it a fall foliage outing (the Fenimore Art Museum currently has a great exhibit entitled "America's Rome" with impressive artwork on loan from major collections). Please include this information in your e-bulletins, newsletters, etc. - and we hope you will consider attending.

Best,

Ellen Tillapaugh, President
LWV of the Cooperstown Area

APPENDIX B

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 (to find, type, Impact On Issues in search). At the state level, these are found in LWNYS *Impact on Issues*, located on-line at 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 LWNYS's proposed study on whether the State should enter the Compact for a National Popular Vote. LWVUS advised LWNYS 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.

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.

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

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 LWNYS.

APPENDIX C

Stick With Reform Albany

This summer's struggle for control of the state Senate demonstrated a degree of dysfunction surprising even for Albany. During the month-long stalemate, Senators from both parties made repeated statements that the crisis was fueled by the need for meaningful reform, not power politics. As we move into the fall, the League of Women Voters, along with our other good government colleagues, urge the senators to stick with their promises of reform.

We call on the Senate to pass ethics, campaign finance and election reform, areas where urgently needed improvements were postponed by legislative gridlock. Long-promised reforms in those areas should not be delayed further. The League also urges both legislative houses to address redistricting reform when they return to deal with budget concerns. If nothing else, this crisis has shown the need for more competitive elections in New York State.

Ethics Reform

Recent events have underscored the flaws in the current oversight system. New York's reliance on self-regulation conducted in secrecy fails to adequately ensure the highest ethical standards. New York needs a new, independent ethics oversight agency and tougher enforcement.

Campaign Finance Reform

New York's indefensibly high contribution "limits," coupled with disgracefully inadequate disclosure requirements and nonexistent enforcement, create a system that cries out for change. In particular, New York needs stronger and effective campaign finance enforcement through a separate body in the Board of Elections armed with increased civil and criminal penalties for violations.

Election Reform

The Senate has not yet taken up legislation to expand absentee voting by removing unnecessary documentation requirements on the application for an absentee ballot. They should adopt this legislation as well as pending legislation to require all polling places be accessible to physically disabled voters and permit election inspectors to work half-day shifts.

Redistricting Reform

Redistricting decisions have played a critical role in maintaining Albany's legislative status quo for decades. Creating an independent redistricting commission to draft the state legislative and Congressional political boundaries for the 2012 elections should be a top priority for those who say they are reformers. The process should allow for citizen input, adequate public disclosure and ensure legislative districts that give all voters a fair and equal voice in our representative democracy.

The League of Women Voters urges all citizens to demand these changes from their elected officials, so that we are not doomed to a repetition of this year's farce.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan membership organization open to men and women. It has promoted the active and informed participation of individuals in government for the past ninety years

APPENDIX D

CITIZENS UNION OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK COMMON CAUSE/NEW YORK LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/N.Y.S.

Immediate Release
September 10, 2009

For more information contact:
Dick Dadey, Citizens Union, 917-709-2896
Susan Lerner, Common Cause/NY, 917-670-5670
Barbara Bartoletti, League of Women Voters/N.Y.S., 518 465-4162

Good Government Groups Support State Senate Effort to Pass Real Ethics Reform **See Senate Amendment as Necessary Since It Adds Needed Teeth to Enforcement** *Original Bill A Modest but Incomplete Step Forward*

The good government organizations Citizens Union, Common Cause/NY and the League of Women Voters today applauded the State Senate's effort to pass meaningful ethics reform and commends the Senate for its attempt to improve upon the original bill passed by the Assembly in June.

Though the Assembly bill is a welcome step in the right direction, the Senate's proposed chapter amendment, as introduced by Senators Sampson and Squadron, is a required addition that significantly strengthens the package and boosts the effort to reform ethics oversight and enforcement.

The civic groups see the amendment as an essential element of the ethics reform legislative package. Without the amendment, these groups today made clear that they cannot support the original stand-alone bill, even though it represents a modest yet incomplete improvement over the status quo.

Dick Dadey, executive director of Citizens Union, said, "Though it did not pass the Senate today, it is better to wait and get it right, rather than pass a less than sufficient solution. The Senate's approach adds real teeth to ethics enforcement, which is why we cannot support only the original bill. We changed the ethics law two years ago and got it wrong. We can't afford to get it wrong a second time which is why we need the Senate's approach to succeed."

"The Senate did the right thing by not settling for the Assembly bill, which by itself, does not go far enough. Integral to our support for the Senate's ethics package is the fact that the amendment significantly enhances accountability with a 3 year 'sunset' clause," pointed out Susan Lerner, Executive Director of Common Cause/NY. "Such a clause forces a review of the law to ensure that it is serving the public as promised and ensures that the momentum to continue improving ethics oversight does not let up. We commend the Senate for taking the time to achieve meaningful reform and their willingness to 'stick with it' until they can pass a strong package such as the one they introduced today."

Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director of the League of Women Voters of New York State, stated, "The League applauds the Senate Democrats for putting forward this chapter amendment which, along with the Assembly bill, is good reform. Without the chapter amendment, particularly the campaign finance discrete enforcement unit which for the first time provides teeth to the campaign finance laws, the Assembly bill does not meet our standard of real reform."

APPENDIX E

VOTER SERVICE SURVEY

League _____ Responder _____

Please participate in this state-wide voter service survey to gather information about this fall's activities and to celebrate the League's impact on local communities. Please use extra pages if necessary to complete this form.

CANDIDATE FORUMS/DEBATES

1. Did you conduct forums/debates in your local area? If so, how many different events? For which offices? Together with other Leagues? Co-sponsored with other organizations? If so, which organizations? Who moderated?

Please send copies of your publicity with this report.

2. Were all parties included or did you use your Debate Policy/Guidelines to exclude some candidate(s)? If so, did this exclusion cause any problems?

3. What was the attendance at your event(s)?

4. What format(s) did you use for your event(s)? Traditional? (Opening statement, closing statements? Cumulative time? Panels? Cross-questioning? Candidates' Fair? Empty chair?)

If you used a combination of formats, please elaborate.

Did questions come from the audience? Were they written and screened? Were questions asked by individuals at a microphone? Were there any problems during the question and answer period?

5. Was the event(s) televised? If so, how many times was it broadcast? Was your event covered by the media?

6. What was the most significant accomplishment in putting your event(s) together? What was the biggest challenge/problem?

7. Did your League provide any services such as moderating or timekeeping for an event sponsored by another organization? If so, did you request payment for this service? How much?

VOTERS GUIDES

1. Did your League use the State Voter's Guides? _____
For information about registering and voting? For information about the two statewide ballot proposals?
As part of your League's Voter's Guide? To publicize the League?

2. How many did you distribute? Where were they distributed? Were they distributed free? Did you charge for them? If so, how much?

3. Please make suggestions about how the State Voter's Guides could be improved.

4. Did your League publish a local Voter's Guide? _____ YES _____ NO

If so, please send a copy with this report.

5. How did you publish your local Voter's Guide? Through local newspapers? As a self-supporting publication? On your website? Other?

6. When, where and how did you distribute your Voter's Guide? How many did you print?

VOTER REGISTRATION

1. Did your League conduct voter registration drives? If so, how many and where?

2. How many voters did you register? _____

3. Did you distribute absentee ballot applications? If so, how many? _____

GET-OUT-THE-VOTE EFFORTS

Did you use appearances on TV or radio? Letters to the editor? PSAs? Other?

OTHER SUCCESSES, CHALLENGES, IDEAS, QUESTIONS?

DUE DECEMBER 1, 2009
PLEASE SNAIL MAIL/FAX OR E-MAIL TO:
LWVNYS, 62 GRAND STREET, ALBANY, NY 12207
518-465-0812
LWVNY@LWVNY.ORG

APPENDIX F



*Sponsored by the
League of Women Voters of
New York State Education Foundation, Inc.*



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN EXPERIENCING THE NYS LEGISLATIVE PROCESS AT WORK?

APRIL 11-14, 2010

- Three-Day Interactive Conference
- Tour the NYS Capitol
- Shadow Your Legislator
- Meet Students from Throughout NYS
- Increase Your Knowledge of NYS Government and
- Learn What Role You Can Play in the Government Process

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SMITH COUNTY**

Name
(555) 555-0125

Name
(555) 555-0125

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(555) 555-0125

Name
(555) 555-0125

Name
(555) 555-0125

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(555) 555-0125

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(555) 555-0125



State News

The League of Women Voters of New York State

September 2009

President's Message

It is with sadness we note the deaths of Marion Sinek, LWVNYS President from 1985 to 1989, and Ruth Shur, LWVNYS board member from 1977 to 1989. Marion knew that all politics was local, and said, upon becoming New Castle Town Supervisor, "I like to think that I worked my up to local government." Ruth's husband Walt says she frequently told people that, although she left college to marry, she earned a Ph.D. in government from the League. These amazing women served as inspirations to so many of us in the League and we will greatly miss their contributions and friendships.

Board Travels & Training

LWVNYS President Betsey Swan is speaking at the LWV of Tompkins County fall kickoff and then visiting with other area Leagues, including LWV Broome/Tioga, Cortland, Chemung, Steuben and Cooperstown. She is also meeting with the Management Team of the LWV NYC. **League Legislative Director Barbara Bartoletti** will speak at the Cooperstown Area League's October 17, 2009 luncheon at the Otesaga in Cooperstown, NY. Members of other Leagues are invited to her talk. See p. 19 of the September SBR, available at the League's website, for details. **Voter Services Director Maggie Moehringer** will train members of local Leagues in moderating candidate forums. **Membership Director Georgia DeGregorio** and her regional membership coordinators are available to do board training and training for growth in membership. Contact the state office to arrange a training session.

Voter Services and Guides

The 2009 Voter's Guide Part I has been distributed and Part II is being shipped to local leagues this week; additional copies are available from the state office. The five voter's guides for special populations printed by the New York State Bar Association and the newest version of *Welcome to the League*, printed by CSEA, both at no cost to the League are available for distribution from the state office.

Reform New York

2010 Legislative Priorities Update

Given widespread dissatisfaction of league members with this summer's stalemate in the New York Senate, the **State Issues Committee** and the Issues Specialists decided to focus the 2010 Legislative Agenda on making the State Legislature cleaner and more competitive through emphasizing campaign finance, redistricting and other good government legislative and election reforms. The legislative packet will be given to local leagues in January 2010 as usual but will be re-formatted and focused on these issues. The other areas in which the League has positions will continue to be listed on the Legislative Agenda, and we will continue to take action on issues covered by these positions as they arise.

Youth Programs

It's time for local Leagues to begin preparations for the 10th Annual *Students Inside Albany* Conference to be held April 11-14, 2010. Our goal this year is to have a student representative from every local League in New York State. Look in the SBR for more information on how to find and select students.

We have been notified that the League did not receive the federal \$75,000 mock election grant from the Election Assistance Commission for development of the new youth curriculum. We will continue to develop the curriculum, entitled *Pathways to Civic Engagement*, and will reapply to the EAC, or to other funders, at a later date.

Amicus Brief Filed

This month the League joined a broad coalition of 30 public interest organizations and private law firms in filing an amicus brief, prepared by the Brennan Center for Justice and Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison. This matter involves interpretation of the federal civil rights fee-shifting statute, which permits successful plaintiffs in federal civil rights litigation to recover their attorney's fees, in the belief that, without such fee shifting, many potential litigants could not afford to redress violations of their civil rights in court.

State Study Gears Up

With the advent of fall, we are gearing up for the governmental consolidation/shared services study. Local League presidents should call the state office with the names and contact information of their study chairs.

The initial study schedule is as follows:

- Sept: Preliminary bibliography to local Leagues described below;
- Nov: Full bibliography and written materials for local Leagues;
- Dec: Consensus questions developed by committee;
- Jan: Consensus questions go out after approval by State Board;
- Jan to Apr: Local Leagues have meetings and prepare answers to consensus questions;
- Apr/May: Committee reviews input from local Leagues and prepares a draft position for State Board approval at May board meeting.

The following websites contain valuable information about government consolidation/shared services: www.nyslocalgov.com (a good overall explanation of the State initiatives); <http://www.nytowns.org/core/contentmanager/uploads/GovernmentEfficiencyTheCaseForLocalControl.pdf> (a publication of the Association of Towns); and www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/publications.htm#SharedServices (a good site with several additional reports).

Take a look. A more detailed bibliography will follow in November. For more information, contact study chair Noreen Fisher at NQFisher@gmail.com or see the September SBR.

Emails Wanted

Currently the state League has e-mail addresses for less than one-third of its members. Given the state League's decision to dispense with the printed Voter, it is essential that members send us their e-mail addresses, so that we may distribute the reconfigured Voter to them electronically. We use e-mail addresses for League purposes and do not share them with outside organizations. Don't miss the electronic boat. Send us your e-mail address today.