



State News

The League of Women Voters of New York State

November 2009

Save the Dates

February 9, 2010

Public forum on redistricting followed by celebration of League's 90th birthday; Albany.

April 20, 2010

Equal Pay Day 2010 - annual event to advocate for pay equity; Albany.

April 30-May 2, 2010

Spring Fling weekend in New York City including plays, tours and party.

June 11-June 15, 2010

LWVUS Convention; Atlanta, GA.

May 19-21, 2011

LWVNY State Convention; Albany.

Please Support the LWVNY Foundation Mail Appeal

We have just mailed letters for the Education Foundation's end of year fund drive. Our ability to meet projected income targets is dependent upon the generous support of all League members. We thank you in advance for your anticipated continued generosity.

New Voting Machines Pilots

New York State voters tried out the new optical scanners in 47 counties, either county-wide or in some election districts. The NYS BOE pilot project of scanners was also used in the 11 counties comprising the 23rd Congressional District and reports, while unofficial as of this date, seem to indicate that they performed well. The State League will be summarizing the results from our member survey of polling places where voters used the new equipment.

Smart Growth Celebrates

Smart Growth advocates are celebrating the passage of the Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit—S6056 (Valenski) A9023 (Hoyt)—which was signed into law on July 28th. It is seen as an important breakthrough for revitalizing New York's cities. The bill establishes a rehabilitation and preservation program that will benefit property owners and communities who seek to renovate properties that are run down and dilapidated.

Fix Albany Now!

The LWVNY State Board adopted *Fix Albany Now!* as the slogan for this year's legislative priorities. The 2010 priorities are steps to a new and better State government:

- Redistricting
- Campaign Finance Reform
- Ethics Reform
- Election Reform

Watch for information on ordering the 2010 Legislative Priorities brochure.

A new format for the Issues and Advocacy portion of the website is being developed. We have a new home page for the *Advocacy Areas* section, which explains the League advocacy process, highlights current action, and guides the reader into specific advocacy areas, where more detail is provided. Issue areas are being added as information is compiled - watch the website!

State Welcomes/Seeks Members to Work on Statewide Issues

Roberta Wiernik, Environmental Issue Specialist welcomes Pat Rush of the Schenectady County League and Kay Wagner and Katie Payne of the Tompkins County Leagues to the statewide committee on hydraulic fracturing of the Marcellus Shale. The issue areas of Judiciary and Court Restructuring have recently been consolidated and Albany County League member Janet Aram will join Helga Schroeder and Lenore Banks as an issue specialist in this area.

We invite any local League members with interest in a particular advocacy area to volunteer for a statewide committee. This is a wonderful way to receive training to advocate at the state level, to hone your advocacy skills, and to meet interested and engaged individuals with expertise in the same area. Much work is done electronically.

Welcome New MAL Units!

The LWVNY State Board welcomed two new MAL (Member at Large) units at the November board meeting. They are the LWVNY MAL St Lawrence County and the LWVNY MAL Hamilton County. The most significant thing that each group had in common was the realization that their communities needed a non-partisan, grassroots voice and the League fit the bill.

State Study on Local Consolidation/ Shared Services

New York State continues to be faced with serious structural problems. Anemic economic growth, population losses and some of the highest taxes in the nation have been of serious concern for many years. Although the cost of New York State government threatens its effectiveness, the League has never studied, at a state-wide level, whether it should encourage government consolidations/dissolutions or shared services in the interest of increasing efficiencies, and, if so, what criteria should be applied in evaluating various proposals.

Extensive information and bibliography are now available on the website (under Programs and Studies) for local committees and members. Consensus questions will be available in Jan.

Youth Programs

The 2010 Students Inside Albany Conference will be held April 11-14, 2010 in Albany. It's not too early to get ready to choose your student for the Conference. This year's goal is to have a student representative from every local League in New York State.

We are also excited to announce that the Capital Region will serve as a pilot for the implementation of **Vote 18** programs statewide. Training for League members and presentations in two Capital Region high schools will occur in early Dec. The goal is to create a cadre of Vote 18 presenters who can then train other League members and hopefully spread the program across NYS.

Contact Stephanie Lopez at 518-465-4162 or Stephanie@lwny.org for brochures and more information.

New State Voter On Its Way - Don't Miss It!

Don't miss the League's news! The state *Voter* goes electronic this month because the cost of the printed *Voter* became prohibitive in light of current League funding realities. You will receive the electronic *Voter* automatically free of charge if we have an e-mail address for you. If not, you may order a printed version for \$20.00 for the rest of this fiscal year (4 issues @ \$5 each) or send us your e-mail address to get on our free electronic list.