



League of Women Voters of NYS STATE VOTER

April 2017



From the State President

What a whirlwind these last few days have been for me as League president and how proud I've been of all of us - and of our past, present, and future.

Our past includes being a training ground and a life-long connection for Eleanor Roosevelt who served on the state board in its early years. It was "all Eleanor all the time" last Friday as 50 of us gathered at the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill, her home at Hyde Park, to have lunch with our new-ish LWVUS executive, Wylecia Wiggs Harris, hear some inspiring words from her (see elsewhere for more on that), and tour Val-Kill. You came from all over to be there - three of you from Chautauqua! - and there was much joy and excitement.

At 4 pm that day many others of you joined a crowd at the Wallace Center on the FDR site not far from Val-Kill as the "Women in Politics: Past, Present & Future" conference that we helped plan with SUNY New Paltz got underway. Everywhere I looked in the crowd I could spot familiar League faces including many who had not been able to be at the lunch. A rather disturbing report on polling done by SUNY New Paltz on women's values and a powerful talk by US Senator Kirsten Gillibrand followed. See here: <http://www.twcnews.com/nys/hudson-valley/news/2017/04/21/senator-kristen-gillibrand-helps-celebrate-100th-anniversary-of-ny-women-s-suffrage-movement.html> for TV coverage on the talk. We will report later on the polling.

During the wine and appetizer period that followed, "our" Wylecia gave a toast in which she expressed delight at being able to visit Val-Kill and learn more about the trailblazer that Eleanor was. "You are all trailblazers in your own right," she said as she encouraged us to keep fighting to make the hopes of our foremothers a reality and to honor "the past, present, and future" of women.

Allida Black, Research Professor of History and International Affairs at George Washington University and an expert on Eleanor Roosevelt, was the keynote speaker at dinner, and afterwards when we talked she said she'd help us create a program to train women to run for office, something she does in a week-long summer program at Yale.

The next day Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul greeted us and spoke in a very personal way about the need for women to believe in ourselves and to get out there and make a difference. A wonderful selection of panel discussions followed and after I debrief with the SUNY organizers, I'll try to share more with you about them.

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WANT TO TAKE ACTION?

You want to take action? Keep informed on legislative issues and League action? Join the new google group. See information below or email Jennifer@lwvny.org to sign up.

Support the League Through Amazon

You can support the League's Education Foundation with every purchase you make on Amazon.com. Just select the LWVNYS Education Foundation as the organization you want to support, and Amazon provides .05% of each purchase price to the EF. An easy way to support us! More info at: <https://org.amazon.com/>

Travel with the League



Click [here](#) for trips and itineraries.

And then Tuesday I saw a whole new gathering of League members at the Capitol as we got updates on our issues from Barb Bartoletti, Jennifer Wilson and Laura Bierman; watched Jennifer manage a well-attended press conference on election law reform; and then go lobby our legislators. It's always a little crazy in Albany on Tuesdays but a lively time was had by all.

What a pleasure to see so many of you during these few days. Keep up your enthusiasm and very good work. We're a pretty lively bunch for being almost 100!

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Writers Wanted

Call for Submissions from Female Writers in New York State

Deadline: May 31, 2017

*Before They Were Our Mothers:
Voices of Women Born Before
Rosie Started Riveting*

seeking first-person, present-tense
TRUE stories giving voice to the
author's mother or grandmother
born before World War II.

Review specific guidelines:
<https://journalartspress.com/before-they-were-our-mothers/>.

Email:
b4theywereourmothers@gmail.com

57th Biennial State Convention - June 9-11



"FAILURE IS IMPOSSIBLE"

LEAGUE'S STATE CONVENTION IS COMING!

The 57th State League Convention is scheduled for June 10-11, 2017, at the Holiday Inn Express in Liverpool, NY (just off the Thruway near Syracuse). The Registration Kit is now available on the state website (<http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Registration-Kit-2017.pdf>). Encourage all members to attend, even if as Visitors or for free to the workshops!

Pre Convention Kit

The Pre Convention Kit is now available - click [here](#). This Kit includes all the important items to be discussed during the League's plenary (business) meeting: Proposed 2017-18 Budget, Proposed Bylaw Amendments, Nominating Committee Report with the Proposed Slate of Officers and Board Members, and the Proposed Program, including an update to an existing position and a new proposed concurrence. Workshops and Caucuses or Info Sessions are also described to encourage all to join us in Liverpool! The workshops and info sessions are open to anyone - you don't have to be a voting delegate to attend these. And, our luncheon speaker will be Sally Roesch Wagner, Executive Director of the Matilda Joslyn Gage House, who will present *The Rest of the Story of the Suffrage Movement*; join us for lunch and the speaker (\$40) or just come for the speaker at no cost!

Field Trip!

To celebrate women achieving the right to vote in 1917 in NYS, the state League is organizing a field trip from Liverpool to Seneca Falls on Friday, June 9 (day before Convention actually begins). This is will a separate charge and everyone is welcome (not just convention attendees); tours of the Elizabeth Cady Stanton home, Women's Hall of Fame and the Women's Rights National History Park (and Wesleyan Chapel), as well as dinner and a speaker at an historic restaurant in Seneca Falls, will be included. You will need to be in Liverpool by noon on Friday to join this trip. The Registration Form for this tour is also posted on the website (<http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/concon/2017/Suffrage-Tour-Registration-Form.pdf>).

Volunteers are Needed!

Volunteers are needed to help at the state Convention. You should all send as many voting delegates as you are entitled, but if you have others that want to attend only part of Convention, encourage them to become volunteers. Here are some reasons why:

- Delegates can volunteer during non-plenary hours.
- Visitors can volunteer during plenary and observe plenary at no charge.
- Volunteering is a great way to meet and network with fellow Leaguers.

Contact Joan Johnson, Volunteer Coordinator, at 315-488-4339 or by email at jaj62@twcny.rr.com.

Anyone can attend the workshops on Saturday, June 10, in the morning, and, if they register as a Visitor, may observe the plenary sessions. Volunteers will be allowed to attend plenary also, as space permits.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE HISTORY

100th Anniversary Dates

November 6, 2017	100 th Anniversary of Woman Suffrage in New York State
November 19, 2019	100 th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters of New York State
February 14, 2020	100 th Anniversary of National League of Women Voters
August 26, 2020	100 th Anniversary of the official certification of the ratification of the 19 th amendment by the US Secretary of State



Resource Packet for Local Programs

A packet of resources for local Leagues to organize programs and events on women's suffrage history has been mailed to every local League - and a new page has been created on the state website with links to all the info, as well as a [calendar](#) to see what events are scheduled, and a [blog on significant events and locations in women's history in NYS](#). Check out at all the resources at <http://www.lwvny.org/programs-studies/womens-suffrage/index.html>. You might find a book or movie that you'd like to read or watch together with some League friends!

LWVUS has created a new logo to be used during these next 4 years to celebrate the League's 100th anniversary. We have customized it for NYS (on left). We have also created buttons that are for sale from the state office (on right) for \$1 plus tax and shipping.



LWVUS Executive Director, Wylecia Wiggs Harris Addresses Members at Val-Kill Luncheon



At a luncheon for 50 League members at the Eleanor Roosevelt Center at Val-Kill (ervk.org), Wylecia Wiggs Harris expressed enthusiasm about her job as CEO of the national League and was honest with us about the significant challenges we face.

She was happy to report that at the end of January, even before the full effects of the November election were felt, **our membership was already up 7% while new Leagues were being formed and more new members were still coming.**

But while we end the first century of LWV history strong, she challenged us to start our next century even stronger. We have always been evolving, but **as change picks up speed, we need to move beyond evolution to transformation.** Many new members are younger and more action-oriented than current ones. We want to retain them and to prepare for the next generation of members. We also need to be sure that our relevance is evident to those outside the League. We need greater diversity in age, ethnicity, and perspective.

Wylecia spoke of letting go of past mistakes - "There are no perfect organizations, no perfect people." We also need to evaluate which elements of our deep culture serve us well and which don't.

Finally she spoke with passion about reclaiming **our role at all levels of League as the premier authority on election reform.** With increased competition from younger, more agile organizations, we must vigorously defend our core issues and our role in election reform at the national, state and local levels.

The conversation about our "transformational journey" began with LWVUS board and staff and continued with the 2016 Convention, a board-appointed committee tasked with elevating the

discussion, and a retreat in Pocantico Hills (NY) early this year. Our board president and secretary, Dare Thompson and Jane Park, and our executive director, Laura Bierman, were among the 30 or so Pocantico participants.

Questions included in all this talk:

1. How do we provide more community facing time for local Leagues by shifting administrative responsibility elsewhere?
2. Do we need to engage individuals differently in micro volunteer activities to hook them into League.
3. How might we need to change our economic engine to ensure all levels of League are success

The conversation will continue at LWVUS Council 2017 in June.



ADVOCACY AND PROGRAM UPDATE

Jennifer Wilson, Director of Program & Policy,

jennifer@lwvny.org



Advocacy Training/Lobby Day

This year's Lobby Day was a major success! Thank you to all of the members who spent their Tuesday in Albany lobbying for voting reforms, health care, women's issues, and environmental conservation. Although the day was a bit chaotic, we managed to fit in a very exciting press conference on the need for comprehensive voting reforms. Several legislators attended and spoke at the event including Senate Democratic Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and CO-Sponsor of the Assembly bill, Assemblymember Brian Kavanaugh. Many media outlets attended and we received a significant amount of attention on social media. Over all it was a very fun day and we were delighted to see so many eager League members meet with their legislators. Photos and the handouts from the training will be available on the website shortly. If you attended Lobby Day please don't forget to send your Lobby Report to Jennifer at

Jennifer@lwvny.org



Legislative Update

The budget passed earlier this month after a 9 day delay. The legislature included many progressive reforms in the budget package including Raise the Age, College Affordability Plan, Uber for Upstate NY, and a \$2.5 billion investment in water infrastructure. Unfortunately ethics and voting reforms were not included in the final package. You can read our full analysis of the final budget package on our blog [here](#).

Now that the budget has passed and session has resumed, we will be focusing on our push for voting reforms. We are adamant about getting something done on voting before the end of session. We have already held a large press conference on the issue and will now focus our efforts on trying to work with Senate Republicans and the Independent Democratic Conference.

NEW VOICES App for Political Advocacy on Your Phone



You can help us with our advocacy agenda by downloading our new app on your phone (iPhone or Android). **Voices is a political advocacy app that shares action alerts from the League directly to your phone.** These action alerts will allow you to quickly call, email, or tweet at your legislator with the touch of a button

The alert will provide you with a sample script, email, or tweet and give you the power to lobby on these issues quickly and easily. You can download the app to your smart phone or tablet by using this link: <https://tryvoices.com/lwvnys> or by searching "**Voices: Political Advocacy**" in the **Apple App Store** or **Google Play** on your cell phone. Please download the app so that you can help us take action as we move forward this session.



DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Kate Jankowski, kate@lwvny.org

Honor an Inspiring Woman and Celebrate NY Suffrage Centennial

It's almost Mother's Day and 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of women earning the right to vote in New York State. So this is the perfect time to honor a woman who inspires you by making a gift to the League of Women Voters of NYS Education Foundation! If you make a Mother's Day tribute gift by Tuesday, May 9, 2017, we will send a special card to let the person you honored know that you made this gift for them. Click here to make a gift for a special woman in your life: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/eYLuu1N53W_rWKs6mi3z3A.

Monthly Giving

With 2017 marking the 100th anniversary of women earning the right to vote in New York State, this is the perfect time to become a monthly donor to the LWVNY Education Foundation. Many donors have discovered the ease and opportunity of making monthly gifts to the state League. When you sign up for monthly giving, your gift is charged automatically to your credit card or deducted from your bank account each month, you will no longer get appeal letters so you save paper and postage, and you can often give more to your favorite charities by spreading out your gift than you would be able to give in one lump sum. It's also a win for your favorite charities because they know they can depend on that income each month and they save on printing and postage.

If you are interested in joining our monthly giving program, click here: https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/YDtdm48AXX7FWV4H3JnXSw

FROM LWVUS

New Google Discussion Group: Health Care Reform

As the fight for health care continues, what is next for advocates at the state and national levels? The LWVUS Board recently approved a new a Google discussion group for Health Care Reform. This discussion and sharing group for League members on health care reform, including behavioral health, welcomes ideas, resources, successes and questions. To receive an invitation to the group please contact Linda Hawkins at abitahawk@gmail.com or Linda Mahan at Lmahan78@gmail.com.

Last Chance and DC Meeting Spot: Climate March April 29

This Saturday, the League will participate in the 2017 [People's Climate March \(Washington, DC\)](#). We will meet in front of The Newseum at 10AM. If you are planning to attend the March in Washington, please let us know by [filling out this form](#). We hope to see you in DC on April 29 or at a Sister March! Questions may be directed to Emily Yost (eyost@lwv.org).

LOCAL LEAGUE NEWS

LWV of Rochester has been busy with forums on voting reforms - and will continue the forums in the future. Following are YouTube links to the recording (in 3 parts) of our 9/2016 forum on "Voting in Monroe County" presented by our BOE Commissioners - the "seed" from which this plan started. It's a really good overview of election process and various issues:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Go3Lyh6yjuo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2BfaCIZfdw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vg9cfnPlceI>

The **LWV of Huntington's** second Issues Education session, Voices from the Front, held on Wednesday, March 8th at the South Huntington Library was a panel discussion with opening remarks by our League President, Colette Knuth and moderated by member, Dianne Slavin. Panelists included medical practitioners, an employer, a patient advocate, an insurer and a policy maker. The panelist gave the audience real life examples of the American health care and insurance systems at work; systems that certainly have flaws but that are essential to our general well-being.

On Friday, May 5th, **LWV of Syracuse** invites its members to attend the annual legislative breakfast with their state senators and assembly members. The Syracuse League is also hosting the state Convention in June and would love people to help volunteer at the Convention. Contact Joan Johnson at jaj62@twcny.rr.com if you are willing to help!

LWV of Chautauqua, with League leadership, has organized a small group of local citizens to find common ground among people who voted for Secretary Clinton and people who voted for President Trump. These citizens reject the polarization of views and demonization of opponents that has marred public discourse in recent months. They believe that our democracy is harmed when people can't listen to one another and speak to one another in a civil manner. The group's focus has been on issues not personalities; on action for the future, not on blame for the past. And indeed, a lot of common ground has emerged during the three monthly meetings this gradually growing group has held.

A panel discussion on the Electoral College was organized by the **LWV of Eastern Putnam County**. Panelists included: Dr. Jeanne Zaino, Political Science Faculty member, Iona College and New York University; Barbara Bartoletti, LWVNYS Legislative Director; and Anthony G. Scannapieco, Jr., Republican Election Commissioner, Putnam County Board of Elections.

There was standing room only for a meeting organized jointly by the **LWV of Albany County** and the NYS Women's Press Club, entitled, "*Endangered Species? The Future of Journalism and the 1st Amendment.*" Guest panelists included Rex Smith, TU editor; Rosemary Armao, UAlbany Journalism professor, Robert Heverly, Assoc. Professor at Albany Law School with Moderator: Angela Ledford, Professor of political science at College of St. Rose

LWV of Tompkins County held a meeting to discuss the legacy of the Rockefeller drug laws, the capacity of local organizations, the success/challenge of drug court, the public's attitude toward addicts, and the relationship of alternative programs to the proposal to increase the size of the local jail.

The **LWV of Broome and Tioga Counties** is a member of the Status of Women Council in which women from twelve other organizations cooperate to highlight the importance of women's contributions in our community. Great collaboration, League!

Ten members of **LWV Saratoga** recently squeezed around a table in Congresswoman Elise Stefanik's rather small Glens Falls district office to talk about issues of concern. They discussed voting reforms, healthcare and environmental issues.

More than 90 percent of the people fleeing to New York from conflict-ridden countries have resettled in one of five upstate counties. Erie County is one of those, welcoming refugees and asylum seekers from Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Burma, Bhutan, Nepal and more. **LWV of Buffalo/Niagara** held a meeting to hear about their real-life experiences, and how the Center for Survivors of Torture helps them heal and make their home in a new land.

On February 22, a group representing **LWV of the Hamptons** (Glorian Berk, Carol Mellor, Martha Potter and Judi Roth) met with Congressman Lee Zeldin to advocate for LWVH positions including comprehensive health care for all.

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