



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEW JERSEY

STATE BOARD REPORT

January 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- President's Letter
- State Board Contact List
- Board Meeting: Key Decisions
- Development Report
- Program Report
- Voters Service Report
- Advocacy Report
- State Office Reminders
- Calendar
- Learning the League: Membership and Leadership Development

204 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608
609-394-3303 * 800-792-VOTE * Fax: 609-599-3993
Email: contact@lwvnj.org Web site: www.lwvnj.org

Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/LWVNJ

Follow us on Twitter @LWVNJ

Dear Presidents and Members,

I hope you are all well rested and eager to refocus on our mission to educate, advocate and empower our New Jersey electorate in this Presidential election year. Those who have held or started to prepare for Program Planning meetings know that LWVUS has not proposed any new studies for the 2016 -18 biennium. Rather, we are urged to *free up resources and unite Leagues across the country to focus on a single nationwide education and advocacy League campaign: Making Democracy Work by taking the power from the few and returning it to the many.*

Concurrently and, quite independently from National but with input from our members, your LWVNJ board has re-affirmed its commitment to making democracy work by partnering with local Leagues to register voters, organize debate watching parties, provide public policy forums throughout the state, and focus on strategies to get out the vote. This Presidential election year promises to be unique, providing an opportunity for greater engagement and visibility for the League at all levels. In this month's report, our Voter Service V.P., Dawn Clarke, provides guidance on two ways your Leagues can begin to expand your Voter Service activities.

League members know democracy is not working in New Jersey when only 20% of its voters visit the polls on Election Day. According to the Pew Foundation, New Jersey ranks 39th in percent of eligible voters registered and our overall election performance ranks 37th in the nation! One way to improve New Jersey's overall election performance is to expand opportunities for voter registration and voting. In this new legislative session, LWNJ will continue our work with coalition partners in advocating for automatic and on-line voter registration, in person early voting and restoring voting rights for probationers and parolees. (See Sandy Matsen's Advocacy Report for details from the lame duck session of the Legislature.)

And while the LWVUS consensus studies are concluding, we voted on two state consensus studies at our 2015 Convention – Campus Sexual Assault and Redistricting. Members of the state Women and Family Issues Committee are preparing the Sexual Assault Study and are in the process of drafting the consensus questions. Ed Gracely, Program VP has provided an update on the Sexual Assault Study in his report.

Anne Maiese, LWVNJ Coach Coordinator has prepared an overview of the Membership and Leadership Development program in this month's "Learning the League." This program may be exactly what some local Leagues need to refine leadership or engage new members to strengthen their capacity as we head into this important year.

At our 2015 Convention, one of the "directions to the Board" was to make the cocktail reception (held the previous evening) an annual event. And our "northern" Leagues have expressed a desire to attend a statewide event in their geographic area. We heard you and are planning a cocktail reception for May 7th, the night before the spring workshops, in the Morris County area. If you or a member(s) of your League would like to serve on the cocktail reception committee, please contact Ann Saunders, our V.P of Development (saunders12@verizon.net).

Finally, thank you for responding to our action alerts and sending the letter to the editor templates we've provided.. Many of your letters have been published and, as you will note in the Advocacy Report, your responses to our most recent action alert contributed to passage of ACR249 on the last day of the last Legislative session, an excellent example of Making Democracy Work.

In League,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy K. Hedinger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

2015-2017 Expanded Board List

Nancy Hedinger, President hedingern@gmail.com	Stacey Faella, Director staceyfaella@gmail.com
Dawn Clarke, Vice President, Voters Service clarkeda@comcast.net	Nickole Forbes, Director nickoleforbes@hotmail.com
Ed Gracely, Vice President, Program edgracely@verizon.net	Brendan Keating, Director blkleague@gmail.com
Loretta Lynch, Vice President, Governance lynchloretta@aol.com	Casey Olesko, Director casey.olesko@gmail.com
Ann Saunders, Vice President, Development saunders12@verizon.net	Melissa Scott, Director mebscott@comcast.net
Susan Varga, Secretary scvarga@hotmail.com	Terry Thompson, Director ta-thompson@hotmail.com
Ellen Kemp, Treasurer ellenmkemp@gmail.com	

Off-Board

Sandra Matsen, Chair
Budget Committee
slmatsen@aol.com

Marlene Sincaglia, Chair
Nominating Committee
jcsmmm@verizon.net

Michelle Bobrow
Nominating Committee
m.bobrow@verizon.net

Crystal Matsibekker
Nominating Committee
crystal.matsibekker@nyu.edu

LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting Key Decisions

Meeting held January 9, 2016

League of Women Voters of New Jersey Key Decisions

1. The Funds Preserving Task Force was extended to March 12, 2016
2. The League of Women Voters of New Jersey Financial Policies & Procedures was approved.
3. Pre-approval of \$1500 expenditure for YPN to partner with Eagleton Institute on a pilot program for students – RU Running.
4. February Board meeting was changed from a conference call meeting to an in-person meeting

League of Women Voters of New Jersey Education Fund Key Decisions

1. The League of Women Voters of New Jersey Education Fund Financial Policies and Procedures was approved
2. February Board of Trustees meeting was changed from a conference call meeting to an in-person meeting

Date of the Next LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting: Saturday, February 13, 2016

Pre-Board Briefings Due: Wednesday, February 3, 2016

Committee Members Needed

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey hosted a very successful cocktail reception last May and is in the process of planning this year's event.

Our intent is to educate and inspire the public about the work we do and instill a greater sense of pride within our membership, while raising much needed funds to support our work. The cocktail reception last year created a buzz that began to strengthen our strategic and coalition partnerships.

This year we will host the "Making Democracy Work" award ceremony and cocktail reception in the Morris County Area on May 7th. While we have experience from last year's event, we are looking for extra hands to help make this year's reception even more successful. As VP of Development, I will oversee the plans and the timelines that have been developed. I am writing in the hope that you or some of your members would be willing to work with me on the event committee. We are looking for assistance with the following:

- ❖ Finding a venue
- ❖ Identifying and obtaining sponsors
- ❖ Producing a sponsorship booklet
- ❖ Running a silent auction and a 50-50 drawing at the event
- ❖ Identifying awardees - 5 outstanding individuals and organizations that will be recognized at the event
- ❖ Developing a program that will be fun, profitable and encourage networking among members and guests
- ❖ Other activities that go into making a successful event

The planning meetings will be conducted by conference calls so that very little travel is involved. Conference call meetings worked very well for us last year and we will continue this method of planning. We need your expertise and look forward to the interaction and comradeship that often develops from such activities. Please contact me at saunders12@verizon.net or call 856-232-1041. We will be hosting our first conference call January 27, 2016.

League Study:
How Best to Respond to Alleged Sexual Assault on Students in College Communities

This LWVNJ study, which was approved at Convention 2015, is moving forward. The Women and Family Issues Committee, under the leadership of Chair Melissa Smith Goldstein, is working on study questions and materials. Some materials are already available on the LWVNJ website at http://www.lwvnj.org/issues_womenfamily.html

While it is too soon to start actual consensus meetings, some local Leagues have already held informative sessions on the topic, with speakers and sometimes survivors to tell their story. You may want to consider following suit.

The formal scope of the study was adopted at Convention. It says:

The study will consider the following issues/questions:

- How should sexual assault be defined? Here we want consider sexual assault on men as well as women as well as what constitutes consent.
- What is the appropriate role for local law enforcement and for campus student services?
- What are viable means of prevention that all campuses should implement?
- In this regard, what is the role of men in eliminating gender-based violence?

This study will be interesting and important -- I hope every League will plan to participate and ensure enough time to educate its members on this serious topic.

Making Democracy Work

The LWVNJ has suggested expanding both voter registration and moderator training opportunities to support Voter Service efforts to “Making Democracy Work.”

We know that voter registration is a year round affair, taking advantage of every public event or gathering. Additionally, we now need to promote focused outreach to schools and colleges to collaborate on raising awareness of voting rights issues as well as registering voters. While students are offered the opportunity to register to vote at the time of obtaining their driver’s license, many don’t do so, others even opt out of getting the license. Therefore, we need to continue to rethink and reapproach how to reach the next generation of voters and help them understand the importance of their vote. Connecting with an AP social studies class, a debate club or college service organization to share that well researched Money in Politics information and offer to support their voter registration efforts is one approach. You might also want to look online at LWVUS’s, *Empowering the Voters of Tomorrow High School Voter Registration Manual*.

Offering balanced, nonpartisan educational forums and debates helps achieve the League’s core mission. To ensure an informed electorate and continuing civil discourse in the political arena, we need to train not only moderators, but League leaders and members to effectively share this informed model of civic engagement with the community. We would like to empower our local League leaders and voter service team members to effectively consult on organizing forums and debates with community civic groups. We propose to expand Moderator training opportunities throughout the state to include experienced moderators and local League members as well as potential new moderators. To do that, LWVNJ will provide trainers and materials, but we need local Leagues to volunteer to host i.e. provide a site. **One LL has volunteered for a Saturday in February, can you do one as an additional program event in March, April or May?**

Advocacy Report

Government Committee

► **There will be no constitutional amendment on the ballot in 2016 based on the Democracy Act.**

Democracy Act S50/A4613 modernizing New Jersey's voting laws with initiatives to enact automatic voter registration and the ability to update information online, expanded early voting by allowing in-person early voting, protection of voters against fraud and harassment, elimination special elections for Congress, and expanding access in languages other than English passed both houses June 29, 2015 and was vetoed by the Governor November 9, 2015.

November and December the coalition worked to influence a promised Concurrent Resolution (CR) placing the Democracy Act as a constitutional amendment on the November 2016 ballot. The coalition lobbied sponsors of the CR to include parole and probationer enfranchisement missing in the Democracy Act into the CR. A draft CR proposing amending Article II Section I, paragraphs 3 and 4 was available December 10. The League signed on to a letter sent to all legislators supporting this action December 14.

December 17 was the deadline for the Senate and Assembly to introduce the CR in committee so it could be "placed on the desk" for the required 20 days before a session vote. Although 4 CRs were introduced on December 17, the Democracy Act was not one of them.

Natural Resources Committee

► Submitted comments to NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJ DEP) [opposing new regulations related to sewer treatment overloads](#)

► Submitted comments to NJ Department of Environmental Protection opposing regulations making [multiple changes to the Water Supply Master Plan](#)

▶ [Supported ACR 249](#) a resolution that the NJ DEP's proposals to revise regulations for Flood Hazard, Coastal Zone and Stormwater Management Acts are inconsistent with legislative intent. SCR 180/ACR249 passed both houses on the last day of the 2014-15 session. The Commissioner has 30 days to amend or withdraw the proposed revisions. If he does not do so, it requires passage of another CR by the Legislature to invalidate the rules in whole or in part.

▶ Submitted [comments on 2015 Energy Master Plan](#) before the Board of Public Utilities

▶ Testimony at Port Ambrose LNG hearing

▶ Petition signatures collected and sent asking for separate FERC/DRBC PennEast pipeline meetings (grant requirement)

Reminder: Sign up for Callathon

Thank you to everyone who has sent in an Annual Appeal donation. If you haven't sent in your donation, please consider making a donation today. 2016 is shaping up to be a busy and important year and we need your support.

I hope that your League will participate in this year's Callathon. **The deadline to sign up to participate is 1/25/2016.** Participating Leagues receive a percentage of the donations made by the members of the League they are calling. This is a great way to support LWVNJ and earn some money for your local League.

To sign up please call or email Pat, contact@lwnj.org, 609-394-3303 and let her know if you would like to call your own League, prefer to call a different League, or both.

Once you agree to participate, the state office will send you a packet on February 1st with instructions and people to call.

New to organizing Callathon? No worries! In addition to the instructions in your Callathon packet, the staff/board will offer you some training and answer any of your questions.

Reminder: Deadline to Update your Membership Roster is January 31, 2016

Your local League's PMP payment to LWVNJ and LWVUS for the 2016-2017 FY is based on your membership roster as of midnight January 31.

This is your opportunity to access the National roster and to make sure the listing for your local League is correct. Please note that LWVUS is using a new membership database and there have been significant changes. Make sure you allow yourself plenty of time to become familiar with the new roster. If you have added members from last year, be certain they are listed and mark members as inactive or deceased when appropriate. Check EVERYTHING for the correct spelling of names, addresses, phone numbers, emails and expiration date.

It is the local League's responsibility to maintain its roster. The state office is doing more with less, and while we can help answer your questions, we cannot be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of local League rosters. If you have any questions, please contact Pat Thompson at thompson@lwnj.org.

LWVNJ CALENDAR
Upcoming Events 2016

Please note that dates are subject to change. If you have any questions, please contact the LWVNJ office at contact@lwvnj.org or 609-394-3303.

February 2016

- Feb. 1: Callathon Packets Out
- Feb. 3: PBBs due
- Feb 13: LWVNJ/EF Board meeting
- Feb. 14 LWVUS birthday (PR/Fundraising Opportunity)

March 2016

- Women's History Month (PR opportunity)
- Mar. 1: Callathon Packets Due Back
- March 2: PBBs due
- Mar. 8: International Women's Day (PR opportunity)
- March 12: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting
- Mid-March Sunshine Week (PR opportunity)
- March 30: PBBs for April meeting due

April 2016

- Apr. 9: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting
- Apr. 19-25: National Volunteer Week (PR opportunity)
- Apr. 22: Earth Day (PR opportunity)
- Apr. 27: PBBs for May meeting due

May 2016

- May 1: Law Day (PR opportunity)
- May 6: Making Democracy Work Awards Cocktail Reception
- May 7: LWVNJ Spring Forum
- May 9: Advocacy Appeal Sent

June 2016

- June 1: PBBs due
- June 11: LWVNJ/EF Board meeting
- **June 16 – 19: LWVUS Convention 2016**
- June 29: PBBs for July meeting due

July 2016

- July 9: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting

August 2016

- Aug. 3: PBBs due
- Aug. 13: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting
- Aug. 26: Women's Equality Day

September 2016

- Sept. 7: PBBs due
- Sept. 17: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting
- Sept 24 – 25: Statewide Voter Registration Weekend
- Sept 28: PBBs for October meeting due

October 2016

- Oct 2 – 4: Rosh Hashanah
- Oct. 8: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting
- Oct. 8: Fall Forum and Workshops
- Oct. 11 – 12: Yom Kippur

November 2016

- Nov. 1: Annual Member Appeal begins
- Nov. 8: General Election Day
- Nov 9: PBBs due
- Nov. 19: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting
- Nov 30: PBBs for December meeting due

December 2016

- Dec. 8: Annual Advocacy Meet & Greet
- Dec. 10: LWVNJ/EF Board meeting
- Dec. 23 – Jan. 2: Office Closed for the Holidays

Learning the League: What is the Membership and Leadership Development Program (MLD)

What is MLD?

MLD is an organized method for all the levels of League to work together, carrying out our mission in such a way that we attract new members, engage our present members, and train leaders. It was designed by LWVUS to help local Leagues thrive.

When did it start?

MLD (then called Membership Recruitment Initiative) was started in 2006, when the LWVUS Board took what it had learned from working with a consulting service and began a pilot project with five city Leagues. Feedback from the pilot helped shape the program, with the emphasis on working at all three levels of League as a main goal.

When and how did New Jersey get involved in the MLD program?

In the spring of 2011, NJ accepted an invitation to join MLD and selected Dawn Clarke and Anne Maiese to attend a two-day training in Rhode Island. Since then, six additional coaches have worked with a total of nine local Leagues. With 28 local Leagues in NJ, we really need to expand the program.

Why would a League want or need a coach?

Just like a tennis coach can see what a player is doing well and help her improve, a MLD coach is able to see how the group functions and help it build on its strengths. A coach provides an "outside eye" that can help even the best of Leagues. (It's similar to the way an editor helps a writer.)

What does participation in MLD involve?

After their training the coaches attend another training session with the local League team(s) they'll be coaching. They have a chance to get acquainted and practice using a few of the MLD methods.

Afterwards, they mutually agree upon a day & time each month for a conference call of about an hour. During the calls the coach helps the team recognize and take pride in its successes. She shares tips gleaned from other Leagues' experiences and offers support when things don't go as well as planned.

The team also is encouraged to give feedback to their coach about her coaching and about the MLD program generally. The coaches share these with the MLD organizers at LWVUS so they can continue to make improvements.

How have Leagues benefited from participation in MLD?

Generally these groups are much more enthusiastic. Coaches guide them to focus on their strengths, and with support they become more confident that positive change is possible. Participating Leagues have been able to re-engage their current members and attract new allies and members. They also are consciously helping members learn procedures and develop skills that they can use in leadership roles.

Which is more important, adding members or developing leaders?

They are both extremely important. A League may have a good number of members but no one who is willing or able to do basic jobs like convene meetings and collect dues. Other Leagues may have some good leaders but not enough members to accomplish much. However, a positive change in just one of these elements can often transform a League.

For more information about becoming a MLD coach (or suggesting someone you think would be a good coach) contact:

Anne Maiese, LWVNJ Coach Coordinator; <mailto:maiese2@comcast.net>

For more information for local Leagues about what would be involved for them, contact:

Marlene Sincaglia, President of LWV of Berkeley Heights, New Providence, & Summit, currently participating in MLD. <mailto:jcsmmm@verizon.net>