



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEW JERSEY

STATE BOARD REPORT

November 2016

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Dear Local League Presidents and Leaders:

Congratulations on surviving another hectic election season! Subject to receiving the final numbers, it looks like local Leagues sponsored over 70 candidate forums and registered countless voters at county colleges, high schools, naturalization ceremonies, places of worship, libraries, and street fairs. We are still waiting for a breakdown by state but according to LWVUS, Vote411.org received 6 million hits! Many thanks to our moderators, voters service chairs, and volunteers for their tireless efforts to help make democracy work for all in New Jersey in 2016.

This election has enhanced interest in civic engagement. Prospective members and volunteers are looking for ways to become involved. The League is presented with an auspicious opportunity to grow our organization. Some suggestions for best practices to achieve this are offered in this SBR.

At our Fall Forum, we asked local Leagues and interested members at large to a visit with their legislators (after the election) to present the League's Voter Reform Platform. For those who couldn't attend the forum, Sandy Matsen prepared an explanation of the platform as well as "next steps" for those visits.

Concerning civic engagement, we have received a number of inquiries about League participation in the Women's March on Washington, January 21st. This matter was addressed in an email from LWVUS President, Chris Carson to State Presidents, which advised as follows: *The LWVUS Board of Directors met this past weekend and discussed whether the League should participate officially in the planned Women's March on Washington, January 21, 2017. The board considered feedback from the State Presidents call, the State Presidents/ED listserv, and the State Executive Director calls to inform its decision. We also considered information about the March available online. After a thoughtful discussion weighing the pros and cons, the board decided that LWVUS is not planning to officially participate in the Women's March. We believe in the freedom of assembly as a cornerstone of our open democracy. We support political activism and encourage people across the United States to let their voices be heard. If League members wish to attend this event, we do not discourage it. We kindly request that League members do not wear League buttons or carry League signs in this march. We will monitor the organization of this event and if additional information emerges before January 21 that indicates it will be a non-partisan diverse, and inclusive event, the LWVUS may reconsider its decision.*

Finally, we have provided a link to the 2017 Program Planning packet and key dates leading up to LWVNJ Convention 2017. Planning the Convention and the Making Democracy Work Cocktail reception requires the input, involvement and assistance of many. If you would like to work on either of these events, please let us know by emailing or calling me. This is a productive, professional and fun way to share your talents and get to know other League members!

In League,



LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting Key Decisions

Meeting held: Saturday, November 19, 2016

League of Women Voters of New Jersey :

1. Stacey Faella presented the draft Strategic Plan. Final to be voted on at the December meeting.
2. 501 c3/501c4 Merger Committee to meet and discuss the feasibility of proposing the change at Convention 2017. A timeline will be presented and board questions answered during a discussion at the December meeting.
3. The conversion from oil to gas at 204 West State Street is complete. This includes a new furnace, chimney liner, fan and water heater. The oil tank still needs to be removed and permits from the City are pending.
4. Convention 2017 will take place on April 28 and April 29. Making Democracy Work Awards cocktail reception will take place on April 28.

Important Timeline Information for Local Leagues

- December 21, 2016: Call for Award Nominations sent to local Leagues (December SBR)
- December 21, 2016: Call for New Board Members sent to local Leagues (December SBR)
- **January 27, 2017: Program Planning Responses Due to LWVNJ Board**
- January 28, 2017: First Call to Convention
- January 28, 2017: Suggestions for New Board Members due to Nominating Committee
- January 28, 2017: Any recommended PMP increase must be sent to local Leagues (if proposed)
- February 28, 2017: Proposed Budget/Program/Bylaws must be sent to local Leagues no later than this date
- February 28, 2017: Award Nominations due from local Leagues
- April 28, 2017 and April 29, 2017: League of Women Voters of New Jersey Convention

Program Planning Responses Due to LWVNJ Board

Program planning responses are due by January 27, 2017. Information about participating and response forms are available here: <http://lwnj.org/members.html>

Convention Committee

If you are interested in serving on the Convention Planning Committee, please email Nancy Hedinger at hedinger@gmail.com.

To: League Leaders
From: Sandy Matsen slmatsen@aol.com 908-236-6490
Re: Voting Reform Platform Legislative Visits

At fall workshops, we asked local Leagues to have a conversation with their elected officials about the 6 items on our Voting Reform Platform. Our goal is to encourage bipartisan support for these reforms and also give us a better understanding of legislators concerns. These visits are not designed to solicit a yes vote on a specific piece of legislation, but to discuss ideas. We would prefer the visits be completed by April 15, 2017.

At the workshops, we handed out the Platform which includes: (1) online voter registration; (2) automatic voter registration; (3) in-person early voting; (4) same day voter registration; (5) voting rights restoration for those on parole or probation; and (6) portable voter registration. Some attendees agreed to coordinate the legislator interface or to find someone else to do so. The coordinator should be the person who is managing you League's effort and interfaces with me, but need not be the person conducting the meeting with legislators.

Next steps

1. Contact me if you are the coordinator or are willing to coordinate for your League. If you signed up you will get an email from me shortly.
2. I will send the coordinator a template for soliciting the visit with applicable legislators. There will be two templates as most democrats are on record supporting 3 of the 6 reforms and that support needs to be acknowledged when asking for an appointment.
2. The coordinator should ensure that at least one person visiting is a constituent. No more than 3 individuals should be in the League delegation
3. The platform will be provided to the coordinator and is to be given to your legislator.
4. I will provide League visitors (through the coordinator):
 - A short cheat sheet with 2 or 3 pros and cons for each reform to give you an idea of what you might hear
 - The voting record for your legislator(s) on these reforms. Several have passed along party lines during the past four years and then been vetoed.
 - Report form

My next goal is to get a coordinator for every local or county League. If we achieve that goal, we can cover 23 of our 40 legislative districts. Hopefully we can add another 8-10 districts to our list with the help of members-at-large and individuals in Leagues where there are only 2 or 3 members in a given district

Below are our local Leagues and the legislative districts. Those listed as coordinators are individuals who offered to get the ball rolling in their local League. **Please call or email me if you will coordinate for your local League.**

Local League	LD	Coordinator
BH, NP, Summit	21	Volunteer
Burlington County	7 & 8	
Camden	6	Volunteer
Cape May County	1	
East Windsor-Hightstown	14	Work with Monroe
Fair Lawn	38	Volunteer work with Glen Rock
Glen Rock	38	Volunteer work with Fair Lawn
Greater Red Bank	13	Volunteer 11 covered by Twp of Ocean
Hopewell Valley	15	Work with Lawrence Twp
Lawrence Township	15	Volunteer
Maplewood-South Orange	27	
Monroe Township	14	Work with East Windsor-Hightstown
Montclair Area	26 & 34	Volunteer
Montvale Area	39	Work with Northern valley
Morristown Area	27	25 covered by Mountain Lakes
Mountain Lakes	25	
Northern Valley	37 & 39	
Nutley	28	
Ocean County	10	
Plainfield	22	
Princeton Area	16	
Ridgewood	40	Volunteer work with Wayne
Sussex Highlands	24	
Teaneck	37	
Township of Ocean	11	Volunteer
Union Area	20	22 covered by Plainfield 21 covered by BH, NP, Summit
Wayne Township	40	Work with Ridgewood
Western Monmouth	13	11 covered by Twp. Ocean

Districts with significant Local League membership are:

1,6,7,8,10,11,13,14,15,16,20,21,22,24,25,26,27,28,34,37,38,39,40

Campus Sexual Assault Study and Consensus deadline is February 17, 2017

At the last LWVNJ Convention, delegates adopted a study of Campus Sexual Assault due to the sense of epidemic proportions and visibility of the problem on the nation's and New Jersey's campuses. The League adopted this study because we note with alarm the increase, or at least the increase in reporting, of campus sexual assault and want to determine how best to respond to alleged sexual assault on students in college communities.

All materials for the study can be found here (scroll down to resources):

http://lwvnj.org/issues_womenfamily.html

Voters Service Activity Report

Please complete your voters service activities report and email to Jesse Burns at jburns@lwvnj.org by December 31, 2016.

Share your Events

Please share your upcoming events and all League meetings by emailing Jesse Burns at jburns@lwvnj.org. Potential new members are looking to get involved and we want to be able to direct them to events in their areas. We will publicize your events on our website and social media accounts. This is also a great way for Leagues to share ideas with each other.

Important Information about Increased Interest in the League

We have recently seen a surge in interest in our organization. Potential new members and volunteers are looking for ways to become more involved in the League. This is a great opportunity to grow our organization! We suggest that local Leagues:

- Hold meetings in public venues, like libraries, schools or community centers, not in members' homes. It is difficult to encourage new people to attend a meeting in a private home.
- Schedule meetings at different times – If you normally hold day meetings during the week, try to schedule a meeting on a weeknight or on a weekend, when people who work are able to attend
- New members and volunteers want to be able to get involved right away. Brainstorm as a League how you can be sure to welcome newcomers properly and quickly, how you can orientate them without overwhelming them. Find out what they are interested in and suggest volunteer opportunities and tasks so they can dig right in and get to work!

- Suggestions to get new members involved might include asking them to assist with voter service activities, inviting them to work on an event or program, or holding a new member lunch or happy hour.
- Let new members know about opportunities to serve on a state program committee if they are interested in learning more about and advocating for education, fiscal policy, government, immigration, natural resources, or women and family issues public policy.
- Introduce new members at the beginning of your meeting and consider assigning a mentor to provide guidance and answer questions.

Grants Available from LWVUS: Spring 2017 Youth Voter Registration: Apply by 12/31

The LWVEF is pleased to announce a 2017 Youth Voter Registration grant project. As part of this project, LWVEF will award pass-through grants to state and local Leagues to undertake voter registration activities in high schools, community colleges and alternative/vocational schools in underrepresented communities. [Find our Request for Proposals here](#); applications are due December 31