NOTE FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS
IN MEMORY OF SID SALTZMAN
VOTE 411 ELECTION UPDATE
HELP WANTED! JOIN US
MEMBERSHIP REPORT
VOTER SERVICES REPORT
STUDENTS INSIDE ALBANY
PROGRAMS FOR SPRING
NATURAL RESOURCES
HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE REPORT
HOW TO CONTACT YOUR REPRESENTATIVES
The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government.

The league works to increase and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Any person 16 years and older, regardless of gender, may become a League member.

www.lwvtompkins.org
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A message from your Co-Presidents
Submitted by Sally Grubb and Kay Wagner

Dear Friend in League,

We wish you all of the best for the holiday season and the new year. This past 10 months have been very difficult for everyone, but we hope you are healthy and doing well. It has been hard being unable to get together with family and friends except at a distance wearing masks. We are hoping that things will improve soon and look forward to seeing all of you again in person.

First, we would like to welcome the new members who have joined us this year, with several of you diving in to help with everything from the website to VOTE411 to Getting Out the Vote. We had hoped to hold a socially distanced welcome party, but time and the weather were not on our side. We hope to see and get to know you at our next members’ meeting.

Many members have been busy during the time leading up to and through the election. Our thanks go out to all of you who helped with virtual and in person voter registration and Getting Out the Vote. We especially want to thank Nancy Skipper and, new to our League, member Chris St. Clair for all of the very hard work they did on VOTE411. Our thanks also go out to LWVNY for all of their support and the up to date information they regularly gave us. We were pleased with our relationship with the Board of Elections for Tompkins County who requested our help organizing absentee ballots for recently quarantined voters. We will continue to work with the BOE in conjunction with Cornell Students on different voting issues identified by Cornell Votes during this election.

Looking ahead, the LWVNY is proposing a new position with regard to health care. Our Health Care Committee is working on providing our members with information which will be distributed before two members’ meetings to be held in January and February. Discussion will take place at both meetings and voting on our League’s position will take place at the February meeting. February is also the month for a program presented by the Natural Resources Committee. They are developing a program with the group Oceana on the subject of plastics. Other events are under consideration by our program Committee, and we will keep you posted as these plans develop. The History Committee is continuing to work on the display to be held at the History Center in celebration of our 100-year anniversary of the 19th amendment. Please contact Flo Smith or Sally Grubb if you would like to be involved.

Despite the early part of the 2021 continuing to require virtual meetings and social distancing at any in person event, we still plan on continuing with League Activities. We would love to hear from as many of you as possible about how you would like to be involved, and what programs and activities you would like to see our League undertake in 2021. Please get in touch with us or any member of our board or committee chair to let us know about your ideas.

We Wish You All the Best.
Sally Grubb and Kay Wagner
In Memory of Sid Saltzman

We will greatly miss Sid Saltzman, League member and husband of our Membership Chair, Lory Saltzman. Sid did his Ph.D. work in the College of Engineering at Cornell. After completing his thesis, he joined Cornell’s Industrial Engineering faculty and later worked as Associate Director of the Office of Computer Services until 1968. As his research turned towards economics, he realized that he was more interested in people and economics than he was in engineering. He moved to the College of Architecture, Art and Planning, where he later became a member of the faculty in the Department of City and Regional Planning.

Sid wanted to use his engineering background to make life better for people by applying his interest in quantitative methods to economics. He loved being with and working with people, which showed in his love of teaching. He especially loved solving problems for the benefit of all, and hoped that each problem solved would lead in some small way to a world at peace. Hence his interest in and involvement in the founding of The Regional Science Council.

In recent years Sid and Lory became active members of our League. Our thoughts are with Lor and her family at this very difficult time.
VOTE411: Helping Millions Find Nonpartisan Election Info in 2020

The 2020 election cycle saw record voter turnout and for the League of Women Voters Education Fund, our VOTE411.org election information website also broke records! This year more than 6 million users came to VOTE411.org, the League’s one-stop-shop election website, 1.5 million more users than four years ago.

A few interesting facts: 57% of our more than 6 million website visitors identify as female, and more than half of our users are between the ages of 18 -44. Our users found VOTE411 so engaging, they spent an average of 5 minutes on the site and averaged more than 5 pages per visit. The most web traffic came from the following states: Texas, New York, Florida, Michigan, California, North Carolina, Georgia, Massachusetts, Ohio, and Illinois.

People used VOTE411.org to view 30 million pages of nonpartisan election information, including checking registration, finding polling places, confirming voting hours, and to see exactly what would be on their ballots. These users utilized our candidate guides to research what the candidates had to say in their own words about the issues and compare their positions in more than 22,000 races in all 50 states.

These are amazing numbers and show just how much the voters turn to the League to find the information they need on Election Day.
Your help is needed!
By Sally Grubb and Kay Wagner

For a local league to be successful our members need to be involved in the issues that interest them. Your Board wants to hear from you what your interests are so we can focus on those issues. If you have not updated your list of interests lately, please do so now and send them to Kay and Sally at cmw17@cornell.edu and sally.grubb@gmail.com. Please also let us know if you wish to be a supportive member only, and not active but merely staying informed through the Bulletin and State and National newsletters. Now however, we need your active participation in the following areas. Please let us know what you can do to help.

- **Healthcare**: The State is updating its position on Health Care and needs input from our league by the end of February. Please read the article on action the Healthcare and Program committees are taking on this issue. Your involvement is needed, this is one way you can help shape the League.

- **Helping with Schools/Students/Youth/Civics Engagement**: We are seeking members to do outreach to the school districts, to college students and to local youth. Member Sheila Stone is our liaison to Rejoice the Vote, which involves younger aged students. Megan Nettleton is responsible for “Students in Albany”, which is targeted to Junior and Senior Year High School Students. At the collegiate level, we have liaisons to TC3 – Kerry Curran and Connie Sterling Engman, and Pam Tolbert to Cornell. We are looking for a liaison to Ithaca College, as well as to each local school district. Please contact sally.grubb@gmail.com and nettleton.megan@gmail.com if you can help in any way. We will be holding a Youth Activities Committee meeting in the near future to plan how to move forward. We need your help. The youth are fired up and ready to change the world.

- **Redistricting**: Following the 2020 Census, the State League is calling for our involvement in Redistricting at all levels of government. This includes the Independent Redistricting Commission, People Powered Fair Maps, Mapping and Public Outreach. Linda Duttweiler was involved ten years again and has agreed to help put together a committee to work here locally. The use of Zoom will make it much easier to be involved at the State level as it is hoped travelling to Albany for meetings and training will not be necessary. If you would like to be involved in this work please contact Linda at lduttweiler@gmail.com.

- **LWV-TC Bylaws**: Our bylaws are in need of some significant updates, particularly as we use email, zoom, and other means of communication. This is an easy way to help keep our local League running smoothly. Kay Wagner and Megan Nettleton will be working on this update but we need additional members to participate in the process. The deadline for completion is March 31. Please contact Kay Wagner (cmw18@cornell.edu) if you can help. She will send you the bylaws with areas that need updating highlighted and schedule a Zoom meeting for discussion.
• **Advocacy:** Advocacy is one of the important roles of the League and we would like to make this a much bigger part of our local activities. There is strong support for the formation of an Advocacy Committee which would keep us up to date on all of the issues that LWVUS and LWVNY are lobbying for. In addition, they would help us become aware of local issues that need attention. The Health Care and Natural Resources committees already do this but there may be other issues members wish to highlight. Again, if you have any interest in this area please contact cmw18@cornell.edu and sally.grubb@gmail.com. We need committee members, and someone who will take on the role of chair of the group.

• **Promoting the work of the League through local media:** Earlier this year our league started sending opinion pieces to the Ithaca Journal and other local media and this has been very well received. This is a team effort, unfortunately no one person can do this on their own as there is a limit to the number of times the press will print letters from the same writer. So once again we need your help. If you want to join this letter writing group Kay and Megan, our PR guru, will either send you a topic to write on, or draft a piece for you to personalize and sign. These will be opinion pieces that we can sign as a member of the LWV of Tompkins County after our board has approved the letter. This does not preclude a member from writing letters as an individual and not as a league member.

• **Further action requested by the State:** LWVNYS is asking for our involvement in Program Planning for the State Convention 2021, Legislative Agenda and Legislative Priorities for 2021. We will send out information on these issues separately from this bulletin. Here again we will welcome timely response to any questions we pose.

Please know that we have a wonderful set of active members, you will not be working alone! Send where you would like to join us to cmw18@cornell.edu and sally.grubb@gmail.com and Kay and Sally will forward names to relevant committee chairs.
This year, in Tompkins County we have welcomed 9 new members to our League. As we meet on Zoom it’s not quite the same but we will look forward to greeting everyone in person in, what is hoped to be, the near future.

The 2020 election is soon to be declared over, but clearly there remains much to do. In particular our elections have to become more secure and trusted. We need health care for all to help foil this and any future epidemic that might threaten our nation and indeed the world’s population at large. We need to address Climate change in a more timely fashion. Feel free to grow that list, and visit the League website to see what the National and State Leagues are doing this year. Look for “Impact on Issues”.

If you have yet to become a member, and wish to do so, please go to http://www.lwvtompkins.org/join.html

If you have yet to renew your membership for 2020-2021, we hope to hear from you soon. We also hope to see you at one of our Zoom meetings!

Please know that our scholarship fund is there for those the pandemic has left temporarily in need. Send a note with your membership form or an email to Kay Wagner cmw18@cornell.edu.

With your help this year, could well be the year we face danger by using the opportunity to courageously make necessary changes for a brighter future
Voter Services Report
Submitted by Sally Grubb

Working under the constraints of the pandemic resulted in a very different Election Season for Voter Services.

Normally members of Voter Services Committee would have been very active through the Spring, Summer and Fall registering people to vote at all our local Festivals and the Farmers Market. Candidate forums would have been organized at the High School and the Public Library. But everything stopped in March when we went into lock down.

With in-person contact being out of the question, we had to change the way we did everything. Nonetheless our members quickly learned how to do everything remotely, over Zoom and through the distribution of flyers. We developed new contacts and new ways of doing things many of which will continue in the future.

VOTE411 became one of the National Leagues most valuable services to the public and thanks to Nancy Skipper and Chris St. Clair, Tompkins County League participated fully. Taking full advantage of all that VOTE411 offers has become a major part of our election activity, not just during national elections but also school board elections and all local and state elections. An enormous amount of work is involved collecting candidate information and anyone interested in becoming involved is welcome and should contact Nancy at nancysueskipper@gmail.com.

The members who worked as liaisons with Tompkins Cortland Community College, Ithaca College and Cornell University played an important role ensuring we were still able to reach out to the student community. We will continue with this role in future and we plan to extend to the local school districts. If you are interested in working with our schools, county wide, please let Megan Nettleton know and she will include you on the committee for youth affairs which we are establishing. Thanks to Pam Tolbert, Lucia Sciore, Connie Sterling Engman, Kerry Curran for all they have done to date. We would like to establish liaisons to the local libraries as well.

Members of the Voter Services and Program committees worked together to Get Out the Vote. We developed and distributed flyers which contained information about all aspects of voting in the election from registration to actually voting. We worked with Food Banks and Pantries, local churches, all the libraries in the county and key community centers. We also participated in Zoom meetings and webinars to educate and distribute information.
We co-sponsored two Candidate Forum/Debates during the election. One with LWV of Cortland County for Assembly District 125 race, moderator Laura Bierman, was very successful. The other with Local Leagues of Cooperstown, Cortland, Oneonta, Tompkins Co, and Mid-Hudson Region which serve areas that fall within NY Senate District 51, together with Spectrum Networks, moderator Susan Arbetter was not successful. It had to be cancelled due to non participation by one candidate.

However, we learned the benefit of holding a forum over Zoom or Facebook Live and streaming the event, and then posting videos on websites. We achieved a much wider audience than any in-person event held in the past. We also learned the benefit of working with other leagues over Zoom and not having to travel to a meeting! We will continue this in future.

As we move forward into the new year, we will build on all we learned and repeat many of our successful efforts and collaborations particularly with libraries and food pantries.

As with everything your local league does, we need the active participation of our members. Please let us know where and how you would like to be active.
Students Inside Albany (SIA) is a conference sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation, Inc. The program is designed to increase students' awareness of their responsibility in representative government and provide the tools necessary for meeting that responsibility.

The annual Students Inside Albany Conference for high school students is currently scheduled for May 23-26 at the Hampton Inn in downtown Albany. The State League will be making a final decision about the Conference by the end of January. If no in-person conference is held, NYSLWV will host a virtual program on state government for the selected students.

Our League is encouraged to still pick a student! If you want to nominate a Junior or Senior in high school, please contact Megan Nettleton, nettleton.megan@gmail.com. More information will be available next month.

What are the learning objectives of SIA?
- To increase student understanding of public policy in New York State.
- To enhance student understanding of the roles of the various forces seeking to impact New York State legislation and policy development, enactment and change.
- To promote an increased understanding of the New York State legislative process through legislative shadowing experience

Is there any cost to the student?
No, LWVNYSEF, along with our cosponsors pays for the entire conference, which includes lodging, meals and snacks. The local League that sponsors the student, is responsible for arranging and paying for transportation to and from the conference.
Program Committee Report
Submitted by Ann Warde and Megan Nettleton

The Program Committee invites you to join us virtually in 2021!

January is right around the corner. LWVNYS is asking for the local League's to vote on a two part Health Position Consensus. We urge all members to attend and vote, make your voice heard! The first meeting will be held on January 11, 6-7pm, an educational program about the consensus process, and a discussion of Issues related to the updated LWVNYS Positions.

We want to end January with a members meeting, Come Join Us — League Highlights from 2020. Despite the pandemic, our League had amazing accomplishments in 2020. Come hear the highlights, and discuss plans for 2021.

On February 8, 6-7pm is the second part of our Health Care presentation. A meeting where members will first engage in the consensus process, and vote. Please see the Health Care Committee report for additional information.

The Natural Resources Committee will be hosting a virtual program on plastics. It will be held in two parts: a movie to watch over the course of a few days, and then a webinar. The Natural Resources committee always hosts very informative programs.

The soup and bread luncheon is traditionally held in March. This year, we will eat together in a slightly different way. Stay tuned for more details on our first ever recipe swap and virtual cooking class!

In April, our program focus will be how our community can assist the next generation. As we all know, the next generation is taking a stand. We hope to chat with local community groups to talk about what they are doing and how the community can support them. How can we help?

May is our annual meeting, and we hope to be able to see each other in person, from a safe distance. Time will tell, 2020 has taught us to be adaptable.

The state League Convention is currently scheduled for June 4-6, 2021 at the downtown Hilton in Albany. They will be making a final decision by the end of January if the convention will be in person or virtual.

More information for all the above will come via email. If you don't get our updates and would like too, please email Nettleton.Megan@gmail.com
Natural Resources Report
Submitted by Kay Wagner

Our Natural Resources Committee has not met this fall, but we hope to do so soon. In the meantime, we are working with Oceana and a student from Skidmore College on plans for a program on plastics to be held in February, date to be decided. See Program Committee report above.

We hope that you have seen the news items we have been posting on the LWVTC website. These are just a few of the many articles many of you may receive, but we hope these are ones that will be of interest to all of you. We are also still expanding our list of books on environmental issues (fiction and non-fiction) that we will post on the website. Please send Kay Wagner information about books you would like to see added to that list.

There has finally been a lot of discussion of climate change in the news recently. We are very happy to see that the issue may play a central role in the next administration. We are particularly pleased to see that a position has been created within the National Security Council for a person who will work on climate change at the international level. Since climate change affects everything from our health to our economy to our food supply and beyond, it is important that this issue be front and center in the new administration.

The night sky has a special treat in store for stargazers this winter solstice. On Dec. 21, Jupiter and Saturn will be so closely aligned that they will appear as a "double planet," Rice University astronomer Patrick Hartigan announced in a university press release.

This is called a conjunction, and the last time such a close one between the two planets was visible from Earth was in 1226."That's just [shy] of 800 years ago" Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics spokeswoman Amy Oliver told USA TODAY.

"Call [2020's conjunction] a unique, holiday gift to the world. Maybe it's the soothing band-aid for 2020."

Health Care Committee Report
Submitted By Ann Coyne and Ann Warde (Program committee)

The Health Committee will be holding two meetings to reach a consensus for our League on updated New York State League positions on Healthcare:

January 11, 2021. 6-7pm - Educational Program about the consensus process and a discussion of Issues related to the updated LWVNYS Positions
Join Zoom Meeting  https://unomaha.zoom.us/j/94778958028

February 8, 2021 6-7pm - Members Consensus and Voting Meeting where we will first engage in the consensus process, and end with a Vote
More information will be on the way in an email inviting all members to these meetings.

Meanwhile, please review the following materials.

If you have questions, please contact:
Ann Coyne, Health Committee Chair   acoyne@unomaha.edu
or Ann Warde, Program Committee Co-Chair   amw38@cornell.edu

* * * * *

Concurrence on Two Proposed Updated LWVNYS Positions: Healthcare & Financing of Healthcare

Local Leagues have been asked to hold a consensus meeting early in 2021 to determine if their League concurs with the proposed positions on Healthcare and the Financing of Healthcare.

Leagues reach consensus by bringing individual perspectives to a discussion and engaging with their group to seek common ground together. An honored tradition, the League sees consensus as a “sense of the group” — not unanimity or a majority, and not reached by voting or polling — a shared perspective achieved by active listening and engagement.

Concurrence is a League process in which participants decide if they agree with a statement or position that another League or League committee has already adopted. The position itself cannot be changed during the concurrence process.

So, in this case, you are being asked to try to reach general agreement (consensus) with other League members, in a discussion first about whether you concur (agree) with the proposed position on Healthcare and then with the proposed position on Financing of Healthcare. The choice is, in each case, whether as a group you prefer the current position or the new one.
We will also hold an educational meeting focused on the Study Materials prior to the actual consensus meeting.

You may prepare for our League’s consensus meeting by:


b) Printing out these materials so that you can easily refer to them during the discussion:
The Participant Guide.
The footnoted versions of the proposed new positions (p. 31 – 35).
The current positions on Healthcare (p. 4) and Financing of Healthcare (p. 7)

Remember: Your League should not publicize the results of its consensus. That is for LWVNYS to do after it knows whether enough Leagues have participated and agreed in order to reach a valid NYS consensus.

If you have questions, please email: LWV.NYS.Healthcare.Update@gmail.com
Two Decisions to Make

In each case, compare the proposed new position to the current position:

Do you accept the new position on Healthcare? YES or NO
• No retains the current position
• Yes accepts the new position

Do you accept the new position on Financing of Healthcare? YES or NO
• No retains the current position
• Yes accepts the new position

Should the LWV NYS position on Healthcare include
• A call for “safe staffing” (care by appropriately trained and licensed individuals in sufficient numbers)?
• A call for protecting vulnerable populations (as equitable and) as critical to overall public health?
• A call for vision, dental, hearing and long-term care in essential care?

Financing of Healthcare — Federal vs. State Roles & Single-Payer Systems
To what extent should federal policy on HC determine the healthcare NYS provides its residents?
• Should any single-payer legislation be required to provide not just equitable access to healthcare but also financial feasibility and affordability for patients and taxpayers?
• Should any healthcare system that provides universal access to essential healthcare be affordable for both patients and taxpayers?
• Should health insurance coverage be tied to employment (as now) or should NYS residents have access to essential healthcare regardless of employment status?
• Should the League specify favoring broad-based and progressive taxes for the “public financing” of healthcare — where tax rates increase with increased ability to pay (as contrasted, e.g., with narrower, flat-rate taxes such as sales taxes)?

Do you prefer the current or proposed cost controls?
How to contact your Representatives (current as of 12/2020)
https://myreps.datamade.us/ to find an updated list

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518-455- 3131; 607-758-9005
www.nysenate.gov/senator/james-l-seward
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Pamela Helming
518-455- 2366, 315-568-9816 helming@nysenate.gov
54th—Town of Lansing

Thomas O'Mara
518-455- 2091; 607-735-9671
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58th—Towns of Ithaca, Newfield, Enfield, Ulysses

Representative for Tompkins County in the NYS Assembly
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The League of Women Voters of Tompkins County publishes this bulletin four times a year.

Previous bulletins can be found on our website at http://www.lwvtompkins.org/bulletins.html

For information about our league go to http://www.lwvtompkins.org/

Reach us by email at lwvtompkins@gmail.com

Follow us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/LeagueOfWomenVotersOfTompkinsCounty/