

## LWVNEW JANUARY 2020 NEWSLETTER

### YOUTH OUTREACH

#### **STUDENTS INSIDE ALBANY**

High school students ages sixteen and over who reside in Bedford, Lewisboro, Mount Kisco, North Salem, and Pound Ridge are invited to submit applications to compete for a spot at the annual 4-day *Students Inside Albany (SIA) Conference*.

SIA is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Education Foundation.

60 students from all across the state will observe the state legislature at work, shadow their representatives, learn how voters' interests are processed, and tour the Capitol. The conference will be held May 17-20 and is without cost to participating students, including train transportation, meals, a three-night stay hotel stay, and all activities chaperoned and led by members of LWVNYS.

For applications and more information, contact the school social studies department, the local library, or the League of Women Voters of North East Westchester SIA Coordinator, Barbara Dodds, at (914) 275-6550.

All completed applications must be sent to: LWVNEW c/o Barbara Dodds, 2805 Canterbury Way, Mt Kisco NY 10549 or badodds@optonline.net. **The deadline is February 12th.**

*Please contact Barbara if you'd like to be involved in selecting our student through the reading of applications and essays.*

### CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

LWVNEW will be commemorating the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment during this centennial year of 2020. Plans are just starting to take shape but it looks like we will might do something in conjunction with the Bedford Historical Society. Watch this space in future newsletters – as well as your email inbox – for more information.

### THANK YOU

#### **KATHERINE DERING**

Many thanks to Katherine Dering, who offered to stay on as LWVNEW secretary for six months longer than she had originally planned! Lee Roberts has now moved into that role (welcome back to the board, Lee) and Katherine remains an active member of LWVNEW, especially in the all-important area of Voter Service.

#### **BEA RHODES**

A special shoutout to longtime LWVNEW member Bea Rhodes, who moved out west in 2018 but graciously continued as our Webmaster and Communications person. Bea has maintained the website, managed our email account, and disseminated our press releases for many years – even doing so after her move to Washington State. We appreciate her willingness to stay so involved in our group and wish her continued good luck as Lisa Pizzurro transitions into Bea's former role.

**NEWS FROM  
THE STATE LEAGUE (LWVNYS)****LEGISLATURE RECONVENED JANUARY 8TH**

LWVNYS is anticipating a very different session this year because it is an election year for State Senators and Assembly Members. It may be a much more cautious legislature, with the passage of far fewer reforms. The state is also facing a major budget deficit and will likely be conservative in its appropriations for new progressive programs and reforms.

In spite of this less than optimistic outlook, the League will continue to advocate for its slate of good government reforms.

**2020 LEAGUE PRIORITIES**

With a new year comes new goals and objectives. This year the League of Women Voters of New York State will be focusing on voting rights, redistricting and the census, campaign financing, and court consolidation.

**VOTING RIGHTS**

In 2020, the League will work to pass automatic voter registration, restoration of voting rights for people on parole, lower the voter registration deadline from 25 days to 10 days, and implement new reforms to improve New York State's nine days of early voting. The League has already begun advocating for funding for early voting and that advocacy will continue until the passage of the budget on April 1st.

**CENSUS & REDISTRICTING**

The League has also begun advocating for transparency and accountability in the formation of New York State's first ever independent redistricting commission. According to the New York State Constitution the commission must be formed by February 1, 2020. In February, LWVNYS will focus its efforts on ensuring

appropriate funding for this commission to be able to operate without outside influence. The State League is coordinating with LWVUS's People Powered Fair Maps campaign to ensure New York State's new maps are drawn fairly.

**CAMPAIGN FINANCING**

Throughout 2019, the League worked with Fair Elections NY to advocate for public campaign financing in New York State. The outcome of the Public Campaign Financing Commission was disappointing and LWVNYS issued a statement voicing disapproval. The new policy isn't set to take effect until the 2023 election cycle but the commission will likely begin planning in the coming year. The legislature can amend this reform and the League will continue to push for more restrictions on party spending accounts, reforms to root out dark money, lower contribution limits, and elimination of donations from corporations doing business with the state.

**COURT CONSOLIDATION**

The League has joined the Statewide Coalition for Court Simplification to advocate for court reform in New York State. The League is advocating for consolidating the current 11 separate trial courts into a three-tier model, and establishing an integrated, statewide court system consisting of a minimum number of trial courts of broad jurisdiction. LWVNYS will be working with its new coalition partner to ensure a more equitable and easier to access judicial system in New York. In addition to these issues, the League will continue to advocate for health care reforms, funding for education, an Equal Rights Amendment, and other issues listed in its Legislative Agenda.

## **NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL LEAGUE (LWVUS)**

### **VOTE411 2020 PRESIDENTIAL GUIDE CANDIDATE RESPONSES**

The League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) is pleased to announce that the 2020 Presidential Candidate guides found on VOTE411.org are being published. LWVEF creates a unique guide for all 50 states and DC, so the information is being published on a rolling basis. Iowa and New Hampshire are live now, and new states are being added in the coming weeks.

[www.Vote411.org](http://www.Vote411.org)

### **EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT**

Virginia just became the 38<sup>th</sup> state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, passing the three-fourths threshold of support required from the states for a constitutional amendment. Now we need Congress to remove the ratification deadline it imposed after passing the ERA back in 1972. LWVUS has sent a letter to Congress, urging members to remove the ratification deadline on the ERA.

[https://www.lwv.org/lwvus-urges-house-and-senate-remove-ratification-deadline-equal-rights-amendment?utm\\_source=LeagueUpdate&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=1162020](https://www.lwv.org/lwvus-urges-house-and-senate-remove-ratification-deadline-equal-rights-amendment?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=1162020)

### **LEAGUE ENDORSES ACCESSIBLE VOTING ACT OF 2020**

The League endorsed the Accessible Voting Act of 2020, introduced by Senator Bob Casey (PA). This legislation will expand voter accessibility requirements to the resources voters need for information on how to register to vote, cast an absentee ballot, find transportation to the polls, and receive

help if their right to vote is challenged. This bill will also increase support to the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and create grants for states that will improve accessibility for voters across the country.

### **LEAGUE JOINS LETTER REGARDING FEC APPOINTMENTS**

LWVUS joined a letter sent to the White House and to the staffs of Senators McConnell, Blunt, Schumer, and Klobuchar, asking them to make appointments to the Federal Election Commission (FEC). The FEC is the only organization tasked with enforcing our nation's public financing laws in U.S. federal elections. It is currently operating without a quorum. The letter asks the President and Senators to ensure that the 2020 elections are transparent and fair by prioritizing the restoration of the FEC's quorum. This is more important than ever, as the country enters what promises to be the most expensive election in history.

[https://www.lwv.org/money-politics/league-joins-letter-regarding-fec-appointments?utm\\_source=LeagueUpdate&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=1162020](https://www.lwv.org/money-politics/league-joins-letter-regarding-fec-appointments?utm_source=LeagueUpdate&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=1162020)

### **19<sup>TH</sup> AMENDMENT EXHIBITS IN DC**

If you are going to be in the nation's capital this year, consider a visit to one or more of the many Women's Suffrage Centennial exhibits available to the public.

Information here:

<https://washington.org/visit-dc/womens-suffrage-centennial-events>

**LWVNEW**

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**Voter Service:**

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**-Candidate Forums:**

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**-Student Voter Registration:**

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**Youth Cmte Chair/Students Inside Albany:**

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Lisa Pizzurro [lcp328@gmail.com](mailto:lcp328@gmail.com)

**MEMBERSHIP DUES**

**PAYPAL OPTION** at the LWVNEW website:

<https://sites.google.com/site/leagueofwomenvotersnew/home>

**LWVUS**

Phone: 202-429-1965

Website: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

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<http://www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters>

**LWVNY**

Phone: (518) 465-4162

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**LWV Westchester**

Phone: 914-949-0507

Website: [www.lwvw.org](http://www.lwvw.org)

**NEW!** Email: [WestchesterLWV@gmail.com](mailto:WestchesterLWV@gmail.com)

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**ARE YOU ACTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA?**



*at League of Women Voters  
of North East Westchester*



**at LWVNEW**