Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization whose purpose is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The LWV does not support or oppose candidate or political parties, but does support or oppose issues after study and member agreement.

Co-Presidents' and Nominating Committee Message

At our last two board meetings discussions have centered on the concerns we have about the drop in membership and the struggles we continue to experience in maintaining interest in the League’s programs and events. Additionally, a majority of our present core Board members, past board members, and core committee people, past and present, have served to the full extent for many years. In other words, they have done their fair share of volunteering and serving. The present Board feels the time has arrived to consider making appropriate adjustments to the League’s board structure that will better accommodate its purpose.

As we move into the planning stages for this year’s spring activities, the LWV of Oneonta Board has been exploring viable possibilities for solving its transition from a complete board to what a new board model might consist of in the near future. This year’s Nominating Committee has met and is working together to come up with a slate of officers and possible directors to fill vacant spots on the board. The League’s Annual Meeting, including the election of officers, will take place on May 30, 2009.

The Board is reaching out to each of you, as members and supporters of your local League, to consider taking a more active role in the organization. Also, as we go through the process of reevaluating our priorities in order to best accomplish the League’s mission, we encourage everyone to have a say. We would encourage you to contact a board member (listed in your membership booklet) and express your own inquiries, suggestions and concerns. We welcome your input and feedback.

The LWV of the Oneonta Area thanks all its members and supporters for their continued and loyal support. We extend a welcome to new members. We remind you that the League has a website that contains local League information as well as links to the LWVNY and LWVUS websites. You can check it out at www.lwvoneonta.org. Also, the League responds to voice messages at 607.436.4050.

Co-Presidents
Maggie Winne (2007-2009) Susan Hughson, Chair, Paul Scheele,
Cathy LaFontaine (2007-2009) Sandee Fleisher, Laurel Elder

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of the Oneonta Area, in both its values and practices, is committed to diversity and pluralism. There shall be no barriers to participation in the League. The League of Women Voters of the Oneonta Area recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making.

New Members Always Welcome - contact Maggie Winne, Local Membership Director at 607.432.6206 or leave a phone message at 607.436.4050 and someone will get back to you.
Background for the National Popular Vote Compact

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote. Now, League members have the opportunity to consider whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president.

The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual who received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state’s EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States.

The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement - conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts.

Currently four states have passed legislation to enact the NPV Compact. There are pros and cons to this plan, which are discussed in full in papers found on the LWVUS Web site. Summaries of these papers are also available. League members can learn more about the plan from these sources and consider its ramifications at consensus meetings across the country. Be sure to participate! Who better than the League to be ready to speak to this good-government issue?

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League Invited to Participate in Sunshine Week Event

On Friday, March 20 from 1 - 2:30 PM (ET), the LWVF will co-host the 4th Annual Sunshine Week National Dialogue. The event, “Opening Doors: Finding the Keys to Open Government,” will be held at the Center for American Progress in Washington, DC, and available via webcast. It will feature panels of experts from inside and outside government, who will discuss federal openness policies and opportunities for people to use government information to make a difference in their communities.

Leagues are encouraged to host “viewing parties” in their local communities. Audience members will have opportunities to ask questions of the panelists, and Leagues could consider combining the webcast with a follow-up panel to discuss local aspects of the issue. For more information, visit www.openthegovernment.org.

League of Women Voters Celebrates 89th Birthday

The League of Women Voters celebrated its 89th birthday on February 14. We celebrate this year with a strong commitment to build on the civic energy generated during the 2008 election season by continuing our 89-year history of fostering meaningful citizen participation in our government processes and vigorous public dialogue about public policy issues.

“Now is the time for Americans to come together and tackle the tough challenges we all face. We are so proud that our own communities nationwide, the League of Women Voters remains THE trusted place for citizens to discuss the issues, ask the difficult questions and demand accountability from their government to help keep our communities healthy, vibrant and strong.”

“For nearly nine decades, the League has worked to ensure our democracy is transparent, effective, and truly representative,” said national League president Mary G. Wilson. “Those challenges are as real today as they were for our suffragist foremothers who struggled for their right to vote so many years ago.”

“The occasion of the League’s 89th birthday this month, the trusted legacy and grassroots strength remains as vital to a healthy and transparent government as it did in our infancy,” said LWVUS President Mary Wilson.

For more information about the LWV of Oneonta, contact Maggie Winne, Membership Director at 607.432.6206 or visit the League’s website at www.lwvoneonta.org.

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. Membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages. Join us in making democracy work!

NPV Resources

Complete resources for the NPV Study are now online. You’ll find a background paper, pro/con arguments, suggested resources list, a study guide, consensus questions, and a consensus response form. In addition, any member can join the NPV Study Discussion List. All you need is an email address where postings can be sent. Just log in at https://member.lwv.org/Login.asp

Call to Convention 2009

In addition to your Convention Delegation of seasoned League leaders, why not send a few newer members, as either delegates or observers. Convention is a great learning experience for any Leaguer to experience the League way of doing things, learn more about our issues, and network with other Leaguers. This year, we will offer a bonus day of workshops on Friday, May 15th, entitled Strengthening League Leadership. This special program is designed to give you valuable tools for strengthening your League. We encourage leagues to send board members to these workshops even if they are not delegates or attending State Convention.

Travel to Syracuse a little earlier to take part!

Program Planning - 2009 - GrassrootsSpeaks

The LWV of Oneonta met on Saturday, January 25, 2009 to review our local Program and the LWVNYS Program. This year LWVNYS will hold its Convention in Syracuse when delegates adopt a 2009-2011 Program either as proposed by the state League board or as amended by the inclusion of non-recommended items. On the local level, the LWV of Oneonta will have an opportunity to vote on its proposed local Program when it is presented to its members at the annual meeting in May of 2009.

We had a turnout of 12 members present at the meeting. Cathy LaFontaine, Co-President of the LWV of Oneonta, called the meeting to order. The group discussed local issues first. We reviewed the program in place for 2008 that included the following: Planning for Town and City, Schools, Solid Waste, Government, City and Town of Oneonta, and Government, Otsego County. (See Membership Booklet, page 11).

Next, the group discussed the following LWVNYS state program positions: Election Law, Government, Health Care, Judicial, Natural Resources, Social Policy and State Finances. (See Membership Booklet, page 12).

If any member has a question or would like more information about program planning, do not hesitate to contact one of your local board members. You will find contact information in your 2008-2009 Membership Booklet. You can also leave a voice message for the LWV of Oneonta at 607.436.4050 and someone will get back to you.