



# The Voter

January  
2017

Published by the [League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County, NY](#)



Rensselaer County Historian Kathy Sheehan speaks about Suffragist and Anti-Suffragist movements locally to LWV members at the Post Holiday Get Together on Jan. 7, 2017.



Kathy Sheehan speaking, January 7, 2017.

## **President's Message**

Happy New Year all,

So the election is over and results are not what we expected and then the Women's March on January 21 also brought unexpected results - thousands marched not only in this country but around the world to declare their intent to continue to work together to protect the rights of women and minorities and champion basic human welfare. Now what? The League of Women Voters offers many options for action from registering voters, participating in Lobby Days, or most recently participating in NY State google advocacy groups. Please see details re this new initiative in the State League message below. In Troy we will launch a Troy civic observer corp. Troy League members who wish to join should plan to attend one or more City Council, neighborhood, school or other meetings with a civic focus each month. We will gather on the fourth Tuesday of each month to share what we've learned and questions that are stirred. The fourth Tuesday is chosen because it seems most City Council meetings occur in the first three weeks - details can be found on the City web site. We may vary the time and place but will begin February 28th at 5PM and the Psychedelicatessen. Observer Corps are not new to the League and have waxed and waned with political currents. Guidelines can be found at [http://lwv.org/files/LWVEF\\_ObservingYourGovernment.pdf](http://lwv.org/files/LWVEF_ObservingYourGovernment.pdf). If you wish to start an Observer Corp in your community feel free to contact me or any other Board member for guidance and for help in contacting other League members in your area.

Judy Meyer, President  
League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County

## **LOCAL NEWS**

### **PETTICOATS OF STEEL**

By Carolyn Anderson & Jill Rafferty-Weinisch

Directed by Margaret E. Hall

Celebrate the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote in New York State with this powerful production. Experience the battles for women's suffrage told in the voices of the brave warriors who fought them. Petticoats of Steel uses primary sources to tell the true stories of the women of New York State—Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth and Elizabeth Cady Stanton—and the roles they played in gaining voting rights for all women of the United States of America.

At the Huxley Theater at the NYS Museum      Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, at 5:30 pm.

## **Environmental Committee Meeting**

Monday January 30 6PM Psychedelicatessen. Continuing the discussion of the PFOA contamination in Hoosick Falls with guest Laura Rabinow, RPI PFOA research project.

## **Post Holiday Party**

We all had a great time with Kathy Sheehan, our County Historian, speaking about the history of Suffrage and Anti-Suffrage movements in Rensselaer County. And the potluck food was as usual terrific and plentiful.

## **Women's March on Washington**

Watch the Rensselaer County LWV Facebook page as well as the New York State LWV Facebook page for reports from members who participated in the Washington march as well as reports from local marches across the state.

## **STATE NEWS**

Hello everyone,

### **We have officially kicked off the 2017 Legislative Session!**

Since the 2016 election, we have welcomed dozens of new members to the League. Many of these new members have expressed interest in the League's involvement with policy at the state level. As our long time members know, the New York State League lobbies and advocates for many state issues. Those of you who are new to the League should take a look at our [Impact of Issues](#) document. Our Impact on Issues contains all of our positions, how we came to those positions, and the actions we have taken since those positions were adopted.

The state League lobbies and advocates on many different issues - everything from education to the environment. Some of our biggest issue areas include election law, government reform and ethics, health care, transportation, judicial issues, women's issues including pay equity and reproductive choice environmental issues pertaining to clean air, water, and energy, and K through 12 education. We are very lucky to have some amazing [Issues Specialists](#) that help the League stay on target on these issues.

The League works with several different issue based coalitions that help us to multitask during the legislative session. There is certainly never a dull moment at the Capitol and some days we find ourselves starting the morning with a press conference on ethics, attending a committee meeting on the environment in the afternoon, and later meeting with members to lobby them on education. Every week we post a blog called [The Capitol Beat](#). The blog is more than just an overview of our week - it includes photos, insider information, and some snark and wit courtesy of our very own Barbara Bartoletti. If you are interested in the reading the blog [subscribe via email](#) .

If you're on twitter be sure to follow us [@LWVNYS](#) and like us on [Facebook!](#) We post pictures, articles, and advocacy action alerts daily. Our twitter account is the best way to stay up to date on what we are doing daily at the Capitol.

Finally to our newest endeavor - our [NEW Advocacy Google Groups!!](#) Francine Rodgers of our Saratoga League had an amazing idea to create issues-based Google Groups where League members interested in similar advocacy areas could talk to each other via email and hold monthly conference calls. The groups will be headed by the state office but members of the groups can share their ideas, articles, statewide bills of interest, and whatever else they feel is appropriate. The conference calls will be an opportunity to share ideas and to hear what we are doing at the state level. The most exciting part of these groups is it will be an excellent opportunity for the League to use its membership to lobby on pertinent legislation. We will send out action alerts on specific bills in real time so that those interested in calling their legislators can do so exactly when the time is right.

We are very excited about this new project. For now we will be kicking off with 2 groups - the first is a General Advocacy Group that will be headed by myself and Barbara. We will use this group to keep you all up to date on the general happenings at the Capital (but be sure to subscribe to our [blog](#) and follow us on [twitter](#) too!) The second kick off group will focus on Education issues. This group will be headed by our Education Finance Specialist, Marian Bott. Education is always a major advocacy area of the League and we spend a lot of our time fighting to keep bad education policy from being passed at the state level.

If you are interested in either of these groups please email me at [Jennifer@lwvny.org](mailto:Jennifer@lwvny.org). I will add you to whichever group you would like to join - feel free to sign up for both! Once we get these two groups up and running we will be setting up other groups. We are thinking of setting up groups focused on **Environmental Issues, Women's Issues, and Health Care**. If you have interest in joining any of those groups please let me know and I will add you to the list.

As a reminder: our Vice President of Voter Service, Judie Gorenstein also heads a Voter Service Google Group: [lwvnyvoterservices@googlegroups.com](mailto:lwvnyvoterservices@googlegroups.com) If you are interested in being included in that group email Judie at: [judiel728@aol.com](mailto:judiel728@aol.com)

Let me know if you have any questions or comments. I look forward to working with you all in 2017!

Best wishes,  
Jennifer

Jennifer Wilson  
Program and Policy Director  
The League of Women Voters of New York State  
[Jennifer@lwvny.org](mailto:Jennifer@lwvny.org)  
(518) 465-4162  
62 Grand Street  
Albany NY 12207

## **Register now for Family Planning Advocates of New York State's Day of Action on Monday, January 30, 2017**

Please go to [bit.ly/supportPPNYC](http://bit.ly/supportPPNYC) for more information on how to get involved in other actions. Thank you for standing with us!\*\*\*

What: Annual lobby day for all NYS reproductive health, rights, and justice advocates

Where: The Legislative Office Building, 198 State St, Albany, NY 12210

Questions? Call (518) 436-8408 or email [info@familyplanningadvocates.org](mailto:info@familyplanningadvocates.org)

---

## NATIONAL NEWS

### Sneak Attack on Congressional Ethics

Washington, DC – When the new Congress is sworn in Tuesday, one of the first orders of business will be to adopt rules for the 115th Congress, including severe cut backs in the independence of the Office of Congressional Ethics.

The following statement is attributed to League president, Chris Carson:

“Gutting the independent ethics office is exactly the wrong way to start a new Congress. Speaker Ryan should be ashamed of himself and his leadership group that are pushing this through the House. This opens the door for special interest corruption just as the new Congress considers taxes and major infrastructure spending. We all know the so-called House Ethics Committee is worthless for anything other than a whitewash -- sweeping corruption under the rug. That's why the independent Office of Congressional Ethics has been so important. The OCE works to stop corruption and that's why Speaker Ryan is cutting its authority. Speaker Ryan is giving a green light to congressional corruption.”

Contact: Sarah Courtney | 202-263-1332 | [scourtney@lwv.org](mailto:scourtney@lwv.org)

---

League of Women Voters of Rensselaer County– [info@lwvrc.org](mailto:info@lwvrc.org)  
[www.lwvrc.org](http://www.lwvrc.org)