

Annual Report
League of Women Voters
Utica/Rome Metro Area
May 12, 2018

Leadership Team – Mary Kelly-Monaco

Our 2017 – 2018 organizational year was busy with the Centennial Celebration of Woman Suffrage being the Hallmark activity of the year. More comments on this function are provided in the Women's Issues Committee below.

The Leadership Team model continued to be the method our League used, sharing responsibilities in members' areas of strengths. The Team consisted of Mary Kelly-Monaco, Lorrie Wasielewski, Nancy Agen, Barbara Gibbs, Karen McBride and Shirley Hilts-Adams. This model of League operation will continue for the 2018 – 2019 organizational year.

In addition to being busy, the year has been challenging and productive. Eight of our members attended a Regional League training, held in the Central NY Living History Museum in Cortland in early April. It was a day well spent in receiving and sharing information with sister affiliates from Central and Southern New York. Again, eight members attended the Advocacy Training/Lobby Day in late April in Albany, providing visitation opportunities with our Assemblymen and Senator whom were visited in their home offices earlier in the year, along with our Congresswoman. In mid-April a busload of twenty-two members and guests attended the special exhibit on Woman Suffrage at the NY State Museum in Albany. The exhibit was made more meaningful through the information provided by the well-informed tour guide.

In addition to voter registration activities at Federal and County Ceremonies and voter drives at other locations; the selection of two students for the League's *Students Inside Albany* endeavor; and member Karen McBride receiving a Civic Humanitarian Award from the NYS Women, Inc., were all meaningful activities. Our general meetings, held every two months, covered the following topics:

- *Citizenship Test – Could You Pass It?*
- *The Opioid Crisis in Oneida County*
- *Women's Issues in New York State*
- *Voter Registration in 16 Easy Steps*

Our 2018 Annual Meeting speaker, Dawn Catera Lupi, Oneida County First Assistant District Attorney and Special Victims Unit Bureau Chief, shared her journey to her current position. Her talk was entitled *Defeating the Challenges, Defending the Victims*.

Membership - Lorrie Wasielewski

The membership is currently 55. This committee seeks new members continually to accomplish League efforts to "Empower Voters and Improve Democracy", the National League mission. If you have ideas and or would like to serve on the Membership Committee it would be appreciated. Membership renewal dues for 2018-2019 are due on July 1. Dues may be mailed to the post office box or paid at the annual meeting or first meeting in September. That action will save us the cost of mailing reminder notices later in the year. For those members who joined in January of this year or later, the dues are covering the new League year.

Women's Issues Committee - Lorrie Wasielewski

The special Centennial Committee effort took the most effort this year. The committee successfully celebrated New York State's 100th anniversary of the passage of Women's Right To Vote with a party on November 6. The Honorary Chair was our own long-time member and women's advocate, Mary Chapin. The Oneida History Center provided an ideal location. There were proclamations from Senator Griffo, Representative Brindisi, County Executive Picente, and Mayor Palmieri. Live music, beverages and appetizers were provided. 59 people attended including politicians, judges, and historians interested in the local activities of that era. Several people, unable to attend, sent donations to the League. Committee members were essential to this effort and their assistance is greatly appreciated.

On April 14 the committee organized a bus to the New York State Museum in Albany to view the Women's Suffrage Display. Although only 22 people rode the bus, we had excellent reviews from attendees. A docent described the long history leading to the vote and the continuation of efforts in recent years for women to obtain credit, strive for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, equal pay, family leave and other issues critical to women.

Treasurer - Nancy Agen

We had 2 special events this past year which effected our finances. The Celebration of the NYS Women's Suffrage Centennial at the Oneida County History Center was well attended and added to our coffers. Although everyone thoroughly enjoyed the Bus Trip to the NYS Museum in Albany to view the Votes for Women Exhibition, attendance was below our projections and it had a negative effect. Thankfully, between the two we made \$500. We were disappointed to learn that we would no longer be receiving income from Election Night Reports to the media outlets and that beginning next year we will not be receiving income for Organ Donor drives. We did receive a payment from them this year plus we also received some of our literature for free. This negative news means that we will have to consume more of our savings in the future or find other sources of income. Next year's budget takes this into account, however, the National PMP was calculated at the current rate. There is a national convention in June and it remains to be seen if the dues will be raised or stay the same.

Our expenses are steady and very conservative. The issue is with our income. The Leadership Team welcomes any ideas and suggestions that members may have to alleviate this situation. The Budget for 2018-2019 is attached as page 6.

Nominating Committee – Ann Popeo

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers for the upcoming organizational years, 2018-2020:

<u>Nominee</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Term</u>
Dawn Laguerre	2 nd Vice President	2018-2020
Nancy Agen	Treasurer	2018-2020
Lu Blanchard	Director	2018-2020
Dianne DiMeo	Director	2018-2020
Carol Fitzgerald	Director	2018-2020
Lucretia Hunt	Director	2018-2020
Anne Popeo	Director	2018-2020
Donna Loomis Rubin	Director	2018-2020
Sally Swierczek	Director	2018-2020
Loretta Wasielewski	Director	2018-2019

(replacing Dawn Laguerre, 2017-2019 seat)

(cont'd. on pg. 3)

Nominating Committee (2018-19)

Anne Popeo, Marianne Buttenschon, Sue Allen

Officers and Directors who will continue in office, elected for 2017-2019 terms:

Mary Kelly-Monaco	1 st Vice President
Barbara Gibbs	Secretary
Donna Goodwin	Director
Shirley Hilts-Adams	Director
Karen McBride	Director

There will be a call for nominations from the floor for any of the open positions during the Annual Meeting.

Program – Barbara Gibbs

Following a local study, our league supported the 1965 referendum creating the Part County Sewer District which was expanded in 2006 by county legislation. Over the years this became a "back burner" item for us then once again a "hot topic." In 2007, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation mandated eliminating of overflows into the Mohawk River and county planning for the Oneida County Sewer District Compliance and Abatement Project was initiated.

Measures to reduce pollution to protect surface water, ground water and drinking water have been a League issue at all levels for decades. As an extension of our local issues, earlier in the decade Smart Growth study we recognized water quality as an essential element to smart growth and in 2008 adopted post study monitoring of the project planning and progress.

The project moves steadily on target towards the 2021 completion date with sanitary sewer and pumping station rehab projects and new construction at the Water Pollution Control Plant. Educational information provided by Project Ripple Effect is widely available at public events, schools, libraries, PSA's and through a monthly newsletter on line at www.rippleeffectocsd.org. See quarterly and annual updates at www.ocgov.net/wpc.

The **Proposed Local Programs** for the coming year, to be voted on at the Annual Meeting, are:

- Retain post-study monitoring of local planning, the Oneida County Sewer District Permit Compliance and Abatement Project and water quality measures to further Smart Growth and development in Oneida County; and,
- Promote the use of containers made of recycled and recyclable materials, where practical, in restaurants or places that serve food, to replace Styrofoam containers.

Publicity – Shirley Hilts-Adams

News items/press releases or calendar items were submitted to the local newspaper and TV station. Lorrie Wasielewski and Dianne DiMeo appeared on WKTV's Live at Five talk-show segment several days in advance of the Centennial Celebration (CC) for Women's Suffrage at the Oneida County History Center (OCHC).

In addition to names of potential attendees to the CC submitted by local League members, all social service agencies that dealt with women's issues were researched, online, for their

presidents, executive directors or staff members and were added to our data base for invitees to the Centennial Celebration at OCHC. IHEs (Institutes for Higher Education) were researched for faculty members in Women's Studies, History, Political Science, and Economics and added to our data base of invitees. Also added were elected officials at the city, county, state and national level. Our Treasurer, Nancy Agen, then took the information of the 250 accumulated invitees and transferred the information to a spread sheet to ease the tracking of potential attendees.

Working with the CC Ad Hoc Committee, an invitation and response package for the Centennial Celebration was developed. The package was printed at The Gallery, a local print shop. Joan Stalloch, Utica Public Library (UPL), provided a space in the Main Lobby from late October to Mid-November for a display of centennial material on Women's Suffrage. Female library staff members expressed their thanks and appreciation for the display. Carl Antonucci, a reference librarian at UPL showed the movie *Iron Jawed Angels* on a November evening. Upon introducing the program he commented on the turnout – "...better than most for our films." He was moved to learn more on the topic so researched peripheral topics, some of which he shared with the audience. A comment heard after the movie, from an attendee: "I had no idea women experienced the violence and imprisonment that they did for the sake of getting the vote." Additional information was provided via display boards set up on a table with a prominently displayed newspaper headline from November 7, 1917 proclaiming the NYS vote. Following the movie, a WKTV reporter, Callihan Marshall, interviewed Lorrie Wasielewski, Lu Blanchard and Karen McBride on facets of Women Suffrage.

Secretary – Barbara Gibbs

Minutes of monthly Board meetings and the Annual meeting were prepared. A copy of each approved set of minutes is maintained on file. Links to the minutes are posted on the Members Only page of our website, http://www.lwvuticarome.org/members_only.html.

Students Inside Albany (Dawn LaGuerre)

We have selected excellent candidates for this year's Students Inside Albany conference sponsored by the LWVNYS Education Foundation. The conference will take place May 20-23 and includes high school students from across New York State. The students that have been selected to represent LWV Utica/Rome this year are **Sandra Bajrektarevic**, and **Cameron Kilpatrick**.

Sandra, a junior at Thomas Proctor High School was selected for the position of Battalion Operations Officer and Drill Commander of her NJROTC unit. It is the first time that this position has been held by an underclassman. Sandra's extracurricular activities include earning Varsity letters in track and field. Her goal is to be accepted into the Naval Academy.

Currently a senior at Rome Free Academy, Cameron Kilpatrick is an outstanding student/athlete in Football, Basketball, and Lacrosse. Despite his rigorous schedule, he finds the time to volunteer as a Rome Common Council Youth Advisor, and is active in I Serve Mohawk Valley Food Recovery Network. His career goal is to become an Engineer. Cameron has been accepted to Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

Voter Services – Karen McBride

Since May 2017, our League held a total of 37 voter registration drives at 9 different sites and registered to vote (209) members of the public. Drives were conducted (2/21 – 4/4/18), at

Utica City Hall while AARP volunteers assisted members of the public complete their income tax returns. We also set up voter registration at the Dorothy Smith Advocacy Center of the Resource Center for Independent Living, (RCIL), (4/16 – 4/17/18) during income tax preparation sessions. The majority of new or updated voter registrations resulted from drives conducted at fairs and festivals such as the Oneida County Public Market and Hanna Park celebrations, along with those at the colleges: Mohawk Valley Community College, Herkimer College, and Utica College.

Since May 2017, our League participated in (10) naturalization ceremonies, federal and county sponsored. Of the (483) citizens newly naturalized at these ceremonies, we registered to vote (247) of them, or (51%). (Our “thanks” to all the volunteers who staffed these registration tables—especially the (3) new members at our 17-day sojourn at city hall.) During this same period, we signed up (50) people wishing to donate tissues and/or organs via a tear-off section on the NYS voter registration form. We’ve been doing this since mid-2015 to assist the New York Alliance for Donation gain donors. [By the way, NYS Public Health Law §4301, effective 2/14/17, allows youth ages 16 and 17 to choose to be an organ donor. More info. on this at: www.info@dlnys.org and www.alliancefordonation.org.]

On Jan. 23, 2018, at the New Hartford Public Library, our League’s Voter Service Committee meeting was the subject of a photo and article in the September issue of *A’ccent Magazine*, issued monthly by the *Observer-Dispatch*, focusing on the League’s history as a suffragist organization, our local League’s mission and activities, and League Centennial celebrations.

Our Sat., Mar. 24, 2018 General Membership Meeting featured a panel discussion on voter registration entitled *Voter Registration in 16 Easy Steps*, comprised of community leaders from four organizations: Committee for Voter Registration Expansion, (CVRE), the Mohawk Valley Latino Association (MVLA), the United Way’s Empire State Poverty Reduction Initiative (ESPRI), the NAACP, plus the League. Panelists shared ideas and provided insight, tips, and inspiration for helping increase the number of local citizens who are registered to vote. All who attended left with a commitment to continue to work together using each others’ areas of expertise to reach our common goal.

Once again, our Voter Service Committee knows well that none of the above-mentioned events could have occurred without the support, enthusiasm, and resolve of our associates and fellow League members. “Thanks” for another successful year!

VOTER Newsletter – Dianne DiMeo

Five editions of the “VOTER” Newsletter were prepared and distributed during the 2017-18 year. In addition, it is posted to our website for wider viewership and archival purposes. The “VOTER” is mailed to city, county, state and national representatives, as well as to those members without email or who request a hard copy. Since most members are able to receive the newsletter by email, printing/ mailing costs have continued to decline. To help off-set the expenses of the newsletter, we have advertisements from local businesses. We ended the year with a total of 9 advertisers. When you patronize these businesses, please mention the League of Women Voters and our newsletter, the ***Utica/Rome Voter***.

2018 - 2019 Budget

Income

Dues	2940
Contributions/Gifts	200
General membership meetings	500
Newsletter sponsor ads	315
Items for resale - plant sale	200
Interest at AmeriCu	70
Miscellaneous	100
Total Income	4325

Cost of Sales

PMP national	1568 *
PMP state	980
General membership meetings	400
Items for resale	140
Total COS Expense	3088
Gross Profit	1,237

Operating Expense: General and Administrative

Voter Guides/Voter Services	90
Utica/Rome Voter newsletter	225
Use of Space-NHPL, NY Mills library, Amer. Legion	150
Website	270
Students Inside Albany	100
Publicity/Advertising	100
Admin expense	100
LWVNY conference	600 **
Membership	30
Promo Items/Speaker Gifts	50
Youth Services	50
Programs & Education	50
Total Operating Expenses	1815

Total Expenses	4903
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Net Income/(Loss)	(578) ***
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Use of Retained Earnings	578
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Grand Total	0
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* State PMP will remain the same however National PMP may be changed at this year's conference.

** Applies to cost of conference and hotel for 2 attendees. Costs vary widely year to year.

*** Our expenses have been exceeding our income each year resulting in our funds being slowly depleted.