



The Leaguer

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May - June, 2020

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY
lww@lwwchautauqua.org, 679-1774

In this issue:

Information about our Annual Meeting –Pages 2-3

Voting Information – Pages 4,5 and 9

Chautauqua County's Pioneering Suffragists by Kate Farrell (Part 1 of 3) – Pages 6-8

Be Active in the League – Page 8

From the President

Uncertainty
Difficult circumstances

Where does the League of Women Voters fit in our lives just now?

Our focus needs to be “Get Out The Vote” and educate people about issues that the electorate has to deal with when they vote early or on the June 23 election date, or send in their *Absentee Ballot Application*. For the June, 2020, primary election the new ballot box is the mailbox. If you choose to vote by mail because of the pandemic, please select in section number 1 on the application “temporary illness or physical disability.” Executive Order 202.23 permits us to take this option. Do not write in ***anything*** else like “due to the pandemic.” The League will follow closely the options we will have in November and send out information to you.

Get to know your candidate. Go to Vote 411, or the website of the all the candidates. Be informed!

We have some signs that you can borrow to put in your yards if you live in a high traffic area. The signs say “*Vote it Counts, League of Women Voters*.” If you want one to borrow please let me know: mcroxtton51@gmail.com.

Please look at the information about our Annual Meeting. We have several issues that we must vote on as an organization.

I miss the many communities that I usually am involved with but I am constantly thinking about people who are facing physical and mental health issues, people who are struggling financially, and students.

Warmly,
Mary Croxton

ANNUAL MEETING

These are important issues we must vote on as an organization. You will receive a ballot via email or letter shortly. Because of the uncertainties surrounding the pandemic this notice was delayed.

Please respond by June 5, 2020 with your vote via email or letter.

We must vote on the following items:

1. Bylaws amendment: We are a not-for-profit organization that is not incorporated but must amend our by-laws to include the new virtual meetings. The language for this amendment was sourced from "The Laws of New York Consolidate Laws" which states: (c)

"Unless otherwise restricted by the certificate of incorporation or the by-laws, any one or more members of the board or any committee thereof who is not physically present at a meeting of the board or a committee may participate by means of a conference telephone or similar communications equipment or by electronic video screen communication. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting as long as all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time and each director can participate in all matters before the board, including, without limitation, the ability to propose, object to, and vote upon a specific action to be taken by the board or committee."

2. Proposed Annual Budget (see budget on page 3)

Notes:

- a. We are proposing to increase our annual dues from \$60.00 to \$65.00 for individuals and from \$90.00 to \$95.00 for household members. LWVUS and LWVNY have increased their PMP (per member payment) which is deducted from the dues we collect. Therefore we are left with very little income from dues. We have not raised dues in over 20 years!
- b. Website update - \$500.00

3. Election of Officers

The offices of President, Treasurer, Program Chair are not up for reelection (2019-2021).

Slate of officers for election for 2020-2022:

Secretary: Sue Evans

At large members: Marcia Merrins
Gen Ludemann

If there is someone you would like to nominate, please submit by email or mail to LWV, Box 42, Fredonia, New York 14063

All our members will receive an email or letter to cast your vote.



LWV CHAUTAUQUA PROPOSED BUDGET 9/1/2020 - 8/31/2021

Income	2019 Approved (based on 93 members)	2019 Actual thru 5/31/2020	2020 Proposed
Dues	\$5,680.00	\$4,660.00	\$5,455.00
Interest	\$3.00	\$0.52	\$2.00
Donations	\$150.00	\$56.00	\$450.00
Luncheons	\$2,877.00	\$2,555.00	\$2,500.00
Annual Banquet	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
Other			
1. Election Night Reporting	\$150.00	\$175.00	\$175.00
2. LWWNYS Big Raffle	\$50.00	\$0.00	
4. Leaguer Ads	\$150.00	\$137.50	\$150.00
5. LWV Chautauqua Banquet Raffle	\$150.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Feb. 14 Money from LWVUSA		\$1,000.00	
Total Income	\$10,380.00	\$8,584.02	\$10,232.00
Expenditures			
State Dues @\$23/primary member + \$16/household membership	\$1,700.00	\$1,932.00	\$1,666.00
National Dues @\$32/primary member + \$16/household membership	\$2,700.00	\$3,584.00	\$2,224.00
Voter Service	\$750.00	\$351.58	\$500.00
Luncheons	\$2,500.00	\$1,848.39	\$2,500.00
Annual Banquet	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
Conferences	\$1,000.00	\$477.41	\$1,000.00
Fund Raisers			
1. Promotion & Advertising	\$200.00		\$200.00
Fees for use of facilities	\$180.00	\$98.00	\$180.00
General Operating Expense			
Postage, Printing & PO Box	\$100.00	\$161.40	\$180.00
Office Supplies(5)	\$0.00		
Auditing Fee (donated)	\$0.00		
Website	\$250.00	\$750.00	\$250.00
Membership Committee	\$0.00		
Street Banner Hanging Cost	\$0.00		\$430.00
Total Expenses	\$10,380.00	\$9,202.78	\$10,630.00

These are unprecedented times, certainly for the League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County. In a typical year, our League would be gearing up to get out the vote: hosting tables, putting up posters, knocking on doors to get out the vote. The pandemic has changed our approach, but the message remains the same: Get Out and Vote! It Matters.

The League urges all citizens to visit the Chautauqua County Board of Elections' excellent website. The user-friendly site contains up-to-the minute info pertaining to the upcoming elections, and deadlines for what you can do.



- The New York State Presidential Primary is scheduled for June 23. A Republican Primary will also be held on that date for all eligible voters in the Town of Busti.
- All registered voters with the Libertarian Party in Chautauqua County will also have a county-wide Primary on June 23.
- The Board of Elections strongly encourages all eligible voters for the upcoming Primaries to apply for an Absentee Ballot to minimize exposure to COVID-19.

The League, along with the Board of Elections, urges you to take advantage of absentee voting, for the sake of poll workers, and for your own continued good health.

For those who do opt to vote in person on June 23, polls will be open from 6 AM to 9 AM. Early Voting will be June 13 to June 21, at the Board of Elections headquarters in Mayville.

School elections originally scheduled for May 19 have been rescheduled to June 9. The election for your district will be conducted via absentee ballots only, with no in-person voting. For more information on how your district is handling this situation, please contact the District Clerk. There is ample time to apply for your absentee ballot for the Primaries.

Visit <https://chqgov.com/board-of-elections/Board-of-Elections> to get started now.

If you are registered in one of these districts and enrolled in a political party holding a primary, you will receive a postage-paid absentee ballot application that you must complete and to get a ballot.

The Governor's Executive Order Specific to Election Changes Includes:
All village & town elections scheduled for March, April, May or June will be held on September 15, 2020.

School board/budget elections are scheduled for June 9th and will be held via mail with return postage included. Each district will send out postcard notices which detail the date of the election, date of budget hearing, definition of qualified voter, and an absentee ballot.

The Governor's order recognizes that absentee ballot requests submitted before his Executive Orders on absentee voting will still be valid without further action by the voter.

Boards of Elections must also make available at their offices a voting system that is accessible for voters wishing to mark their ballot privately and independently.

FAQs on Absentee Ballots

On April 24, the Governor announced a new Executive Order that will allow all voters to receive an absentee ballot application with a postage paid return envelope. Complete and return the application and an absentee ballot will be mailed to you. You then complete and mail the ballot to your county Board of Elections

Where do I get an absentee ballot application?

On April 24, the Governor announced a new Executive Order that will allow all voters to receive an absentee ballot application with a postage paid return envelope. Voters can also access an absentee ballot application from the State Board of Elections' and New York City Board of Elections' websites Under #1 on the application, voters can select "temporary illness or physical disability" as their reason for requesting to vote by absentee ballot.

Governor Cuomo's order expanded the definition of "temporary illness" to include the risk of contracting the coronavirus. The form can be printed, completed, signed, and mailed back to your county Board of Elections. Voters can also submit email applications to their county Board of Elections. Individuals can have an application attached to their email or provide to the Board with written information necessary to identify themselves. Prior to issuing the absentee ballot, the county board will complete a review process to identify the voter and the reason for the ballot. Absentee ballots will be sent to the voter's residence address unless otherwise requested by the voter.

What if I don't have access to the internet, computer or a printer?

On April 24, the Governor announced a new Executive Order that would allow all voters to receive an absentee ballot application with a postage paid return envelope. Voters who still need to request an absentee ballot application and who do not have internet access or a printer can call their Board of Elections and request that they mail them a paper application. Voters who do not have access to a printer, but do have computer access, can request an absentee ballot electronically by submitting an absentee ballot application by FAX or email. Voters can also request an absentee ballot by sending an email to their county Board of Elections. This will allow the Board to complete the review process and identify the individual as a qualified and registered voter prior to issuing the absentee ballot.

How will I receive my absentee ballot?

Absentee ballots will be sent to the voter's residence address unless otherwise requested by the voter. Delivery of absentee ballots to voters still remains the same, via mail or in person. There is no change in the return methods. The ballot must still be sent back by mail or returned in person by a specific deadline.

What will I receive with the absentee ballot?

After applying for an absentee ballot, you will receive:

1. Absentee Ballot: must be filled out (no signature here) and inserted into:
2. Ballot Envelope: Must be sealed, then signed and dated and inserted into:
3. Pre-addressed, postage-paid Return Envelope: Postage has been provided on the envelope.

When will the absentee ballot be mailed to me?

Your absentee ballot materials will be sent to you at least 32 days before federal, state, county, city or town elections in which you are eligible to vote. If you applied after this date, your ballot will be sent immediately after your completed application is received and processed by your local Board of Elections. Complete the ballot, SIGN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED, and mail to your county Board of Elections. The voter's signature on the return envelope will be used to validate the ballot.

Will I need to stamp the return envelope or is postage provided?

No, with the Governor's Executive Order on May 1, the return envelope for absentee ballots will be postage-paid. You must use the return envelope provided with the ballot, and sign the back of the ballot envelope.

What if I am not at my normal voting address during the election?

Voters can request their ballot be sent to an alternative address on their absentee ballot application. Voters who are currently forwarding their mail to another address should contact their county Board of Elections to ensure that they are still on their voter rolls. What if I have a disability that does not allow me to read or sign the application or ballot? You may sign the absentee ballot application yourself, or you may make your mark and have your mark witnessed in the spaces provided on the bottom of the application. Please note that a power of attorney or printed name stamp is not allowed for any voting purpose. For any election held before July 1, 2020, upon transmitting or mailing absentee ballots to voters, the board of elections will provide and maintain, in its office, a voting system that is accessible for voters wishing to mark their ballot privately and independently. For more information about voting absentee with a disability, please contact your county Board of Elections.

What is the deadline to apply to vote by absentee ballot? And to submit the absentee ballot? • June 16 is the last day to postmark application for the primary ballot. • June 22 is the last day to apply in person for primary ballot at your county Board of Elections. • June 22 is the last day to postmark ballot and it must be received by the county Board of Elections no later than June 30. • June 23 is the last day to deliver primary ballot in person to county Board of Elections' office by close of polls

Chautauqua County's Pioneering Suffragists (Part 1 of 3)

Kate Farrell



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Kate Farrell graduated from SUNY Fredonia (2013) with a B. A. in History, and from the University of Buffalo Law School (J.D., 2016). This is an abridged version of the essay she wrote for her senior history honors seminar at Fredonia, which was published in *Nearby History: Tales of Chautauqua County* (2013). Kate currently resides in Boston, where she is an associate attorney with Melick & Porter.*

On the sixth of November 1917, the women of New York State finally won the right to vote in political elections. Women had fought a long battle for this privilege nationally, and major strides for suffrage were also made on local scale.

In Chautauqua County, New York an astonishing fifty-two years of organization, turbulence, and hard work had been devoutly dedicated to the movement. The liberal attitudes of the area enhanced the spread of the movement throughout the county, stimulating the interest of assertive, proactive women in the community. It is important to consider the suffrage movement among communities on a local level when seeking to understand the national movement in its entirety; neither story can be complete without the inclusion of the other. The very heart of the suffrage movement lay within the steadfast nature of the women themselves. The leaders of the movement were entirely committed to its success, and the attitudes they carried were powerful enough to rally their communities. Although suffrage literature focuses more on the national movement, the history of Chautauqua County's Political Equality Organizations demonstrate that this area acted as a major catalyst in the Political Equality Movement in New York State.

Chautauqua County was the first in New York to form a County Political Equality Club, illustrating the progressive nature of the region. Once united with the State Suffrage Association, the Chautauqua County Political Equality Club was "the largest club in the United States" for several years, according to Elnora Monroe Babcock's history. The goals of the Political Equality Club of Chautauqua County were above all else to "elevate women to an equality with man in municipal, state and national rights and privileges," "to seek information in political economy," and "to aid in the dissemination of like knowledge." Through valiant efforts, the Political Equality Club and like organizations of the area were able to reach such goals, facilitated by Chautauqua's progressive environment.

In order to understand why Chautauqua County, of all counties within New York, was the first to take this revolutionary step, it is important to explore what progressive steps the county had seen before. By the time the Political Equality Club was founded in 1889, other local progressive groups were already in existence.

The Fredonia Grange was established on April 16, 1868 as a type of fellowship to strengthen the local agricultural community. The Grange sought to help citizens to develop to their highest potential to contribute to the community, the state, and the nation. It was a place to acquire leadership skills while serving the community and establishing a political voice. Oliver Kelly was the organizer of the Patrons of Husbandry (or Grange) and local granges, and was directed by his niece that, "Your organization will never be permanent if you leave women out." The Grange then became one of the first ways women could become involved in the administrative and political aspects of the community. The Grange thus became one of the first outlets for female equality in Chautauqua County. In the Grange, women were entitled to equal representation and an equal voice. The popularity of Granges increased, and they spread throughout the county. By 1875 the Pomona Grange had elected a woman by the name of Bela Lord as 'Master.' By 1888, the Pomona and the Ross Granges had created their own Political Equality Clubs, further stabilizing the view among the Grange that women should be treated as equals, given equal opportunities, and have equal rights. Minutes from the First Assembly District January 17, 1917 recorded, "Letters from Mrs. Whitehouse with regard to Grange speakers stating that the Chamber of Commerce at Oneida had asked for a Suffrage speaker for Grange convention and that Mrs. Willis Mitchell would be acceptable to them." The works of the Political Equality Clubs were not only accepted at the Grange, but requested. Considering the popularity of the Grange among citizens of Chautauqua County, both male and female, it was vital that the Suffrage movement secured this wide scale support.

In addition to the forward thinking nature of the Grange, articles from the Fredonia Censor indicated clear support from the town for the Suffrage Movement. On December 14, 1887 an article entitled "Frances Willard on Municipal Suffrage" was published, summarizing the main ideas of Miss Willard upon re-election as President of Nashville's Women's Christian Temperance Union. Miss Willard addressed the significance of securing the vote to bring an end to the "liquor curse." Miss Willard represented the views of many members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union across the nation in pursuing the municipal ballot. The Women's Christian Temperance Union had been founded at Fredonia Baptist Church in 1873. The Union was created with the intention of impeding consumption of alcohol, although this was not the only focus. The organization also sought to reform prisons, enact child labor laws, achieve purity in arts and in literature, and work in cohesion with other ethnic groups. In order to see its agenda addressed and progress made within their organization, the W.C.T.U knew that gaining women's suffrage was the first step to create true political headway. The W.C.T.U therefore had a specific committee dedicated to working towards women's suffrage.

In the Meeting Minutes of the Women's Suffrage Party of the First Assembly District, ties with the W.C.T.U come up frequently. On September 18, 1917, two months before Suffrage was granted in New York State, the secretary wrote, "The matter of a suffrage booth at W.C.T.U festival discussed and it was voted to donate

\$10.00 toward convention expenses and have a booth at festival for distribution of literature only.” Again, the intermingling of various organizations with similar goals created a sensible and successful means of progress. The main reason the W.C.T.U and the Political Equality Clubs were so closely knit was their common goal of Suffrage for the sake of prohibition. In First Assembly District meeting minutes from December 9, 1917, a letter was read from a representative of the W.C.T.U, which “asked for the cooperation of all women in regard to the prohibition amendment. It was voted to send a letter to the Congressman Chaz H. Hamilton asking him to support the amendment.” Together, the W.C.T.U and Suffrage Organizations alike were able to make real political progress.

Women of Chautauqua County were beginning to gain respect and influence in more areas than just politics. Calista S. Jones was a woman born in Jamestown in 1823. By the time she was eighteen years old, she was a successful young teacher. A male teacher of Jamestown was dismissed, and when asked to replace him, Jones agreed on the condition that she receive the same pay as he would have received. Jamestown school officials originally objected to the idea of a woman receiving equal pay to a man. In time, however, Jamestown did accept this proposition, and Calista S. Jones became the first woman to receive equal pay to a male educator in Jamestown. The tough attitude that secured Jones this liberty can be generally noted in other headstrong women Chautauqua County had produced.

BE ACTIVE IN THE LEAGUE!

We need people to be involved with Advocacy issues. We are sure there are people interested in voters rights, redistricting, health, education, the environment, or one of the many topics we face today. I would ask that you investigate legislation, research the legislation, write about it in the Leaguer or newspaper, and get in touch with our elected officials with your findings for the League. This can be a one time effort with the help of people that are also interested.

The League of Women Voters has many virtual meetings that you can join in. Look within your email for the options.

If we have the Fredonia Farm Festival, we would need booth personnel. Please let me know if you are interested, 679-1774

Do you have a question for our poll? Here is an example: “Is voting by mail safe?” Yes or No

We would also need a child appropriate polling question as well.

Finally, we received got a small grant to make Flyers and door knob information for voting. We usually distribute these in low voter turnout areas. There would be no social contact. You would hang the information on the door or other obvious place. Example: We would not mail something like this just distribute the cards.

Farmers markets are good places to register voters. We would just have a table with information and registration forms. We don't need to sit at the table.



State Budget

The Legislature returned to pass the 2020-2021 budget which did not include any additional funding for early voting or other voting reforms and underfunded the State Board of Elections by nearly \$1.6 million. The Legislature also passed a campaign finance bill mirroring the recommendations of the Public Campaign Financing Commission from last year (which became law automatically) that were successfully challenged in court on the basis that the Legislature had unlawfully delegated its law-making to an unelected entity. The bill allows candidates for statewide office and the Legislature to opt into a system of public financing that incentivizes small dollar donations by matching them with public funds. Candidates for statewide office can now raise a maximum of \$18,000 in a four-year election cycle from an individual contributor, down from about \$70,000; state Senate candidates can raise \$10,000, down from \$19,300; and state Assembly candidates can raise \$6,000, down from \$9,400. Unfortunately, limits on contributions to political parties and those doing business with the state were left untouched.

The new law also put back in place the Commission's controversial changes to party thresholds and ballot access requirements. Statewide candidates now have to get 45,000 signatures from voters to get on the ballot, up from 15,000. For an automatic ballot line, a party must receive at least 130,000 votes or 2% of the vote, whichever is higher, every two years in a gubernatorial or presidential election, up from 50,000 votes every four years in a gubernatorial election.

Federal Funding for Elections

The federal CARES Act stimulus package includes \$400 million in new Help America Vote Act (HAVA) funds for states to utilize to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus for the 2020 election cycle. States can use these funds to purchase cleaning supplies, protective masks for staff and poll workers, resources to meet the increased demand for mail ballots due to self-isolation and quarantine in response to COVID-19, and temporary staff to process the increased absentee ballot demand. New York State qualified for \$20 million through the CARES Act and is required to commit \$4 million in matching funds.

This funding was influx until the end of April because the state had not included the necessary legislative language in our state budget to allow the State Board of Elections to spend these funds. The League send a letter to [legislative leaders](#) and the [Governor](#) urging them to amend the budget so these funds could be received. The League also sent a letter to the [New York Congressional delegation](#) urging them to amend the CARES Act to remove the 20% state match so that states could receive election assistance without the burden of a match.

The League is continuing to advocate for the removal of the state match and for an increase in overall federal funds for election assistance during the coronavirus outbreak. A packet of materials to lobby Congress is available at: <https://bit.ly/3cECVwu> and we encourage local Leagues to share this info with their members to take action on this issue. A member-wide meeting was held by Zoom on April 28 to present these materials and answer any questions. The Powerpoint presentation from this meeting will be shared and posted soon.

Voting Updates

In April Governor Cuomo introduced several important Executive Orders related to voting during the ongoing outbreak of COVID-19. The Governor expanded absentee voting to allow any voter to vote via absentee ballot in the June primary due by selecting "temporary illness" and to mandate that all active and inactive voters who are eligible to vote in the June primary receive a pre-paid absentee ballot application in the mail from their county board of elections.

The order also lifted the signature requirement on the absentee application form to allow voters to apply to vote absentee electronically. Voters can contact their county board of elections offices for more information on applying to vote absentee electronically or by mail.

Later this month, the Governor announced that all voters will be mailed an absentee ballot application and postage paid return envelope to facilitate all to vote by absentee ballot.

The League has created several educational documents on the changes that have been made. The League released an FAQ page on voting via absentee in New York State that has been translated into Spanish, Bengali, Korean, and Chinese. We are also working on an educational video on how to apply for an absentee ballot and a webpage with information about applying for an absentee ballot in all 62 counties in New York.



TO BE RESCHEDULED

“Telling Your Healthcare Stories”, EVENING MEETING - 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. – JCC North

“How to Lobby your Representative”, SUNY Fredonia at 7 p.m. (more information to come)

“Fair Housing”, Luncheon , Jill Casey, HUD, and Jessica Mallon, Doubletree, Jamestown

Advocacy Training in Albany by LWVNYS.

LWV Banquet. Celebration of 100 years: the 19th amendment and the people who made it happen.

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

lww@lwwchautauqa.org, 672-4275



The League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County

Mary Croxton, President
Nancy Boynton
Pat Kirell
Gen Ludemann
Marcia Merrins
Lisa Mertz

Invite a Friend to Join or Give the Gift of League Membership!!

Make Your Voice Heard!
Join Us Today!

Membership Form

Mail to:

LWV Chautauqua

P.O. Box 42 Fredonia, NY 14063

Membership Dues: through December 31, 2020 Individual: \$60; Family: \$90; Student: \$25 (Check payable to LWV Chautauqua County)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

I would like to get involved with:

_____ Local Issues _____ Voter Service _____ State/National Issues

_____ Local Newsletter

_____ Assisting with minor tasks occasionally

Other: _____