

On June 4, League recognized the 100th anniversary of Congress passing the women's suffrage amendment. The work of ratification was off and running, to culminate on August 26, 1920, when the nineteenth amendment became part of our Constitution.

Representing League of Women Voters NH, Liz Tentarelli was asked to speak for 5 minutes at the June 15th Progressive Summit about the centennial of women's right to vote and the upcoming 100th anniversary of the League. Below is her presentation, with permission for League members to borrow and edit and recite it whenever you have 5 or 6 minutes before a captive audience. The coming year will be one big commemoration!

Women's Suffrage and the League of Women Voters: A brief herstory.

One hundred and seventy-one years ago, 300 women and men met in Seneca Falls NY for the first Women's Rights Convention. Elizabeth Cady Stanton opened the convention thus:

"We are assembled to protest against a form of government, existing without the consent of the governed—to declare our right to be free as man is free, to be represented in the government which we are taxed to support, ..."

The convention discussed the 11 resolutions on women's rights. All passed unanimously--except the one that demanded the right to vote. Stanton and abolitionist Frederick Douglass gave impassioned speeches in its defense before it eventually (but barely) passed.

What followed was first public shaming, for daring to ask for women's suffrage, and then 72 years of working state by state and at the federal level for women's right to vote.

That work was interrupted, though, by the Civil War. Most suffragists put their cause on hold to devote themselves to abolition, and then to passage of the 15th amendment that would give voting rights to former male slaves. That

amendment is its own story, and the way many states—northern and southern—restricted black voting rights for 100 years is a shameful part of our history.

Between 1870 and 1917, various states granted women certain voting rights, but the federal government dragged its feet, despite the growing roles of women.

Throughout the Progressive Era of the 1890s and early 20th century, women were making their marks in social justice work.

The first world war, terrible though it was, was a boon to women's push for their rights. They took over jobs left vacant as men became soldiers in Europe. Some women even served in the war, as telephone operators in France, for example, and as army nurses. By the time the war was over, President Woodrow Wilson had come to see that women had earned their right to vote.

On June 4 of 1919, Congress passed the 19th amendment for women's suffrage. The battle turned to the states, where 36 states had to ratify the amendment.

Some, including New Hampshire, did so quickly. But parts of the country wanted nothing to do with increasing the voting rolls, particularly with black women voters who would likely vote Republican (the party of Lincoln).

The suffragists by this time were divided between those cajoling the states to ratify, and those who had grown impatient, copying the militant tactics of the British suffragettes. Some were imprisoned, where they were force-fed and maltreated.

The National American Woman Suffrage Association was the largest national organization working on ratification.

When Congress had passed the amendment, discussion began about what would follow ratification. If women got the vote, now they had to learn how to use it, how to understand issues, to vote their consciences, and to work to protect democracy.

Thus was born the League of Women Voters, a direct descendant of NAWSA. On Valentine's Day 1920, the NAWSA national convention changed the organization's name to the League of Women Voters.

The thousands of members in local and state chapters began their work to prepare women to vote in the 1920 election.

In New Hampshire the League created weekend "citizenship schools" to teach women about current issues and government.

In November 1920, 8 million women voted for the first time in a national election!

And here in New Hampshire, two women were elected to our state House as write-in candidates, Democrat Mary Farnum of Boscawen and Republican Jessie Doe of Rollinsford.

While we are eager to celebrate the historic passage of the 19th amendment and the

Countdown to the centennial of women's right to vote

centennial of the League of Women Voters, we recognize that not all women got the right to vote in 1920.

Black women were subject to the same Jim Crow laws that had plagued black men since 1870.

Native Americans did not achieve citizenship and voting rights until 1924.

Young women were out of luck: the voting age was 21 until 1971.

And of course we never did ratify a federal Equal Rights Amendment!

But we do need to commemorate our momentous steps. As we head toward August 26, 2020, please join us in recognizing the centennial of women's right to vote and also the centennial of the League of Women Voters, who continue the fight to protect voting rights.



The 19th amendment giving women the right to vote became law on August 26, 1920. Join us in the countdown to commemoration of this historic event. Lots of happenings will be held around the state. Check out the website of the loose coalition (including League) of organizations helping to raise public awareness. Instagram and Twitter accounts too.

NHWomenVote100

<https://www.nhwomenvote100.org/>
<https://twitter.com/HampshireVote>

Money in Politics – a film, a march, and whatever you can do.

Campaign finance reform has been a core League issue for decades. If you haven't seen the documentary "Dark Money," try to catch it somewhere. It's been shown by Open Democracy in various cities and towns, and we've posted showings on our website.

If you live in the Seacoast area, consider joining a special event on July 7, a 1-mile walk from Kittery to Portsmouth, in the spirit of Granny D., with a rally at either end.

For details, visit the NH Rebellion website (link below)
NH Rebellion grew out of Open Democracy.

Walk & Rally to
Declare Independence from
BIG MONEY IN POLITICS
Sunday, July 7, 2:00 pm

Meet at John Paul Jones Memorial Site, Kittery ME
Walk to Market Square; Portsmouth NH

More info: nhrebellion.org @nhrebellion

https://www.nhrebellion.org/walk_to_declare_independence_from_big_money_in_politics?utm_campaign=2019_independence_walk&utm_medium=email&utm_source=nhrebellion

Public Education news in NH

If you missed the League's op ed in the Concord Monitor on June 10 opposing the state board of education's "Learn Everywhere" plan, it has been included on the Advancing NH Public Education's website. You can read it here: <https://anhpe.org/2019/06/10/just-before-the-sboe-vote-nh-league-of-women-voters-issues-a-statement-opposing-the-nhdoe-learn-everywhere-proposal/>

Although it is signed by the LWVNH president, it is primarily the work of Nancy M., with various board members weighing in on edits.

The state board of education held their meeting on this plan on June 13 and voted 4-3 to adopt the rules, with just a slight amendment. But next the rules need to go before JLCAR (a legislative committee), where we hope they will be struck down.

Meanwhile a lawsuit filed by several school districts in the southwest part of the state had its day in court, and the judge ruled that current funding by the state doesn't even come close to providing the "adequate education" ordered by the Claremont lawsuits decades ago. Here we go again...

The state's 2 year budget includes additional school funding for property-poor towns, but big question is whether the Governor will sign the budget adopted by the Legislature.

Candidate forums: Check out the LWVNH.org [Candidates Forum page](#) where we attempt to post upcoming televised or radio presidential primary forums as well as local forums.

Several cities will be holding municipal elections this fall. If your city is having a forum, let us know and we'll post it. If a group in your city wants advice about organizing a forum, we can help.

Local League news: Check the [Calendar page](#) of our website for local meetings and events. Local League leaders, please send news you'd like to share with the rest of the state.

LWVNH PeterboroughPlus unit is busily planning to participate in the August 3 Granny D walk in their area. They had a successful documentary showing on June 24 of "The Making of America" with the film-maker there for a discussion.

LWVNH-Mt Washington Valley unit bids farewell to some key people moving to other states—How dare they! But we wish them well and know that Leagues will welcome them in their new homes. Thanks for all you've done to get this new unit off to a great start, Gerrie B. and Betsey H.!

LWV Kearsarge/Sunapee Area had a wonderful annual meeting in June with guest speaker the Honorable Tina Nadeau, Chief Justice of the NH Superior Courts. Justice Nadeau spoke from the heart about drug courts in New Hampshire as a positive alternative to incarceration for those with high need and at high risk as a result of addiction. You can learn more about the drug courts at [Friends of NH Drug Courts](#) website.

LWVNH Southern Rockingham is in the planning stages for a presentation about the census, sometime in October probably.

LWVNH Greater Nashua is off the hook for hosting a mayoral candidate forum—no challengers to the incumbent. But Alderman and School Board races will warrant attention. They hosted a "Dark Money" screening on June 20.