



# NH Voter

**League of Women Voters  
New Hampshire**

**LWVNH.org**

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**DECEMBER 2015**

## **What do YOU know about town meeting?**

Some of you are thinking, "Too much." Like me, you've probably gone to just about every town meeting in every small town you've lived in. You may be thinking "too long" or "too ornery" or "too many people asking too many questions." In spite of that, we go back every spring, don't we?

But I suspect some of you are muttering, "Here she goes again, trying to get me to go to those interminable meetings where no one seems to understand what we're voting on or why." Either way, you may be interested in a terrific article on the website of the NH Municipal Association that explains the town meeting process in clear, simple terms and with enough detail that all of us can learn from it. Check it out:

<https://www.nhmunicipal.org/TownAndCity/Article/600>

Why am I writing about town meetings now? Because they are important! Our tax bills and the character of our towns are based on our decisions at town meetings. Most towns hold their meetings the second week of March, although some wait until May. But the process begins much earlier, with warrant articles submitted in late January.

If you have an issue you believe your town meeting should address, now is the time to read the above article, find other voters friendly to your ideas, gather signatures, and get your question on the warrant.

See you at town meeting!

**- Liz Tentarelli, President**

**How to Organize a Candidates Forum.** [Click here](#) for a flier about this free training, offered by the League of Women Voters NH. Participants will receive a free manual, and guidance, if requested, for your first events. Advance registration is required. To register email the League president via our [Contact Us page](#).

Wednesday, December 9, 1-3 pm, Concord

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**Money in Politics Consensus Meeting**  
**Wednesday, December 16, 2015**  
**10:00 am-1:00 pm (Bring a brown bag lunch)**  
**Bow Baker Library**  
**South Street, Bow**  
**All league members invited to participate in this discussion.**

The LWV Greater Capital Area will host a consensus meeting on updating the LWVUS position on Campaign Finance. The current position:

*The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process.*

*This position is applicable to all federal campaigns for public office — presidential and congressional, primaries as well as general elections. It also may be applied to state and local campaigns.*

The update is being undertaken for the purpose of addressing the lack of member understanding and agreement as to whether financing a political campaign is protected speech under the First Amendment. The consensus meeting will consider: (1) the rights of individuals and organizations, under the First Amendment, to express their political views through independent expenditures and the finance of election campaign activities; and (2) how those rights, if any, should be protected and reconciled with the interests set out in the current position.

See details and study materials on the LWVNH website: <http://lwnh.org/LWVUSstudies.html> All NH League members welcome. Bring a bag lunch, if you wish.

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**What do the candidates say?**

At campaign events in NH and elsewhere through the fall of 2015 and into the rest of the campaign season, volunteers have asked a specific question of the Presidential candidates: **"What specific reforms will you advance to end the corrupting influence of big money in politics?"**

The answers are posted as text and video on this website: <http://www.questionr.us/candidates>

Check it out. This is a project of the NH Rebellion, a nonpartisan group advocating for campaign finance reform.

**League Members Spread Holiday Cheer**

League members are again filling gift bags for the women at Shea Farm in Concord. The only half-way house for women now houses 49 women both those who are categorized as C-1 which means they can leave the facility and get jobs in the community as they prepare to complete their sentences and C-2 inmates. The C-2 women cannot leave the facility but are low risk and have exhibited good behavior while in prison. They are moved to Shea for a less restrictive environment.

The League gives each woman a gaily decorated gift bag containing three or four items including: hotel sample shampoo, hand lotion bath gel, etc, and warm gloves or mittens, warm hats, socks, or other personal items. We also include some candy and a note extending our wishes for a peaceful holiday.

Thanks to all the League members who so generously contribute gifts that bring a bright spot to those women who are struggling to rebuild their lives.

This is the message of Christmas: we are never alone. – *Taylor Caldwell*

**-Peg Fargo, LWV Greater Capital Area**

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**LWVNH Greater Nashua Area Unit**

The fledgling League group for Greater Nashua has continued to build momentum and grow interest as we have participated in a number of community-wide events throughout the fall election season.

Nashua voters were fortunate to be offered a series of Mayoral Forums some of which included "Meet and Greet" for all municipal candidates. At each forum, the League was there making voter information available in English, Spanish and Portuguese. We also had sample ballots and ward maps available to help voters more clearly identify where and when to cast their ballots.

One highlight of Nashua's 2nd Annual Fall Festival was the LWV "Voting Booth" where children were able to cast a vote for Nashua's next Mayor. Although the results were slightly different from the actual Election Day outcomes, the kid-sized voting booth was such a hit that it made a reappearance at Nashua's Winter Holiday Stroll the Saturday after Thanksgiving. This time, voters got to cast a ballot choosing from a wide array of presidential candidates in this unofficial "Straw Poll" in the first of the First in the Nation Primary contests! Not only have our young voters had the experience of casting their vote, but they also received an "I Voted" Sticker.

In the coming months, we hope to solidify our membership and leadership and will begin developing materials to help local voters become more familiar with positions and voting records of prospective and incumbent candidates leading up to what will be very busy and important state, local, and national elections in 2016.

**-Sylvia Gale, LWVNH Greater Nashua Area Unit**

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**Memo to Members:**

As you read this, the 2014-2015 dues notices for LWVNH Members at Large have been mailed. We would greatly appreciate a timely return to help us update our state membership roster and calculate what we owe LWVUS in per member payments. Remember your dues cover both state and national membership. Many members of NH's local Leagues paid their dues at their annual meetings in June. If you belong to a local league and have not paid your dues, please do. If you know a nationally recruited member, please encourage her or him to join the state League. Also, if you know or meet a former member or a member who belonged to a League in another state before moving here, please encourage them to rejoin. Keeping LWVNH apprised of email changes is also important so that we can send you your voter.

**-Mary Perry, LWVNH Treasurer, [marybperry@tds.net](mailto:marybperry@tds.net)**

## Keeping Up To Date

When is the next presidential debate? Which candidates are visiting NH this week? When is 2016 town meeting? When is the filing deadline for town and state offices?

LWVNH board members do our very best to keep our website up to date with important information for voters, including answers to the above questions. We also have a calendar page with League events and other items of interest to League members and supporters. So visit our website often and get the facts.

- For candidate forums and presidential visits, go to our "Forums and Candidate Visits" page: <http://lwvnh.org/Forums-debates.html>
- For other events, including election and filing dates, visit our "Calendar" page: <http://lwvnh.org/calendar.html>
- For information on voter registration, voter ID, and absentee voting, visit our "Elections" page: <http://lwvnh.org/elections.html> On that page, you will also find fliers and brochures that may be printed out and distributed without any further permission. Please help us "Get Out The Vote" by sharing these with friends and neighbors who may need information.

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## Voting Absentee

If you will not be able to vote in person in the presidential primary (likely to be early- to mid- February), you may get your absentee voter application on line now: <http://sos.nh.gov/ElectForms.aspx> Fill it out and send or bring it to your town or city clerk's office. When ballots are ready, you will receive your absentee ballot in the mail. Complete your ballot and mail it back promptly.

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## From Open Democracy:

Open Democracy is a non-partisan organization that shares many of the same goals as the LWV regarding reforming elections and fighting back against big money in politics. Open Democracy is promoting the *We the People Pledge* which calls for all candidates to support transparency in campaign funding, overturning Citizens United, public funding of campaigns, an end to gerrymandering, voter registration reform and enforcement of campaign finance laws.

They are calling on citizens to introduce Town Warrant articles supporting the pledge. They have created web pages which provide a description of what they are asking petitioners to do, and the supporting documents and online resources.

- Volunteers may sign up here: [http://www.nhrebillion.org/warrant\\_article](http://www.nhrebillion.org/warrant_article)
- "How-To" information is here: [http://www.nhrebillion.org/town\\_warrant\\_petitions\\_how\\_to](http://www.nhrebillion.org/town_warrant_petitions_how_to)
- Warrant Article language and forms are here: [http://www.nhrebillion.org/warrant\\_article\\_language](http://www.nhrebillion.org/warrant_article_language)

Nationally, there were a number of encouraging victories on November 3, 2015. In states and cities from Maine to Seattle, citizens voted decisively to pass key items on the *We the People* agenda.

- In **Maine**, [voters approved Question 1](#) to require transparency of outside spenders, toughen penalties on special interests who break the law, and revitalize the state's landmark Clean Elections program.
- In **Ohio**, Issue 1 was overwhelmingly approved to create an [independent redistricting commission](#) designed to end the partisan gerrymandering that stifles electoral competition, protects the party in power, and drives politicians to the extremes.
- In **Seattle**, voters decisively passed the nation's first "[Democracy Voucher](#)" system of citizen-funded elections, an approach that enables voters to directly finance the campaigns of candidates who say no to large donations. The measure also blocks major lobbyists and government contractors from buying influence in elections.
- In **San Francisco**, Proposition C was easily adopted to [tighten ethics and lobbying rules](#) and rein in "Astroturf" lobbying by special interest groups seeking to hide their true identity.

**How is Marilla Ricker doing?**

Marilla Ricker—New Hampshire's own suffragist, ground-breaking attorney, and would-be governor—died in 1920, just days after women were first able to vote in major elections. Will her portrait be installed in the NH State House? Will visiting fourth graders ask, "What did that lady do?" Will your name be listed as one of the donors to make her State House portrait a reality?

Read about Marilla Ricker on our website, and consider making a tax-deductible donation to the portrait fund: [http://lwvnh.org/Marilla\\_Ricker.html](http://lwvnh.org/Marilla_Ricker.html)

This is a joint project of the League of Women Voters NH and the NH Women's Bar Association following 2013 legislation authorizing the installation of Mrs. Ricker's portrait. The artist, Kate Gridley, has begun her work. League volunteers have been working hard to raise the tax-deductible donations. We are nearing our fund-raising goal for the actual portrait, frame, and plaque. Additional funds will let us have a reception celebrating the unveiling and a nice brochure with more information about Marilla and a list of donors. Please help us meet our goal with your donation. And a big thank you to League members and friends who have already donated!

Checks may be mailed to: LWVNH Education Fund Ricker Project, 4 Park St Room 200, Concord, NH 03301  
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**Thank you to LWV Upper Valley**

It is with sadness but an acceptance of the inevitable that the LWVNH board announces the disbanding of the League of Women Voters of the Upper Valley, one of only a handful of bi-state Leagues nationwide.

For decades, the Upper Valley had a vibrant League that offered interesting programs for members and for the public, as well as the voter service that they do so well. The members have realized that with longevity comes fatigue, and that without new younger members their League work will be now limited to voter service. That work will continue, and the state board will support those efforts.

Last spring, members appointed an ad hoc steering committee to effect the transition from local League to members-at-large unit status. That committee, and in particular past treasurer Ellen Blumberg, has worked with the NH and VT state boards to turn over administrative duties to the respective state boards and to divide the treasury so that it can be put to work for the Leagues of both states.

Dues notices have been sent out by LWV New Hampshire, as agreed to by the Ad Hoc Steering Committee. We sincerely hope that members will continue their support of the League. Please send back the dues notice and be sure to give us your current mailing and email addresses, so that we can keep you informed.

*If you haven't been receiving the NHVoter via email, it is because we don't have your current email. Please let me know your current email address. Send me an email at [LWV@kenliz.net](mailto:LWV@kenliz.net)*

We want to thank in particular the people who, in recent years, have kept the Upper Valley League alive: Ellen for acting as treasurer and facilitating this transition, Virginia for starting and maintaining the Facebook page, BettyAnn for sending out newsletters to members, Augusta and Ginger for compiling Upper Valley documents and finding a good home for them in the Rauner Archives, Margaret for organizing an event at Kendall last year, all members of the steering committee operating since 2010, all who worked to organize and run candidate forums, and especially the members of the ad hoc steering committee who grappled with the decision on the members' behalf to disband as a League.

As members-at-large, Upper Valley area members continue to be important to League. We look forward to staying in touch. Feel free to email or phone me at any time with questions or concerns.

**-Liz Tentarelli, President**