



**League of Women Voters  
New Hampshire**

# **NH Voter**

**September 2014**

## **LWVNH.org**

Liz Tentarelli, Co-President  
603-763-9296  
[LWV@kenliz.net](mailto:LWV@kenliz.net)

Sally Davis, Co-President  
726-3775  
[sally.davis36@gmail.com](mailto:sally.davis36@gmail.com)

Peg Fargo, Vice-President  
226-4574  
[pfargo@hotmail.com](mailto:pfargo@hotmail.com)

Joan Flood Ashwell, Communications  
868-3775  
[jfashwell@comcast.net](mailto:jfashwell@comcast.net)

Mary Davies  
228-6312  
[marbob75@yahoo.com](mailto:marbob75@yahoo.com)

Sally Embley, President  
Kearsarge/Sunapee  
456-2315  
[ssembley@gmail.com](mailto:ssembley@gmail.com)

Nancy Marashio  
763-4163  
[nancymarashio@myfairpoint.net](mailto:nancymarashio@myfairpoint.net)

Mary Perry, Treasurer  
Greater Capital Area, President  
648-2488  
[marybperry@tds.net](mailto:marybperry@tds.net)

Upper Valley LWV:  
<https://www.facebook.com/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-the-Upper-Valley/187569014624799>

## **Message from the Presidents:**

Welcome to our new newsletter format. We will be sending you emailed newsletters about state League work on an almost monthly basis. That way members and friends of the League will get up-to-date news, so that they can take action, if they wish, by calling or emailing their elected officials on important hot issues. Probably three times a year we will mail a newsletter to members who don't use email, so they won't be out of the loop.

The state board offers a sincere thank you to our past NHVoter editor, Ginny Higgins, for her years of editing and mailing the print NHVoters we sent three times a year. Ginny chose to step down and we will miss her at board meetings. Stepping up as our new editor is Joan Flood Ashwell, who is also our state League election law specialist. Joan is eager to use email for faster and more frequent communication.

In our emailed newsletters, you will see links to more information on various topics, often to pages on our [LWVNH.org](http://LWVNH.org) website. Please click on the links underlined in blue to read more information, and do visit our website often for breaking news, legislative alerts, study materials, and of course election information.

Co-president Sally Davis has been hard at work on state energy policy issues since our Quad States meeting. Do visit our Energy/Quad States webpage to stay on top of this important topic. You'll find a link in the article on page 5.

As the co-president who likes nothing better than candidate forums, I have moderated some pre-primary forums in hot races. Fascinating experience to meet the candidates and hear the audience's astute questions. It's been a great summer. Now full speed ahead to the November general election campaign season. See you at the polls!

Liz Tentarelli

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## **Human Trafficking Program -- October 1, 2014 - Colby-Sawyer College**

Join League members, faculty and students at Colby Sawyer College on Wednesday, Oct.1, for a program on Human Trafficking. The program will begin with a 30-minute video, "**Not My Life**," narrated by Glenn Close that exposes the worldwide problem of human trafficking of children and women. Guest speaker Rev. Phyllis Evelyn will talk about the national and New Hampshire implications before opening the program to audience questions and discussion.

The video begins at 7 p.m. in Wheeler Hall of the Ware Student Center at Colby-Sawyer College, 541 Main St., New London, N.H.

The League of Women Voters now has a [position](#) in opposition to human trafficking, allowing Leagues to advocate for better legislation, at both the state and federal level, to prevent and to punish human trafficking. NH [Senate Bill 317](#) was signed into law this year further defining human trafficking and strengthening the penalties for those who coerce labor or sex for profit from victims.

This event is sponsored by LWV New Hampshire and Colby-Sawyer College, with the gracious help of gender studies professor Margaret Wiley. The program is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.

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## **Get Out the Vote: What You Can Do**

As League members we sometimes have to be reminded that not everyone knows as much about the election process as we do. How do I register? Who can vote in a primary? How can I vote absentee? What do I need for ID on Election Day? How do I find out who is running in my district?

The LWNH board urges members to use our website to get answers. [LWNH.org](#) has a page devoted to Elections that includes fliers and brochures, easy to download and print, to post or to pass along to friends and neighbors. These materials cover voter registration and absentee voting, voter ID requirements, information for college students about their voting rights, and a brochure about the Executive Council. We also offer two brochures in Spanish.

The [Elections page](#) of our website has links to the Secretary of State's website where voters can determine which districts they live in and who is running for office in those districts.

New this year is our [Scheduled Forums and Debates page](#). Both League-sponsored candidate forums and any others we learn about are posted on this page, updated often. We list live and televised forums, and the October WMUR forums for Congress and the Governor's race are already posted. If any forums or debates are scheduled that we have not posted, please let us know the details.

Mark your calendars and spread the word about the elections: **The primary is Tuesday, September 9.**

## **Candidate Forums**

The League tradition of organizing and moderating candidate forums continues. LWV Greater Capital Area had over 100 attendees for their state Senate District 15 forum on August 15. It is available via a YouTube link on our Scheduled Forums webpage: [forums webpage](#)

LWVNH board members arranged two other forums. On August 25 a smaller audience met the Democrat candidates for Executive Council District 5 (Nashua and surrounding towns). That will also be available via YouTube shortly. An attempt to include the Republican contenders for that seat failed, though one of them did attend the forum, along with the independent candidate who will run in November.

Durham candidates for state representative requested the League host a forum, which was held on August 27 and was well attended. Also available on YouTube.

As we move into the general election season after the Sept. 9 primary, check our [forums webpage](#) for more candidate forums. Please contact the League if you wish to help set up a forum in your community.

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## **News, News, News**

The state League's website, LWVNH.org, has two new pages of interest to members and to the general public.

Wanting a place to share news of members' activities, milestone birthdays, and recognize the passing of long-time League friends, we have created a [Members' News](#) page. To share something of interest on this page, email us via the Membership/co-president link on the [Contact Us](#) page of our website.

We have also begun a page just for press releases and breaking news, called [In The News](#). One of the first items we posted to this site was the happy news of the Superior Court judge's ruling July 25 that the state's voter registration law is unconstitutional. It prevented those who recently moved to the state, especially college students, from voting unless they had established legal residency. The League was a plaintiff in that suit in 2012, when a temporary injunction was issued preventing the onerous wording from appearing on registration forms. The case finally went to trial this spring, and the injunction has been made permanent. Sometimes the news is good! Voting rights and drivers' licenses do not have to be linked.

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## **New Women's Prison**

On Aug. 18, League Co-President Liz Tentarelli and Board member Peg Fargo proudly attended the ground breaking for the new women's prison to be built behind the men's prison in Concord. About 100 people were invited to this auspicious event. Welcomed by Commissioner William Wrenn, N.H. Women's Prison chaplain, Beth Richeson gave the invocation, Governor Maggie Hassen spoke of the perseverance of many individuals and groups who have worked to bring this about. Senator Sylvia Larsen, speaking as a constant advocate for better services for the incarcerated women in our state, thanked N.H. Legal Assistance and the League of Women Voters for persistent advocacy.

Assistant Commissioner Bill McGonagle told us that the actual digging for the 234 bed facility would begin the next day. Just because those first shovels of dirt have been turned over, the work of the League is not done. We must commit ourselves to continuing to observe, monitor, comment and advocate to ensure that the building – and the programs provided within that building – truly meet the needs of the incarcerated women.

- Peg Fargo

## **Happy Birthday!**

On July 9, the League and the United Methodist Women's Club of Concord sponsored a birthday party for all the women at the New Hampshire Halfway House, Shea Farm. The day was hot and as we parked our cars and started to unload, the women of Shea Farm came right out to help. We decorated a table and put out our decorated handmade cakes, fancy plates and glasses of cold lemonade. We all put on name tags and in just a few minutes, we were chatting like old friends.

There were 31 women eligible to come to the party and all of them signed up. Eleven women were off the premises at their jobs that day. We made sure to leave cake and gifts for each of them. About 22 women actually came and stayed for the entire party. Some were working within the house (in the kitchen or laundry) and some chose not to come.

We talked and enjoyed birthday cake and ice cream, then set up a game of bingo for the women. The bingo prizes were small bags of candy or hotel samples of shampoo and soap. The women had a hard time deciding which one they would enjoy the most. Then, the United Women provided a birthday gift for each of the residents of the house. The gifts were bottles of shower gel, shampoo and conditioner, body lotion, or packages of cards and stationery and pens, all gaily wrapped in colorful tissue. The women were very grateful for this outpouring of friendship and gifts. We chatted the afternoon away.

A simple sunny afternoon for those who volunteered – but here's a sample of the thank you notes, "It truly meant a lot to me that you guys come and share your time and presents with us. I've been in for the past two birthdays so I'll always remember my 23<sup>rd</sup> was blessed with all of you amazing people!" and then, "Thank you very much for coming to spend the afternoon with us. The kindness of all of you touched my heart. I will never forget that day – being with all of you took me away from being in prison and away from my family. It brought me joy and comfort and a sense of normalcy for the first time in almost three years. For that, I'm grateful."

The League presented another supply of Concord bus passes for the women who work offsite. We have given over 400 bus rides this summer and continue to seek ways to help fund these passes for the women (see below).

- Peg Fargo

## **Thanks to Our Members**

The commitment of League members to improving conditions for [women incarcerated in NH](#) is ongoing. Ever since we began our study in 2009, we've heard from members and others how important it is to change many things to reduce recidivism and to improve women's chance for success upon release. So it should have been no surprise that members responded generously when our Vice-president Peg Fargo reported to the board and to LWVNH Council about the serious transportation issues facing women at Shea Farm, the "halfway house" for women offenders. These minimum security inmates, usually within 6 months of release, must find jobs in the community and get themselves there. Not an easy matter given Shea Farm's location, and bus passes are only part of a much needed solution. An impromptu auction at our June Council meeting raised \$150, and then at the LWV Upper Valley meeting, a member spontaneously passed a hat to raise another \$247! Wow! Christine LeClerq, the supervisor at Shea Farm, is thrilled to be able to give the bus passes as needed to women to get themselves to their jobs.

- Liz Tentarelli

## **Energy 101**

League members who attended the Quad States conference in Maine this past spring were astonished to learn how much we don't know. The topic was Energy and Energy Efficiency, specifically as it applies to the New England states. For the first time, Massachusetts and Connecticut also sent members to this event, giving us the full sweep of New England League of Women Voters state organizations.

Energy is, of course, a regional issue. The New England Governors in December 2013 signed a compact agreeing to work together to solve the region's energy issues. The Governors are committed to working toward a regional goal of lowering electricity and heating costs and expanding their [energy] portfolios. This announcement contributed to our choosing this topic for our 2014 conference.

A summary of the weekend's presentations is on our Energy/Quad States page: <http://www.lwvnh.org/Quadstates.html>

## **New Hampshire's Energy Draft Plan**

Energy planning in N.H. was rebooted with the passage of SB191 last year which was funded to study and develop policy for the next 10 years. Those of you who remember the Climate Action Plan of 2003 may have thought this had been done already. The draft, prepared by the consultant hired for the job, was described in several hearings and after attending two of them we were better prepared to make comments. Since Quad State discussed regional energy planning, we will follow N.H.'s final plan and follow the legislation that is proposed. We did **not** support the plan's recommendation that gas transmission infrastructure be built and we supported **more** solar and wind than was proposed. Our comments can be found here: [http://www.lwvnh.org/files/energy\\_letter\\_to\\_oep\\_july\\_2014.pdf](http://www.lwvnh.org/files/energy_letter_to_oep_july_2014.pdf)

The state's final plan can be found here: <http://www.nh.gov/oep/energy/programs/SB191.htm>

- Sally Davis and Liz Tentarelli

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## **MAL Dues Notice**

As you read this our 2014 -2015 New Hampshire Members at Large dues notices have been mailed. We need *your* renewed membership now to ensure that we can accomplish our ambitious schedule of activities in the coming year. Remember to check our calendar at LWVNH.org. As noted in your dues notice, we have increased MAL dues to \$45 to provide the much needed additional funding for our work and to allow some minimal support to our coalition organizations. Remember your dues cover both state and national membership. Thank you for your continued commitment to the League of Women Voters. We are counting on you to renew today! League of Women Voters of New Hampshire, 4 Park Street, Suite 200, Concord, NH 03301.

- Mary Perry

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## **Note from the Editor**

This is the first of the LWVNH almost-monthly email newsletters. The League Board thought more frequent, shorter newsletters would help members stay up-to-date on the issues we care about. My impression of this issue is that we have been incredibly busy for the past couple of months and with the Elections, we'll just get even busier. Please send me your suggestions for changes in the newsletter, and let me know of any problems you may have with the layout. I expect there will be many changes in the months ahead.

- Joan Flood Ashwell, [jfashwell@comcast.net](mailto:jfashwell@comcast.net)