

# INSIDE THE LEAGUE



Spring 2019

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

## Celebrating a Century of Breaking Barriers

By Barbara Ettington, Voter Services Committee Chair

On May 21, 2019 the League will be hosting its major fundraising event at the Roosevelt Hotel celebrating our 100th Anniversary. We will pay tribute to the women who have fought for the right to vote and honor women who have broken barriers in their fields. Our honorees are: **Stacey Cunningham**, the first woman to be President of the New York Stock Exchange in its 226 years, and **Billie Jean King**, tennis champion and social activist, Founder of the Billie Jean King Leadership Initiative.



Stacey Cunningham



Billie Jean King



Sponsors are stepping forward to support the League into our next 100 years. Sponsorships are available from \$500 to \$10,000. Individual tickets are \$300. Journal ads are available from \$100 – \$1,000.

**Be a part of this important event.**

For Information and Tickets visit: [www.lwvnyc.org](http://www.lwvnyc.org)

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## Katrina Ely (Mrs. Charles Lewis) Tiffany

**Dedicated Suffragist and Second LWVNYC President**

By Beth Kelley

Katrina Ely Tiffany led LWVNYC from 1923 to 1927, after 1st president Mary Garrett Hay. A graduate of Bryn Mawr, she married Charles Tiffany, son of Louis Comfort, in 1901 and immediately became active in myriad social causes, including starting a hospital staffed with all women doctors.

This photo shows Tiffany holding a flag at the 1917

suffrage parade on 5th Ave., an honor given in recognition of her suffrage and war relief efforts. A friend described how a “mocking wind” made the flag completely envelope Katrina at one point, but she didn’t mind because they were below the building where she knew her “unconverted husband” would be “sorrowfully” looking down. A month later, NY State voters passed woman suffrage.

Tiffany died unexpectedly at 51. Ten days earlier, she spoke at Barnard about the league. A news account says she “had a severe cold, but her exuberant vitality led her to make one of her most brilliant addresses.” At the memorial, Carrie Chapman Catt called her the “best example of what good citizens should be.” A friend described the utter shock to all who knew her because “she was the affirmation of life itself.”



# Voting Reform – Many Changes; But Stay Tuned for More

By Kate Doran, Elections Specialist

On January 14th, the State legislature passed significant changes to the way New Yorkers vote. On January 24, 2019, Governor Cuomo signed all of the bills into law.

## Here's what's new.

- **Consolidated Primaries:**

There will be a single June Primary for federal, state, and local elections. Goodbye, September Primary! This year the primary will be on June 25th, and will feature another chance to vote for NYC Public Advocate.

Your annual Voter Notice will arrive in April, rather than August.

- **Pre-Registration of 16 & 17 year olds:**

Takes effect on January 1, 2020. High School voter registration won't just be for seniors anymore.

- **Voter Registration Portability:**

Takes effect on March 25th. NY State voters won't have to re-register when they move from one county to another.

- **The Assembly and Senate passed two concurrent resolutions regarding constitutional amendments:**

"No Excuse Absentee Voting," and "Same Day Registration." To be adopted, they must be passed by two separately elected legislatures, and then put to voters. The earliest they could be on the ballot is November 2021.

- **The biggest change is Early Voting, starting with the general election in November 2019.**

There will be voting over 2 weekends, and some evenings.



Clockwise from bottom right: Barbara Thomas (LWV Saratoga) (blue Vote shirt); Barbara Bartoletti (LWV NYS); Jennifer Wilson (LWV NYS); Judy Lapook (LWV Saratoga); Regina Tillman (LWV Albany); Cathy Gray (LWVNYC); Kate Doran (LWVNYC)

Counties are required to have at least one EV site for every 50,000 registered voters, but do not have to provide more than seven sites.

League members should push their State Representatives to fund electronic poll books, which are vital to the success of Early Voting in NYC.

# LWVNYC Out and About for International Women's Day



Maren Morris Today Show Concert – The League thanks NBC for their International Women's Day Celebration!



Go Red for Women Luncheon – L to R: Barbara Biden, Malva Rabinowitz, Ruth S. Altman, Nancy Wildfeir-Field, Robin Vitale

# Third Annual Women’s March – No Pink Hats

By Marion Novack

Saturday, January 19, was a cloudy, cold day but thousands of women and men (including my husband) met at Central Park West and 72nd Street and enthusiastically marched south along the park, then turned onto Central Park South before marching down Sixth Avenue to 43rd Street.

NYC League marchers were given gold sashes to wear over their coats, a nod of recognition and appreciation to the suffragettes who wore sashes whenever they marched in the early 1900s for the right to vote. Some of our group walked among the crowd before the march began, to offer registration materials and answer questions about registering to vote. Then we marched as a group without any partisan symbols or signs. League marchers took turns proudly holding our League of Women Voters banner stretched across five of us at a time.

Although there were two NYC events planned, only one had a permit to march through the city. That one was organized by the Women’s March Alliance which also organized the 2017 and 2018 marches in NYC. Despite allegations about anti-semitism that led to a number of sponsors leaving the Women’s March, the event still enjoyed a large turnout, albeit smaller than in the previous years, which was likely due to multiple factors including the recent controversies, cold weather and protest fatigue from numerous events over the last few years.

We were cold and tired at the end but all agreed that we were glad to participate.



### Welcome Our New Office Manager

Monique Covington is the new Office Manager at the League. Monique specializes in creating efficiency and transparency in organizations within the startup or rebirth stage, such as the League in its 100th year. Monique's vision for her role is



creating organizational and communication systems within the office that help to create a solid infrastructure, making events and meetings seamless within the League. Monique also supports the Co-Presidents, increasing their work output and helping to open up communication between the board and the League office.

Monique has begun her work by instituting an internal systems audit, working brainstorms and project work blocks to increase productivity. "Systems such as these help produce solid work and help build a collaborative culture." Monique went to Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus and studied Religious Philosophy and Journalism and was in the Honors Program. In her spare time, she blogs, exercises and aggravates her family cat, Sandy.

### Our New Spring Intern

Chloe Dennison, a sophomore at Barnard College studying Political Science and History, is one of the League's interns for the



spring. One of her primary tasks has been to visit the archives at the Columbia University library in order to locate information on the history of the NYC League (including photographs, campaign literature, and League Chapter President chronology). As her academic interests focus on US political history (with an emphasis on activism), her

time in the archives has been especially enjoyable thus far. Additionally, while she has been here she has helped update the "They Represent You" guide, as well as create content for the League's Instagram account. Chloe previously volunteered with her hometown League chapter in Asheville, North Carolina, and is thoroughly enjoying her experience here in New York!

### Meet Our Treasurer

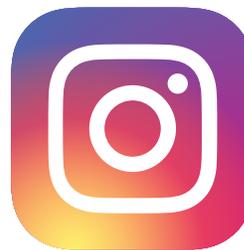
Jessica Weinberg has been our treasurer and a board member since June 2018. Jessica discovered LWVNYC at a voter registration training session for the NYC Women's March. Since 2002 Jessica has been a trusts and estates attorney at a tax law firm in Manhattan. She is a member of Unsettled Scores, a community pop and rock choir formed in 2015. Jessica holds a BA in Economics/Math from Emory University, a JD from Harvard Law School, and an LLM from the NYU School of Law. Jessica is originally from Long Island and currently lives in Manhattan.



### Follow the League!

By Chloe Dennison and Preeti Sodhi

The League recently launched our Instagram profile as a way to interact with local community organizations, as well as to generate interest in our activities and programming. Chloe and Ashley, our spring interns, are helping develop this platform, along with Preeti Sodhi and Lesley Sigall, who both serve as members of the newly established Social Media Committee. Photos and videos are posted multiple times a week. The feed has a mixture of information on the League's history, current events in NYC, and happenings within the League, including updates on our upcoming 100th anniversary gala, "Celebrating a Century of Breaking Barriers". We now have over 110 followers! Follow @lwvnyc on Instagram to stay updated and remember to tag us in any photos you post personally!



If you have any photos or videos you would like posted to the League's account, please feel free to email them, with a short caption, to [intern@lwvnyc.org](mailto:intern@lwvnyc.org)

### League's Speakers Spur Members to Action

By Joanna R. Leefer, Program Committee Chair

The League's 2019 speaker programs have galvanized members into action. January's Lunch with the League featured State Senator Brian Benjamin who spoke on the injustices of New York's criminal justice system. After listening to Senator Benjamin describe the harsh treatment of many young people



Co-President Cathy Gray, Senator Brian Benjamin and Program Committee Chair Joanna Leefer

of color in our prison system, several League members spontaneously formed a Criminal Justice Committee to address this situation.

February's Black History Month program presented Elinor Tatum, the Editor-in-Chief of the New York Amsterdam News, one of the earliest established African American community



Publisher and Editor-in-Chief of the New York Amsterdam News, Elinor Tatum

newspapers. Ms. Tatum discussed the important role of local papers in reporting and addressing community concerns.

In recognition of March's Women's History Month, Co-Founder of the National Women's Political Caucus and National Women's Education Fund, Tanya Melich discussed the impact



Co-President Ruth S. Altman, left, with Tanya Melich, center

of women in politics. Ms. Melich is one of the pioneers in the Women's Movement. She emphasized the importance of women's involvement in politics and the need for us to concentrate on state issues that lay the groundwork for national change.

The League's program on April 16th will concentrate on New York City's plan to protect residents against the threat of climate change. The program on May 14th will feature representatives of the Manhattan D.A.'s office, who will address the challenges in the fight against human trafficking.

### A New Committee Is Born

By Diane Burrows, 2nd Vice President

On Tuesday evening, March 5, a new committee of the LWVNYC was born. This committee's mission will be focused on the topic of the upcoming 2020 Census and the subsequent redistricting that will occur as a result of it. LWVNYC members Laura Quigg, Ashmi Sheth, Allie Swatek, and Eunice Ko volunteered to serve as co-chairs.

In order to be successful, the Census must have 100% participation from all residents. This is the only way to ensure appropriate funding for schools, housing, health care, and transportation. One serious concern of the 2020 Census is the possible inclusion of a citizenship question. This issue is before the courts now but is worrisome because many people will be hesitant to participate if they believe they could be deported based on their answers to this question. In addition, the census has never been available online before and this could be problematic for residents with no available internet; public libraries and other organizations will need to assist in this area. Our new committee will consider these questions and many more as they mobilize.

# Unbroken Link

By Suzanne Surbeck

As the League of Women Voters of the City of New York celebrates its 100th Anniversary this year, we also gather to celebrate something else, the unbroken link between the suffragists before us and the League members and volunteers of today. This bond is both theoretical and practical, a connection reflected in both the words of the League's ongoing mission and the LWVNYC's day in and day out work. And nowhere is this link more prominent than in the still significant writings of Carrie Chapman Catt, the leader of the national suffrage movement and a founder of the League of Women Voters.



Chapman Catt was, as many of you know, a skilled political strategist who provided practical leadership for the various statewide suffrage campaigns in the early 20th Century. One of her major contributions to the success of the 1917 New York State suffrage campaign, when women won the right to vote, was a January, 1917 pamphlet entitled "**HOW TO WORK FOR SUFFRAGE IN AN ELECTION DISTRICT OR VOTING PRECINCT**"\* (digital copy available through the New York Public Library). This "boots on the ground" manual included detailed instructions on everything from the importance of canvassing as a way to educate voters to how to organize meetings in a district, advice that is as relevant today as it was in 1917.

The pamphlet also contains still valuable instructions regarding the use of literature.

"Arm yourself before starting to canvass with pencils, enrollment slips, and literature appropriate for various types," Chapman Catt wrote. "Always leave some literature. Judicious use of literature often wins without interviews. Use the 'not at home' flier when appropriate. Send follow-up literature."

More than a century later, in March 2018, Voting Reform Initiative Chair Bella Wang followed in Chapman Catt's footsteps while standing on a corner of Cortelyou Road in Brooklyn. Undeterred by the blustery weather, Bella handed

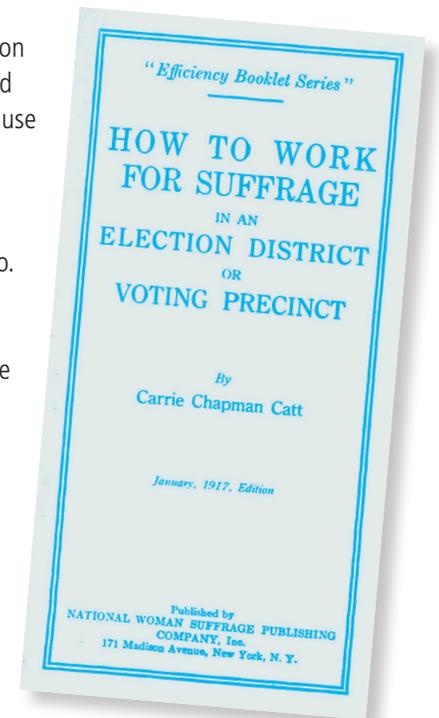
out her appropriate literature urging passersby to contact their New York State Senators and lobby them for voting reform. She also attempted to educate them about not only the importance of early voting but the crucial importance of voting itself. Even though most people walked by, Bella persevered, trying to reach as many people as possible.

And like the suffragists of 1917, Bella's efforts in 2018 were indeed successful with voting reform becoming New York State law in early 2019. And just like the suffragists before them, this triumphal moment came after years of lobbying by the League of Women Voters and other New York State voting groups.

As the LWVNYC celebrates its 100th Birthday, Chapman Catt's introductory comments in her pamphlet mean just as much in 2019 as they did in 1917.

The captain for each election district, Catt wrote, "should ever remember that our cause is just, that logic is on our side, and that eventually public opinion must acknowledge that this is so. Therefore, she must never allow herself to be discouraged... She must be patient, tactful, persistent, long-headed... If she possesses zeal enough, nothing else is needed."

\*Catt, Carrie Lane Chapman, 1859-1947 New York: National Woman Suffrage Pub. Co., Inc., 1917. January 1917 ed.



## Upcoming Events

All meetings are held at the LWVNYC office unless otherwise specified.  
For more information, please visit our website, [www.lwvnyc.org](http://www.lwvnyc.org),  
or call the office at 212-725-3541.

- April 10 – Education Committee Meeting, 5:30–7:00pm
- April 11 – Voter Registration Training, 6:00–7:30pm
- April 16 – Lunch with the League, 12:00–2:00pm
- April 16 – Criminal Justice Committee Meeting @ Genesis Bar, 1708 2nd Ave., 6:30–8:30pm
- April 17 – Voter Services Committee Meeting, 6:00–7:30pm
- April 25 – Train the Trainer (must be a member), 6:00–7:30pm
- May 11 – Voter Registration Training, 10:30am–12:00pm
- May 21 – LWVNYC Centennial Celebration
- June 5 – Voter Registration Training, 6:00–7:30pm
- June 13 – Annual Meeting, 6:00pm

**DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT**

## Save the Date

May 21, 2019

**Centennial Celebration**

June 13, 2019

**Annual Membership Meeting**

### Newsletter Staff

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*Thank you to all of our  
newsletter contributors!*

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