

Overview of Being Visible All Year

Leagues who have used the membership recruitment best practices have reported that one of the key components of their success is being more visible in their communities. Through using a mix of different approaches as much as possible (e.g. social media, up-to-date websites, letters to the editor and/or radio or local TV appearances) Leagues become more visible.

By having a consistent presence in the public eye, Leagues are able to reinforce the value of membership in the organization and debunk the myth that we are an elections-time only organization.

Remember, it often takes 7 – 8 times for a message to sink in and for someone to take action, such as joining the League. Holding public events, gaining media coverage for them, and working with allied groups are proven ways for Leagues to communicate their membership message. Also, the public wants to access information the League provides on issues, candidates, and other things because they know we provide factual information (rather than “spin”). If we are not visible, they can’t get that valuable information they seek from us and, of course, they won’t know where or how to join us either.

This section of the handbook is designed to provide Leagues with resources about specific events or activities that can help Leagues gain visibility. The *a la carte* menu of turnkey opportunities provided here have been tested and successfully used by Leagues across the country. Some are large scale events whose primary goal is to generate visibility and provide opportunities for media outreach (such as the Making Democracy Work Award program), and others are more simple ways to assist Leagues in being visible every month of the year (such as press templates for Leagues to customize).

Leagues know their own communities best and most Leagues are likely to have a full calendar of events planned. We encourage all Leagues to look at their own calendars first to see where some of the outreach best practices can be added to their planned activities. However, if there are “holes” in the League’s calendar, Leagues are encouraged to use the information in the following pages to fill in their calendars or to build upon what is already planned.

Doing Consistent Outreach Activities Year Round:

- Ensures that Leagues are consistently present in the community throughout the year
- Debunks the myth that we are an elections-time only organization
- Establishes a sustainable and successful calendar of activities that supports growth
- Provides opportunities for Leagues to introduce the organization to new audiences
- Provides platforms for Leagues to explain and reinforce the value of being a member of LWV
- Offers chances to extend invitations to individuals to join



Calendar of Media Hooks

Below is a list of potential media hooks adapted from the LWV national calendar available on www.lwv.org. These are nationally recognized dates and anniversaries that offer local Leagues opportunities to be visible in the community. Very simply, they are an excuse to engage local media to help build stronger relationships.

LWVUS uses these same milestones to issue statements to the media, and often a template for local Leagues to customize is also available. These templates, which are updated annually, are distributed via the weekly Leaders' Update and posted on www.lwv.org.

Marking these anniversaries or milestones – by issuing a media statement or in some other way – helps to ensure that the League is in the public's eye consistently.

Annual Media Hooks:

January:

- Start of new legislative session
- Inauguration/State of Union Address
- 9th- Carrie Chapman Catt's Birthday

February:

- Youth Voter Month
- 14th – League Birthday*

March:

- Women's History Month*
- 8th – International Women's Day
- Mid-March (including March 16th) – Sunshine Week*

April:

- 15th – Tax Day (“Check the box for public financing”)
- 19th-25th – National Volunteer Week
- 22nd – Earth Day

May:

- 1st – Law Day
- 10th – Mother's Day

June:

- Announce program and leadership outcomes after Annual Meetings (local, state, and national)
- 23rd - Anniversary of the Enactment of Title IX

July:

- 4th – Freedom of Information Act anniversary
- 19th-20th - Anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention



August:

- 26th – Women’s Equality Day/ Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment*

September:

- Voter Registration Month
- 17th – Constitution Day*

October:

- Voter Education Month
- 24th – United Nations Day

November:

- Election Day*

December:

- 15th – Bill of Rights Day*



***LWVUS routinely provides customizable press templates for these milestones. Others are provided as time, resource and priorities permit. Templates and talking points can be found in the Leader’s Update. State coaches also will provide reminders as possible.**

Need to Sign Up for the Leader’s Update? It’s Easy!

Step 1: Go to www.lwv.org

Step 2: Click on “Login” at the top right-hand corner of the screen.

Step 3: If you are a registered user, simply input your email address and password and click “Login.” Haven’t registered yet? Simply input your name and the email address on file with LWVUS in the database and click “Register.” Once registered, repeat the first 3 steps.

Step 4: Click on “League Sponsored Email Lists” on the left-hand side of the screen.

Step 5: Check the box next to “Leader’s Update.”

Step 6: Click on “Submit Changes” at the bottom of the screen.

You are signed up for the Leader’s Update! Expect it in your inbox every Thursday.



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