

Votes for Women

This Saturday, November 4, there are two events that might be of interest. First, there is an antique show at the American Legion. The proceeds from the tickets at the door will help the Historical Society. The project we have designated is the repair of the steampipe in the basement of LeRoy House. The repairs have already been done and the bucket on the floor has been moved just in time for our school programs. So stop by the American Legion and see if there is some little treasure that might find a new home, or might be a Christmas gift for someone.

The other event is at Genesee Community College. It is a Heritage Fair and features exhibits by several of the museums and organizations in the area. The theme for the event is Presidential Elections and the LeRoy Historical Society is focusing on the events that led up to the 1920 election, which was the first presidential election in New York in which women could vote. The road to women's suffrage was long. In July 1848, the first women's rights convention was held in Seneca Falls. During the next twenty years, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and many others attempted to keep the issue of women's rights on the national agenda as well as the state level. In 1867, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucy Stone addressed the New York Constitutional Convention, with a proposal to allow suffrage to women. In the meantime, Susan B. Anthony was in Kansas, trying to get support for women's suffrage. It was defeated. But there was success in the Territory of Wyoming where in 1869, women were not only given the right to vote, but also to hold public office. (Other states allowed women to vote in local school elections, but none in federal elections.) In 1870, Utah Territory granted full suffrage to women. On November 5, 1872, Susan B.

Anthony and fourteen other women voted in the national election in the Eighth Ward of Rochester. Anthony was arrested and judged guilty. She never paid the fine.

Colorado joined Wyoming and Utah, granting women universal suffrage. In some states, it was necessary to amend their state constitution. Idaho adopted a constitutional amendment in 1896 and Washington voted for women's suffrage in 1910 followed by California in 1911. In 1912, Wisconsin and Michigan defeated proposed suffrage amendments, but Kansas, Oregon and Arizona approved constitutional amendments. Illinois became the first state east of the Mississippi to vote for women's suffrage in 1913. Then in 1914, Mississippi, Nevada and Montana accepted women's suffrage. But suffrage was rejected in New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania in 1915.

The proponents for women's suffrage in New York State, presented a suffrage measure to the State Legislature every year (with the exception of the Civil War) from 1854 until 1917. In 1880, the Legislature undertook to give women the right to vote at school meetings, but the law could not be enforced. At that time, all efforts were attempts to change the state constitution which required a voters referendum (which meant that only men would vote on women's rights). In 1901, Governor Theodore Roosevelt, a proponent for women's suffrage, advised the suffragists to abandon their constitutional strategy, and to look for other ways to secure partial suffrage. But after five years, State leaders decided to return to the original effort for the submission to the male voters of a constitutional amendment. In 1908, Senator Percy Hooker of LeRoy (who lived in the house, we now known as the Creekside Inn) introduced the resolution.

1883 **CHAPMAN'S AD** **1924**

ELECTORAL VOTE OF STATES 1920. MAKE YOUR GUESS FOR 1924

Electoral Vote of States for 1924

States	Republican	Elect. Vote	Democratic
Ala.	12	2	10
Ark.	13	3	10
Cal.	13	5	8
Colo.	6	3	3
Conn.	7	5	2
Del.	3	3	0
Fla.	14	6	8
Ga.	11	6	5
Idaho	4	4	0
Ill.	15	15	0
Iowa	10	10	0
Kan.	10	10	0
Ky.	10	6	4
La.	10	10	0
Me.	6	6	0
Mich.	12	12	0
Miss.	12	12	0
Mo.	10	10	0
Mont.	4	4	0
Neb.	7	7	0
N.H.	4	4	0
N.J.	14	14	0
N.M.	3	3	0
N.Y.	45	45	0
N.C.	12	12	0
N.D.	4	4	0
Ohio	24	24	0
Ore.	5	5	0
Pa.	21	38	17
R.I.	4	4	0
S.C.	9	9	0
S.D.	3	3	0
Tenn.	12	12	0
Tex.	20	20	0
Utah	4	4	0
Va.	12	12	0
Wash.	7	7	0
W. Va.	4	4	0
Wis.	13	13	0
Wyo.	3	3	0
Ed. Tot.	531		

Electoral Votes Necessary to a Choice, 266

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In 1915, the men of New York voted against women's suffrage. The state vote was 553,348 for suffrage and 748,332 against. Finally in 1917, the referendum was passed. (It should be noted that in LeRoy, the men defeated the proposal by 38 votes.)

Women in LeRoy voted in their first election in March 1918. Ninety-one year old Miss Delia Phillips of Myrtle Street, cast the first vote at the Municipal Building. She was first in line and was not only the first women to vote, but also the first person to cast a ballot. The second ballot was cast by Mrs. A.C. Upham. It was noted that the last two votes of the day were cast by women – Mrs. B.W. Logan and Miss Sarah Bissell. The newspaper article read: "Practically all the interest attached to the election was the voting of women. They seemed to enjoy it thoroughly, many of them coming down from the Red Cross rooms in their caps and aprons to vote. (Because of World War I, the LeRoy Red Cross was actively

involved with projects at the Municipal Building.) They apparently had little trouble in working the machine, and the percentage of votes lost is no larger than before women voted." There were 134 votes cast and 58 of those votes were cast by women. It was noted that the Republican slate of officers for the Village was unopposed.

The 19th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which would give all women the right to vote was submitted to Congress on June 4, 1919. New York's Senators split their vote. Senator William Calder voted in favor. Senator Wadsworth (from Geneseo, who had always opposed women's suffrage) voted no. Of New York's Representatives in Congress, 35 voted in favor; five were absent; three voted against – including Archie Sanders of Stafford. The 19th Amendment was finally ratified in 1920 which gave women throughout the United States the right to vote.

WOMEN VOTE
WYOMING, IDAHO, COLORADO
UTAH, WASHINGTON
AND CALIFORNIA
WHY NOT IN NEW YORK?