



The Transition Network

TTN-NYC Newsletter January 2017

Birth of Civic Action SIG at NYC Chapter

By Marticia Moore Madory

Members reported feeling anxious, nervous, and helpless. There were complaints of sleepless nights, backaches, and difficulty in concentrating. The 2016 presidential campaign was impossible to ignore -- even for members of the NYC Chapter who preferred to discuss topics like art, cultural events, and common health problems.

As the November 8th election drew near, some members felt increasing pressure to "DO SOMETHING".

There were already two news-oriented discussion Special Interest Groups (SIGs), but this was a different phenomenon. Members didn't want to just talk; they wanted to act. Enter the Chapter's Semi-annual People & Passions (P&P) event, the birthplace of so many successful SIGs. An energetic discussion at the P&P gathering covered a wide range of political ideas and concerns; there was plenty to talk about. But no one knew whether members' interest would extend beyond November 8th, so a "pop-up" SIG was suggested, and an exploratory meeting was held.



MaryLou Floyd and Marti Madory agreed to serve as initial co-coordinators and Barbara Schreibman, a TTN National Board member, took on looking into Board policy related to political activities by members.



In the interest of promoting a bipartisan approach, members decided to name their group "Civic Action SIG".

After the election, anxiety levels remained high. It became increasingly clear that the Civic Action SIG could provide a platform for airing all this new thinking. Successive meetings have helped bring those forces into focus on such issues as reproductive health, hate crimes, the environment, interfaith tolerance, immigration, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.



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The group's activities are expected to grow out of research by individual study groups. Operating in a manner similar to that of TTN's Caring Collaborative neighborhood groups, members interested in a particular issue will research it and identify steps that individuals can follow to influence public policies, legislation, or candidates of their choice. The research can also identify organizations that have similar interests and might like to share programs or projects with TTN, such as the League of Women Voters, the American Association of University Women (AAUW), and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

Contact information for like-minded organizations will form a resource on the Civic Action SIG's Facebook page. Ask MaryLou or Marti for access to the page, which is intended to keep members informed of activities available to them in their own neighborhoods, such as Meet the Candidates nights, candidate debates, and town hall meetings.

The Facebook page is intended to be a valuable asset for members who want to be active in civic affairs. Its files will include the series of Civic Calendar Shares that are emailed to SIG members, as well as articles and reviews of books recommended by members.

All TTN members are welcome to attend the SIG's meetings and to become active in its Civic Actions. "We want to help TTNers who are interested explore ways they can make their voices heard," explains MaryLou.



Many of us may remember demonstrations and protest efforts we participated in when we were younger. So it won't be surprising that one of the new Civic Action SIG's first activities will be participation in the upcoming Women's March in New York on January 21. Members will coordinate our participation in this New York event; both men and other non-TTN members will be welcomed to join in.

[\(To register for the New York March, go to the Events page on the TTN-NYC website.\)](#)

Other Civic Actions may reach from encouraging new candidates to run for election, to the honing of skills that will help us distinguish between authentic "news" stories and those that are fake.

Join us.

What better way to take control of your own life than to fulfill your role as a citizen?

The TTN National Board has provided Barbara Schreibman with TTN Guidance for Members about Advocacy, Activism, and Participation in Political Activities. It states that, as a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, members may not act as representatives of TTN in political activities, but they may participate as individuals. [For a full reading of TTN policy, click here.](#)