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Web: www.house.gov/mchugh/



**Does the Current State of Politics Get You Angry?
Don't Just Explode!
Join the League of Women Voters
and Do Something About It!!**

Join an organization that makes an impact in the community, the state and the nation.
Nonpartisan: We do not support candidates, elected officials or political parties.

Membership Information: call Myra Decker 643-2742 or send:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone No. (home) _____ (work) _____ Email: _____

Membership Dues: _____ \$45.00 Individual

(Check desired level) _____ \$65.00 Family

Make **check** out to: **Plattsburgh Area League of Women Voters**

Mail to: Myra Decker, 7 Woodland Hills, Morrisonville, NY 12962

THE INFORMER



**League of Women Voters
of the Plattsburgh Area**

September 2007 No. 1

**7 Woodland Hills
Morrisonville, New York 12962**

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Visit Plattsburgh LWV Web Site at www.plattsburgh.ny.lwvnet.org

Special

OFFER TO THE PUBLIC

If you wish to be put on the League's mailing list and receive the League Newsletter, "The Informer", to keep in touch about the League's activities, please submit \$5.00 to cover cost of postage and printing for 10 issues. Make check payable to **League of Women Voters, Plattsburgh Area** and send it to **Myra Decker, 7 Woodland Hill, Morrisonville, NY 12962.**



"The Informer" Goes Online to Members with September Issue!



Welcome to our technological world! A large number of League members will be reading this newsletter online instead of with a hard copy. Advantages: The day you are notified via email that the newsletter is posted online, you'll be able to read the Informer. Pictures and most graphics will be in color. You'll be able to access past issues with a click of a mouse. If you have to have a hard copy, you will be able to download the pdf file and print it. The steps to do this follow below.

Please notify Madeleine Robinson by *September 1st.* if you are unable to access a computer/printer or don't have an email address. Then the Informer will be sent through the post office. If you have any further questions, please contact Myra Decker

Steps to access the Informer:

Log on to www.plattsburgh.ny.lwvnet.org.

Click on "The Informer" either on the side bar or main part of the page.

Click on <http://www.lwvny-bulletins.org/Capital%20Region/Plattsburgh.htm>

The next page enables you to click on the latest or past editions of the newsletter.

It will ask to either open it up or save it to a disk. You can then print it if you desire.



Woman in History

Marilla Marks Ricker, was born at New Durham, N.H. in 1840. She was brought up as a "free thinker," a Whig and a suffragist due to her father's influence.



At the age of 16, after teacher training at Colby Academy in N.H., she taught school until her marriage to John Ricker in 1863. After her husband died, she went to Europe becoming fluent in German and "absorbing the doctrines of European freethinkers. Upon returning from Europe, she began to read law in 1876 to "help the weak and unfetter the oppressed." She practiced in Washington for many years and was known as the "prisoners' friend," from her constant habit of visiting jails and prisons, and applying for releases and pardons, and supplying prisoners with reading matter, writing material and other comforts. She made the test of the "poor convict's act" by receiving judgement that the fines imposed supplementary to confinement were illegal.

Ricker was involved in one way or another through every step of the march towards national woman suffrage. In addition to helping out with local New Hampshire suffrage campaigns, speaking at national suffrage conventions across the country, and donating funds in support of the cause, she initiated several high publicity political maneuvers that brought national attention to women's rights issues.

She was the first woman to cast her ballot in a state election prior to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1971, the first woman appointed Commissioner and Examiner in Chancery in the District of Columbia in 1884, the first woman who opened the New Hampshire bar to all other women in 1890 when she was admitted to the bar, the first woman to apply for a foreign ambassadorship in 1897 primarily to bring greater public attention to the need for a change in women's traditional place in society, and the first woman to announce her candidacy for governor of New Hampshire in 1910, but was refused to be put on the ballot claiming that "without the right to vote, she could not run for office."

In her lifetime, she succeeded in her challenge to change public perception of women in politics and in the professions. And for her perseverance and dedication to the woman suffrage movement, she was rewarded to see the greatest victory of all with ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment just three months before her death in 1920 at the age of 80 from a stroke.

(Womenslegalhistory.stanford.edu)

Voter Service

Statewide Voter Registration Database

The integrated statewide voter registration database system required under the federal HAVA is now fully operational with 54 of the 62 counties on-line. The others will be on-line in August. However, NYC is the only holdout and with 30% of the state's voters, will be a large obstacle to having a fully integrated and useful system for verifying registration data.



Countdown To Election Day

Primary Election: September 18, 2007

General Election: November 6, 2007

Last day to **postmark** application for **absentee ballot** for primary election: **September 11**

Last day to **apply in person** for an **absentee ballot** for primary election: **September 17**

Last day to **postmark absentee ballot** and date it must be received by the board of elections: **Postmarked by September 17, received by September 25**

Last day to **deliver absentee ballot in person** to the county board of elections: **September 18**

REMEMBER: Donations to the local League of Women Voters are **tax deductible** if the checks are made out to the **LWV Educational Fund.**

continued from p. 8 Health Definitions

Capitation: Prospective, flat-fee payment, by insurer to provide, based on the number of patients listed with that provider, without regard to actual health service needs. When a patient requires higher than average level of care, the patient's provider must absorb the extra cost. Conversely, when the lower than average level of care is required, the provider absorbs the savings. Creates financial incentive for provider to limit care options offered to patients, to shun patients with complex needs, while trying to attract young, healthier patients.

(More definitions next issue)

League President Praises Lobby Reform Bill's Movement in Both Chambers

Washington, DC-The House and Senate took major steps this week toward finally passing the landmark lobbying and ethics reform legislation that had been a major campaign promise of the incoming leadership of the 110th Congress. Earlier this week, the House passed its version of the bill. The Senate voted 80:17 for cloture on its bill this morning and is expected to vote for final passage later today.

League of Women Voters President Mary G. Wilson, who has worked tirelessly to ensure the legislation's passage, made the following statement:

"Congress deserves credit for finally changing the rules of the game," said Wilson. "Now starts the hard part: actually playing by the rules they've created."

"These monumental lobbying reforms could mark a turning point in Washington. By committing to change the way they do business, members of the House and Senate are shedding light on their own activities and limiting the

ironclad influence lobbyists hold."

"The League is particularly satisfied that the final legislation includes, for the first time, a bundling disclosure requirement that will bring lobbyists' fundraising practices into the light."

League of Women Voters members have long worked to improve ethics and lobbying practices in Congress.


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Labor Day is a legal holiday observed in the United States, Puerto Rico, the Canal Zone, and the Virgin Islands. The celebration of Labor Day, in honor of the working class, was initiated in the U.S. in 1882 by the Knights of Labor, and the first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City, in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union. The Central Labor Union held its second Labor Day holiday just a year later, on September 3, 1883.

In 1884 the first Monday in September was selected as the holiday, as originally proposed, and the Central Labor Union urged similar organizations in other cities to follow the example of New York and celebrate a "workingmen's holiday" on that date. The idea spread with the growth of labor organizations, and in 1885 Labor Day was celebrated in many industrial centers of the country.



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League of Women Voters First Friday Forum



September 7, 2007

12 noon

Butcher Block Restaurant



Topic: "The Current Status of Clinton County Airport and Plattsburgh International Airport"

Speaker: Rodney Brown, Director of Planning for Clinton County and Deputy County Administrator for Clinton County

\$12.00 Soup and Salad Bar

RSVP by September 5th to Carole Cao-Ba 563-3903 or tzivia12@aol.com

Calendar

September 3, 2007	Labor Day
September 7, 2007	First Friday Forum "Status of Clinton County Airport"
September 10, 2007	Board Meeting-check with Myra Decker for details.
September 20, 2007	Literacy Volunteers Office-Voter Registration Info. for new citizens
October 4, 2007	8-1 Voter Registration and Bake Sale at Clinton Community College
October 5, 2007	First Friday Forum
November 2, 2007	First Friday Forum



87 Years of Fighting for Political Equality
League of Women Voters Marks Anniversary of the 19th Amendment

This August 26 marks the 87th anniversary of the day that the U.S. Constitution was amended to grant women the right to vote. While American women now comprise more than half of our nation's voting age population, the struggle to become full participants in the political life of the country has yet to be fully realized.

"This anniversary of the 19th amendment, Women's Equality Day, provides us with an opportunity to reflect with pride on the progress made on voting rights in the past 87 years," said Mary G. Wilson, national League president.

"This year, we've witnessed a number of remarkable milestones for women. For the first time, a female has been elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, and a major contender for the 2008 Presidential election is a woman.

"However, these achievements do not mark the end of our journey. In communities across the country, citizens still lack real representation by their elected officials and the policies they pass. It is only with the continued work of citizens and leaders, of all backgrounds, that this can change."

The League's current and recent projects include the launch of a major voter education website, www.VOTE411.org, lobbying against the disenfranchisement of eligible voters, a campaign to end "taxation without representation" for D.C. citizens by granting DC a voting representative, and continuing voter registration drives nation wide.

"It is crucial that we continue to engage more citizens in the democratic process, on every level. Citizens volunteering, educating, lobbying; that's absolutely necessary to democracy, and we need to see more of it,"

"Today is a time to celebrate the progress achieved

by active citizens over the past eight decades, but it is also a time to look to what still needs to be done to make democracy work for all Americans. The League of Women Voters will continue to be the place where hands-on work leads to a better democracy for all."

87 Years of Fighting for Political Equality

This August 26 (Women's Equality Day) marks the 87th anniversary of the day that the U.S. Constitution was amended to grant women the right to vote with the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment. It reads:

Section 1: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Section 2: Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

The beginning of the fight for women suffrage is usually traced to the "Declaration of Sentiments" produced at the first woman's rights convention in Seneca Falls, N.Y. in 1848. The "Declaration of Sentiments" protested the political, social, and economic inferiority of women and also included the first public demand for extending the franchise to women. It was the first of many such conventions in the nascent women's rights movement, and virtually all of the activists in the cause were abolitionists as well. Four years later, at the Woman's Rights Convention in Syracuse in 1852, Susan B. Anthony joined the fight, arguing that "the right women needed above every other...was the right of suffrage."

During debates on the Reconstruction Amendments which extended the vote to ex-slaves (through the 15th Amendment), suffragists pushed hard for "universal suffrage," but they never had a chance.

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Why Join the League?

(From lwv.org - by Marcia Merrins, LWV Chautauqua County, NY)
 Even more than nurturing family, the people you meet along life's way change your life. Pat is my friend. Not the kind of friend that chats only about tomato prices, pouty kids, and the woes of living on the leeward side of a Great Lake. She's a political creature, critically observant and passionate.

Telephones were the way to communicate in the 80's and we did, "catching up" almost every day. She wanted to learn more about a topic and an "expert" was speaking at a luncheon in a church basement. Egads! "You know", she said, "you should join the League of Women Voters."

The League of what? Is it like the daughters of the American Revolution? Oh no. I had never heard of the League even though I lived in Brooklyn, a borough of New York City, honest. I guess it was hard (expensive) to advertise back then. "Just join", she said. "It's a good organization."

She described its non-partisan nature. I understood "non-partisan". But when she said "political"....wait... I'm not a "political person"! Actually, as a soccer mom, differentiating between political and non-partisanship took me a while to understand but I still wasn't sure I had time to "waste" with some "old ladies". As a favor I went and found the kind of energy that I hadn't experienced - not at home - not in college - not even when I taught in NYC. So I did join. In a very short period of time became treasurer, president, and here I am, a state president and loving every minute of it, looking forward to the future.



Your Story
Why You Joined the League?

The League would like to publish your story about how you came to join the League. Many of us have different reasons and circumstances that led us to become a member. Please email your story to larry.arcarese@verizon.net or send it to **Stasia Arcarese, 118 Prospect Ave., Plattsburgh, NY 12901-1355** or submit your story [<http://www.lwv.org/Storybank/>](http://www.lwv.org/Storybank/) on the LWVUS Web site.

Do You Know the Meaning of These Health Care Terms?

Socialized Medicine: A system of health care in which all health personnel and health facilities, including doctors and hospitals, work for the government and draw salaries from the government. Doctors in the U.S. Veterans Administration and the Armed Services are paid this way. And the Veterans and U.S. military hospitals are also supported this way. Examples also exist in Great Britain and Spain.



Social Insurance: Administered by a public agency, not commercial entities; directed to a social goal - to promote the nation's health through universal access to care the nation can afford - rather than to make money; all members of society are in one risk pool, not 1500 pools each trying to avoid risk; higher percentage collected funds go to care (97 percent vs 60-75 percent).

Comprehensive: Coverage which includes all services determined by physicians, nurses, and other health professionals to be necessary. Includes rehabilitation, long term and home care, mental health care, prescription drugs, medical supplies, preventive and public health measures, in addition to all acute services.

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League President Testifies Before Senate Committee on Election Reforms “Essentials”

Washington, DC -- League of Women Voters President Mary G. Wilson testified in July before the Senate Rules Committee, expressing the League’s strong support for key elements of S. 1487, the “Ballot Integrity Act of 2007,” introduced by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D CA). The League strongly applauded the following elements of the legislation:

1. Protections for voter registration drives (Section 302)
2. Poll worker training (Section 303)
3. Equitable allocation of polling place resources (Section 304)
4. Protections against erroneous purges of voters (Section 306)
5. Requirements to count provisional ballots of eligible voters (Section 309)

“These provisions are essential -- they must remain in the bill and must be included in any election reform legislation that goes to the President’s desk for signature,” said Wilson. Wilson also called attention to the need for continued federal funding for election administration. “America needs to get real about the resources that are required to run elections,” she said. “You get what you pay for, and right now we are paying the price for our miserly approach to election administration. We need continued, permanent federal funding to make the transition to a 21st Century election system,” said Wilson.

“Organizations such as the League are crucial to assuring that voter registration is available to every voter, but the facts also show conclusively that we are essential to assuring that

minority voters have access to registration” Wilson said. “In 2004, for example, 15 percent of African-American and Hispanic registrants had been registered to vote as a result of an organized drive – a rate much higher than the 8.9 percent rate for Whites.”

Several states have imposed severe restrictions on third-party registration efforts. “We believe Congress must step up to the plate to ensure that all citizens have a full opportunity to register to vote,” Wilson said.

The League of Women Voters has long worked to educate the electorate, register voters and make government at all levels more accessible and responsive to citizens. Mary Wilson’s full written statement is available lww.org. To learn more about League’s nationwide work on election reform, contact Maggie Duncan at mduncan@lww.org or (202) 263-1332.

UN Climate Change Conference

The United Nations Conference, “Climate Change, How it Impacts us All” will meet in New York City, **September 5-7.** <http://www.un.org/dpi/ngosection/annual-conf.asp>” To learn more about the conference, please contact LWVUS UN Observer Doris Schapira at doris.schapira@worldnet.att.net. To learn more about our UN Observer program, read the 2007 LWVUS UN Observer Report to Council. http://www.lww.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Council_and_Convention&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.



continued from p. 3 “19th Amendment”

In 1872, a suffragists brought a series of court challenges designed to test whether voting was a “privilege” of “U. S. citizenship” now belonging to women by virtue of the recently adopted 14th Amendment. One such challenge grew out of a criminal prosecution of Susan B. Anthony for illegally voting in the 1872 election. The first case to make its way to the Supreme Court, however, was *Minor vs Happersett* (1875). In *Minor*, a unanimous Court rejected the argument that either the privileges and immunities clause or the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment extended the vote to women. Following *Minor*, suffragists turned their attention from the courts to the states and to Congress.

In 1878, a constitutional amendment was proposed that provided “The right of citizens to vote shall not be abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” This same amendment would be introduced in every session of Congress for the next 41 years.

In July 1890, the Territory of Wyoming, which allowed women to vote, was admitted as a state. Wyoming became the first state with women suffrage. By 1900, Utah, Colorado, and Idaho joined Wyoming in allowing women to vote.

In 1912, Theodore Roosevelt’s Progressive (Bull Moose) Party became the first national political party to have a plank supporting women suffrage. The tide was beginning to turn.

In May, 1919, the necessary two-thirds vote in favor of the women suffrage amendment was finally mustered in Congress, and the proposed amendment was sent to the states for ratification. By July 1920, with a number of primarily southern states adamantly opposed to the amendment, it all came down to Tennessee. It appeared that the amendment might fail by one vote in the Tennessee house, but twenty-four-year-old Harry Burn surprised observers by casting the deciding vote for ratifica-

tion. At the time of his vote, Burns had in his pocket a letter he had received from his mother urging him, “Don’t forget to be a good boy” and “vote for suffrage.” Women had finally won the vote. on August 18, 1920.

law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/nineteenth.htm

September 17th Constitution Day

Since May 14, 1787 the 55 delegates to the Constitutional Convention had gathered almost daily in the State House (Independence Hall) in Philadelphia to revise the Articles of Confederation. By the middle of June, it became apparent to the delegates that to merely amend the Articles of Confederation would not be sufficient. Instead, they would write an entirely new document designed to clearly define and separate the powers of the central government, the powers of the states, the rights of the people and how the representatives of the people should be elected.

On September 17, 1787, the 55 delegates to the Constitutional Convention held their final meeting to sign the Constitution of the United States of America. It was signed by thirty-nine brave men who changed the course of history.

After being signed in September of 1787, Congress sent printed copies of the Constitution to the state legislatures for ratification. In the months that followed, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton and John Jay would write the Federalist Papers in support, while Patrick Henry, Elbridge Gerry, and George Mason would organize the opposition to the new Constitution. By June 21, 1788, nine states had approved the Constitution, finally forming “a more perfect Union.”

No matter how much we argue about the details of its meaning today, in the opinion of many, the

continued from p. 4 “Constitution”

Constitution signed in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787 represents the greatest expression of statesmanship and compromise ever written. In just four hand-written pages, the Constitution gives us no less than the owners’ manual to the greatest form of government the world has ever known.

Constitution Day Will Be Celebrated On Sept. 17th In Memory Of Louise Leigh Our Founder.

For the last ten years Louise Leigh made the world aware that September 17th was Constitution Day. She said her life was changed when she gained an appreciation for the U.S. Constitution and her ensuing crusade to educate others about this historic document.

As outreach director for the California Bicentennial Commission in 1987 she realized how little most Americans knew about the Constitution. She said “It is the most unique government document in the history of mankind. It guarantees our freedom. It is unique in that the government doesn’t tell us what to do, we tell the government what to do.” She once said, “I looked for Constitution Day on calendars, but it was not there.”

So in 1997, she founded Constitution Day Inc. to organize Constitution Day celebrations throughout the country with school children, the military overseas and Governors or their representatives from every state reciting the preamble simultaneously on September 17th last year. Louise was instrumental in getting Public Law 108-447 signed into law by President George Bush designating September 17th as Constitution Day.

Louise organized prominent people to recite the Preamble to the Constitution with everyone joining in. In the past she had Congressman David Drier, President George Bush (41) US. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore, Governor Edward Rendell of Pennsylvania, General Tommy Franks and

this past year General Colin Powell. usgovinfo.about.com/blconstday.htm



Immigration Study

Starting this fall, the Plattsburgh Area LWV will participate in a study on Immigration. This study was initiated by the LWVUS. Even though the scope is broad and imposes few limits on the immigration study, the consensus questions will focus on the items specified in the scope. Please call **Myra Decker 643-2742 or Betsy Metz 561-6106** for information. Resources and background information can be found on the www.lwv.org web site. Watch for further information in future *Informers*.

Poll Worker Management Guidebook Now Available

The U. S. Election Assistance Commission recently adopted “Successful Practices in Poll Worker Recruiting, Training and Retention.” http://www.eac.gov/research_reports_bp-poll.htm, a guide developed by the LWVEF, IFES and the Pollworker Institute. This guidebook was developed over months of research, focus groups, and a pilot program during the 2006 election cycle. It is designed to help elections officials recruit and train an Election Day workforce that can meet the demands of modern day elections. We encourage you to learn more about this resource and share it with your state and local elections officials. The EAC plans to distribute hard copies and CDs of the manual nationwide beginning August 10.



League News

League Connects with Voting Moms

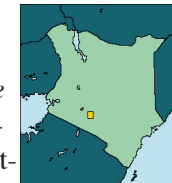
This month, Today'sMama partnered with the League to launch **Mama Vote** <http://lists.lwv.org/t/429157/1751249/258/0/>, an initiative to educate and inspire mothers with the “hows and whys” of participating in government--community, state and national--as voters and as active citizens. The site will feature League resources.

Congress Leaves for Recess, Makes Important Strides

Before adjourning for their August recess last week, members of the House and Senate took positive action on a number of important LWVUS legislative priorities. These accomplishments included the passage of SCHIP, the State Children’s Health Insurance Program, the Open Government Act, and the sweeping bipartisan lobbying and ethics reform by both chambers. The League’s advocacy department and Grassroots Lobby Corps will continue to work on these and other important issues when Congress returns to Washington in September.

Volunteers Promote Transparency in Kenya

This month, League volunteers and staff traveled to Kenya as part of the League’s *Kenya's Working Together for Good Governance* project, which promotes democratic transparency and accountability. While there, the visitors had a packed schedule, meeting with an impressive array of elected officials, members of Parliament, and community leaders and taking part in a number of civic workshops and activities.



New Logo Items Available Online



New items, including LWV hats, flashlights and travel mugs, are now available at the League’s Online Store <http://lists.lwv.org/t/441038/2385360/137/0/>. Visit today!

LWVUS President Marches for DC Voting Rights; over 3,000 activists call their Senators

While in Washington, President Wilson also marched for DC Voting Rights alongside League volunteers, DC Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, and others. Chanting, “No Vacation without Representation,” Wilson and the others urged Senators to vote on the DC House Voting Rights Act before leaving for their August recess. Earlier in the week, the League and other groups motivated more than 3,000 activists nationwide to call their Senators and demand representation for citizens living in our nation’s capital. Thank you to all Leagues that participated in the Call-in day!

Raise Money for the League by Searching the Web!

GoodSearch.com is a new search engine that donates half its revenue to the charities its users designate. Just go to [www.goodsearch.com http://lists.lwv.org/t/429157/1751249/27/0/](http://lists.lwv.org/t/429157/1751249/27/0/), designate the League of Women Voters Education Fund, and start searching!



Celebrate September 9th



GRANDPARENT'S DAY