



LWV of Albany County

May 2008

Educate

Participate

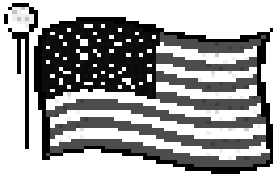
Advocate

An Evening with the Honorable Michael McNulty

Congressman McNulty will re-cap his career and peer into the future for us at our

Annual Meeting and Dinner

May 12th



Normanside Country Club, Delmar

5:30 Social

6:00 Business Meeting

6:30 Dinner

7:30 Speakers



Please make your reservations with Gael Vecchio, 459-9958, by Wed., May 7

Dinner Cost is \$25 and Choices are: Lemon Sole, Chicken Granny Smith or Parmesan Risotto.

Dessert Choices: Dark Chocolate Mousse or Vanilla Ice Cream.

Congressman Michael McNulty

First elected to public office in November 1969 as Town Supervisor of Green Island, Michael McNulty became the youngest Town Supervisor in New York State at the age of 22. After serving eight years as Supervisor, he was elected Mayor of the Village of Green Island and served in that capacity until he was elected to represent New York's 106th Assembly District in 1982.

Mike was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives for the 23rd Congressional District of New York in 1988, and was re-elected in 1990. In 1992, he was elected to represent the new 21st Congressional District. McNulty was re-elected to his tenth term in the U.S. House of Representatives in November 2006, with roughly 78% of the vote. The 21st Congressional District includes all of Albany, Montgomery, Schenectady and Schoharie Counties, and portions of Fulton, Rensselaer and Saratoga Counties. He now serves as At-Large Whip.

(continued on page 4)

League of Women Voters of Albany County

Website: www.lwvalbany.org Email: lwvac@crisny.org

Lori Keegan-Brady and Maggie Moehringer, Co-Presidents

Susan Coleman (330-2992) and Audrey Kibrick (489-9931), Membership Co-Chairs

Laura Ladd Bierman, Newsletter Editor



From the Co-Presidents

We are looking forward to seeing you at Annual Dinner on May 12th, with guest speaker Michael McNulty. Did you know that in November 2006, he was elected for a tenth term in the U.S. House of Representatives with 78% of the vote? He has been a strong champion for the interests of Albany, Montgomery, Schenectady and Schoharie counties, and portions of Fulton, Rensselaer and Saratoga counties. We look forward to hearing him re-cap his career and glance into the crystal ball of the future.

We also have two long time League members to recognize for their dedication and commitment. These two dynamic women are Ann Brandon and Carol Wallace. Their stories are a trip down memory lane. Also, at the Annual Meeting, we have some business to attend to. The budget for next year, a proposal for a new study, and the slate of new board members, all of which will be presented for your approval.

Are you interested in how to save the planet and tax dollars? Here is your opportunity! We still need the study chair for the proposed a new study, "Greening our Towns". This study is designed to discover the environmental practices of our County's villages, towns and cities. Provided it is approved at the Annual Meeting as a local program item, we will be studying it this next year so we can take action on its findings. BUT WE NEED A STUDY CHAIR!! No chair, no study! If you are interested, please call Maggie at 475-0960.

We are also planning a summer fun event on the Captain JP Cruise Lines on Friday, June 20th - see inside for details.

Yours in League,
Maggie and Lori, LWVAC Co-Presidents

Dues Increase Proposed for 2008-2009

As much as we hate to do it, periodically it becomes necessary for us to propose a dues increase. LWVAC has not increased its dues for 4 years. National League has proposed to increase Per Member Payments (PMP) by 4.5% this year, with additional planned increases to follow in subsequent years. As we will explain at the Annual Meeting, the budget is based on increasing our dues to \$50 for an individual member, with an additional \$25 for each household member, beginning in 2009. On the State and National levels, dues for household members has always been half of the rate for an individual member. This increase will allow us to cover our dues to State and National Leagues without additional local fund raising; we will still have to raise additional funds to cover local activities.

New Members

Barbara Warner - Albany
Ray Warner - Albany

Great Decisions Discussion Group

As its last event of the year, the Great Decisions group will have a pot luck luncheon at the home of Marsha Kayser on May 5th . We will begin at 10:30, with a discussion of the final chapter in the Great Decisions book, followed by lunch. Please plan to bring a dish to share. To help with the cleanup (and with the environment), please bring a plate and utensils. Watch your email for details and directions.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan citizen organization that promotes the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

This newsletter is published by the League of Women Voters of Albany County, 12 Coventry Road, Glenmont, New York 12077 and mailed to League members. The frequency of publication is as follows: one mid-summer issue followed by nine monthly issues from September to May.



League in Profile

Extraordinary Women: Ann Brandon and Carol Wallace

At our Annual Dinner this year, we are thrilled to honor two long-time League members that have provided a wonderful example to all of us of what one extraordinary Leaguer can do for her community. These two women of incredible energy and vision, Ann Brandon and Carol Wallace, will be honored by having their names inscribed on the Sustainers Plaque displayed at the New York State League of Women Voters office. A contribution in their honor has been made to the LWVNYS. Please join us in honoring them on May 12th. We print their League stories below.

Ann Brandon

What does one do with a toddler and new baby on the way? She joins the League of Women Voters! I did that in 1961 in Knoxville, Tennessee, and have been hooked on the League ever since. Soon after I joined, the president asked if I'd chair the study on foreign trade. Huh? But I was persuaded to say yes. I knew this would be right up my alley after majoring in music in college. I learned about leading a study committee, being a discussion leader, resource person, and many other skills that the League is so good at teaching.

Then came Utica, NY; another child, another League. From the League I became involved in the Antipoverty Community Action Organization. Then we moved to Albany (and another child) where I was delighted to find a lively League with women ready to take on issues of a political system that had outlived its usefulness. My first job was to take notes at hearings for the state Constitutional Convention. Then it was a study for fair housing in Albany. After that we worked for an elected school board for Albany. That campaign brought many strategic sessions with lawyers, going all the way to a successful court case in the Court of Appeals. In the early 1970's we began a major push for passage of a county charter for Albany County. Among other things, we collected over 16,000 signatures to get a Charter Commission appointed. This led to a coalition of many organizations that I chaired after serving as president of the League from 1972-74. I still remember marching into the Times Union offices with Audrey Price to get publicity for our cause. Very exciting times! The charter passed in 1973, followed by election of our first County Executive.

(continued on page 4)



Carol Wallace

I'm on the other side of the continent (Portland, OR), having fun remembering my League adventures 40 years ago in Albany! It's strange, but I've come full circle in my League involvement because I first joined the LWV in Eugene, Oregon, in the early 1960s. A faculty wife at the University of OR (where Dwight was teaching anthropology) invited me to attend a unit meeting. Before I could gather my wits I had agreed to be Voter Service chairperson without having a clue what it entailed! One thing lead to another (as it always does in our merry group), and I realized that the League was teaching me to debate in unit meetings, to organize a committee, to interview officials, and to speak at formal meetings. It had become my personal College of Political Knowledge.

When we moved to Albany in 1968 and had barely arrived, I read an editorial in the Albany Times Union about a League invitational meeting. Of course I went and was greeted by the same type of engaged, intelligent, sociable women I had left behind in Eugene. I knew I was "home." I remember fondly Mim Solomon who helped me settle in. It was the long time stalwarts such as Mim, Bea Feinstein, Tina Lord and Stevie Swire who were my mentors when I became president and needed their guidance as we took on the establishment in the weird world of Albany politics fighting for an elected school board. Sometimes I wondered if they taught me more than I wanted to know but soon realized they had done a good job as I moved up to the State League board, organized the League legislative lobbying corps in the new Albany office, and eventually ran for public office, serving 8 years on the Common Council. Thank you LWV! You changed my life.





SUMMER FUN
Friday, June 20th
Hair of the Dog
And Saint James Gate

Price Per Person \$41.00 buffet dinner at 6:00 pm
 \$19.50 without dinner at 7:00 pm

Capt. J.P. Cruise Lines
 278 River Street
 Troy, NY 12180

Call (518) 270-1901 to book your reservation

Say you are with the “Albany County League of Women Voters”

For more information: <http://captainjp.homestead.com/>

Directions from Albany:

787 to exit, which reads “23rd St., Watervliet /Green Island.” At the light take a right turn; at next light take a right turn and go over the Green Island Bridge. Take a right turn off the bridge, and follow road around. Bear to your first right onto Front St. Follow Front St. down, under City Hall parking garage, and through open parking lot. You will see the Capt. JP on your right.

(continued from page 3)

Ann Brandon

My work with the judicial studies of the League led to my job in the 1980’s as the first Capital District Coordinator for the Fund for Modern Courts. It also led to my interest in criminal justice and a return to school for a Master’s in Criminal Justice in 1984, followed by a position with NYS Dept. of Correctional Services.

In retirement, I returned again to the League as off-board specialist for the state death penalty study leading to a position against the death penalty and action when needed. Now I’ve come full circle as chair of the immigration study and member of the Albany County League board - working with other Leaguers who are the same kind of great people I met back in the ‘60’s.

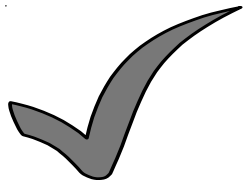
(continued from page 1)

Congressman Michael McNulty

Congressman McNulty has served on the Armed Services Committee, the Small Business Committee, the International Relations Committee, and the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service. From 1989 until its dissolution in 1993, he served on the Select Committee on Hunger. He was also a member of the Executive Committee of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus.

In 2008, McNulty begins his fifteenth year of service on the powerful House Ways & Means Committee, which has jurisdiction over taxation, international trade, health care, human resources and Social Security. He is Chairman of the Subcommittee on Social Security. He also serves on the Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support. Congressman McNulty has traveled to all seven continents, the North Pole and the South Pole.

McNulty became an Eagle Scout in the Boy Scouts of America on July 15, 1960, at the age of twelve. He is a graduate of St. Joseph’s Institute, Barrytown, N.Y.; Loyola University Rome Center, Rome, Italy; and the College of Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science. He is also a graduate of the Hill School of Insurance in New York City. He is married to the former Nancy Ann Lazzaro, and has four daughters and five grandchildren.



Nominating Committee Report: Nominations Slate 2008-2009

Marggie Skinner, Chair

The Nominating Committee - Marggie Skinner (chair), Gael Vecchio and Peg Sawyer - is pleased to present the following slate of candidates for board positions. The following individuals will be nominated as officers and directors at the LWVAC Annual Meeting on May 12th, 2008:

Ann Brandon	Second Vice President for Action
Jessica McMullan	First Vice President for Program
Mary Ann Lettau	Director (Voter Service)
Martha Kennedy	Director (Membership)
Carol Webster	Director (Membership)
Donald Kennedy	Director (Information Specialist)
Betsey Swan	Director (Development)
Marian Schwager	Director (Social Policy)
Judy Campbell	Director (State and Local Government)

The following Officers and Directors will continue in their roles next year:

Maggie Moehringer	Co-President
Lori Keegan-Brady	Co-President and Director At Large
Gael Vecchio	Third Vice President for Administration
Linda Brown	Recording Secretary
Mary Berry	Treasurer
Peggy Sawyer	Director (Public Relations)

The following will serve or continue to serve in an off-board capacity:

Edith Allen	National Government
Judy Wing	Local Government
Katie Henrikson	International Relations
Susan Coleman	Membership
Martha Kissinger	Membership
Jenny Stromer-Galley	Web Master
Laura Ladd Bierman	Bulletin Editor
Annette Argiros	Distribution Specialist
Marggie Skinner	Budget Committee Chair, Poll Reporting Chair, and Nominations Committee Chair

We Need a Chair! No Chair, No Study!

The heart of the League of Women Voters is grass roots action. Our members want to make a difference and be involved in their communities; study and action on local issues is a great way to do that. It's what engages our members and benefits our communities. LWVAC has a long history of action on local issues - the Pine Bush preserve, the Albany County and City Charters to name just a couple of examples.

Each year, at its annual meeting, LWVAC members decide on whether to pursue what we call "local program" items. This year, members have proposed, and the Board is putting forward for a vote at the Annual Meeting, the following:

PROPOSAL FOR A NEW LOCAL PROGRAM STUDY **"Greening our Albany County Towns and Cities: Encouraging Responsible Use of Natural Resources by our Municipalities"**

Possible questions to be answered by the study:

- What are best practices in current use or proposed for other municipalities of similar characteristics nationwide that:
 - encourage responsible use of natural resources;
 - set a good example for residents and businesses in responsible practices;
 - encourage residents and businesses to adopt such practices.
- What are the current practices in our Albany County municipalities that encourage responsible use of natural resources?
- What are current practices that are not advisable or responsible?
- How can the League best educate our residents and municipal governments concerning best practices?
- How can the League and collaborative partners best encourage adoption of better practices by our municipalities?

Would you like to be involved in this study? Would you like to chair it? Please contact Maggie Moehringer (475-0960)!



An Invitation from LWVNYS

You are cordially invited to a ceremony of rededication of our new building at 62 Grand Street as the Anne F. Holtzmann Building and the unveiling of our Room of Honor in recognition of our many generous donors and volunteers

Thursday, May 15, 4:00 p.m.

League of Women Voters
62 Grand Street, Albany

R.S.V.P. 518-465-4162 or lwvny@lwvny.org
Office of General Services Visitors Parking Lot on Grand Street, \$5



Capitol Beat

Volume 1, Issue 5

Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director, LWVNYS

E-Mail: bbheck1@yahoo.com or 518-469-8905

Welcome to Albany of old! We are now seven days into a new fiscal year with a budget process more secretive and more behind closed doors than we have seen in probably fifteen years. If you were partial to three-men-in-a room, behind closed doors, then you just loved this budget session.

January 2007, shortly after the new governor, Eliot Spitzer took office, he and legislative leaders made much fanfare over a three-way agreed to budget reform legislation which became known as Chapter 1 of 2007. Under this new law, a quick start budget process for the agencies and new legislative budget process was to begin. By the end of 2007 that agency budget reform process was working well. Under the new law, available revenues must be determined by March 1st of each year.

On Friday, March 7th the sky fell in and on Monday, March 10th Governor Spitzer resigned. The following Monday, David Paterson was sworn in as Governor and had to quickly orient himself to budget negotiations. Later that week, Wall Street took a nosedive and with it went revenue that New York State counted on. The new Governor re-estimated revenues to be lower by \$800 million dollars and asked the agencies and the legislative leadership to cut spending in this new budget. But of course, this is an election year and asking legislators in an election year to cut spending, even in very trying economic times, is like trying to tell your four year old “you can’t have a cookie, before dinner.” Legislative leaders stomped their feet, ignored the governor and continued their election year binge.

The issue currently holding up the budget and keeping Albany in a state of either suspended animation or dumb-founded amazement is congestion pricing. This is an issue the League does not have a specific position on. It is a proposal championed by NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg. It would reduce congestion below 60th Street in Manhattan by charging \$8.00 per car for anyone driving in the City from 60th Street down to the tip of Manhattan at high peak traffic hours of the day. Environmentally, this may be a laudable goal. However, it has created a huge political firestorm. Budget negotiations (behind closed doors, between three-men-in-a room) have come to an abrupt halt while hour, after hour, after hour the issue was debated in the Assembly Majority Conference. As of today, April 7th the Assembly Majority decided not to bring the issue to the floor of the Assembly for a vote, killing congestion pricing. Following the announcement by the Assembly Democratic Majority, the Assembly adjourned. This prevented the Assembly Republican Minority from introducing a hostile amendment on the floor of the Assembly. Meanwhile over in the Senate, the Senate Democratic Minority walked off the floor preventing a quorum so that the Senate Republican Majority could not force a vote, thereby putting the downstate Democrats on the record on congestion pricing.

Following the failure of congestions pricing on Monday, April 7th, both houses of the legislature moved quickly to reach agreement on this year’s budget. An agreement was announced on a \$121.9 billion dollar budget on Tuesday night and by 2:30 on Wednesday afternoon the Senate had passed the budget and adjourned. The Assembly followed shortly after. It is almost impossible at the moment to tell what exactly is in this budget as it was passed in secret with only briefings to the legislators in party conference. There were not open leaders meetings except for one. Some joint legislative budget committees never met and the rest met only once. The bulk of the this election year budget was done in one big ugly bill which will take several days to digest, to know with certainty how much legislative pork is in this year’s budget. What we do know for certain is that the Governor and the legislative leaders both concede that this budget process was awful and they maintain that it won’t happen again. How often have we heard that here in Albany? League members should make sure their legislators know that this process has done nothing to bring public trust or integrity back to government in Albany.

And the beat goes on...

League Calendar

<u>WHEN</u>	<u>WHAT</u>	<u>WHERE</u>	<u>MORE INFO</u>
Mon., May 5, 10:30 am	Great Decisions Luncheon Foreign Aid	M. Kayser's Home	see page 2
Tues., May 6, 5:45 pm	Board Meeting	Albany Public Library	
Mon., May 12, 5:30 pm	LWVAC Annual Mtg & Dinner Speaker: Cong. Mike McNulty	Normanside Country Club	see page 1
Thurs., May 15, 4:00 pm	Rededication at LWVNYS	62 Grand St, Albany	see page 6
Fri., June 20, 6:00 pm	Summer Fun Cruise	Troy	see page 4

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ALBANY COUNTY
PO Box 611
Slingerlands, NY 12159

Nonprofit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Permit #247 Albany, NY
