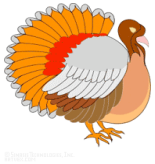


THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
of SCHENECTADY COUNTY, NEW YORK



November 2009

BULLETIN



Think about people who would like to come to the

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

Wednesday, November 11, 7 to 9 pm

Connie Young's House, 1400 Keyes Ave.

Join us for an evening of information, conversation and refreshments.

Learn about the League, what it does and how you can be a part.

Submit names to Lynda Nichols, Membership Chair. 374-1643 or nicholsL@nycapp.rr.com.

***"The First Annual Girls' Day Out:
Breaking Barriers/Building Relationships"***

A conference for middle school girls from the Schenectady City School District

Presented by the Working Group on Girls

To be held at the

Glen Sanders Mansion on Wednesday, November 18, 2009.

The mission of the WGG is "Working together to put the spotlight on girls, facilitate programs on their behalf, and educate the community about their needs, challenges, opportunities and successes."

**"The Future of Nuclear Energy in the US",
November 24th at 7-9 PM**

McChesney Room, main branch of the Schenectady Public Library.

Dr. Howard Hart, PhD in physics and Dr. Peter Ford, BA, PhD will give us background information on the topic of nuclear energy. A Q&A will follow.



President's column:

Greetings,

I hope you had a chance to attend some of the Candidate Forum's, very ably coordinated by Karen Bradley. Thanks to many of you and those from the AAUW who assisted at these events. As we assess these programs, we always want to look at what worked and what did not. We will be reviewing our policy, working with the State LWV, our local board and parties to see if changes need to be made to meet our goal of educating the electorate in a nonpartisan manner. If you have suggestions, Karen would like to hear from you. Contact her at dbradley99@aol.com.

This coming month is filled with a variety of programs, from our annual New and Prospective Members meeting, to a consideration of the Nuclear Energy Option, and for a lucky group of 150 City middle school girls, there will be the First Annual Girls' Day Out on November 18th at the Glen Sanders Mansion.

This girls' program is the culmination of a year of planning by the Schenectady County Working Group on Girls, a collaborative community venture of women from many organizations and agencies in Schenectady that work with and care about girls. The SCWGG is modeled on the International Working Group on Girls under UNICEF and was started five years ago, initiated by the AAUW and LWV, to look at issues girls face locally. We've offered programs to the community in the past on Mentoring, Girls and Violence, What Does a Community Look Like That Cares About Girls, and 'UR UGLY: When the Bully is a Girl.' Working closely with City School District clinicians, we now have an exciting new program for girls.

The focus of the program in November is on strengthening girls' sense of self and self respect, further developing their relationship skills so they can take more control of their lives and develop healthy, appropriate relationships, showing them that the community cares about them, and connecting them with resources and agencies in the community for follow-up.

Many people and organizations have donated funds to support this program. Many dedicated women are contributing their time as workshop and follow-up leaders. Numerous League members have been involved in developing and supporting this effort. A further description of this creative, collaborative program is in this bulletin from Gwynne DeLong.

Working Group on Girls

The Schenectady County Working Group on Girls' Meeting will take place on Monday, November 2, at 3:30pm at the YWCA, Washington Ave.

Health Care Committee

The Health Care Committee will be meeting in November to discuss what activities it will pursue over the coming year. New members are welcome. A date has not yet been finalized for the meeting so those who are new to the committee, please call Carol Furman at 346-2746 or e-mail cfurman@earthlink.net to receive a notice and further communication. Our focus will be local health issues as well as the national efforts at health care reform.

Environment Committee

The Environment Committee will meet as usual on the first Monday of the month, November 2, at 12:00 noon at the Moon and River Cafe 115 South Ferry Street in the Stockade. New members are welcome. Questions? Call Ruth Bonn, 384-0804.

NUCLEAR ENERGY

Submitted by Carol Furman

"The Future of Nuclear Energy in the US," is the title of a program open to the public, and sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Schenectady on Tuesday, November 24th from 7-9 PM in the McChesney Room of the main branch of the Schenectady Public Library. This program will help us examine the role of nuclear energy in our efforts to utilize clean energy to combat global warming and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.

Howard Hart, PhD in physics, formerly a Coolidge Fellow at GE, and a member of the National Academy of Engineering, will start the program off with a short talk on "Global Warming and Energy: Problems in Scope, Timing, and Will." He will be followed by Peter Ford, BA, PhD, presenting "The Future of Nuclear Energy in the US- What Should It Be?" Dr. Ford focused much of his career on materials problems in the nuclear industry and more recently served for four years as a member of the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards at the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and then as a consultant to utilities, National Labs and regulators worldwide. The program will be followed by a question and answer period. For more information contact: cfurman@earthlink.net.

Observer Corps Report

Submitted by Mary Maitino

Some members of the committee have said they would like to attend a meeting to learn more about the Observation process. Now that the Candidate Forums are behind us, I will be scheduling a meeting during the first week of November. Please be looking for an email from me, **marimay67@gmail.com**. I'll be asking you for day and time of day availability, and will select a time convenient for as many of you as possible.

In the meantime, if you go to **www.lwv.org** and click on the second word in the blue band, PROJECTS, then scroll down to OPENNESS IN GOVERNMENT. Find GUIDES on the right hand side of the page; you will find the guide, *Observing Your Government in Action* as a PDF file. Reading it should be helpful before we meet.

I do have some copies of the booklet, but not enough to go around. I'll see if there are anymore within our LWV chapter.

Thank you for your presence and "eyes" at local government meetings.

Welcome New Member

Jane Brand

Submitted by Betsy Chase

Jane has been a National League member for quite a while and has decided to join locally. She is retired from Schenectady Planned Parenthood where she worked as a part time Family Planning Specialist for several years. Jane is the former President of HAVEN and is on the Board of the Schenectady Day Nursery. Health Care Issues are of interest to her and she is interested in the Health Care Reform Committee.

League Holiday Luncheon

SAVE THE DATE:
Wednesday, December 9, Noon

Jeff Clark, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady Co., and Darlene Hayes, Director of ReStore will be presenting information about their work at the December 9th Luncheon at Schenectady County Community College . Issues of substandard housing in Schenectady and Habitat projects like the Women Build Project will be discussed.

Entrée Choices:

Chicken boursin boneless breast stuffed with cheese and spinach
Salmon char grilled topped with honey garlic sauce
Portabella mushroom grilled stuffed seared with red peppers & goat cheese

Call Connie Young 393-7061 for reservations. Cost \$21.... Dessert and Coffee included

State Consolidation/Shared Services Study

Submitted by Pat McKinnon, Housing Committee Chair

You are invited to be a part of the Schenectady LWV's committee to examine the possibilities of local government consolidation and shared services. This topic has been in the public eye since the publication of the reports of the Lundine and Suozzi Commissions. Consolidation possibilities include simple mergers of local government units like school districts, and also the consolidation of special districts such as fire, library, water, sewer, etc., the consolidation of local public authorities and municipal services such as civil service hiring, assessments, IT, and purchasing, all with the intent of reducing cost.

With much direction and assistance from the NYS LWV, local leagues will examine the issues surrounding consolidation and use the consensus process to pass along information to the State league. This will allow the State league to arrive at policy positions concerning consolidation that all the leagues can refer to in offering assistance to local government entities that might be contemplating some consolidation.

The committee work will include examination of available documents, the gathering of information from people involved in the study or implementation of consolidation, scheduling speakers to educate ourselves and the public, and the discussion of consensus questions supplied by the state, as well as the arrangements for a meeting to arrive at a local consensus on the consolidation issues.

A meeting of the Schenectady County LWV's Consolidation Study Committee will be held at Connie Young's home (1400 Keyes Ave.) on Monday, November 16, at 7pm. If you are interested in joining us or would like more information to examine, please email Pat MacKinnon at macol17@nycap.rr.com, or call her at 399-8271. We hope to see you!

First Annual Girls' Day Out

Submitted by Gwynne DeLong

"The First Annual Girls' Day Out, Breaking Barriers/Building Relationships" will be held at the Glen Sanders Mansion on November 18, 2009. The conference, for 150 middle school girls from the Schenectady City School District, is a collaborative effort with the Schenectady Schools and the community groups and members of the Schenectady County Working Group on Girls. The mission of the WGG is "Working together to put the spotlight on girls, facilitate programs on their behalf, and educate the community about their needs, challenges, opportunities and successes."

The girls will attend two workshops in the morning session, addressing areas such as bullying, self esteem, handling stress, empowerment, and leadership. In the afternoon they will participate in a creative arts workshop of their choosing; expressing themselves through drama, theater, yoga, drumming, dance, poetry, and the visual arts. Sister Ann Smollin, CSJ, an internationally known writer, lecturer and humorist will be the morning motivational speaker. Our final speaker of the day is Michelle Paterson, NY State First Lady. The girls will receive backpacks with gifts and information from community agencies and a book, *Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul – The Real Deal*.

Following the conference, there will be monthly, small group, follow up meetings with the girls held at each of the participating schools. Members of the WGG, and other participating groups will facilitate these after school and/or lunch meetings along with middle school clinicians. The purpose of these meetings is to reinforce the positive messages of hope and empowerment received at the conference. There will be a celebration for the girls and a guest in the spring, along with a community forum to share the outcomes of the program with the greater community. Funding for this program has been acquired through grants and donations from foundations, non-profit organizations, businesses and individuals.

GIRLS' DAY OUT WORKSHOP LEADERS

Chrys Ballerano, Community Educator, NYS Coalition Against Sexual Assault

Karen Baum, Dir. of Alternative Dispute Resolution Programs at The Center for Community Justice

Robin Boyd, SPOA Coordinator, Schenectady Co. Office of Community Services

Laura Combs, Social Worker, BOCES/Schenectady CSD

Nettie Crossman, retired school librarian, Schenectady CSD

Gwynne De Long, LWV and retired teacher Schenectady SCD

Gail Wilson-Giarratano, President/CEO, Girls Inc. of the Greater Capital Region

Okenya Hickson, student SHS

Maureen Johnson, Service Coordinator, SAFE Inc.

Eileen Lawson, Education Team Manager, Planned Parenthood Mohawk-Hudson

Mary Clare O'Connor, Schenectady Youth Build, SUNY/SCCC

Nichelle Rivers, Ed.D., Asst. Superintendent, Troy CSD

Karen Ferrer-Muniz, Dir. Multicultural Affairs, Union College

Shirley Readdean, past president, YWCA NENY, and Schenectady CSD Board of Education

Bernice Rivera, Social Studies Teacher, Schenectady CSD

Latisia Rivera, SHS 2008

Angelique Williams, Founder of Girl Power Mentoring

Michelle Williams, community volunteer.

List of Contributors for the Girls' Day Out

Foundations:

Carlilian Foundation
Henry M. Butzel Family Foundation Inc.
Golub Foundation/Price Chopper
Stewart's Shops
The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region's Standish Family Fund
The Schenectady Foundation

Non-Profit Agencies and Organizations:

American Association of University Women
League of Women Voters of Schenectady County
New York State United Teachers • SAFE Inc.
Schenectady Permanent Firemen's Association, Inc.
Soroptimist International of Schenectady

Businesses:

Blown Away, A Jessica Michaels Salon
Griffith Dardanelli Architects, PC
M.A.L. Accounting & Tax Services
Miss Nikki's Tutoring Service, Athens, Greece

Individuals:

Dr. N. Balasubramanian • David Humphrey • Carole Merrill-Mazurek
Jon & Nancy Tobiessen

League Health Care Policy Mary Wilson, President, LWVUS

The current health care system is endangering our economy and our health. Congress needs to pass comprehensive health care reform, and the public option is a vital component. All Americans must have health care coverage, including the choice of a quality, affordable public insurance plan. It is universal coverage that will determine the humanity of our system. Legislation must guarantee access to comprehensive and essential benefits to all U.S. residents. The public option will make it possible for Americans who cannot obtain coverage through traditional employer-sponsored plans to find coverage at a reasonable price.

But ensuring universal coverage is not the only advantage of the public option. It will increase consumer choice and lower overall health care costs. As a nation, we are spending \$1 out of every \$6 we earn on health care. Over the last three decades, increases in the amount we spend on health care have consistently risen faster than wages and inflation. If nothing is done to control costs, we could be spending \$3 trillion for health care by 2011 and \$4.2 trillion by 2016.

The League believes that cost containment measures must take place in the context of overall health care reform. We must reduce or eliminate the cost-shifting that currently exists in health care financing and work to streamline the system. Legislation must provide effective cost controls, equitable distribution of services and allow for efficient and economical delivery of care. Offering everyone the choice of a government administered health insurance plan like Medicare that would compete with private health insurance plans will be key.

Membership News

Submitted by Lynda Nichols, Membership Chair

It is November and most of us are beginning to think of the holidays soon to come. The Membership Committee is already thinking of gift giving. We are putting together gift bags containing materials for gift memberships to our League. In our "have everything" society, a gift of League membership could be the perfect present for a friend or family member (male or female). We will sell the gift membership bags at the November 24 program at the Schenectady Library and at the December 9 Holiday Luncheon at SCCC. The prices are the normal membership rates: \$55 individual, \$75 household; \$20 student. Contact Lynda Nichols if you would like to purchase the gift of membership for someone you know.

(nicholsl@nycap.rr.com or 374-1643)

Email is a very important communication tool these days. The New York State League would like to remind you that you can update your contact information in the State and National LWV data base. Log into the National Database (www.lwv.org) and click "Manage Your Account" on the left hand side to enter or update your email address. The National League NEVER sells these addresses to anyone else. By email you will receive the monthly "E-Voice" publication.

If anyone still needs a membership form, contact Lynda or use the one below. The majority of members have now renewed for 2009-2010. We're still not at 100%, but we're getting closer.

If your address label has a red dot it means you have not yet paid your 2009-2010 dues. Contact Lynda Nichols (374-1643) if you need another Membership form sent to you, or if you have questions or special concerns. The December Bulletin will be the last one sent to members who have not renewed.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please send this membership form with your dues to Lynda Nichols, 1038 Maryland Ave. Schenectady, 12308

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

Membership choices: Student \$20 Individual \$55 Family \$75 (Needs Adjustments can be made.)
These yearly dues are not tax deductible

Judicial / AT Court Committee Report

Submitted by Helga Schroeter, Committee Co-chair

The committee met at Helga's house on October 15 and heard reports of the recent AMI fundraiser (a very successful, well-attended event) and the NAMI conference at the Desmond Hotel. The conference covered presentations by Buffalo City Court Judge Robert Russell, who runs a Veterans Court, along with Drug and Mental Health Courts, a psychologist who treats returning veterans for combat trauma and a report on a School Mental Health Education Program entitled "Typical or Troubled?" The conference also featured several mental health workshops.

The committee then discussed its outlook for work and agreed that the focus would be on juvenile justice issues, along with the ongoing monitoring of the Alternative Treatment Court. The next meeting will be held at 4 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 3 at Joan Elliott's house (1159 Waverly Place) and Joe Mancini from Probation has agreed to speak to the committee.

The Fund for Modern Courts will present its 2009 Hugh R. Jones Memorial Lecture on Tuesday, November 17, at 5:30 p.m. at the Albany Law School. Retired Appeals Court Judge George Bundy Smith will be the speaker. A reception will follow the lecture. Please call Helga Schroeter (518-370-5042) or Laura Zeliger (357-8061) for more details.

CALENDAR of October Events

Mon, Nov 2 ...Environmental Committee, 12 noon, Moon and River Cafe

Mon, Nov 2....Working Group on Girls, YWCA, 3:30 pm.

Tues, Nov 3....Board Meeting, 1400 Keyes, 5-7 pm.

Tues, Nov 3....ELECTION DAY

Wed, Nov 11...New Member Orientation, 1400 Keyes, Ave., 7-9 pm.

Wed, Nov 18....GIRLS' DAY OUT, Glenn Sanders Mansion

Tues, Nov 24....Nuclear Energy Talk, McChesney Rm, Schenectady Library, 7-9 pm.

Tues, Nov 17...Fund for Modern Courts, Talk & Reception, Albany Law School, 5:30 pm.

Thurs, Dec 3....Judicial/AT Court Committee, 1159 Waverly Pl, 4 pm.

Wed, Dec 9....Holiday Luncheon, SCCC, Noon.