



League of Women Voters of Albany County

October 2010

Educate

Participate

Advocate

Have you heard these terms lately?

POLLVAULTING

POLLAPALOOZA

A POTPOURRI OF POLLS

Are you confused between a sample of “likely voters” versus “registered voters”?

Have you ever wondered why you or your friends have never been included in political polls?

Do you wonder how a sample of a few hundred truly reflects the opinions of millions?

The LWV of Albany County in partnership with the Congregation Beth Emeth Social Action Committee is pleased to present an opportunity to learn about polling and get the answers to these questions and more.

Come to the Albany County League’s October program
Thursday October 14 at 6:00 pm
Beth Emeth, 100 Academy Road, Albany

Speaker: **STEVE GREENBERG**

Siena Political Poll spokesperson for the Siena Research Institute reveal the mysteries of polling results.
see page 4 for more information

Program on New Voting Machines

The LWVAC will be presenting an educational program to the residents of the Cohoes and Watervliet Housing Authorities regarding using the new voting machines, becoming familiar with the newly designed ballot and applying for an absentee ballot. This program was requested as an aid to the residents. If other organizations are interested in a similar program, please contact either Mary Berry at maryb424@aol.com or Mary Ann Lettau at mlettau1@yahoo.com.

League of Women Voters of Albany County

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

Mary Berry, President

Monica Sharp (475-9736) and Margaret Danes (438-7218), Membership Co-Chairs

Laura Ladd Bierman, Newsletter Editor



From the President

To me the fall always signals the time of year when we get back to schedules after the more casual days of summer. Our League has been busy planning programs, running primary candidate debates and spreading the word about our organization particularly at local farmer's markets. In our planning this fall, we are being guided by our decision to emphasize issues about elections and further the celebration of our 90th anniversary. At our October program, our guest speaker, Steve Greenberg, will explain all you ever wanted to know about polls. Please come on October 14th to listen and learn from him. He is the spokesperson for the Siena Political Poll of the Siena Research Institute. See the front cover for details. October also brings candidate debates. There are four scheduled as we go to press. Please volunteer to help at these events. It is a big undertaking furthering one of the basic tenets of the League: to provide voter education opportunities so that all voters may make informed decisions on election day. See inside for dates and ways to volunteer.

In addition we need your help in our annual fund raiser by volunteering to be a poll reporter on election night, November 2. We are paid for each district reported by phone to the news service. Ask your family and friends to help – you don't have to be a league member to join in. Please contact Marggie Skinner at marggies@earthlink.net.

Our local league is taking baby steps toward electronic communication. We are aiming to "go green"! We need your help to save a tree, save printing and mailing costs, and save volunteer time. Please send us your email address so that we may communicate with you electronically – this will allow us to speed news of events, action alerts and other information such as this bulletin to you over the internet. Our league email address is lwwac@lwvalbany.org.

See you on the 14th and at the debates.

Yours in League,

Mary

maryb424@aol.com

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are seeking volunteers to help us with our goal to make better use of **electronic communication**, particularly in web design and maintenance - we could also use help in videographing. Please join our new committee on technology.

We are seeking volunteers to car pool and provide **transportation** for our members who are in need of rides to our League events.

The **Publicity Committee** writes and disseminates information about the League of Women Voters of Albany County, its activities and events, to the media in order to attract public attention, encourage membership, educate the public, promote advocacy, and support events. It also includes encouraging the press to cover events, promote the League, and consult the League on issues of concern.

Media outlets include public newspapers, TV, radio, college sources, and electronic sites including the LWVAC's newsletter. Help is needed to write, edit, and distribute press releases, arrange for interviews and press attendance at events, and help find ways to keep the LWVAC in the public eye.

To help with any of these tasks or committees, contact Mary Berry at maryb424@aol.com.

Membership Committee THANK YOU

On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Albany County, the Membership Committee thanks all the League members who have renewed the 2010 - 2011 membership. Thank you for being part of the people who: TAKE THE ACTION and CARE ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH CARE, IMMIGRATION, and we can do even more with your support.

If you have interest in joining the Membership Committee please contact Monica Sharp at 475-9736 or by e-mail sharpmonica@yahoo.com.

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, PO Box 611, Slingerlands, New York 12159 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



I immigrated to the United States from Brazil, in 2000, shortly after my favorite candidate had been defeated in the election for President of the United States. I wished I could've voted for him, although technically it would not make any difference, but it would at least have made me feel good. I was raised in a dictatorship, where the citizens couldn't vote for President. From 1964 to 1984 the Militaries in power of the Country, would nominate two of them, preferably a General from the Army, and the Congress would "elect" whoever they wanted to take the turn "playing" President. After 1984, voting for President became one more of the citizen's obligations. During the dictatorship we voted for Senator, Congress, etc. In some states we could even vote for Mayor and Governor, but in other States they were appointed. We, the citizens, didn't vote because we wanted to exercise our civic right to vote and choose our candidates. We voted because, if we didn't do so, we would be penalized. You must justify to the Court of Elections the reason you didn't vote. If a citizen fails to justify the reason for not voting, there were many penalties. If you are a public servant, you will not receive your salary for the month the elections were held. If you are a regular citizen, and you didn't vote or justify your vote, and you want to apply for a passport, guess what? YOU CAN'T. There are other sanctions, but I will stop here.

After the "official dictatorship" was over, we obtained the "obligation" to vote for all officers in the government, including President. Some of us felt that the only change we had was that now we must vote for President, along with the other candidates we've been already obliged to vote for. Those of us who did not like the idea of voting because you have to, regardless if you have decent candidates or not, started to vote null. We hoped that one day, who knows, we could have more than 50% of the votes null, and therefore the election would be defeated, and we could change the "System". I even joined a movement where an entrepreneur financed windshield stickers saying: "Thieves must go to jail not to the Government. Please vote null". We had people shaking our hands, but also had a lot of scratches in our cars. At the end, our campaign was defeated; predictable, but worth trying. We were around 200 people trying to fight a huge war. So back in that time I was urging people not to vote.

Back to why I joined the League. I first heard about the League, from my mother-in-law, who is currently a young 90 year old life term League member. I decided that after obtaining my citizenship, I should join the League. I did, but not by myself. My husband decided to give a dinner party to celebrate my Citizenship. One of our guests, Loretta Simon, came with the best gift of the night. Loretta gave me a League membership. I became a League member in 2006, and hope I will live long enough to be a young 90 year old League member as my mother-in-law. The reason I am still a League member is because I believe in what the League is doing for the Citizens of the United States. I also believe that if we can add more brilliant men and women to our League, we can do more for this Country. There are too many battles to be fought, and we need "intellectual warriors" to win the war on behalf of the Citizens of the United States.

Membership 2010-2011 - Join & Make a Difference

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address, City, Zip: _____

Email: _____

Individual Membership \$50/year

Household Membership \$75/year

Student Membership \$15/year

Contribution in support of my local League

Please send me more information

For financial aid information, contact Carol Webster, 439-1491.

Mail to: League of Women Voters of Albany County PO Box 611, Slingerlands, NY 12159

Candidate Forum, September 1 46th NYS Senate Democratic Primary



Mary Berry, chair of the LWVAC, was interviewed by Jessica Layton of WNYT before the September 1st Candidate Forum for the 46th NYS Senate District's Democratic primary. A standing room only crowd attended to ask questions incumbent Neil Breslin and his challenger Luke Martland.

New Member

Deborah Vogel - Delmar

Welcome!



With Sympathy

It is with sadness we report the death of Morris Zusman on September 25, 2010. He was 92. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Sylvia. Sylvia and Morris were active members of the LWVAC for many years. They both participated in poll reporting until very recently. Sylvia worked with Aimee Allaud in 1976 on the first Albany Housing Authority election as well as the Code Enforcement Committee.

In memory

Harold W. Roeth died February 11, 2010. He is survived by his wife Monique, a long time League member. A donation was made to the LWVAC in his memory with the following note:

"Harold Roeth embraced the values of the League and demonstrated his humanitarianism through life long support of civil rights and advocacy for universal access to affordable higher education. He was a wonderful man who is terribly missed by his family and those whose lives he touched.

When I read that his wife, Monique, is a member, I decided that a donation to the League would be a fitting memorial contribution to honor this exceptional man. He will be missed."



Speaker (see page 1)

Steve Greenberg

Siena Research Institute

Steve Greenberg, the Siena Political Poll spokesperson from the Siena Research Institute, will be our guest speaker on Thursday, October 14, 2010 at 6:00 PM at Beth Emeth 100 Academy Road, Albany NY. We are partnering with Congregation Beth Emeth Social Action Committee in presenting this timely program. The Siena Research Institute (SRI) was founded in 1980 at Siena College in Loudonville, New York. The SRI conducts regional, statewide and national surveys on issues of public interest. They include education, health care, business, economic, political, voter, social, academic and historical issues. The surveys include both expert and public opinion polls. Recent polls have surveyed New Yorkers' sentiments towards the creation of the Muslim Cultural Center in lower Manhattan, the Arizona immigration law and the New York governor's race.

Mr. Greenberg will discuss how a poll is conducted, how questions are framed, who is asked, what is a sampling error, what is a push poll, what makes a poll "scientific" and other questions you may ask to help shed light on polling results.

The results of SRI surveys have been published in major regional and national newspapers including the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, as well as in scholarly journals, books and an encyclopedia. Survey results are regularly featured on local and network television and radio.

SRI conducts the Siena New York Poll, a monthly snapshot poll of registered voters from throughout New York State on timely political topics and the New York Consumer Confidence Index, a monthly look at New Yorker's willingness to spend. SRI is a full service public opinion research center that assists policymakers, business leaders and civic organizations to gather and understand information for strategic planning.

SRI subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices.

REGISTRATION FORM



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW YORK STATE
in association with
United Nations Department of Public Information
(additional co-sponsors to be named at a later date)

INVITE YOU TO ATTEND A BRIEFING ON

MICROFINANCE:

From Struggle for Survival to Planning for the Future

Tuesday, November 9, 2010 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**at the Church Center of the United Nations, 777 United Nations Plaza, NYC
(across the street from the UN Headquarters)**

Name:

Organization:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Day Phone:

E-Mail:

COST/PAYMENT INFORMATION

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<i>Optional Tour of the UN</i>	\$ 16
2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	<i>Briefing Program</i>	
	<i>\$55 League Members or Members of Sponsoring Organizations</i>	
	<i>\$70 Non-Member \$45 Students</i>	\$
	TOTAL ENCLOSED	\$

Optional Lunch Reservations will be made (at your own expense on that day) for 12:00 noon

___ *Etho's Restaurant (Greek), 905 1st Ave (at 51st), entrees \$15-30*

OR ___ *Cibo Restaurant (Italian), 767 2nd Ave (at 41st), entrees \$15-30*

I would like to become an individual sponsor for \$100 \$
(FREE BRIEFING AND TOUR INCLUDED)

I cannot attend but would like to provide a donation in the amount of \$

I would consider joining the bus (from Saratoga and Albany only) at cost of \$30-50; we will contact you with exact amount depending on number who sign up and reservation and payment can be made at that time.

My Check for \$ _____ is enclosed (make payable to LWVNYS) OR

Please charge \$ _____ to my: MasterCard VISA American Express Discover

Card Holder's Name: _____ Signature: _____

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: _____

SPACE IS LIMITED, SO RESERVE EARLY
REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS OCTOBER 22, 2010

PLEASE RETURN TO:

United Nations Briefings/LWVNYS

62 Grand Street, Albany, New York 12207

Fax: 518-465-0812 (Credit Card Registrations ONLY)

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 518-465-4162 or E-MAIL: Stephanie@lwvny.org

Voter Services

Mary Ann Lettau (mlettau1@yahoo.com)

The temperatures may be cooling off but Voter Services is not ready to hibernate!

Debates/Forums

The debate between Neil Breslin and Luke Martland at St Rose, a new partner, went well, with turnout of over 200 people. The College was pleased with the outcome of the evening and is willing to work with us in the future.

Oct. 21, 7:30 AM at the Century House—Bob Reilly and Jennifer Whalen, vying for the 109th NYS Assembly District. This event is sponsored by us, the Saratoga League, Spotlight Newspapers, and the Colonie and Southern Saratoga Chambers of Commerce. There will be a second event in Clifton Park on Oct. 25. This has been a productive and enjoyable collaboration.

Oct. 19 at Albany Public Library Main Branch—candidates for Albany County Surrogate's Court, at 7 PM. We're not quite sure who they are yet, as absentee ballots are still being counted.

Oct. 20 at the Marriot Hotel on Wolf Rd— 3 candidates for the 46th NYS Senate District. They are Neil Breslin, Bob Domenici, and Michael Carey. Stayed tuned for final details, as the commitments come in.

Oct. 27 at Guilderland Public Library— 2 candidates for NY State Assembly, 104th District, at 7 PM. One is committed; awaiting the 2nd.

Voter Registration/League Promotion

Sept. 7 -NAACP Surrogate Judges Forum

World Wrestling Entertainment at Times Union Center on Aug 31. Carol, Monica and I gave away shirts with League and WWE logos—No Vote, No Voice. Went like hotcakes

Sept. 18—Central Ave Farmers Market—3rd time.

Sept 26 - Bethlehem Farmers Market

Sept. 11—Sherman Ave. Neighborhood Fair.

Sept 29 - Belvedere Rehab, by request. (persons with traumatic brain injuries)

Voters Guides, Part 2 will be available soon and will be distributed to libraries, and League events. An electronic Voter's Guide is also available. The 5-county League guide to be activated on Oct. 15, is called the Capital Area Candidate Guide; there will be a link from our web site. The info is interactive; you can even print a list of the candidates you like and take it to the voting booth. The participating Leagues are Schnectady, Albany, Renssalaer, Saratoga and Washington Counties. Check it out!! The Times Union also does a Guide. Perhaps there is a possibility of collaborating in the future.

The Voter Services committee has met two times to discuss voter info on our web site. We have some ideas for additions and met with Jessica (webmaster)and Mary (President) to discuss further; we also attended a meeting with Bo Lipari, LWVNYS Technology Director, on September 15. I have suggested some small changes and am awaiting the feedback from the Electronic Media Committee—or whatever our name is!

Albany Housing Authority. The tenant elections are coming up next year. The League may or may not be involved. I've gotten good advice and information from the Buffalo League. The voting will take place by mail, so, if we do take part, we'll need just 4 or 5 people, not 45!

COMMENTS? QUESTIONS? DO I SEE ANY VOLUNTEER HANDS UP?

Thanx to Carol Webster, Judy Wing, Jessica McMullan, Mary Berry, Jan Messina, Arleen Urell, Steve Winters, Kitt Jackson, Janet Reilly, Tina Lord. Suzanne Perry, Joe Galu, Lois Griffin, Marian Schwager, Stevie Swire, Monica Sharp. Some of these members advised, supported and cajoled; some helped out at the debate. They are all important to Voter Services. And we do not have too many—there is room for you!

United Nations Event – Nov. 9

Join League members and friends from around the state for the annual United Nations briefing on **Tuesday, November 9**, from 2:00-4:30 pm in New York City. This year's topic will be Microfinance: From Struggle for Survival to Planning for the Future. Because the UN building is under renovations, the briefing will be held across the street in the Church Center of the United Nations (777 United Nations Plaza); speakers will be arranged by the United Nations Department of Public Information. A optional tour of the UN and reservations for lunch at area restaurants are also available. Registration form is on our website.

Fall 2010 Debates/Voters Guides

State League is currently tussling with trying to schedule candidates for debates and to get their input for the Voters Guide. In coordination with the Association of Public Broadcast Stations, we are hopeful that we will organize at least one debate for each the Gubernatorial race and the two US Senate seats. Please bear with us!

The electronic voters guide, www.smartvoter.org, is up and running. One of the Smart Voter's biggest benefits is that voters can quickly find individual candidate information, including their positions on important issues. The hardest part, though, is getting candidates to provide us with the information. That's where we could use help from local Leagues all around the state. *Can you volunteer a little time to help make Smart Voter a complete information resource this November?* If you can help contacting your local candidates, please send an email to bo@bolipari.com. And, continue to watch on Smart Voter for updates.

Students Inside Albany Conference

The 2011 *Students Inside Albany* Conference will be held on April 10-13 in Albany. Sample flyers, applications and suggested methods of finding students will be available next week. Start thinking about ways to select a student from your League to join this conference on leadership and lobbying.

Redistricting Reform

Over 50 members from many local Leagues participated in the training session on the issue of redistricting on September 11 in New York City, Albany, by conference telephone or by computer webmeeting

We have asked all local Leagues to organize a community forum on the issue of redistricting. We have created a power point presentation and handouts so that local Leagues can hold these forums and have a ready-made program for them. All the materials will be distributed and also will be available on our website. Encourage or help your local League to organize a forum on this important issue.

2011 Legislative Agenda

Last year the State Issues Committee and the Issues Specialists decided to focus the 2010 Legislative Agenda on making the State Legislature cleaner and more competitive through emphasizing campaign finance, redistricting and other good government legislative and election reforms. Some election reforms were passed last year, in particular simplifying the absentee ballot, but no progress was made on the other areas. Therefore, we are recommending that the 2011 Legislative Agenda be very similar to last year's. We ask for your comments on this recommendation (see SBR on website). We will also continue to take action on issues covered by the League's additional positions included in Impact on Issues as they arise.

State Convention: May 20-22, 2011

The State Convention will be held at the Desmond Inn in Albany from May 20-22, 2011. We will again host a series of pre convention workshops on Friday, May 20, which are open to any League member – even if you are not attending Convention. We are once again organizing a Silent Auction which will be available online and at Convention so everyone, not just attendees, can participate. Start thinking of donations; be creative and think of some new items or services that can help raise funds for the League. Donations forms are available by calling the state office.

Call for Board Nominations

Every two years, members of the LWNYS elect their leaders for the next board term at the State Convention. The nominating committee invites, welcomes, and depends on nominations by League members and local League boards. Send your recommendations by November 15 to Janalyn Travis-Messer, Nominating Committee Chair, PO Box 919, Shelter Island, NY 11964.

Youth Program Survey

The new state Youth Program Directors have distributed a survey to all local Leagues asking about local programs for youth. Only 11 Leagues have responded so far – so encourage your League to respond. The goal is to develop a list of programs and contacts which can be shared around the state – and all Leagues can “copy” these League programs and services and all youth can benefit!

Lobby Corps

The League is developing a group of trained volunteers who will communicate the League's position on proposed legislation in person directly to the members of the state Senate and Assembly. It would be expected that the Lobby Corps volunteers would agree to lobby on a regular basis as assigned in Albany. Come try something new in the League! Contact the state office for more information.

1919 Society

Don't forget to include the state League in your will - and join the 1919 Society. If you already have included the League in your will, just let us know and we'll add you to the members of the Society. ***We already have two members – and we're hoping for many more!*** We will not ask for either proof of the bequest or its amount - we just want to honor your future support. As a member, your name will be engraved on a plaque in the state League office, listed in the *State Voter*, and on the website.

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

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

League Calendar

<u>WHEN</u>	<u>WHAT</u>	<u>WHERE</u>	<u>MORE INFO</u>
Oct 5, 7 PM	Board meeting	St Stephen's Church	
Oct 8	Last Day to register to vote in General Election		
Oct 14, 6 PM	Steve Greenberg:Program on Polling	Beth Emeth	see pages 1 and 4
Oct 15	Deadline for Nov. Bulletin	LBierman@nycap.rr.com	
Oct 19, 7PM	Candidate debate Surrogate's Court Judge	Albany Public Library	
Oct 20	Candidate debate 46 th Senate District	Marriot Hotel Wolf Road	
Oct 21, 7:30AM	Candidate debate 109 th Assembly Disttict	Century House	
Oct 26	Last day to mail absentee ballot application		
Oct 27, 7 PM	Candidate debate 104 th Assembly District	Guilderland Public Library	
Nov 1	Last day to mail absentee ballot		
Nov 2 6 AM-9PM	GENERAL ELECTION	PLEASE VOTE	
Nov 2, 7 PM	Board Meeting	St. Stephen's Church	
Nov 2, 8:45 PM	Volunteers collect poll results	all election districts	
November 9	LWVNYS Day at the United Nations NYC		
November 16	Evening at Albany Institute of History and Art "The Perfect Fit: Shoes Tell Stories"		