



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

of SCHENECTADY
COUNTY, NEW YORK

BULLETIN

March 2010

lwvschenectady.org



Schenectady LWV Sunshine Week Observance:

YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW

New York's Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Laws

The Schenectady County League of Women Voters will sponsor:

a Forum on Open Government

Wednesday, **March 10, 2010**, from 7-9 PM,

in the Board Room of the Daily Gazette Building

2345 Maxon Road Extension, Schenectady.

Speakers: **Robert Freeman**, Executive Director of the Committee on Open Gov't, NY Department of State
Judy Patrick, Managing Editor of the Daily Gazette.

The primary focus of the program is to acquaint citizens with the ways that FOIL (Freedom of Information Law) can be used to gain access to important decisions made by New York State and local government agencies. The discussion will also provide information about the Open Meetings Law which is concerned with the conduct of meetings before public bodies, the right to attend these meetings, and what legally constitutes an Executive Session.

There will be a one hour presentation, followed by a question and answer period.
There is ample parking in their well lit lot at the front of the building. All are welcome.

Learn about MOLST

Wednesday, March 31 at Hospice at 1411 Union Street 7-9 pm
Bonita Zahn on the Ethics Council of St. Peter's Hospital and Dr George Giokas, Hospice Physician will give us information about MOLST (**Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment**) which is considered to be more comprehensive and more portable than either Living Wills or Healthcare Proxies. Come and find out for yourselves.

President's Column

DIVERSITY POLICY

At our last Board meeting on February 2, 2010, the Board adopted the following policy on diversity:

"The League of Women Voters of Schenectady County, in both its values and practices, is committed to inclusion and diversity. This means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of economic position, gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

We recognize that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making. We believe inclusiveness enhances the organization's ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs. We affirm our commitment to reflecting the diversity of Schenectady County."

We realize our commitment is an on-going work in progress. We have begun to identify and discuss barriers to participation. If you have feedback or suggestions to help us meet our goal, please let me know at jtobiessen@hotmail.com. Thank you.

Joanne

League of Women Voters Celebrates Milestone Birthday

Washington, D.C. The League of Women Voters celebrated its 90th birthday on Sunday, February 14th. Known widely for its voter education efforts, this non-partisan, government watchdog group has been an American institution since 1920.

"More than 850 state and local Leagues across the country will celebrate this milestone birthday throughout 2010," said Mary G. Wilson national president of the League of Women Voters. "But most importantly, we'll be doing what we always do: discussing the important issues, challenging the status quo and demanding accountability."

In 1920, after a 72 year struggle, and when passage of the 19th amendment appeared to be imminent, members of the National American Woman Suffrage Association met to form the League of Women Voters. Carrie Chapman Catt first proposed the creation of a League to "finish the fight" and to work to end all discrimination against women. Today, the League works to effect change on a variety of issues including health care, climate change, election and campaign finance reforms, land use and education. "The women who fought for voting rights in the first part of the 20th century did not know if they would be successful," Wilson continued. "And yet they persevered – changing our democracy and society. Today we are equally committed to improving our democracy at all levels, making sure it represents the common good – not special interests and big money."

"Membership in the League is open to men and women of all ages," Wilson continued. "We have members that have been League activists for over 50 years and members who have just joined – inspired by a particular issue or after attending an event. If a particular issue attracts new members, they will keep coming back after meeting the wonderful people who are similarly dedicated to change in the communities. For more information, visit the League on line at www.lwv.org and www.facebook.com/leagueofwomenvoters. Become a fan of the League on Facebook.

BLOG ON NEW YORK STATE POLITICS

Laura Bierman, NYSLWV

The state League has just launched a blog on New York State politics, thanks to Jay Gallagher, retired Albany Bureau Chief for Gannett News. Jay will be writing about Albany happenings and posting his stories on our blog. You can read the blog simply by visiting the site, <http://lwny-blog.blogspot.com>; we have provided a link to the blog from the League's website also (in the top right corner of the header). If you would like to comment on a blog, you have to "sign in" on the blog website. Spread the word and watch for new blog entries!

League Forum on Redistricting

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director LWVNYS

Over 60 people from 9 local Leagues and other organizations attended the Forum on Redistricting and celebration of the LWVUS's 90th Birthday at the Rockefeller Institute on Feb. 9. Speakers included Assemblyman William Parment; Assemblyman Daniel Burling; Gerald Benjamin, Associate VP for Regional Engagement, SUNY New Paltz; Blair Horner, Legislative Director, NYPIRG; and Jeffrey Wice, Counsel to Senate Reapportionment Chairman Martin Dilan. Susan Arbetter of WCNY-TV moderated.

Four photos from the event are posted on the League's homepage (www.lwny.org) but more photos can be viewed on our facebook page at

<http://www.facebook.com/album.php?page=1&aid=144060&id=138506691184> - just cut and paste this link; you don't have to sign up or join to view the photos.

The Forum was well attended and provided an abundance of information and further questions about this key issue. A follow-up forum is being discussed as well. So, even if you missed the forum, take a look at the photos and watch the videos to learn more

The Future of High Speed Rail in our Area

Joan Gould

On Saturday, March 13, from 11am - 4 pm, the Empire State Passenger Association (ESPA) will hold its 30th Annual Meeting at the Holiday Inn in Schenectady . The meeting includes buffet lunch, keynote speaker Ann Purdue, Director, High Speed Rail Program, NYS Department of Transportation, and a chance to mingle with others who enjoy trains and train travel. ESPA is a volunteer network of citizens working to improve and expand the AMTRAK intercity passenger system.

There are many benefits to train travel. Trains are comfortable and convenient. Twelve trains stop in Schenectady daily; the travel environment is casual; you don't have to be at the station hours early for ever-changing security screening. Railroads are a low-friction, low energy form of transportation. New funding opportunities coming out of Washington seem to indicate that beneficial changes are coming our way and citizen input is an essential part of the process. Find out what role you can play in the process..

Health Committee Report

Submitted by Carol Furman, Health Committee Chair

Health Committee- The committee will meet next on March 8th at 1:30 pm at the Moon and River Cafe in downtown Schenectady. we are focused on planning for our April 7th program on health needs in Schenectady County. New members are welcome. Call Carol Furman at 346-2746 if interested in the committee or just join us at the next meeting.

Hold the date: A program " Health Needs in Schenectady County, Planning for Our Future" on April 7th 7-9pm at the McChesney Room of the main branch of the Schenectady Library.

Observer Corps Report

Submitted by Mary Maitino

Our next meeting will be on Wed., March 24, at 7:00 PM at the Rotterdam Library Branch. Please arrive so that we can start the meeting promptly at 7:00 PM, as we must leave by 8:15 PM. Please let me know whether or not you will be attending the meeting. New members are always welcome. Any questions, please call me: 377-3248.

Membership Committee Report

Submitted by Lynda Nichols, Membership Chair

We had completed our annual end of January membership report to the National LWV. Our current membership total is 161. For various reasons, we lost about 17 members since last January, and we gained about 20. We have a healthy membership number, which includes many active participants. But we always welcome more! Several of you are regularly on the lookout for acquaintances who might be interested in joining our League. Thank you for your enthusiasm and help. I await the names you give me so I can send information to interested persons! Keep those names coming!

Currently the Membership Committee is working on creating a postcard sized information card for our members to carry around with them. These cards will provide some information about our League, and our members can give them to people they meet who express interest in the League. And remember, lovely gift bags are available from Lynda if you choose to purchase a gift membership for someone you know. Contact Lynda 374-1643 for more information.

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

Calling All Cooks from Billie Day, President, LWVDC

The Washington DC League is preparing a recipe book in conjunction with the 90th birthday of the National League and our Chapter. The book will be edited by Goody Braun, whose byline, Goody Solomon, has appeared on food and nutrition articles in the local and national press for many years. "Old Ways Made New" and "Modernizing the Old Fashioned" are working titles for the volume, which will contain members' and friends' favorite recipes converted into modern, healthier, still delicious versions. All categories will be included.

Here's a chance to share your culinary skills and interests with others while benefiting the LWV. Please send your recipes to Goody (her email and snail mail addresses are below). She will update them and return revisions to you for review. If you already have updated and old versions, please send both to her. Brand new 21st century recipes also would be welcome. Ask your friends for contributions, too. Please note: these should be individual recipes. If a favorite comes from a cookbook, be sure to give an accurate reference. Also please indicate whether you want your name on the recipe – and include any anecdotal information you may wish, such as family history related to the recipe.

Email is preferred: goody.solomon@verizon.net. Or send by regular mail to Goody Braun, 1712 Taylor St. NW, Washington, DC 20011, by end of March, if at all possible. Or at least let Goody know by



Girl Scouts of Northeastern New York

Presents Healthy Living Symposium hosted by The Sage Colleges

Professional Day, March 12, 2010 • 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Girl & Family Day, March 13, 2010 • 9:00 am - 2:30 pm

The symposium will highlight the prevailing challenges faced by families, schools and the health care community as they promote healthy living and wellness habits to ensure sound health for life against strong social, environmental and media influences. Interactive sessions, lunch and much more

To register and for more information please visit: gsneny.org/HLS2010 or call Susan A. Stoddard at 447-6369.

SAVE THESE DATES:

Wednesday, April 7, 7-9 pm.

The Health Needs of Schenectady County

McChesney Room of the Central Library

Presented by Health Care speakers

From Ellis Hometown Health and The County Health Department

Wednesday, May 12

Working Group on Girls Community Forum



MARCH CALENDAR of Events

Mon, Mar 1...Environment Committee, 12 Noon, Moon & River Café, South Ferry St.

Tues, Mar 2... LWV Board, 1400 Keyes Ave., 5-7pm

Mon, Mar 8.....Health Committee, Moon and River Café, 1:30 pm.

Mon, Mar 8.... Working Group on Girls, 3:30pm, YWCA, Washington Ave.

Wed, Mar 10...Your Right to Know, Gazette Bldg, 7-9 pm.

Tues, Feb 16....

Wed, Mar 24...Observer Corps 7pm at the Rotterdam Library Branch

Wed, Mar 31...MOLST Meeting at Hospice, Union St..7-9 pm.

For Your Information:

*Schenectady County LegislatureMarch 9, 7 pm
6th floor, County Office Bldg.*

*Schenectady City CouncilMarch 8 & March 22, 7 pm
City Council Chambers, City Hall.*

*Duanesburg Town Board...March 11, 7:30 pm
Town Hall...895-8920*

*Glenville Town Board... March 3 & 17, 7:30 pm
Glenville Municipal Center...688-1200*

*Niskayuna Town Board...Tuesday (date varies)...7 pm
Niskayuna Town Hall...386-4510.*

*Princetown Town Board...March 9...7pm
Princetown Hall...355-3468*

*Rotterdam Town Board....March 10 & 24 ...7 pm
Kirvin Gov't. Center...355-7575*

Mission Statement: The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization. We encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. We work to increase the understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

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