


North Country Legislative Representatives

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Web: http://owens.house.gov

 **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: _____ \$50.00 Individual
(Check desired level) _____ \$70.00 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

March 2011 No. 7

7 Woodland Hills
Morrisonville, New York 12962

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First Friday Forum on **March 4th**

Redistricting Forum on **Feb. 26th**

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

LWV Plattsburgh Area Diversity Statement

“The League of Women Voters of the Plattsburgh Area is committed to diversity and pluralism. There shall be no barriers to participation in any League activity on the basis of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, religion, creed, economic status or political affiliation.”

Environmental Committee

Barbara Landes, Chairperson



Our committee had a first planning session with Karen McCarthy of Learn and Serve. We are starting the groundwork for the Environmental Global Youth

Awareness Fair. The date of said Fair is Sunday, **April 10, 2011 from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at the Champlain Mall.** Last year we had a good attendance for the event and hope all members will save the date to support the effort.

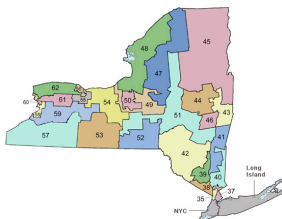


Reminder

**Redistricting Forum
February 26, 2011**

1-3

Plattsburgh Town Hall



Please encourage your family members, friends, and neighbors to attend this forum. Decisions made this year will affect us all for the next 10 years.

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. You will get a larger print if you use legal size paper.

Landes Contributes to On-Line Auction



The LWV of Plattsburgh is so fortunate to have many members with diverse talents. Barbara Landes is one such member. When asked to describe her artistic history, Barbara modestly says she likes to keep a low profile.

In Barbara’s words, “I have exhibited at the Cultural center and the Plattsburgh Library Member’s show. I have sold a couple items. I’m self taught and just enjoy the freedom of expression one gets from experimenting with art. I am happy to be able to contribute to the on-line auction and to save our League extra money to participate.” Thank you, Barbara for your generous donation.

Greetings from Florida



Hi everyone,

It is hard to believe that it is almost March. The League is winding up and down. Local program planning was done this past month with good discussion from the membership. But soon we’ll be planning our monthly meetings for next year. It was quiet in the Voter Service area because no spring primaries took place this year.

The February meeting had as its topic Migrant Workers. There is a large population of workers in Immokalee, that work the agricultural fields south east of Fort Myers. The speaker was a former migrant worker who works at a high school in this area but who also has worked for the Title I Migrant Programs as a home school liaison and migrant recruiter. He showed a film called “The Harvest” that showed the conditions and views of migrant workers in Texas and Minnesota.. They work from 5 am to 7 pm and make about \$64/week. About 400,000 children leave school each year to work in the fields. Two of three migrant children drop out of school to bring extra income to the family.

He said that role models are needed for the children and counselors for migrant workers. The undocumented migrant students don’t always know that they are ineligible for financial aid. In Immokalee, 32 high school students have college paid for them if they maintain their grades, are involved in the community, etc. He stressed that education is important.

He described the “Guest Program Worker” that unfortunately attracts individuals who do not know how to do agricultural work. For a family to get documented, the cost is about \$35,000 (immigration lawyers) and is a 5-6 yr. process.

With the increases in PMP, the league decided that dues had to be raised to maintain some money in our treasury. This has been done by many leagues already in Florida as well as in NY.

That’s all the news for now from sunny and warm Fort Myers, FL. I hope that spring will emerge soon for you.

Take care,
Stasia Arcarese

continued from p. 8 “Civil War”

so they did much of their work on their own or through local auxiliaries and relief societies. They, too, cooked and sewed for their boys. They provided uniforms, blankets, sandbags and other supplies for entire regiments. They wrote letters to soldiers and worked as untrained nurses in



makeshift hospitals. They even cared for wounded soldiers in their homes.

Many Southern women, especially wealthy ones, relied on slaves for everything and had never had to do much work. However, even they were forced by the exigencies of wartime to expand their definitions of “proper” female behavior.

A Women’s Proper Place?

During the Civil War, women especially faced a host of new duties and responsibilities. For the most part, these new roles applied the ideals of Victorian domesticity to “useful and patriotic ends.” However, these wartime contributions did help expand many women’s ideas about what their “proper place” should be. <http://www.history.com/topics/women-in-the-civil-war> <http://www.civilwarphotos.net/files/images/686.jpg>

League Urges House and Senate to Investigate FEC Failure

In a [letter](#) with coalition partners, the League urged House and Senate committee leaders to investigate and hold hearings on the systemic problems with the Federal Election Commission.

Dear Senators Lieberman and Collins and Representatives Issa and Cummings:

The under-signed organizations, dedicated to ensuring that federal candidates for public office abide by their legal obligations, respectfully urge your Committee to investigate and hold hearings on the systemic problems with the Federal Election Commission (FEC). The FEC is, without question, one of the most dysfunctional agencies in the federal government. The broad powers of each of the oversight committees make them well-suited to identify and bring real attention to the reasons why the FEC has ceased to comply with its statutory mandates.

The FEC is a broken agency that refuses to fulfill its basic statutory functions. Examples of the FEC's ineffectiveness are legion. Time and again, the FEC has either dismissed complaints because the Republican and Democratic Commissioners have rejected efforts by the professional staff to enforce the law, deadlocked in a three-to-three vote, or promulgated rules contrary to the law, resulting in orders from the court to rewrite those rules.

The FEC Commissioners are carrying out what can only be described as "agency nullification," failing to provide for any effective enforcement of the statutes within their purview. There are myriad explanations as to why the FEC is unable to operate effectively, including defects in its structure, composition, and appointment process. Americans expect their elections to be conducted in a fair, honest and lawful manner, but the agency

charged with ensuring the integrity of campaign financing is embarrassingly incapacitated. Put simply, the Commission is excessively political and ideological, and the enforcement process is therefore broken.

Our nation's laws should not be undermined by the agency charged with enforcement. It is up to Congress to write the laws and for the courts to determine the constitutionality of the laws. FEC Commissioners may not simply refuse to enforce laws based on their disagreement with the laws, or their predictions of how a court might rule if a law were challenged. Until Congress addresses these problems, candidates, donors, parties and outside spenders will continue to flout the laws with little fear of repercussion.

The status quo is unacceptable and the American public reasonably expects agencies charged with enforcing the laws to actually do so. Our organizations respectfully request that your Committee hold hearings to examine the root causes of the Commission's dysfunction. It is unacceptable that the only agency charged with enforcing campaign financing rules on our nation's highest elected officials is largely AWOL.

- Americans for Campaign Reform
- Campaign Legal Center
- Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)
- Common Cause
- Democracy 21
- League of Women Voters
- Public Campaign
- Public Citizen
- U.S. Public Interest Research Group (USPIRG)

The Informer

League of Women Voters
of the Plattsburgh Area



March 2011

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*League of Women Voters
First Friday Forum*

MARCH 4, 2011

12 Noon

Butcher Block Restaurant

Speaker: Carol Prevost-Meier

Topic: "Women and the Threads of Time"



RSVP by March 3rd to: Myra Decker
643-2742 or mystdek7@northnet.org

Cost: \$12.00 (no checks please)



Come and Join Us

February 26, 2011

"Redistricting Seminar"

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director
League of Women Voters of New York State
and Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director
LWVNYS, will be participating.

1:00-3:00 pm

Plattsburgh Town Hall
151 Banker Road



2011 Calendar

February 26, 2011	Redistricting Seminar
March 4, 2011	FFF - 12 noon
April 1, 2010	FFF - 12 noon

Report on February FFF

Notes from Kathy Felty

The February 4th FFF had as its speaker Jackie Vogl, Assistant VP for International Enrollment Management International Student Services. Her



Jackie Girard Vogl

presentation was titled "SUNY Worldwide: We are the World."

She told us about the substantial number of foreign students now studying at SUNY and the majors which they are enrolled in. The

numbers are highest for Business Administration. Jackie also gave us an idea of numbers who are of Asian, Spanish, Middle Eastern and other origins.

In answer to questions, Jackie talked about personal losses that students may experience when they leave their homes to study in this country. This may include things we take for granted every day such as familiar food, customs, and a common language.

In planning for foreign students, Jackie and her staff attempt to ensure that students are able to create positive experiences for themselves and to secure help where help is needed (such as with immigration issues).

Jackie noted that occasional visits to the nearby multicultural city of Montreal may be especially pleasurable to foreign students who may find there evidence of the country they have left for a while. (Regrettably, entrance to Canada requires a Visa at this time and not all foreign students have one.)

Jackie's and her staff attempt to provide help to students where it is needed. For example, they seek balance in requesting dormitory space. For

example, a few Asian students may do well together but an entire dormitory wing containing only Asian students may tend to diminish contact with nonAsian students.

Jackie's responsibilities extend far beyond the Plattsburgh campus where she and her staff provide information and assistance to students who wish to study abroad; students from other countries who wish to study here; and actively plan for and assist students after they reach the Plattsburgh campus.

In addition to these very substantial responsibilities, Jackie makes a number of trips to foreign countries each year for the purpose of visiting colleges with which SUNY Plattsburgh may eventually develop exchange programs.

Jackie's experience and commitment to student exchange programs, plus her ability to communicate in four foreign languages, make her an ideal person to serve as the director of SUNY Plattsburgh's student abroad program as it exists here in Plattsburgh for students from other countries and as it facilitates local residents who seek study abroad opportunities.



Kathy Wunderlich, Myra Decker, Jackie Vogl



Myra Decker, Jackie Vogl, Kathy Schumacher

March is Women's History Month

Women's History Month, now celebrated annually in the United States, grew out of a weeklong celebration of women's contributions to culture, history and society organized by the school district of Sonoma, [California](#), in 1979. The idea quickly caught on within communities, schools and organizations across the country. In 1981, the [U.S. Congress](#) made it official, passing a resolution establishing Women's History Week. Six years later, the event was expanded into the entire month of March. (<http://www.history.com/topics/womens-history-month>)

Women in the Civil War

Nearly 20,000 women worked more directly for the Union war effort. Working-class white women and free and enslaved African-American women worked as laundresses, cooks and "matrons," and some 3,000 middle-class white women worked as nurses. The activist [Dorothea Dix](#), the superintendent of Army nurses, put out a call for responsible, maternal volunteers who would not distract the troops or behave in unseemly or unfeminine ways: Dix insisted that her nurses be "past 30 years of age, healthy, plain almost to repulsion in dress and devoid of personal attractions." (One of the most famous of these Union nurses was the writer Louisa May Alcott.)

Army nurses traveled from hospital to hospital, providing "humane and efficient care for wounded, sick and dying soldiers." They also acted as mothers and housekeepers--"havens in a heartless world"--for the soldiers under their care.

Women of the Confederacy

White women in the South threw themselves into the war effort with the same zeal as their Northern counterparts. The Confederacy had less money and fewer resources than did the Union, however,

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What's NEW?

LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2011

The Board adopted the following LWVUS Legislative Priorities for 2011 at its meeting last weekend:

Clean Air Defense. Health Care Defense, Money in Elections (campaign finance reform); **Voter Registration, Election Administration**

The Legislative Watch List* is as follows: **CEDAW** (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women), **Climate Change, Ethics, Immigration, Safe Drilling and Mining** ("Fracking"). **The Watch List means that if an opportunity arises on these issues and does not interfere with action on an advocacy priority, the LWVUS may take action if it appears we can make an impact.*

The Board discussed many issues and the responses from members suggesting Legislative Priorities. The decisions were made based on what issues are likely to come before the 112th Congress, the opportunities to make an impact, program decisions made at the 2010 Convention, member interest and resources available to manage these priorities effectively. The Board reviews these priorities throughout the year, making changes if warranted.

Dates to Remember in March

March 3 Star Spangled Banner made U.S. National Anthem (1931)

March 9 Ash Wednesday

March 12 Girl Scouts of U.S.A. founded 1912

March 13 Daylight Savings: Turn Clocks **AHEAD** one hour

March 17 St. Patrick's Day

March 20 Spring Begins



continued from p. “Public Financing” system should be eliminated.” The *USA TODAY/Gallup* poll showed that more than 70 percent of the public supported continuing the presidential public financing system and only 20 percent said the system should be eliminated.

The *Citizens United* decision last year demonstrated just how essential it is to repair the presidential public financing system. An updated system would provide presidential candidates with a viable alternative way to finance competitive campaigns, without relying on influence seeking money. It would give average citizens and small donors a pivotal role to play in presidential elections, instead of presidential candidates being dependent on big donors, bundlers and corporate and other campaign spenders.

Legislation is expected to be re-introduced in the Senate shortly to modernize the presidential system. The key goal of this legislation is to greatly increase the role and importance of average citizens and small donors in presidential campaigns and to greatly decrease the role and importance of influence-seeking money. It is essential to the health and integrity of our democracy to defeat Senator McConnell’s legislation to kill the presidential public financing system. Our organizations strongly urge you to vote against S.194.

Honoring Women in the 112th Congress

Rachel’s Network and the League of Women Voters sponsored a swearing-in reception to honor the women



of the U.S. House of Representatives, 112th Congress, on January 5, 2011. [Watch the video.](http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=16627)
<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=16627>

LWV Celebrates 91st Birthday



Carrie Chapman Catt first proposed a League of Women Voters to work to end all discrimination against women. The League was found on Valentine’s Day, 1920, six months before the ratification of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote.

The heart of our mission—strengthening our democratic system and increasing the public’s participation—has not diminished. Today, we are a grassroots organization of 140,000 supporters and more than 800 Leagues throughout all 50 states.

We are also celebrating the tremendous strides we’ve made for voting rights and other critical issues in America — thanks, in large part, to the work of supporters like you. As we recognize this important anniversary, I wanted to share some thoughts on a few of last year’s accomplishments. [Click here to watch my special video message.](#)

Coming Soon: Earth Day – April 22, 2011

Every April, in communities around the globe, people come together to mark the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement – the first Earth Day, April 22, 1970 – and to demonstrate their commitment to environmental protection and sustainability. The theme of this year’s Earth Day is “A Billion Acts of Green,” a campaign to encourage individual green acts – to total one billion – in advance of the 2012 global Earth Summit in Rio.



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Pearlie Rabin, Jan Forsman, Cesca Hartnett

Action Alert

Keep Planned Parenthood Funding

There is a move afoot to remove Family Planning funding from Planned Parenthood. Specifically, the Pence Amendment would deny federal funding through Title X Family Planning from going to Planned Parenthood. This will be considered on the House floor during consideration of the Labor/HHS Appropriations Bill, which could occur at any time.

LWVUS has given us permission to lobby the New York delegation. It is particularly important to contact:

- Nan Hayworth, NY District 19, phone 202-225-5441. We are told she is leaning toward voting against the amendment. Call her office and urge her to vote against it;
- Richard Hanna, NY District 24, phone 202-225-3665. We are told he is leaning toward voting against the amendment. Call his office and urge him to vote against it;
- Michael Grimm, NY District 13, Staten Island, phone 202-225-3371. We are told he is leaning toward voting for the amendment. Call his office and urge him to vote against it.

Contact Your Member In Congress And Urge Him/her To Vote No On The Pence Amendment!

Action Alert



Clean Air Act Attack

The House of Representatives has unveiled a spending bill that will roll back and defund programs that control life-threatening pollution. This legislation will effectively stop the EPA from protecting America’s most vulnerable groups, such as seniors and children, in favor of protecting the bottom line of big polluters.

[Take action now](#) to tell your Representative to oppose any legislation that would block or prevent action to clean up our air and protect the most vulnerable Americans.

For decades the EPA has protected the health of children, seniors and all the rest of us from dangerous pollutants through the Clean Air Act. In just the last twenty years, carbon monoxide, which negatively affects those with heart and lung diseases, has been cut by seventy percent.

TAKE ACTION

1. Contact your Representative [now](#) and tell him or her to oppose any legislation that would block or prevent action to clean up our air and protect the most vulnerable Americans. You can also call your Representative at 202-225-3121.
2. Send this alert to other concerned citizens -- your grassroots network, your friends and coworkers. Encourage them to contact their elected leaders.

Action Alert

Protect America’s Health Care

[Take action now!](#) An attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act failed in the Senate yesterday by a 51-47 vote. Proponents of repeal have indicated that they will continue to raise the issue in the Senate. Please tell your Senators not to repeal the Affordable Care Act and to stand firm in support of this law which extends coverage to millions of uninsured Americans.



Capitol Beat Returns

The League of Women Voters of NYS is pleased to announce the return of "Capitol Beat." This informative and entertaining column, written by the LWVNY Legislative Director Barbara Bartoletti, will contain legislative updates about League issues, as well as political gossip. We will also outline the budget and of course, will chronicle the always-lively end of session. We have created a blog page for "Capitol Beat" on our League website, www.lwvny.org and we welcome your comments posted on this blog page. Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director

AND THE BEAT GOES ON.....

SAVE THE DATE: Sunshine Week 2011

On Friday, March 18, 12:00-1:30 PM (ET), the LWVEF again will co-host the Annual Sunshine Week National Dialogue. The event, "The Road Forward on Open Government," will be broadcast live via the web and is a great opportunity for Leagues to gain visibility on a core League issue. State and local Leagues are encouraged to host "viewing parties"—perhaps in conjunction with a local university or law library. Panelists will take questions from the live and viewing audience. To learn more, visit our event partner at www.OpenTheGovernment.org.

League Urges Senators to Oppose Repeal of Presidential Public Financing

The League and coalition partners sent a [letter to Senators](#) urging them to oppose legislation to repeal presidential public financing and support modernization legislation instead.



The letter follows:

Oppose Undermining Average Citizens and Small Donors and Turning Presidency Over to Big Givers, Bundlers and Corporate and Other Campaign Spenders Vote No on S.194

February 7, 2011

Dear Senator,

Our organizations strongly urge you to oppose S. 194, legislation introduced by Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell to repeal the presidential public financing system. The presidential public financing system needs to be repaired, not repealed.

The organizations include Americans for Campaign Reform, Brennan Center for Justice, Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, League of Women Voters, People For the American Way, Public Campaign, Public Citizen and U.S. PIRG.

The presidential public financing system has served the nation and presidential candidates of both major parties well for most of its 36-year existence.

The system has provided presidential candidates with the funds needed to mount viable candidacies and wage competitive campaigns, has provided more meaningful choices to voters and has helped to ensure that more candidates have the opportunity to share their views with the electorate. For many candidates, public funding has been the source of sorely needed funds at crucial points in their presidential races.

The presidential system has protected against government corruption and has given average citizens and small donors a vital role to play in our presidential elections. Senator McConnell's legislation to kill the presidential financing system would turn the presidency over to influence-seeking big givers, bundlers and corporate and

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other campaign spenders, at the great expense of the American people.

The presidential system became outmoded in recent years when the costs of campaigns outstripped the public funds being provided to participating candidates and when the frontloading of primary elections got out of hand in the presidential nominating process. Congress has made no adjustments in the presidential public financing system since it was first enacted in 1974.

The presidential financing system needs to be repaired and updated to again serve as a viable alternative system for presidential candidates to use in financing their campaigns. Presidential candidates have long recognized the value and importance of the presidential public financing system. Since 1976, the system has been voluntarily used by most candidates from both major parties. For example, every Republican presidential nominee from 1976 to 2008 used the presidential public financing system to finance their general election campaigns. This included President Gerald Ford, President Ronald Reagan (twice), President George H.W. Bush, Senator Bob Dole, President George W. Bush (twice) and Senator John McCain. Similarly all Democratic presidential nominees during this same period, with the exception of President Barack Obama, used the system to pay for their general election campaigns. This included President Jimmy Carter (twice), Vice President Walter Mondale, Governor Michael Dukakis, President Bill Clinton (twice), Vice President Al Gore and Senator John Kerry. President Ronald Reagan benefited from public financing as much as any candidate who has used the system, participating in the presidential public financing system for three of his presidential campaigns in 1976, 1980 and 1984. The Republican and Democratic parties also have requested and received public funds from the

system to pay for every presidential nominating convention from 1976 to 2008.

Recent editorials in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *USA TODAY* also have recognized the importance of the presidential financing system in calling for the system to be repaired and in opposing efforts to eliminate it.

President Obama recognized the importance of continuing the presidential financing system in calling for the system to be fixed and strongly opposing the effort in Congress to repeal the system. In a statement issued on January 25, 2011, the Obama Administration said: The Administration strongly opposes House passage of H.R. 359 because it is critical that the Nation's Presidential election public financing system be fixed rather than dismantled.

.....

After a year in which the *Citizens United* decision rolled back a century of law to allow corporate interests to spend vast sums in the Nation's elections and to do so without disclosing the true interests behind them, this is not the time to further empower the special interests or to obstruct the work of reform. Most importantly, the American people have recognized the importance of the presidential financing system as shown by a national poll taken at the end of the 2008 presidential campaign about the system. According to *USA TODAY* (October, 29, 2008): "A *USA TODAY/Gallup* Poll taken Tuesday [October 28, 2008] finds wide support for public financing of presidential campaigns, including a third who say the current voluntary system should be mandatory." According to the poll, "Four in 10 Americans say the nation should maintain the voluntary system, and 32% say candidates should be required to participate. Only 1 in 5 say the

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