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APRIL EVENTS

The Schenectady County League of Women Voters &
The Union College Department of Political Science
Present



HEALTH CARE REFORM

Can You Afford It?

Can You Afford It?

Wednesday, April 9 from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Speakers:

Paul Sorum MD.

Chairman, Physicians for National Health Care
Capital District Chapter.

Presenting: The Single Payer Solution

Paul Macielak,

President, New York Health Plan Association.

Presenting: The Views of Managed Care Health Plans

Moderator:

Melinda Goldner *Union College Dept. of Sociology*

College Park Hall
Union College
Nott St.

More information inside.

FRIENDLY LUNCH

Tuesday, April 29, 2008 at 12:00 noon
Brainstorming Session All members are welcome.
Congregation Gates of Heaven
Eastern Parkway

Bring your own lunch. We'll provide coffee & tea

Movie Night

“Iron Jawed Angels” about women’s suffrage
with Hillary Swank and Frank O’Connor;
Union College, College Park Hall, Nott St.
7 pm., Saturday, April 26.
Free Admission

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.

President: Joanne Tobiessen.....393-0477 Vice-President: Connie Young.....393-7061 Newsletter Editor: 346-7006

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Can You Afford It?

One of the Presidential campaign "Hot Topics" challenges each of us to consider what changes to the current health care system would help us, and which would hurt. Reform proposals under consideration offer a broad spectrum of ideas which are confusing to many people. The **League of Women Voters of Schenectady County and Union College** have joined forces to present an informative program on **Wednesday, April 9, from 7-9 PM** at Union College Park Hall, Nott Street, Schenectady. (*The former Ramada Inn*)

Paul Macielak, President of New York Health Plan Association (HPA) will present the views of 30 managed care health plans that provide comprehensive service to more than six million New Yorkers. HPA and its member plans are committed to supporting efforts to bring high quality, affordable and accessible health care to all New Yorkers; as well as improving health care outcomes for all.

Paul Sorum MD. Is Chairman of the Physicians for a National Health Program, Capital District Chapter (PNHP). Physicians for a National Health Program is a single issue organization advocating a universal, comprehensive single-payer national health program. PNHP has more than 15,000 members and chapters across the United States.

Professor Melinda Goldner, Union College Department of Sociology will serve as Moderator for the program.

For additional information please contact Pat Kessler at 374-2713 or email Patkessler@aol.com.

--- PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS 2008-9 ---

The Nominating Committee is very pleased that all members whose term will end in 2008 agreed to remain in their positions for another term.

The 2008 -2010 Slate of Officers is as follows: 2008 Nominating Committee will be:

First Vice President Connie Young	Irene Uzgiris, chair
Treasurer Sonya Rubenstein	Gwynne DeLong
Action/Financing Maxine Borom	Vaughn Nevin
Publicity Jacqueline Foster	
Editor Helen MacDonald	
Membership Lynda Nichols	

Submitted by the 2007 Nominating Committee

<i>Irene Uzgiris, chair</i>	<i>Connie Young, board rep.</i>
<i>IngeLise Pangburn</i>	<i>Lynda Nichols, board rep.</i>
<i>Betsey Chase</i>	

AWARDS Recently Bestowed Upon League Members

Karen B. Johnson received the "Civic Leadership Award" from Sage College's Academy for Character Education.

Eleanor Rowland is the recipient of the first "President's Circle Award" given by the YWCA of Schenectady.

Ruth Bonn will be honored by the YWCA as a "Woman of Achievement"

Malinda Myers was recently honored by the City Council and the County Legislature as a recipient of the "Unsung Heroine Award" given by the YWCA.

Report from the Judicial / AT Court Committee
Helga A. Schroeter, AT Court Co-Chair and Judicial Chair

On March 12, Connie Young, Inge Lise Pangburn, Maxine Borom, Laura Zeliger (E.D. of the Center for Community Justice and a member of our committee) and I attended a conference at SCCC entitled, Schenectady County "Systems Mapping" which was sponsored by the county's Probation Department in conjunction with the Office of Community Services. The conference had a very comprehensive representation from community agencies and law enforcement representatives who come into contact with clients of the mental health system along with criminal justice services. Apart from probation officers, mental health workers (e.g. Ellis Hospital), Schenectady Police and Sheriff's Deputies, County Court Judge Karen Drago, City Court Judge Christine Clark, Debbie Slack from the Public Defender's office and an Assistant District Attorney were in attendance.

Conference participants first "mapped" existing services and procedures when mental health candidates get involved in the criminal justice services, all the way to jail confinement and resolution of the cases. Along with interactions and co-operations between agencies involved, gaps and shortcomings in the system were identified as a first step towards finding solutions and more effective interaction. The conference was a good step towards finding solutions to work together to find more efficient, humane solutions in dealing with mentally ill people involved in the criminal justice system.

Our LWV committee hopes to continue to be involved as advocates in this process. We look forward to meeting with Mary Lolik, Director of Probation, after an official report has been received from the results of the conference.

Below is an excerpt from a statement made to the Schenectady City Council on Monday, March 10, 2008 by Helga Schroeter as Judicial Chair and representative to the Schenectady Committee for Social Justice.

I am here tonight to urge your continued strong support of Public Safety Commissioner Bennett, along with your ongoing commitment to the position of a Public Safety Commissioner. The city is very fortunate in having Mr. Bennett's strong leadership skills, as he addresses the ongoing issues facing the Police Department. He needs your clear and full support in his endeavors.

The League has taken very clear positions in the area of oversight, record-keeping and openness of all governmental units at national, state and local levels. It has been a strong supporter of the Police Civilian Review Board. As you know, the local League has a representative on the Review Board! We urge you to strengthen the board's effectiveness by speeding up the review process from the time complaints are received to the final findings of the board and by assuring that the results are publicized. The board's investigator also needs your full support.

Finally, in order to foster greater trust and public confidence in the work of the Police Department, it is of utmost importance to invest in recruiting new officers who more closely resemble the ethnic and racial make-up of the city's population. Therefore, we urge you to be as creative and pro-active as possible to obtain that goal which is strongly supported by Commissioner Bennett.

Thank you very much for allowing me to share the League's concerns with you tonight!

President's Column

Greetings,

During our November 'Friendly Lunch' at City Hall to meet our elected officials, we heard recommendations including a suggestion that we put our energy into 'getting out the vote.'

Your Board began to think about this request. In recent years we have put on candidate forums, which are competing for an audience with similar forums, particularly in the City. Is this the best use of our limited resources?

We want to have the most impact. Would we better serve our civic institutions and electorate by offering other programs and services?

We've decided to brainstorm this topic of how we could best get out the vote. We need the ideas and perspectives of recent and long-time members.

Plan to attend our 'Friendly Lunch' at noon on Tuesday, April 29th, at Congregation Gates of Heaven. Bring your lunch; we'll provide coffee and tea. Let's use our creativity and see where we might go from here!

Also, thought provoking entertainment: we are joining BPW in sponsoring the feature length film "Iron Jawed Angels" being shown at Union College (College Park Hall/former Ramada on Nott Street) at 7pm on Saturday, April 26th. This is the true story of how defiant and brilliant young activists, Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, took the women's suffrage movement by storm, putting their lives at risk. It is a riveting and disturbing film starring Hilary Swank and Frances O'Connor. Open to the public. No admission.

Hope to see you at all of our April programs!

Joanne

HELPING FAMILIES COPE WITH DIVORCE

The New York State Parent Education and Awareness Program of the New York State Office of Court Administration is an initiative of Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye, and is Chaired by the Hon. Evelyn Frazee, a Supreme Court Justice in Rochester. Parent education is offered by certified providers to help separating or divorcing parents better understand the effects of their breakup on their children and to give them information and ideas about how to make the new family situation easier and more livable for themselves and their children.

Please check the website at www.nycourts.gov/ip/parent-ed for a list of certified providers. The Programs are certified through our Office, and can then accept orders or referrals from the Family Courts or the Supreme Court matrimonial parts. Parents can self refer and agencies can refer them too. Locally, classes are offered in downtown Schenectady by Cheryl Vallee, 518-461-2289 or cebvallee@nycap.rr.com.

Check out our website at www.lwvschenectady.org .

Environment Committee Report

Nancy Peterson, Chair

The Environment Committee is sponsoring a program at the McChesney Room on April 7 at noon. The presenter is Jason Pelton showing a Power Point about the Great Flats Aquifer. Mr. Pelton is very knowledgeable about the Aquifer and will be able to answer questions after the presentation.

Our Greening Schenectady program on March 12 was well-attended and very informative. We had Gazette coverage both before and after the event. Unfortunately, there were a few inaccuracies in the follow-up. The most glaring was the reference to me as Chair of the LWV Climate Change Committee. My letter to the editor regarding this was not printed.

Our monthly Environment Committee meeting will follow the presentation. We welcome new members.

Membership Committee Report

Lynda Nichols, Chair

At their March meeting, the Membership Committee decided to clearly outline the membership dues collection procedures. We made a few minor changes in the existing procedures, but our main purpose was to outline clearly in written form just what the procedures are.

The main thing for members to understand is that we will be collecting the 2009 dues for a set period of time, not for the months and months as we did this year. The collection period will be July 1 through October 31. (Dues will be collected for the next fiscal year at the June Annual Meeting for those who wish to pay early.) Our fiscal year is July 1 through June 30, and membership dues are for that period of time.

In future Bulletins I will describe other parts of the dues collections process. For now let me say that the Membership Committee is trying to clarify dues collection so that all members understand what is happening, when it will happen, and why we are doing things that way. If any member has a suggestion concerning dues, please contact Lynda Nichols.

The Membership Roster for 2008 has now been printed. Lynda will have copies to give to members at upcoming events. Contact Lynda 374-1643 or at nicholsl@nycap.rr.com if you are unable to come to events and receive your copy.

Blair Horner Returns to NYPIRG

Press Release from LWVNYS

Albany, NY - The League of Women Voters of New York State (LWVNYS) is thrilled to welcome Blair Horner's return to the New York Public Research Group (NYPIRG). Blair has been a trusted colleague for many years working with the League to create a more open, transparent, and accountable government here in New York State. We look forward to working with Blair and NYPIRG on many issues including government reform, healthcare, and the environment.

APRIL MEETINGS

Tuesday, **April 1**...Board Meeting, 4 pm. Connie Young's, 1400 Keyes Ave.

Monday, **April 7**...Meeting on the Aquifer and Environment Committee, Noon, McChesney Room Schenectady County Public Library.

Monday, **April 7**... Working Group on Girls, 3 pm, Girls' Inc. planning May forum on bullying.

Wednesday, **April 9**... **Health Care Reform, 7-9, College Park Hall.**

Tuesday, **April 29**...Friendly Lunch, Noon, Get Out the Vote Brainstorming, Congregation Gates of Heaven.

SAVE THESE DATES;

Wednesday, May 14,... Working Group on Girls presents A Community Forum... *U R Ugly...When the Bully Is a Girl (What to look for; how to respond)*, 7-9 pm, 1st Reformed Church.

Tuesday, May 27...Picnic at Water Treatment Plant, noon, Lock 9

Wednesday, June 11...Annual Dinner, 5:30-8, Turf Tavern.

Check out our website at www.lwvschenectady.org