



**The LOCAL VOTER**  
**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**  
**SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN AREA**

APRIL 2007

Syracuse Metro LWV  
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**Web Sites:**

Local: [www.lwvsyr.org](http://www.lwvsyr.org)  
 State: [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)  
 National: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

**What's Wrong With This Picture ?**



**JOIN US FOR A BOOK SIGNING & PRESENTATION  
 BY MARK BITZ, AUTHOR OF *CREATING A  
 PROSPEROUS NEW YORK STATE.***

**WEDNESDAY  
 APRIL 25TH - 7:00 PM  
 BORDERS BOOKS CAFÉ, 2ND FLOOR  
 CAROUSEL CENTER**

**EARTH  
 DAY**



APRIL 22, 2007

**UPCOMING LEAGUE EVENTS**

- April 10th  
Voting Systems Forum
- April 23rd  
Reform NY Rally - Albany NY
- April 25th  
Mark Bitz, Founder of FREE NY  
Borders Books Carousel Center
- May 1st  
Law Day Event
- May 18 -20  
LWVNY Convention
- June 14th  
LWV Annual Meeting

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Faced with a decision to sell, or transfer a sixth-generation business to his children in a state with limited promise, Bitz decided to retain the business for now and help New York State out of its darkness. Frustrated with the state's continuing loss of businesses, capital, talent and young adults, as well as with its poor record in educating a large portion of its youth, Mark penned his book documenting the state's fifty year decline, the reasons for the decline and twelve initiatives to reverse the decline.

Of interest to all New York State voters, Mark delineates the state's income growth, employment, population growth, high school graduation rate, average SAT scores health insurance coverage, transportation system quality, and poverty rates relative to other states. He exposes how New York State leaders have taken the number one economy in the world in 1950 to its present 44th place among the 50 states. He identifies how elected officials become liked locally, exchange favorable laws and benefits for campaign contributions, and are reelected despite the state's continuing decline. Most importantly, Mark outlines twelve initiatives to improve New Yorkers' lives and the actions individual voters can take to ensure their implementation.

Mr. Bitz is the owner of Plainville Turkey Farm and a member of the Syracuse Metro League of Women Voters. For more information go to [www.FreeNYS.org](http://www.FreeNYS.org).

**Syracuse Metro LWV  
Annual Dinner & Business  
Meeting  
Justin's Grill  
June 14th - 6:00 pm**



**Guest Speakers:  
County Legislator Jim Farrell  
Citizen Activist Sarah McIlvain**

**What the future holds for our community - How can we build on our strengths and develop our potential for a sustainable 21st Century?**

## Naturalization Ceremonies

Volunteers are needed to register new citizens at this year's Naturalization Ceremonies. If you have not participated in this League activity, please consider offering a few hours of your time to help us out. The new citizen ceremonies are held at the Federal and State Court Houses. You will find the ceremony inspiring as new citizens from around the world are grateful to call the United States their new home. For more details please contact Susan Bush at the YWCA - 424-0040.

## Naturalization Schedule

April 12 - 11am	Federal Bldg. Room 5
April 26 - 2 pm	County Court House, Room 400
May 24 - 2 pm	County Court House, Room 400
June 28 - 2 pm	County Court House, Room 400
July 6 - 11am	Federal Bldg. Ceremonial Court
Aug. 16 - 2pm	County Court House, Room 400
Sept. 20 - 11am	Federal Bldg. Ceremonial Court
Sept. 20 - 2pm	County Court House, Room 400
Oct. 18 - 2pm	County Court House, Room 400
Oct. 25 - 11am	Federal Bldg. Ceremonial Court
Nov. 8 - 11am	Federal Bldg. Court Room 5

**LOST & FOUND :** *We have a black winter hat with a London Fog label at the office. It was left at our Program Planning meeting in January. Please call the office at 448-7199 if it is yours.*



## Officers

President...	Roberta Millert
Vice-President ....	Janet Mallan
Treasurer....	J. Arthur Johnson
Secretary....	Mary Lou Green

## Directors

Advocacy....	Joan Johnson
Fund-Raising...	Open
Membership....	Janet Mallan
Public Relations...	Holly Hoehner
Local Advocacy	Lenore Rapalski
Voter Service....	Joan Durant
At-Large .....	Adam Bushey
At-Large.....	Elizabeth Nicoletti-
Program....	Open

## Off-Board Positions

Budget Director....	Rhonda Hungerford
Nominating Committee.....	Debra Merryweather
	Mary Lou Green
	Barbara Olum
	Joan Johnson
	Eleanor Feitler
Lake Partnership....	Reginald Durant
Optical Scan Liaison...	Lenore Rapalski
Newsletter.....	Roberta Millert
	Joan Johnson

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information please call the League office at (315) 448-7199 or e-mail: [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org)

## Diversity Statement

The Syracuse Metropolitan League of Women Voters is committed to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any League activity on the basis of age, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, or national origin.

We look forward to reader participation and invite your questions regarding issues and columns. Kindly mail your queries to the office or e-mail to [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org)

Please let us know your email address.

- It is the most efficient way to communicate
  - You will be notified of upcoming local events
  - LWV National & State Action Alerts
- Your e-mail address will not be shared or sold.

# Message from the President

On July 1<sup>st</sup> the Syracuse Metro League of Women Voters will be starting a new year. We will be voting on a new budget, program, and Board of Directors at our Annual Meeting on June 14th. Open board positions include Secretary and President. Our nominating committee has been working very hard trying to find qualified members that are willing to step up to the plate and lead the Syracuse League.

The majority of the current Board has served for over 7 years, and now it's time for other members to take the helm. Don't assume someone else will do it. Several Leagues in New York State have folded because of the lack leadership. Don't let this happen to the Syracuse League. We were one of the first Leagues formed after women received the right to vote over 87 years ago. Let's make sure the Syracuse League celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

The League of Women Voters has evolved over the years but has stayed true to its roots as a non-partisan resource for voter education. We are a diverse organization of men and women focused on *Making Democracy Work!* The Leagues in New York State have been very active in reforming the state legislative process.

I urge you to please consider joining the Board or leading the Syracuse League as President. I understand taking on a leadership position can be scary but you will have the support of many dedicated long time board members. You will have the satisfaction of knowing you are leading an organization that is highly respected by citizens and elected officials alike.

Please do not hesitate to call a member of the nominating committee or me if you have questions about the open Board positions or interested in leading the League.

**Roberta Millert**

## UPCOMING EVENTS

April 10 - 7:00 AM - 9:00 PM  
State United Teachers Office,  
Brittonfield Office Park  
Info: Jerry Lotierzo: [glotierz@twcny.rr.com](mailto:glotierz@twcny.rr.com)

Forum on Paper Ballot/Precinct Based Optical Scanners with NY Ballot Marking Devices - Sponsored by CNY Alliance for Retired Americans, Syracuse Metro LWV, Greater Syracuse Progressive Coalition, Syracuse Peace Council & Working Families party

April 23 - 11:00 AM - 1 PM

Reform Day - Albany NY

April 25th - 7:00 PM  
Lecture & Book Signing Event  
Borders Books Café - Carousel Center

Mark Bitz, Founder of "Free New York"  
Author of *Creating a Prosperous New York: Making Elected Officials Accountable for New York State's Performance Relative to Other States*

May 1st  
County Convention Center

Law Day Event Luncheon with the Onondaga Bar Onondaga Student Voter Registration & Essay Contests

May 18th - 20th

LWVNY Convention - White Plains

June 14th - 6:00 PM  
Justin's Grill

Annual Business Meeting & Election of League Officers

## 2007 LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

Our annual Legislative Breakfast, a time to meet and greet our state legislators was again a great success.

Pictured from left to right are Joseph Burns (representing Senator John DeFrancisco), Assemblymembers William Barclay, William Maganarelli, Joan Christensen and Albert Stirpe, Jr. and event coordinator, Nina Tamrowski. Senator David Valesky also sent a representative.



Our Celebrity Book Raffle, also held at the Breakfast, was a huge success. Thank you to all who purchased raffle tickets to help support our activities. Winners were: 1st Place - Adam Bushey, 2nd Place - Minna Buck, 3rd Place - Betty Lourie and 4th Place - Debra Merryweather.

**Additional photos of the Legislative Breakfast can be found on our website [www.lwvsyr.org](http://www.lwvsyr.org)**

### NEWS FROM THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Nominating Committee has been hard at work preparing a slate of officers for next year. If you would like serve on the



Board or if you know a member who would be an excellent addition to our Board, please let us know. We are also looking for people to serve on our various committees.

Serving on the board or a committee is the best way to learn more about the League and to meet other members. Give it some thought!

Contact Debra Merryweather, chair of the Nominating Committee at 455-5210 or call the office at 448-7199.

***Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year but when you volunteer you vote everyday about the kind of community you want to live in. - Marjorie Moore, Mind Eyes Information Services, Belleville, IL.***

### WHAT KEEPS THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ALIVE?

We say we value our Syracuse League, but what is required to keep it alive and growing?

**TIME:** Registering voters and informing the public on vital issues such as new voting machines require people power. LWV values cannot continue without members willing to help occasionally or throughout the year. The more who participate, the better and more easily our LWV can make a difference. Without you something we all value can't happen. Please help with a single activity, join one of our committees, or become a board member at-large by calling 448-7199 or emailing [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org).

**INVITATIONS:** Bring others to LWV events. Invite a neighbor to come with you to meet and hear Mark Bitz at Borders on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Take someone with you to register voters at a naturalization ceremony or on Law Day. Help your LWV grow stronger by turning friends into members.

**MONEY:** Yes, but only \$5.40 of your membership dues stays in Syracuse. The State LWV receives \$18.00 and the National LWV receives \$26.30 to sustain their important work. We try hard to make your local \$5.40 cover publications, local activities, and office and mailing expenses effectively and efficiently. Additional contributions, unrestricted to Syracuse Metro LWV or tax-deductible to LWV Education Fund, are always appreciated and needed.

**Your response in one, two or all three areas will help ensure what you value about the LWV will not disappear.**

## LWVNYS POSITION IN BRIEF - GOVERNMENT

We continue our series on LWVNYS positions. This month we present our position on Government.

The League of Women Voters of the United States defines the fundamental goals of the government program and action to: Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable, and responsive.

The League works at all levels of government to improve legislative procedures, assure equitable representation and protect the rights of all Citizens.

- ◆ Support of standards to ensure equitable representation in the State Legislature and the Congress
- ◆ Support of improved measures to provide representation for legislative districts in case of a vacancy.
- ◆ Support of responsive and responsible legislative processes which increase the roll of the individual member and the committee system.
- ◆ Support of effective lobbying and ethics regulation.
- ◆ Support of procedural reforms in the constitutional convention process to promote openness and nonpartisanship.



***If liberty and equality, as thought by some, are chiefly found in democracy, they will be best attained when all persons alike share in the government to the utmost - Aristotle***

## LWVNY CONVENTION 2007 - BIG LEAGUE RAFFLE

The Big League Raffle is back as part of Convention 2007, Reaching Out/Reaching In. It is an opportunity to raise some funds for the state and local Leagues and for an individual to win some cash. This raffle is a partnership with local Leagues that provides all of the benefits to local Leagues without the headaches. This is a win-win opportunity. Last year's raffle netted over \$17,000 with over \$6,487 given out in prizes, \$3,045 rebated to local Leagues, and an additional \$324 awarded to the League that sold the winning ticket. Tickets are being printed and will be sent to local Leagues on April 1, 2007. Tickets and money must be returned to the state League by close of business, May 14, 2007.



THE STAKES ARE HIGH - PLEASE PARTICIPATE



### TELL THE GOVERNOR NY VOTERS DESERVE THE BEST

New York State is about to undergo an enormous change in the way our elections are conducted. Soon all our lever machines will be replaced with a new way to cast our ballots. It is crucial that the State get the choice of voting systems right the first time. Adopting flawed electronic touch screen voting machines (DRE's) would be a mistake we cannot afford to make. There is a better choice: paper ballots counted with ballot-scanners, with accessible ballot-marking devices to make sure everyone can vote independently and privately.

The current plan allows each county to choose its own voting system. This will lead to a disastrous patchwork of expensive touch screen DRE's administered by under-trained staff and poll workers. We'll see long lines at the polls; frustrated voters; questionable results; subsequent legal challenges and confusion resulting from a mix of different systems.

#### DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN

**Send a Fax to Governor Spitzer:** Tell him there is only one choice for New York - a single statewide voting system using paper ballots, precinct based optical scanners and accessible ballot marking devices.

**Contact Senators John DeFrancisco and David Valesky:** Ask them to co-sponsor, with Assembly-members Galef and Lifton, a NYS Bill requiring a single, statewide paper ballot counted on precinct based optical scan voting system.

If you can use email go to [www.NYVV.org](http://www.NYVV.org) for further instructions.

**Bo Lipari, Executive Director, New Yorkers for Verified Voting Verified Voting**

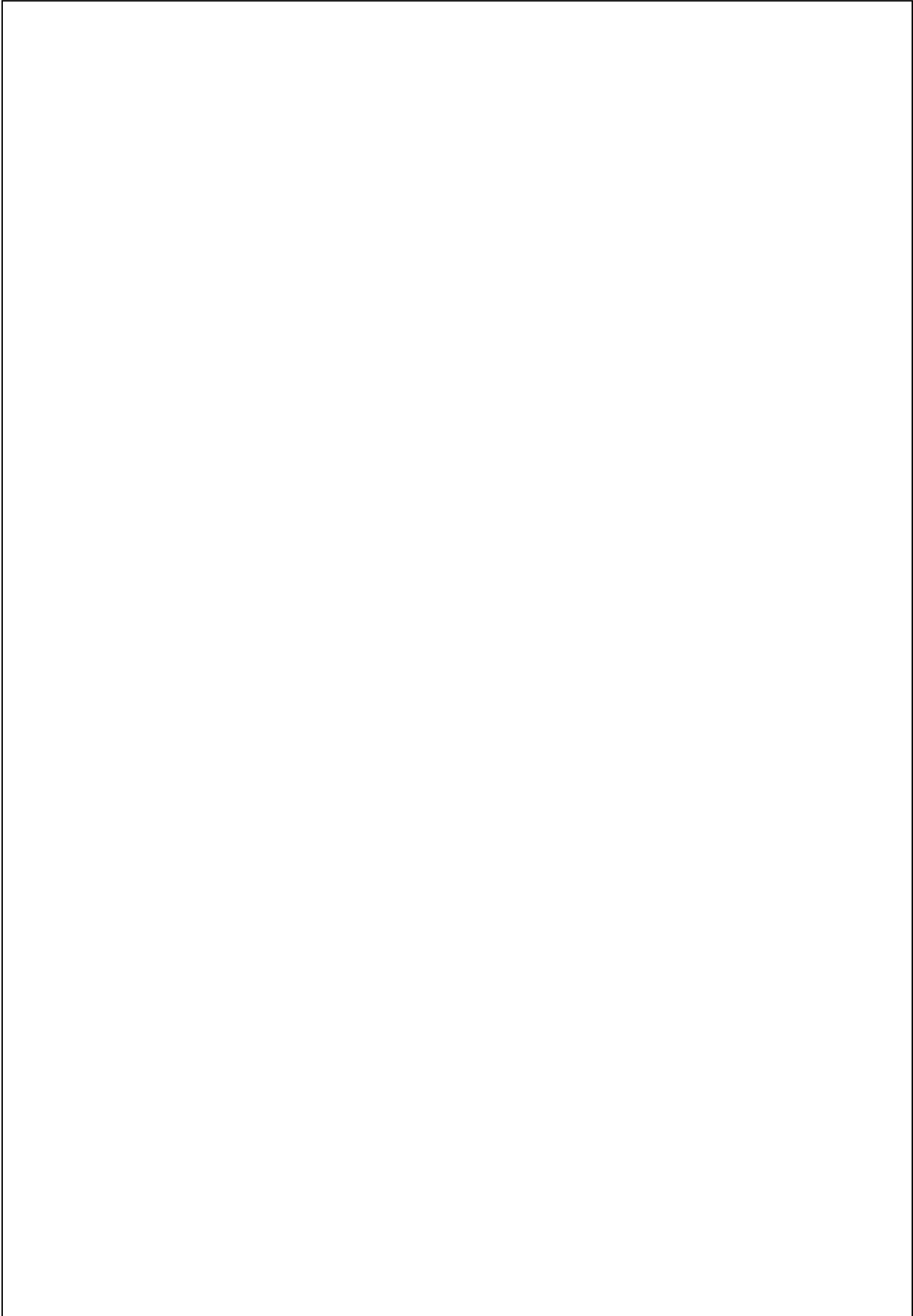
### MAKE OVER FOR LWVNY

The League of Women Voters of New York State has undergone a virtual makeover! We have a brand new website. Please take some time to browse the new website and you will see a new and less complicated home page that is more esthetically pleasing. The purpose in revamping was to create a site that was easier for League members as well as visitors. We found tht the old site, particularly the home-page, ws too League-centered and was loaded with acronyms. It was neither welcoming to non-League visitors nor helpful in providing an immediate synopsis of the LWVNY.

Additionally, from a technical perspective, it was cumberson and difficult to maintain. We thank our Web Mistress, Debra Drake, for all her work. She put in many, many hours of design time beyond the hours of design time for which she was paid. Thank you, Deb!

*News From Your State League  
March 2007*





**League of Women Voters  
Membership Application**

*Democracy is not a spectator sport  
It's efficient activism*

*It is a way to make your voice count  
It is a way to make politics a process for the people*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ *Individual Level....\$50*

\_\_\_ *Household Level\*...\$65*

\_\_\_ *Student Level \*\*....\$25*

\* *Two members in the same household*

\*\* *Full time student under 25*

*Please make check payable to:*

*Syracuse Metro Area League of Women Voters*

*P O Box 11866*

*Syracuse, NY 13218*

**For more information call us at (315) 448-7199 or visit us at [www.lwvsyr.org](http://www.lwvsyr.org)**



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**Non-Profit  
Organization  
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