



The LOCAL VOTER
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN AREA

Aug/Sept 2007

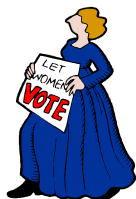
Syracuse Metro LWV
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Web Sites:

Local: www.lwvsyr.org
 State: www.lwvny.org
 National: www.lwv.org

August 26, 1920 -

Signing of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote



Mark Your Calendar

Sept. 6th - Fall Kick-Off
 Sainte Marie Among the Iroquois
Sept. 18th - New York State Primary
 Polls open 12 Noon - 9 PM
Oct. 20th
 LWVNY Ida Trager Workshop
Nov. 6th Election Day
 Polls open 6 AM - 9 PM
Nov. 20th LWVNY U N Event
 Briefings on the Effects of War on Women Around the World

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Have you seen Onondaga Lake at night while sitting under the stars?



Do you care about the future of the lake?

Have you toured the site of the first French mission in Onondaga County?

SATISFY YOUR CURIOSITY
 ON
 THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH
 AT
 SAINT MARIE AMONG THE IROQUOIS,
 ONONDAGA LAKE PARKWAY,
 LIVERPOOL

JOIN THE SYRACUSE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
at
5:00 P.M. FOR A TOUR
5:30 P.M. FOR A SALAD & DESSERT SUPPER
6:30 P.M. FOR AN UPDATE ON ONONDAGA LAKE
BY DIANE CARLTON
OF THE
NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT
OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

R.S.V.P. by September 4th at the LWV office at 448-7199

THE EVENT IS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

JOIN US AND BRING A FRIEND !

BOARD NOTES

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

We mourn the passing of **Betty Wiles**. Betty was a past president of the League and a member for over 50 years. Her many accomplishments include founder of the International Center of Syracuse and the recipient of the Post Standard Woman of Achievement Award.

We welcome new members, **Beverly Congel** and **Jean Congel**. Beverly and Jean are sisters-in-law and live in Liverpool.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Our fiscal year ended June 30, 2007 and membership renewal letters have been mailed. If you have not yet renewed your membership, please do so soon. If you have misplaced your letter, you may use the form on the last page of this newsletter. Your support is needed to carry out our local programs and to support the National and State Leagues as well.

THANK YOU!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES

Volunteers are needed to register new citizens. If you have not participated in this League activity, please consider offering 1-2 day time hours to distribute voter registration forms, explain how to fill them out, collect any that have been completed and return them to the Board of Elections. We will arrange for a partner to assist you the first time. 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.

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
Dec. 13 - 2pm County Court House, Room 400

THANK YOU



Officers

President... Joan Johnson
1st Vice-President Janet Mallan
2nd Vice-President/Membership... Mary Lou Green
3rd Vice-President/Public Relations... Gwen Grant
Treasurer.... J. Arthur Johnson
Secretary.... Vacant*

Directors

Advocacy& Issues.... Lenore Rapalski
Fund-Raising... Elizabeth Nicoletti
Program.... Rae Rohfeld

Off-Board Positions

Budget Director.... Rhonda Hungerford
Nominating Committee..... Roberta Millert, Chair
Eleanor Feitler
Barbara Olum
Onondaga Lake Partnership.... Reginald Durant
Optical Scan Liaison..... Lenore Rapalski
Technical Support.... Roberta Millert
Publications.... Vacant

***Serving on the Board is the best way to learn what league is all about. If you are a new member, please consider serving as our secretary. It's not a difficult or involved job. The Board meets about 9 times a year. Questions? Call us at 448-7199 or email president@lwvsyr.org.**

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 to 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

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. Please respond to info@lwvsyr.org

Message from the President

“Election Season” has arrived. The signs are finding their way to front yards and the literature will soon be arriving in the mail. What has often been referred to as an “off year election,” meaning that we neither elect federal or state officials, is often the most important election you will vote in. In an off year election we choose leaders who are the easiest to access and our first avenue in solving a problem, but many citizens fail to participate in these elections. Electing good men and women on the local level also provides the opportunity for good people to seek higher office.

Unique to this year’s “off year election” will be the election of a new County Executive - our third county executive since 1961 when the citizens of Onondaga passed a referendum establishing separate legislative and executive branches. The league is ready to participate in forums and events to inform the public about the candidates.

We begin the league year with a “Kick-Off” Salad & Dessert meal followed by an update on Onondaga Lake. The lake has been a part of our Local Program for as many years as most of us can remember. The event will take place at St. Marie Among The Iroquois. Overlooking the lake, the museum will set the atmosphere for our speaker, Diane Carlton (NYS DEC), to brief us on the progress of one of our most overlooked and misused assets. Please join us for a tour of the museum, good food and a lesson on the progress of efforts to revitalize the lake and its watershed.

Joan Johnson, President

Can You Hear Me Now?

We smile at the old phone ad “Can You Hear Me Now?” But how far does our LWV voice carry? The more LWV members we have, the stronger and farther our voice is heard throughout the Syracuse area.

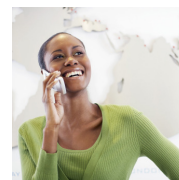
How can you extend our range? Invite a coworker, friend, neighbor, or relative to **come with you** to the September 6th event at the Sainte Marie Among the Iroquois facility and other upcoming gatherings.

Give, call or email me the names and addresses of people you know who are interested in things related to LWV issues, such as improving the environment locally or meeting and questioning local candidates for office. I’ll send some LWV information and personally invite them to our next event.

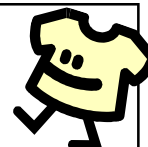
Two key ways to help our LWV become even stronger, more respected, and more effective are **INVITE. Invite, invite** and **ASK, Ask, ask** to join with us in helping democracy work.

And **REMEMBER** - whether you are a financial supporter or a more involved LWV participant, your voice adds strength to helping our League voice be heard.

Mary Lou Green, Vice President
Membership



WE NOW HAVE LEAGUE T-SHIRTS FOR SALE - \$10.00
HELP US PROMOTE THE LEAGUE AND ENCOURAGE CITIZENS TO VOTE
CALL THE OFFICE AT 448-7199 FOR DETAILS



SHOULD NEW YORK STATE JOIN THE COMPACT FOR A NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE?

Delegates attending the LWVNYS State Convention in May approved a study to determine if New York State should join the Compact for a National Vote.

What is the Compact for a National Vote? Essentially it is a state-based plan for electing the president by a national popular vote. If you were one of the people who were disheartened in 2000 when the Electoral College gave the Presidency to George W. Bush even though Al Gore won the national popular vote, this study may be of interest to you.

What is the National Popular Vote Plan?

- ◆ Each state participating in the plan would award all of their electoral votes to the presidential candidate receiving the most popular votes nationwide (in all 50 states and the District of Columbia).
- ◆ The National Popular Vote plan would take effect only when the plan has been enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes – that is 270 of the 538 electoral votes. This guarantees that the presidential candidate receiving the most popular votes nationwide would win enough electoral votes in the Electoral College to become president.
- ◆ The proposed National popular Vote plan is state legislation in the form of an "interstate compact." An interstate compact is the legal vehicle that the Founders placed in the Constitution to enable the states to address a common problem by coordinated action.
- ◆ The plan recognizes the inherent power granted to the states in the Constitution to employ the most suitable method for casting their electoral votes

What is the current LWVUS position on the Election of the President and will the study adhere to our position?

The League's position on the Selection of the President calls for the direct-popular-vote method of electing the President and Vice-President, and therefore the abolition of the Electoral College. We will not be studying whether to elect the president by nationwide popular vote or whether we should eliminate the Electoral College. We will be studying whether New York State should join the compact for the National Vote.

Lenore Rapalski, our Issues and Advocacy Director, sits on the State Committee to study the issue. If you are interested in serving on a local committee, please contact Lenore at:

lrapski@verizon.net
315-652-9112

It is an interesting concept. To learn more about the issue go to:

www.nationalpopularvote.com.



CITIZEN FACT-CHECKERS PROJECT

A Project of the Syracuse League of Women Voters, the Onondaga Citizens League and Syracuse University

This is a collaborative project planned as an educational service to the community. It follows up on the creation by the League of Women Voters and the Onondaga Citizens League of a Fair Campaign Practices Committee in 2006. The Citizen Fact-Checkers will analyze political ads and disseminate reports to the public on the accuracy of the content. The project's mission is to assist voters in determining the accuracy and intent of political advertisements so that they can exercise their vote with confidence.

We have recruited 15 people, split into teams of three, who will spend a few hours each week from early August to the general election on November 6th to work on this project.

The recruits were schooled in political fact-checking and the dynamics of political campaigning by Prof. Charlotte Grimes of the Newhouse School of Public Communications and Professors Robert McClure, Grant Reehner, and Danny Hayes of the Maxwell School of Citizenship at Syracuse University. Political reporters John Mariani and Fred Pierce from the *Post-Standard* also made presentations during the two-day workshop. Prof. Kathryn Lee, chair of the public relations department at Newhouse, will be responsible for disseminating the reports to local news media, print and electronic, and serves as an advisor to the project. Prof. Hayes will conduct exit polls at randomly selected polling places to ask voters if they have read the reports and been influenced by them in their voting decisions.

Janet Mallan,
Project Coordinator

LOCAL PROGRAM – 2007 -2008 (amended)

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK

- Promote greater citizen participation in the political process encouraging citizens to become knowledgeable about the issues and to actively lobby elected officials.
- Encourage participation in campaigns and running for office.
- Encourage individuals to exercise their right to vote.
- Continue the project to increase voter participation in low-turnout neighborhoods within the city of Syracuse.
- Continue the project to increase voter participation among youth.
- Establish action projects for members to accompany monthly themes at meetings.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT. Program item:

- Study and support, where appropriate, *(legislation which promotes proposals to modernize local government by sharing services among villages, towns, public schools, the city of Syracuse and County of Onondaga County)*.
- Support efforts to contain sprawl with planned growth throughout Onondaga County.

SOCIAL POLICY. Program items:

- Monitor the settlement of the CFE lawsuit and its implications for upstate school districts and the Big 5 Districts.
- Promote educational efforts dealing with domestic violence and the Integrated Domestic Violence Court in Onondaga County.
- Promote opposition to the Death Penalty in support of the new LWVNY position.
- Promote measures to meet housing needs for citizens of all income levels, with incentives to localities as necessary.

NATURAL RESOURCES.

- Support efforts of the Onondaga Partnership to facilitate improvement projects for the lake and its watershed including the development of the inner harbor.

LOCAL ASPECTS OF STATEWIDE ISSUES/STUDIES.

- Promote HAVA reforms; including elimination of the full face ballot; improved training for poll workers; advocacy for optical scan machines; and citizen education and training for replacement machines.
- Promote meaningful lobby reform.
- Promote and encourage further NYS budget process reform.
- Promote and encourage meaningful campaign finance reform.
- Promote the creation of an independent redistricting commission
- Promote the creation of an independent ethics commission.
- Promote meaningful reform of public authorities.
- Promote additional legislative rules reform
- Promote changes to the selection process for constitutional convention delegates.

** Section in italics notes changes in wording as recommended at the Annual Meeting and by the Board of Directors*

VOTING REFORM IN NYS A LA DR. SEUSS

At the 52nd LWVNYS Convention delegates were pleased to see a performance of the Albany group OINK, Albany's version of the Capitol Steps. League President Marcia Merrins, Legislative Director, Barbara Bartoletti, and incoming President Martha Kennedy were part of the presentation. Following is their take on voting reform in New York.

The legislature has been sluggish
'Cause lobbyists are acting thuggish
Companies with buck to make
And politicians on the take
Do not good law making make.

They punted to the B.O.E.
Which does not care, apparently
For moving with alacrity.

The counties do not have a plan
Some like computer, some like scan
This leaves our system lesser than
Elections held in Pakistan.

The League has been, so far insistent
That vote procedures are consistent
From Buffalo down to Coxsackie
We do not want a system patchy.

We want one standard to prevail
There needs to be a paper trail
So votes will not be compromised
By software that is vandalized.

So this is unequivocal
We think that it is critical
To have elections optimal
We must use systems optical.

A scan gives us a guarantee
That recounts will be error free
A recount really can't be had
With hanging chads or code that's bad

And so dear friends, here is our plan
Tell every woman, every man
Elections will be err-ified
Unless the voting verified.

Created by Michael Carrese for "Only In New York (OINK)"



← League Member Holly Hoehner
Registering Students at Law Day Event
May 1, 2007

Annual Meeting Guest Speakers -
Sarah McIlvain, Jim Farrell
↓ June 14, 2007



← Campaign Finance Reform Forum
Speakers:
Rachel Leone, Common Cause
Russ Haven, NYPIRG
Barbara Bartoletti, LWVNY
May 23, 2007



LEAGUE HAPPENINGS

**2007 NYS Voter Registration Deadlines
September 18, 2007 Primary Election
November 6, 2007 General Election**

You may register to vote if ...

- You are a United States Citizen
- You will be 18 years old by 12/31 of the year in which you register (note: you must be 18 years old by the date of the general, primary or other election in which you want to vote)
- You live at your present address at least 30 days prior to an election
- Are not in jail or on parole for a felony conviction
- You don't claim the right to vote elsewhere

2007 Dates to Know.....

- To Vote in a Primary Election, mailed in registration application must be postmarked no later than **August 24th**. Change of address must be postmarked by **August 24th**.
- To Vote in a General Election, mailed in registration applications must be postmarked no later than **October 12th** except, if you have been honorably discharged from the military or have become a naturalized citizen or a registered voter who has moved within the county since **October 12th**, you may register in person at the board of elections up until **October 26th**.

ABSENTEE VOTING INFORMATION

Primary - September 18th

Last day to postmark application for absentee ballot - **September 11th**. Last day to apply in person for absentee ballot - **September 17th**. Last day to postmark absentee ballot - **September 17th**. Last day to deliver absentee ballot in person - **September 18th**.

General Election - November 6th

Last day to postmark application for absentee ballot - **October 30th**. Last day to apply in person for absentee ballot - **November 6**. Last day to postmark absentee ballot - November 5th. Last day to deliver absentee ballot in person - **November 6th**.

A REMINDER: NEW YORK IS A CLOSED PRIMARY STATE. YOU CAN ONLY VOTE FOR CANDIDATES IN THE PARTY YOU ARE ENROLLED IN. NON-ENROLLED VOTERS CANNOT VOTE IN A NYS PRIMARY.

September 18, 2007 - Primary Races

Voters in Onondaga County will have the opportunity to choose between party designated candidates and candidates who have secured enough signatures to appear on the ballot in the race for County Executive. Primaries will take place on both the Democrat and Republican lines of the ballot. The candidates are:

Joanie Mahoney (R)
Dale Sweetland (R, Con., I)
Edward F. Ryan (D)
William Magnarelli (D), WF)

In the city of Syracuse Common Council District 4, there will be a primary between:

Tom Seals (D, I, WF)
Charles Pierce (D)

The winners of the primaries will run as their party's designated candidate in the November 6 General Election. Often a losing candidate will still be on the ballot in November representing another party designation they may have received. There also may be primary races on the town level.

**November 6, 2007 General Election
Offices To Be Filled**

Family Court Judge
District Attorney
County Executive
County Comptroller
19 County Legislative Positions
City Court Judge
City Auditor
Two City Councilor-At-Large Positions
5 District City Counselors
4 City of Syracuse Commissioners of Education
Majority of Town Elected Officials:
Supervisors
Councilpersons
Clerks
Receivers of Taxes
Highway Superintendents
Justices
Elected Assessors

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**

Please make check payable to:
Syracuse Metro Area League of Women Voters
P O Box 11866
Syracuse, NY 13218

* *Two members in the same household*

** *Full time student under 25*

For more information call us at (315) 448-7199 or visit us at www.lwvsyr.org



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**Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Syracuse, NY
Permit no. 372**

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2007

**MARK YOUR CALENDER
FALL KICK-OFF MEETING
SEPTEMBER 6TH
DETAILS PAGE 1**