




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

January 2007

**We've Moved**  
Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box 11866  
Syracuse, NY 13218  
Our physical location is  
now:  
507 Plum St, 2nd Floor  
Syracuse, NY 13204  
Phone: (315) 448 - 7199  
Fax: (315) 448 - 7299  
www.lwvsyr.org

- UPCOMING LEAGUE  
EVENTS**
- January 11th  
League Program Planning
  - February 8th  
Advocacy Training Workshop
  - March 9th  
Legislative Breakfast
  - April (Date TBA)  
Mark Bitz, Founder of FREE NY
  - May 1st  
Law Day Event
  - May 18 -20  
LWVNY Convention
  - June 14th  
LWV Annual Meeting

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- January 15, 2007  
A Day To Remember  
Martin Luther King Jr.

**Message from the President**

On Thursday January 11, 2006 at Noon, our annual Program Planning Meeting will be held at the League Office at 507 Plum St. The purpose of this meeting is to determine the future of the Syracuse Metro League of Women Voters and to plan our Program for the upcoming 2006- 2007 year.

I urge all members to participate. It is important to let the Board of Directors know what your priorities are for the League. If you can not attend the meeting please let the Board know you care about the League's future. You can use any of the means listed on the form below to communicate your expectations for the League's future.

The format of the Program Planning meeting will be a working lunch. A sandwich tray and beverages will be provided. Donations to defray the cost will be welcomed.

I'm looking forward to seeing you at the meeting or hearing from you . Don't let this chance to weigh in on the future of the League slip by.

Sincerely,  
**Roberta Millert, President**

**Annual Program Meeting**

**Date & Time:** January 11<sup>th</sup> Noon – 1:30pm  
(please be a few minutes early the meeting will start at 12pm sharp)

**Location:** LWV Office: at 507 Plum St.  
2nd Floor in the Executive Board Room  
(The Unity Plaza Office Building at the very end of Plum St. Plum St is off Franklin St. )

Yes I will be attending the annual Program Meeting  
 No I can not attend but I would like the League to hold programs or conduct studies on:

- Government Reform
- Equitable Funding for Education in NYS
- Healthcare
- Alternatives to Incarcerations
- Court Restructuring/Judicial Selection
- Smart Growth/Containing Sprawl
- Other Issues

Please respond by email or snail mail by January 9, 2007, if you are unable to attend. You may also leave a message at 448-7199.

Thank you!

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

*Welcome to new members -*

*Barbara Benedict  
Michelle Ellsworth  
Gwendolyn & William Grant  
Frank Heath  
Lois Meyer\*  
Agnes Palocz  
Kimberly Scott*

*\*Lois comes to us from the Buffalo/Niagara League.*

*Congratulations to Holly Hoehner , her husband and big brother James, on the birth of Andrew William.*



## 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 or Joan Durant at the YWCA - 424-0040



*When they call the role in the Senate, the senators do not know whether to answer "present" or "not*

*"guilty". Theodore Roosevelt*

**LOOK FOR OUR ANNUAL *WHO'S WHO, A GUIDE TO ELECTED OFFICIALS IN ONONDAGA COUNTY* - Coming in the February *Local Voter***

***OUR WEBSITES BRING YOU MUCH MORE!  
CHECK THEM OUT!***

***www.lwvsyr.org  
www.lwvny.org  
www.lwv.org***

## 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
Program....	Open

## Off-Board Positions

Budget Director....	Rhonda Hungerford
Nominating Committee.....	Debra Merriweather
	Barbara Olum
	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 to any other organization. Please respond to [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org)



## LWVNYS CHARTER SCHOOL POSITION November 2006

Our thanks to all who have worked so hard and under such tight time constraints to make the charter school consensus possible.

The League recognizes that charter schools represent an educational experiment whose efficacy has never received appropriate validation. Moreover, a review of the performance of charters in New York State indicates that, while some do an excellent job of educating children, others are less successful than the most substandard traditional public schools. Therefore, The League supports public funding of academic research into the characteristics of charters that lead to student academic success.

Authority to grant, oversee, renew and revoke charters, other than those granted in public school conversions, should be vested in a single entity. Charters should be subject to more stringent oversight of charter compliance in the renewal/revocation of process, with greater emphasis on positive educational outcomes.

The League supports measures to limit the negative financial impact of charter schools on their home districts, including: transition assistance; home district payment to charters based on the same standard used to pay operating aid to school districts (While the League supports enrollment as the appropriate measure, it believes the measure should be identical for both charters and traditional public schools.); separate levels of reimbursement for elementary and secondary education to charter schools based on what the home districts spend for the level of schooling provided; limitation of the percentage of a school district's budget that could be paid to charter schools. The League is opposed to State provision of capital construction and renovation services and reimbursement of capital expenditures for charter schools.

The League supports limitation of the number of charters issued in New York State. As a general matter, it believes that the number of charter schools should not be increased without prior successful implementation of the improvements outlined in this position. In lieu of amendment of the Charter School Act to increase the total number of charters that could be granted, it supports retention of the current total (100) with amendment of the Charter School Act so that a charter could be reissued if a charter school ceased to function for any reason. Any increase in the cap on charter schools should be tied to amendment of the Charter School Act so that charters are required to prove positive educational outcomes for all children (disaggregated by special needs) exceeding those in traditional public schools as a precondition for charter renewal. To more accurately measure student outcomes in charters and to compare them to those in traditional public schools, the League supports public funding to measure educational growth in individual students as they progress from grade to grade in charter schools (a value added approach).

Betsey Swan  
Lee Tetkowski  
Co-chairs - Charter School Study

## 2007 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

At the November State Board Meeting, your State Board adopted the following legislative agenda for 2007:

1. REFORMING STATE GOVERNMENT:
  - Budget Reform
  - Campaign Finance Reform
  - Redistricting Reform
  - Legislative Rules Reform
  - Ethics Reform
  - Lobby Reform
  - Public Authorities Reform
2. COST EFFECTIVE & AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE
3. COURT RESTRUCTURING/JUDICIAL REFORM
4. EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR EDUCATION

Thank you to all Leagues who participated in the process. The agenda brochure should be available for distribution in January. It is a useful tool for lobbying your local legislators. It will also serve as a source of information at our Legislative Breakfast in March.

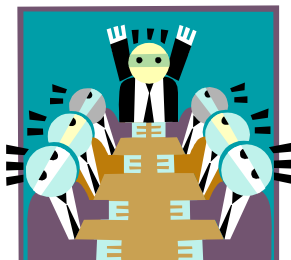
## STATE & LOCAL PROGRAM PLANNING 2007

In a grassroots organization it is vital that all members have the opportunity to participate in the program-making process. The League program, the issues selected for concentrated study and action, is determined by members and consists of federal, state and local issues. National issues are adopted at LWVUS Convention, state issues at LWNYS Convention and local issues at local Leagues' annual meetings.

At our Program Planning meeting on January 11th we will review our 2005 -2007 State Program to consider revisions and additions to our State Program and forward the recommendations to the State League. Our recommendations, along with those from Leagues around the state will determine a Proposed Program for consideration at Convention in May 2007. Our current LWNYS Program can be found on the web at [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org). Click on Member Resources and scroll down to *Impact on Issues 2003-2005*. State Positions in Brief can also be found in our 2006 Annual Report..

We will also review our Local Program and propose changes that are pertinent to our local community Please review our present Local Program on Page 5

***Please review our present programs and plan to attend our planning meeting on January 11th. We need your input!***



## **LOCAL PROGRAM – 2005 -2006**

### **MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK.**

- Promote greater citizen participation in the political process by 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 the sharing of government services among towns, Onondaga County , the city of Syracuse and public schools.

### **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 cost effective and accessible health care for NYS citizens in support of LWVNYS position.

### **NATURAL RESOURCES. Program item:**

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

### **LOCAL ASPECTS OF STATEWIDE ISSUES/STUDIES.**

- Promote improved reforms for HAVA; 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.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

January 11th 12- 1:30 PM Unity Life Boardroom 507 Plum St	2007 State and Local Program Planning Meeting and Working Lunch (Donations accepted to defray cost of lunch)
February 6th - 5:30 PM Newhouse School at SU	Eric Lichtblau Lecture (see info below)
February 8th - Time & Place TBA	Advocacy Training Meeting - LWV/YWCA
March 9th - 8 - 9:30 AM Ramada Inn - Buckley Rd & 7th North	Legislative Breakfast with our NYS Representatives
April (Date & Time TBA) Borders Books - Carousel Center	Mark Bitz, Founder of “ Free New York” Author of <i>Creating a Prosperous New York: Making Elected Officials Accountable for New York State’s Performance Relative to Other States</i>
May 1st - 11:30am On Center	Law Day Event: Luncheon with the Onondaga Bar Assoc. Student Voter Registration &, Essay Contests sponsored by the Syracuse Metro LWV
May 18th - 20th	LWVNY Convention - White Plains
June 14th Time & Place TBA	Annual Business Meeting & Election of League Officers

## Financing the League

Thank you to all who contributed to the League in 2006. Dues alone cannot support our many activities and programs. Please consider the League in your gift-giving plans for 2007. What better New Year’s resolution than a gift to the League!



## BUSHEL AND A PECK OF BOOKS

Our president, Roberta Millert, has been busy requesting signed copies of books written by popular authors. The books are timely and cover all topics. We will be raffling off the books at our Legislative Breakfast on Friday, March 9th. League members will be asked to sell tickets. Proceeds will be used to benefit the League. Look for your packet of tickets in the mail in the next few weeks.



## Eric Lichtblau at Syracuse University

Eric Lichtblau, a reporter for the New York Times, won a 2006 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting for his coverage of domestic spying. Mr. Lichtblau is a graduate of Jamesville-Dewitt High School. The Newhouse School at SU will be hosting a dinner and lecture on February 6th starting at 5:30 pm. The event is open to the SU community and the League of Women Voters. For more information on attending this event, please call the League office at 448-7199.

## NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The Syracuse Metro LWV Nominating Committee will soon meet to select candidates for the 2007-2008 League year. Candidates for several Board positions including President, Secretary, Membership, Voter Service, Program and Finance will be elected at our annual meeting in June.

Serving on the Board provides the opportunity to learn more about the League and to meet the membership. If you are interested in serving or if you know of someone that would be interested, please give us a call at 448-7199.

### FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES COMMITTEE

The committee met after the November election to review and evaluate its work during the election season. We were all disappointed that we did not have at least one complaint but recognized that the newness of our committee probably played into that result.

The committee has decided to “move to the next level” with a multi-media approach that would involve graduate students at the Newhouse School of Communications and the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. The plan is to create a new media and politics course for the fall semester. Students will monitor the political ads from county and local government candidates, write pieces for regional papers, and develop a proposal to have a regular spot in *The Post Standard's* weekly New York State column. This approach would also include a program on WAER, the University's radio station, and information on the web sites of the League, the Newhouse School and Maxwell.

We will also be trying to expand the committee's membership and holding a public signing of the Fair Campaign Pledge.

We will be meeting in March to begin making plans and setting up activities. The local parties will have their political conventions in April to choose candidates for the fall election. Petitions to run in the primary must be submitted in July. The primary will be held in September.

Offices open for election in November will be the county legislature, the Syracuse common council, town offices, and others.

More to follow in the spring.

*Janet Mallan*

### Update on Optical Scan

I am still waiting to hear from Lenore

**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**



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
SYRACUSE METRO AREA  
PO Box 11866  
SYRACUSE, NY 13218**

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

**JANUARY 2007**

*We Are Now On The Web  
www.lwvsyr.org*