



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

MARCH/APRIL 2008

Syracuse Metro LWV  
 PO Box 11866  
 Syracuse NY 13218  
 (507 Plum St -2nd Fl. Syr. 13204)  
 Phone: (315) 448-7199  
 Fax: (315) 448-7299  
 info@lwvsyr.org  
 Web Sites:  
 Local: www.lwvsyr.org  
 State: www.lwvny.org  
 National: www.lwv.org

**UPCOMING EVENTS**  
March 20th  
 Education Town Hall Meeting  
April 2nd  
 Gloria Steinem Fair Pay Day  
April 17th  
 City Counselor-At- Large  
 Stephanie Miner  
June 17th  
 Syracuse LWV Annual Meeting

**Inside This Issue:**

Board Notes.....	2
President's Message.....	3
Legislative Breakfast.....	3
Happy Birthday LWV.....	4
Voting Machines.....	5
OLP Update.....	5
Local Notes.....	5
NYS Primary System.....	6
LWVNYS Notes.....	7
Calendar.....	7

**March is Women's History Month**



*"Of my two "handicaps" being female put more obstacles in my path than being black".*

Shirley Chisholm, 1st black woman elected to Congress.  
 1924-2005

**A DIALOGUE WITH SYRACUSE COUNCILOR-AT-LARGE STEPHANIE MINER**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 2008  
 7:00 PM**

**ENABLE**  
**1603 COURT STREET – SYRACUSE 13208**


**What happens in Syracuse involves our entire community. It affects the County's work force, its economy, its quality of life. Councilor Miner chairs the City of Syracuse Education and Human Development Committee. She also serves as President Pro-Tempore on the City Council.**

**We look forward to hearing about the issues facing the Syracuse City Schools from the perspective of the Common Council and the role the Council plays in school policy and the budget process. Come listen, and ask your questions!**

**Refreshments will be served.  
 The event is open to the public.**

**For more information –  
 Phone: 448-7199  
 Email: [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org)**

**Sponsored by:  
 Syracuse Metropolitan League of Women Voters**



# BOARD NOTES

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

*We welcome new members -*

**James Corl  
Clyde Ohl  
Karen Smith  
Michael Haven**

*We have published a new Membership Directory. If you would like a copy, please call us at 448-7199 and we will mail one to you.*

## *We're going green -*

In order to reduce the use of paper as well as printing and mailing costs we can now send you the **Local Voter** electronically. Please call the office at 448-7199 or email us at [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org) and we will make the change.



## Naturalization Ceremonies

Volunteers are needed to register new citizens. 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. Below are dates not yet covered. Please help us out.

August 21	2pm	- County Court House*
September 18	2pm	- County Court House*
September 25	11am	- Federal Building
October 9	11am	- Federal Building
October 23	2pm	- County Court House*
November 6	11am	- Federal Building
December 11	2pm	- County Court House*

\*Room 400

For more information contact **Susan Bush** at the YWCA - 424-0040.



Local public radio station **WRVO**, will offer expanded coverage of Election 2008 on its website. Visit [www.wrvo.fm/election](http://www.wrvo.fm/election) for details.

## 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
Voter Service...	Susan Bush

## Off-Board Positions

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

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](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. Please respond to [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org)

## President's Message

Many thanks to all who attended our Legislative Breakfast on March 7<sup>th</sup>. We had a great crowd and an interesting dialogue with our state legislators. Our Raffle was a huge success. I wish to thank all who participated and especially our donors, **Jivi & Sue Govender** (Camillus Country Club), **Nick LaPenta** (Antonio's Restaurant), and City Councilor **Michael Heagerty** (Palace Theater). Our winners were **Jack Mannion**, **Frank Heath** and **Debbie Cornell**.

On Thursday, April 17<sup>th</sup> we will welcome City Councilor-At-Large, Stephanie Miner. Stephanie chairs the Council's Education and Human Development Committee. We look forward to hearing about the issues facing the Syracuse City Schools and other areas of interest.

The New York State League of Women Voters State Board has chosen Syracuse as the location for their biannual convention scheduled for May 2009. This is a great opportunity for our League. Although most of the preparations will be done by the State Board, we will need a number of volunteers to host the event. If you would like to serve on a committee to help us out please call me at 448-7199 or email me at [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org). The event will not only provide our members the occasion to meet League members from throughout the State but give us a chance to publicize our own league and our community.

Hope to see many of you on April 17<sup>th</sup>.

*Joan Johnson*

### 2008 LWVSYR ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST - MARCH 7, 2008

Left to right - Assemblymembers Al Stirpe, William Magnarelli; Senators David Valesky, John DeFrancisco & Moderator Janet Mallan



League members Rae Rohfeld, Roberta Millert, Dan Millert and Senator DeFrancisco

League members Jack Mallan, Mary Lou Green and Assemblymember Al Stirpe



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The League of Women Voters celebrated its 88th birthday on February 14th. I'm sharing a small sample of the over 1,000 birthday wishes we received this month, a truly heartwarming reminder of the League's impact!

*88 keys on a piano. 88 years of League. Let the music continue.*

*You are truly the League with a heart, a voice, and shared information which can create positive change.*

*Still the best organization in America! Taught me most everything I know about organizing. Love it with all my heart.*

*You are the most underappreciated national treasure.*

*You go, girls...doing a great job!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*

*When LWV speaks, civic leaders listen. Happy Birthday to a group that has earned respect because of all the hard work of its volunteers.*

*From the bottom of my heart, body, mind and political soul - Women can and do change the world. Let's keep it up!*

*The League was responsible for two of the biggest things in my life: My business and my marriage. I'll always be grateful to this terrific group of women.*

*LWV is the standard by which I measure all other organizations.*

*Without you, we'd be no where. Thanks for changing the world.*

*League Members are wonders. Without them voters would wane, by not registering to vote, by not standing in the voting lane, so Happy Birthday LWV, long may you continue to serve, so our voting process continually improve and never your resolve shall swerve.*

*It is great to be associated with this wonderful organization which so many depend on for advice & information, especially in this election year.*

*The League continues to blaze a trail for women's equality. Congratulations!*

*We've come a long way baby!!!! The clothing changed, but not the sentiments!!!*

*Happy Birthday to a group that still believes in the "high road" and making things transparent, honest, and positive.*

*To the best darn organization that ever was created in these United States. Happy Birthday, women.*

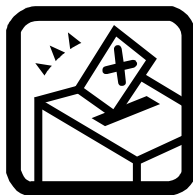
*We are so proud to be a small part of this big, beautiful picture of democracy in action.*

*I came from Iraq and I was 38 year-old. I was never given the chance to vote. I am a proud member of this league and I am a proud citizen of this country where I was given the chance to vote.*

**Maggie Duncan, Communications & Outreach Manager  
League of Women Voters of the United States**



## Finally New Voting Machines for New Yorkers



After almost six years since the passage of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) New York voters will be in compliance with the federal law. Under pressure from the Courts, in late January the New York State Board of Elections approved three machines that would be in compliance with New York's tough election law. All were optical scan systems. The League and New Yorkers for Verified Voting celebrated the victory only to learn the manufacturer of the Liberty Vote DRE filed suit claiming the Court had acted arbitrarily and capriciously in making their decision. The suit was followed by three other companies who had been left out of the mix. On February 4<sup>th</sup> a Supreme Court Judge ruled these machines should be put back on the list of choices counties could choose from.

Thanks to much pressure from optical scan advocates all but one New York County has chosen optical scan technology. Tiny Hamilton County in the Adirondacks will purchase the Liberty DRE System. Onondaga County Board of Election Commissioners have chosen the Sequoia/Dominion system. More on this in the months to come.

Although the decision for these machines only applies to accommodating disabled voters this year, it will however, directly influence the choice of systems purchased for all New Yorker in 2009. Money and training investments will be made for the optical scan this year. It is unlikely most counties will be willing to waste this investment by choosing another system next year.

Onondaga BOE Commissioners have stated they would like everyone on board for the fall election. Their work is cut out for them!

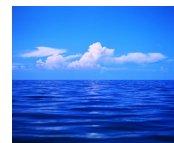
### REMINDER

The legislative session is in full swing in Albany. You can make your voice heard by responding to "Action Alerts" from LWVNYS. With the Citizen Action Toolkit or CATT, named after our founder Carrie Chapman Catt, it only takes a push of a button to respond to an action alert. It is quick and simple.

If you are not already on the list to receive alerts, email Stephanie Lopez at the State office to ask to be put on the list:

[stephanie@lwvny.org](mailto:stephanie@lwvny.org).

## THE ONONDAGA LAKE PARTNERSHIP - NEWS FROM OLP



One of the many purposes of the Onondaga Lake Partnership (OLP) is to educate the community on our valuable resource, namely Onondaga Lake. It also includes all of the tributaries in the watershed. In keeping with the goal of education, the OLP offers two distinct ways of securing funding for projects pertaining to the lake

The first is our public education mini-grants. Successful applicants may receive up to \$5,000 for their project. The goals of this program are to promote community based stewardship activities for water quality and habitat of Onondaga Lake and its watershed; sustain and or promote participation of stakeholders in environmental activities and strengthen environmental links between OLP and all stakeholders. Funds for this are provided from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to the OLP and administered through the Onondaga Environmental Institute (OEI).

The second type of funding is the Teacher's Education Fund. Again the goal is to educate students about the environment of Onondaga Lake, its tributaries and watershed. These grants are available for up to \$500 per school year.

**Reg Durant,**  
*LWVSyr Liaison to the OLP*

### VOLUNTEERS NEED

We are pleased to announce that the **2009 LWVNYS State Convention** will be held at the DoubleTree Inn in Syracuse next May. This provides a wonderful opportunity to meet League members from across the state and our State League leaders. It also provides a great opportunity to promote our league as well as CNY New York. We will need volunteers to assist the State Board. Please give me a call if you would like to serve on a planning committee or to volunteer for the convention.

With the Presidential election in November comes many requests to speak to various groups and conduct voter registration events around the area. Please let us know if you are willing to help. Call us at 448-7199 or Email us at [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org).

## PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARIES IN NEW YORK STATE



The Democratic and Republican primaries in New York State are different in important ways, but have similarities. Both are "closed" primaries; participation is limited to the voters who have registered in the party sponsoring the election. While delegates are not bound by any law to vote for any particular candidate at the party's national convention, both parties have "pledged" candidates to whom they are "pledged". Both parties also have "unpledged" and/or "super" delegates, who are not committed to a particular candidate. A certain number of delegates in each party participate because they occupy a particular elective or party position. Before the primary, candidates submit to the board of elections a list of delegates from each congressional district that are committed to them. These delegates actually appear on the ballot in the Democratic primary, along with a statewide presidential democratic candidate, but do not appear on the ballot in the Republican primary.

### DEMOCRATS: "Proportional" Primary, 281 Delegates at Stake

New York Democrats have a total of 281 delegates, 151 of whom are "pledged" and will be elected proportionally based on the results of the February 5<sup>th</sup> primary within each congressional district. In addition, 45 are automatic and/or chosen from party leaders. The remaining 85 delegates are selected at a state Democratic committee meeting in May.

The Democratic Party in New York always uses a proportional method for awarding delegates. The percentage of delegates each candidate is awarded (or the number of undecided delegates) is representative of the number of primary votes for the candidate.

The Democratic Party primary in New York is really a "dual primary," Candidates for president appear on the ballot and run against each other in a state-wide primary, and delegates and alternate delegates run in each congressional district. Delegates and alternates are either committed to a presidential candidate or uncommitted, and males and females are equally represented among the delegate choices for a candidate.

### REPUBLICANS: "Winner-take-all" Primary, 101 Delegates at Stake

The National Republican Party, unlike the Democratic Party, allows each state to decide whether to use a "winner-take-all" method or the "proportional" method. In the winner-take-all method, the candidate whom the majority of caucus participants or voters support receives all the delegates for the state. New York is a "winner-take-all" state.

In New York, the selection of delegates and alternate delegates to the Republican National Convention is determined by a statewide primary of candidates for the office of President. Unlike the Democratic primary ballot, the names of the delegates and alternate delegates do not appear. Based on the results of the February 5<sup>th</sup> presidential primary, 87 of the state's 101 Republican delegates are allocated to the presidential candidate with the most votes statewide. At a Republican state committee meeting, the remaining 14 unpledged delegates are selected from party leaders.

Maggie Moehring, LWNYS Voter Service Director  
March 2008 State Board Report

### **SAVE YOUR BOOKS -**

We hope to conduct a used book sale at our annual meeting in June. Please donate new or slightly used books on topics of interest to our membership. If you need someone to pick them up, please give us a call at 448-7199.

**THANK YOU**



## NEWS FROM YOUR STATE LEAGUE - MARCH 2008

### Centennial Fund News

The draft of the Centennial Fund Plan is currently being reviewed by the LWVNYS board and development committee and will be circulated to local Leagues for their input. The main emphasis of the plan is a document that will serve as a roadmap for the League's future programmatic and financial development. A focus of the plan is to raise an endowment, which when fully funded, will allow the state League to assist local Leagues with some of the administrative functions for which local Leagues are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit volunteers.

To date, the state League board has pledged \$38,750 to the Centennial Fund with an additional \$3,000 pledged for the benefit of two local Leagues.

### Domestic Violence

The LWVNYS has joined the New York State-wide Coalition for Fair Access to Family Court. This is a focused attempt to correct a long standing wrong in the failure on the part of the New York State Senate to pass the "Expanded Access to Family Court Act" for domestic violence victims.

### National Popular Vote: Update

Members of the former Compact for National Popular Vote study committee have been talking with local Leagues and other state Leagues on the possibility of proposing adoption at Convention 2008 of a National Study entitled "The Advisability of Using the National Popular Vote Compact among the States as a Method for Electing the President." This action comes in the wake of the decision by LWV that "LWVNY could not take action on any position adopted as a result of that study since the election of the president is a national issue," and the LWVNYS board's subsequent direction to the study team to assess interest in furthering the issue at Convention 2008.

It will be officially introduced as a recommended program item by the state and local Leagues in New York State to bring it to the attention of the national board. If it is not recommended, it will then be on the radar to take further action whether it is to recommend the national study or to make a possible resolution to address the issue

**Note:** The Syracuse LWV, at its program planning meeting on January 10, 2008, approved the adoption of a study on the topic at the national convention in June.

## CALENDAR

Thursday, March 20, 2008 - 7:00 PM  
Dr. King School, 416 East Raynor St, Syracuse

Alliance for Quality Education  
Town Hall Meeting Funding  
"Promises for Syracuse Schools"

Wednesday, April 2, 2008  
Albany NY

Gloria Steinem Day for Fair Pay

Thursday, April 17, 2008, 7:00 PM  
ENABLE - 1603 Court St, Syracuse



Guest Speaker, Stephanie Miner  
Syracuse City Councilor-At-Large

Thursday, June 17, 2008 - 6:00 PM  
Location - TBA

LWVSYR Annual Meeting

June 13 - 17, 2008  
Portland OR

LWVUS National Convention

**MARCH 16 - MARCH 22 - SUNSHINE WEEK  
PROMOTING THE IMPORTANCE OF OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE GOVERNMENT**

**MARCH 28 - APRIL 6 - VERA HOUSE WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN**

**League of Women Voters  
Membership Application**

8

*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*

\_\_\_\_ ***I would like to support the League with a donation.***

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



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

**March/April 2008**

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