



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

OCTOBER 2008

Syracuse Metro LWV  
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 Web Sites:  
 Local: www.lwvsyr.org  
 State: www.lwvny.org  
 National: www.lwv.org

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

- Wednesday, October 1st**  
SU Rock the Vote
- Thursday, October 2nd**  
CNY Alliance for Retired Americans  
Universal Healthcare Forum
- Friday, October 3rd**  
Syr. Rotary Congressional Forum
- Monday, October 6th**  
Parents for Public Schools  
Congressional Forum
- Thursday, October 16th**  
Human Services Candidate Forum
- Wednesday, Oct. 22**  
WCNY TV Congressional Debate
- Saturday, October 25th**  
AAUW Luncheon

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**STAYING INFORMED ON THE ISSUES AND EVENTS**

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

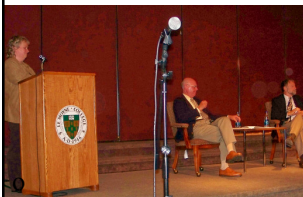


**Message from the Co-President**

One surprise after another is turning up in this election season. That may be part of the reason we're getting so many requests to register voters, provide information, and moderate debates and discussions. One of the striking things has been the number and variety of groups we have served and collaborated with: Syracuse University, LeMoyne College, Onondaga Community College, the State Fair, several branch libraries and churches, WCNY, WSTM, The Human Services Coalition, Parents for Public Schools, CNY Alliance for Retired Persons, and many more. We have registration events until just before the October 10 registration deadline and presentations and candidate discussions through October. We still need volunteers for these, If you can help out, please email us at [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org) or call the office at 448-7199. (You'll probably have to leave a phone message if you call.) It's really rewarding to have people say, "We're so glad you could work with us; you have such a wonderful reputation for knowledge and objectivity about elections and voting."

**SELECTING THE NEXT PRESIDENT- HOW DO VOTERS CHOOSE?**

On September 22nd the League co-sponsored the first of three events entitled the Intelligent Conversation Series, sponsored by Syracuse University and LeMoyne College on selecting the next president. The event drew a capacity crowd at LeMoyne's Grewen Auditorium to hear David Rubin, Professor of Communications at SU's Newhouse School and John Freie, Professor of Political Science at LeMoyne College discuss how voters filter political information, evaluate the candidates, assess their stands on the issues, and judge the influence of the media.



*Nina Tamrowski, David Rubin & John Freie*

The event was moderated by Nina Tamrowski, Professor of Political Science at Onondaga Community College and a League member.

Many thanks to League member Barbara Olum and Sandra Barrett, Director of Community Programs at University College for arranging the event.



*Barbara Olum*



*Nina Tamrowski & Sandra Barrett*



*Norma Mulvey & Mary Lou Green register voters at the event.*

# BOARD NOTES

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS HAVE YOU RETURNED YOUR “MEMBERSHIP INTEREST” FORM

Getting involved in League activities is easy, if we know your interests. If your “Membership Interest” sheet has disappeared, request a copy by calling our office at 448-7199 or email us at [info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org).

Thank you to all who have renewed your membership in the League. Your support offers us the opportunity to encourage the public to participate in the electoral process. If you have not renewed your membership, we hope you will consider renewing now. If you have misplaced your renewal letter, you can use the form on the last page of this newsletter to respond.

**LWV Annual Election Guide -**  
Available at all *Syracuse Newtimes* distribution sites on October 22nd. Pick one up and learn about the candidates.



## Naturalization Ceremonies

Thanks to all who have registered new citizens at the Naturalization Ceremonies this calendar year. We look forward to your help again next year. Below are dates not yet covered. Please help us out.

October 9      11am - Federal Building  
October 23     2pm - County Court House  
November 6    11am - Federal Building

To volunteer, please call or email **Susan Bush**:  
(315) 424-0040 - [sjbushywca@cnyemail.com](mailto:sjbushywca@cnyemail.com)

## ELECTING THE PRESIDENT -

As a longer range effort to improve the electoral process, the League is conducting a national study on whether to support adoption of the National Popular Vote Compact. This agreement would alter the working of the electoral college so that its vote would reflect the popular vote of the country. At least four states have passed legislation to joint such a compact, and many other states are at earlier stages of the approval process. If you would like to participate in the study group, please contact Rae Rohfeld at [rohrfeld@twcny.rr.com](mailto:rohrfeld@twcny.rr.com) or leave a message at the office. We will have an initial planning meeting at the end of October and finish our work in April so that we can submit our League’s consensus to the national office by May 1. You may choose the amount of time you want to spend on this. There is currently information about the topic on the State website, [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org). Look down the column on the left side and click on National Popular Vote.

## Officers

Co-President....	Joan Johnson
Co-President...	Rae Rohfeld
Vice-President...	Joe Sammarco
Secretary...	Karen Smith
Treasurer....	J. Arthur Johnson

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Fund-Raising...	Elizabeth Nicoletti
Membership...	Mary Lou Green
Program....	Don MacLaughlin
Public Relations...	Sherly Day-Bernthal
Voter Service...	Susan Bush

## Off-Board Positions

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

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)

## **HOW TO JUDGE A CANDIDATE**

### **DECIDE WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR IN A CANDIDATE**

What are their positions on the issues? Are they issues you care about?  
What are their leadership qualities and experience – Intelligence? Honesty? Communication skills?

### **FIND OUT ABOUT THE CANDIDATES**

Call your local Board of Elections  
Call your local political party headquarters  
Check out candidates' websites and campaign literature  
Pay attention to television and radio ads and reports  
Read your local newspaper  
Attend debates and forums  
For incumbents, check their voting records on the issues you care about  
Read your local League of Women Voters Election Guide

### **LEARN ABOUT THEIR LEADERSHIP SKILLS**

Look at their backgrounds and experience – are they prepared for the job?  
Observe their campaigns – do they accept speaking engagements to debate?  
Do they avoid serious questions?

### **LEARN WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK ABOUT THE CANDIDATES**

Talk to your neighbors, friends, relatives, political volunteers

### **LEARN ABOUT ENDORSEMENTS**

### **LOOK INTO CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS**

### **FOLLOW OPINION POLLS**

### **SEE THROUGH DISTORTION TECHNIQUES**

Name calling? Rumor mongering? Catchwords? Passing the blame? Promising the impossible?  
Evading real issues?

### **SORT IT ALL OUT**

Which candidates' views on the issues do you agree with?  
Who ran the fairest campaign?  
Which candidates showed the most knowledge of the issues?  
Which candidates have the leadership qualities you are looking for?

### ***CAST AN INFORMED VOTE ON ELECTION DAY***



## NOVEMBER 4, 2008 GENERAL ELECTION

### COUNTDOWN TO ELECTION DAY

- ◆ Last day to register by mail - postmarked by **October 10**, received by the BOE by **October 15**
- ◆ Last day to register in person at the BOE - **October 10**
- ◆ In-person registration for persons honorably discharged from the military or who become naturalized citizens after October 10 - **October 24**
- ◆ Last day to postmark application for absentee ballot - **October 28**
- ◆ Last day to apply in person for an absentee ballot - **November 3**
- ◆ Last day to postmark absentee ballot **November 3** Must be received by the BOE by **November 11**
- ◆ Last day to deliver an absentee ballot in person to the BOE - **November 4**

### FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES COMMITTEE

The Fair Campaign Practices Committee will be convening again this election season to hear complaints brought by candidates. The committee is chaired by Dr. David Rubin, former dean and professor at the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University. Committee members are retired Family Court judge Minna Buck, Most Rev. Thomas Costello of the Syracuse Diocese, Steven Kulick of LeMoyne College, Joseph O'Hara of Peace, Inc., Marilyn Pinsky, formerly of the Office on Youth and Aging, Bernhard Molldrem, Jr., an attorney, and Prof. Grant Reeher of the Maxwell School at S.U. Chairs of the local political parties are included in the hearings as non-voting, ex-officio members. The committee has scheduled meetings for once a week until election day to hear complaints and prepare a decision.

The Syracuse League has mailed information about the work of the committee and a copy of the Fair Campaign Practices Pledge to each candidate, asking each to sign the pledge and return it to the League office. Candidates can use the pledge as a guide for bringing a complaint against an opponent. The committee will hear the complaint in a timely manner and make its decision public.

The pledge and complete manual for the committee are available on the League's website at [www.lwvsyr.org](http://www.lwvsyr.org). Check it out for more information.

Janet Mallan  
FCPC LWV Chair



### Ballot Proposal Number One

One ballot proposal will appear on the 2008 Election Ballot. Following is the form of submission:

*Amendment to Article 5, section 6 of the Constitution, in relation to additional civil service credit for members of the armed forces of the United States.*

*The proposed amendment would eliminate the requirement that veterans who were disabled in the actual performance of duty in any war be receiving disability payments from the United States Veterans Administration in order to qualify for additional points on a civil service examination for appointment or promotion. Under the proposed amendment, the disability must only be certified to exist by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The proposed amendment would also update the reference to the "United States Veterans Administration" to instead refer to the "United States Department of Veterans Affairs" to reflect current federal government structure. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?*

**Pro:** There is a long history (indeed since the Civil War) of veterans, particularly disabled veterans, being afforded preferential treatment in qualifying for and being retrained for positions in the civilian world, Preferential treatment is a recognition of veterans' sacrifice and service to our country, and also serves to make military service more attractive. Voting against this amendment will continue the status quo, which makes it harder for disabled veterans to qualify for additional points on civil service examinations. This in turn makes it harder for them to be appointed or promoted to positions in the civil service.

**Con:** The League can identify no arguments against this proposal.

## ***ARE YOU REGISTERED TO VOTE? REALLY?***

With all the attention that voting machines have received over the last few years, many people don't realize that the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) addressed more than just voting equipment. HAVA also required substantial changes to the way voter registration lists are managed, requiring that all states maintain a single statewide database:

***"... each State acting through the chief State election official, shall implement, in a uniform and nondiscrimination manner, a single, uniform, official, centralized interactive computerized statewide voter registration list defined, maintained, and administered at the State level that contains the name and registration information of every legally registered voter in the State..."***

HAVA also describes, together with the National Voter Registration Act (better known as the Motor Voter Act), the critically important conditions which determine whether a voter can be removed from the voter rolls. This means that in New York and other states using the new computerized voter lists for the first time that there could be many thousands of voters showing up at the polls on Election Day assuming they are registered to vote who will find to their dismay that they are not.

There are various reasons that a voter might be flagged for removal – clerical errors, data transfer errors, address mismatches with DMV databases, a matching death record in the Social Security database, a match against New York's felon list, duplicate registration records from multiple counties (this last one could easily happen if you have moved from one county to another in the past, and didn't explicitly deregister from your previous county).

If your registration has been flagged, the local County Board is required to send you a written notice that a problem has been detected and you are at risk of being purged from the voter rolls. But if this notice is sent to the wrong address, or you don't notice it among the pile of junk mail and toss it, you could find on Election Day that you have been "purged" from the rolls (in which case, you have the right to a provisional or "affidavit" ballot, but these ballots will not be counted on Election Day and may not be counted at all). So what can you do to ensure that you are indeed registered to vote in this important election? You've got to be proactive.

As required by HAVA, New York State provides an online "check your registration" page. This is alright as far as it goes, and will tell you whether your current status is 'Active' or 'Inactive' (active means you are registered and can vote). But unfortunately it does not tell you if your record has been flagged as needing review and has not yet been processed by the county. So it is possible that you could check the page today and see that your status is 'Active', but find out on Election Day that it has changed to 'Inactive' because the county processed your flagged record after you checked it and decided you were not legally registered.

Given this potential New Yorkers for Verified Voting (NYVV) is recommending that voters take the following steps to confirm that you are registered to vote this year in New York State:

Call your local Board of Elections or go online to their voter registration page. If your status is 'Inactive', or the page tells you "No Matches Found", you are not registered to vote. In this case call your County Board of Elections immediately and make sure you straighten this out (even if it means re-registering).

Even if your status is 'Active' on the online page, you may want to call them and ask three questions:

1. Am I registered to vote?
2. Is my name flagged for review?
3. Will my name be in the poll book on Election Day?

You may also want to confirm that your address is correct, because we are hearing of data transfer errors that are mangling addresses.

***From Bo's Blog  
Bo Lipari, Executive Director of New Yorkers for Verified Voting***



## CNYSpeaks Engage. Discuss. Act.



CNYSpeaks aims to get the citizens of Central New York talking about downtown Syracuse -- what they love about it and what needs to change to get them downtown more often. The goal is to establish a citizens' agenda for the core of our region, and to get our civic and political leaders to enact it.

Please join us at one or more of these forums. Make sure your voice is heard.

**6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 2, at the Hotel Syracuse, 500 S. Warren St.**

**2 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 5, at the Warehouse, 350 W. Fayette St.**

**6 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 7, City Hall Commons, 201 E. Washington St.**

Ensure we have a spot for you. Contact Post-Standard Civic Engagement Editor Greg Munno at 470-6084 or [gmunno@syracuse.com](mailto:gmunno@syracuse.com). For more information visit <http://blog.syracuse.com/cny-speaks>.

CNYSpeaks is a joint project of The Post-Standard, Syracuse.com, Syracuse University's Maxwell School and the Program for the Analysis and Resolution of Conflict.

## LEAGUE DAY AT THE UNITED NATIONS

This year's annual UN Day will be on Tuesday, December 2, 2008. The topic will be the "Effect of Global Warming on Women and Children Around the World." The schedule for the day will include a tour of the UN and lunch in the Delegates Dining Room in addition to the main presentation..

### Cost/Payment Information

10 am - 11 am Optional Tour of the UN	\$12.00
4:30 pm - 5:00 pm -Optional Tour of the UN	
11:30 am - 12:30 pm Optional Lunch Buffet	\$40.00
<i>(includes International Buffet, Dessert Bar and Coffee/Tea.</i>	
<i>UN requires proper attire: no jeans, shorts, sneakers)</i>	
1:00 pm - 3:30 pm Briefing Program	
League or Sponsoring Organization Members	\$55.00
Non-Members	\$65.00
Students	\$45.00
Discount fee for Tour, Lunch & Briefing for Members of sponsoring organizations	\$100.00
Roundtrip bus from Albany to NYC	\$40.00

If you are planning a trip to the Big Apple for the holidays, you might want to schedule it around this event. More information? Email: [Stephanie@lwvny.org](mailto:Stephanie@lwvny.org)

## Interested in Serving as an Election Inspector ?



Election inspectors are needed in many areas for the upcoming election as well as in years to come. If you are either a registered Democrat or Republican (and in some cases with no party affiliation if there are not enough poll workers from the two major parties) you can serve as a poll worker.

Lots of election inspectors are needed, but this year and in the future, especially people who are comfortable dealing with computers can make a big difference for the integrity of elections. Getting young people involved is a great idea.

- They are often used to computers.
- It's good to get them involved in the election process for the rest of their lives.
- Every young person who works at the polls will pull in friends and acquaintances, who might otherwise skip voting.
- This is paid work. While the payment may not be much for an adult ( in fact it's quite minimal) it may be a lot of money for a young person still in college.

**SAVE THE DATE -  
NOVEMBER 12TH-  
NYS PROPERTY TAX  
COMMISSION  
HEARING IN  
SYRACUSE  
TIME AND LOCATION  
TBA**



## VOTER SERVICE - A LOT HAPPENING

This year's Presidential Election and the uniqueness of it has brought a number of requests from local organizations for League participation. You still have time to volunteer and get involved with registration, education and other activities encouraging voters to make their voice heard on Election Day.

Please note the events on our calendar (page 7). Please call or email us to lend your support.



**448-7199 or  
[info@lwvsyr.org](mailto:info@lwvsyr.org)**

## FALL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Wednesday, October 1, 11 AM - 2 PM  
Schine Student Center, Syracuse University

Women's Day at SU "Rock the Vote: Rock the "Cuse"

Thursday, October 2, 7 - 9 PM  
Palace Theatre  
2384 James St. Eastwood

CNY Alliance for Retired Americans Congressional Forum on Universal Health Care. LWVSYR will co-sponsor . **Viewing of Vice-Presidential Debate will follow.**

Thursday, October 2, 7:30 PM  
Robinson Memorial Church – 7:30 pm.

Geddes Seniors, Discussion - Election Issues

Friday, October 3, Noon - 1:30 PM  
Drumlins, 800 Nottingham Road, Syracuse

Syracuse Rotary Club Congressional Forum  
LWVSYR will moderate.

Monday, October 6, 7PM  
Henninger High School

Parents for Public Schools Congressional Forum on Educational Issues. LWVSYR will co-sponsor.

Thursday, October 16, 5PM  
Grant Middle School

Human Services Forum - League will moderate Congressional & State Candidates

Wednesday, October 22 - 8:00 PM  
506 Old Liverpool Road

WCNY TV Congressional Debate (League Participation)

Saturday, October 25 - Noon  
Casa Di Copani, Burnet Avenue

AAUW Luncheon , League will provide guest speaker

***We have had many requests to participate in election related events this fall. Check our website at [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org) for additional events and changes or call us at 448-7199.***

### ***Establishing Our 2009 Legislative Priorities***

Your LWWNYS Board is once again asking the local League Boards to provide input on the selection of legislative priorities for 2009. Any member can have a voice in this important process.

Please list the state issues you feel are important and that you think should be the basis for lobbying once the 2009 Legislative Session begins in January. Please submit your priorities by Monday, October 20, 2008. You can mail them on the tear-off below or email them to [info@lwvny.org](mailto:info@lwvny.org).

For more information, please refer to the September 2008 State Board Report (SBR), pages 28-34.. It can be found online at [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org). Click on Local League Resources and scroll down to SBR Reports.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

