



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TOMPKINS COUNTY

MARCH 2008

PRESIDENT: KAY SHARP 272-4748
MEMBERSHIP: MARIA EISNER 277-4404

EDITOR: ROBERT SILSBEE 273-1436
www.lwvtompkins.14850.com

SAFETY NETS: THE IHA AND THE FREE CLINIC

presentation by

Bethany Schroeder

Monday, March 24 at 7:00 PM

Livesay Room of the Human Services Building

(more information on page 2)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our soup and bread luncheon was a smashing success. Over 30 members attended. We honored those who have supported the League over 25 years.

The table discussions generated a lot of ideas about the direction to take in 2008-2009. Some suggestions for programs were literacy, Tompkins County diversity, the working poor and health care. The membership feels strongly that we focus on health care. Currently, we have a committee and at the National Convention we're sponsoring a caucus on this issue.

Other issues to focus on were the electoral college, the environment, immigration, school violence, voting and civic participation. Members suggested that we go into schools and present programs for youngsters on the League's

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function and it's role in voter service. We could sponsor "mock" elections to increase students' interest in the democratic program.

To increase the League's visibility it was suggested that we write monthly articles or press releases to be published in our local newspapers. We need to increase our visibility on the college campuses, reinstate our speakers bureau, participate in local government meetings and increase our connection with other community organizations.

There were many very specific suggestions on the programs and issues on which we should focus. These will be presented to the Board for future planning.

As you can see it was a very exciting and productive meeting. Thank you for your participation.

Kay Sharp

SAFETY NETS: THE IHA AND THE FREE CLINIC

Our March meeting on Monday, March 24, features Bethany Schroeder, President of the Board of Directors of the Ithaca Health Alliance (IHA). The meeting is at 7:00 PM in the Livesay Room of the Human Services Building. In 2006, the IHA opened the Ithaca Free Clinic with the expectation of 300 visits in the first year. Instead, Clinic staff and volunteers had almost 900 visits, with more than 1800 visits in 2007. In this presentation, League of Women Voter members can expect to learn about how and why the effort was undertaken and how the larger community can participate in the Clinic's success.



A DOCTOR LOOKS AT HEALTCARE AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. KLEPACK, FAMILY PHYSICIAN

Dr. Klepack pointed out that health care has been undergoing many challenges. The most disturbing being that major indicators of health are not going in the right direction. As a family physician with long-term relationships with his patients he sees this a lot. Also, as employers have to shop around each year for plans for their employees that they can afford, patients often have to change plans and their physician may not be part of the network. Patients are then faced with having to change doctors or pay extra costs. This often breaks the doctor-patient relationship and reduces continuity of care.

The present system also presents administrative challenges. Physicians are being forced into a business model. In his office he is required to interact with 40 different insurance agencies and this requires staff to "jump through the hoops" of prior authorization, denials, etc. and often patients become confused and need help. They call staff with questions and talk to the doctor about these issues during visits, which takes time from diagnosing and caring for the patient. When pharmacies change their formularies medications have to be changed so they are covered, and that also impacts on patients. He has hired an outside billing agency because it had become increasingly difficult to keep training staff to understand coding and billing procedures, and also answer phone calls. It takes 3-4 staff per physician to do the administrative work.

When asked what could be a solution, Dr. Klepack said he had been looking at a Single Payer system more and more. The NY State Academy of Physicians, of which he is a member, came out in support of a Single Payer system in 2006 because they see that administration problems are huge, patients in U.S. don't live as long, we lose more babies due to infant mortality and we walk around worrying about health care coverage for ourselves and our families. He decided that there are bigger issues in life and unless we are looking at these

important issues we are beginning to die a little. He sees people stressed because they can't cover costs. With Single Payer the overhead is streamlined and costs are reduced. When we are paying high fixed costs it comes from health care delivery and people are not getting the preventive care they need.

Some people are concerned that they will lose what they now have and have less choice. However, Dr. Klepack feels that, under a Single Payer system with payment coming from one source, providers could choose whether to be part of the system, and patients could choose who they want to go to. Currently, choice of doctors may be limited to 2-3 doctors in some regions. People with Health Savings Accounts are often afraid to spend dollar "one" of the money they have in them for fear that it will not be there when they need it and often they cannot afford to pay anything out of pocket (that's why they bought the product in the first place). Employers are shifting more of the cost of health care to their employees because high health care costs are impacting on their ability to be competitive in the global market.

Dr. Klepack feels that a tipping point is coming because the economics of health care is affecting everyone and impacting too many important facets of our life. Some change is going to have to occur. He feels that the most significant challenge for a Single Payer system will be to give control of the program to the

people affected by it and to keep it out of political hands. The economics and delivery of health care are not the parts which present the biggest challenge as we come to create a new system. The committee that runs it nationally must be separated from politics so that politicians can not play political football with it and the people who need health care can be empowered. The public, health care practitioners and those who provide services at all levels have to be in the mix. Then the dialogue can go on about what gives us the most value for the dollars spent in preventing illness and achieving better health care outcomes for the public. For physicians to buy into the system they must have meaningful collective bargaining power regarding both their own economics and the priorities of the care delivered.

This interview between Dr. Klepack and Rebecca Elgie was taken from a Public Access Television Show, DSA Presents and is also available on DVD.

Rebecca Elgie

A WOMEN'S CELEBRATION

The annual *Women Making History Celebration* will take place Thursday, March 27, 2008, at 7:00 PM in the Women's Community Building, 100 West Seneca Street. The program includes Peggy Haine's *Ithaca's Wild Women of the 70s* and recognition of outstanding women in the community. Come join the celebration and support Dooley Kiefer, one of the honorees, who has made so many contributions to the WLWV-TC.

LWV-TC CALENDAR—2007-2008

7:00 Mon., Mar. 24	GENERAL MEETING: Bethany Schroeder	Livesay Rm., Hum. Serv. Bldg.
	THE ITHACA FREE CLINIC	
7:00 Thu., Mar 27	WOMEN MAKING HISTORY CELEBRATION	Wmn.'s Comm. Bldg.
7:00 Mon., Apr. 7	Board Meeting	Libby DeProsse
7:00 Mon., Apr. 21	ANNUAL MEETING: Jennifer Wilkins and Monica Ross	TBA
	COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS	
7:00 Mon., May 5	Board Meeting	Kathy Burlitch
7:00 Mon., Jun. 2	Board Meeting	Kay Sharp

THE BIGGER, BETTER, BOTTLE BILL

This bill passed the Assembly in 2005 and 2006 but died in the Senate both years. This year the Bigger, better, bottle bill A8044 (Sweeney) was recently introduced in the Assembly and has been included in the Governors proposed 2008 budget.

Supported by the League of Women Voters of New York, the 1983 Returnable Container Act, has been a most successful recycling program, capturing 76% of the containers that are subject to deposit. Six million tons of glass, plastic and aluminum have been diverted from the waste stream. Greenhouse emissions have been reduced and the energy equivalent of 25 million barrels of oil were saved.

In addition to expanding the kind of beverages requiring a deposit, unclaimed deposits would go to the Environmental Protection Fund, to be dispersed directly to municipalities for recycling or other environmental programs

This new bill will address some of the concerns which the retailers have expressed, the handling fee will be increased and financial incentives would be made available for new redemption centers.

What can we do? WRITE TO YOUR STATE SENATOR TO SUPPORT A BIGGER, BETTER, BOTTLE BILL IN THE STATE SENATE. Reduce litter on roadsides and landfills, reduce greenhouse gas emissions from incinerators. Assemblywoman Lifton has supported this bill in the Assembly.

51st District; Senator James L. Seward
41 S. Main Street, Onenta, NY 13820
Groton, Dryden, Caroline, Danby

53rd District, Senator George H. Winner, Jr.
228 Lake Street, Box 588, Elmira, NY 14902
Ithaca, Enfield, Newfield, Ulysses.

54th District Senator Michael F. Nozzolio
114 Fall Street, Seneca Falls, NY 13148
Lansing

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TOMPKINS COUNTY: BOARD 2006-07

LWV NYS website

www.lwvny.org

LWV US website

www.lwv.org

LWV-Tompkins County leave message at 273-8350

lwvtc@twcnny.rr.com

www.lwvtompkins.14850.com

Officers:

President	Kay Sharp	272-4748	kshepherdqueen@yahoo.com
VP Program	Martha Hamblin	277-3025	mth3@cornell.edu
VP Membership	Maria Eisner	277-4404	mle3@cornell.edu
VP Finance	Sunny Gooding	277-3598	shgooding@clarityconnect.com
Secretary	Jane McGonigal	272-4065	jwm7@cornell.edu
Treasurer	Alene Wyatt	257-1894	alene@lightlink.com

Directors:

Action	Mary Berkelman	257-6450	mberkelman@twcnny.rr.com
Director-at-large	Libby deProsse	257-6678	deprosse@lightlink.com
Co-Voter Service	Debbie Levin	273-7746	dlevin01@twcnny.rr.com
Co-Voter Service	Barbara Thorp	257-2462	bthorp@twcnny.rr.com
Publications/PR	Kathy Burlitch	539-7316	klburlitch@frontiernet.net
Phone	Linda Duttweiler	277-0006	ldutt@twcnny.rr.com
Bulletin	Robert Silsbee	273-1436	rhs1@cornell.edu

Off-Board Members

Web Master	Michael Duttweiler	277-0006	mdutt@twcnny.rr.com
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MEMBERSHIP**NATURAL RESOURCES**

The Tompkins County League has a long and admirable record of advocacy for conservation: for example, its strong participation in the successful effort to prevent the construction of a nuclear power plant on the shore of Cayuga Lake. Why, with the current intense interest in issues of sustainability and global warming, has the Natural Resources Study Committee been inactive for a number of years? Any who are interested in reactivating this study committee should call Marnie Johnson at 257-2948.

We are happy to welcome new members:

Robin Booth	375 Stone Quarry Road
273-0570	
Donna Fleming	199 Valley Road
277-0019	
Pat Long	4 Schickle Road
273-6865	
Elizabeth Reed	309 Savage Farm Drive
257-4330	
Jery Stedinger	120 Kay Street
257-8016	

Thank you for joining our League!

Maria Eisner

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The nominating committee with Marnie Johnson as chair, Lucia Armstrong, Debbie Levin, Maria Eisner, Martha Hamblin and Fran Helmstadter met on January 18th, 2008 and worked over several weeks to come up with the following slate of nominees:

Officers:

1. Vice President and Program	Cathy Valentino
2. Vice President and Membership	Kathy Yen
3. Vice President and Finance	Sunny Gooding
Secretary	Barbara Caldwell

Directors:

Bulletin	Robert Silsbee
Director-at-large	Maria Eisner
Health Care	Rebecca Elgie
Publication and PR	Kathy Burlitch

Off-Board Directors

Co-Program	Martha Hamblin
Co-Program	Florence Smith

Nominating Committee

Joan Bechhofer, chair
Helen Cooil
Margaret Myers

The report of the nominating committee will be presented to the annual meeting in April 2008. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any voting member provided the consent of the nominee has been secured. A majority vote of those present and qualified to vote is required for election, a quorum being present.

Respectfully submitted, Marnie Johnson for the nominating committee.

2008-09 BUDGET PROPOSAL

INCOME	2007-08 Budget	2007-08 YTD (to Feb.24)	2008-09 Proposed
DUES			
Individual/regular (48/58)	5,150.00	4,210.00	5,194.00
Friends (\$10)	100.00	77.50	50.00
Household (72/87)	1,125.00	1,260.00	1,272.00
Sub-Total	6,375.00	5,547.50	6,516.00
CONTRIBUTIONS			
General	300.00	706.50	700.00
Sub-Total	300.00	706.50	700.00
PUBLICATION SALES	0.00	0.00	0.00
PROJECTS			
Election Night Report	50.00		50.00
Voter's Guide		3,382.50	
Sub-Total	50.00	3,382.50	50.00
OTHER - Misc.			
Interest	30.00	3.79	10.00
Winter Lunch	75.00	85.00	75.00
Annual meeting	600.00		500.00
Subtotal	705.00	88.79	585.00
TOTAL INCOME	7,430.00	9,725.29	7,851.00
EXPENDITURES			
BOARD AND ADMINISTRATION			
President	50.00		50.00
Secretary	50.00		50.00
Treasurer	50.00	8.20	50.00
Board Tools	50.00		50.00
Committees			
Finance		300.00	0.00
Membership			
Materials & Supplies	120.00	29.16	100.00
Programs	100.00		100.00
Winter Lunch	75.00		75.00
Annual Meeting	600.00		500.00
PR			
Sub-Total	1,095.00	337.36	975.00

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EXPENDITURES (cont.)	2007-08 Budget	2007-08 YTD (to Feb.24)	2008-09 Proposed
DELEGATES/TRAVEL			
State convention	800.00		800.00
National Convention	500.00		1,000.00
WCB	175.00	143.00	175.00
	1,475.00	143.00	1,975.00
FINANCIAL SUPPORT (08 rates)			
State @ \$18	1,854.00	2,250.00	1,764.00
Household @ \$27	405.00		432.00
National@ \$28	2,708.90	3,282.00	2,744.00
Nat. Household @ \$42	591.75		672.00
	5,559.65	5,532.00	5,612.00
BULLETIN			
Production	500.00	186.99	375.00
Postage	400.00	205.00	400.00
Sub-Total	900.00	391.99	775.00
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES			
Nat. study	25.00		25.00
Sub-Total	100.00	0.00	25.00
VOTERS SERVICE			
Meetings			
School board	25.00		25.00
November	100.00	164.12	150.00
Voter's Guide, Local		3,718.75	
Facts for Voters	150.00	0.00	200.00
Telephone	360.00	187.30	
Sub-Total	635.00	4,070.17	375.00
SALES TAX			
	0.00		0.00
Bank Charges	0.00		0.00
TOTAL	9,764.65	10,474.52	9,737.00
INCOME			
	7,430.00	9,725.29	7,851.00
EXPENDITURE			
	9,764.65	10,474.52	9,737.00
I-E (From Reserves or EducFd)	-2,334.65	-749.23	-1,886.00
BALANCES			
	2/22/2007	2/24/2008	
Checking	1,820.56	1,584.04	
Savings	1,430.92	0.00	
	3,251.48	1,584.04	
Community Foundation	35,831.00	37,562.39	

YOUR REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS

SENATORS:

Hillary Rodham Clinton US Senate, 476 Russell Senate Building, Washington, DC 20510
202-224-4451; Syracuse Office: 315-448-0470
e-mail: senator@clinton.senate.gov web-site: clinton.senate.gov

Charles E. Schumer US Senate, 313 Hart Senate Building, Washington, DC 20510
202-224-6542; Syracuse Office: 315-423-5471
e-mail: senator@schumer.senate.gov web-site: schumer.senate.gov

REPRESENTATIVES;

Michael Arcuri 327 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515-3224
202-225-3665; Utica Office: 315-793-8146
e-mail: send from web-site web-site: arcuri.house.gov

Maurice Hinchey 2431 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515
202-225-6335; Ithaca Office: 607-273-1388; 123 S. Cayuga St. #201
e-mail: mhinchey@mail.house.gov web-site: www.house.gov/hinchey

League of Women Voters of Tompkins County
60 Hickory Circle
Ithaca, NY 14850