



The Broome-Tioga Voter

Bulletin of the *League of Women Voters of Broome & Tioga Counties*

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January Program

Redistricting: The Time is Now

Laura Ladd Bierman, LWNYS Executive Director

Barbara Bartoletti, LWNYS Legislative Director



Tuesday, January 25, 2011

7:00 pm Refreshments

7:30 pm Program

Vestal Public Library

Vestal Parkway E., Vestal, NY

Public Welcome

(The Library is accessible to people with disabilities.)

President's Message

It is usual for some to recall the highlights of their past year as a new one approaches. As president of our League, I take great satisfaction at reviewing our 2010 accomplishments. From clean air and how to save energy in our own homes, from learning about Project Sunlite and protecting our right to know, to the comparison of the approach to the Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania to New York, well informed speakers gave our members and local residents important knowledge about issues which can help us with our daily choices.

We had a challenging year helping the Board of Elections take the unofficial tally of election results. Changes in the voting machines, the forms which we filled out, and a totally new phone system were dealt with patiently by both the Board of Elections and our volunteer phone clerks. We thought we had everything in order but a new set of challenges (in the same areas – but different) came up. We are planning to speak with both of the Deputy Commissioners, before election time next year, to see how we can handle the new situation. Those of you who volunteered at both the Primary and General Elections were a great help to the Board of Elections, and we hope you and others continue to perform this service.

Thanks to Mary Johnson, we again have a Natural Resources Committee. It was Mary and her committee who were responsible for *Press and Sun-Bulletin* reporter, Tom Wilber, to speak about the Marcellus Shale from a well documented reporter's perspective. Please consider joining Mary and her committee on future endeavors on the issue of our environment and how to protect it.

As usual, in the fall, our Voter Service Committee and its chair, Sara Wokan, were busy registering new voters, distributing voter registration information to new citizens, and Voter Guides to high schools, libraries and government offices. Their biggest project was co-hosting a Senatorial seat debate with the BCC Political Science Faculty between incumbent Thomas Libous and his opponent John Orzel. They also supplied help in setting up debates between other candidates which the BCC Faculty held in our area.

Our year ended with a very successful 90th Anniversary Celebration of “Winning the Vote” by our newest members, 50-year members, and those in between. We were inspired by a Power Point presentation about the courageous women who made all of this possible, and proud of our own efforts to “make democracy work.”

~ Clare Simeone, President

December Brunch THANK YOU

Thank you to our delicious bakers, cooks, and decorators, serving and clean-up helpers.

Someone has said that our League is not a cookie and kaffee League, but a cerebral league. I agree. However, there is no doubt in my mind that our members, when so moved, can cook and set up a lovely brunch with the best of them. Thanks to Janet Gill, Isi Trapper, Sara Wokan, our president Clare Simeone and her helper Debbie, who decorated and helped set up. Anne Taft brought our mikes which were set up by Carol Oestrich. Janet Gill prepared a delicious fruit salad, as well as a croissant dish and also did yeoman service in the kitchen and brought cups, coffee and numerous items for the brunch. Our bakers were Alice Brooks, Mary Diegert, Jane Park, Clare Simeone, and Sara Wokan. Anne Kalayjian contributed a delicious salad. Debbie, who is not yet a League member, was the visitor who pitched in and helped without being asked and with great gusto and knowledge. Thank you all for your hard work and expertise.

~Raney Colvill

Future Happenings

Planned in March is a meeting on education. In April we will have a speaker about health care. More information will be given closer to those dates.

~Raney Colvill

THANK YOU, ELECTION NIGHT REPORTING VOLUNTEERS!

I would like to acknowledge all of the following people who volunteered to help at the 2010 Election Night Reporting events. We appreciate all of our volunteers for their time and effort in making the September 14th and November 2nd election night reporting events a success. Thank you for doing such a great job.

~Joanne Gee

Judy Arnold	Jane Park
Nancy Boyd-Goff	Les Platt
Alice Brooks	Sondra Pruden
Sharon Bryden	Evelyn Rozunick
Claire Burkhardt	Susan Ruff
Carol Carpenter	Barbara Shope
Raney Colvill	Clare Simeone
Diana Cornell	Sue Stanton
Steve Cornell	Debbie Tabony
Bobbi Dean	Anne Taft
Barbara Dessel	Carol Taren
Ione Garing	Adele Thorne
Sue Garing	Isi Trapper
Suzanne Geoghegan	Chris Zick
Janet Gill	JC School
Joan Goodell	Jim Testani
John Goodell	Rachel Birmingham
Ellie Grubham	Brandi Carpenter
Eleanor Hamilton	Josh Hodges
Ellen Hickey	Shannon Jimenez
Jeanette Hriciga	Taylor Mihok
Mary Johnson	Donny Burhan
Sandi Junker	Kyle Zlock
Anne Kalayjan	
Beth Kilmarx	Volunteer for
Shirley Kowalewski	Tioga County AP reporting
Doris Lawton	Robert Hoople
Mary Malenda	
Ruth Morenus	
Marilyn Myers	
Toni Norton	
Carol Oestrich	
Dick Paden	
Cheryl Papa	
Gregory Papa	

Interested in NYS politics? Want to participate directly in the legislative process and development of policies?

Join the new LWVNYS Lobby Corps

The League of Women Voters of NYS is developing a Lobby Corps, similar to that of LWVUS. The purpose is to train a group of volunteers who will then communicate the League's position on proposed legislation in person directly to the members of the state Senate and Assembly. The volunteer lobbyists will receive background information, talking points and individual assignments of legislators. A meeting will be held prior to the start of the legislative session in Albany to train and brief the Corps.

These volunteers are not to replace the Issue Specialists on whom the League currently depends for specific information, testimony and memos on particular issues as they are considered by the legislature. Instead, the Lobby Corps will be generalists who will provide the direct contact with the legislators on the key talking points. The Corps will also attend legislative committee meetings to report to the state League on important discussions and votes. It would be expected that the Lobby Corps volunteers would agree to lobby on a regular basis as assigned in Albany, for example, at least 2 days a month.

The Corps will work very closely with the state League's Vice President for Issues and Advocacy, Sally Robinson, and our Legislative Director, Barbara Bartoletti. The volunteers will "shadow" Barbara to meet the legislators, become familiar with the capitol and the legislative procedures, and learn the aspects of good lobbying techniques, especially during the volunteers' first year.

Come make a difference - and try something new in the League!

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NYS
54th Biennial Convention

May 20-22, 2011 Albany, NY

STRONG MEMBERS - STRONG LEADERS
STRONG GOVERNMENT



“A classic picture of the original gerrymandered district” ~ Raney Colvill

January Program

Redistricting: The Time Is Now

The January meeting will be held on January 25th, 7 p.m. at the Vestal Library.

Who picks whom? Do voters pick their representatives, or is it the other way around?

We are facing the post-census challenge of reforming the system for drawing election district lines. Gerrymandering has been the common practice, and it has a deservedly bad reputation. Come find out why and learn what we can do about it. Our speakers for the January meeting will be a “dynamic duo:” Laura Ladd Bierman, LWVNYS Executive Director, and Barbara Bartoletti, LWVNYS Legislative Director. They will give us background information on the current system and its flaws and bring us up to date on how the redistricting process can be reformed. Join us on January 25th for what promises to be an important and interesting discussion!

Redistricting: A Glossary

Every topic has its jargon. Here are a few of the terms you will hear on the subject of redistricting:

Reapportionment – process of determining how many Congressional seats each state receives

Redistricting – redrawing of districts within each state

Gerrymandering – manipulation of the redistricting process for political gain.

Some of the techniques used in gerrymandering are:

Packing – placing as many voters of one type in a single district to minimize the number of elections they can influence

Cracking – spreading voters of one type over many districts, thus diluting the opposition

Hijacking – separating an incumbent candidate from his constituents by placing him/her in a district where he or she has no name recognition.

Kidnapping – Drawing two incumbent candidates into the same district so they must run against each other.

All of these techniques are commonly practiced during what a New York Times article (9/26/10) called the country’s “once-a-decade exercise in creative cartography.” The League and other good government groups are actively seeking creative alternatives to these practices so that all voters can be fairly represented.

~ Jane Park



A recent photo of Ruth. Ruth Levin says, "Just try to take this sign, Huppenthal! " (a reference to Arizona state Senator John Huppenthal's proposed education cuts)

A note from Ruth Levin via MaryBelle Mitten ...

Did you know Ruth Levin who moved to Arizona? Ruth was a long time member and active in many organizations in Broome County. Her son Nate was president of a League in the New York City area. He grew up in Vestal.

I had told Ruth that we have just one copy left of Nate's book about Carrie Chapman Catt. She had donated some when she moved. Before that, Ruth and Nate gave our League a good deal, and we purchased and donated a copy to each middle school library in Broome and Tioga Counties, when Ruth was still here. Ruth was a wonder when it came to environmental issues.

Ruth says, "I am sure that members would be interested to know what Nate as a former member of LWVBTC is doing. It was his membership in the League in Broome that started his interest in Carrie Chapman Catt and women suffrage."

~ MaryBelle Mitten (Nate Levin's book is available at Amazon.com, *Carrie Chapman Catt: A Life of Leadership*.)

LWVNYS 2010 Election Survey Results

The online survey of 1,072 respondents, from 47 counties including all 5 counties of NYC, showed that the voting machines indeed did perform well; however, the respondents did make note of several inadequacies that the League feels must be addressed to ensure that voters are guaranteed a secure and private franchise. The League's recommendations for immediate action are listed below. We are recommending that the State Board of Elections move to implement these recommendations before the next election cycle: * increase voter education * increase training for all elections personnel * revise the paper ballot * put into place measures that ensure the privacy of the voter.

Please visit the NYS League's website for the full report.

The Broome-Tioga Voter

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Calendar

January 11	Board of Directors Meeting
January 25	Program Meeting - Redistricting

Contents

President's Message	2
December Brunch Thank You	2
Future Happenings	2
Election Night Reporting Thank You	3
LWVNYS Lobby Corps	3
LWVNYS Convention Announcement	3
January Program - Redistricting	4
Ruth Levin - Hello	5
LWVNYS Election Survey Results	5