

Update

The newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Cooperstown Area



September 2007

07/08 Issue 1

Meet the League

Prospective members are receiving post card invitations to Meet the League on Tuesday, September 18, 2007, in the Village Meeting Room at 22 Main at 7:00 p.m. Refreshments will be served.

The mission and goals of the League of Women Voters are often misunderstood, and we hope to dispell any misconceptions people in the Cooperstown area may have, and encourage them to add their voices to our unique tri-level organization. So, all hands on deck! Pick up the phone and call your new neighbors, or someone whose Letter to the Editor intrigued you, and invite them to come along. Asking works!

Consider giving someone special a gift membership in the League. We all need to be reminded that membership is open to ALL: men as well as women, and students too. And remember that we offer scholarships to add to what a new member is able to pay, or to cover the entire membership cost.

Immigration Study Begins

Those attending our annual meeting were enthusiastic about joining local Leagues across the nation in the League of Women Voters of the United States' study of Immigration Policy. There are many resources available to us in issues of the *National Voter*, and on the LWVUS website in the Members section. You will need to register as a member on the site @ www.lwv.org.

We are making printed copies of the eight background papers available to the public, and to League members without internet access, or who prefer hard copy. The background papers topics are: Economic Aspects of Authorized and Unauthorized Immigration; Immigration and the Economy; Overview: Federal Immigration Policy and Proposed Reforms; Effects of Global Interdependence on Migration; Immigration: Diversity and Inclusion; Federal Immigration Policy: Enforcement Issues; What Motivates Immigration to America?; Immigration Policy: Family Reunification.

League positions are made to allow us to join our voices and forces to impact public policy. They are not crafted to speak to one piece of legislation. The legislative process runs on compromise, and our positions must be used over and over to reach our goals. Be a part of a strong consensus on an issue that will outlast all of us.

Wolverton to speak in October

Lorrie Wolverton, Director of the Oneonta Migrant Education Outreach Program will kick off our local study on immigration on Tuesday, October 16, 2007, in the Village Meeting Room at 7:00 p.m.

The Outreach Program works with migrant farmworker families to improve the educational success of their children.

Lorrie has been a League member for the past 38 years. While serving on the state League board, she facilitated the formation of our Cooperstown League. Come, help welcome her back.

Ironed Jawed Angels to be shown

The fight for women's voting rights has rarely been given as dramatic a treatment as in this film. Oscar-winner Hilary Swank and Frances O'Connor star as second-wave suffragettes Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, who led the final fight for the 19th Amendment to the Constitution. The actors give fervent, determined performances that should energize all who see "Ironed Jawed Angels."

We are tentatively scheduling a showing on Tuesday, November 13th, location to be announced.



From the web

Our state League provides an overload of information to all members on the internet at www.lwvny.org.

Check it often. This fall's United Nations Briefing will be held on November 28, 2007, and details will be posted on the website as they become available. This year's topic will be *The Effects of War on Women Around the World*.

Along with updates of League action, you will also find speaker's notes on various issues, *State Board Reports*, publications and links to local League bulletins, as well as to the *New York State Voter*. Prospective members will find all their questions answered here, and seasoned members will find new ways to be more effective.

Do you shop on-line? The state League website will link you to web organizations such as iGive that will see to it that a portion of your purchase prices will be donated to the work of the League. What could be less painful?

Perhaps the most valuable feature of the site is the Citizen's Action ToolKit (CATT, named after the League's founder). If you find yourself wanting to respond to legislative Calls to Action, but finding the time is a roadblock, just try this tool once, and you'll find yourself speaking out more frequently, and sleeping more soundly.

Ballot Proposal

This November's ballot will include a proposal to amend Article 14, section 1 of the state Constitution. The proposal will read:

"The proposed amendment would allow the State to convey one acre of forest preserve land to the town of Long Lake for public use as the site for drinking water wells and necessary related equipment for the municipal water supply for the hamlet of Raquette Lake. In exchange, the State would receive at least twelve acres of land that is at least equal in value to the land conveyed to Long Lake. The land the State receives would be incorporated into the forest preserve. The Raquette Lake reservoir would be abandoned as a source of drinking water supply. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?"

The League of Women Voters

The LWV, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

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"Update" is the bulletin of the League of Women Voters of the Cooperstown Area. It is published as often as possible.

Would you like to join the League? Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all citizens 18 years of age. Dues are \$45 for individual membership; \$65 for a household membership; \$18.25 for Student memberships; and \$5 for Junior memberships.

For information write: LWV of the Cooperstown Area, P.O. Box 426, Cooperstown, NY 13326.

**Editor: Joyce Hickling
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Regional Workshops

The State Board and Your Local League Working Together, is the theme for this fall's Ida Trager Regional Training Workshops.

Workshops on Voter Service, Membership, Financial Support and our new state study on the Compact for a National Popular Vote (see page 3).

State President Martha Kennedy, and VPs Marcia Merrins (membership), Maggie Moehringer (Voter Service) and Betsey Swan (development), as well as other state board members will attend to facilitate training, dialogue and an active networking opportunity among local Leagues.

Food will be provided by area local Leagues, and the cost to you is \$5.00. Register online @ www.lwvny.org or by calling 518-465-4162.

Sept. 26 Western NY: Harlem Road Community Center, Amherst.

Oct. 4 Long Island: Farmingdale University, Farmingdale.

Oct. 5 Central NYS: Tompkins/Cortland Community College, Dryden.

Nov. 15 Capital Region: Shenendehowa Senior Citizen Center, Clifton Park.

Nov. 28 New York City: 45 E33rd Street.

Should NYS Join the Compact for a National Popular Vote?

At this spring's state League convention, delegates adopted the non-recommended study: "Should New York State Join the Compact for a National Popular Vote?" The desire to get to a nationwide popular vote for President (the main tenant of the national League position on the Selection of the President), coupled with the difficulty of eliminating the Electoral College by the constitutional amendment route, led some innovative thinkers to propose that the U.S. move to a nationwide popular vote by having individual states join a "Compact for a National Popular Vote." This is how the compact would work:

- Each state participating in the plan would award all of their electoral votes to the presidential candidate receiving the most popular votes nationwide (in all 50 states and the District of Columbia).

- The National Popular Vote plan would take effect only when the plan has been enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes - that is 270 of the 538 electoral votes. This guarantees that the presidential candidate receiving the most popular votes nationwide would win enough electoral votes in the Electoral College to become President.

- The proposed National Popular Vote plan is state legislation in the form of an "interstate compact." An interstate compact is the legal vehicle that the Founders placed in the Constitution to enable the states to address a common problem by coordinated action.

The plan recognizes the inherent power granted to the states in the Constitution to employ the most suitable method for casting their electoral votes.

Our national League position on the Selection of the President calls for the direct-popular-vote method of electing the President, and therefore, the abolition of the Electoral College, so we will NOT be studying whether to elect the President by nationwide popular vote or whether we should eliminate the Electoral College. We WILL be studying whether New York State should join the Compact for the National Popular Vote.

More information on the study is available at www.lwvny.org. See the index at the left hand side of the homepage. Included is the full text of opposing views:

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger vetoed the Bill that would have had California join the interstate compact because, "...it disregards the will of the majority of Californians..." By this he means that California would not necessarily be voting its block of votes for the presidential candidate who won the majority of the votes in California, rather it would be casting its electoral votes for the presidential candidate who won the most votes nationwide.

Opponents argue that it would be far better to pass a constitutional amendment to eliminate the Electoral College. The advantage of a constitutional amendment is that it is not easily reversed, whereas states could withdraw from the compact, meaning that it would be possible to use the national popular vote in one presidential election and then have to revert to the Electoral College in the following presidential election because one or several states withdrew and there were no longer 270 electoral votes among the contracting states.

Professor Matthew Soberg Shugart objects to the Compact for a Nationwide Popular Vote because in a three-way race the votes would go to the candidate with a plurality of the votes and there is no provision to have a run-off, instant or otherwise.

Arguing against the Compact which was passed by the Colorado Senate, one Colorado Senator argued that the Compact would make voters in Colorado "irrelevant."

Many supporters of the Electoral College argue that eliminating the Electoral College would take away the numerical advantage given to small states, take away their voice in presidential elections and steer campaigns to the most populous states.

Smart Voter for Election 2007

The state League staff will be working to bring the Smart Voter website current for the 2007 elections. Since there are no elections to be covered specifically by the state League for 2007, the state page will focus on general voter information, important links, and information on the proposed ballot issues.

There are two ways for local Leagues to begin to utilize Smart Voter. The first way is free and part of the franchise fee paid by the state League! You can send us links for your county. Your county page should, at a minimum, be linked to all of the local Leagues in your county, the county board of elections, and other offices that will be helpful to voters.

The second way involves the personalized ballot look-up feature. This takes human resource time for data entry and server costs. If you are willing to help, please contact President Ellen Tillapaugh at 547-5646 or kuchtill@verizon.net

Call to Action on Voting!

This week should bring an action alert to your email in-box. The state Board of Elections (BOE) is considering allowing counties to select DREs for the 2008 rollout of accessible machines in each poll site. Under this plan, counties would be allowed to select DREs even though they will not yet have completed certification.

As the BOE may approve this at their next meeting on September 11th, New Yorkers for Verified Voting, and LWVNY have a team working on preparing our defense against this move. We will need a huge response from around the state if the BOE is to be convinced to refuse to take this approach.

If the BOE decides to take this action, all our efforts to gain verifiable paper ballots will have been for naught, and New York State will be a DRE state after all.

Calendar

September

- 18 Meet the League!** Village Meeting Room at 7:00 p.m.
Refreshments will be served.

October

- 16 Immigration Policy,** Lorrie Wolverton, speaker, 7:00 p.m. at the Village Meeting Room

TBA Candidates Night

November

- 6 General Election Day, YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE!**
- 13 "Ironed Jawed Angels" screening.** 7:00 p.m., place to be announced



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