



# ***LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TOMPKINS COUNTY***

**JUNE-JULY 2008**

**PRESIDENT: KAY SHARP 272-4748**  
**MEMBERSHIP: KATHLEEN YEN 257-8199**

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

## **PLANNING MEETING**

This is for anybody—not just board members—who is interested in the programs for our monthly meetings for this year. Please, come to my house at 60 Hickory Circle on Wednesday, July 23rd, at 10 am to discuss ideas for topics and speakers. Bring lots of ideas. If you cannot come, call me (277-4404) or e-mail me (mle3@cornell.edu) with your thoughts. We want to put together an attractive, lively agenda for the year.

If you need instructions to find my house, let me know. Please park in the street.

Maria Eisner

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

The National Convention was fantastic! It stimulated so many ideas for the future work of our League.

I attended two caucuses on universal health care, which Rebecca Elgie has written about in this Bulletin. It was voted by the attendees of the Convention to proceed with educating our communities about this important topic. We are planning to have a program on health care for the Fall.

I saw a heart-wrenching documentary about young girls married off as young as 7 years of age. A report on this film appears later in the Bulletin. I may be able to get a copy of the film to show at one of our membership meetings.

I attended a workshop on “How to manage your League,” which reinforced the many projects we are already doing, especially voter service. The

speakers suggested that Leagues educate the young about the democratic process. We are exploring the possibility of giving talks in our local schools’ government classes. The workshop also suggested that Leagues co-sponsor programs with other organizations to increase visibility. One idea I had was to coordinate with the Women’s Business Organization. They invited us to speak at their Fall meeting last year. We could reciprocate.

Our changing climate was covered by two speakers in one of the plenary sessions. I’ve highlighted some of the facts from this talk later in the Newsletter. It would be interesting to have someone who is an expert on this topic come to speak on the issues.

Well, as you can see, I’ve been “jump-started” by the Convention. Thank you for supporting my attendance. I’ll see you at our September membership meeting.

Kay Sharp

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## **REACHING NEW HEIGHTS TOGETHER: LWV-US 48<sup>TH</sup> NATIONAL CONVENTION**

Attending this convention in Portland was a stimulating and interesting experience. The national group that I have been working with for the last two years to try to get health care as a program item for the national league had worked feverishly for months to organize three caucuses all of which were scheduled on the first day of the conference. A group from Massachusetts presented the first caucus entitled Massachusetts Healthcare Reform: Miracle or Mirage? People started arriving a half hour early and by starting time the room was overflowing. Jackie Wolf outlined the basics of the program including problems such as: underestimating the numbers of uninsured; having no mechanism for controlling costs; the fact that it is not universal because 62,000 waivers have been granted exempting people from the program; insurance companies still dictate treatments; and people continue to pay premiums, co-pays and deductibles and many cannot afford it, but if they don't have insurance they are penalized. They also discussed the plan which the LWV- MA is supporting called the Mass Health Care Trust and outlined the principles of what they consider good reform.

The formal presentation was followed by a lively question period led by Judy Deutsch from Sudbury who is the LWV-MA Health Care Specialist, Jackie Wolf from Amherst LWV-MA who speaks regularly to groups, and Dr. Don McCanne of LWV- CA who is Senior Health Policy Fellow for Physicians for a National Health Program. After a very short break we continued questions and then moved into our second caucus, which was sponsored by our league called Healthcare Reform: Strategy for the Future. The strategy session was an opportunity to plan for the program vote slated for Monday. We designated people to speak in favor of the proposed program, "the LWV-US board recommends a Health Care program to educate members and communities in order to be better prepared to do healthcare advocacy as needed," and discussed parliamentary rules etc.

This was followed by short presentations by representatives of a number of leagues who have been holding forums on Health Care and developing speakers bureaus. They shared materials and brochures they had developed, a petition by the LWV- CA in support of basic reforms, which they presented to the LSV-US Board, and an outline of the work going on in California. The clear message from these workshops was that there is a lot of interest and concern around this topic. Many leagues are already actively working on it but there is much more work to do and this campaign season is a perfect time to begin the work of making a major change in the system. Throughout the conference we had a table set up with materials submitted by many leagues around the country, which we put in a sample book of resources, as well as handouts, brochures, stickers, visors, bandaids and booklets to share. At each break in the sessions we had people come and talk with us at the table and sign up for more information. Saturday evening we showed the PBS Video Sick Around the World, which depicts the health care systems in Taiwan, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Japan & Germany. That was followed by another lively discussion and was very well attended.

In addition to the presentations that we had planned one of the keynote speakers was former governor John Kitzhaber (1995-2002) (he made sure we knew he was the son of a League member) who addressed "The Unfinished Business of the Baby Boomer Generation: Health Care for the 21<sup>st</sup> century." He framed health care as a social responsibility, like education, which benefits the individual and the whole society. Kitzhaber analyzed the history and current crisis of the American health care system. He concluded his powerful speech with a challenge: his grandparents fought in WWII for freedom and democracy; his parents' generation ushered in the social safety nets Medicare and Medicaid; now it is time for his generation, the baby boomers, to provide the legacy of universal health care for our children, grandchildren, and future generations. The delegates rose to their feet in applause. On

Monday we had 14 people lined up at pro microphones to speak before the program vote but, after the only con speaker and one pro speaker, president Mary Wilson called the question which passed by a large margin.

As you can imagine the bulk of my time was concentrated on the Health Care activities but I did attend all the plenary sessions and workshops on: Public Financing Campaign Reform to hear how different states and cities have adopted their own voter-owned reform; Media Outreach Tactics for the 21st Century to learn about ways to use both traditional media and online media to get out the league message; and Developing an Effective Advocacy campaign which talked about defining the message and getting it out to others and also building coalitions with other groups.

Other programs which were approved were a recommended program of a “Multi-Level Education and Advocacy Campaign to promote solutions to global climate change” and a non-recommended study item entitled “The advisability of using the National Popular Vote compact among the states as a method for electing the President.” I also met Elizabeth MacNamara, who is the new 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President and with whom I have been communicating by phone during the past year about our health care work. Marcia Merrins, former NYS President was elected to the board so we have two strong contacts on the National Board. All in all it was a full and exciting five days and I appreciate the opportunity to attend and represent LWV-TC.

I video taped the Mass HC Caucus and have DVD's available and also for the Frontline program. Contact me if you would like one.

Rebecca Elgie 272-0621

## CLIMATE CHANGE

A number of facts were presented in a speech at the Convention:

\*A blanket of pollutants is moving from country to country, one country's problems affecting the other. This is a world-wide concern.

\*The heat emitted and distributed around the globe is equivalent to 25 trillion 60-watt light bulbs, burning in the world night and day.

\*Between 1860 and 2000 the globe's temperature has increased 1.5 degrees F.

\*Global warming is masked by atmospheric clouds called brown clouds.

\*Brown clouds are composed of soot and dust, and they trap the sunlight from coming to the earth.

\*When the brown clouds are cleaned up, we will see, for example, heat waves, increased droughts, intense rainfall and flooding, increased hurricanes, loss of vegetation, the disappearance of glaciers, the acidification of oceans and an increase in the sea level.

\*The major warming agents are greenhouse gases: carbon dioxide, methane, black carbons and ozone

\*If we were to decrease 25-30% of the soot, we would increase the rate of global warming.

Kay Sharp

### LWV-TC CALENDAR—FALL 2008

**10:00 Wed., July 23**

7:00 Mon., Aug. 25

**7:00 Mon., Sept. 22**

**PLANNING MEETING**

Board Meeting

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING (PROGRAM-TBA)**

**Maria Eisner**

Kay Sharp

**TBA**

**MEMBERSHIP****New Members**

We are pleased to welcome three new members:

Ms. Barbara Berthelsen      1249 Trumansburg  
Road, Apt. 4, Ithaca      273-0682  
Dr. J. Dix Wayman      917 Danby Road, Ithaca  
273-4564  
Ms. Joyce R. Munschauer      349 Savage Farm  
Drive, Ithaca      257-4342

Thank you for joining and supporting the League!

**Membership Renewal (July 2008 - 2009)**

Thank you to all who have renewed your membership and added a donation. It is sincerely appreciated.

If you have not had a chance to renew your membership for the new fiscal year (July 2008 - July 2009), please use the DUES form on the next page and mail it, along with your check, to: Alene Wyatt (LWV-TC Treasurer), 380 Savage Farm Drive, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Also, please take the time to update your contact information and complete the questionnaire on the reverse of the dues notice.

**Prospective Members**

If you know someone who is interested in learning more about the League of Women Voters, please send their name, address and e-mail or telephone number to me so that I can send them some information.

Kathleen Yen

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF TOMPKINS COUNTY: BOARD 2008-09**

LWV NYS website  
LWV US website  
LWV-Tompkins County      leave message at 272-4748

[www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)  
[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)  
[lwvtc@twcnny.rr.com](mailto:lwvtc@twcnny.rr.com)  
[www.lwvtompkins.14850.com](http://www.lwvtompkins.14850.com)

**Officers**

President	Kay Sharp	272-4748	<a href="mailto:kshepherdqueen@yahoo.com">kshepherdqueen@yahoo.com</a>
V.P.-Program	Cathy Valentino	272-5214	
V.P Membership	Kathleen Yen	257-8199	<a href="mailto:kyen@twcnny.rr.com">kyen@twcnny.rr.com</a>
V.P. Finance	Sunny Gooding	277-3598	<a href="mailto:shgooding@clarityconnect.com">shgooding@clarityconnect.com</a>
Secretary	Barbara Caldwell	272-5769	<a href="mailto:bcaldwel@twcnny.rr.com">bcaldwel@twcnny.rr.com</a>
Treasurer	Alene Wyatt	257-1894	<a href="mailto:alene@lightlink.com">alene@lightlink.com</a>

**Directors:**

Bulletin	Robert Silsbee	273-1436	<a href="mailto:rhs1@cornell.edu">rhs1@cornell.edu</a>
Director-at-large	Libby deProsse	257-6678	<a href="mailto:deprosse@lightlink.com">deprosse@lightlink.com</a>
Director-at-large	Maria Eisner	277-4404	<a href="mailto:mle3@cornell.edu">mle3@cornell.edu</a>
Action	Mary Berkelman	257-6450	<a href="mailto:mberkelman@netscape.net">mberkelman@netscape.net</a>
Publications/Publ.Rel.	Kathy Burlitch	539-7316	<a href="mailto:klburlitch@frontiernet.net">klburlitch@frontiernet.net</a>
Phone	Linda Duttweiler	277-0006	<a href="mailto:ldutt@twcnny.rr.com">ldutt@twcnny.rr.com</a>
Co-Voter Service	Debbie Levin	273-7746	<a href="mailto:dlevin01@twcnny.rr.com">dlevin01@twcnny.rr.com</a>
Co-Voter Service	Barbara Thorp	257-2462	<a href="mailto:bthorp@twcnny.rr.com">bthorp@twcnny.rr.com</a>

**Off-Board Members:**

Webmaster	Michael Duttweiler	277-0006	<a href="mailto:ldutt@twcnny.rr.com">ldutt@twcnny.rr.com</a>
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Dear Member,

July 2008

Our new fiscal year started on July 1, 2008 and, if you have not already done so, you should mail your annual membership dues promptly to the LWV-TC Treasurer, Alene Wyatt, 380 Savage Farm Drive, Ithaca, NY 14850. Please, do not forget to renew your membership, and continue to show your support of the League.

Because our PMP (per member payment) to the National League (\$28) and to the State League (\$18) has increased during recent years, leaving us now only \$2 per member for local operating expenses, we are introducing a different payment structure. You may choose between paying either \$48 as *contributing* member or \$58 as *supporting* member, and either \$72 or \$87 for a *contributing* or *supporting* family membership. "Friends of the League" who want to receive the local Bulletin only are asked to pay \$10. They are welcome to attend our meetings, but cannot participate as voting members.

**Please make your annual check payable to LWV-TC.** If our dues are a financial hardship for you, rather than drop your League membership please consider a token payment. It will be accepted like a full payment. No questions will be asked.

We are always grateful for a contribution toward our operating expenses. It can be added to the dues check, which is not tax-deductible. **For a tax-deductible contribution toward our educational activities, please, use a separate check, made out to Community Foundation of Tompkins County, memo: Ed. Fund of LWV.**

Please, take a few minutes to update your contact information and fill in the questionnaire on the reverse side. Send it, along with your check, to Alene Wyatt, 380 Savage Farm Drive, Ithaca, NY 14850.

Thank you for your faithful support.

Sincerely,  
Kathleen Yen, Membership, 277-4404

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**LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS of TOMPKINS COUNTY Dues 2008-2009**

<b>Dues</b> Individual:	<i>contributing</i>	\$48.-;	<i>supporting</i>	\$58.-	_____
Household:	<i>contributing</i>	\$72.-;	<i>supporting</i>	\$87.-	_____
Friend of the League		\$10.-			_____
<b>Contribution</b> (not tax-deductible)					_____
	<b>Total</b> (payable to LWV-TC)				_____
<b>Contribution</b> (tax-deductible) (payable to Community Foundation of TC; memo: Ed. Fund of LWV)					_____

**CONTACT INFORMATION** (Please Print) Contact information needs to be updated each year.

Mrs., Ms., Miss, Mr. (first name) \_\_\_\_\_ (last name) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_ (City, Town, Village of \_\_\_\_\_)

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ A good time to call: day \_\_\_ evening \_\_\_ never \_\_\_

Work phone (if ok to call): \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS – TOMPKINS COUNTY**

**QUESTIONNAIRE** (2008-2009)

**BULLETIN** How do you want to access the *Bulletin*? (please check one)

\_\_\_\_\_ On our web site [www.lwvtompkins.14850.com](http://www.lwvtompkins.14850.com)

\_\_\_\_\_ Receive it by e-mail (this is a good way to save printing costs and postage)

\_\_\_\_\_ as .doc file or \_\_\_\_\_ as .pdf file

\_\_\_\_\_ Receive it by US postal service

**COMMITTEES** I am interested in joining a committee on:

"Unmet needs of young children living in poverty in TC" \_\_\_\_\_;

Natural Resources \_\_\_\_\_; Health Care \_\_\_\_\_; National Popular Vote Study \_\_\_\_\_.

**VOTER SERVICE** I would like to be involved with Voter Service in the following ways:

\_\_\_\_\_ Register voters

\_\_\_\_\_ Election reporting

\_\_\_\_\_ Help with candidates' forums

\_\_\_\_\_ Moderate meetings (training provided)

\_\_\_\_\_ Distribute Facts-for-Voters

\_\_\_\_\_ Hand out voting information to new citizens

(3 times/yr. at naturalization ceremonies)

\_\_\_\_\_ Talk to high school students about voting, participation in government, civil rights

**OTHER WAYS TO BE INVOLVED**

\_\_\_\_\_ Help with a one-time job

\_\_\_\_\_ Represent the LWV on the board of the City Federation of Women's Organizations

\_\_\_\_\_ Observe meetings<sup>1)</sup> of the:

\_\_\_\_\_ County Legislature \_\_\_\_\_ School Board \_\_\_\_\_ City Council

\_\_\_\_\_ Town Board (of \_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Village Board (of \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

(specify) \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>1)</sup>You would be asked to report back to the board or to the membership through the Bulletin.

**SPECIAL TALENTS** (to share with the League): \_\_\_\_\_  
e.g. audit our books?

**PROSPECTIVE MEMBER(S)**: (Information will be sent to individuals interested in the LWV)  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ address OR e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**IDEAS & SUGGESTIONS**: (e.g. topic for a meeting or forum, student involvement)

## CHILD BRIDES: STOLEN LIVES

This documentary was seen at the National Convention. It is the story of young girls, as young 7 years old, who are married off by their families. The documentary covers three countries: rural India, Niger and Guatemala.

In India the legal age for marriage is 18 years. But in the rural parts young girls are married in hideaway places in the night so authorities are not present. The girls stay with their birth families until puberty. Then they move into their in-laws' homes. Two-thirds of these child brides are physically abused by their in-laws, stoned and beaten. One mother-in-law said to the girl, "you don't look good," and beat her to the point of unconsciousness. She was hospitalized, in a coma for several days.

Niger has the highest rate of child marriages in Africa. Three-fourths of girls wed before the age of 18. The fear that drives child marriages is the girl might get pregnant before marriage. The belief is "the bride has to be a virgin." Women in Niger bear an average of eight births in their lifetime. They have the highest fertility rate in Africa. Eighty-five percent of the young girls give birth at home, treated for pain with traditional remedies.

In Guatemala, 40% of the population is indigenous Mayan. At the age of 14 years girls are removed from school, if they are attending school. They are taught at home household work to be a good bride. They are married to older men and bear children at this young age. The girls have no choice. In the documentary a 24 year old man said that he wanted a young bride because she "is easier to control." Unfortunately, these young 13 and 14 old girls have five times the probability to die or experience terrible complications during birthing than a 20 year old woman.

All three countries are trying to intervene in these young girls' lives. Education is believed to be the remedy.

The current leader of Niger has three daughters and does not want them to endure the traditional

ways. He wants them to go to school and to get job skills before they marry. He has brigades of government officials go into the rural areas and educate mothers and their daughters to stop this "old way" and send their daughters to school. In Guatemala there are mentors, older girls, who educate the younger one that they do have choices. India is also attempting to get young girls to go to school.

The documentary told a sad story of "stolen lives."

Kay Sharp

## VOTER SERVICES REPORT

Voter Services is looking forward to a busy season as the lead-up to a very important election. We had a voter registration table on the Commons on the Friday and Saturday of the Ithaca Festival. Five new voters registered on the spot, and a number of others took registration forms. We also answered numerous questions about voting. Thanks to the intrepid folks who sat through rain (not much shine) at the tables.

We are planning to have a Voter Registration table at the Farmers' Market on as many Saturdays as we can find the people to staff it. Please let me know if you can help. We will have two two-hour shifts: 10 - 12 and 12 - 2. Call or e-mail me if interested: 273-7746, [dlevin0@twcny.rr.com](mailto:dlevin0@twcny.rr.com). Let me know what days and hours you would be willing to work.

Barbara Thorp, Kathleen Yen and I met with Sara Shenk, a government teacher at Ithaca High School. Sara would like us to come to her classes to talk about the electoral process, and to get the students interested and excited about voting. Since all high school students are required to do some community service, we also thought a good project would be to have them help with voter registration. We are really looking forward to working with the students.

Debbie Levin

## 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

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Ithaca, NY 14850