



# THE VOTER

NOVEMBER 2007

website: [www.lww-suffolkcounty.org/brookhaven.htm](http://www.lww-suffolkcounty.org/brookhaven.htm)

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## ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

### A CHALLENGE FOR OUR DEMOCRACY

Monday, November 26, 2007

1:30 pm to 3 pm

At South Country Library

22 Station Road, Bellport

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PAGE 2—Contradictory points of view on immigration  
 PAGE 3—Hearings on a proposed NYS Health Plan  
 PAGE 4—NAACP Law Suit, Town of Brookhaven 2030 Comprehensive Plan  
 PAGE 5—Report on the UN Dinner  
 PAGE 6, 7, 8 ,9 --Consensus Questions  
 PAGE 10—NYS VOTER

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**— Soon another election will be behind us, and we are still using lever machines. We can enjoy them while we can, and hope that by 2009 we will have safe, accurate, recountable, and accessible machines to use when we vote. We hope that, whatever the type of machine, the winners of the election are the best choices.

Leagues all over the country have been studying immigration, with many differing viewpoints. Below we give some opinions about immigration for your consideration. Attend the meeting on November 26 to learn more. On pages 6-8 we enclose the questions issued by the LWV-US Immigration Committee, and request that you read them before the consensus meetings on December 8 and December 13.

### .WHAT DO YOU THINK?

(Some contradictory views on immigration and illegal immigration.)

Illegal immigrants depress the wages of low skilled workers and are creating an underclass in American society, If employers paid low skilled workers better, American workers would fill the slots and everyone would be better off.

For the past decade or so, market forces have created 1.5-1.8 million new jobs, In addition, the population in the United States is graying—our birth rate is lower and we depend on younger people to keep the economy going and do the jobs that older people rely on. Unless our birth rate increases or more legal immigrants are admitted, we must rely on illegal immigrants to fill the gap.

In my opinion, people who wish to live here, well educated or not, should do so within the law. Those who have broken our laws deserve to be severely punished and returned to their own countries.

Unauthorized immigrants are here because the US government does not issue a sufficient number of visas to meet labor demands. It would cost \$94 billion to locate, detain, and deport the 10 to 12 million people who are here illegally. (cost estimate by Maine State Senator Susan Collins)

How many Americans should there be? Is our country already crowded or do we have room for plenty more? Is this a decision that should be made by those currently living here, or left to those who want to come here?

Sustainability is a subject all its own, as are other issues affected by immigration. As environmental problems have no borders, we cannot really address them by simply limiting the population entering the United States illegally.

## ELECTION OF SUPREME COURT JUSTICES

New York has 12 judicial districts, which often include multiple counties. Trial courts within these districts at the Supreme Court level are presided over by justices who are elected for 14 year terms (or until they reach age 70, whichever comes first). Voters in almost all of the state judicial districts will elect one or more justices to these positions on November 6<sup>th</sup> 2007.

The current process to nominate Supreme Court justice candidates is by party Judicial District Nominating Convention, separating the voters from direct involvement in the nominating procedures. On primary day, this September 18<sup>th</sup>, you were presented with a slate of delegates, by party, for whom to vote, not the judicial candidates themselves. If the party slate is unopposed, the names may not even have appeared on your ballot. Delegates are typically individuals who are active in their respective political party organizations, and party rules govern conduct of the conventions.

In January 2006, this partisan method of selecting nominees was held unconstitutional by a Federal District Court, and upheld by the Second Circuit, as violating the first amendment rights of both voters and judicial candidates. The decision calls for legislative action to change the selection system. If the state Legislature fails to act, Supreme Court judicial candidates must run in open primaries, as do candidates for most of the other New York State courts. The U.S. Supreme Court recently decided to hear an appeal of this case, and delayed implementation of the decision until it has issued its ruling.

There are many opinions about how the process should be changed. Some support an amendment to the State Constitution so that justices are appointed through a qualification-based appointive system, not elected. If the U.S. Supreme Court

upholds the District Court's ruling, debate will take place in the Legislature about how to change the process.

## ACHIEVING AFFORDABLE, HIGH QUALITY HEALTH CARE FOR NEW YORKERS

The State of New York has begun to reform the State's health care delivery system and expand health insurance coverage in the State. Legislation enacted this year will control the growth rate of Medicaid spending, reallocate funding based on patient care priorities and provide incentives to improve patient outcomes. Additional measures have been enacted to expand eligibility under the Child Health Plus program to 400% of the federal poverty level, to streamline enrollment in all publicly sponsored health insurance programs and to allow employers to participate in the Family Health Plus program. The State is interested in proposals that build on these initiatives for achieving health system reform, increasing access to health insurance coverage and determining ways that universal coverage can be achieved.

The State has been holding public hearings to gather public input on how to best achieve universal coverage in the state. Our League will attend the hearing at SUNY-Westbury on December 5, 2007, to present our view that a single payer plan, like the current Medicare system, with private providers and public funding, would be the best way to achieve universal health coverage for the state.

We also plan a meeting with US Congressman Tim Bishop, to discuss HR 696, the Conyers Kucinich bill for a national single payer health plan. For more information, call Estelle Auerbach, 698-1139.

## THE TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN INVITES TO TOWN RESIDENTS

Please join us in the preparation of the Town of Brookhaven's 2030 Comprehensive Plan. The decisions made collectively during this citizen-directed process will help determine the course of future growth, and establish the proper balance between development, protection of the environment, and open space preservation. On Tuesday, November 13, we will host an *Issues and Opportunities Workshop* at Town Hall. In addition to a presentation on the planning process, there are a number of interactive exercises which will help us to both identify and prioritize the issues that will be addressed in the Plan's development.

We have hired professional planners with national expertise in the preparation of Comprehensive Plans for communities both large and small. They bring to us many tools that have worked well in other communities., but we need the experience of local residents to help inform this process and ensure that this will be a plan that Brookhaven residents will be proud of and able to help implement in the years to come. **We need you!**

We hope you will accept this invitation and join us for an exciting evening. We also hope you will come back to other workshops planned for January, March and May in order to ensure a high level of citizen input and participation in the Comprehensive Plan development process. Also, please visit the website [www.brookhaven2030.org](http://www.brookhaven2030.org), which will be available online soon.

Date and Time: Tuesday, November 13, 2007, from 7:00 to 9:30 pm

Place: Town Hall Auditorium, 2nd floor, ! Independence Hill, Farmingville, NY 11738

Councilwoman Constance Kepert, Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, Chair

## NAACP FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST MORTGAGE LENDERS ALLEGING RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

- On July 11 the NAACP filed a Federal class action lawsuit against fourteen of the country's largest subprime mortgage lenders.
- This lawsuit is designed to bring about equitable lending practices that do not adversely affect borrowers based on their race.
- In a 2006 study, the Center for Responsible Lending found that when creditworthiness and credit risk were equal, African-Americans were still 31 percent to 34 percent more likely to receive higher rate, more expensive subprime loans than Caucasians.
- The National Community Reinvestment Coalition revealed that lenders on average made high-cost subprime loans to higher-qualified African-Americans 54% of the time, compared to 23% of the time for Caucasians, even when the Caucasian applicants were less qualified.
- These and other studies demonstrate that African-American homeowners are paying higher mortgage interest rates than their Caucasian counterparts.

The Lenders: Ameriquest, Fremont, Option One, WMC Mortgage, Long Beach Mortgage, BNC Mortgage, Accredited Home Lenders, Encore, First Franklin, HSBC, Washington

## ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DINNER - GREAT FOOD, EXCELLENT SPEAKER

On October 19, a very rainy night, we welcomed Mary Dewar, our speaker on health in Africa, Mary has had many careers - she worked in China and Africa as a missionary nurse, and teacher of nurses. and hospital director in the absence of doctors; she worked with the World Council of Churches in Geneva on health policy for churches; then returned to the United States to continue in community health nursing and advocacy for an effective national health policy in her role on the Board of the Long Island Coalition for a National Health Plan.

Mary talked about her work in Angola, colonized until 1974 by Portugal, and then engaged in civil wars that laid landmines and uprooted much of the rural population. Many who moved to the cities lost much of the support of their tribal identity, and many of the tribes intermixed. But it is still a country with tribal governments. Major problems for the people in Angola with whom Mary worked were nutrition, water quality, and health. Their staple food was corn ground very fine and served as mush with beans. Water had to be transported long distances in clay pots and was often the cause of severe diarrhea, especially for children under 5. UNICEF'S oral rehydration program has made a difference, providing water that is boiled and mixed with sugar and salt and fed to babies. Like Gatorade, it is able to re-hydrate people by re-introducing electrolytes. Infectious diseases - malaria and tuberculosis - remain problems because there is no incentive for drug companies to develop vaccines. The nets recently distributed to guard against the malaria mosquito are helpful, but it is hard to stay under them when it is very hot. DDT successfully killed the mosquitoes until the United States banned it. There is no immunity to HIV Aids. In addition to the health problems from nutrition, poor water, and diseases, Angolan children frequently die from measles, whooping cough, smallpox, and they are especially subject to the many kinds of parasites that are there. Maternal health is particularly poor since malnutrition weakens the women. .

The Portuguese did not address these problems when they were in control. UNICEF and WHO are building artesian wells to get safer water. Efforts are being made to help farmers grow a greater variety of food, provide cooking classes and health education, and give shoes for everyone to prevent hookworm and other parasites. The greatest health need is for doctors to give primary care, especially for young children, rather than specialists. The group Mary worked with in Angola started a project where they recruited about 200 people from each village and divided them up in teams - during the dry season, the teams drilled wells, dug latrines, installed tile floors. They taught each team to do each task, and after the initial effort the teams went out and worked on their own. It was an opportunity to provide health education at the same time, in a comprehensive approach.

We look forward to working with Ms. Dewar on plans for single payer universal health insurance for the United States.

## WARMING UP TO SMART GROWTH

(from the November newsletter of Vision LI, available at [www.VisionLI.com](http://www.VisionLI.com).)

According to an article in *New Urban News*, Smart Growth can provide ways to mitigate the global warming crisis. The Urban Land Institute recently published a report, *Growing Cooler: The Evidence on Urban Development and Climate Change*. The findings concluded that "...households living in developments with twice the density, diversity of uses, accessible destinations, and interconnected streets when compared to low-density sprawl drive about 33 percent less."

The report findings continue, stating that "shifting 60 percent of new growth to compact development by 2030 would have the same benefit as a 28 percent increase in US fuel efficiency... If combined, these policies would produce an even greater benefit."

Smart Growth development is becoming increasingly important in the fight against global climate change. Though there has been increased government attention drawn to stricter fuel emission standards, more must be done in order to combat the longer distances commuters face to and from their sprawling communities every day.

For more information, read the article in *New Urban News* to see more information on the report by the Urban Land Institute.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### NOVEMBER

- Sun Nov 11 POST ELECTION BRUNCH, Bellport Country Club, 10:30 am
- Tues Nov,13 Brookhaven Town Comprehensive Plan 2030 Meeting, 7:00 pm at Town Hall
- Mon Nov 26 Meeting on IMMIGRATION—South Country Library, 1:30 pm
- Wed Nov 28 UN Trip—Briefings on the Effects of War on Women Around the World

### DECEMBER

- Thurs Dec 6 BROOKHAVEN LWV BD MEETING, Edie Lewis', 12 noon
- Sat Dec 8 CONSENSUS MEETING ON IMMIGRATION, Edie Embler's, 10 am
- Thurs Dec 13 CONSENSUS MEETING ON IMMIGRATION, Ruth Schwarz', 7:30 pm

Directions to South Country Library—take Sunrise Highway to the Bellport exit (#65), go south across the railroad tracks, the Bellport Middle School, The library is just to the south of the post office.

Note: The December Consensus meeting on immigration can be attended at either session, Saturday morning or Thursday evening.