



League of Women Voters of Smithtown Township

VOTER

The LWV is a non-partisan organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy

April 2007

website: <http://www.lwv-suffolkcounty.org/smithtown.htm>

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Meet your Smithtown Elected Officials

and

**Celebrate the League of Women Voters of Smithtown
2006 Citizen Activist**

Linda Henninger

Thursday, April 26, 2007

12 noon to 2 pm

Nissequogue Golf Club

\$30 per person in advance (\$35 if paid at the door)

Raffle tickets included in this issue of the Voter

To reserve a place, please send a check payable to LWV Smithtown to
Mary Zopf 21 Greene Drive Commack, NY 11725 499-0107

Why has the Smithtown League chosen to honor Linda Henninger as our 2006 Citizen Activist?

Linda Henninger of the Kings Park Neighbors' Association has been an active and vocal participant in the Kings Park Psychiatric Center property discussion. She has been heralded as a driving force in acquiring money for the site clean up.

She was instrumental in focusing the attention of State Senator John Flanagan on this issue, and he has described her as "tenacious and passionate about her community" and said "she works hard for the betterment of her local community."

Henninger and her organization have tackled development issues, clean up issues, and funding issues. She is continuing to work to place the property within the Nissequogue State Park. This would preserve an important revenue stream for the school district, which is achieved through state payment in lieu of taxes.

She also continues to work for transfer of the remaining 92 acres to the Town of Smithtown in order to maintain local control of the property.

**The League of Women Voters of Smithtown proudly recognizes
Linda Henninger as our Citizen Activist for 2006.**

President's Message

I am looking forward to this year's Citizen Activist Award event as I always do. This year is special to me, however, because its focus is our natural environment. The programs we have sponsored this year at the library have had that focus as well. Linda Henninger has done so much which will benefit all of us far into the future. Each year those we honor make us realize anew just how much can be accomplished by a dedicated few. It's an inspiration. I am also excited to welcome Robert Freudenberg of the Regional Plan Association as our luncheon speaker. He will tell us more about the Nissequogue River Watershed Project, another effort which promises to enhance the quality of our community. Join the celebration!

Sondra Irvine

New CNG Powered Garbage Trucks Hit the Streets in the Town of Smithtown

Twenty-two new compressed natural gas (CNG) garbage collection vehicles hit the streets in Smithtown on January 2, 2007. The Town of Smithtown is the first municipality in New York State to require contracted garbage carters to use only vehicles that run on compressed natural gas. According to Town Supervisor Patrick R. Vecchio, "This move will save the town money, the new trucks will be better for the environment and reduce dependence on foreign oil." The Town's move to replace the older diesel-fueled garbage trucks has been praised by local environmentalists. The old diesel trucks output extremely high levels of air pollutants. The new CNG fueled trucks will also be much quieter.



The New York State Office of General Services recently completed an upgrade to the Compressed Natural Gas fueling station adjacent to the Perry S. Duryea, Jr. State Office Build-

ing on Veterans Highway in Hauppauge, NY. The station's upgrade expands CNG dispensing capabilities to approximately 1,000 gallons/hour and adds two additional dual-hose dispensers. These upgrades make the facility the largest publicly accessible CNG fueling station on the East coast.

Smithtown Town Board Meeting Schedule

Tuesday: April 10
Smithtown Town Hall

9:30 am work session
2:00 pm regular meeting

Thursday: April 26
Senior Citizens Center

7:00 pm regular meeting

STAC
Smithtown Township Arts Council



Mills Pond House
660 Route 25A, St. James, NY 11780
631-862-6575 fax 631-862-8730

The League of Women Voters of Smithtown thanks Allison J. Cruz, Executive Director and the staff of the Smithtown Township Arts Council/ Mills Pond House Gallery for its support of the League.

We encourage all Town Residents to support the Arts Council, participate in its cultural programs, and visit the historic Mills Pond House in St. James. For info: www.stacarts.org.

SMITHTOWN TOWNSHIP
ARTS COUNCIL
REACH FOR THE ARTS

The LWVNYS Convention in May will feature a workshop on VOTE 18, a dynamic, interactive program to teach young people about the importance of their vote. Both the Huntington and Hamptons local leagues have embraced this effort. We reprint the Hamptons VOTER article below with their permission, since it enlightens us further on voter turnout issues.

A Lesson Plan for the Education Committee -- and All of Us

By Judi Roth, Education Chair, Hamptons LWV

The Nov. 24, 2006 issue of "Science", the most prestigious refereed journal in the wide field of "science", has published a book review ("Learning to Become a "Good" Citizen", Blais, A., Science, 314:1244-45, Nov. 24, 2006) that is of particular interest to the LWV. "*Why We Vote: How Schools and Communities Shape Our Civic Life*" by David E. Campbell (Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ 2006) should be mandatory reading for all people who bemoan low voter turnout; it may provide a roadmap on how we can do better and where we should expend our energies.

The main theme of Campbell's book is that an internalized sense of civic duty is a key factor in motivating people to vote and that this sense of duty flourishes best in homogeneous communities with strong civic norms. Campbell, who is a political scientist at the University of Notre Dame, proposes two theories as to why people become publicly involved: 1) to fulfill a sense of duty or 2) to protect their interests. These motivations are not mutually exclusive and can exist in the same person but the decision to vote, Campbell says, is based more on a sense of duty. A sense of duty dominates in civic forms of engagement such as volunteering, whereas interest is more dominant in activities such as protest or partisan work, such as joining and working for a political party.

Campbell has done extensive analysis to support his dual-motivation theory and according to Blais' review, his empirical tests and controls are impeccable. What he does even better is to show the

linkages between his results and how they can be turned into practical plans.

Here are some of his findings:

People are more likely to vote in both the most politically homogenous and the most heterogeneous communities. In the former it is because of their sense of duty and in the latter it is because of greater competition.

Volunteerism is greatest in more homogenous communities; the need to protect ones interests through protest and electoral activism are found in more heterogeneous communities.

People with more politically homogenous social networks are more inclined to vote.

Adolescents who live in more homogenous counties are more likely to do volunteer work.

Adolescents who volunteer are more inclined to vote when they become adults.

The strengths of civic duty within one's high school, i.e., the belief that voting makes you a good citizen, increases the probability that one will vote 15 years later.

Campbell argues that a citizen's moral obligation to vote is usually ingrained before adulthood and that duty is the predominant consideration in voting while personal interest falls to the sidelines. He shows that, everything else being equal, the probability of voting in 1980 was 10 percentage points higher for someone whose high school civic climate was strongest in 1965 than for someone whose high school civic climate was weakest. This impact (high school civic climate) is of the same magnitude as the effects of parental education and parental political involvement.

In summary, *Why We Vote* makes us think about the role of schools in society. Campbell shows that schools matter very much and although it may not be clear what should be done (and can be done) to foster the development of civic duties in schools, we must work on and think about the aspects of the school system that help or hinder the attainment of such civic norms.

How do the 2008 Presidential Candidates Stack Up on Election Reform?

Many 2008 candidates have been active in election reform legislation

by M. Mindy Moretti electionline.org March 29, 2007

With just about 10 months to go until the first 2008 presidential primaries and caucuses, election officials and voting advocates may be wondering where the current crop of candidates stand on election-related issues.

What follows is a list of major candidates who have filed a statement of candidacy and a sampling of the legislation they have introduced or the work they have done on election-related issues.

This is in no way an exhaustive list and only focuses largely on work done since the 2000 presidential election. This list does not include resolutions or detailed information about bills candidates may have co-sponsored.

Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) - Sen. Biden has been a co-sponsor on several election reform bills, but he has not introduced any legislation with regard to domestic elections. Through his work on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, he has been very supportive of multiple international elections by passing resolutions of support.

Sen. Sam Brownback (R-Kan.) - No information found.

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.)-Sen. Clinton has authored several pieces of election reform legislation dating back to the 108th Congress:

"Protecting American Democracy Act of 2003" ([S. 1986](#)) was written to amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) to require voter verification and improved security for voting systems under title III of the Act. The legislation was read twice, referred to committee and no major action was taken.

"Count Every Vote Act of 2005" ([S. 450](#)) was designed to amend HAVA with regard to a variety of issues including: minority language access, audits, making Election Day a federal holiday, absentee voting, training, election-day registration and early voting. The bill was read twice, referred to committee and no major action was taken.

"Count Every Vote Act of 2007" ([S. 804](#)). The legislation was reintroduced on March 7, read twice and referred to committee.

Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) Sen. Dodd co-authored HAVA as well as other [election reform](#) legislation.

"Martin Luther King Jr. Equal Protection Voting Rights Act of 2002" ([S. 565](#)) was written to require states and localities to meet uniform and nondiscriminatory election technology and administration requirements applicable to federal elections, to establish grant programs to provide assistance to states and localities to meet those requirements and to improve election technology and the administration of federal elections, to establish the Election Assistance Commission (as amended). The bill was approved by a vote of 99 to 1 in April of 2002.

"Voting Opportunity and Technology Enhancement Rights (VOTER) Act of 2005" ([S. 17](#)) would amend HAVA to allow for a nationwide federal write-in/absentee ballot; require states to provide for a voter-verified ballot; ensure that provisional ballots cast anywhere in a state are counted; eliminate regional and local disparities in the allocation of voting machines and poll workers; mandate early vote and Election Day-registration procedures; and protect against improper purging of registration lists in federal elections. The bill was read twice and referred to committee.

"Voting Opportunity and Technology Enhancement Rights (VOTER) Act of 2007" ([S.730](#)) was reintroduced in March 1, read twice and referred to committee.

Former Sen. John Edwards (D-N.C.) - Sen. Edwards did not author any election-related legislation during his tenure in the Senate although he did co-sponsor several bills.

Former Gov. James Gilmore (R-Va.) - In 1999, Gov. Gilmore [spoke out](#) in favor of mandatory voter ID legislation that was before the Virginia General Assembly. When the legislation was approved, but tied up in a [court battle](#), Gilmore again expressed his support of voter ID and called on the state's Attorney General to [appeal](#) the courts decision.

Former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani (R-N.Y.) - No information found.

Former Governor Mike Huckabee (R-Ark.) Gov. Huckabee has not taken much action with regard to election-reform in Arkansas, although in 2005 he did speak out against an immigration [bill](#) in the state leg

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islature that would have, among other things, required proof of citizenship to vote.

Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.)-Rep. Hunter has not authored any election legislation during his tenure in Congress, although he is on the [record](#) as being a proponent of requiring photo ID at the polls to vote.

Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) - Since 2000, Rep. Kucinich has co-sponsored several larger election reform bills and has authored one of his own. Kucinich has a page on his [Web site](#) devoted to election issues.

"Paper Ballot Act of 2006" ([H.R. 6200](#)) would have required that all presidential elections be conducted on paper ballots and counted by hand. The legislation was referred to two House committees and no further action was taken.

Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) - Sen. McCain has been very active with regard to campaign finance-related issues and he has also introduced legislation pertaining to election reform.

"American Voting Standards and Technology Act" ([S. 368](#)) was a bill to develop voluntary consensus standards to ensure accuracy and validation of the voting process, to direct the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to study voter participation and emerging voting technology to provide grants to states to improve voting methods. The bill was read twice, referred to committee, hearings were held, but no major action was taken.

Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) - Sen. Obama has introduced several pieces of election legislation during his tenure in the Senate.

"Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act of 2005" ([S. 1975](#)) would criminalize efforts to confuse or intimidate voters in an attempt to keep them away from the polls on Election Day. The bill would make it a crime to knowingly communicate, within 60 days of an election, false information about the time and place of an election, a voter's eligibility, registration rules and endorsements by a person or organization. Convictions for violating the law would carry with it penalties of up \$100,000 or five years imprisonment, or both. It would also increase the maximum criminal penalty for voter intimidation from one year to five years' imprisonment. The bill was read twice and referred to committee.

"Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act of 2006" ([S. 4069](#)) was a new version of voter intimidation and prevention of deceptive practices bill introduced in the previous session of Congress. The bill was read twice and referred to committee.

"The Election Jamming Prevention Act of 2006" ([S.4102](#)) bill would amend the Communications Act of 1934 to prohibit the use of telecommunications devices for the purposes of preventing or obstructing the broadcast or exchange of election-related information. The bill was read twice and referred to committee

"Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act of 2007" ([S.453](#)) is a new version of voter intimidation/prevention of deceptive practices bill introduced in the previous session of Congress. The bill was reintroduced on Jan. 31, read twice and referred to committee.

"Voter Advocate and Democracy Index Act" ([S. 737](#)) legislation would create a scorecard to rank states on a set of standards designed to measure the ease of exercising the right to vote. Under the proposed legislation a new Office of the Voter Advocate would be created within the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and would develop a Democracy Index. The Index would require states to report basic performance metrics such as the amount of time voters spend waiting in line, the number of voters incorrectly directed to the wrong polling place, the rate of ballots discarded or not counted along with an explanation, and the rate of voting system malfunctions and the time required on average to get the systems back online, to name a few. The legislation directs the Office of the Voter Advocate to conduct a pilot program in selected states in 2008. The bill was read twice and referred to committee

Gov. Bill Richardson (D-N.M.) - Gov. Richardson has been active with regard to several key election-reform issues. In 2005, Richardson signed into law [comprehensive legislation](#) that addressed voter ID requirements, created uniform statewide standards for provisional ballots and election worker training and allowed for early counting of absentee ballots. In 2006, Richardson signed into the law the "[New Mexico Make Every Vote Count Act](#)," that moved the state to a single paper ballot system.

Former Gov. Mitt Romney (R-Mass.) - No information found.

Smithtown Library Expansion and Renovation Plans Announced

According to The Smithtown News of March 29, 2007, The Smithtown Library district has made expansion and renovation plans available to the public. Architects' renderings of the buildings are available on the library website www.smithlib.org, and are reproduced here. The plan is contingent on the Library district taking title to the Armory building in Nesconset, and completing the environmental review required by New York State.



Smithtown

Library director Robert Lusak was quoted by the Smithtown News as emphasizing that in addition to space expansion, the project includes a complete renovation of the three existing library buildings. Overall the amount of library space in the district will be expanded from nearly 52,000 sq. ft to over 78,000 sq. ft. The plans as presented are expected to cost \$26 million, which according



Kings Park

to Library Board President Anthony Monteleone comes out to about \$38 to \$45 per year for the average home, which is now paying \$215 per year for library services.

According to Mr. Monteleone, the Library Board intends to host a series of public informational forums to describe the details of the project. These dates will be posted on the library website.



Nesconset



Commack

Library Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule

Regular meeting:
Tues. April 9

All meetings are held in the Main Library at 7pm