



# THE VOTER

SEPTEMBER 2008

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

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RESTORATIVE JUSTICE  
 AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH TO COURTS

PRESENTED BY  
 RESTORATIVE PRACTICES COALITION  
 IN SUFFOLK COUNTY

**MARK SEIDLER—Restorative Practices  
 Consultant and Trainer  
 CAROL MCNALLY—LMSW**

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 7:30 PM**

**COMSEWOGUE LIBRARY  
 170 TERRYVILLE ROAD  
 PORT JEFFERSON STATION  
 928-1212**

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**-- Welcome to the new year of League activities and concerns.

On September 22 we are presenting information by the Restorative Justice Consortium, It follows from the studies the League has been doing on the death penalty, alternatives to incarceration, and trying to reduce the population in the jail. The LWV-Suffolk County received a grant of \$5,000 from Suffolk County to inform the community about the concepts of restorative justice and how it has worked in schools, with the goal of introducing it in some of the schools of the county. "Restorative justice is a systemic response to wrongdoing that emphasizes healing the wounds of victims, offenders and communities caused by criminal behavior. Parties with a stake in a specific offense resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offense and its implications for the future," explains Prison Fellowship International. It is a process that can help families and communities but has had special success in schools, where it can replace the traditional methods of suspension and expulsion which often cause students to drop out of school. The persons who are involved in or affected by a particular offense, or by a serious conflict, come together in a carefully designed process to collectively decide what should be done to repair the harm or to resolve the conflict. It is democratic because it strives to give a real voice in the decisionmaking to those most directly involved, and it is restorative because it focuses first on healing or repairing harm rather than on simply imposing punishment.

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### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Barbara Strongin

Gerhart Friedlander

Sue MacKenzie

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We held our Annual Meeting in June at Jefferson's Ferry, and appreciated the welcome we received. We hope to have more meetings there during the year. We elected two new board members, Linda Devin-Sheehan, who will coordinate our Voter Service efforts, and Besty Gaidry, who will lead a study committee on the Compact for a National Popular Vote. Call 730-6556 if you are interested.

## Remembering Edith Gordon

Memories of Edith were included in the article written about her in the Village Herald by Lee Lutz in July. One that rang a bell for me was that of County Legislator Vivian Vilorio-Fisher, a close friend. "Edith was always thinking of the greater good. Edith was not milque-toast. She told you the truth — not always what you wanted to hear."

When I first met Edith in the early 1960's she was troubled by the efforts of Ken Anderson and his wife to find a house to buy near his job, at Mather Hospital. It was obvious that they were being treated unfairly because of his race, and Edith rushed to their support. From there, she went on to look at other issues of prejudice and discrimination in her community of Setauket and in Brookhaven Town, leading the North Brookhaven League's efforts to address the problems of discrimination, segregation, and the substandard housing that was one of the results.. She was one of the leaders in the effort to convince town government to pass a fair housing law to back up the federal and state laws on a local level, speaking at town meetings and marching in Patchogue. When the town of Brookhaven was considering the change to a councilmatic district, to make sure that each person's vote for town council would count, Edith stepped up to lead the League of Women Voters of Brookhaven to study it. The League's support helped bring it to pass.

Just before she left for California, in 2005, she took charge of the Local Voices Project, which dealt with one of her deepest concerns - civil liberties . With a grant from the LWV-US, the LWV of Brookhaven presented the opportunity for community residents to talk about the civil liberties issues that were in the

headlines. Through her friendship with Kevin McCoy, Librarian at Suffolk Community College and NYCLU member, she was able to open the auditorium at the college to a cross section of the community for a day of speeches and workshops where they could exchange their views about the federal government's handling of civil liberties. Our results were combined with those of other Leagues in a published report called LOCAL VOICES, CITIZEN CONVERSATIONS ON CIVIL LIBERTIES AND SECURE COMMUNITIES.

She was born on Feb. 4, 1929, in Springfield, Ill., and she moved with her family to Germany in 1933, which they left when they realized the dangers of remaining there. In high school, she had a severe case of polio, from which she recovered although it left some effects. She attended Douglas College, then the women's affiliate of Rutgers University. She earned a master's degree in education from Bank Street College of Education in New York City and then earned a Ph.D. from the New School with an oral history study..

Edith and her husband Barry Gordon, a chemist at Brookhaven National Laboratory,, whom she married in 1958, moved to Setauket in 1961 where Edith taught in the Nassakeag and Mount elementary schools from 1968 to 1988. One of the accomplishments that she most valued was helping the Unitarian Fellowship build a beautiful community room while she was President.

. In her many capacities, she brought her determination to bring people together and erase prejudice—as a teacher, community activist, and friend. She immersed herself in the world around her in so many ways, painting and print-making, gardening, cooking, reading, and trying to change the things that she felt were wrong.

## NEW YORK STATE LEAGUE WEIGHS IN ON TAX CAPS AND CIRCUIT BREAKER

On August 19, 2008 the League weighed in on Governor Paterson's Program Bill 62, introduced as S8736, imposing a tax cap on school district increases, and A11838, a need-based real property tax circuit breaker program and millionaire's tax. The League opposed both of the bills on the grounds that they represented one-house bills designed to provide political cover for the upcoming elections rather than the series of serious recommendations for real property tax reform and education finance reform outlined in the Suozzi Commission preliminary report, available on-line at: [www.cptr.state.ny.us/reports/CPTRPreliminaryReport\\_20080603.pdf](http://www.cptr.state.ny.us/reports/CPTRPreliminaryReport_20080603.pdf). As predicted, each bill was passed by one chamber and went no further.

In formulating its positions on these 2 bills, the League drew upon its updated financing K-12 education and real property taxation positions to recommend:

- Awaiting the final Suozzi Commission report before tackling the issues of education finance and property tax reform;
  - True implementation of a foundation approach to education, with annual cost-of-living adjustments. Under this approach the funds to provide a sound basic education would be provided by the state, after subtracting a reasonable local contribution;
  - Creation of a reserve fund for education that would stabilize foundation funding (generated primarily by the state income tax) in times of economic downturn;
  - Folding the entire STAR program into a real property circuit breaker program;
  - Implementation of additional Suozzi Commission recommendations for cost saving as part of the reform package;
  - Raising any additional state funds necessary to fund a foundation approach to education;
  - Implementation of a tax cap only in conjunction with an entire reform package.
- The League has had a longstanding interest in education finance and property tax reform, having studied these issues over the past 25 years as part of ongoing investigation into the manner in which New York State funds crucial services. The League last updated its positions in these areas in 2006, when, after a year-long study, it determined that:
- The state should adopt a foundation approach to funding education;
  - Additional funding required to provide all children with a sound basic education should be provided by means of the state personal income tax, implemented in a progressive fashion;
  - Cost-savings should be implemented by replacing the constellation of STAR programs with a real property tax circuit breaker program based on need and indexed to inflation;
  - Stability in the funding of education should be increased by creation of an education reserve fund, calculated to stabilize state funds available for education purposes in times of economic downturn.

We send our condolences to the family and friends  
of Adelaide Flateau, a long time and active member of the League

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### NEW ELECTION INFORMATION

For a new site that shows how you are registered in the New York State Voter database,  
your party, your polling place, and other information about critical dates,

Check the Suffolk County LWV website—[www.lwv-suffolkcounty.org](http://www.lwv-suffolkcounty.org).

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### PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

Governor Paterson has announced that he is going to hold hearings statewide on Property Tax Relief. Each hearing will include a public forum to invite comments. For a complete listing of the hearings please visit the Governor's website at: [www.ny.gov/governor](http://www.ny.gov/governor).



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BROOKHAVEN**  
**P. O. BOX 92, BELLPORT, N.Y 11713-9998**

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### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

#### **SEPTEMBER**

Wed Sept 17 Suffolk County LWV Board meeting, 10:00, Riverhead Library  
 Mon Sept 22 RESTORATIVE JUSTICE MEETING, COMSEWOGUE LIBRARY, 7:30 PM

#### **OCTOBER**

Wed Oct 15 Suffolk County LWV Board meeting, 10:00, Riverhead Library  
 Thurs Oct 23 LWV Brookhaven Board Meeting, noon  
 Fri Oct 24 INTERNATIONAL DINNER, ALICE D'AMICO'S, 7:30 PM

Directions to Comsewogue Library—1170 Terryville Road, Port Jefferson Station, 928-1212 - from the west, on Nesconset Highway, turn onto Terryville Road at the Sunoco Station, before Route 112, *and* From the east, on Nesconset Highway past Route 112, turn right at the Sunoco Station. From Port Jefferson, take Terryville Road right from Route 112/Main Street.

Four Corners plan moving along  
 Story By: MARK NOLAN, Editor

13 March 2008

Saying that the proposed Four Cornerment project in Patchogue Village could be a model for Long Island, Robert Coughlin of Tritec Real Estate Inc. is moving ahead with property acquisitions, and is hopeful of submitting final proposals to the village soon.

The keystone of the deal—a Hilton Garden Inn hotel—is still not completely official, but Coughlin said the deal is all but signed. "It's pretty much done," he said. "We haven't signed that deal yet, but the tract could take another six to eight months to close, and their operators are very enthusiastic about Patchogue."

Until Tritec submits plans to the village, the proposed mixed-use project are for the village. Before the plans have been submitted, the village planning, zoning and architectural review board, as well as the board of trustees, will review the project and make recommendations. Coughlin said the village has already been an active partner in planning the project.

"We've been working with the village to