

League of Women Voters of Brookhaven

THE VOTER

October-November 2009

www.lwv-suffolkcounty.org/

ANNUAL UNITED NATIONS DINNER

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 7 PM

SPEAKER: SUSAN DAVID—LIVING IN WEST AFRICA

at

Alice d'Amico's

5 Old Field Road, Setauket

See page 3 for more information



POST-ELECTION BREAKFAST

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 10:30

NYS GOVERNMENT

LOCAL LEAGUE AWARDS

Bellport Country Club

See page 11 for more information

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN- Another election is approaching, this one for town and county officials. The list of candidates we will be voting for is on pages 6, 7 and 8. Some of the issues are town government and how it should be run, the county budget, housing in Yaphank, and the quality of life and protection of water. The list of candidates shows how many of the candidates are running unopposed and are cross-endorsed.

We are making some changes in our annual post-election brunch. We will eat earlier so it will be a "breakfast" rather than a "brunch" and we will be reporting on the effect of local issues on the election. We have also invited Senator LaValle, a very experienced New York State Senator, and Senator Foley, a very new one, to talk about the issues they see in Albany.

At our annual UN dinner on October 23, we will have the opportunity to meet a young woman who grew up in Brookhaven and then went to West Africa with her husband and child. It will be interesting to find out what it was like to live, temporarily, in a new home so different from her own. Or was it different? She will tell us about it. The annual dinner, at Alice d'Amico's, is a friendly delicious way to remember our commitment to multinationalism. We hope you will be there.

We are still actively watching the health reform efforts in Washington. Suggestions have been made for reducing the cost of health care by promoting research into the most effective treatments and encouraging doctors and hospitals to form "accountable care organizations." The bills propose these suggestions, but either in a limited way or as small demonstration projects. We need incentives to encourage doctors to train for the primary care that produces good outcomes, as well as a payment system that pays doctors by outcome, rather than procedure. Little of this has been in the media, or in the political arguments that have been heard during the summer and fall. See Betsy Gaidry's article on page 3.

Nancy Marr

HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION UPDATE

The Senate Finance Committee proposed health care legislation is titled "America's Healthy Future Act". As this goes to press, the Finance Committee is still voting on amendments. They have agreed that there will be a summary in understandable English available at least 72 hours prior to a committee vote. At present it is possible to look at the draft on the internet. (If you look at the index, you can then scroll down to any topics that interest you, but since the draft runs to 220 pages, it requires some patience. When you google the bill, you get a lot of ads and viewpoints and action requests by lobbyists, so check the source, which should be: finance.senate.gov and look for DRAFT or SUMMARY.) Senators Schumer and Rockefeller offered amendments to add the public option to this bill, but both were defeated. Senator Olympia Snowe suggested an amendment that would trigger a public option in any area that certain targets of affordability are not met, but she did not propose it officially.

If you look at the draft of this Senate Finance Committee bill, you will find an extensive section on promoting disease prevention and wellness, and another on improving quality and efficiency of health care. (Most of these issues are also in the House version, although the media has paid little attention to them.) Many of the proposals would apply to Medicaid (which would cover an expanded population under all proposals) and Medicare. Many others are pilot programs or advisory committees to find and try out methods to improve the care provided. The IT funded by the stimulus package will be much used in making these improvements. It also includes a study of the workforce which will be necessary to meet the US health care needs, and policies to get there. (This includes the lower skilled health care workers as well as professionals).

If you want to look at the 4 page House Bill 3200 summary, it's titled "America's Affordable Health Choices Act." The July 14 version is still available, though there were some amendments made since then.

Betsy Gaidry

Note: there is more information about health issues on the LWV.org website, and on Congressman Bishop's website.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF BROOKHAVEN**

ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL DINNER

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 7 PM

SPEAKER: SUSAN DAVID—LIVING IN WEST AFRICA

Susan David, daughter of Genie and Don David, of Brookhaven, went to West Africa with her husband, an anthropologist who was studying there and doing research. She will share some of the experiences she had living there, some of the time with a young baby. (Her mother was a member of the LWV of South Brookhaven for many years.)

Plan to bring a main dish or dessert
\$5.00 per person with dish (one per couple)
\$15.00 per person without a dish
Invite a friend and come for a good evening

Directions to Alice d'Amico's, 5 Old Field Road, Setauket (751-0328): going north on Nicoll's Road, turn right at the end onto #25A. At the first traffic light (before the hill), turn left. Go past the Setauket Neighborhood House, to the end (Old Field Road). Turn left over the bridge over the Setauket Mill Pond. It is the 2nd house on the right after the Mill Pond (up a driveway). From the East, take 25A to Main Street in Setauket, turn right and go past the post office and cross the bridge, turn at the 2nd house on the right.

To reserve a place, please send form to Pauline Pierce, 33 Ridgeway Ave, Setauket, 11733, or call her at 751-5063.

Name or Names _____

Phone or email _____

SUFFOLK COUNTY'S MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM by Katherine Hoak

[The following statement was made in conjunction with those of Dr. Mark Sedler, Chair of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science at Stony Brook University, who gave a comprehensive presentation on CPEP before the Suffolk County Legislature. Katherine Hoak represented the Suffolk County LWV.]

Our mental health system is comprehensive in its scope, but is challenged by the great demands made on it, especially in the areas of emergency, inpatient and outpatient services, and appropriate housing. Suffolk County's system is unique because we had three very large psychiatric institutions. One of them, Kings Park, was considered to be the largest mental health facility in the United States. There were wards to deal with mentally ill veterans, and with those with forensic problems. We can assume that clients who would have been placed there are now residing in our jails, a far more expensive alternative. It is because of this reality that the League of Women Voters of Suffolk County became involved. We have a position in support of alternatives to incarceration programs which provide services for people who become involved with the criminal justice system because of their mental illnesses.

In the 1980s, when NYS determined to close these institutions, their clients—most of whom were from New York City and elsewhere in the state and in the country—were dispersed onto the streets of Suffolk County. Because so many of the patients had been institutionalized for many years, sending them "back home" was not possible.

In addition, NYS was to send financial support to counties to deal adequately with the needs of these patients. Instead of dispensing with the funding according to the needs of counties, though, it gave funding to all counties, regardless of need. This is equivalent to Homeland Security sending funding to Alaska along the same line as it did to New York City! We continue to suffer

greatly from, what I would call, political shenanigans.

After the hospital closings, an emergency hospital system was developed around a Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program (CPEP) at Stony Brook University Hospital. True, this is a state facility, but it provides services for County residents. CPEP was to be the centralized receiving hospital for the most serious situations. Over time, though, limited space there, along with delays in the necessary transfers to other facilities because of insufficient bed capacity, has caused serious problems within that system. This has been compounded further by the additional reduction in beds for psychiatric patients, as at St. Catherine's and Southside. Also, there are growing needs for services.

Suffolk County has no county hospital, as does Nassau. The Nassau County Hospital has 130 beds for psychiatric patients, essentially filled fulltime. In Suffolk, no matter what the crisis is, the thinking is to take the client to CPEP. Suffolk's system for dealing with the mental health crises of its residents face is fragmented. It has to deal with domestic violence, with drug and alcohol abuse difficulties, along with a wide assortment of other extreme problems. Community hospitals are not equipped to deal with many of such crises.

Mental health housing is a critical factor in our system. The housing that is available includes:

- 368 Community Residence beds (24-hour per day supervision)
- 192 CR-SRO beds (single room occupancy with on-site supports)
- 8 service planning beds within the CR-SRO residence that are specifically designated for temporary stay pending more permanent housing placement following acute psychiatric hospitalization

(continued on page 6)

-218 apartment treatment beds
(apartment living with regular support visits)

-1160 supported housing beds (apartment living with less frequent support visits)

Of the above-mentioned beds, 129 are reserved for applicants coming directly from state operated housing.

As of September 3, 2009, the current **overall wait list is 403 people.**

Of the 403 people waiting for housing, there are:

-79 homeless (shelter, street, jail, doubling up with family and friends)

-87 System Movement (from hospital to housing, across levels of mental health housing, etc.)

-34 pending homeless (facing eviction/foreclosure)

-203 inadequate housing (with parents, family, sober housing, room & board)

Of all 403 on the wait list:

-94 applications represent couples or families

-36 require housing for individuals with both mental illness and substance abuse problems

-8 need handicap supports

-3 require housing for both conditions of **mental illness and mental retardation**

It is important to note that there are many people are currently held in hospitals because there is no available housing for them.

Outpatient treatment services are the least intensive level of services, where, hopefully, people in crisis can walk into clinics and receive service. However, because demand greatly exceeds supply, only a fraction of the individuals requesting services at any one time can be accommodated. Priority must be given to those referred by hospital emergency rooms and psychiatric units. Because of this lack of access, many people have nowhere else to go. As with physical health, when there is nowhere to go with

relatively minor symptoms, one goes to the emergency room when in crisis. When mental symptoms increase and intensify, ultimately CPEP is often the only route to go.

Suffolk County, currently dealing with the deeply-felt lack of adequate resources, is facing two additional, inevitable crises. Additional adult homes will be closed because of their last week.

The League is encouraged by your including CPEP in your capital budget. I and several other League members saw CPEP. We were startled and appalled by its physical inadequacies. We expect the expansion will provide the greatly-needed upgrade in that part of our mental health system.

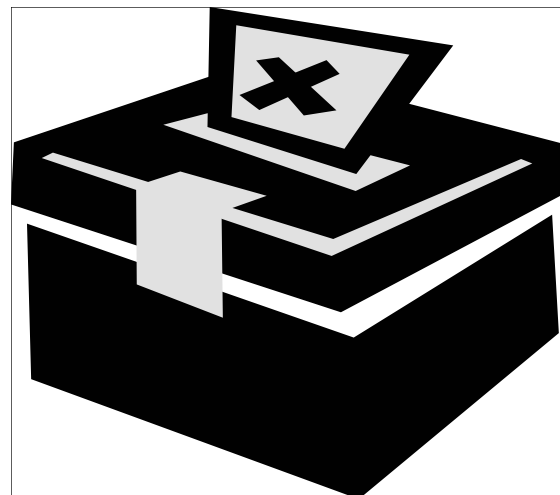
Katherine Hoak

DO YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO NEEDS TO VOTE BY ABSENTEE BALLOT?

The last day to postmark an Absentee Ballot application is October 27

The last day to submit an Absentee Ballot application in person is November 2

The last day to submit your Absentee Ballot by mail, postmarked by November 2, received by November 10



PROPOSITIONS ON THE BALLOT ON NOVEMBER 3

Proposition 1 Amendment to section 1 of article 14 of the State Constitution

Amendment to section 1 of article 14 of the Constitution, in relation to the use of certain forest preserve lands by National Grid to construct a 46 kV power line along State Route 56 in St. Lawrence County.

The "Forever Wild" clause of the NYS Constitution prohibits any development in the Adirondack Forest Preserve, including the building of power lines, unless the constitution is specifically amended to allow it. This amendment has been passed unanimously by the Legislatures that took office in 2007 and 2009, and is now being presented to the voters on the November 2009 ballot.

The proposed amendment would authorize the Legislature to convey up to six acres of forest preserve land along State Route 56 in St. Lawrence County to National Grid for construction of a power line. In exchange, National Grid would convey to the State at least 10 acres of forest land in St. Lawrence County, to be incorporated into the forest preserve. The land to be conveyed by National Grid to the State must be at least equal in value to the land conveyed to National Grid by the State. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

Proposition 2 Amendment to article 3 of the Constitution

Amendment to article 3 of the Constitution, in relation to authorizing the Legislature to allow prisoners to voluntarily perform work for nonprofit organizations.

The NYS Constitution currently prohibits labor performed by prisoners in state or local correctional facilities to be "be farmed out, contracted, given or sold to any person, firm, association or corporation:, except the state or ay political division of the state. If passed by the voters, this amendment will remove this constitutional impediment, and will authorize the Legislature to pass legislation to permit inmates in state and local correctional facilities to perform work for nonprofit organizations. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

WHO ARE WE VOTING FOR IN BROOKHAVEN??

SUFFOLK COUNTY

DISTRICT ATTORNEY (FOUR YEAR TERM)

THOMAS SPOTA, Democratic, Republican

Independence, Conservative

TREASURER (FOUR YEAR TERM)

ANGIE CARPENTER Democratic, Republican

Independence, Conservative

SHERIFF (FOUR YEAR TERM)

VINCENT DE MARCO Democratic, Republican

Independence, Conservative

COUNTY LEGISLATOR—1ST LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT (TWO YEAR TERM)

MICHAEL COMANDO Democratic

EDWARD P ROMAINE Republican, Independence, Conservative, Working Families

COUNTY LEGISLATOR—2ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT (TWO YEAR TERM)

JAY SCHNEIDERMAN Democratic, Republican, Independence, Conservative, Working Families

COUNTY LEGISLATOR—3RD LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT (TWO YEAR TERM)

KATE BROWNING Democratic, Working Families

CAROL BISSONETTE Republican, Independence, Conservative

COUNTY LEGISLATOR—4th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT (TWO YEAR TERM)

BRIAN BEEDENBENDER Democratic, Independence, Working Families

THOMAS MURATORE Republican, Conservative

COUNTY LEGISLATOR—5th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT (TWO YEAR TERM)

VIVIAN M VILORIA-FISHER Democratic, Independence, Working Families

PETER D BUSACCA Republican, Conservative

COUNTY LEGISLATOR—6th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT (TWO YEAR TERM)

BRYAN LILLY Democratic, Working Families

DANIEL LOSQUADRO Republican, Independence, Conservative

COUNTY LEGISLATOR—7th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT (TWO YEAR TERM)

JACK EDDINGTON Democratic, Independence

L DEAN MURRAY Republican, Conservative

COUNTY LEGISLATOR—8th LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT (TWO YEAR TERM)

WILLIAM LINDSAY Democratic, Independence, Conservative, Working Families

WHO ARE WE VOTING FOR IN BROOKHAVEN??

BROOKHAVEN TOWN

SUPERVISOR (FOUR YEAR TERM)

MARK J LESKO Democratic, Independence, Working Families

MARTIN W HALEY Republican, Conservative

TOWN CLERK (FOUR YEAR TERM)

PATRICIA EDDINGTON Democratic, Independence, Working Families

M CECILE FORTE Republican, Conservative

SUPERINTENDENT OF HIGHWAYS

JOHN H ROUSE Democratic, Independence, Working Families

NICHOLAS J CARACAPPA Republican, Conservative

COUNCILMEMBER, 1ST TOWN DISTRICT, BROOKHAVEN

STEVE FIORE-ROSENFELD Democratic, Independence

EDWARD C WENDOL Republican, Conservative

COUNCILMEMBER, 2ND TOWN DISTRICT, BROOKHAVEN

JOHN J LEONARD Democratic, Working Families

JANE E BONNER Republican, Independence, Conservative

COUNCILMEMBER, 3RD TOWN DISTRICT, BROOKHAVEN

IRA BERNSTEIN Democratic, Conservative

KATHLEEN E WALSH Republican, Independence

COUNCILMEMBER, 4TH TOWN DISTRICT, BROOKHAVEN

CONSTANCE M KEPERT Democratic, Independence, Working Families

RICK NELSON CUNHA Republican, Conservative

COUNCILMEMBER, 5TH TOWN DISTRICT, BROOKHAVEN

M CRAIG CHARVAT Democratic, Working Families

TIMOTHY P MAZZEI Republican, Independence, Conservative

COUNCILMEMBER, 6TH TOWN DISTRICT, BROOKHAVEN

RONALD S LUPSKI Democratic, Working Families

KEITH ROMAINE Republican, Conservative

WHO ARE WE VOTING FOR IN BROOKHAVEN??

SUPREME COURT JUSTICES, 10TH JUDICIAL DISTRICT (14 YEAR TERM) VOTE FOR 6

STEPHEN A BUCARIA Democratic, Republican, Independence, Conservative

ELIZABETH EMERSON Democratic, Republican, Independence, Conservative, Working Families

DAVID GOODSELL Democratic, Republican, Independence, Working Families

RANDALL HINROCHS Democratic, Republican, Conservative

PATRRICK LEIS Democratic, Republican, Independence, Conservative

JAMES P MC CORMACK Democratic, Independence, Working Families

ROBERT A BRUNO Republican, Conservative

THOMAS P PHELAN Republican, Conservative

DANIEL DONNELLY Independence

BARBARA BYRNE Working Families

STEPHANIE G. OVADIA Working Families

ANDREW L SPENCE Working Families

DISTRICT COURT JUDGE, 1ST DISTRICT (SIX YEAR TERM) VOTE FOR 1

MADELINE FITZGIBBON Democratic, Republican, Independence, Conservative

DISTRICT COURT JUDGE, 6TH DISTRICT, BROOKHAVEN TN (FOUR YEAR TERM)

VOTE FOR 2

ROBERT MARGOLIN Democratic

ANTHONY M PARLATORE Democratic

JAMES P FLANAGAN Republican, Independence, Conservative, Working Families

GLENN A MURPHY Republican, Independence, Conservative, Working Families

BE IN FOR THE COUNT AND EARN MONEY FOR THE LEAGUE

On Election Night, a few of us will be at the Board of Elections to report the voting totals to Associated Press, from 9 to ????. If you would be able to help with this, please call Nancy Marr, 730-6556. (It's sort of fun to see what happens at the BOE on election night.)



George R. Rehn

Certified Public Accountant

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LWV of Brookhaven: Call 751-0328

2009 Post Election Breakfast

Invited speakers:

NYS Senator Ken Lavelle

NYS Senator Brian Foley

Bellport Country Club

40 South Country Rd, Bellport

Sunday November 8, 2009

10:30am—1:30pm

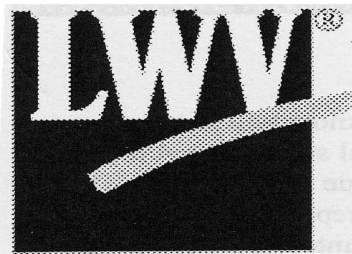
Cost: League Members (paid in advance) \$30

Non-members or Pay at the Door \$35

For information contact Sue Wilson, sswilson@hamptons.com 283-6549

Please make checks payable to LWVNYSEF and mail BEFORE OCTOBER 31

to Marilyn McKeown, 15 Mott Lane, Brookhaven, NY 11719



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
BROOKHAVEN
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DATES TO REMEMBER

OCTOBER

Wed Oct 21 Suffolk County LWV Board Meeting, Riverhead Library, 10 am
Fri Oct 23 UNITED NATIONS DINNER, ALICE D'AMICO'S, 7 PM

.NOVEMBER

Tues Nov 3 ELECTION DAY
Tues Nov 3 Board of Elections, reporting to Associated Press, 9 pm
Wed Nov 4 Brookhaven LWV Board Meeting, Paulette Chase's, 2 pm
Mon Nov 23 Meeting about NYS Government, Bellport Library, 1:30 pm