



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF EAST NASSAU

Voter

*At local, state and national levels
the League works to influence public policy
through education and advocacy.*

April, 2009

Save the Dates

Wednesday, April 1

6:00 PM - LWVEN

Informational meeting on

Compact for a National Popular
Vote (pizza included)

7:30 PM - Board Meeting

Home of Judy Schecter -221-5448
1205 Julia La., N. Bellmore

Wednesday, April 13 – 7:30 PM

LWVEN General Meeting

Consensus Meeting on Compact
for a National Popular Vote
Levittown Library, Bluegrass La.

Wednesday, April 22

National Equal Pay Day

See page 4.

Wednesday, May 6 – 7:30 PM

LWVEN Board Meeting

Home of Shirlee Bergman
18 Lesley Lane, Old Bethpage
249-5276

Wednesday, May 13 – 6:00 PM

LWVEN Annual Meeting

Forest City Park Clubhouse
3099 Morgan Drive, Wantagh
Business Meeting, Dessert
Buffet, Entertainment - \$5.00

Wednesday, May 27 – 4:00 PM

LWV of Nassau County

Annual Convention & Dinner

Pompei Restaurant & Catering
401 Hempstead Ave., West
Hempstead, 485-8620

The 2008 Election is Over, But What About 2012?

Is the Electoral College outdated?

**Should we work to end the Electoral College by
Constitutional Amendment?**

Is there another way?

**Should New York State join the Compact For a National
Popular Vote?**

Please join us:

Wednesday, April 13, 2009, 7:30 PM

Levittown Library

Bluegrass Lane

The NPV Committee will present information, and a discussion will follow. We will then discuss the consensus questions, and hopefully come to a consensus on the topic, which will then be sent to the LWWNYS. If there is a consensus among the local Leagues in the state, we will then have a position on the topic, which will allow us to lobby on this issue.

Members of the community are welcome to attend and join our discussion on the topic, but only members can participate in the consensus discussion.

**Watch in the mail, and in the May VOTER for information regarding:
the Nassau County League's Annual Convention (May 27).**

Note: The recipients of the Adele Fox Award for Service to the LWWNC, which will be presented at the County Convention on May 27, are: our own **Mimi Hirsch**, and **Flora Schwartz**, from the LWV of Southwest Nassau. AND, the Keynote Speaker will be **Barbara Bartoletti, LWWNYS Legislative Director**, who will give us the lowdown on what's *really* happening in Albany. Don't miss this opportunity!



League of Women Voters® of East Nassau

Barbara Epstein, President
Paula Blum, Editor
 1385 Lyon Place, Wantagh
 Tel/Fax: 785-3213/3263
paulablum@hotmail.com

Mary Price, Circulation
Lesley Pollak, Advertising

County Legislature Meeting Schedule

Thursday, April 2	10:00 AM
Monday, April 10	10:00 AM
Monday, May 4	10:00 AM
Monday, May 18	10:00 AM

The Nassau County Legislature meets in the Legislative Chamber, 1st floor, 1550 Franklin Ave, Mineola, 571-4252. An admittance pass must be obtained on the first floor.

Town of Hempstead Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, April 14	10:30 AM
Tuesday, April 21	10:30 AM
Tuesday, May 5	10:30 AM
Tuesday, May 19	10:30 AM

The Hempstead Town Board meets at Town Hall, in the Nathan H. Bennett Pavilion, 489-5000.

Town of Oyster Bay Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, April 7	10:00 AM
Tuesday, April 28	7:00 PM
Tuesday, May 12	10:00 AM
Tuesday, May 26	7:00 PM

The Oyster Bay Town Board meets at 54 Audrey Ave., Oyster Bay, 624-6390.

**Call before
attending.
Schedules
are subject
to change.**



LWVEN Board of Directors – 2008-2009

OFFICERS		
President:	Barbara Epstein	221-1948
Vice Presidents:		
Environment:	Lorraine Newman	735-4876
Voter Service/HAVA:	Norma Schaeffer	489-3133
Bulletin Circulation/ Special Events:	Mary Price	731-0812
Secretary:	Shirlee Bergman	249-5276
Treasurer:	Barbara Josepher	921-8749
DIRECTORS:		
Administrative Assistant:	Judy Schmertz	221-1576
Affordable Housing:	Barbara Epstein	221-1948
Bulletin:	Paula Blum	785-3213
Budget:	Lesley Pollak	731-1066
Education:	Maxine Stolzer	938-1172
Health Care, Advocacy:	Polly Nager	796-6211
Immigration:	Carole Goldfarb	626-3338
Membership:	Bobby Stim	731-1067
Membership, PR:	Elsie Yurasits	292-8045
Programs:	Janet Spar	735-8673
Special Districts Study:	Mimi Hirsch	822-5086
Students Inside	Judy Schecter	221-5448
Albany/Civics:	Lillian Broad	781-8685

In this issue:

1. Save the Dates, Consensus Meeting on Compact for a National Popular Vote
2. Legislative Meeting Dates, Officers and Directors, Keeping Connected
3. Barbara's Corner, Why We Do What We Do, Quotes
4. Bringing Public Awareness to Pay Equity
- 5 & 6. Advertisers, Membership Enrollment Form
7. This Election is Over, but What About 2012?
8. Nassau County Master Plan Workshop, Bigger, Better Bottle Bill

Keeping Connected

LWVUS & LWVUS Education Fund

1730 M Street, NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036-4508
 202-429-1965, www.lwv.org, lwv@lwv.org

LWVNYS & LWVNYS Education Foundation

62 Grand Street, Albany, NY 12207
 518-465-4162, www.lwvny.org, lwvny@lwvny.org, www.lwvny-bulletins.org

LWV of Nassau County:

Post Office Box 539, Point Lookout, NY 11569, 516-431-1628
www.lwvofnassaucounty.org, vote@lwvofnassaucounty.org



Barbara's corner

One of the high points of League activity has always been our face-to-face meetings with public officials, letting them know our positions on current issues and listening to their points of view. Many of our members will experience this while lobbying their State Senators and Assemblymembers about our state priorities this month.

We have always stressed the importance of communication with our local governments as well. I recently had the opportunity to meet with **Hempstead Town Supervisor Kate Murray**, along with **Marion Schurade** and **Judy Schmertz**, as representatives of the Nassau County League's Affordable Housing committee.

Supervisor Murray is proud that Hempstead has the largest affordable housing program of any town in the County. The Town has sponsored over 3,000 units of Golden Age housing, and will have more built as land becomes available. While we support these efforts, our current focus is on affordable housing for the young people, singles and families who provide the work force necessary to maintain economic growth on LI. The Town does have a successful program to help first-time home buyers finance their purchase. Another program allows homeowners to legally create accessory apartments to rent out. Proposed code modifications allow renting to blood relatives other than mothers and daughters.

We learned some interesting facts about the difficulties of dealing with the myriad rules and regulations attached to using money from the federal government. The rules concerning the economic stimulus funds have not yet been clarified, but Town officials expect to use these funds to the greatest extent possible.

Our committee has been closely following the progress of the Lighthouse project in the HUB area. The developers have delivered lots of material to the Town regarding the environmental impact of the project. Supervisor Murray said that the developers' plans must also be reviewed by the State DEC, Dept. of Transportation, EPA, Village of Garden City, etc. We expressed our hope that the affordable housing component will be built in the first phase of building. The time frame, however, seems quite uncertain and we didn't get the feeling that anything would be built very soon.

We thank Supervisor Murray and are proud that she is a League member. She graciously spent quite a bit of time with us, and we were able to discuss other subjects, such as brownfield development, redevelopment in Baldwin and Elmont, and the status of the former Army base in N. Bellmore. We invite all members to our Housing Committee meetings, for the latest on these and other issues.

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO Women and Politics

Polly Nager

So many women have blazed trails to bring us to a day when women are elected as heads of state and serve in every capacity, in the professions and government, all over the world. We know our history – a struggle for recognition and equality then, no less now, different in every culture. The LWV was formed so that we would understand how to affect and even shape the world around us. We learn about our politics and government every time we undertake a consensus study and every time we visit a legislator.

Reading a piece of history jolted me back to a different time and place but with a pungent familiarity. Madame Germaine DeStael, brilliant, wealthy, and fiercely independent, had thrust herself into the politics of the French Revolution. When she met Napoleon Bonaparte for the first time she took him to be a man of study and scholarship and tried to cultivate a mutual understanding; wooing him shamelessly. But he preferred only submissive and beautiful women and he is reputed to have said to a woman in society: "Madame, I do not like women to talk about politics."

To which the woman replied, "But in a nation where women's heads are cut off, sire, it is natural that they'd want to know why."

Quoted from *Madame DeStael, The First Modern Woman*,
By Francine Du Plessix Gray,
N.Y. Atlas & Co., 2008

Information is the currency of democracy.

~Thomas Jefferson

Better the occasional faults of a government that lives in a spirit of charity than the consistent omissions of a government frozen in the ice of its own indifference.

~Franklin D. Roosevelt

People come to Washington believing it's the center of power. I know I did. It was only much later that I learned that Washington is a steering wheel that's not connected to the engine.

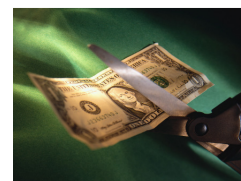
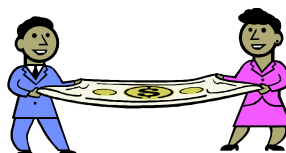
~Richard Goodwin

Bringing Public Awareness to Pay Equity on National Equal Pay Day 2009

With thousands of Pay Day Candy Bars (a product of Hershey Corporation) and literature in hand, **Women on the Job** ran a successful educational campaign for pay equity awareness last year, by visiting railroad stations, legislative offices, and colleges and universities across Long Island on **National Equal Pay Day**. National Equal Pay Day was originated by the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) in 1996 as a public awareness event to illustrate the gap between men's and women's wages. The day, observed annually on a specific Tuesday in April, symbolizes how far into the year a woman must work, on average, to earn as much as a man earned the previous year. According to a February study conducted by the *Institute for Women's Policy Research* entitled *Still a Man's Labor Market: the Long-Term Earnings Gap*, a typical woman who worked full-time in 2005 still only earned 77 cents for each dollar that the typical man earned that same year. WOJ's educational campaign, acknowledging this day, reaffirms the project's commitment to justice and equality in the workplace for all working women and, calls upon everyone to recognize the full value of the skills and contributions of women in the labor force. It also emphasizes the need for employers to review their wage practices to ensure that all their employees are paid equitably for their work.

With the cooperation of the **WOJ Task Force** Member Organizations (American Association of University Women, Association of Black Women in Higher Education, Civil Servants Employees Union, the **League of Women Voters of Nassau County**, the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, the New York Women's Agenda, the Suffolk County Association of Nurses and others) and the following LI colleges and universities: Adelphi University, CW Post – LIU, Dowling, Farmingdale University, Hofstra University, Nassau Community College, NYIT, SUNY Stony Brook, and the Brentwood and Selden campuses of the Suffolk County Community College, WOJ, a project of the Long Island Fund for Women and Girls, successfully sent the message of the need for gender equality to future generations of working men and women last year, **and will continue the effort in 2009**. Fran Medaglia, *Program Associate* for WOJ explains that “*We focus on visiting LI colleges and universities so that we can be instrumental in educating students about the underlying issues of pay equity. Research materials provided through this program highlights how inequities in pay can have a long-term negative impact on young women and people of color. The message is one of awareness and that the better educated you are about comparable worth, the better prepared you will be when negotiating wages moving forward.*” Achieving equal pay provides benefits to all working Americans. It empowers us to become more self-sufficient, reducing the dependence of many families on government assistance, can increase purchasing power, pension, and improves our capacity to save, all of which help to strengthen our economy. This day enables *Women on the Job* and other organizations that support pay equity an opportunity to educate the public about comparable worth.

Look for the **Women on the Job** Task Force on **Tuesday, April 28, 2009**, National Equal Pay Day 2009 and become part of the movement towards Equal Pay!”



This Election is Over, But What About 2012?

Carole Goldfarb

For 39 years LWVUS has had a solid position in favor of direct election of the President, instead of the Electoral College. The question is: Should we wait for the unlikely event that Congress will pass a Constitutional Amendment to make this happen, or should we legislate an equitable solution in the meantime?

Currently the Electoral College is less effective than ever in expressing the wishes of voters in choosing a President. For example, each electoral vote in Alaska equals approximately 112,000 people, but it takes 404,000 people in New York to get one electoral vote. What ever happened to one person, one vote? There are many other reasons to elect our President and Vice President directly, as we do our Senators, Representatives and all other public officials. If we had a Compact for a National Popular Vote to accomplish this goal, would it hasten the passage of a Constitutional Amendment? According to its proponents, one does not preclude the other, since the Compact would be dissolved if the Constitution were amended to establish a national popular vote.

This would not be the first time a compact among states has been used to solve important problems. Compacts have been used in many instances to resolve issues relating to trade, boundaries and other concerns. They are sanctioned by the Constitution and have been upheld by the courts.

Some opponents fear the possibility that the Compact will need Congressional approval, and that Senators could balk. However, according to proponents, previous compacts have not always sought Congressional approval, and the 4 states (New Jersey, Maryland, Hawaii and Illinois) that have already adopted the NPV Compact did not seek approval. To avoid the possibility of litigation, NPV backers say that they will seek congressional consent in the form of a statute after many states have adopted the proposal.

Interstate compacts are binding agreements and their enforcement is supported by case law. What would

happen if, after a state signed on to the Compact, a subsequent state legislature decided it was unhappy with it? The language of the Compact permits a state to withdraw, but not between July 20th and January 20th when important events pertaining to the election are taking place. Therefore, a partisan state legislature could not change the rules after the election, but before the Presidential inauguration, if they thought the opposing party won the popular vote.

NPV would create uniform national standards because every vote would be counted equally. Even before all 50 states have signed on to NPV, all popular votes will still count. With our current Electoral College system, not all states have the same 'winner take all' system (a split apportionment is possible in Maine and Nebraska).

Right now, Presidential candidates shape their campaigns and their policies to appeal to a few major swing states. For example, the unfortunate decision to turn corn over to the expensive and energy inefficient production of ethanol, which caused food prices to skyrocket (corn oil and high fructose corn syrup are used in most processed foods), is a direct result of the fact that Iowa is a key swing state. This is only one example of how national public policy is affected by the need to appeal to only a few states with our current system. What is most important to you? Should every vote count, including your own? Should we wait until we can amend the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College? Should New York State sign on to the Compact for a National Popular Vote?

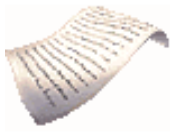
I hope to see you at our **"Pizza and the Popular Vote" meeting – 6 PM on Wednesday, April 1st**, when you can hear more information relating to each of the consensus questions we will address on April 15th, get answers to your questions, and discuss the variables of this fascinating topic.

If you are coming to this meeting, please contact our hostess, Judy Schecter: 221-5448 and let her know. That way we will have enough pizza for all who attend.

The happiest thing that can be said about democracy... is that it is one of the few systems that has been willing to risk a long period of confusion and mixed purposes for the sake of giving man a chance to grow up in mind and responsibility. ~H.A. Overstreet

Economics is extremely useful as a form of employment for economists. ~John Kenneth Galbraith

To rule is easy, to govern difficult. ~Johann W. von Goethe



Nassau County Master Plan Workshop

Marion Schurade

Tom Suozzi invited Town, City & Village officials, along with other members of the community to gather on March 16, 2009 to discuss the future of Nassau County, in both the long and short term. This was an opportunity for the public to express their ideas and opinions to the Planning Board. Approximately 200 accepted the invitation, including Don Skinner (LWV of Central Nassau), and me.

Mr. Suozzi began by comparing Nassau and Suffolk. Nassau has 1.3 million people and Suffolk has 1.5 million. Suffolk has 3 times the land mass of Nassau. Nassau, between 1940 and 1960, had explosive residential and commercial growth, starting with the building of Levittown. We led the country then and hopefully we can lead the country in the 21st century.

Nassau is 80% residential and parks. We should not change this, but we should recognize the advantages of:

A "Kool" Downtown: Mixed use real-estate, train station, pedestrian friendly: i.e. Long Beach, Rockville Centre, Garden City, Glen Cove.

Cleaning Brownfields: Cleaning up toxic sites and building mixed use, parks: i.e. Glen Cove,

*Commercial Development: The HUB
 Glen Cove
 105 Acres in Bethpage
 Elmont - The Empire Zone*

At the conclusion of Mr. Suozzi's power-point presentation, we filled out cards with questions and suggestions for the Participant Participation. We were also asked to answer a 3 part survey to be handed in upon leaving.

Over the next several months public input and insight will continue to be sought to shape a new vision for Nassau. There will be 3 more meetings:

*Spring - Draft Concept Plan
Summer - Public Workshop #2
Fall - Draft Master Plan*

AWARE

Associates for World Action in Rehabilitation & Education

There's a new online resource center that's FREE and convenient, right on your computer. It provides information and materials to increase personal independence, options and opportunities for people who are blind or have vision loss.

If you go to **visionaware.org**, here's what you'll find:

- * Information on eye diseases and conditions such as cataracts, macular degeneration, glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy and much more.
- * Adaptations for everyday activities
- * Adaptations for leisure and recreational activities
- * Purchasing adaptive equipment
- * Vision rehabilitation services and professionals nationwide
- * Coping with the emotional impact of vision loss

You can access this **free resource** from your own home, whenever you'd like, at a family or friends or a community organization such as your local Library.

VisionAWARE's mission is to provide self-help information on adapting everyday activities and locating helpful services and independent living resources for individuals with vision loss, their family members and those who work with them. The VisionAWARE team consists of highly qualified professionals with extensive experience in vision rehabilitation.