



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.*

January, 2010

Save the Dates

Wednesday, Jan. 6 – 1:30 PM
LWVEN Board Meeting
Levittown Library
Bluegrass Lane, Levittown

Wednesday, Jan. 20 – 1:30 PM
**Topic: Comprehensive
Immigration Reform**
Speaker: Samantha Fredrickson,
NC Chapter Director, NYCLU
Levittown Library

Wednesday, Jan. 27 – 12:30 PM
LWVEN Post-Holiday Party
See right column.

Wednesday, Feb. 3 – 1:30 PM
LWVEN Board Meeting
Levittown Library

Wednesday, Feb. 17 – 1:30 PM
LWVEN General Meeting
Speaker: Burton T. Ryan, Esquire,
Assistant US Attorney for Eastern
District of NY

Please reserve _____ places for the
LWVEN Post-Holiday Party.
Enclosed is my check in the
amount of \$ _____.



Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Speaker: Samantha Fredrickson, an attorney and the Director of the Nassau County Chapter of the New York Civil Liberties Union.

Where: Levittown Library, Bluegrass Lane, Levittown

When: Wednesday, January 20, 1:30 PM

Ms Fredrickson's background is in both law and journalism. She earned a BA in journalism, worked as a newspaper reporter in Pennsylvania, and graduated cum laude from New York Law School. During law school, Ms Fredrickson worked as a research assistant for former ACLU president Nadine Strossen and co-founded New York Law School's NYCLU chapter.

Please join us. Learn about the desperate need for immigration reform in our country, and what is being done about it. Ask questions. Get answers. Bring friends and family.

Please Help Us Celebrate the New Year.

LWV of East Nassau Post-Holiday Luncheon

Wednesday, January 27th, 12:30 PM

Per Un' Angelo Restaurant

(at the Jones Beach Hotel)
3275 Byron Street, Wantagh, 516-783-6484

Cost: \$25.00

Please send your check (by Jan. 20th) to Mary Price,
3930 Kingsberry Road, Seaford, N. Y. 11783



Directions: Wantagh Parkway South to exit 6 East. Go to second (2nd) traffic light. Turn right on Atlantic Boulevard. Go to end and make a right turn on Byron—
Parking on left.

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

Monday, Jan. 4 12:00N

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

Town of Hempstead Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, Jan. 12 7:00 PM

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

Town of Oyster Bay Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, Jan. 5 10:00 AM
 Tuesday, Jan. 26 10:00 AM
 Tuesday, Feb. 9 10:00 AM

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

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



A man's country is not a certain area of land, of mountains, rivers, and woods, but it is a principle; and patriotism is loyalty to that principle.

~George William Curtis
 1824-1892, American Journalist

LWVEN Board of Directors – 2008-2009

OFFICERS

President/Affordable Housing:	Barbara Epstein	221-1948
Vice Presidents:		
Executive VP/ Judicial	Lorraine Newman	735-4876
Liaison/Environment:		
Voter Service/HAVA:	Norma Schaeffer	489-3133
Bulletin Circulation/	Mary Price	731-0812
Special Events:		
Secretary:	Shirlee Bergman	249-5276
Treasurer:	Barbara Josepher	921-8749

DIRECTORS:

Administrative Assistant:	Judy Schmertz	221-1576
Bulletin:	Paula Blum	785-3213
Budget/Bulletin Advertising:	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
Nat. Res./Health Care:	Anne Ostling	681-8996
Public Relations:	Shirley Bard	781-9570
	Dell Smith	520-9366
Voter Service:	Claire Gavrin	781-7274
Programs:	Janet Spar	735-8673
Special Districts:	Mimi Hirsch	822-5086
Students Inside Albany:	Judy Schecter	221-5448
Students Inside Albany/		
Special Districts:	Lillian Broad	781-8685

In this issue:

1. Save the Dates, Meeting on Immigration, Post-Holiday Party
2. Legislative Meeting Dates, Officers and Directors, *Keeping Connected*
3. Barbara's Corner, NYS Prescription Saver Program, Milestones on the Road to Equality
4. LWVNYS 2010 Legislative Priorities, NC Red Light Camera Program, Reforming Local Government in the Name of Efficiency
- 5 & 6. Advertisers, *Membership Enrollment Form*
7. In 2010, LWV Will Celebrate Women's Equality Day and the Anniversary of the 19th Amendment
8. A Revolution from the Court?

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



Welcome to 2010. We look forward to a busy year and many interesting programs, as we celebrate LWVUS's 90th birthday and the 90th anniversary of the passing of the 19th amendment, giving women the right to vote.

In December, I attended a program sponsored by the NYC League. The speaker was Larry Norden, Senior Counsel of the Democracy Project at NYU Brennan Center. He discussed issues, ethics, campaign finance, redistricting and house rules. He mentioned that the State Senate did make some move to change the rules. For example, if one-third of the members ask for a hearing, it will be held. He also discussed the pros and cons of a Constitutional Convention to amend the state constitution. Vital issues include whether a decision will be made to require an independent commission to do the redistricting after the census, as well as the method for selecting the delegates to the convention.

There are websites to track the legislative process: www.nys.gov/open, www.assembly.state.ny.us/leg, www.openlegislation.org. Check them out when you get a chance.

To keep you up to date with activities of our National League:

- The LWVUS sent 8 League leaders to attend the UN Framework Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen as official non-governmental organization (NGO) delegates.
- The LWVUS, in support of LWV of Indiana, has filed an amicus brief in Indiana v. Rokita, a case before the Indiana Supreme Court. The brief argues that the Indiana Voter ID Law burdens the voting rights of some citizens, resulting in the unjustifiable disenfranchisement of constitutionally eligible voters.
- The LWVUS is involved in the 2010 census and suggests that we volunteer in some way. It is important that everyone be counted.

The LWVUS is asking us to submit suggestions for advocacy priorities for 2010. If you have any suggestions email them to me at byeppie@aol.com or call 516-221-1948. Hope to see many of you at our post-holiday lunch/get-together on Wed. Jan. 27.

New York State Prescription Saver Program

The New York State Prescription Saver Program was established to help those with limited incomes to pay for prescription drugs



To qualify, one must:

- be between the ages of 50 and 64, or have been determined to be disabled by the Social Security Administration;
- have an annual household income of no more than \$35,000 if single, or an annual joint household income of \$50,000 if married;
- NOT be on Medicaid; and
- be a New York State resident

If you or someone you know may qualify, you can apply by calling toll-free at 1-800-788-6917, or by visiting their website: nyprescriptionsaver.fhsc.com.

Milestones On The Road To Equality

1840 - The World's Anti-Slavery Convention is held in London, England. When women delegates from the United States are not allowed to participate, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton determine to have a women's rights convention when they return home.

1848 - July 19 - The first woman's rights convention is called by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. It is held on July 20 at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, NY. A reconvened session in Rochester NY is chaired by Amelia Bush. She becomes the first woman to preside over a meeting attended by both men and women. New York State Legislators pass a law that gives women the right to retain possession of property they owned prior to their marriage. (Source: Syracuse Metro LWV)



Democracy is an experiment, and the right of the majority to rule is no more inherent than the right of the minority to rule; and unless the majority represents sane, righteous, unselfish public sentiment, it has no inherent right.

~William Allen White

2010 State Legislative Priorities

Sally Robinson,
LWVNY VP Issues & Advocacy

FIX ALBANY NOW!

Steps To a New and Better State Government

Redistricting

Create an independent redistricting commission to draft the New York State legislative and Congressional political boundaries for the 2012 elections.

Campaign Finance Reform

Support lower contribution limits and increased disclosure. In particular, support stronger and effective campaign finance enforcement with increased civil and criminal penalties for violations.

Ethics Reform

Put in place a new independent ethics oversight agency and tougher enforcement. Make the legislature more open and accountable through continued rules reform.

Election Reform

Improve election processes that extend and encourage voting, including no-excuse absentee balloting and Election Day registration



"Nassau Stops on Red" Red Light Camera Program

According to information on the Nassau County website, traffic studies have shown that red-light running is a problem at several intersections. The stated goal of the red-light camera program is to *change driver behavior*. Studies have indicated that red-light camera programs are successful at reducing the number of red-light runners and increasing compliance with traffic laws, making roadways safer for all drivers and pedestrians.

The recorded images and video of violations will be submitted as evidence in the Traffic and Parking Violations Agency proceeding for disposition of the violation. Recipients of tickets can view their images and video online at www.DriveSafelyInNassau.com. The *notice number and pin number from the front of the Notice of Liability are needed*. The images and video contain information such as: date and time of violation, approximate speed of vehicle, amber time for the light prior to violation, phase of light at time of violation, how long the light was red at time of violation, what lane the violation occurred in, frame sequence of the photos and location of the violation.

Reforming Local Government in the Name of Efficiency

Noreen Fisher, Chair,
LWVNY Gov't Consolidation Study

New York State continues to be faced with serious structural problems. Trends reflecting anemic economic growth, population losses and some of the highest taxes in the nation have been of serious concern for many years. The state has responded to these long standing problems by establishing a series of commissions over the last decade to study its problems and recommend reforms. Most of the recommendations in these reports have not, however, been implemented

The state legislature recently did pass the 2009 Reorganization Act. The Act facilitates consolidations and dissolutions involving towns, villages and districts. It will become effective in March 2010. Several legislators and municipal organizations are studying it and proposing amendments, which may be considered this year. As local governments consider consolidations or sharing of services in the years ahead, it is also likely that various technical issues will arise that could best be resolved through statewide legislation. Because there is currently a great deal of activity at the local level, as local governments study consolidations and/or shared services, many local Leagues wish to weigh in on the process as well.

Although the cost of New York State government threatens its effectiveness, the League has never studied, at a statewide level, whether it should encourage government consolidations/dissolutions or shared services in the interest of increasing efficiencies, and, if so, what criteria should be applied in evaluating various proposals.

Given the immediacy of these issues, the study committee has decided to devote the first portion of the study to exploration of consensus in the following areas:

1. Is there agreement on the standards that the League should apply in assessing changes to state law that would facilitate the consolidation/dissolution process and/or the expansion of shared services;
2. Is there agreement on standards that local Leagues should apply in assessing proposals for consolidation/dissolution/ shared services in their service area..

Extensive information, bibliography and print-ready bulletin articles from our State Study Committee are available at lwny.org.

In 2010, LWV Will Celebrate Women's Equality Day and The 90th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment Giving Women the Right to Vote

On February 14, 1920, with passage of the 19th amendment imminent, suffragists met to transform the movement into the League of Women Voters to help educate women to be responsible voters. On August 26, 1920, just days after Tennessee became the thirty-sixth (and last- needed) state to ratify the amendment, the Secretary of State signed the proclamation enacting the 19th amendment giving women the right to vote.

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others first seriously proposed women's right to vote at Seneca Falls, N.Y., on July 19, 1848. Prior to this time, **Susan B. Anthony** was active in the women's temperance movement, but when she met Stanton in 1851, they joined forces and worked together over the next half of the century – and what a force they were. Although they both died before the goal was reached, they lived long enough to see significant progress and were primarily responsible for the ultimate success. **Carrie Chapman Catt**, founder and early leader of the League of Women Voters, younger than Anthony and Stanton, entered the struggle later and became a leader in the suffragist movement that helped lead it to victory with passage of the 19th amendment in 1920.

The sacrifices these three made to win the right to vote for women is amazing and one that few people recognize today. In most cases, they gave their lives to the movement. Becoming public advocates at the time for this or any movement, meant that they were living lives and playing roles in a totally unconventional, unacceptable, inappropriate manner – to many they were pariahs. It is impossible to even conceive of how difficult their lives were, what hardships they endured – public humiliation, terms in jail, ridicule – and they did it so that the women of yesterday, today and tomorrow can exercise their right to vote.

Recently, a group of college women – graduate and undergraduate students, as well as faculty - attended a showing of *Iron Jawed Angels*. At the end of the film the auditorium sat in stunned silence. When the moderator opened discussion, one after the other of the women said in voices filled with emotion and in a variety of ways, "I had no idea what they went through." And they were not alone. Without reminders, few of us can really know what they endured throughout their lives.



(Source: LWVUS)

What is League Action?

“Action is agitating, organizing, educating, pleading and persuading,” according to Carrie Chapman Catt, a leader of the women's suffrage movement and founder of the League of Women Voters. Today, action is whatever the League does to influence government officials to implement the League's program goals. Action is sending emails, writing letters, visiting public officials, mobilizing public support and testifying at hearings.

All League action is taken in accordance with positions arrived at after study and a consensus process. League positions and the history of actions taken under these positions are found in “Impact on Issues,” which can be found on the state (lwny.org) and national (lwg.org) League websites. All action taken is to further the League's positions, with emphasis in NYS, on those items contained in the “Legislative Agenda.” Issue Specialists in various areas develop annual plans and action agendas which articulate the activities they anticipate during the legislative session. (Source: LWVNYS)



A Revolution from the Court?

by Mary G. Wilson, President, LWVUS

(The League filed an amicus brief in the case Citizens United v. FEC in association with the Constitutional Accountability Center. The decision of the Supreme Court should be forthcoming very soon.)

“In a breathtaking move . . . , the Supreme Court ordered reconsideration of one of the basic pillars of modern American democracy – the prohibition on unlimited corporate and union spending in candidate elections. The Court’s upcoming decision in Citizens United v. FEC will determine whether corporations can intervene directly in elections from school board to President of the United States. It thus has the potential to be more important than Bush v. Gore to American democracy. This is not merely another run-of-the-mill, technical case about campaign finance regulations; it has the potential to allow corporate wealth to dominate our elections for years to come.

Earlier this fall, the Court heard oral arguments in Citizens United. What’s at stake? Imagine Exxon or Pfizer spending hundreds of thousands of dollars directly in a Senate race to make sure that a Senator will be responsive to their corporate concerns about energy or health care policies. Or imagine one of the companies that recently received billions in federal aid spending a million dollars or two to support President Obama in his re-election bid because he saved the corporation from bankruptcy. And think how corporate and union funds could overwhelm campaigns for state representative, state and municipal judges, and zoning commissions. Add into this scenario unfettered spending by foreign-owned corporate entities and you truly have the ingredients for a revolution – a frightening revolution.

Modern American democracy is the story of the rights of individual citizens. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 expanded our democracy by ensuring that every citizen will be allowed to vote, regardless of race or ethnicity. The Court’s 1964 decision in Reynolds v. Sims required that every person be counted equally in the apportionment of legislative bodies, ensuring equality of representation throughout our country. And, to protect the role of individual citizens in the election process, Congress has long prohibited election spending by corporations and unions. Together, these three pillars provide the foundation for our modern electoral system.

Voters are supposed to be at the center of our political process. For more than two centuries, America’s constitutional democracy has been moving in the direction of broader enfranchisement and more meaningful political participation by American citizens. After the Civil War, the 15th Amendment to the Constitution guaranteed the right to

vote to citizens regardless of race or color. The 19th Amendment provided voting rights to women, the 24th to poor citizens and the 26th to young adults.

On the other hand, our Constitution does not reflect a similar solicitude for corporate participation; indeed our constitutional history reflects a growing concern over the influence of corporations, and the distinction between the legal protections afforded to living persons and corporations has been part of our constitutional law from the Founding.

In 1907, outraged by corruption from huge election expenditures by corporations at the end of the Nineteenth Century, Congress passed the Tillman Act, which prohibits corporate expenditures in candidate elections and which started the era of campaign finance regulation. Scandals also provoked new campaign finance laws in the 1970s and 2002. In 1947, direct spending by unions in elections was prohibited by Congress.

Throughout this history, the Supreme Court respected and approved congressional limitations on corporate and union spending, upholding these restrictions against a First Amendment challenge in 1990 in Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce and again in 2003 in McConnell v. FEC.

Opponents of campaign finance restrictions argue that the First Amendment should apply to corporations in exactly the same way that it applies to individuals. They suggest that the corporate “person” created by the state should have all the rights of an individual citizen, including the right to make unlimited expenditures to elect or defeat specific candidates.

But this argument is a radical new theory and based on a fundamental fallacy: that corporations are persons just like individuals, and that democracy would be served by unleashing the tremendous sums that for-profit corporations can amass because they are shielded from the liabilities, taxation, and other responsibilities that fall on individual citizens. Such legal arguments run contrary to constitutional text and history and could reverse our centuries-long march of progress toward a more expansive, inclusive, citizen-based democracy. As Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist said in this context, “it cannot be disputed that the mere creation of a corporation does not invest it with all the liberties enjoyed by natural persons.”

The Supreme Court should follow precedent in this case and keep intact the basic principles protecting American democracy. Doing otherwise would bring about an anti-democratic revolution our country does not need.”