

# THE VOTER

League of Women Voters of Brookhaven

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April 2011

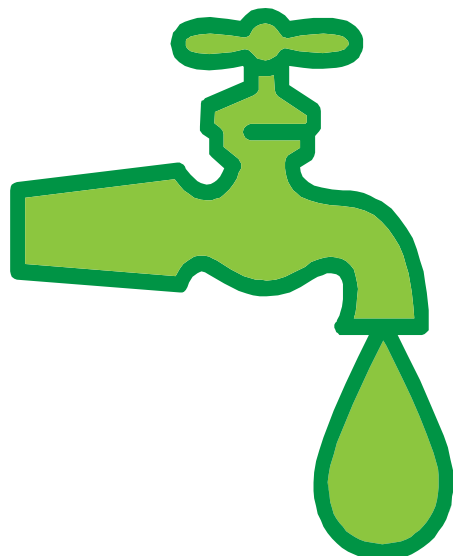
## OUR ANNUAL LUNCHEON

### THE WATERS OF LONG ISLAND

*Balancing the preservation of our delicate natural environment  
with the needs of a growing population*

**SPEAKER: MAUREEN DOLAN MURPHY**

Citizens Campaign for the Environment



at The Fifth Season

34 East Broadway, Port Jefferson

Saturday, April 16, noon

\$34.00

See reservation form, page 3

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**PRESIDENT'S PAGE**

This is the time for budgets—to be proposed, not necessarily to be adopted. New York State does have an on-time budget this year; it seems as though the negotiation process did reduce some of the Governor's cuts to schools, but it failed to redress the regressive nature of the funding, which "hurts poorer school districts even more than the one initially proposed" (New York Times, April 2). Cuts to the judicial system and a failure to extend the tax surcharge for those earning more than \$20,000 a year were other criticisms by the Times. The Federal budget process is also on our minds, with the possibility that the inability to come to agreement will cause the government to shut down. Efforts to plan a budget for 2011-2012 seem even less likely to be successful with proposals interesting but far apart.

On Monday, four of us saw our country from a different point of view. We attended the Naturalization Ceremony for 165 immigrants who became new citizens. Almost every Monday, at the Federal District Court in Islip, over one hundred persons participate in this ceremony, testifying to the promise of the United States. Judge Allyne Ross spoke to the group about his own career as the grandson of immigrants, and read off the list of countries the new citizens came from, asking people to stand as their country was mentioned. When he had read the list of over thirty-five countries, the applause for the standing crowd was overwhelming. We were there to assist those who wished to become registered voters, and sixty-five of them completed forms. We welcome them to the United States.

In March, we viewed *The Last Fix* at the Bellport Library. Subtitled "An Addict's Passage from Hell to Hope," the film is the third one made by the creators of Justice Productions, Jacqui Lofaro and Victor Teich, to explore some of the dilemmas of our criminal justice system. *The Last Fix* presents the concept of the drug court, which offers drug addicts a chance to follow a course of treatment and group meetings instead of incarceration. It provides them a method of sentencing that is rehabilitative and supportive, and is a good alternative to incarceration. It is effective because it holds out the threat of incarceration if the addict does not follow the court's directives. Its impressive record of recidivism suggests that it works better, and costs less, than punishment. In the film, the stories of three addicts dramatize their fight against addiction and their success, through the firm monitoring and humane support of Judge Deborah Cooperstein and her staff, in re-establishing their family life and careers. .

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**BOARD POSITION OPEN**

If you would like to be part of our board of directors — to help plan meetings, work on committees, publicize the League, please call Nancy Marr, 730-6556

**OUR LUNCHEON SPEAKER—MAUREEN  
DOLAN MURPHY**

*Balancing the preservation of our delicate natural environment with the needs of a growing population*

Our speaker, Maureen Dolan Murphy is the Executive Programs Manager for Citizens Campaign for the Environment. She has been with CCE for 9 years and works on a variety of environmental issues including drinking water protection, advancing renewable energy, reduction of pesticides, and the protection of oceans, estuaries and bays. She is an active member of the Long Island Sound Study and the Chair of the South Shore Estuary Reserve Citizens Advisory Committee. The Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve is where salt water from the Atlantic Ocean and fresh water from upland streams and groundwater mix to create a unique place for Long Island. The Long Island South Shore Estuary Reserve includes 173 square miles of south shore bays and wetlands, the streams and tributaries that empty into these bays, and its 326 square mile watershed. The reserve extends for over 70 miles along the Atlantic shoreline of Long Island, from Reynolds Channel in Nassau County to the eastern shores of Shinnecock Bay in Suffolk County.

The Citizens Campaign for the Environment (CCE) was formed in 1985 by a small group of concerned citizens who recognized the need to provide public involvement to advance stronger environmental policy. Today, after 25 years as a not-for-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization, CCE has grown to an

80,000-member organization with offices in Farmingdale, White Plains, Albany, Syracuse, Buffalo, and Hamden, CT. CCE engages in extensive education, research, lobbying and public outreach. One of its primary goals is to help citizens increase their influence and participation in important environmental campaigns. Through such activism, the public has a stronger voice in the development of public policies and legislative agendas.

.In 1993, the New York State Legislature created the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council and charged it with developing and ultimately implementing a comprehensive management plan for the estuary. The Council represents local governments, water related businesses, community groups, conservationists, environmentalists, academic institutions, and fishers. The council is guided by input from the Citizens Advisory Committee, which is engaged in public education activities and provides the Council with public perspectives on ways to implement the recommendations in the management plan. The South Shore Estuary Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan (SSER CMP) was approved and signed in April 2001. The SSER CMP describes current reserve conditions, identifies important problems and trends affecting the estuary, and recommends actions that citizens, local governments and others can take to ensure that the South Shore Estuary Reserve is improved and protected for future generations. The goal of the plan is to balance the preservation of our delicate natural environment with the needs of a growing population. Issues addressed in the comprehensive management plan include water quality, living resources, public use and enjoyment, water related economy, and education and stewardship.

To reserve your place at the luncheon, please return with your check for \$34 to Robbie Fishman, 17 Mott Lane, Brookhaven, NY 11719 (286-0614) - by April 11.

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*Thank you for your support! – Alice D'Amico*

## REDISTRICTING IN NEW YORK STATE

ReShapeNY, a campaign to achieve redistricting reform organized by Citizens Union, with the League and NYPIRG on the Leadership Team, was launched this month in a simultaneous announcement in Albany and New York City by its distinguished co-chairs and diverse coalition of thirty member organizations.

The campaign seeks to end partisan gerrymandering in New York State and create a fair and independent process to draw state legislative and congressional district lines in time for the 2012 elections. It is a broad-based campaign made up of 9 distinguished New Yorkers serving as co-chairs, and 30 civic, issue advocacy, business and labor organizations. The campaign will lobby legislators and engage in public education across the state to ensure redistricting reform is realized. See more at [www.reshapeny.org](http://www.reshapeny.org).

**WE URGE ALL LEAGUE MEMBERS TO URGE YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS TO SUPPORT AN INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMITTEE**

## NEW YORK STATE—EDUCATION TESTIMONY

On February 15, 2011, the League submitted testimony to the Joint Legislative Public Hearing on the 2011-2012 Executive Budget Proposal on Elementary and Secondary Education. This testimony, which was prepared by President Betsey Swan, emphasizes League positions on financing education and property taxation and calls for:

- Adding the final two years of foundation aid into the budget prior to application of the Gap Elimination Adjustment;
- Replacement of the STAR program with a STAR circuit breaker, which would provide more meaningful relief to taxpayers according to need;
- Defeat of tax caps until the state fully implements the foundation aid approach to financing e

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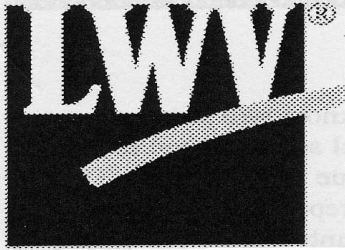
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Sat Apr 16 LWV ANNUAL LUNCHEON—The Fifth Season, Port Jefferson, noon

**MAY**

- Wed May 11 Brookhaven LWV Board Meeting, Linda DevinSheehan's, 2 pm  
Tues May 16 SUFFOLK COUNTY LWV CONVENTION, Suffolk CC Culinary Institute, 9:00 AM  
Congressman Tim Bishop, Keynote speaker

**JUNE**

- Wed June 8 Brookhaven LWV Board Meeting, Robbie Fishman's, 2 pm  
Fri June 17 ANNUAL MEETING—Place to be determined, 7 pm