



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, 2011

Save the Dates

LWVEN 2011 Board Meetings:

Location: Levittown Library

April 6 – Room 1 – 7:30 PM

May 4 – Room 1 – 7:30 PM

June 2 – Room 1 – 7:30 PM

All members are welcome to attend
Board Meetings.

Tuesday, April 5 – 6:45 PM

**Board Meeting -LWV Nassau County
Hempstead Library**

Tuesday, April 12

NATIONAL EQUAL PAY DAY

April 12 – 16

WOMEN'S EQUALITY WEEK

Wednesday, April 13 – 7:30 PM

LWVEN General Meeting

Levittown Library

Topic: Sustainable Future for LI

See right column.

Friday, April 22 – EARTH DAY

Sunday, April 24 – EASTER

Friday, April 29 – ARBOR DAY

Thursday, June 2 – 4:00 PM

LWVNC COUNTY CONVENTION

Mangia Bene, 526 Middle Neck Rd.

Great Neck – More information in next
issue of the VOTER – stay tuned.

and – Please try to attend!!!

Creating a Sustainable Future for Long Island

Wednesday, April 13, 2011

7:30 PM

Levittown Library

Our Speaker for this very important topic is

**Donna Boyce, Director of Programs, *Sustainable
Long Island.***

Sustainable Long Island has engaged thousands of community leaders and elected officials to *rethink, rebuild* and *renew* communities across LI, resulting in tens of millions of dollars of investment, hundreds of units of housing, and dozens of new businesses.

Over the last 50 years, the communities on LI were built and have matured without adequate planning, leaving an aftermath of suburban sprawl, fragmented transportation systems, depleted natural resources, segregated neighborhoods and schools, and deteriorating downtowns.

Please join us to hear Ms Boyce discuss the needs of our LI communities and how they can be addressed.

Friends, neighbors, relatives, co-workers and other community members are cordially invited to attend.



National Council of Jewish Women - Long Island Sections Cordially Invite You to a Luncheon

WOMEN + ADVOCACY = POWER

Honoring

**NCJW SECTION MEMBERS
and COMMUNITY HONOREES**

**League of Women Voters of Nassau County
& Judy Jacobs, Nassau County Legislator**

Wednesday, May 11, 2011 - 11:30 AM

See page 3 – for more information and for registration form.

League of Women Voters® of East Nassau

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County Legislature Meeting Schedule

Monday, April 18 10:00 AM
 Monday, May 16 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. Call for scheduled committee meeting dates and times.

Town of Hempstead Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, April 5 10:30 AM
 Tuesday, April 12 10:30 AM
 Tuesday, May 3 10:30 AM
 Tuesday, May 17 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 12 7:00 PM
 Tuesday, May 3 10:00 AM
 Tuesday, May 17 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 – 2010-2011

OFFICERS

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Vice Presidents:
Judicial Liaison/
Environment: Lorraine Newman 735-4876
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Natural Resources Anne Ostling 681-8996
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Keeping Connected

LWVUS & LWVUS Education Fund

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 202-429-1965, www.lwv.org, lwv@lwv.org

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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
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Barbara's Corner

REMINDER: APRIL 22 IS EARTH DAY. We should all be concerned with our environment. Our bulletin frequently offers us good tips to follow. Since it is *Earth Day* soon, we should make a special effort this month and beyond to do our part to help. Some easy suggestions: carpool when possible (especially with the high price of gas), take advantage of spring weather (eventually) and walk, turn off your computer overnight and when not using it for more than 4 hours, and turn off lights and unplug appliances when they are not being used.

We will be having a new study beginning in May, *The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education*. If you are interested in participating in this study let me know via email: byeppie@aol.com or phone: 221-1948. With all the discussion regarding education on the national and local levels this should be a most interesting study.

Government on many levels has been in the news recently from national to local. To many people this may be very confusing, considering the myriad levels and functions. I am interested in developing a program explaining the various levels of government. This might include a power point presentation that could be given to schools and local groups. I am looking for volunteers to help with the project. I am hoping to make what many consider a dull topic interesting. Please contact me if interested (see contact info above).

My best wishes for a happy holiday for all (Happy Easter, Happy Passover).



Above: Attendees at our very successful forum on Redistricting at Hofstra, on March 3.



Left: Our own state League Legislative Director, Barbara Bartoletti, speaking at the Redistricting Forum.

National Council of Jewish Women Luncheon

Wednesday, May 11, 2011, at 11:30 AM

Honorees

The League of Women Voters of Nassau County

Judy Jacobs, Nassau County Legislator

TEMPLE AVODAH

3050 Oceanside Road, Oceanside

Couvert \$36 –

Please join us there!

RSVP by May 2

() I will attend on May 11th. Enclosed is my check for \$36.

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email _____ Local League _____

Choice of entrée: () Chicken () Fish () Pasta-Vegetable
Mail to NCJW, 342 Central Ave. Lawrence NY 11559 - 516-569-3660

Our Sincere Wishes for a Speedy Recovery

for

Suzy Gell
Jerry Price
Judy Schecter



Power to the People

In New York State, legislators choose their voters before we are asked to choose them in the voting booth. How does this happen? Every 10 years, after the census figures are established, Assembly and Senate district lines are drawn by the legislators to maximize favorable results for both parties.

Rather than adhere to boundaries that are contiguous with communities, they examine changes in population patterns such as ethnicity, religion, race and other similar factors, and then redraw the boundaries to assure that incumbents will be re-elected. Some of these district boundaries have blatantly contorted shapes.

We can change this politically controlled system by taking the power away from the legislators and putting it in the hands of a truly independent redistricting commission. The legislature could create such a commission immediately. Instead, the Senate has passed legislation that proposes a constitutional amendment that would create the commission, but it would not be effective until 2022.

We can do away with a system where legislators cherry-pick voters. Call your state legislators and insist that they support a truly independent redistricting commission to take effect now.

Barbara Epstein, President

Polly Nager, Advocacy Director

League of Women Voters of East Nassau

(Printed in L&M Publications newspapers, as a guest editorial)

Genetic Engineering Meeting

By Lorraine Newman, VP

On March 16, 2011, Dr. Michael Hadjiargyrou (Dept. of Bioengineering at Stony Brook University) presented his third educational and informative lecture to our League. The topic, Human Genetic Engineering, was presented with a Power Point lecture and discussion. What did we learn?

- What is Genetic Engineering,
- A review of the historical development of Human Genetic Engineering – from the 1950s to the present, and the science behind it,
- The applications in basic research, agriculture, livestock and human medicine,
- Discussion of ethical, legal, and social implications associated with this powerful and life-altering biotechnology.

This presentation by Dr. Hadjiargyrou was co-sponsored by the LWV of East Nassau and the Levittown Library.



Dear Mr. President:

Our organizations are writing to express our grave concern about the **dysfunctional Federal Election Commission** which is spectacularly failing to meet its statutory responsibilities to administer and enforce the nation's campaign finance laws.

The organizations include **Americans for Campaign Reform, Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW), Democracy 21, League of Women Voters, Public Citizen and U.S.PIRG.**

As a result of its failures, the FEC itself has become a national campaign finance scandal. Solving this scandal, in the first instance, rests in your hands and in the statutory power you have to appoint FEC Commissioners.

As a 2009 *Washington Post* editorial explained...

The commission was designed to have power shared equally between the two parties, so that neither would have the upper hand in taking potentially politically inspired action against the other. This unusual setup has often produced 3-3 splits between Republican and Democratic appointees. But those deadlocks have tended to arise sporadically, and in ideologically or politically charged cases, not in run-of-the-mill enforcement actions.

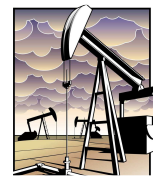
That's no longer true. The three Republican appointees are turning the commission into The Little Agency That Wouldn't: wouldn't launch investigations, wouldn't bring cases, wouldn't even accept settlements that the staff had already negotiated. This is not a matter of partisan politics. These commissioners simply appear not to believe in the law they have been entrusted with enforcing.

The FEC problems described in the *Washington Post* editorial in 2009 remain true today.

As of April 30, 2011, the terms of five of the six current FEC Commissioners will have expired and you will be in a position to nominate five new Commissioners for the agency. By statute, none of the five current Commissioners whose terms will have expired are eligible to be reappointed.

Our organizations urge you to expeditiously exercise your powers to nominate five new Commissioners to serve on the FEC and to give the Commission a new start. We also call on you to discard the past practice of allowing party leaders in Congress, in essence, to name the FEC Commissioners, the result of which all too often has been Commissioners who either serve partisan interests or are ideologically opposed to the laws.

We also request that you begin steps now to help ensure that five new Commissioners are in place as rapidly as possible, rather than allowing the current Commission to remain in place a day longer than is necessary...



Hydraulic Fracturing FAQs

How does hydraulic fracturing work?

Hydraulic fracturing or fracking is a means of natural gas extraction employed in deep natural gas well drilling. Once a well is drilled, millions of gallons of water, sand and proprietary chemicals are injected, under high pressure, into a well. The pressure fractures the shale and props open fissures that enable natural gas to flow more freely out of the well.

What is horizontal hydraulic fracturing?

Horizontal hydrofracking is a means of tapping shale deposits containing natural gas that were previously inaccessible by conventional drilling. Vertical hydrofracking is used to extend the life of an existing well once its productivity starts to run out, sort of a last resort. Horizontal fracking differs in that it uses a mixture of 596 chemicals, many of them proprietary, and millions of gallons of water per frack. This water then becomes contaminated and must be cleaned and disposed of.

What is the Halliburton Loophole?

In 2005, the Bush/ Cheney Energy Bill exempted natural gas drilling from the Safe Drinking Water Act. It exempts companies from disclosing the chemicals used during hydraulic fracturing. Essentially, the provision took the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) off the job. It is now commonly referred to as the Halliburton Loophole.

What is the Safe Drinking Water Act?

In 1974, the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) was passed by Congress to ensure clean drinking water free from both natural and man-made contaminants.

What is the FRAC Act?

The FRAC Act (Fracturing Responsibility and Awareness to Chemical Act) is a House bill intended to repeal the Halliburton Loophole and to require the natural gas industry to disclose the chemicals they use.

How deep do natural gas wells go?

The average well is up to 8,000 feet deep. The depth of drinking water aquifers is about 1,000 feet. The problems typically stem from poor cement well casings that leak natural gas as well as fracking fluid into water wells.

How much water is used during the fracking process?

Generally 1-8 million gallons of water may be used to frack a well. A well may be fracked up to 18 times.

What fluids are used in the fracking process?

For each frack, 80-300 tons of chemicals may be used. Presently, the natural gas industry does not have to disclose the chemicals used, but scientists have identified volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylene.

In what form does the natural gas come out of the well?

The gas comes up wet in produced water and has to be separated from the wastewater on the surface. Only 30-50% of the water is typically recovered from a well. This wastewater can be highly toxic.

What is done with the wastewater?

Evaporators evaporate off VOCs and condensate tanks steam off VOCs, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The wastewater is then trucked to water treatment facilities.

What is a well's potential to cause air pollution?

As the VOCs are evaporated and come into contact with diesel exhaust from trucks and generators at the well site, ground level ozone is produced. Ozone plumes can travel up to 250 miles.



Transportation Crisis in Nassau County

The showdown between the Nassau County government and the MTA has become an impending crisis for 16,000 riders, many of them workers who cannot afford other forms of transportation – who will lose their only way to get to their jobs, doctors, and stores when the MTA cuts 25 of the 48 bus routes beginning July 1.

Many of those who rely on the buses, including home health workers, housekeepers, landscapers and retail workers have been saying “*Nassau with no bus is Nassau without us.*” What of the recipients of their services? What of the sick and elderly who are served by these people? What of the shoppers in the stores where many of the salesclerks and cashiers will be unable to get to work? What of the restaurants whose workers will not be able to get to work? What of the students at Nassau Community College, SUNY Old Westbury, etc., who might not be able to attend without bus transportation?

Let’s not forget the elderly and people with disabilities who rely on the buses (or, in some cases, the AbleRide buses, whose routes will also be affected) to get to their jobs, doctors, shopping centers and family. How will stores and shopping centers be affected if many of their customers cannot get to them? If we are to reduce vehicular emissions which negatively impact the air we breathe, shouldn’t we be encouraging bus ridership, not reducing or eliminating it?

How did the situation reach this point? For the last decade, Nassau County has contributed only \$9.1 million of the \$133 million required annually to run the LI bus system in the county, while our neighbor, Suffolk County has contributed \$24 million toward their buses, whose total costs are not so far from those of Nassau. The MTA says that they can no longer afford to provide this subsidy to the Nassau County bus system. Though part of the problem may well be the result of mismanagement by the MTA, as many claim, surely Nassau County bears some responsibility. If we are to reduce congestion on the roads and reduce vehicular emissions, shouldn’t the county be increasing their contribution to the buses, not eliminating it.

The county’s response has been to threaten to privatize LI Bus, without providing the subsidies to keep it profitable.

The LWV of Nassau County has had the following position on transportation for many years:

“To support the concept of mass transit as a public service with operating costs subsidized as they are for all public services and shared by all levels of government.”

Perhaps it’s time for all of us to contact the County Executive’s office, our legislators and the MTA to tell them to live up to their responsibilities regarding LI Bus.

To the MTA Leaders:

by Carol Bergman

According to your website, over 100,000 people ride the LI Bus every day (*not annually*). *They are students, elderly, disabled, and those who can’t drive or do not have a car.*

You further state that the bus is used for “museums, parks and beaches.” Yes, we do use bus transportation for recreation, but sorry to say, that’s not all. People use buses for shopping, going to work and for going to doctors. I take the N74 and the N21 to work every day. For riders, buses are essential for our livelihood!

A couple of years ago, Tom Suozzi introduced the “*greening of Nassau County*” to reduce carbon output. Using bus transportation will reduce, not add, to carbon emissions. According to the American Public Transportation Association, a single person switching from commuting by car to taking public transportation reduces carbon emission by 30%. This is even more than the 10% reduction proposed by Mr. Suozzi.

Long Island is not the only place experiencing the possibility of budget cuts affecting their bus routes. Pittsburgh and Detroit are among the other places in the same position.

The *Transportation Research Board*, a private, non-profit, organization whose goal is to promote and provide solutions for the transit industry, urged the use of small buses for many transportation systems. Small buses are more cost efficient because of lower maintenance and fuel costs. Approximately half of the bus companies who are members of the American Public Transportation Association have small buses in their systems. The major complaint about small buses concerns peak rush hours, where they were found to be overloaded. My suggestion for the MTA is as follows: During the peak hours of 6 to 9 am and 4 to 7 pm, Monday to Friday, the Long Island bus should use their standard buses. All other times, smaller buses, similar to an AbleRide bus would be efficient.

The city of Chicago, known for its extensive bus system, is combining two similar routes into a new single longer route. This reduces expenses and overlaps of bus routes. For the MTA, this would help eliminate costs without completely eliminating bus routes. Currently, the N74 and the N73 routes alternately run every half hour to one hour apart, and cover similar areas. My proposal would be to cut the N74 and only use the N73 which covers a larger area. Other dual bus routes can be changed as well. This method has proven to be an acceptable way of reducing transportation costs while still enabling riders to get to their destinations.

