



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.*

August/September, 2011

Save the Dates

Saturday, August 13 – 8AM – 2PM
Town of Hempstead - Pharmaceutical Disposal, Shredding & E-Cycling Program - Bring papers to be shredded and watch while they are shredded - behind UNIQUE (formerly Tri-County Flea Market – Hempstead Turnpike) Levittown (If you choose to shred personal information documents yourself – put in plastic bag before putting into garbage.)
Also: Sat., Oct 15, Town Park – Point Lookout

Wednesday, Sept. 21 – 7:30 PM
LWVEN General Meeting
Topic: Speaking Truth to Power
Co-sponsored by the Levittown Library. See right column.

LWVNC Board Meetings – 6:45 PM
Hempstead Library (Tuesdays)
Sept. 13, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, Dec. 6, Jan. 3, Jan. 31, Mar. 6, Apr. 10, May 1

LWVEN Board Meetings – 7:30 PM
Levittown Library
Sept 7 (This might be changed.)
Oct. 5, Nov. 2, Dec. 7

Candidates' Meetings - 7:30 PM
October 4 - East Meadow Public Library, co-sponsored by the library

October 11- Plainview - Old Bethpage Public Library, co-sponsored by the library.

Sign up for emergency information from the Town of Hempstead – **Swift 911**. Go to TOH. LI and click the link, or call 489-6000 to register your phone number(s).

Please Join Us for Our Inspiring First Meeting of the 2011-2012 League Year

Speaking Truth To Power: Sophie Scholl and the White Rose Anti-Nazi Resistance

Role Models in the Fight for Freedom Today

Wed, Sept 21, 2011 – 7:30 PM

Levittown Library, Bluegrass Lane

This inspiring program, co-sponsored with the Levittown Library, will be presented by **Jud Newborn, PhD**, Special Projects Curator, Cinema Arts Centre (Huntington), Founding Historian/Curator, NY Museum of Jewish Heritage (1986--2000), Co-Author, "Sophie Scholl and the White Rose," Multimedia Lecture Artist, Journalist, Curator, Lyricist

Dr Newborn, who served as Founding Historian and Curator of New York's Museum of Jewish Heritage, presents this multimedia lecture program based on his new book about the remarkable students who resisted Hitler.

Using music, historical photographs and suspenseful storytelling, Dr. Newborn recounts how Sophie Scholl and her brother Hans--former fanatical Hitler Youth leaders--transformed uniquely to become the greatest heroes and Christian martyrs of the German anti-Nazi resistance. "We will not be silent," their wartime leaflets declared. "We are your bad conscience. The White Rose will not leave you in peace!" On February 18, 1943, they mounted a gallery high above the University of Munich's vast atrium and scattered hundreds of leaflets down upon the heads of astonished students. It was the only public protest against Nazis ever to be staged. **But Dr. Newborn's program does not remain in the past.** Relating the White Rose story to today's most compelling current events, from genocide and human rights violations to extremism, autocracy and the suppression of dissent, he then presents an array of "White Rosers" today--inspiring heroes of all backgrounds, abroad and at home--who risk themselves for freedom and our shared humanity.

League of Women Voters® of East Nassau

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Mary Price, Circulation
Lesley Pollak, Advertising

County Legislature Meeting Schedule

Monday, Sept. 19 10:00 AM
 Monday, Oct. 19 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, Sept. 6 10:30 AM
 Tuesday, Sept. 20 10:30 AM
 Tuesday, Oct. 4 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, Sept. 6 10:00 AM
 Tuesday, Sept. 27 10:00 AM
 Tuesday, Oct. 4 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.**



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Keeping Connected

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

LWVNY & LWVNY Education Foundation

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 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



I hope you are having a good summer.

Time goes by so quickly. We are looking forward to an exciting League year, beginning in Sept. with the very interesting program described on page 1. Two candidate forums for Nassau County legislative candidates are scheduled for October, each co-sponsored by a local library. As of this printing we do not know the results of the court cases regarding the legislative district lines – therefore, we are not sure which districts will be involved.

The county league will be studying the Nassau County Charter, with the hope of making recommendations for some changes, if deemed appropriate. If interested in being part of this study committee, contact me at byeppie@aol.com or 221-1948, either before Aug. 18th or after Sept. 7th. For the next issue of the VOTER we will be trying a different, more economical format. Watch for it in October.

Enjoy the rest of the summer. I look forward to seeing you in September.

Membership – We can do it!

Do you have any ideas for increasing League's membership in East Nassau, Nassau County, NYS and/or nationally?

Please share these ideas with us, so we can share them with the other levels of League, and use them ourselves, since local membership is also down. To remain a successful, vibrant organization, we must attract the next generation of members. Can you help?

HELP WANTED:

Secretary or Co-Secretaries needed to take minutes at board meetings. No experience needed. Knowledge of Microsoft Word and ability to email minutes to board members required.

Bulletin Editor and/or Assistant Editor
Knowledge of Microsoft Word required.
Experience helpful, but not essential.

For further information, contact
Barbara: 221-1948 (byeppie@aol.com).

This X-Ray Danger is Avoidable

According to TV's Dr. Oz, the fastest growing cancer in women is thyroid cancer. He has indicated that the increase could be related to the use of dental x-rays and mammograms. On his show, recently, he showed that on the aprons used for taking dental x-rays there is a little flap that can be lifted up and wrapped around the patient's neck, something many dentists don't bother to use. Also, there is something called a "thyroid guard" for use when having a mammogram.

Role of the Federal Government in Public Education:

Where Are We Now and the Impact on Early Childhood Education

The United States has changed dramatically since the early debates on public schools. The responsibility for education for the common good shifted from mainly local control to state control. Now, in 2011, attention is coming from the federal government and national organizations to control standards.

Congress is currently in a debate and stalemate over the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965 ESEA, reauthorized as "No Child Left Behind" in 2001). *Major issues include the purpose and role of the federal government in public education.*

Pro: An increased role of the federal government in education ensures equal education opportunities for all children across the country, so that we will be better prepared to compete globally. The federal government has always had a part in distributing funding to state and local school districts for specific needs, so there will be more consistency across the districts and states.

Con: Education has traditionally been a local and state issue. An increased role of the federal government will add to the number of unfunded federal mandates (laws passed with no monetary support). Decisions at the local level best serve the needs of students in the local area.

For lots more valuable information on this issue, go to the National League web site: lwv.org.

Is There Money Waiting to Be Claimed By You?

Every year, banks, insurance companies, utilities, investment companies and other businesses are required by state law to surrender inactive accounts to the state. According to the Office of the State Comptroller, these accounts, known as “lost,” “abandoned,” or “unclaimed” funds, are used by the state’s General Fund until the money is claimed. Recently, New York had around \$10.5 billion in unclaimed money!

The State Comptroller’ office indicates that if you can prove you are entitled to these unclaimed funds, they will return it to you, at any time, without penalty.

Here are some helpful tips to make sure that your money isn’t turned over to the state.

- * Keep your accounts active. More than half of unclaimed accounts are dormant savings accounts that have had no activity for five years. Make a small deposit or withdrawal every year.

- * Cash all checks promptly for utility deposits, dividends, insurance premiums, wages, and any other refunds you receive.

- * Keep accurate financial records. Record all bank accounts, stock certificates, insurance policies, utility and rent deposits, and your safe-deposit number.

- * Notify all financial institutions when you move.

- * Tell a family member or trusted friend or advisor where you store your financial records.

For complete details, visit the **Office of the State Comptroller’s website**.

The League of Women Voters
has **two separate and distinct roles**.

Voter Service/Citizen Education: we present unbiased nonpartisan information about elections, the voting process, and issues.

Action/Advocacy: we are **nonpartisan**, but, after study, we use our positions to advocate for or against particular policies in the public interest. We never advocate for candidates or political parties.

Cell Phone Radiation Protection

Recent research on cell phone use is absolutely scary. New smartphones are being developed with increased degrees of radiation emissions.

Here are 5 simple tips that you can use to protect your health and the health of your family when it comes to wireless communication:

1. Buy a low radiation cell phone.
2. Text instead of talk as often as possible.
3. Use speakerphone or a headset, and keep your phone away from your body.
4. Only use your phone if you have a strong signal.
5. Limit your child's or grandchild's cell phone use.

This last tip is especially important since almost two times as much cell phone radiation can penetrate a child's thinner, softer skull as opposed to an adult's, to cause serious health risks in the future.

Hydrofracking Film

"The largest domestic natural gas drilling boom in history has swept across the United States. The Halliburton-developed drilling technology of "fracking" or hydraulic fracturing has unlocked a "Saudi Arabia of natural gas" just beneath us. But is fracking safe?

When filmmaker Josh Fox is asked to lease his land for drilling, he embarks on a cross-country odyssey uncovering a trail of secrets, lies and contamination. A recently drilled nearby Pennsylvania town reports that residents are able to light their drinking water on fire.

This is just one of the many absurd and astonishing revelations of a new country called **GASLAND**. Part verite travelogue, part expose, part mystery, part bluegrass banjo meltdown, part showdown.”


Website for State Information:

Governor Cuomo has a website that you might want to look at: <http://www.governor.ny.gov/node>.

If you wish, you can sign up there for updates from the Governor on issues of importance.


The League of Women Voters®, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

NEW YORK STATE SENATE



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Thank You
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of East Nassau
for your dedication and commitment to the residents of Nassau County


There is no better time than now to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude for giving so freely of yourselves. "Unless someone like YOU cares a whole awful lot - nothing is going to get better. It's not." Dr. Seuss

Nassau County Legislator
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Editor(s) needed for **The VOTER**.
Knowledge of Microsoft Word necessary.

If interested, or for more information,
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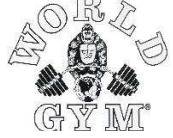
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Update on Ethics in NYS Government

Since ethics reform was one of the agenda items for the Governor, he spent a good deal of political capital across the state setting the stage for negotiations on this issue. However, the negotiations were done behind closed doors with the Speaker and Majority Leader - classic "three men in a room." What was different about this was the amount of energy, time and money the Governor extended in bringing the issue of ethics to the top of voter awareness and interest. The Governor also had Albany's recent, rather sordid, ethical scandals to back up his call for ethics reform. The good government advocates who have long championed ethics reform were brought in during the last week of the negotiations to give input and participate in the final language sign-off.

To be sure, this is not our vision of an ideal bill; many of the elements are the product of compromise that occurred in closed-door negotiations without public hearings on the bill. Nevertheless, this legislation represents a significant improvement over the current system and we supported it. The major reform areas of the bill are described below.

Creation of a Joint Commission on Public Ethics

·For the first time ever, a single body will have jurisdiction over investigations of the legislative branch, the executive branch, and lobbyists. The Joint Commission on Public Ethics (JCOPE) will include both gubernatorial and legislative appointees, with no one leader having a majority of the Commission's appointments. This is the first time a single entity would have investigatory powers over both branches of government to determine if there is there is a substantial basis of a violation of law by a public official or employee.

·New commissioners will serve fixed five-year terms, and may only be removed for cause: we hope that this degree of independence, coupled with a broader mandate and penalties for leaks about proceedings, will enable members to have thoughtful deliberations and vote their consciences.

·JCOPE will conduct random reviews of financial disclosure statements to help ensure compliance with the new disclosure requirements.

·JCOPE will be subject to strict confidentiality restrictions regarding its investigations. A violation of these restrictions will be punishable as a Class A misdemeanor.

Increased Disclosure

·For the first time, officials will be required to provide unredacted financial information,

including sources and amounts of outside income, such as the identity of clients for whom they perform state business, even clients of a law practice.

·Amounts of income will be reported in much narrower dollar-value ranges-108 bands from "none" to "\$10,000,000 or over" - than is currently required.

·Lobbyists will be required to disclose business relationships with officials.

Creation of a Public Database

A new Project Sunlight II database will identify all firms representing everyone with state business, and since officials must disclose their business partners on their financial disclosure forms, the public will be able to also evaluate these relationships.

Expansion of the Definition of Lobbying

The definition of lobbying will be expanded to include attempts to introduce a bill or resolution or prevent the introduction of a bill or resolution.

Increased Penalties for Violation of Campaign Finance Laws and Greater Disclosure of Independent Expenditures

· The State Board of Elections will be required to issue regulations for the disclosure of independent expenditures made by corporations, individuals, and political committees that identify a political candidate or ballot proposal.

· Penalties for violations of campaign contribution limits and failure to file disclosure reports are increased.

A Review Commission Ensures that the New Systems and Rules Created by this Bill will be reviewed in three years

· Since no legislation can fully anticipate the technical, legal and political changes occurring in government at an ever-increasing pace, this legislation builds in a review process. The new system created by this bill, including the structure and operations of JCOPE, will be subject to an assessment of what is and is not working through an outside review commission. The review commission will look at the law's efficacy in 2015, after the new system has been up and running for a full two years.

During the negotiations we repeatedly urged the Governor to affirm his commitment to campaign finance reform early in the 2012 legislative session. The league will continue to push the Governor to fulfill his commitment to this important issue.

**(Source: Barbara Bartoletti,
Legislative Director, LWVNY)**



California Legislature Passes National Popular Vote Bill; Could NY Be Next?

Carole Goldfarb

On July 14, the California State Senate passed the National Popular Vote (NPR) bill, sending it to Governor Jerry Brown to sign.

It has now been enacted into law by Vermont, Hawaii, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Washington state, and the District of Columbia, for a total of 77 electoral votes – 29% of the 270 needed. From the time the bill was proposed, it has received the endorsement of respected leaders in both parties.

States that have enacted the National Popular Vote would award all of their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the greatest number of popular votes nationally, thereby eliminating the chance of electing a president who received a minority of the votes, as has happened four times in the past.

Currently, two-thirds of the states that are not considered “swing states” are ignored by the presidential campaigns, receiving no visits from candidates or attention to their needs. In 2008, 98% of the post-convention campaign events occurred in just 15 “battleground” states. Others were taken for granted. The same was true in 2004, when 2/3 of presidential candidates’ campaign funds and visits were concentrated in just 5 states. NY is one of those states whose needs are taken for granted. We don’t get the kind of federal attention to our depressed upstate economy as Iowa gets in corn subsidies, for example.

In June, the NY State Senate passed the NPV bill 49-10, with large majorities in both parties supporting it. The State Assembly has not yet passed it, although the bill had 80 sponsors in the 150 member Assembly in June 2010. *A brief phone call, email or letter to your assemblyperson could make an important difference.* If you look up their contact information in your copy of They Represent You, the whole process will take you less than 5 minutes and will give you a good feeling. Or, you can go to www.NationalPopularVote.com/write for a sample letter that you can edit and send.

A Quick Summary of Action at the LWWNYS Convention:

- 2011-2013 Board and Officers were approved.
- 2011-2012 Budget was adopted.
- No amendments to the Bylaws were presented.
- Current program was re-adopted for 2011-2013 with no changes and no new studies.

On the state League website, they have posted all the handouts from the workshops at Convention, as well as photos. Take a look (lwvny.org). The handouts provide great information on a number of topics including technology, voter services and board leadership. They have also provided the Moments in the Sun from those Leagues who submitted them in writing to the State office; these are one minute highlights of local League accomplishments this year.

A Fond Farewell

Judy Schmertz and I accepted positions as co-editors of the LWWEN VOTER in 2002. We soon realized that since we had different word processing programs, it would be a bit difficult to share the job, and I ended up as the editor, with Judy writing some articles and expertly proofing the bulletin, along with Mimi Hirsch. Judy and Mimi have continued as proofreaders until now (even though Judy is no longer in LWWEN’s bailiwick).

I never expected to be doing the job for so long. It has been fun, and I learned a lot in the process, both in terms of gaining knowledge and learning a lot about the many uses and quirks of Word for Windows. This will be the last issue of the VOTER that I edit, though I will continue to contribute information when appropriate. The format and size are expected to be different, since now so much information is more time sensitive and is shared via email. Now I will lose a valuable excuse for why I haven’t had the time to get my office and files better organized.

My special thanks to Mary Price, Circulation Director, who has been mailing out the VOTER all these years, to Lesley Pollak, our capable Advertising Director, and to all who helped me by providing articles, information and encouragement.

Paula Blum

Reminder: Your League dues are due. Please go to page 5 for a copy of the membership form, and send it with your check.