

# *INSIDE* the New York City League

League of Women Voters of the City of New York

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Fall 2007

## GENERAL MEETING ON HEALTH CARE REFORM

Wednesday, September 26, 2007

5:30 P.M.

at the League office

45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street (between Madison & Park)

Members and guests welcome.

Please let us know if you plan to attend:

212-725-3541 or [office@lwvny.org](mailto:office@lwvny.org)



### SPEAKERS

**MARK HANNAY** IS DIRECTOR OF THE **METRO NEW YORK HEALTH CARE FOR ALL CAMPAIGN** AND VICE-CHAIR OF **UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE ACTION NETWORK**. HE ALSO SERVES ON THE STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE **REKINDLING REFORM** COALITION, OF WHICH **LWVNY** AND **LWVNYC** ARE BOTH MEMBERS. **MARK** IS AN ASSOCIATE PRODUCER OF THE WEEKLY RADIO SHOW **HEALTH ACTION** ON **WBAI** (99.5 FM).

**SID SOCOLAR** IS THE CO-CONVENER OF **REKINDLING REFORM**. HE IS PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF PHYSIOLOGY AND BIOPHYSICS AT THE **UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**, AND FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS HAS BEEN ENGAGED, *PRO BONO*, IN PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY ANALYSIS AND ADVOCACY.

# CALENDAR

*League office will be closed :  
Thanksgiving weekend, Thursday – Friday, November 22 - 23;  
Christmas, Tuesday, December 25, 2007*

## SEPTEMBER

Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> Community Board Study Committee meets at 11 a.m.  
Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> **Primary Election, 6 a.m. - 9 p.m.**  
Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> **GENERAL MEETING**, 5:30 p.m. Health Care Reform  
Speakers: Mark Hannay and Sid Socolar (see front page for more information)  
Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> Legislative Action Committee meets at 11 a.m.

## OCTOBER

Thursday, 11<sup>th</sup> City Affairs Committee meets at 10:30 a.m.  
Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> Docent-led tour at the Museum of the City of New York (See page 8 )  
Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> Legislative Action Committee meets at 11 a.m.  
Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> **GENERAL MEETING** at 5:30 p.m. on Immigration, in Room 103

FOR THE DATE AND TIME WHEN THE **COMMITTEE ON THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE** MEETS, call 212-725-3541

## NOVEMBER

Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> **General Election, 6 a.m. - 9 p.m.**  
Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> City Affairs Committee meets at 10:30 a.m.  
Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> **GENERAL MEETING**, 5:30 p.m., National Popular Vote  
Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> Legislative Action Committee meets at 11 a.m.  
Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> U.N. and State League sponsor "Briefings on the Effects of War on Women Around the World"  
Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> Ida Trager Regional Training Workshop at the League office, 4:00-7:30 p.m., Room 104

## DECEMBER

Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> City Affairs Committee meets at 10:30 a.m.  
Thursday, 27<sup>th</sup> Legislative Action Committee meets at 11 a.m.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL THE LEAGUE OFFICE AT 212-725-3541  
LAST MINUTE CHANGES CAN BE FOUND ON THE LEAGUE'S WEBSITE: [WWW.LWVN.YC.ORG](http://WWW.LWVN.YC.ORG)

### **IDA TRAGER REGIONAL TRAINING WORKSHOP**

On Wednesday, November 28, 2007 from 4:00 to 7:00 members of the State League Board will lead the Ida Trager Regional Training Workshop at the League office. The focus will be on training and dialogue and will be an active networking opportunity for involved League members. There is a \$5.00 fee and registration is required. Come share information and a light meal. Call the League office and we will send you a registration form to fill out and send to the State League office with your check. Or, you can print out the form directly from the website: [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org).

## *Greetings from Co-President Elinor Miller*

Hope you have had a healthy, interesting and fun summer. Here's some good news:

**Our Fall 2007 General Meetings are AT THE CUTTING EDGE!** They deal with three of the nation's most important current issues. Do not miss these opportunities to expand your knowledge.

**September** → → → Moving along the path to **Universal Health Care** \*

**October** → → → **Immigration** -- finding ways to serve the needs of our people and support our industries while adhering to our most cherished human principles.

**November** → → → **The Electoral College\*\*** and finding ways to replace or go around it. (See page 4 for a short description of the **National Popular Vote** plan which we will be studying.)

\* League positions on Health Care:

**National** - Promote a health care system for the United States that provides **access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.**

**New York State** - Support for uniform eligibility and coverage of basic health care costs through public financing.

\*\* League positions on Election of the President:

**National** - The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the **direct-popular-vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The LWV believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished.**

## *Reflections on a summer across centuries and miles*

"What I did on my summer vacation" is the overused title for too many insipid essays but for me, this year, the summer months were a time to take a new look at familiar places and events. For the past several years, I have spent most of every summer in England and Wales, and I have become accustomed to the differences in culture, language, and world view that prevail among friends and family who live there. I no longer marvel at the stately homes and ancient churches, the pretty stone villages and the sheep on the hillsides, but this time I was impressed as never before by the survival of the old among the complex pressures of the new.

At the Royal Henley Regatta, women in amazing hats and men in striped blazers act out a century-old tradition that surely cheers the heart of the English Tourist Board. In a little village on the far west coast of Wales, where traffic signs and other public notices appear in two languages, the lilting sounds of spoken Welsh enrich the daily intercourse. In the New Forest, which was set aside for the pleasure of the king in the eleventh century, campers must allow for the ponies and cattle that roam at will over the fields of purple heather. Hurst Castle, a massive defensive structure established by Henry VIII, houses displays that show its key role in the preparations for D-Day, 1944.

And alongside all of this, the people and their elected representatives wonder where their new leader will take them as they work through such issues as immigration, health care, education, taxes, and the war in Iraq. Sometimes it almost seemed like home.

*Toni Coffee, Co-President*



*At the 2007 Annual Meeting: Guest Speaker Margarita Lopez, NYC Housing Authority Board Member and League Board Member Adrienne Kivelson.*

## What the Committees Do

The **Legislative Action Committee** will take action on legislative priorities for 2007-2008. At our first meeting, we will review advocacy strategies and tactics and adopt a plan of action for the coming legislative session. We ask you to become part of this campaign. Numbers matter. As the committee grows, so does our voice and our reach.

*Chaired by Robin Bahr and Phyllis Wells*

The **City Affairs Committee** explores the workings of the city government, encourages citizen participation, and advocates for local issues and programs that evolve from LWV studies and consensus. Committee members observe City Council and Board of Elections meetings; review pending legislation and reports on such city issues as campaign finance reform, implementation of the Help America Vote Act, Charter revision, housing programs, and election activities.

*Chaired by Adrienne Kivelson*

The **Committee on the National Popular Vote** will be leading a study on "Should NY State Join the Compact for a National Popular Vote?" Committee members who cannot come to meetings will keep in touch by email and will also check developments on the website of the State League ([www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)).

*Chaired by Marjorie Shea*

The **Immigration Committee**

The League of Women Voters is conducting a nationwide study designed to help League members understand the implications of immigration at the local, state, and federal level. Committee members will explore the history of federal immigration policy and its impact on American society, and will discuss the underlying values and principles for future immigration legislation.

*Chaired by Ellie Miller*

The goal of the **Community Board Study Committee** is to determine the ability of the Boards to follow City Charter requirements. Community Boards have an advisory role in such matters as land use, zoning, City budget, and municipal service delivery as related to their community's welfare. Volunteers are essential to the success of this League study. Anyone, member or non-member of the League, interested in the function of Community Boards, is urged to come to our committee meetings and/or report on the Community Board in your district or a district near you.

*Chaired by Fannie Conner*

### WHAT IS THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE PLAN?

- Each state participating in the plan would award all of its electoral votes to the presidential candidate receiving the most popular votes nationwide (in all 50 states and the District of Columbia).
- **The National Popular Vote plan would take effect only when the plan has been enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes**—that is 270 of the 538 electoral votes. This guarantees that the presidential candidate receiving the most popular votes nationwide would win enough electoral votes in the Electoral College to become President.
- The LWVUS position on the Selection of the President calls for the direct-popular-vote method of electing the President, and therefore, the abolition of the Electoral College. We will be studying whether NYS should join the Compact for the National Popular Vote.

## Help America Vote Act (HAVA)

Adrienne Kivelson and Mary Lou Urban, Co-Chairs

### How to Run for Public Office in New York City

Gladys Krasner, Board Member

On Thursday, September 6, the League's six-session seminar on How to Run for Public Office traveled to The Bronx Community College, Continuing and Professional Studies.

The program has been funded by the New York Community Trust and will complete its five college tour at The College of Staten Island when classes will take place on six Tuesdays, starting October 15.

The response to the program has reinforced our goal of offering a wide range of New York City residents information and training needed before deciding to run for public office.

The students have represented the diversity of our city, and included a mix of political novices, community activists, Community Board members, and campaign workers.

While the New York State Board of Elections has yet to certify and approve new voting machines, the LWV of New York State continues to support an optical scan voting system where voters complete their ballot by hand or with the assistance of a ballot marker and the completed ballots are read and counted by optical scanners in each poll site. We believe this system best meets the nationally adopted League standard that a voting system must be safe, accurate, recountable and accessible. In part, the delay in the State Board of Elections' selection of new voting machines results from efforts to avoid the problems other states have encountered with new voting machines, including computer hacking and misattributed and/or lost votes. In New York, at the urging of the League and other civic organizations, the Legislature passed the most comprehensive testing and security standards. To date, vendors have been unable to provide systems which meet these standards. As public awareness of the dangers of electronic voting has grown, more people and organizations have joined the League in supporting an optical scan system and the vendors, who initially wanted to limit sales to direct recording electronic machines (DREs), are now scurrying to update and upgrade their optical scanners.

**For the 2007 elections New Yorkers will continue to vote on lever machines. Ballot markers will be available at each borough Board of Elections office for all those who wish to use them and have their ballots counted by hand.**

In August the commissioners of the State Board of Elections agreed to prepare a HAVA implementation plan requiring county boards to provide a fully accessible ballot marking device for voters with disabilities at every poll site in time for the September 2008 primary.

Update on Board of Elections: Lever machines do not have to be replaced until the 2009 elections. The State Board of Elections has agreed to a schedule that would mandate at least one ballot marker per poll site in time for the September 2008 elections - keeping the lever machines in place as well.

### Did You Know that. . .

- ▶ The 2007 Primary Election has been moved from Tuesday, September 11 to **September 18**.
- ▶ Only polling places that have contests will be open on Primary Day. All other polling places will be closed.
- ▶ The last day for New York voters to enroll in a political party or change party enrollment for the 2008 primary elections is **October 12, 2007; January 11, 2008** is the last day, for first-time voters or those not currently registered, to register and/or to enroll in a party in order to vote in the Presidential Primary on February 5, 2008.
- ▶ The League is looking for a volunteer to become the Hospitality Chairperson. If you are interested we would love to hear from you.
- ▶ Copies of the INSIDE are sent out to different local Leagues and we receive copies of Newsletters from local Leagues in many states.
- ▶ The League calendar for 2008 is now available for \$5.00.



*At the Annual Meeting in June, one of our students, Sanu Thomas, addressed members as State Senator Liz Krueger listened.*

## Consider the League for a Bequest

For more than 80 years the League has labored to assure free and fair elections, increase citizen participation in the electoral process and protect voters' rights. And yet we are still confronted with new, and ever more alarming efforts to erect barriers to registration and voting.

This reminds us that our work is never done and we must remain vigilant to new assaults on our most precious right and obligation – our vote. The struggle never ends. Unfortunately, it may last another 80 years.

That's why we are asking you to think of the New York City League of Women Voters when you are writing your will. A gift to the League would be a wonderful way to perpetuate your support of our important mission.

To designate us in your will, it is essential that you use our full name, address and tax ID number, which is:

**The League of Women Voters  
of the City of New York  
45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10016  
Tax Identification #: 13-5590517**

To ensure that your bequest is received by the League, as planned, it can be helpful to notify us that we have been included in your will. This would also give us an opportunity to express our appreciation for your support.

### *League Archives Housed at Columbia University*

LWVNYC has archives that are housed at Columbia University's Butler Library. We recently arranged to work at the library to review early League records. There are over 60,000 items, stored in over 100 boxes, from which we selected 12 for review.

We found letters dating from 1919 written on stationery from ***The Women's Suffrage Party***,

## VOTES FOR WOMEN

NATIONAL WOMAN SUFFRAGE PUBLISHING CO., INC.  
171 Madison Avenue,  New York City

notes on meetings held throughout the 1920s and 1930s (at which time the "couvert" for the annual luncheon was \$4.00), and notes from the investigation of the League by the ***House Unamerican Activities Committee*** in the 1950s.

We are looking into the possibility of getting funding to have an archivist work with our material, to better organize it and make it more easily available to researchers.

## ***BRANCH MEETINGS***

*(Members are welcome to attend any branch meeting;  
please call the League office at 212-725-3541 to confirm time and location.)*

### **North Shore (Queens)**

**Contact:** Marjorie Ferrigno  
**Date/Time:** **Wednesdays at 12 noon**  
**September 19,**  
**October 17,**  
**November 28,**  
**December 19**

### **Bronx**

**Contact:** LWN NYC office  
(212) 725-3541  
for information

### **Riverdale**

**Contact:** LWN NYC office  
(212) 725-3541  
for information

### **Southeast Queens**

**Contact:** Mary Cox  
**Date/Time:** **Saturdays at 2:00 p.m.**  
**September 16,**  
**October 21**  
**November 18,**  
**December 16**

### **Upper West Manhattan**

**Contact:** Sylvia Berman  
**Date/Time:** for dates and time

## **TRIBUTES**

***IN MEMORY OF:***

***ELIZABETH SCHACK***

BY  
BERNICE CAVALL

***AUDREY GERSTNER***

BY  
***JUDITH GUTMAN AND JOHN ISRAEL***

***LENORE CHESTER***

BY  
***PHYLLIS AND DAVID WELLS***

## **OUR NEWEST SERVICE FOR VOTERS!**

We work with boards of Coops and Condos to supervise the counting of ballots and to make sure that rules are followed during elections at their annual meeting. These meetings tend to be in the evenings and usually last a few hours. Business has been brisk, and we are looking for members who would like to be trained to perform this function and are able to spend an evening working at a meeting. Funds raised through this service help support ongoing LWN NYC activities. Please call the office (212-725-3541) if you are interested in this opportunity and an experienced member will call you back.

Relive the Glory Days of New York City Baseball Join us on a docent-led tour to  
**The Museum of the City of New York**  
**1220 Fifth Avenue (at 103<sup>rd</sup> Street)**  
**Tuesday, October 16, 2007**

♦10.00 for members

Meet in front of the Museum at 11:15 A.M.

♦12.00 for nonmembers

(Take M1, 2, 3, or 4 bus to 103<sup>rd</sup> Street  
or #6 train to 103<sup>rd</sup> Street Station)

Send checks to the League Office -  
Mark memo "baseball"

Checks due by -  
October 3, 2007

Call or email questions:  
212-725-3541  
office@lwvnyc.org

Print this page and return it with payment to:  
League of Women Voters of the City of New York  
45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Room 331  
New York, NY 10016

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_ # ATTENDING: \_\_\_\_\_



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45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, New York, NY 10016

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