

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

BEDFORD LEWISBORO NORTH SALEM

November-December 2011



## Holiday Luncheon

Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup> at 12 noon

(information and form included at end of this newsletter)

Via Vanti

Mount Kisco Train Station

The price per person is \$35.00, which includes  
lunch, dessert, soft drinks, coffee & tea

Please contact Del Bashkow ASAP so we can get an accurate  
headcount: 232-1045 or [delkatonah@verizon.net](mailto:delkatonah@verizon.net).

Checks should be made out to

LWV Bedford-Lewisboro-North Salem and sent to

Del at 92 Jay Street, Katonah, NY 10536.

**BRING A FRIEND!**

**SAVE THE DATE!! LOCAL HYDROFRACKING FORUM!!**

### **HYDROFRACKING**

**How it May Affect Us in Northern Westchester:**

**Fracking's Impact on Our Water, Food, Air and Wallets**

**December 1, 2011 7 pm Katonah Village Library**

## PRESIDENTS' LETTER

Can't believe that Thanksgiving is just around the corner. What happened to fall? It began with Hurricane Irene which left us without power but with wet basements. And then there was the freak snowstorm which dropped about a foot on snow on the northeast. You've all heard the scary stories of roads blocked by downed wires, trees falling on top of cars and, again, no power -- and this time it was cold! Well, we survived it all, and now we can concentrate on cooking turkey and starting our holiday shopping.

It was an interesting General Election -- turnout was good, the weather was nice, but not all of the voting machines behaved properly. Result: some races have not yet been resolved. I do want to say a sincere thank you to all of you who helped with Voters Guides, Candidate Forums and moderating. There are never enough moderators to fill all the requests that are received at election time, so if you have a yen to preside, get in touch with Laura Fratt (723-5108), who will arrange to train you.

I want to say a special Thank You to all who responded to our fund-raising letter which enables us to continue distributing the Voters Guide each year. We couldn't do it without the generosity of so many of you.

As most of you know, the LWV never stops working. Our next event will be an educational forum on Hydrofracking, co-sponsored with the Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition, to be held on December 1 at the Katonah Village Library. You will find details elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Then, get in the mood for the holidays by joining our League on Tuesday, December 13, at our annual Holiday Luncheon at Via Vanti in Mount Kisco. If you have not been to Via Vanti, you are in for a treat -- the ambiance is delightful and the food is fantastic! Members and guests are welcome. Look for details, and be sure to send your check to Del Bashkow so we'll know you are coming.

Wishing you all a Happy Thanksgiving and a Merry Holiday Season!

-- Rosemary MacLaughlin

## **LOCAL LEAGUE NEWS**

***The League of Women Voters  
of Bedford, Lewisboro, North Salem  
and  
The Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition  
Present***

**HYDROFRACKING  
How it May Affect Us in Northern Westchester:  
Fracking's Impact on Our Water, Food, Air and Wallets**

**December 1, 2011 7 pm Katonah Village Library**

The controversial issue of hydrofracking and how it may affect our lives in Northern Westchester is the topic of an informational program to be co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Bedford, Lewisboro, North Salem and the Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition at 7 p.m. Thursday, December 1. The program will take place at the Katonah Village Library, Bedford Road, Katonah and will be free of charge.

Hydrofracking, as it is commonly known, is the proposed high volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing of shale to produce natural gas in New York State. The League program will address its impact on the water we drink, the food we eat, the wine we consume, the air we breathe and our wallets.

Speakers include Jannette M. Barth, Ph.D., senior economist with Pepacton Institute LLC. She has worked in the fields of economic analysis and economic modeling and forecasting for more than 35 years.

Also speaking will be Larysa Dyrszka, M.D., pediatrician and children's health advocate, frequent speaker on the issue of fracking's impact on public health.

The program will also include Kevin Winn, commissioner for Bedford's Department of Public Works and a professional engineer with more than 18 years of public works, water and wastewater industry experience.

Also invited to speak are State Senator Greg Ball and State Assemblyman Robert Castelli.

The speakers will bring the audience up to date on the status of legislation meant to regulate the gas drilling industry and to protect the health and safety of New York residents. A question and answer period will follow their talks. Refreshments will be served.

## **NATIONAL LEAGUE NEWS**

### **Letter from LWWUS President**

Last Tuesday was Election Day across the country. Although no Federal election was involved, the 2011 elections attracted considerable national attention, and the results covered a wide range of issues and were fascinating. For instance, here in Georgia, voters in numerous municipalities voted to permit the sale of alcohol on Sunday. It is perhaps only remarkable that in 2011, Georgia is one of three states that prohibit the sale of alcohol on Sunday. Nevertheless, because this is one of those states, it was noteworthy that voters turned out to lift that restriction in many jurisdictions. In Mississippi, while voter ID was approved, the voters rejected an extreme measure that defined personhood as beginning at conception. Ohio voters turned back an anti-union statute passed by their legislature, while approving a constitutional amendment limiting that state's authority to require the purchase of health insurance. The People's Veto succeeded in Maine restoring same day registration to that state.

These results confirm what we already know – most Americans are not on the extremes of the political spectrum. Wave elections may change which party is in control, but whether Republican or Democrat, elected officials should never assume they have a mandate. For the League, we must continue to remind voters and elected officials alike that it is possible to communicate between elections. Town Hall meetings should provide an opportunity for an honest exchange of views.

No doubt, our work is cut out for us, but perhaps Tuesday's results will make folks more willing to listen.

In League,  
Elizabeth MacNamara

## **STATE LEAGUE NEWS**

### **2012 Legislative Agenda**

Based on the responses we had from local leagues with suggestions for the 2012 legislative agenda, and consideration of both resources and legislative opportunities for the next year, the Board adopted the following as the League's 2012 Legislative Agenda.

### **Steps To A Better New York (2012 LWNYS Legislative Agenda)**

#### **Election Reform**

Improve election processes to extend, encourage and protect voting, including paperless and Election Day registration, better ballot design, improved polling place management/ poll worker training, and measures to ensure the integrity of all ballots

#### **Campaign Finance Reform**

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

#### **Other Government Positions**

Support structural reform to legislative redistricting; support effective ethics enforcement and open and transparent government processes; monitor impact of the property tax cap on localities and schools.

#### **Health Care**

Support affordable and effective health care for all New Yorkers.

#### **Natural Resources**

Support protection and management of New York's natural resources in the public interest.

## **COUNTY LEAGUE NEWS**

### **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WESTCHESTER STATEMENT ON THE TAPPAN ZEE HUDSON RIVER CROSSING PROJECT**

The League of Women Voters of Westchester (LWVW) commends the process pursued by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), the New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA) and MTA Metro North Railroad (MNR) during consideration of the Tappan Zee Bridge-I-287 Corridor Project in the past few years. Discussions with the stakeholders advisory groups (SAWGs), on which League members served, were thorough, open and inclusive, and those in charge were responsive to suggestions made. We hope this process will continue under the Federal Highway Administration and the NYSDOT with the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project unveiled locally on October 25, 2011.

As to the substance of the new project, the League has strong reservations about it as it now stands. A Tappan Zee Bridge that improves and expands car traffic without encouraging mass transit and making related east- and west-bound highway improvements is inconsistent with our needs. As many have already said, it is backward looking at a time when we are increasingly aware of the problems of urban sprawl, new environmental considerations and growing economic inequalities. We appreciate the fact that a bird in the hand - with the prospect of quicker federal approval and the creation of jobs - is inviting. But such effects are short-term, while the limitations of this particular project would be with us for the foreseeable future. We must and can do better.

Accordingly, the LWVW urges the Federal Highway Administration and NYS authorities to rethink and revise the proposal to accommodate a mass-transit component. Then, we could proceed to build a bridge we can live with for the long term. Hopefully, sufficient engineering and planning has already been completed to permit prompt modification to the current proposed structure and enable us to take advantage of the accelerated federal process.



*You are invited to join us!*

*LWV of Bedford Lewisboro North Salem*

***ANNUAL HOLIDAY LUNCHEON***

*Tuesday, December 13, 2011, 12 Noon*

*at*

***Via Vanti! 2 Kirby Plaza (in historic train station building)  
Mount Kisco, NY 10549 (Parking at public lot – bring quarters)***

**Board Meeting: 10:30 am at Bedford Village Library**

**Luncheon: 12:00 Noon at Via Vanti!**

Luncheon price: \$35

For reservations, send your check, payable to LWV Bedford Lewisboro North Salem, to  
Del Bashkow, 92 Jay Street, Katonah 10536. Questions? 232-1045

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address or e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **National League:**

1730 M Street NW, Suite 1000,  
Washington, DC 20036-4508  
Phone: 202-429-1965; fax: 202-429-0854

Website: [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

To fill out a contact/feedback form: <https://member.lwv.org/ContactUs.asp>

### **State League:**

Phone:(518) 465-4162; fax:(518) 465-0812

Website: [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)

To fill out a contact/feedback form: <http://lwvny.org/contactForm.html>

### **County League:**

200 Hamilton Avenue,White Plains Mall, White Plains, NY 10601  
Phone: 914-949-0507; fax 914- 997-9354

Website: <http://watpa.org/lwv> email: [LWVwestchester@verizon.net](mailto:LWVwestchester@verizon.net)

### **Our Local League:**

PO Box 584, Goldens Bridge, NY 10526

President: Rosemary MacLaughlin [rosem55@verizon.net](mailto:rosem55@verizon.net); 232-5735

Membership Chair: Kay Tyler [kaykolman@optimum.net](mailto:kaykolman@optimum.net); 241-8515

Newsletter Editor: Lisa Pizzurro [lcp328@gmail.com](mailto:lcp328@gmail.com); 533-2609

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