

# THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BRONXVILLE

(Serving Bronxville, Eastchester, Tuckahoe, Mt. Vernon and Yonkers)

FEBRUARY 2011

BULLETIN

ISSUE SIX

*We invite members and friends*

*to our*

*February Monthly Coffee Meeting*

*for*

*A film and discussion about  
Hydrofracking: What to do about it?*



*Tuesday, February 15, 2011*

*9:30 AM*

*Bronxville Women's Club  
135 Midland Avenue*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

The League as a whole, and our League in particular, are faced with challenges on every front. Some are internal. We have the same budgetary problems as many of our members. Some are local, both fiscal and otherwise, evidenced by problems in our own municipalities. And some are state and nationwide like the threats to our health care, our environment and our safety. There are also the assaults on our common sense, as we watch and hear the way our elected officials attempt (or don't) to deal with it all.

We need the League more than ever as a voice of sanity and considered action. Many of our "Coffees" have been on local issues, like the Eastchester Fire Commissioners budget and elections; some have been on state issues, like our upcoming one on hydrofracking; others on national ones like Health Care Reform. A few have addressed personal concerns, like checking your wallet to help prevent identity theft.. They have been largely educational, which is a legitimate and important part of our mandate, but it hasn't really been enough.

My hope is that we can also become more active. Many of us are retired; we don't have the energy of our younger selves or our neighbors. but we may very well have more time. It would be nice to do more, by way of action, together - to add a little socializing and a bit of fun to those earnest exhortations to good work. We're not the smug and pious ladies of a Dickens novel yet! Anyway, stay dry and warm, and keep that sense of humor bubbling.

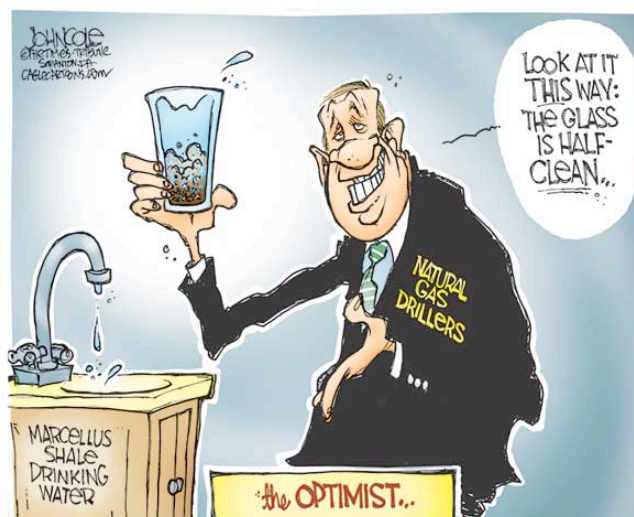
**Edith**

### NOTE:

Our last "Coffee" on WikiLeaks was unfortunately snowed out. It's very unusual for us to cancel any League event, and we waited until the last minute to do so. The driving on main roads was pretty good. However, it was treacherous underfoot, and we couldn't be certain if the key people at the Womens Club would make it on time to open up the place. We were all wary of having anybody getting chilled and cranky, standing about. We hope for better luck next time, when the subject is hydrofracking - clean gas and fouled drinking water and how to stop more of it from happening.

### OUR FEBRUARY 15 COFFEE MEETING:

Our speakers for our meeting on hydrofracking will be Marion Rose from the Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition and Susan Leifer from the Lower Hudson Group of the Sierra Club. We will be showing parts of the film on the subject, "Gasland", with accompanying commentary by our speakers. Questions from the audience will be welcomed regarding both the environmental and commercial aspects of this controversial subject.



## HEALTH ISSUES



On Jan.19th, the House of Representatives voted, 245 to 189, to repeal the Health Care Reform Bill - ten months after it was signed into law. In so doing, newly elected Republicans fulfilled their campaign promises and the wishes of fellow party members. It's only a grand gesture because the Senate is expected to stand firm against repeal.

The Congressional Budget Office says it will reduce the country's deficit by 143 billion over the next decade. The House Republicans say "Nonsense!", contending it will add 701 billion instead. (Herszenhorn & Pear, NY Times, 1/14/11) Nobody can be sure. More to the point, I think, is what's at stake now. According to the HHS (Dept. of Health & Human Services) repeal would cause nearly one in two **non-elderly** Americans to lose their insurance or be denied coverage, nearly 129 million for a pre-existing condition. (Emily Walker, MedPage, 1/23/11) And many could be dropped again when they got sick. Grown children, up to age 26, could be dropped from their family's coverage. Lifetime limits and annual limits would doubtless be re-instated. And insurance companies might well be free to increase their premiums without justification. (New Yorkers are better protected than most, by state regulations dealing with some of the insurance companies' worst abuses.) Those are popular features that people would be very loathe to lose.

However, legal challenges continue to the mandate - the one requiring everyone to buy insurance - on which the viability of the bill depends. While states issue mandates on their own, with respect to auto insurance, for example, many question the federal government's constitutional right to impose them on the states, as the law's administrators. (Richard Thaler, NYTimes, 1/23/11) Other legal issues were discussed in previous columns.

Any insurance plan needs a broad base of subscribers because it's their premiums that generate the money to pay claims. And obviously, the income must exceed the output if the whole thing's to be sustainable. This is why it's been, and continues to be, so vigorously attacked by the Bill's opponents. Assuming, however, that the bill can't be repealed, it will be nibbled at incrementally, through waivers and cuts in funding. That's why we must stay focused on what we stand to lose, and not let anything slip away unnoticed.

Another storm is gathering on the horizon. Across the country, conservative legislators in dozens of states are aggressively working to limit abortions, changing Pro-Choice to Anti, seeking to undo Roe v Wade, the 1973 Supreme Court decision that established a woman's right to an abortion. This will include banning coverage by insurance companies in the new health insurance exchanges. (Erik Eckholm, NY Times, 1/22/11) It's a big subject to which I'll devote next month's column.

**Edith Szold - Health Issues Chair**

### **Please Save the Date**

Friday, March 25, 2011

for a special League of Women Voters luncheon with former

**New York State Court of Appeals Chief Judge  
Judith S. Kaye**

The Davenport Club,  
New Rochelle, New York  
12 Noon

Honored Guest of  
The League of Women Voters of Larchmont-Mamaroneck  
Joined by  
The Leagues of Women Voters of New Rochelle, Rye, Rye Brook and Port Chester  
The Leagues of Women Voters of Westchester County and New York State

For more information, contact [LWV10538@aol.com](mailto:LWV10538@aol.com)



## **A Chocolate Valentine**

The League of Women Voters  
of Bedford, Lewisboro, North Salem  
and the Katonah Village Library

invite you to an

**EVENING FILLED WITH CHOCOLATE DELIGHT**

with a presentation by

**PETER G. ROSE**

Author, Food Historian, Columnist, Lecturer

*“Chocolate: a Hudson Valley Romance”*

Wednesday, February 9, 2011, 7:30 p.m.

Katonah Village Library

126 Bedford Road

Katonah, NY, 10536

Ms. Rose will speak on the history of chocolate and the Hudson Valley merchants' cacao trade during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, followed by a chocolate making demonstration and chocolate refreshments such as hot chocolate and a frozen *choc-tail*, together with various other chocolate goodies that will delight and entice the chocolate lover.

A raffle will be held at the event for a special basket of chocolate treats. Ms. Rose's current books and chocolate related items will be available for purchase.

---

Admission is \$15 with reservation, or \$20 at the door. Raffle tickets are \$5 each. Funds raised will help defray costs for producing local League's annual Voters Guide.

Please send check and reservation form to: LWV Bedford, Lewisboro, North Salem, P.O. Box 584, Goldens Bridge, NY, 10526

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

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ For information call Susan Auslander - 914 763 9747

## Membership Recruitment Initiative

Are you concerned about declining League membership? Do you find yourselves recycling board members due to a dearth of new leadership? Does it sometimes seem like you are preaching to the choir? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then the Membership Recruitment Initiative (MRI) is for you! The MRI is an exciting program developed by the LWVUS to increase League membership, leadership, and visibility. See State Board Report on website for more details.

## Members on Co. Redistricting Commissions

As this is being written, we have heard of two Leagues, the Suffolk County ILO and the Mid-Hudson LWV, that will have members named to nonpartisan county redistricting commissions. Congratulations to Dare Thompson, who will represent Mid Hudson. Appointment of the Suffolk County ILO member will be announced as soon as vetting is complete.

## Lobby Corps

The League of Women Voters of NYS is developing a Lobby Corps, similar to that of LWVUS. The purpose is to train a group of volunteers who will then communicate the League's position on proposed legislation in person directly to the members of the state Senate and Assembly. The volunteer lobbyists will receive background information, talking points and individual assignments of legislators. Come make a difference – and try something new in the League! Contact the state office if you are interested.

## Capitol Beat

The League is pleased to announce the return of "*Capitol Beat*," an informative and entertaining column, written by the LWVNYS Legislative Director Barbara Bartoletti with legislative updates about League issues, as well as political gossip. We welcome your comments posted on this blog page. A link to the new blog is at the top of the state League's homepage (red in the top blue banner). Get all the latest legislative info right on our website and blog!

## Youth Programs

Thirty-nine local leagues, ILOs, and MALs have now responded to LWVNYS's youth program survey. There are several creative programs for youth that leagues have developed. Results of this survey and information about all the youth programs conducted by local Leagues will be put on the state website and presented at state Convention so other Leagues may replicate the programs.

## Observer Corps

Review of local government action has long been a strength of the League. By serving as a local watchdog, the League informs the public, attracts new members, and generally burnishes its reputation as a nonpartisan good government group. The LWV Hamptons has recently reinstated its Observer Corps. If you're interested in joining or forming an Observer Corps in your area, contact your local League President.

## Advocacy on Redistricting

Legislation to create an independent redistricting commission is still very high on our list of legislative priorities. LWVNYC and LWVNYS both testified in December before the NYS Senate Majority Conference Senate Legislative Task Force on Demographic Research and Reapportionment emphasizing the need for an independent commission.

Local leagues have done an amazing job of scheduling educational forums around the state on this topic using the materials we made available in September and more forums are still on tap in the next few months. It's not too late to organize one in your community – contact your local President and offer to help!

## 1919 Society

Don't forget to include the state League in your will - and join the 1919 Society. If you already have included the League in your will, just let us know and we'll add you to the members of the Society. **Thanks to Barbara Bartoletti, Elizabeth Hubbard and Paula Blum for including the state League in their wills and joining this new Society.** As a member, their names will be engraved on a plaque in the state League office, listed in the *State Voter*, and on the website.

## State Convention: May 20-22, 2011

The State Convention will be held at the Desmond Inn in Albany from May 20-22, 2011. We are once again organizing a Silent Auction which will be available online and at Convention so everyone, not just attendees, can participate. Start thinking of donations; be creative and think of some new items or services that can help raise funds for the League. Donations forms are available by calling the state office.

We have just learned that John Zogby, pollster of international repute and author of "The Way We'll Be," published in 2008, will be our Saturday night keynote speaker.

As usual, local Leagues, groups of members or individual members will be honored at the state Convention for their wonderful projects, programs and services. Does your League have a great youth program, voter service project or maybe a membership or action program? Don't be shy – let us know! Complete the form in the full State Board Report at the bottom of the state League's website or contact the state office. Let's celebrate those successes!

This year we are planning to sell ad space in the Awards Program to businesses and individuals as a way of raising money for the state League. We are asking members of local Leagues to sell space to local merchants, banks, and individuals. A prize will be presented to the local League that sells the largest dollar amount of ads and the local League that sells the greatest dollar amount of ads per local League member. Call the state office for more information or the Ad solicitation form.

## New Greater Westbury MAL

A warm welcome to our newest MAL [Member at Large] league. Led by Angela Jenkins and Betty Hylton, as well as the able support of Nassau League member Paula Blum, the group has been approved by the LWVNYS to serve the Greater Westbury area.



# BULLETIN

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
BRONXVILLE, NY 10708

PERMIT NUMBER 7724  
White Plains, NY

League of Women Voters of Bronxville  
P.O. Box 321, Bronxville, NY 10708

President: Edith Szold  
Editor: Janet Jaidi

Current Resident or

**Date Sensitive**

## IMPORTANT DATES

FEB			
8	9:30 AM	Bronxville LWV Board Meeting	Chez Julia Pomeroy 2 Hillside Road
15	9:30 AM	Bronxville LWV Coffee Meeting	Bronxville Women's Club 135 Midland Avenue