

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BRONXVILLE

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

JUNE 2011

BULLETIN

ISSUE TEN

IMPORTANT JUNE COFFEE MEETING PLEASE HELP US DECIDE. . . .



TUESDAY, JUNE 21st

9:30 a.m.

BRONXVILLE WOMEN'S CLUB

135 MIDLAND AVE. corner TANGLEWYLDE AVE.

LWV OF BRONXVILLE, NOW RE-NAMED THE BRONXVILLE-EASTCHESTER-TUCKAHOE (BET) LEAGUE, NEEDS YOUR INPUT!

PLEASE COME TO A COFFEE TUESDAY MORNING, JUNE 21 TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF OUR LOCAL LEAGUE.

WE ARE AT AN IMPORTANT CROSSROAD.

NOW CELEBRATING ITS 91ST YEAR, THE LEAGUE IS A NON-PARTISAN ORGANIZATION. THE LWV DOES NOT ENDORSE CANDIDATES BUT IT DOES STUDY AND TAKE POSITIONS ON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO THE COMMUNITY. OUR VOTER SERVICES CONTRIBUTE TO VITAL FUNCTIONS IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS, ESPECIALLY CONCERNING FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES AND ENCOURAGING PEOPLE TO VOTE.

WHAT DO YOU THINK? HOW SHOULD WE PROCEED IN THIS FAST-PACED AGE OF INSTANT INFORMATION AND CHANGING COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS?

WE NEED YOUR HELP AND YOUR ADVICE.

PLEASE JOIN US ON JUNE 21, EVEN IF YOU CAN'T STAY FOR THE ENTIRE TIME.

(IF YOU PREFER TO SEND YOUR COMMENTS BY EMAIL OR LETTER, PLEASE SEE THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER INSIDE BULLETIN FOR ADDRESSES.)

PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Like families, philosophies, operating systems and apps, Leagues evolve over time. Quite some time ago, the Bronxville League began to move beyond its original geographic boundaries, absorbing and welcoming members from Tuckahoe and "the town outside," and gradually more people from beyond our town borders as their own leagues collapsed. Our populations were growing, economic pressures were increasing, and the problems we faced were more complicated than they used to be.

It was clear that our communities needed one another. It was high time to recognize that fact, focus on common concerns, and find ways to work together. That's why we petitioned LWVUS to change our name and expand our boundaries accordingly.

What are some of those concerns addressed by recent LWV programs? Rising property taxes are one prime example. One solution would be changing the time of the elections of the Eastchester Fire Commissioners' Election from a stand-alone date in December to the date of the general elections in November would save upwards of \$10,000. Separating myth from fact on issues of public safety is another. For example, the Indian Point Nuclear Reactors supply only 10-12% of our energy, contrary to popular belief, and haven't been free of safety problems for decades. Recognizing the distortions made by special interests in "educational" advertising, as the drug companies do, is another concern of general interest. Additionally, we all should be cognizant of how to use the instruments available to us, like the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL), to pry out essential facts secreted from a public that has "the right to know."

The strength of the League is in these areas. We are widely known and well respected for the help we give to people who want to vote -- from those moving into adulthood, aging into eligibility, to those who proudly gain the citizenship that gives them the privilege to vote. Voters are what the League helps to create and foster. Behind the votes, though, has to be knowledge and understanding so that they perpetuate our values of enlightened democracy. This, too, is what the League stands for and why its continuing existence is so important.

The information age offers new tools and different ways to engage. Our League will not be what we knew as our the League of our mothers' time. The simple change that we've just made in name and boundary must bring new flexibility in terms of where, when, and how we meet, and how we interact with other organizations.

There are too many possibilities to speculate about in a President's letter. Therefore, we have set up our last "coffee" of the season to discuss them, to gather suggestions and to explore possibilities for the Fall. We need your help, your input, your comments, your advice. . . .

Also, as you can see from the Board List on the following page, we are in serious need of replacements for the Board members that we lost last year. Any talents that any of you can offer in any of these areas will be much appreciated.

Please join us on **June 21st, at the Bronxville Women's Club** at a very important coffee meeting, **9:30 - 11:00 a.m.** If you cannot come for the whole meeting, come for as long as you can stay. If you would like to send an email comment, our address is: **bronxvilleleague@aol.com** and our "snail mail" address is: **PO Box 321, Bronxville 10708.** We look forward to your input!



Edith Szold

EDITORIAL:

This will be the **final issue** of our League's bulletin, at least for a while. . .

Our League no longer has the person-power to put together and mail a newsletter, and our call for volunteers to take over from long-time editor Janet Jaidi has not met with success.

As Edith stated in her President's Letter, demographics and time pressures within our League community changed the way we are able to work within our League.

So, what can we do? We need help with some of our Board positions (see Board list below) and we need input from our membership.

One way you can help is to let us know **your email address** so that we can inform you of upcoming programs and initiatives, especially those with two or three week lead time. Since we will not have a bulletin in the near future, this is a way we can stay in touch.

If, for this purpose only, you send us your email to **bronxvilleleague@aol.com**, we promise it will remain confidential and no one except the League Board will have access to your email address. **All emails are sent bcc**, so your email address is not seen by anyone else, including those receiving the e-mailings.

The **bronxvilleleague@aol.com** address is also a good way to send us questions/comments/etc. We do not share your email address, nor do we disseminate your messages, except in a generic manner when you ask us to "let others know."

We hope you will attend our coffee discussion on **Tues., June 21 starting at 9:30 a.m.** at the **Bronxville Women's Club** (see cover). *Come for as long as you can. We need your input.*

We are a community service organization with a dynamic nationwide connection. The LWV is strong, well-respected and extremely influential; we are non-partisan but have positions on issues that impact all of us. Without you, our members, we cannot go forward and continue to "make democracy work."

We need you, so please join us on June 21 or, if you can't, then send your comments to bronxvilleleague@aol.com or write: PO Box 321, Bronxville 10708.

Another wonderful service the League provides is to insure the fairness and civility of local debates. I have been a **moderator** for several years and it is both interesting and rewarding. It's wonderful when candidates thank the League for helping make their debate fair and insuring that the *issues* are the main focus, not candidates' personalities.

We are very much appreciated by the community for our work with voter service and for our moderating skills. **Would you consider becoming a LWV debate moderator?** You don't need special abilities, only a short period of training at a time convenient for you. If you are interested, you can contact me or Laura Fratt from the County League: **fratt@verizon.net**.

Looking forward to your comments,

Susan Weisfeld
Temporary Editor
bronxvilleleague@aol.com



BRONXVILLE-EASTCHESTER-TUCKAHOE LWV CURRENT BOARD

OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT: Edith Szold (Health Issues)
1ST VICE PRES.; Irma Moore (Voter Service)
TREASURER: **Open**
RECORDING SECRETARY: Julia Pomeroy

Off Board:

Budget Chair - Amanda Moore
Program - Susan Weisfeld
Nominating Committee - Dorothy Brennan
Student Legislative Day - Denise Berthier

DIRECTORS:

Local Affairs - Jean Delfiner
Data Base Admin - Adelaide DiGiorgi
Bulletin Reporter - Birgitta Sherman
Finance Chair - Pat Harriss
UN Liaison - Martha Chatterjee
Membership - **Open**
Bulletin - **Open**
Publicity - **Open**

This year's delegation to the LWV of NYS convention included former Bronxville League President Adelaide DiGiorgi. She brought back a useful "how-to" and also LWVNYS records, such as the current budget. The "how to" handout, Ten Tips On How To Lobby Legislators, is on the following page. All handouts are on: <http://www.lwvny.org/convention/2011/Pre-ConventionKit.pdf>

Adelaide reports to us:

This year's LWV New York State Convention was a busy one, starting with registration on Friday morning and a Pre-Convention Lunch and Forum. Participants broke out into individual focus groups concentrating on the various issues that the workshops and caucuses will include.

An opening reception was held, followed by dinner. Following dinner there were Informational sessions on Medicare, Transportation Financing, *Gerrymandering: The Film*, and *Gasland: The Film*.

As the voting delegate, I split attendance at the workshops with our Convention observer, Matthew DiGiorgi. Although an observer cannot vote in the Plenary sessions, all the workshops and caucuses were open to him as well as to the delegate. So, our League had the benefit of two participants for slightly more than the cost of one!

Saturday began with a Continental breakfast until 8 am followed by two series of workshops.

From 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. Electronic Voters Guides; Membership - Where are the Members? Website Creation; Advocacy and Lobbying

From 9:15 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. Parliamentary Procedures for the Convention; Youth Programs; Streamlining LWV; Social Networking and also a repeat of the Electronic Vote Guides presentation.



The first Plenary session ran from 10:30 a.m. - noon, followed by lunch with speaker Madeline Kunin, the fourth female to be a US Governor and, as Governor of Vermont, the first woman to be elected for three terms. She also served as a former US Ambassador to Switzerland.

Discussion of her inspiring talk will be on the LWVNY website fairly soon, as well as photos from the Convention, and electronic copies of all the handouts from the workshops and the notes from "Moments in the Sun." Following the afternoon Plenary, informational sessions were once again held: How to publicize LWV and Hydrofracking were added to the list of workshops.

Westchester's Larchmont/Mamaroneck President Beth Radow spearheaded the hydrofracking events, and her group met with Gov. Cuomo's representative to give him the League's update and concerns.

Our dinner speaker was John Zogby, a history and Political Science professor best known for his polls of U.S. presidential elections. His amusing presentation and new book were well accepted by the audience. Awards were presented to various leagues for outstanding Voter Service, publicity, membership initiatives, etc. Raffle ticket sales and a Silent Auction event was ongoing. (My raffle ticket purchase did not result in a prize, but it was for a good cause!



Sunday's final Plenary resulted in the election of officers, the adoption of a Budget, and no increase in New York State PMP's!! This was accomplished by reducing the cost of administration salaries.

All in all, a worthwhile experience - I recommend it to all members!

Adelaide DiGiorgi

LWV NYS 2011-2013 Board of Directors Officers of the League of Women Voters of New York State

President	Betsy B. Swan/Albany LWV
1st Vice President/Issues & Advocacy	Sally Robinson/NYC LWV
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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS *of New York State*

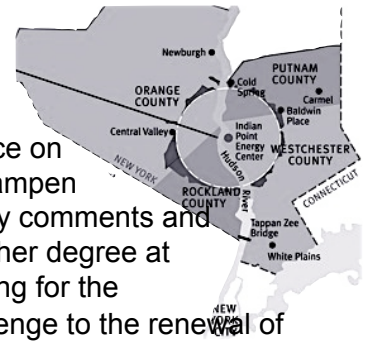
TEN TIPS ON HOW TO LOBBY LEGISLATORS

- 1. KNOW TO WHOM YOU ARE SPEAKING:** Research your legislators' histories. Know, before you arrive, his or her position on issues related to those you plan to discuss. Ascertain his or her voting record on those issues. If appropriate start the meeting with appreciation for past support. Personal information, such as being a grandparent or having a religious upbringing, can also be helpful.
- 2. ORGANIZE:** Develop a strategy for the meeting. Identify the strengths of each team member and decide who will speak, for how long, and on what issues before you enter the room. Identify your priorities and limit the number of topics you will discuss. Identify a team leader to lead the discussion and make strategic points.
- 3. STAY FOCUSED:** Focus on what you want your legislator to do. For example, will he/she talk to the Speaker of the Assembly or write a letter on your behalf? Will he/she co-sponsor a bill? Will he/she commit to vote for a specific bill?
- 4. LISTEN CAREFULLY:** Politicians tend to speak generally and may avoid the topic. Try to keep him or her on track by politely drawing out specific answers to specific questions, keeping focused on your issues.
- 5. YOU MAY NOT KNOW ALL THE ANSWERS:** Never guess or give incorrect information to respond to a question. Offer to get the answer and report back. Then do so. It is the perfect opportunity to stay in touch!
- 6. DON'T ARGUE:** Legislators often have strong opinions. So do advocates. You probably will not change their minds in one visit. Remember you are building a relationship. Find common ground and use specific samples of people who need the legislation you are promoting. Be polite and NEVER argue with the legislator, legislative staff, or your fellow team members.
- 7. LEAVE SOMETHING BEHIND:** Bring information for the legislator about your program, a local event, or specific issues. Bring local information or data relevant to his or her district and key constituencies. Leave draft letters they can use for your request.
- 8. APPRECIATE STAFF MEMBERS.** Staff members are often your most important allies. If you are meeting with an aide, give him or her the best information (including bill numbers) to make a compelling argument to your legislator.
- 9. TAKE NOTES.** Immediately after the meeting, make notes of what was discussed and what the legislator agreed to do. Record the names and titles of staff members who are present or to whom you were introduced (you can ask for business cards). Translate those notes onto a lobby report form before you forget important details and commitments.
- 10. FOLLOW UP.** After the meeting send a thank you note that summarizes your understanding of what the legislator agreed to do. Let them know you are available to help on related issues. Include any information you promised and ask to meet them in their districts, preferably for a clinic visit. Send separate notes to staff member(s) you met and make a point to keep in contact with them.

other LWV materials can be found at: lwvny.org

OUR NUCLEAR NEIGHBOR - FRIEND OR FOE?

a report by Brigitta Sherman



Our May "Coffee" meeting, dealing with nuclear energy and Indian Point, took place on a very rainy day. Fortunately, the deluge did not keep our members at home or dampen the enthusiastic response to Deborah Brancato's presentation, which elicited many comments and questions. The morning's speaker is an attorney with Riverkeeper. She earned her degree at Pace Law School in environmental law, Magna Cum Laude, and has made caring for the environment her career. She joined Riverkeeper in 2008 to work on its legal challenge to the renewal of Indian Point's license.

The Indian Point nuclear reactors are on the Hudson, only 25 miles north of Manhattan. There are two units, started in 1973 and 1975 plus one that is semi-decommissioned. The licenses will expire in 2013 and 2015. Many people want them closed down permanently.

The argument goes that Indian Point is necessary for us to have adequate electricity. However, in reality it supplies only 10%-12% of the New York region's power; at least one of the reactors have often been non-functioning. There are on-going safety concerns not all of which have been adequately addressed.

For instance, the cooling towers use twice as much water as New York City does every day. Modern technology would enable that to be recycled, instead of wasted as it is now. An example of a safety concern is the radioactivity which can leak from the pools in which the spent fuel rods which are presently kept. They are now overcrowded, raising the amount of heat they exude. A safer storage method is in dry cast chambers, to which the fuel rods can be moved when they have cooled enough. However, even this is temporary. There are still no permanent storage facilities for the fuel rods that have been decided on. In any event, it will be over 50 years, apparently, until the company responsible will have the money necessary to dismantle the reactors.

Conservation of our resources and drinking water, part of Riverkeeper's mission on the Hudson, is also a concern. Outdated cooling systems that withdraw more than a trillion gallons of river water annually, needlessly kill billions of fish in our beautiful Hudson River.

In the meantime, there are many safety and security concerns such as *terrorism, earthquakes, and plant accidents*. Even without them, Indian Point has had a high shut-down rate. The events in Japan which affected the Fukushima nuclear plant gave much cause for concern.

While a worst case scenario can happen, our emergency plans are only for much less severe situations. And even those plans might not be realistic. Take evacuation: *Think of how much of your life is spent in traffic jams at bridges and think how it would be if everybody left town at the same time!*

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is the Federal agency in charge of regulating nuclear reactors, but seems rather "lukewarm." It does not even allow concerns about evacuation, terrorism or earthquakes to be considered.

Many people don't know much about nuclear power and what they hear is often what the industry wants them to hear. Not so the LWV members and guests who came to this "coffee". While we are the choir being preached to, we can go out and voice our concerns. Write, call, talk to neighbors. We *can* make a difference.

A final note: we do consume too much energy, and conservation is the best way to conserve our energy resources. At www.riverkeeper.org you can get tips on how to do that. and our speaker recommended a free energy audit.

LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL REMINDERS:

Leaf Blower Ordinances are now in effect in Bronxville, Tuckahoe and Yonkers. Our League helped pass this public health ordinance which prohibits the operation of gas-powered leaf blowers from June 1 - October 1 and is punishable with a \$250 fine.

Starting June 1 **plastic recycling** includes plastics coded **up to number 7** in commingled recycling bins. Please note that all must be rinsed clean and free of food waste, and coded with any number between 1 through 7. You also can now leave the plastic tops on their bottles when recycling.



The moving editorial below, published November 1931 in *The Bronxville Press* was read at last year's Memorial Day celebration by Leonard Morange's grandniece, Bronxville resident Dale Walker, and the text given to our League for inclusion in this bulletin. A square in Bronxville is named for Leonard Morange.

The editorial was written in honor of the first Bronxville casualty in WWI, at the time thought to be "the war to end war." The optimism of the years following "the Great War" that peace would be lasting is ironic, but if we work together, perhaps one day their hope for our future will be a reality.

TO LEONARD S. MORANGE

To the boy who was, and the man who might have been, these lines are written with sadness and humility. This is not a pleasant duty-- bringing to you on the eleventh of November each year the records of what we have done to justify the sacrifice which the folly of the world demanded of you.

We promised you with all the fine fervor a great nation, inspired with the noblest ideals human beings can have, that you and your comrades who died with you would be the last to endure the torture of war, to be shot to death in fighting fellow human beings on this little earth. That we promised.

To you life was sweet. In your few brief years there were the gay memories of babyhood for those who loved and cherished you. School days, just a boy hurrying along our own village streets, playing the games, planning great things in the days when you would take your place as a man with other men.

What might have been, we cannot compute. Under your guidance a business might have taken form, bringing comforts to many people. Your brain might have devised the solution for one of the various troubles which so sorely beset us today. Or you might have been just a good citizen with a pleasant home, a couple of youngsters and many friends glad to have you here.

Strangely, it was your job to die, to give that life you loved so well and which many wanted you to keep. And when you gave it we agreed -- then. If we could have saved you and those thousands others, we might have sat down afterwards and talked the matter over. But the passing of you and those others closed the compact.

Your life was picked for the greatest aim the world knows -- the ending of war. You did your job, splendidly, without reservations, and you left with the rest of us an obligation as sacred as any ever made between humans.

You never knew that first Armistice Day and the wild hysteria of joy that throbbled through this and all other nations. You never knew how these same nations moved as one toward universal accord when their hearts were cleansed of anger. You were close to us then, very close.

On this thirteenth Armistice Day we can only bring this fact to you and to those thousands others, that there are many here who believe a promise once made must be kept. To say you are not just a name, but a person, and very real. That conflict in which you died is very real. And that compact is very real.

Courage, strong and fine, was required for what you did. We are humbly glad that a little courage is often required of us to keep the faith.

That is all, just a reiteration of things we remember, a renewal of strength in our beliefs, a restatement of our purpose to hold fast -- that is all we can bring to you on this anniversary of the end of a war to end war.



BULLETIN

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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White Plains, NY

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

President: Edith Szold
Temporary Editor: Susan Weisfeld

Current Resident or

Date Sensitive



College Student Voter Registration: On Saturday, August 27 in the resource center of Sarah Lawrence College (under a tent) and also during that week or the next at Concordia College, we will meet new and returning students to offer them the opportunity to register to vote and to answer their questions about voting in our community.

We welcome your help! If you would like to participate in and/or to know more about this project, please contact Irma Moore, Voters Service Chair: 914-664-5926 or irmamoore@verizon.net.

IMPORTANT DATES

JUNE 2011

14	9:30 AM	Bronxville LWV Board Meeting	Chez Jaidi
		end of fiscal year - no scheduled meeting in July	130 Wrexham Road
21	9:30 AM	Bronxville LWV Coffee Meeting	Bronxville Women's Club
		<i>see cover for details</i>	135 Midland Avenue

The Voters Guide: Vacation time may be coming but Voters Service continues throughout the year. In June we will meet with the Voters Service Committee of the League of Women Voters of Westchester to discuss the *Fall 2011 Voters Guide* and to receive our work assignment for this publication. We welcome your participation. Please contact Irma Moore, Voters Service Chair: 664-5926 or irmamoore@verizon.net.