



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of Bronxville Eastchester Tuckahoe *also serving Mount Vernon and Yonkers*

P.O. Box 321, Bronxville, NY 10708
bronxvilleleague@aol.com

OCTOBER 2011

BULLETIN

ISSUE TWO

President's Letter



Most of our Bulletins, in the past, had been written in hopes of an unhurried browse over coffee & snacks - like a brief conversation among friends. For that, we had Janet

Jaidi to thank who spent hours putting them together. These days, however, Janet is working at the County level and the rest of us, like Sue Weisfeld and Taryn Duffy, are pitching in until someone else comes forward for the job. We have so much talent in this League! Any would be editors, please speak up!

Meanwhile, we are experimenting and adapting to the current climate in our own way - more bulletins by e-mail which recipients can print if they choose, and hard copies that are simpler, leaner and more economical to send....a bit like using Morse code on an old fashioned telegraph, with just the facts, ma'am, just the facts. In line with those economies, we will no longer be mailing hard copies to members who have not paid their dues, or to non-members. However, any league friends can request an e-bulletin by emailing Bronxvilleleague@aol.com.

We're also moving out beyond our old comfort zone. Please note the evening program coming up at the Eastchester Public Library which working people will be able to attend. We hope that all of you will enjoy our new, additional venue where parking in the evening is plentiful and free. And of course, we'll keep you posted as usual as our League evolves.

Edith Szold

GO GREEN WITH AN E-BULLETIN

Help us **Go Green**, protect the environment and save on postage by choosing to receive your Monthly Bulletin by e-mail. Simply send an email to bronxvilleleague@aol.com and let us know that you'd like to opt out of the snail mail bulletin and confirm your email address for an e-bulletin.

October Coffee

We invite members and friends to our October Monthly Coffee Meeting.

Join us for an informative discussion.

Medicare of the Future – Can it cost less but protect us more?



**Tuesday, October 18, 2011
9:30 a.m.
Bronxville Women's Club
135 Midland Avenue**

This program is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. Seats can be reserved by emailing bronxvilleleague@aol.com.

2011-2012 Officers & Directors

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On the Calendar

LWV B.E.T. Meetings

Tuesday, October 11th, 9:30am, Board Meeting
Home of Julia Pomeroy

Tuesday, October 18th, 9:30am, "Coffee"
Bronxville Women's Club, 135 Midland Ave.
"A Medicare for the Future...Trimmed Down with our Health Built up." Speaker to be announced.

Thursday, October 20th 10am, A Social Get Together
Home of Julia Pomeroy, To address fund-raising letters.
Everyone welcome!

LWV B.E.T. Special Events

Tuesday, October 11, 6:00 – 9:00pm
Celebrating Eleanor Roosevelt
Sarah Lawrence College, Donnelley Lecture Hall in the Heimbold Visual Arts Center
Join LWV B.E.T. & Sarah Lawrence College in celebrating Eleanor Roosevelt's birthday with a lecture by Brigid O'Farrell, author of *She Was One of Us: Eleanor Roosevelt and the American Worker*.

Thursday, October 13th, 7pm, The Legislative Process in Government, Highlighting a Case Study—The Community Effort to Successfully Rezone Warburton Ave. Beczak Center, 35 Alexander Street, Yonkers

Facts on Fracking

Wednesday, October 5th, 3pm, "Gaslands" Screening
Eastchester Public Library, 11 Oakridge Place
The film on drilling's effect on people's health and their environment.

Wednesday, October 12th, 7:00 - 9:00pm
Workshop on the Government's Environmental Impact Statement and Crafting an Effective Response
Eastchester Public Library, 11 Oakridge Place
Speaker: Susan VanDolsen, Westchester for Change
*Urgent! Window for public response end on Dec. 5th

Tuesday, October 4th, 7:00 - 9:00pm
Why taxpayers may be facing another bailout.
Hosted by the LWV of Larchmont/Mamaroneck
Mamaroneck Public Library, 136 Prospect Avenue
Speaker: Elisabeth Radow, Chair, New York State LWV Hydraulic Fracturing Committee

Two Special Forums on Health Care Reform hosted by LWV of Westchester County

Thursday, October 13th, 7pm, Single Payer Health Care
Lubin Graduate School at Pace University, 1 Martine Ave., White Plains, Speakers: Assemblyman Richard Gottfried, NYS Health Plan, Bill A7860/S5425 (Gottfried/Duane) & Dr. Elizabeth Rosenthal, PNHP

Thursday, October 20th, 7pm
Federal Affordable Care Act, Ins. Exchanges
Lubin Graduate School of Pace University, 1 Martine Ave., White Plains
Speakers: Assemblyman George Latimer & Charles Bell, Consumers Union

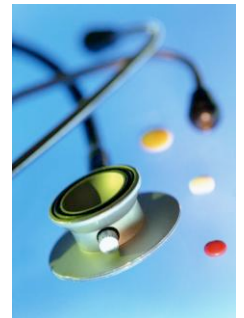
For more information, call 914-761-4382

LWV of New York State Special Event

Saturday, October 15, 5:00-7:00 PM
A Wine Tasting Fundraiser to Benefit the League of Women Voters of New York State
Home of LWV Rye, Rye Brook, Port Chester President, Deborah Reisner, 21 Norman Dr, Rye, NY
\$75 per person or \$250 Sponsorship (2 people and recognition)

Health Issues

The current most urgent issue affecting health, along with the environment, and our economy, is hydrofracking for natural gas. It has long been touted as the cleanest burning fossil fuel - which it is - and one of the easiest to extract - which it was for many years. However, the gas reserves that were in pockets close to the surface have long been tapped out. The rest is trapped in singularly hard rock known as shale and is released through a singularly difficult and dangerous drilling process called hydrofracking. The Marcellus Shale Field, which covers large parts of PA, OH, WV and NYS, is the largest in the country and the one we are principally concerned with. It includes the Catskill and Delaware watersheds from which the drinking water flows to Putnam, Westchester County and NYC.



To many of you this is not news. (I wrote about it here last March.) As the public's anxiety about hydrofracking grew, some places banned it altogether and we had a moratorium in New York State that lasted through June of this year. The SGEIS (the Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement) all 1500 pages, is the latest study, completed early this month. The pressure from the oil and gas companies for drilling permits has been increasing, and the state seems poised to issue them, pending the completion of public comments on that report by Dec. 12, 2011.

We need help, for sure, to understand what that statement really says and whether we can be protected. A number of experts around the state

have been parsing it from many angles, including tax and liability issues. Upstate NY is hard pressed for jobs and new sources of income. It is hard to for struggling residents to read the fine print when the promise of prosperity is right before them. The tragedy, however, is that prosperity is often an illusion. When health is damaged, the water's undrinkable and the land too contaminated to build on or use for growing food, there's really nothing left.

The issues involved are many and very serious. That's why LWVNY has become so active and why we, locally have returned to the subject again. Please note the new showing of "Gaslands" at the Eastchester Library next month, and the workshop at the Eastchester Library with Susan Van Dolsen - our first evening program in a very long time. Please join us there.

September Coffee Meeting



The new program season came off to a promising start for the B.E.T. League as a good crowd gathered at the Bronxville Women's Club to listen to Phil Reisman speak on "The Current Fiscal Climate and What It Means to New Yorkers".

Many of us are familiar with Mr. Resiman's columns in "The Journal News" as well as his weekly radio show "High Noon". We were impressed to learn that "High Noon" is also on podcast.

We were also impressed that Mr. Reisman, a self-proclaimed pessimist, could be so entertaining in spite of the rather gloomy picture he painted of declining tax revenues, loss of net worth for most of us, job losses, cuts of government services, proliferation on 'for sale' and 'for rent' signs, as well as adult children moving back to live with mom and dad.

The unemployment figures remain above 9% with more people falling into poverty. Mr. Reisman found a silver lining on the cloud: young people have their youth as an asset, and eventually the situation will get better.

It seems as if all eyes are on Washington while we neglect what is going on in our own back yard. All is quiet in Albany, but few problems have been solved. The fiscal crisis is not solved. We have a property tax gap, suggested employee contributions to health care and pensions were rejected, as was a wage freeze.

The situation is not that different on the county level. It does sound reasonable to call for shared sacrifices where everyone has to give up something and shoulder more of a burden.

There is more public protest now. People distrust government and identify with billionaires who largely became wealthy because the country provided them with opportunities.

As you could imagine, Mr. Reisman's talk was followed by a lively Q&A session which covered TV propaganda, the lack of productive jobs, vocational training, sound bites vs. a real old-fashioned debate, dealing with issues, public financing of election campaigns and re-districting.

As our county legislator Gordon Burrows attended the meeting we managed to give him a "honey-do" list.

Mr. Reisman praised the League of Women Voters as an organization people respect as it provides information based to studies and facts. Both Mr. Reisman and Mr. Burrows mentioned "The Voter's Guide" and the yearly "Directory of Officials" as valuable contributions.

Voter Service

Candidates Forums

The LWV BET will sponsor a candidates meeting for the **Town of Eastchester on Sunday, October 30, 2011** from 4 to 6 p.m. at Eastchester Town Hall.

There will be a debate for Town Council members, one for the candidates for District 10 County Legislator, and another for candidates for District 15 County Legislator. Invited candidates for Town Council are Joseph D. Dooley Jr. (R-IN-C), Glenn D. Bellitto (R-IN-C), John V. Filibert (D-WF), Anita L. Rosner (D-WF); for District 10 County Legislator, Sheila Marcotte (R-IN-C) and John Fitzpatrick (D-WF) ; and for District 15 County Legislator, Gordon A. Burrows (R-C), Theo Moustakopoulos (D-IN) and Delfim A. Huesler (WF). Supervisor Anthony Colavita R-IN-C, who is running unopposed, will make a brief statement.

The East Yonkers neighborhood association's debate will be in the Reisinger Auditorium, Sarah Lawrence College, **Monday, October 17** beginning at 7:00 p.m. Invited are candidates for Yonkers Mayor and 5th Yonkers City Council District.



There will be an opportunity for the public to ask questions.

Voters Guide 2011

The annual **2011 Voters Guide** published by the LWV of Westchester will be available soon. This nonpartisan booklet includes a sample ballot and biographical information for all of the candidates running in Westchester County in the Fall 2011 election. It will be distributed throughout Westchester County. In our area (Bronxville, Eastchester, Tuckahoe, Crestwood, Mount Vernon, and Yonkers) we will distribute 11,000 copies. Look for it in banks, post offices, libraries, stores, railroad stations, city and town halls, and other public places.

LWV of Westchester Updates

League of Women Voters of Westchester County proudly announces the online Voters Guide.

www.Vote411.org

You can build your own personal ballot. Just go to <http://www.Vote411.org>, select "*Build your Ballot*" on the home page, then enter your address. You will be able to view all of the races and compare all of the candidates, plus view any initiatives or proposals on your ballot in the General Election on **November 8, 2011**. Candidates may provide a picture, a link to their website, and write up to 200 words so you may get to know them. The site is private and secure. You may write notes, check your selected candidate, and print or email your personal ballot so you may take it with you to the polls.

VOTE411 Replaces SmartVoter

Following the lead of the LVWUS, the LWWNY selected VOTE411 to be the official website for election information. Similar to SmartVoter, the VOTE411 website provides the ability to look-up your personal ballot based on your address.

With the launch of this new website, the LWWV will no longer be using SmartVoter and will switch to VOTE411. As with all new technology, there is a start-up period, so information provided for the

November 8, 2011 General Election will be brief. As the Voters Service committee members go through the learning-curve and build the full structure of the Westchester County voting jurisdictions within VOTE411 more information will be available.

The ultimate goal of the switch to VOTE411 will be the elimination of paper questionnaires to candidates, thus providing all candidates with the ability to enter their own information directly into the VOTE411 website. To produce the traditional paper Voters Guide, information will be extracted from VOTE411 and formatted, printed and distributed in the old-fashioned way. However, this goal is a few years off as the learning-curve by the committee and the functionality of technology provided by the VOTE411 service are fully developed.

Marianna Stout

2nd Vice President, Voter Service Chair

Election Dates

Oct. 14 - Last day to postmark registration applications.
Nov. 1 - Last day to postmark absentee ballot apps;
Nov. 7 - Last day for applying in person for application.
Nov. 8 - General Election

Membership Milestones

**We are pleased to welcome
Maureen Hatch of Yonkers
as our newest member.**

Dues Updates

Thanks to everyone who has submitted their membership dues for the 2011-2012 year. If you have not yet done so, please mail your dues to P.O. Box 321, Bronxville, NY 10708. An individual membership is \$60 and a household membership is \$90.

New Members

The B.E.T. League welcomes new members and encourages current members to recruit individuals who are interested in participating in the League. New membership forms can be obtained at all League meetings and forums, or requested by emailing bronxvilleleague@aol.com.



State News

The League of Women Voters of New York State

September 2011

Redistricting

With our coalition, ReShapeNY, we have continued to keep pressure on the state to enact redistricting reform in a fall special session through both testimony and through the media.

Thanks to our local Leagues in Syracuse, Buffalo, Rochester, Binghamton, Westchester and NYC for presenting testimony at each of the LATFOR hearings. In some cities, press conferences were also organized and attended by local members. And other local Leagues have submitted Letters to the Editors in their local newspapers. Thanks to all who helped make the League visible and active on this issue.

Voter Participation Project

The League has recently received a grant from the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation to organize a comprehensive educational project examining different means of increasing the rate of voter participation in New York, including expanding opportunities for voter registration, early in-person and absentee voting and vote by mail, and better voter education and ballot design. In this project, we are researching the effect on voter turnout of different innovations in voter registration modernization and early voting, and associated administrative issues for election officials and security concerns.

A power point presentation on the research and the issue, with supporting documents, will be available this fall for local Leagues to use at a community forum. Encourage your local League to organize a forum to present the info to members and the public.

Vote 411: Electronic Voter Guide

There are 15 local Leagues participating in the development of electronic voter guides, called Vote 411, this fall. Thanks to Christine Alexander of LWV Saratoga who has provided great assistance to the many Leagues developing this program. Some websites are already live; some will be live in the very near future. You can look for candidates listed in your area by copying this link in your browser: <http://onyourballot.vote411.org/?sfr=1315315296435>.

Students Inside Albany Conference

The Students Inside Albany Conference has been set for March 25-28, 2012. It's a bit earlier this year so local Leagues need to start recruiting students NOW. This 3 day conference provides the high school students with the skills necessary to become active citizens and lobbyists. The only cost to the local Leagues is the transportation to and from Albany – the conference is free for students.

Hydrofracking

Now that the DEC has produced its complete revision of the SGEIS (Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement) on gas drilling and hydraulic fracturing, the public has until Monday, December 12th to comment. In accordance with LWV positions on air and water quality, protection of watersheds, etc., it is critical that we identify areas that are weak or omitted and suggest appropriate revisions.

There are experts available to speak on this many different aspects of this topic, free of charge, for local Leagues. Call the state office for a list of speakers. Finally, the NY Times recently printed a Letter to the Editor from LWVNY President Betsey Swan on this topic. See a link to the letter on the state League website.

2011 Voters Guide

The 2011 Voters Guide, Part I, has also been distributed to local Leagues who ordered copies. This brochure includes information on how to register to vote, how to obtain an absentee ballot, info on the new voting machines and more. There will not be a Part II this fall as there are no statewide races and no statewide ballot proposals. Part I is also available on the state League website.

Also, on the state website is a link to the State Board of Elections website which provides a polling place look-up to confirm where a person votes and instructions on using the new voting machines.

First Vote in Spanish

First Vote, a guide to voting for new voters in NYS, has been updated, translated into Spanish and reprinted. The Spanish version is

available from the state office for \$.10 each (\$10 per 100). It's a great document for high school seniors and naturalized citizens - and now for those whose first language may be Spanish.

Youth Programs

The Youth Program webpage (click on Youth programs on left side of homepage) has been updated to contain the information that was gathered from the questionnaires about local youth programs sent to all the local leagues and MAL Units. Although it is impossible to estimate the number of youths that are involved through all the local programs, at least 39 local Leagues have one or more youth programs. Ten leagues that do not have any youth programs have indicated an interest to start one and this webpage can be a starting point for them. See the many programs around the state on this page.

Youth programs are an excellent way to carry out the mission of the league in encouraging citizens to be active and informed participants in government. The descriptions of the programs from around the state are given in order to encourage Leagues to start their own. In cases like, "Take Me To Vote", where several leagues have adapted programs to fit their needs and communities, each is described. There are contact names and email addresses in order that those interested can find out more and then either follow or adapt the program.

Gifts to the League

Did you know that you can make a gift to the League, obtain a current tax advantage, and receive income for life? We offer a vehicle with which to do this through the League's pooled income fund. Within certain parameters, you can choose which level of the League to benefit. For more information, contact Betsey@lwvny.org.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NYS

62 Grand Street, Albany, NY 12207-1403

(518) 465-4162; Fax (518) 465-0812

Web Address: www.lwvny.org

E-mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

Anyone may subscribe for \$12 a year to a paper copy of the State Voter, the state League's bimonthly newsletter; just call or email the state office.



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Presents

A TWO PART PROGRAM ON
HYDROFRACKING

“GASLAND” Screening

A film directed by Josh Fox

About hydrofracking - a way of drilling through rock for natural gas - its effects on people's health and the pollution it brings around and beyond the drilling site.

Wednesday, October 5, 2011
3:00 PM

Workshop on the final NYS Environmental Impact Statement

Speaker: Susan Van Dolsen - Westchester for Change

Identifying parts **of particular concern** to Westchester residents, including the detrimental effects on the air we breathe, the water we drink, our human health, and crafting the most effective response.

The opportunity for public comment ends on December 12, 2011 after which drilling permits could be issued at the State's discretion.

Wednesday, October 12, 2011
7:00 - 9:00 PM

Both programs will be held at the Eastchester Public Library
11Oakridge Plaza - off Route 22
Free of charge and open to the public
Contact information: 914-793-0298