



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW CASTLE

The Voter

May 2008

David Kaczynski Headlines Spring Luncheon



David Kaczynski, Executive Director of New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty, will be guest speaker at the League's spring luncheon on May 21st, at 12:00 noon, immediately following the annual meeting.

In his talk, "The Death Penalty — A View from an Insider," Mr. Kaczynski will share a personal and moving story of his first-hand involvement with a death penalty case — that of his brother, Theodore Kaczynski, the so-called Unabomber. Theodore was arrested in 1996 after David and his wife Linda approached the FBI with their suspicions that Theodore might

be involved in a series of bombings that caused three deaths and numerous injuries over 17 years. Although diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, Theodore was charged capitally in the case; ultimately, he was sentenced to life without parole. David Kaczynski relates this story as a riveting window into some of the complexities of death penalty issues. He will also discuss significant court cases, recent and pending, that impact death penalty issues.

New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty (NYADP) is a statewide coalition of organizations and individuals committed to the abolition of capital punishment. NYADP advocates for public policy change through education, grassroots organizing, and lobbying.

David Kaczynski is currently writing a book on violence and healing with Gary Wright, who was seriously injured by one of Theodore Kaczynski's bombs in 1987.

from Sheila and Joanne Presidents' Message

According to the website of New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty, did you know that:

- Nationally, at least 123 innocent people have been exonerated from death row — about one for every eight executed, or an error rate of more than 10% in the most scrutinized and careful corner of the criminal justice system.
- In New York, those accused of murdering white victims are more than twice as likely to face the death penalty as those who murder black victims, according to a recent study by the Center for Law and Justice in Albany.
- The law doesn't apply equally to all New Yorkers. More than half of the state's death sentences sought in the last ten years come from just six counties.

Across the country, the courts and the public continue to debate the death penalty — its constitutionality, the implications of race among juries and defendants, wrongful convictions, and the intersection of mental competency with justice and compassion in its use. All these issues and more contribute to the deeply emotional responses the death penalty evokes.

Our spring luncheon will focus on some of these issues, as our speaker gives us a first-hand account of a compelling death-penalty case. It will be a fascinating and thought-provoking discussion. We hope you will join us.

Sheila and Joanne

LWV of New Castle
Annual Meeting and Spring Luncheon
with speaker
David Kaczynski
Wednesday, May 21, 2008

*Annual Meeting 10:15am; lunch and speaker at noon
Crabtree's Kittle House, Chappaqua*

"The Death Penalty—A View from an Insider"

\$40 pp; make check to LWV of New Castle and send to
Evelyn Bloom, 5 Woodmill Rd., Chappaqua, NY 10514

All members and friends are welcome!

Observer Notes**Chappaqua Central School District Board of Education Meeting Apr. 15, 2008**

Summary: The Board voted to approve the proposed school budget. The budget-to-budget increase will be 5.25%. It is estimated that there will be a 4.59% tax increase for New Castle residents and a 3.89% decrease for Mt. Pleasant residents. The Board discussed 3 policies and approved a policy on rescheduling Board meetings due to emergencies.

Board Members Present: Janet Benton, Robert Gursha, Susan Habermann, Jay Shapiro, Jeffrey Mester. Faculty Present: Superintendent Dr. David A. Fleishman, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Lyn McKay, Assistant Superintendent John Chow

Presentation: Budget
Presenter: Dr. Fleishman

Dr. Fleishman reviewed the operating standards that guide budget decisions and the district strategic questions. He also reviewed the 4 categories (pillars) that comprise the budget. The budget for 2008-09 is 5.25% greater than the '07-'08 budget. Dr. Fleishman pointed out that the increase is similar to last year's increase and is about in the middle compared to comparable Westchester districts. Salaries and employee benefits account for 74.2% of the budget. Building projects, debt service and transportation account for another 15.6%. There are only a few new programs: the Chinese Studies course, the teacher action research project, and the sustainability units of study. There will also be new technology at Greeley to support the new schedule. Thanks to the Chappaqua School Foundation, all 4th grade classes will have Smart Boards.

The Board discussed the proposal to take \$900,000 from the

unappropriated fund balance for next year's budget. Mr. Chow presented them with several alternative amounts and the estimated impact on the tax rate. Although the Board votes only on expenditures in the budget, revenue sources were described as part of the budget process and the Board felt it was important for the community to know about this item. After discussing the pros and cons of keeping various amounts in the fund balance, they agreed to stay with transferring the \$900,000 amount from the fund balance.

Dr. Fleishman summed up by saying that he felt the proposed budget is a good budget that meets both the academic and emotional needs of the students. The Board voted to approve the proposed budget. It is estimated that there will be a 4.59% tax increase for New Castle residents and a 3.89% decrease for Mt. Pleasant residents. Copies will be available on line and at the district office.

Other Business

The Board approved bids for a number of the Capital/Excel projects and approved the March Revenue and Expenditure reports. They discussed advertising for a new claims auditor in order to comply with state rules that require advertising for a new auditor every 3 years.

Dr. Fleishman reported that the recent Superintendent's Conference Day on teaching children with autistic spectrum disorders was very successful. The district will maintain contact with the Yale Child Study Center and Dr. Volkmar, who presented at the conference. Dr. Fleishman briefly discussed the value of the Board

taking "learning walks" through the schools, in addition to the facilities' surveys. The next walk will look at literacy instruction at Roaring Brook School.

Policies

The Board approved a policy on rescheduling Board meetings after Emergency closings.

The first reading of the "Behavior Interventions for Students with Disabilities" policy lead to a long discussion. This policy will address the use of time-outs or physical restraints as part of a comprehensive behavior plan for specific students. The Board wants to frame the policy as a positive intervention to allow students to regain control.

There was also extensive discussion after the first reading of a technology philosophy policy. The feeling seemed to be that the policy tried to do too much and needed to be restructured. In response to the state audit suggestions, the Board discussed how to refine the policy on purchasing and bidding; specifically at what dollar amount the district should require bids. The feeling seemed to be that \$40,000 was appropriate.

*Barbara Meyers,
Observer*

See more school board notes on other meetings by observer Barbara Meyers on our website: www.lwvnewcastle.org/observeschoolboard08.html

Become a League Observer
Keep up with What's
Happening in Your Town.

Openings available for Town Board, School Board and Library Board meetings.

Contact the League:
lwvnewcastle@optonline.net

LWVUS Adopts Immigration Position

The Board of Directors of the LWV of the United States has unanimously adopted the League's position on immigration, which calls for a path to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants who are currently in the United States. Said Mary G. Wilson, president of LWVUS, the League supports "a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria." She also stated, "We oppose deportations of current unauthorized immigrants who have no history of serious criminal activity."

Other elements of the League's position include support for increased enforcement personnel at borders, more effective tracking of individuals who enter the U.S., and significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers. The League will also champion due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment. The League position sets criteria for legal admission to the U.S., including family reunification of spouses or minor children; economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.; political persecution or humanitarian crises; and studying in the U.S. LWV of New Castle was one of 560 local Leagues nationwide that participated in the two-year study. Read the full position on immigration, below:

LWVUS Immigration Position

The League of Women Voters believes that immigration policies should promote reunification of immediate families; meet the economic, business and employment needs of the United States; and be responsive to those facing political persecution or humanitarian crises. Provision should also be made for qualified persons to enter the U.S. on student visas. All persons should receive fair treatment under the law.

The League supports federal immigration law that provides an efficient, expeditious system (with minimal or no backlogs) for legal entry of immigrants into the U.S.

To complement these goals the League supports federal policies to improve economies, education, job opportunities, and living conditions in nations with large emigrating populations.

In transition to a reformed system, the League supports provisions for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status

The League supports federal payments to impacted communities to address the financial costs borne by states and local governments with large immigrant populations.

Criteria for Legal Admission to the U.S.

The League supports the following criteria for legal admission of persons into the United States:

- * Family reunification of spouses or minor children with authorized immigrants or citizens;
- * Flight from persecution or response to humanitarian crises in home countries;
- * Economic, business and employment needs in the U.S.;
- * Education and training needs of the U.S.;
- * Educational program opportunities; and
- * Lack of a history of serious criminal activity.

Administration and Enforcement

The League supports due process for all persons, including the right to a fair hearing, right to counsel, right of appeal and right to humane treatment.

The League supports:

- * Improved technology to facilitate employer verification of employee status;
- * Verification documents, such as status cards and work permits, with secure identifiers;
- * Significant fines and penalties for employers who hire unauthorized workers;
- * Improved technology for sharing information among federal agencies;
- * More effective tracking of individuals who enter the United States; and
- * Increased personnel at borders.

The League also supports programs allowing foreign workers to enter and leave the U.S. to meet seasonal or sporadic labor needs.

Unauthorized Immigrants Already in the U.S.

In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting unauthorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity.

Naturalization Court

On Wednesday, February 20th, 123 people were granted United States citizenship in the County Court House in White Plains.

This moving and impressive ceremony occurs every two weeks, according to an official who was present, and can involve as many as 125 candidates for citizenship.

They start gathering early, singly but mostly in small family groups, some nervous, some smiling, many with small bouquets of flowers.

The ceremony itself is surprisingly short and simple — a brief welcome, an introduction of the presiding judge, a short inspirational talk from a naturalized

local business entrepreneur, and then to the heart of the matter — the pledge of allegiance, and a loyalty oath to the United States government. Each participant is presented with a certificate, photographed with the judge, and it's over. Stacey Reynolds and Jane McKean, representing the League of Women Voters, handed each new citizen a small American flag and a booklet of instructions on how to register to vote. Very conveniently, voter registration is provided immediately outside the auditorium.

This is a wonderfully inspiring reminder of a gift that many of us take for granted. It is happening nearby every two weeks, and it is

free and open to everyone. We highly recommend it.

Jane McKean

Volunteer at Naturalization Court!

E-mail us at www.lwvnewcastle@optonline.net, or call Sheila Crespi at 238-8994.

The honor of representing LWV at Naturalization Court rotates among Westchester's local leagues. New Castle is asked to send representatives several times a year. If you would like to volunteer, e-mail us and we will contact you when the next date is coming up. It's a wonderful experience!

Forum on "Health Care – The Future?"

The League of Women Voters of the Rivertowns hosted, "Health Care – the Future?" on the evening of Monday, April 7, coinciding with World Health Day and National Public Health Week. The Bronxville LWV, LWV of Westchester, the Westchester Health Action Coalition, and the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services co-sponsored the forum.

Five speakers were invited to talk about the future of health care in our country and to field questions from an audience of close to 80 people. U.S. Representative Hon. Nita Lowey; U.S. Representative Hon. Eliot Engel; NYS Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins; Lindsay Farrell, Director of Open Door Family Medical Centers; and Jim Foy, President and CEO of Riverside

Health Care Systems, were the intended speakers. However, both Eliot Engel and Andrea Stewart-Cousins were unable to attend. Jeremy Tomasulo represented Mr. Engel, and Mae Carpenter, Commissioner of the Westchester Department of Senior Programs and Services, filled in.

The National League of Women Voters believes that quality affordable health care should be available to all U.S. residents. The panel expressed similar belief but each speaker brought their own perspective and their own passion.

The speakers raised concern for the 47 million Americans with no health insurance; the rising cost of care along with a stressed Medicaid/Medicare system; the shortage of primary care physi-

cians to offer the all important primary and preventive care; and a shortage of nurses throughout the health care system.

The animated audience matched the passion of the speakers with numerous heartfelt and probing questions, indicating the desire for health care reform. As gleaned from the evening, however, the problems are complex and the solutions for health care in the future will be a challenge.

Amy McNamara

Update on Millwood Firehouse Needs Assessment and Environmental Review in Progress

The needs of the Millwood Fire District, and the environmental review now in progress for the construction of a new Firehouse #1, were on the agenda at the April 28th meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners.

John Nickerson, the consultant hired by the Fire Commissioners to assess the needs of the district for a new firehouse, reported that he is still gathering information from community members and expects to have a final report ready for presentation on Monday, May 19th, at the next meeting of the Fire Commissioners. Because of the strong interest in Mr. Nickerson's report, the Fire Commissioners are looking for a larger venue to hold the meeting, rather than Station #2 where meetings are usually held.

Members of the League's Local Planning Committee appeared before the Commissioners to discuss questions regarding the environmental review for the new Firehouse #1. In an exchange of letters, the League had urged the Fire Commissioners, as Lead Agency, to expand the scope of the environmental review adopted in November 2007. John

Kirkpatrick, counsel to the district for the SEQRA (State Environmental Quality Review Act) process, responded that the scope would be expanded to include a discussion of possible outdoor activities on the site, including any training exercises, as per the League's scoping comments submitted in January 2007 (available on the League's website at www.lwvnewcastle.org/localplanning.html), and reiterated in March 2008. According to Mr. Kirkpatrick, other issues raised by the League and by other members of the district — such as cost of the firehouse — would be given due consideration in the final decision-making process.

Mr. Kirkpatrick also noted that the Fire Commissioners have retained John Watkins, of Watkins & Watkins in White Plains, to negotiate with neighbors regarding the covenant on the property that has been purchased for the new firehouse. Although the Commissioners prefer to negotiate a settlement for the covenant, the use of eminent domain remains an option.

The release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

(DEIS) was also discussed. Mr. Kirkpatrick expects it to be ready for public review and comment at the end of June. However, questions were raised about releasing the report in the summer, given vacation schedules, the length of the public review period outlined under SEQR regulations, and the fact that the New Castle Planning Board does not have meetings scheduled in August. It was questioned whether summer was the best time to provide for full public review and comment on the DEIS.

The Fire Commissioners have established a new website — www.millwoodfiredistrict.org. Information on the district, including significant documents related to the construction of the new firehouse, is available on this site.

Sheila Crespi

As this issue goes to press, we've learned that the May 19th meeting of the Fire Commissioners is scheduled to be held at New Castle Town Hall at 7:30 p.m.. Please check the district website at www.millwoodfiredistrict.org for any further updates on the meeting's location.



Leaguers Amy McNamara, Evelyn Bloom, Jackie Rider, and Lea Barth prepare spring lunch invitations for mailing.

New Castle Collects Electronic Waste May 31st

Don't know what to do with your old computers, TVs, VCRs, stereos and fax machines? Bring them to the New Castle Recycling Center on Saturday, May 31st, from 9:00am to 2:00pm — so they may be reused, refurbished or recycled. Large household appliances, such as refrigerators, stoves, washers and dryers, cannot be accepted. For more information, contact Bart Carey at the New Castle Recycling Department, at 238-8091; or go to www.westchestergov.com/environment_e-wastedays.htm.

Annual Compost Bin Sale Day May 17th in White Plains

LWV Westchester is one of the co-sponsors of Westchester County's Annual Compost Bin Sale Day — Saturday, May 17th, from 9:00am to 2:00pm, at the Saxon Woods Pool and Park in White Plains. Compost bins will be available for purchase, and experts from the Horticulturists of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Westchester will be on hand to help you solve your gardening and lawn problems. For more information, go to www.westchestergov.com/environment_compostbinsale.htm.

2008/2009 Membership
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW CASTLE
PO BOX 364, Chappaqua, NY 10514

Membership Dues: to June 30, 2009
Individual \$55; Family \$80; Student \$21
Check payable to LWV of New Castle

I enclose for membership \$ _____

I am adding a tax-deductible contribution
to the LWVNC Citizen Education Fund \$ _____

Total \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

I would like to work on:

<input type="checkbox"/> Local Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment
<input type="checkbox"/> State/National Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Voter Service
<input type="checkbox"/> Schools	<input type="checkbox"/> TV Production
<input type="checkbox"/> Call me to discuss what I can do	<input type="checkbox"/> Observe Public Meetings

I cannot be active at this time, but I want to support LWV goals with my membership.

May 2008

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2008-09!

Your current League membership expires on June 30, 2008. For the first time, we are asking for your renewal by email, or by using the membership form here. This saves the League money and is environmentally conscious too. We hope you will take the opportunity to mail in your renewal today!

Your support is vital: It enables us to continue our Candidates Nights, Voters Guides, local studies, and other programs. The League is for women and men—and we welcome you to participate in our work. If you are an individual member, consider a family membership – for our lobbying purposes, it has the same impact as two individual memberships. Thank you for being a member!

If you renew your membership before or at our Spring Luncheon on Wednesday, May 21st, you will be entered in a lottery for a fun League gift basket! Join us at The Kittle House for a chance to win. Contact Membership Chairs Lea Barth at 238-5153 or Mary Ann Bayer at 238-6434 if you have any questions.



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF NEW CASTLE**
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CHAPPAQUA, NY 10514

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CALENDAR

Tuesday, May 13th 7:45pm	Town Board New Cstle Town Hall
Tuesday, May 13th 8:15pm	CCSD Board of Education Seven Bridges
Thursday, May 15th 7:30pm	Candidates Night Chappaqua Library
Saturday, May 19th 9am-2pm	County Compost Bin Sale Day (details on p. 7)
Tuesday, May 20th 7am-9pm	School & Library Election HGHS Gym
Tuesday, May 20th 7:30pm	Library Board Chappaqua Library
Tuesday, May 20th 8:15pm	CCSD Board of Education Seven Bridges
Tuesday, May 27th 7:45pm	Town Board New Castle Town Hall
Saturday, May 31st 9am-2pm	New Castle Electronic Recycling (details on p. 7)
Tuesday, June 10th 7:45pm	Town Board New Castle Town Hall

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