

LWV SPRING 2011

Newsletter



Calendar

- **March 25** Annual Spring Luncheon Danvenport Club, New Rochelle. 12:00 pm
- **March 29** Westchester County League Redistricting Reform Forum, Chappaqua Library, 195 S. Greeley Avenue, Chappaqua, 7:30 pm
- **March 31** Candidates' Forum Moderator Training Program, Posillipo Senior Center, Rye Brook, 7:30 pm
- **April 7** "Gerrymandering" Screening and Discussion with Writer/Director Jeff Reichert, Rye Neck High School, Community Room, 7:30 pm
- **April 10-13** Students Inside Albany Program, Albany
- **May 2-5** Tentative Dates for Candidates' Forums for Local School Board Elections
- **May 17** Election Day School Board & Budgets
- **May 24** Property Tax Cap Forum, Rye Library Community Room, 7:30 pm
- **June 10** LWV Annual Meeting/Pot Luck Cocktail Party, 25 Norman Drive, Rye, 7:30 pm

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Happy 90th Anniversary A Message from our President



Happy Anniversary!

The League of Women Voters has just celebrated its 90th anniversary; a milestone that coincides with the passage of the 19th Amendment through which women gained the right to vote. Over the decades a thing or two has changed in our organization and certainly in our society. Yet, at the core, the League remains dedicated to the imperative of people (and not just women!) to vote and have that vote count, to understand for what, for whom we are voting and to take an active part in the process.

Today our League is a non-partisan, political organization comprised of both women and men of disparate neighborhoods and from all points of the political spectrum. We have markedly different points of view on many issues. What we

hold in common is the belief in the value of a well informed and active community of voters.

As a volunteer organization, we offer a broad range of activities for our members and our communities. These include sponsoring Candidates' Forums for all contested elections in our districts, Issue Forums on policy concerns such as our upcoming programs on Gerrymandering (Thursday, April 7) and the proposed Tax Cap (Tuesday, May 24). Our programs are nearly always recorded and available on demand through our new website: www.LWVRRBPC.org and on our Facebook page: www.Facebook.com/LWVRRBPC. Our Candidates' Forums are also broadcast on the local public access TV stations.

We are working on several educational programs. This past fall, we published our second English-Spanish Voters' Guide. We have just awarded a scholarship through a competition, open to all high school students in the communities which we serve, that will enable a student to

attend the state-wide Students Inside Albany Conference from April 10 - 13.

Together with the Town of Rye and Building Community Bridges, we are co-sponsoring a College-level sociology seminar for students of Rye Neck, Blind Brook & Port Chester High Schools in which the kids research and analyze the causes of low voter turnout.

We are now offering a 45-minute classroom program called Vote 18 to help current and future voters understand the value of their vote. We are also holding a Moderator Training program for our members on Thursday, March 31.

Our Annual Sound Shore Leagues Luncheon is coming up on Friday, March 25, where our honored guest and speaker will be former New York State Court of Appeals Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye.

We will cap off the 2010-2011 season on Friday June 10 with our Annual Meeting & Pot Luck Cocktail Party.

Debbie Reisner

Volunteers Needed for Staffing School Trustee Candidate Forums

We are now staffing teams to work on the Candidates' Forums for our communities that have contested school district trustee elections this May. Tentative Candidates' Forum dates are May 2 to 5. Work on the Forums will begin in early April. To volunteer, contact Debbie Reisner, (914) 481-3234 or LWV.Rye.RyeBrook.PortChester@gmail.com. Election Day is Tuesday May 17.

Join Us at the LWV Annual Spring Luncheon

The Annual Spring Luncheon is **Friday, March 25, 12:00 pm** at the Davenport Club, 400 Davenport Avenue, New Rochelle. We are a co-sponsor together with the other two Sound Shore based Leagues, Larchmont-Mamaroneck and New Rochelle.

Honored guest and featured speaker is former New York Court of Appeals Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye. Tickets are \$45 and can be reserved by mailing a check to LWV, PO Box 811, Larchmont, NY 10538 and by emailing Anne Dooley, dooleypjd@aol.com, and informing her that you have sent your check. For questions, call Anne, (914) 381-8509.

Come join our tables and help us raise a little money for our League.

Interested in Moderating a Candidates Forum?

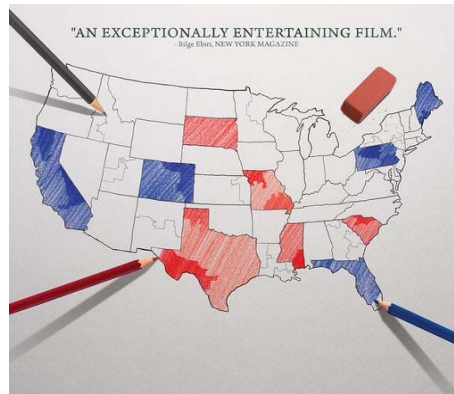
Have you ever thought, "I could do that," while watching the moderator at a candidates' forum? You now can have an opportunity to do so because we have booked Laura Fratt, the County League's Moderator Chair, to train us at a Moderators Training program. The program is scheduled for **Thursday, March 31st, 7:30 pm**, at the Posillipo Senior Center, 32 Garibaldi Place, Rye Brook.

Attendance at the Moderators Training Clinic is a "no strings attached" activity. Being trained does not obligate you to moderate anything.

If you are interested, please call Debbie Reisner, (914) 481-3234 or by email, LWV.Rye.RyeBrook.PortChester@gmail.com.

Why Will it Matter How Your Voting District is Redrawn?

Screening and Discussion of the Movie "Gerrymandering"



Gerrymandering is a provocative documentary, featured at the Tribeca Film Festival, on the issues of the once-in-a-decade, high stakes, redistricting process and its impact on the battle for control of Congress and State Legislatures. Following the census, district lines are redrawn to match the current population trends.

Gerrymandering refers to the practice of allowing politicians to determine where those lines fall. The practice of gerrymandering transcends party lines and as one commentator said, "Lines never happen by accident."

Following the movie, there will be an open discussion with Writer/Director Jeff Reichert.

Thursday, April 7, 7:30 pm

Rye Neck High School,
Community Room
Hornidge Road, Mamaroneck

Open to the public.
Students welcome.
No charge for admission.

Save the Date
Annual Meeting &
Pot Luck Cocktail Party
Friday, June 10th, 7:30 pm
21 Norman Drive, Rye

Port Chester Student Selected for Students Inside Albany Program

Ana Villasenor, a senior from Port Chester High School, has been selected for an all-expense paid trip to Albany to attend this year's *Students Inside Albany* program sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State Educational Foundation. This ninth annual *Student's Inside Albany* program will take place from **April 10-13, 2011**, and will bring approximately 40 students from across the state to Albany to get a first-hand education about their state government. The program is designed to increase high school student's awareness of their responsibility in representative government and provide information about tools necessary for meeting that responsibility.

Ana Villasenor was selected by a committee of our chapter through a competitive process designed to assess the student's interests, goals and leadership abilities. The competition was open to students attending high schools in Rye, Rye Neck, Rye Brook and Port Chester.

Ana Villasenor is a leader within Port Chester High School. She is currently Senior Class president, president of the National Honor Society and formerly Junior Class president. Ana is a three-sport athlete, was the school representative at the HOBY Leadership Conference and is an active participant



2011 Students Inside Albany
Scholarship Winner, Anna Villasenor

Students Inside Albany Program From page 2

in a number of Port Chester community programs and school organizations.

While at the conference, students will join their peers in a hands-on learning experience about how state government works. Students will participate in a series of interactive lectures on topics such as the state budget process, the role of lobbyists in the legislative process, citizen rights to access government information, the role of media in politics, and the move to reform state government. While in Albany, the students will have an opportunity to shadow their Senator and/or their Assembly member for an afternoon, with many of the students getting the opportunity to attend a session on the Chamber floor.

Come See Our New Website

At long last, our website is up and operational, thanks in large part to Reinier Eenkema van Dijk, our intern from Horace Mann School

You can view our new website at www.LWVRRBPC.org. We would welcome your suggestions as to any content you would like to see on the website. We are also seeking a volunteer to become our "webmaster." For students, we would be happy to arrange for community service credit. Responses should be emailed to LWV.Rye.RyeBrook.PortChester@gmail.com.

Check out our page on Facebook. www.Facebook.com/LWVRRBPC.

All of our Candidates and Issue Forums can be viewed on demand at both our website and Facebook page.

Westchester County League Sponsors Issue Forum on Redistricting Reform

The Issue: Rigged elections, favoring incumbents, reducing competition — Gerrymandering.

The County League's Redistricting Reform Forum is **Tuesday, March 29th, 7:30 pm**, at the Chappaqua Library, 195 S. Greeley Avenue Chappaqua. For details, see the Westchester County LWV website <http://watpa.org/lwv/>.

LWV Conducts Candidate's Forum Port Chester Village Mayoral Election

On March 2, our LWV chapter sponsored a Candidates' Forum for Mayor of the Village of Port Chester. The candidates were incumbent Mayor Dennis Pilla and current Village Trustee, Bart Didden. To promote the Forum we distributed flyers, both in English and Spanish, at various locations throughout Port Chester and by notice in the local newspapers. The Forum was well attended. We provided a simultaneous Spanish translation at the Forum. Copies of the Forum were broadcast on Port Chester public access TV and by on-demand viewing at our website and Facebook page. Special thanks to our host, Port Chester High School, and to all the committee members who worked hard to make the Candidates' Forum successful.

Should Property Taxes Be Capped?

We are planning a Property Tax Cap Issue Forum that is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 24, 7:30 pm, at the Rye Library Community Room. Please mark your calendar and watch for announcements on this hot topic.

Nominating Committee Seeking Board Candidates

Interested in a possible position on our League chapter's Board of Directors? Please contact Nominating Committee Chair, Gary Zuckerman by telephone, (914) 937-1817, or by email zucom@aol.com as soon as possible. The Nominating Committee will be presenting its recommendations to the Board on April 12.

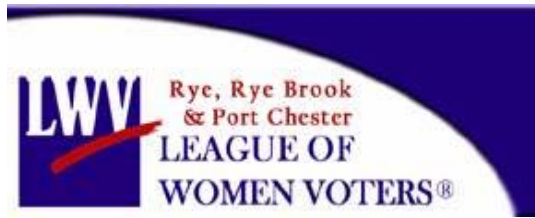
LWV Student Outreach

Our League is sponsoring a college level course at Rye Neck High School together with the Town of Rye and Building Community Bridges (BCB). 24 students are registered from Rye Neck, Blind Brook and Port Chester High Schools. The focus of the course, *Tools to Change Our World*, taught by Duke Professor William Tobin and BCB leader (and League member) Jack Zaccara, is upon research and analyses of the causes of low voter turnout in the Town of Rye.

Representatives of the League also taught the Vote 18 class to two classes at Rye Neck High School. Vote 18 is a fun, fast-paced interactive game taught to government and civics classes at high schools during one class period. It teaches students the history of voting, makes it relevant in their lives, and engages them in the world of politics. The goal of Vote 18 is to show the students the value of their vote, and motivate them to stay politically engaged over the long-term. Vote 18 was successfully received at Rye Neck. We would hope to also teach the Vote 18 class at the other high schools in our communities.

Policy Regarding Members' Email Addresses

The Rye, Rye Brook & Port Chester League Board has adopted the policy that unless expressly instructed by members to do so, we will keep confidential our members' email addresses. In order to remain in contact with members of our chapter, we will maintain our own private email list. Any of our members who would like to receive emails from the Westchester County, New York State and US Leagues regarding news, advocacy initiatives and calls to action are welcome to do so. Please call Steve Meyers, (914) 967-0447, or by email at steve@shmeyers.com. He will see to it that your email address is included in those affiliated League's databases.



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Email:
www.LWV.Rye.RyeBrook.PortChester@gmail.com

Website:
www.LWVRRBPC.com

Facebook Page:
www.Facebook.com/LWVRRBPC

LWV Spring 2011 Newsletter

The League of Women Voters of Rye, Rye Brook & Port Chester is a nonpartisan political organization that promotes political responsibility through the informed and active participation of citizens in government.

Our mission is to foster a better understanding of policy issues that will impact our lives and our communities.



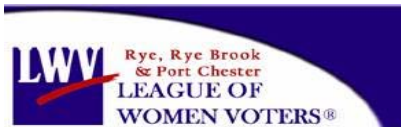
**Membership Form for the Rye, Rye Brook & Port Chester
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**
You can also join online at our website, www.LWVRRBPC.org

**SIGN-UP
NOW**

Return Application and check(s) to
LWV RYE-RB-PC
PO Box 194, Rye, NY 10580

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY, STATE, ZIP _____
TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

Select Membership Level: *Make checks payable to Rye, Rye Brook & Port Chester LWV*
____ Individual \$65 ____ Family \$85 ____ Sponsor \$125* ____ Patron \$250* ____



The LWV is a 501 (C) 4 advocacy organization, membership dues are not tax deductible.
*Includes membership. Monies in excess of \$65 Individual and \$85 Family go to the LWV Educational Foundation, a 501 (C) 3 organization, and are tax deductible.