



# HEADLINES

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WHITE PLAINS

PRESIDENT, MADELINE ZEVON

[www.lwwvp.org](http://www.lwwvp.org)

JANUARY 2012

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DESIGN: ROBERTA LAZARUS



## **ANNUAL WINTER PARTY Honoring Barbara and Paul Schwarz**

*Please join us at the home of  
Janice Abbott and Richard Bernstein  
177 Soundview Avenue*

**Sunday, January 29th, from 3 to 5 PM**

rsvp by January 14, checks payable to LWWVP Marjorie Davies, Treasurer  
90 Bryant Avenue Apt 5CF, White Plains, NY 10605

**\$20 per person/\$35 for two, in advance - \$25 per person at the door**

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\* Off board

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Our program on the French-American school was a big success. There were about 300 people in attendance. We received wonderful coverage in the *White Plains Examiner* and the *White Plains Patch*. Although it was a difficult program to assemble, it went off well, with both sides clearly articulating their views and active audience participation. For those of you who missed it, it can be viewed on our web site. (See article elsewhere in this issue.)

We have a new member on our Board, Ellen Blauner, who implemented our Student In Albany program last year and has agreed to handle it again this year. She also agreed to be on the LWV's County Committee for the Running & Winning program, whereby high school girls will be mentored by female politicians and encouraged to go into politics. So, we are pleased to give Ellen the title of Chair of Youth Programs.

We are so proud of the statement the Housing Committee of the LWV of Westchester made on the affordable housing settlement calling for both sides (HUD and the County) to "put confrontational politics aside and work together." The League's statement was extensively quoted in the *Journal News* on Dec. 15th. The League, being strictly non-partisan, is the voice of reason and sanity on this issue. (Unfortunately the *Journal News* bold headline used initials LMV, not LWV--a major typo.)

January 18th is Lobby Day for the LWVNYS in Albany. All League members are invited to come and learn about the League's positions, tour the capitol, watch the Senate or Assembly in action and possibly meet some key legislative staffers. One issue that will be discussed is the need for increasing voter turnout. Our state has one of the lowest voter turnouts in the country. Other states have been successful in putting through reforms and the League has prepared a plan for New York. If you are interested in attending, contact me for details.

We are delighted to be honoring Paul and Barbara Schwarz at our January 29th Annual Winter Party. There could not be a more deserving couple for this honor. We hope you will join us on this wonderful occasion.

Madeline Zevon, President



# ANNUAL PARTY HONOREES

The Honorees for the LWV's annual Winter Party are the husband and wife team of Paul and Babara Schwarz. This is a couple that just can't say No to White Plains. Below is a very brief synopsis of only some of the things they have been doing for White Plains. We are definitely a better commnity for having them as part of our whole. We hope you can join us January 29 to have fun in recognizing our Local Treasure: **Paul and Barbara Schwarz.**



Barbara Schwarz grew up with her mother being a member of the LWV as was her aunt and her Mom's friends. So of course it just seemed like part of "what one did". After meeting Paul and getting married 6 months later, White Plains became their home. In 1975, LWV member Ruth Davis invited Barbara to the annual LWV luncheon. Barbara was hooked. So her first community involvement was the LWV. Since then she has been on the LWV's nominating committee, education budget committee, and hosted many LWV events. She has also been on the Board of Directors of Cage-Educage, Foundation for Public Education in WP, and the Gedney Farms Neighborhood Assn. The WP & Scarsdale PTAs and her synagogue Kol Ami are other areas where she has spent considerable energy.

Barbara taught at George Washington elementary school. Since retirement, she substitutes on a part-time basis. Her most special interest is her family, which includes her children Stephen and Susie; Stephen is married to Kristen and they have produced the apple of her eye: grandson Wile. Other interests are the theater, Philharmonic, opera, art, tennis, bicycling, exercise classes, travel, art courses, history and current events, and just generally being involved with our community.

Paul Schwarz is a lifetime White Plains resident. He has had a career working with young people, as a teacher and a summer-camp administrator. Retired since 2002 from Scarsdale Middle School, where he had taught English and Public Speaking, he spends his time today working on a number of issues, more often concerning seniors.

Paul is involved with not-for-profit groups and on several boards, including the Westchester Public Private Partnership for Aging Services and the White Plains Public Library. He is president of the boards of Meals-on-Wheels of White Plains and Aging in Place in White Plains. Paul is treasurer of the Rotary Club of White Plains, plus he has been known to give a rousing start to their meetings with his piano accompaniment to their heartfelt musical salute to America. He has also given speech workshops for Family Services of Westchester and the County Department of Senior Programs as well as being involved with advocacy groups in affordable housing and intergenerational programming. Paul writes newsletters for several charitable organizations and mentors a White Plains elementary school student once a week in an after-school program, and so much more than space allows us to enumerate.

# EXCERPTS from the WESTCHESTER COUNTY LWV BUDGET STATEMENT



There is much to like in this budget proposal...much that is not likeable but necessary...and much yet to be addressed.

**First**, what we like.

We applaud holding the County tax levy flat. This is an appropriate measure in light of our residents' and businesses' current economic stress.

The League particularly commends the County for not invading the undesignated fund balance. This sound financial policy should help preserve our AAA bond rating. The ability to borrow, at low cost, could finance much needed infrastructure projects.

**Next**, what is not likeable, but necessary.

The proposed layoff of 210 County employees, while regrettable, is a consequence of the failure to negotiate new contracts, especially involving shared costs of health benefits. It appears to us this leaves the County with no other alternative.

We understand the program and agency cuts were made to achieve the flat tax goal. But there is the as-

**(delivered 12/5/11 to the Board of Legislators)**

sumption built into the budget that as the County steps back, the cuts will be replaced by Federal and State support, other non-County government service providers, and private contributions. The League is concerned that the County remain aware that many of these programs and agencies provide services and aid to our residents most in need. Therefore, the League recommends that the County establish a system to carefully monitor and analyze the impacts of these cuts throughout the next year. "Safety nets" for the most in need must continue, even if not paid for by the County.

**Finally**, we believe there are three major problems not addressed in the proposed budget: State mandates, County-wide reassessment, and flood mitigation.



## CITY FINANCES

Meetings of the entire Budget and Management Advisory Committee were held on October 5th and November 29th, with much interim work being accomplished by Subcommittees concerned with commercial solid waste and fleet management. In advance of the November meeting, the Committee received the Interim Financial Report for the three months ended September 30, 2011. This report is an internal document, is unaudited, and does not contain all of the information that would be included in the comprehensive annual financial report. Nonetheless, the Management Discussion and Analysis did review the excess of revenues over expenditures for the three months, pointing out the increases in property tax as well as sales and use tax revenues over the same period in the prior year.

Critical to the financial decision-making process is an understanding of the impact of required pension contributions for employees covered by both the New York State Employees Retirement System and the New York State Police and Fire Retirement System. There have been increases in City contributions to both of these funds, and at the October meeting of the full Committee it was stated that the budget impact of pension expenditures will continue to be closely monitored.

Earlier issues of *Headlines* discussed the City's plan to institute an Automatic Side Loader Pilot Project to assess possible changes in the method of collecting residential garbage. Use of more modern trucks could enhance efficiency and lead to cost saving. Early in December, residents in several neighborhoods began to participate in the pilot project.

The Committee is also looking at ways to improve the operation and use of its motor vehicles. The creation of a motor pool, the installation of GPS (providing the capability to monitor geographic usage), and the phasing in of an automatic fuel shut-off feature in newly purchased small trucks can improve vehicle utilization.

Submitted by Roseanne Klein,  
City Budget Chair



# LWV FORUM ON THE PROPOSED FRENCH AMERICAN SCHOOL OF NEW YORK (FASNY)

It turned out that setting up only 100 chairs before our LWV sponsored forum on FASNY was woefully inadequate. According to the newspaper *The White Plains Examiner*, there were "close to 300 people" in attendance that night of November 10. Obviously, this is a topic of intense interest to White Plainsers. The LWV appreciates the advance publicity given by the internet newspaper *White Plains Citizen Net Reporter* and by post-event articles such as those in *The Examiner* and in the *WP Patch*.

The evening began at the old Ridgeway Country Clubhouse. This venue was selected so that those attending could get an up close look at the proposed site. Our president Madeline Zevon began the evening with the following statement:

**The League of Women Voters is sponsoring this informational meeting so that we may better understand the facts and issues surrounding the proposed French American School in White Plains. I believe this is the first time the two opposing groups have been together in the same program. The League has not taken a position for or against the proposal. We are holding this forum as a public service. It will be telecast on White Plains Public Access TV and there will be a link to the broadcast on our web site [www.LWVWP.org](http://www.LWVWP.org)**

Concise opening presentations by the City's consultant/environmental lawyer Steve Silverberg, by FASNY's lawyer Michael Zarin, and by the former president of the Gedney Association Robert Stackpole offered their plans and views in a nutshell. This highlighted what the variety of potential resolutions could be and what the process would be to achieve such resolution.



From left: Resident Activist Robert Stackpole; Moderator Carolyn Stevens; and FASNY lawyer Michael Zarin

The following period for questions and answers gave more details. There were a super abundance of questions turned in by the audience to the moderator; many, many more than there were time to ask and answer. The moderator consolidated questions that were on a similar topic. The evening's questions concentrated on what the community's concerns were (particularly traffic and water issues).

For those of you who still have unanswered questions, you are urged to contact your local elected officials on the Common Council who will make the ultimate decision on the FASNY proposal.



## MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the White Plains League of Women Voters is a sign of your support for our goals and activities to educate and inform the White Plains community. It takes the power of many to accomplish this. Whether you wish to be an active member or simply provide the important financial membership dollars, **WE NEED YOUR HELP**. To join our League, get questions answered, or suggest someone interested in League membership, contact Membership Chair:

**DORIS DINGOTT** 4 Macy Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605

Ddingott@gmail.com 289-0869

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

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Tel # \_\_\_\_\_

Check your interest in the following areas.

- Voter Service
- Environment
- Health Care
- Youth
- Other

Enclosed is my membership check : \$55 for individual or \$80 for 2 person household. We are a non-partisan, non-profit organization. Because we lobby on issues, your membership dues are not tax deductible.

**Checks should be made payable to LWV White Plains**

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
17 DUPONT AVENUE, WHITE PLAINS, NY 10605  
Address service requested

Non-profit Org.  
PSRT STD  
WHITE PLAINS. NY  
Permit #235

### **LWVUS REQUESTS LOCAL LEAGUE'S SUGGESTIONS ON ADVOCACY PRIORITIES**

One of the great advantages of being part of the League of Women Voters is that we can have our voice heard on a local, County, State and National level. We just received a request from the LWVUS to submit suggestions to the National Board on any of their issues for which we would like them to actively advocate. Our Health Care Committee will be submitting the following statement:

The League of Women Voters of Westchester County, New York, requests that the LWVUS strongly advocate for Single Payer Health Care. Since 1993 the League has supported a position to: "provide a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost to all U.S. residents." Although the current Affordable Care Act will improve the health care system in this country, it still leaves over 20 million people uninsured and cost containment has not been adequately addressed. This is primarily due to the market-based model of financing. This falls short of the League's goals.

In a time of severe financial debt, it is imperative that we put in place the most cost-saving plan. At the LWVUS 2010 Convention, a Single Payer, Medicare-for-All, resolution was enthusiastically passed. Thus far there is little advocacy for this position.

### **2012 Calendar**

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Sun. Jan. 29 | Annual Winter Party and Fundraiser 3 – 5pm<br>177 Soundview Avenue                      |
| Mon. Feb. 6  | Common Council Meeting<br>7:00pm Citizens to be Heard<br>7:30pm Regular Monthly Meeting |
| Mon. Feb. 13 | Board of Education Meeting<br>7:30pm at Education House                                 |
| Wed. Mar. 14 | Tour of Open Door Health Center   |
| Sun. May 6   | City Budget Brunch  |
| Tues. May 8  | School Board Candidates Meeting   |
| Wed. May 30  | Annual WPLWV Meeting  |
| Wed. June 20 | Picnic  |