



Rochester/Metro League of Women Voters

Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Voter education is one of the League's most important functions, and the League encourages all citizens to register and to cast an informed vote.

The League does not support political parties or candidates, but does take stands on important issues after careful study and research.

Membership in the League is open to all citizens of voting age.

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League Day



Local Development Corporations: Risks & Benefits

Join Us at the Annual Holiday Open House December 6th, 2007.

Speaker

Mr. Kent Gardner, Director

Center for Governmental Research and League member,

Presenting the report and commentary on:

Local Development Corporations

5:00 - 7:30 PM

AAUW House

494 East Ave

Rochester, New York

The Local Government Committee has been studying Local Development Corporations, and Kent's presentation will add to the body of knowledge the committee has accumulated. It promises to be provocative and interesting. There will be time to socialize and enjoy some Holiday Cheer. It gives us all a chance to celebrate the Leagues accomplishments.

We Hope to See You There,

The Board of Directors



From Your President

by Dorothy Borgus



Our work is cut out for us. Government in Albany is at a standstill. Why? The politicians we elected have many excuses for their inactivity... none of which make much sense.

“Troopergate” has Albany riding a political merry-go-round despite the fact it is in the hands of the Public

Integrity Commission. It’s time for the high-minded politicians we elected to get a move on and put the interests of the State ahead of their political party. Tell them, “Bicker on your own time.”

We need a firm agreement on campaign finance reform. Lawmakers will continue to drag their feet on legislation that will lessen their war chests unless we the public demand action and force a reduction in the power of special interest groups.

What other issues have been bottled up in Albany for months? Power plant siting despite the detrimental effect on New York’s business due to high energy

costs. Judges’ pay and the dubious linkage to legislators’ pay. Confirmation of appointments. A capital budget for upstate NY projects. Taxes. In short, a litany of unfinished business.

Yet, our state leaders, including Governor Spitzer, can’t get past politics. In a short few weeks the Legislature will re-convene in Albany. Your representatives will have their plate full in January, but now, while they are home, they have time to listen. Call, write or email them and tell them to get moving. Remind them that they were all fired-up reformers when they wanted your vote! Get an answer why last June’s unfinished work is still gathering dust and what each one, individually, is planning to do about it.

League members are well known for taking action. If each of us contacts our own lawmakers, while they are home for the holidays, it is difficult to ignore the message. Tell them to stop the tit-for-tat politics of Albany and get New York moving again. It’s time for them to move these vital issues from the “to-do list” to “DONE”.

I wish each of you a Happy Thanksgiving. And remember to thank a member of our armed forces for his/her sacrifice and dedication. We all know one....or many....to be proud of and thankful for.

Dorothy

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK Luncheon

A lot of planning and hard work went into making our annual Making Democracy Work luncheon a success. This year we increased the number of patrons for the event. Thank you to all who joined the Carrie Chapman Catt Circle. Community participants are becoming more involved in Fair Election Campaign Practices, signing the pledge and supporting the League. Also, our auction items were popular – food, wine, DVD, a warm robe and good books, etc. Next year’s luncheon is already on the drawing board.

Comments received indicate that those who attended had a wonderful time. Speaker Blair Horner spoke about bringing transparency to state government through a user friendly website he is developing for New York State; it will allow citizens to access information about contributors, contributions, legislation, sponsors, individual legislators and much, much more. Mr. Horner hopes to have the site on line in the near future. League members will be looking for it!

Nancy Kleintop, *VP Development*



Lois Geiss, *President of the Rochester City Council and League member*

Blair Horner, *Special Assistant to the Attorney General*



Can You Help with the Open House?

Special invitations to the 2007 Annual Open House have gone out to all community partners and participants in League programs to thank them for supporting us. This is a popular event, and help is needed in planning it. Your contribution will be welcome to do one of the following:

Be an underwriter for the event by:

- making a contribution of \$25, \$50, \$75 or \$100 to help cover room rental and the cost of food
- contribute a store prepared food
- volunteer to help organize the event.

Please phone the League office at 262-3730 and leave a message, if you can help.

Nancy Kleintop, *VP Development*

Colorful VOTER

Have you checked the LWV website lately? The VOTER appears in color and is there for members and nonmembers to read.

When we published the October VOTER, we had an immediate response from a member of the Schenectady LWV about the article on the Ukrainian visitors.

Go to www.lwv-rma@frontiernet.net, read the VOTER before it arrives in the mail, and also learn more about our League.

Jane Schmitt, *VOTER Editor*



The program focused on three primary areas related to our consensus in January. They were: Family Reunification, Economic Needs and Enforcement Difficulties. Each of our speakers, **Maggie Catillaz** (immigration attorney with Harter, Secrest), **Walter Ruehle** (immigration attorney with Legal Aid Society) and **Tom DiSimone** (Assistant Special Agent with Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the Dept. of Homeland Security), shared their perspective related to these topics. Each has to work with the current legislation, and they gave us their opinions on what works and what needs to be fixed.

The committee felt that most of the major points were covered and will be reviewing the consensus questions before the January meeting to be sure no pro or con is left unaddressed.

But most important, for both those in attendance and those who will be joining us for the first time in January, please refer to the LWVUS web site for several different articles related to Immigration. Go to www.lwv.org and click on LEFT side of the page "Follow our study and get educated". From there you will find the background papers, panel discussions, and the Consensus Kit we will be using for discussion.

And, finally, if you have a question or comment, please don't keep it to yourself. Call the chair, Georgia DeGregorio, at 787-9692 or send her an email at georgiatd@frontiernet.net. Our committee will get back to you or be sure it is included in the consensus discussion.

Georgia DeGregorio, *Chair Immigration Study*

New Members

Aryls Buckingham
20 Winchester St.
Rochester, NY 14615
(585) 865-4673

Virginia and Bill Maier
19 Caltalpa Rd.
Rochester, NY 14617
(585) 342-0633
vbmaier@rochester.rr.com

Anita Miller
240 Hibiscus Drive
Rochester, NY 14618

Gurdip and Uma Sethi
125 Pelham Rd.
Rochester, NY 14610
585-442-7179

Getting Ready for Consensus

IT IS NOT TOO LATE

The Immigration Study Committee presented three panelists at the November 1 League Day plus several fact sheets to over 40 attending members. The fact sheets will be included in the December & January Voters for all those who wanted to be there but couldn't make it. We missed you.

Now is the Time!

Have you called your State Senator and Assembly member regarding campaign reform? Now is the time! Before the legislative session begins in January, ask your representative their position on three items regarding fund raising:

What should the contribution limits be? (presently, political parties can receive \$84,000 annually, state-wide offices \$50,000, Senate \$8,500 and Assembly \$3,400).

Should election committees be permitted to transfer funds to other campaigns?

Should monies donated for an election be used for official duties if the candidate is elected?

Katherine Smith, *VP Action*



Historical Fact and Definitions: IMMIGRATION Historical Facts

Four Peak Periods of Immigration:

1700-1800: Colonization

Early 1800's: First Western Expansion

1880's – 1920's: Industrialization – factories, mines, mills, movement from farms to cities

1980's - present: Deindustrialization which has led to major increase in service jobs and globalization of trade and labor thru such treaty agreements as NAFTA, CAFTA etc.

1952 Immigration and Naturalization Act:

Continued limits on the number of immigrants admitted annually based on quotas per country. The average was 270,000 admissions per year, half of which were set aside for highly educated immigrants. In name the 1952 Act is still on the books. However, its admission systems were completely replaced by the Amendments of 1965.

1965 Immigration and Nationality Act: Expanded admissions from nuclear family members to unification of extended family members and eliminated a system based on national origins begun in early 1920's.

1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act: Created sanctions prohibiting employers from knowingly hiring, recruiting, and referring for a fee, illegal alien workers. Authorized the legalization of illegal aliens (approximately 3 million) who had resided in the U.S. since Jan.1, 1982 referred to as "Amnesty." Created a new classification of seasonal agriculture worker by splitting the H-2 temporary worker visa program between agricultural and non-agricultural workers. Explanations of classifications will be in the January VOTER.

1996 Legal Immigration Reform and Control Act: Established a measure of control on U.S. borders through increased funding of Border Patrol and detention of aliens. Protected legal workers through worksite enforcement. Removed criminal and other deportable aliens. Required proof of citizenship for federal public benefits. (Welfare reform act in 1996 bars legal permanent residents from most federal aid programs, i.e. food stamps and Medicaid, unless they have lived in the U.S. for five years and allowed states to create further restrictions.)



Future Projections: Food for thought.

1. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 56 million new jobs will be created between 2002 and 2012. By 2010, nearly 43 percent of all job openings will require minimal education. In contrast to the 1950's, when about ½ of the students graduated from high school, now over 90% of students will graduate.
2. During this same period, more than 75 million Americans will retire and the declining native-born fertility rate will be approaching replacement levels.

Definitions

Migration vs. Immigration: Immigration refers to people moving from one country to another. Migration also includes people moving within the borders of a country (i.e. workers moving from Florida following the crops to the North and back).

Refugees/Asylees: Refugees are persons outside the U.S. and asylees are persons already in the U.S.-- both seeking protection based on fear of persecution in homeland.

Alien: A non-citizen

Undocumented/Unauthorized/ Illegal: Persons in the U.S. without permission of the U.S. Government. They enter illegally and use false documents for working; or enter the country legally but remain beyond the temporary visa expiration date. Forty percent (40%) of undocumented people fall into the latter category.

LPR (Lawful Permanent Resident): A foreign born individual who has been admitted to reside permanently in the US and is eligible to apply for US citizenship through a process called naturalization. This person is issued a Green Card.

Non-immigrant: Persons permitted to enter the U.S. for a period of limited duration including students, tourists, temporary workers, business executives, diplomats, artists, entertainers, reporters. This person is issued a Visa, a travel document to enter a country.

Guest Workers: Non-immigrants who enter the U.S. under contract to a specific employer to perform a specific job for a specific period of time in a wide variety of occupations.

NAFTA: North American Free Trade Agreement put into effect in 1994. This pact, along with globalization, has had an enormous impact on Mexico's farming community. Some economists believe that this is one major reason for the large increase in illegal immigration from Mexico in the past 15 years.

League Members are Busy!!

This fall (September and October) League Members have:

- participated in the Fair Election Campaign Practices drive, voter registration, naturalization ceremonies,
- helped process absentee ballots,
- moderated candidate forums and governmental meetings,
- demonstrated the wetlands model for 3 days,
- hosted visitors from Ukraine for 8 days,
- organized a go-see tour of a Green Factory,
- presented a program on immigration issues,
- sponsored the *Making Democracy Work* Luncheon
- attended numerous meeting as league representatives and
- worked on committees within the League.

However there is one thing missing: **YOU**. Only a small percentage of League members manage to do all these things. Always, we need more volunteers! If any one of these activities interests you, please contact the League office at 262-3730. Any amount of time you can give will be greatly appreciated and will be rewarding.

Member of the Month: **NANCY KLEINTOP.**

A hurrah for making the MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK LUNCHEON a success. All her planning and hard work are greatly appreciated!

Wetland Thank You

The mailman delivered a package of thank you letters to the home of Ann Jones; they were from fifth grade students at Good Shepherd School who attended Field Days sponsored by the Soil & Water Conservation District. During Field Days environmental groups throughout the area sent representatives to Ellison Park where they gave presentations for 3 days to school children who were bused in.

The Natural Resources committee of the LWVRMA has participated in this program for approximately 8 years. They demonstrate the value of wetlands using their interactive table top model. The program goes over very well with the children, and they frequently shout out their thanks; but this is the first year Ann has received a package of thank you letters. To quote one student, " I think that yours was my most favorite one out of all of them because yours was the coolest." The Natural Resources committee receives more requests than they can fill for demonstrations. If you would like to participate in this activity, please call Ann Jones at 244-9337.

Local Government Committee Report

Last year, the Local Government Committee started looking into Local Development Corporations (LDCs). It became apparent that these organizations operate with little oversight or public scrutiny. As a result of League concerns about the potential for abuse by LDCs, the Center for Governmental Research (CGR) undertook a study of LDCs. The Bee Bibby Endowment, in conjunction with the League, is underwriting the study.

The Local Government Committee reviewed the draft report and joined Dorothy Borgus and Bee Bibby to discuss our suggestions for modifications to the report.

Kent Gardner will present the final report at the League Holiday Open House on December 6. The committee will discuss the report more fully at our meeting on December 13. Please join us as we analyze the report and discuss what action the League should take based upon the findings. The meeting will be at 10 am at the home of Bee Bibby. Her address is in the new membership directory, or you can send an email to Judy Weinstein at j-weinstein@rocketmail.com or call her at 442-9815.

Judy Weinstein, *Chair of Local Government Committee*

NEW!! Give to the United Way and your local League

Make a donation to the United Way and designate the Rochester League of Women Voters as the recipient by specifying Member #3455. You decide what portion of your donation should be designated to the League. It's easy and convenient. Try it.



DECEMBER 2007

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3 VOTER Deadline	4	5	6 LWV Holiday Open House, evening 5:00-7:30 AAUW House	7	8
9	10	11	12	13 Executive Committee Local Gov't Committee 10 am Naturalization Ceremony 10AM and 1 PM	14	15
16	17	18	19 Natural Resources Committee 9:30am	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27 Board Meeting 1:45	28	29
30	31					

JANUARY 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 New Year's Day	2 VOTER Deadline	3	4	5
6	7	8	9 Membership Committee SPOT 2:00 pm	10 League Day Consensus 10:00 am Executive Committee	11	12
13	14	15	16 Natural Resources Committee 9:30	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 Board Meeting 1:45 PM	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

*Board meets in the Bagel Bin Conference Room, 2600 Elmwood Avenue, at 1:45 PM on the fourth Thursday of each month.
Executive Committee meets at the Town & Country Restaurant, 3205 Chili Avenue, at 9:00 AM on the 2nd Thursday of each month.*

*League Days are normally held at 1600 East Avenue at 10:00 AM on the first Thursday of the month.
Parking is at the rear of the building.*

*Natural Resources meets at the home of Ann Jones, 244-9337; Social Policy and Immigration Committees,
call Georgia DeGregorio at 585-787-9692 and Local Government Committee call Judy Weinstein at 585-442-9815*

AM Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Monroe County Office Building, 39 W. Main St;
PM Naturalization Ceremonies are held at Federal Court House at 100 State Street.

League Days are open to the public. Calendar information subject to change.

For more complete information consult our website at www.lwv-rma.org, call the office at 262-3730 or e-mail us at lwvrma@frontiernet.net

Membership Committee Report

The newly formed Membership Committee had its first meeting at **The Spot** Coffee House on East Ave. Wednesday November 7th. I thought a lot of coffee would be necessary, but not really. The ideas and suggestions flew; only three of us were able to attend, but when we left we had a plan! We formulated some long-term and short-term goals and decided we would get our thoughts out to our members. The first and most important goal is that, starting January 2008, we pledge to raise our Rochester LWV membership by 10% for the year.

We plan to target other active organizations in order to find individuals who have the same interests and goals as the LWV. We will focus somewhat on the westside of Rochester; currently the highest percentage of members is from the eastside.

We plan to put together New Membership Packets with information about our history, how the LWV works, updated calendars of our upcoming events and committee lists.

We are planning to put together a mentor program of longtime members who will 'adopt' new members and work with them for the first 6 months or year.

We are hoping to plan a workshop with NYS Membership Chair Marcia Merrins to role play and work out specific ways to bring potential members into the LWV.

As you know our LWV has a loyal and stable base, and the majority of our members have been in the League for years. However, now is the time to bring in new members and introduce them to the goals and activities of the LWV – and get them involved!

I am charging all of our members to think about their friends and family; ask a sister, cousin, or newly retired friend to a LWV activity. Take time to let them see what we do and how much fun and important League work is. The Geneva LWV has been very successful in expanding their membership, and their answer to how they accomplished it was simple, "Just Ask!" If you don't ask, you don't get! I think people are sometimes afraid to ask a friend because they feel it might be an imposition, but think about it. Being asked to join an organization is a compliment and, even if they can't or don't join, we've still taught someone about the League!

Sally Brown, *VP Membership*

Thanks for Your Help –Let's Do It Again in February

Thanks to Phyllis Masters, Dorothy Borgus, Ann Jones, Sula Baxter, Chris Burleigh, Sally Brown, Shirley Eberly, Andrea Krist, Tamara Sheppard and Barbara Hendry for helping sort ballots on November 6th, Election Day.

Please mark Tuesday, February 5th, 2008 on your calendar to help sort absentee ballots for the NY presidential primary. The Board of Elections is expecting to be flooded with absentee ballots. They have asked the League to provide at least 20 people to sort ballots. This not only helps them and makes us a part of the voting process, but also is a great way for the League to make money. We'll be in touch when we get closer to the date.

Barbara Hendry, *VP Voter Services*

Join the League Today!



Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Check Amount: _____

Level of Membership: _____

Yes! I would like to get The VOTER in my E-Mail!

Please send this form and your check payable to League of Women Voters/RMA to:
LWV/RMA, Times Square Building,
45 Exchange Street, Suite 508,
Rochester, New York 14614

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

Individual/Associate.	\$70
Household.	\$100
Susan B. Anthony/Frederick Douglass	\$150
Carrie Chapman Catt	\$200
Student (full-time/under 25)	\$25
Low income, call office	Sliding Scale



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**December VOTER Deadline is
December 3rd!**

Goals of the League of Women Voters:

- To encourage informed citizen's participation in government and politics
- To influence public policy through education and advocacy

Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it.
Thomas Paine, The American Crises