

The Leaguer

Volume 12, Issue 2
February 2008

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

www.lwvchautauqua.org 672-4275

"The Erosion of Women's Rights"

*Joint meeting with the American Association of University Women
of the Dunkirk-Fredonia Area*

Honorable Judith S. Claire, Speaker

March 8th at JCC North at 10 a.m.



HONORABLE JUDITH S. CLAIRE was elected to the position of Chautauqua County Family Court Judge in 1998. Prior to that, she worked as an attorney for sixteen years in a private general practice in the partnership, VanEvery and Claire. Immediately before her election, she was Confidential Assistant and Matrimonial Referee to the Supreme Court Justice, Honorable Joseph Gerace from 1992 to 1998. Following graduation from law school, Judge Claire spent a year in Albany as staff attorney for the Governor's Health Planning Commission and has been listed in Who's Who in American Law.

Judge Claire has received statewide attention for her work as Chautauqua County Family Court Judge. Initiatives have included the start up of a C.A.S.A. (Court Appointed Special Advocates) program for neglected children, an expanded and strengthened mediation program that has served as a model for the State, efforts to assist teenagers who age-out of the foster care system, parent education programs, as well as operation of one of the first rural Family Treatment Drug Courts in the state.

In 2004, Judge Claire was appointed to the New York State Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee, which is a statewide committee that helps formulate policy, recommends amendments to state law, and proposes revisions to Court procedures and rules.

She is a frequent speaker and presenter at seminars and workshops. In addition, Judge Claire has received various awards and honors over the years including the prestigious Unified Court System, 8th Judicial District Gender and Racial Fairness Award in May 2005 for her significant contributions to the judicial system.

Judge Claire has volunteered with many community organizations throughout her legal career involving children and families including Girl Scouts, Family Services, Chautauqua County Commission on Families, P.E.A.C.E. (Parent Education and Custody Effectiveness), Falconer High School Compact Team, Workforce Youth Council, and BOCES Advisory Council. In addition, her community activities include Audubon Society and the Breast Cancer Support Group.

Inside This Issue

Paper Ballots in NYS	2
Marcia's Memo	3
Welcome to New Members	3
Recommended Study	4
Legislative Priorities 2008	5 & 6
Calendar	7
Membership Renewal Form	8

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
FREDONIA, NY
PERMIT NO. 18

LWV Chautauqua County
42 Rosalyn Court
Fredonia, NY 14063

PAPER BALLOTS IN NYS!

State of Voting Machines in Chautauqua County - January 2008

In January a federal court ordered all voter polling sites in New York State to have located a so called Ballot Marking Device in each New York State poll site for any 2008 federal September Primary or November General Election. Further, the federal court has decreed that all non-compliant voting machines (mechanical lever voting machine) be replaced with Help America Vote Act compliant voting machines in 2009. The county Boards of Elections throughout the state are charged with compliance with the federal court order.



A Ballot Marking Device (BMD) can be best described as a machine that allows a handicapped citizen to vote independently and without assistance at a regular poll site. The voting machine is so complex, it enables a multi-parapaplegic to vote by a sip and puff method through a straw. Of course, the BMD would also allow a blind, limited sight and hearing- impaired person to vote independently. Even voters who forgot their reading glasses might use the BMD to enlarge e the ballot so they could see it.

Previously, Chautauqua County purchased five Automark brand name BMDs to assist voters and to meet the requirements of a previous federal court order to provide limited relief to handicapped voters. The locating of five Automark voting machines in five different areas of the County in 2006 was among the most aggressive rollout plans to serve handicapped voters in New York State. The rollout was preceded by an aggressive visitation and Automark demonstration program to more than twenty county handicapped service agencies or organizations, a massive use of the free radio, television and print media, and paid advertisements in the county's two official newspapers. Our neighbors in Erie, Niagara, Cattaraugus and Allegany Counties situated just one BMD at each of the county Boards of Elections. ***In the end, however, only a few Chautauqua County handicapped voters even used the available BMDs.***

After 2006 and since the time that the Chautauqua County Board of Elections made its decision to purchase Automark BMDs, Sequoia Voting Systems began marketing its ImageCast brand BMD and election district based **optical scan ballot** counter. The ImageCast BMD and optical scan ballot counter is a one stop solution for meeting the federally ordered BMD requirements for 2008 and the federally ordered mechanical lever voting machine replacement for 2009.

MACHINE PURCHASE: With the nearly \$1.2 million of federal HAVA funding in place for Chautauqua County and the required five percent match already in place and encumbered from previous county budget cycles, Chautauqua County has sufficient funds to purchase one device for each of our ninety polling sites. However, we will have a budgetary shortfall if the county replaces lever machines on a one-for-one basis. The Board of Elections is currently working on an election district consolidation plan that will allow for maximum use of each machine and to allow the BOE to stay within budget.

MACHINE STORAGE: The Board of Elections currently leases a 4,200 square foot climate controlled storage facility at the North Chautauqua County Office Building (Graf Building). We have been transporting AVM machines from this facility and are confi-

dent that it will meet our storage needs in the future.

STAFF FOR TESTING AND MANAGEMENT OF NEW VOTING MACHINES:

With centralization of elections, the Board of Elections was funded with two new Election Machine Site Coordinators to manage these new obligations.

TRANSPORTATION OF VOTING MACHINES:

The Board of Elections has been successfully working with local moving

companies to privately transport AVM voting machines. We plan to continue this same RFP process and do not expect any future problems or issues. The transportation is currently funded, but is tight and we may experience a short fall in the this budget item with double transportation of voting machines this fall.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION OF ELECTION INSPECTORS AND PUBLIC:

The Board of Elections intends to use its federal HAVA training funds already procured for the training of the public and Election Inspectors in 2009 for use of new voting machines.

SUPPLIES FOR BMD ROLL OUT IN 2008: The doubling up of ballot related supplies for a second voting machine in 2008 is an unforeseen and untabulated and unfunded expense.

OTHER POLL SITE EXPENSES: The Board of Elections will need to purchase ballot marking tables, privacy sleeves and marking pencils, and future ballot costs will triple over the current budget. (To itemize just a few of the expenses.)

2008 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: The Board of Elections intends to continue the use of the mechanical lever voting machine at all poll sites. The ImageCast voting machine would be transported to each poll site and stand ready for duty side-by-side with the AVM. It would stand ready for a full roll out and AVM replacement in 2009. Super Election Inspectors would stand ready in five quadrants to operate the ImageCast in 2008 and a full hand over and transition to trained Election Inspectors would take place in 2009.

WHAT WILL THE BOE DO WITH THE AUTOMARK MACHINES ALREADY PURCHASED:

We hope to re-sell these machines to another county using this system.

WHAT ARE THE OTHER OPTIONS? Using an Automark machine with a foreign optical scan ballot counting system or to purchase a Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting machine. Note that the DREs do not currently have the confidence of the general public and have experienced problems in other states.

IN CONCLUSION, this is meant only to be a preliminary report of the state of voting machines for Chautauqua County in January 2008. The dedicated election professionals employed at the Board of Elections will continue to modify and adapt its plan for a smooth voting machine conversion in 2008 and 2009.

Norman P. Green and Terry Niebel, Chautauqua County Commissioners of Elections



Hi Everyone,

Thank you for being a part of the League. My deep appreciation to Nancy Bleck and Minda Rae Amiran for their membership efforts. Now that you've rejoined it may be time to tell you what happens with that \$60 check you wrote to LWV Chautauqua County!

From that \$60, the state League (LWVNYS) receives \$18 Per-Member Payment (PMP) and the national League (LWVUS) receives \$26.80. It is the way local Leagues satisfy the requirement to support the state level and national levels of our three-level organization. The balance, \$13.20, remains in Chautauqua County. The PMP is a major source of income for the LWVNYS, LWVUS and LWV Chautauqua County. At the local, state, and national levels, it provides partial support for advocacy, membership, organizational activities, newsletters (The Leaguer, The State Voter and National Voter), conventions, studies, programs, state board

meetings, committee meetings, and staff. The LWV Chautauqua Board recognizes and appreciates the significant commitment members make when they pay their dues.

About 30% of LWVNYS budget is supported by PMP which is one of the lowest in the country. I expect LWVUS use of PMP is similar.

LWVUS has asked all leagues to express a view on a number of issues as part of a national immigration study. The LWVUS background materials can be found on the LWVUS website. The board reached consensus on most of the questions as to issues in immigration law and in the treatment of undocumented immigrants already in this country.

I will be attending the LWVUS Convention in Portland Oregon representing Chautauqua County in May. I am also a nominated candidate for the LWVUS Board of Directors. I am very excited about the prospect of serving at the national level. My heart will always be in Chautauqua County and I will continue to be a part of keeping our community vibrant and strong.

If you are interested in making a difference in our community by taking a more active role, say yes when the nominating committee calls you!

Sincerely,

We Welcome Our Newest Members!

John Ames

5624 West Lake Road
Fredonia, NY 14063
679-7947

jdames@netsync.net

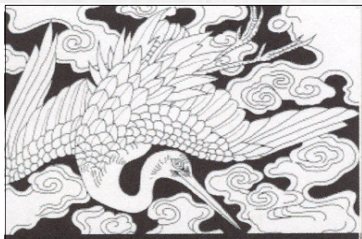
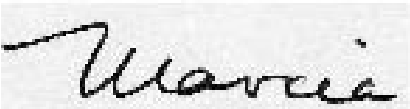
Malinda Stoller

127 Cowden Place
Jamestown New York 14701

Ann Beebe

7801 Raspas Hill Road
Panama, NY 14767
355-6355
jabs@madbbs.com

487-0450



Laura Mitchell-Woolson, L.Ac.
Classical Five Element
Acupuncturist



One Park Place, Suite 207
Fredonia, NY 14063
(716) 672-9674
www.5blessings.com
fiveblessings@mac.com

REGISTRATION "The Erosion of Women's Rights"

10 a.m. JCC North

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

\$5 Continental Breakfast

Send to: Martha Burdick

5206 West Lake Road

Dunkirk NY 14048

We have recommended the adoption (at the National Convention in 2008) of a National Study entitled:

**“The Advisability of Using the National Popular Vote Compact
among the States as a Method for Electing the President.”**

Why?

NY State Delegates Embraced Study of Compact for NPV

After lobbying and caucusing, delegates attending the NY State Convention in May 2007 enthusiastically adopted the non-recommended study: *Should NYS Join the Compact for a National Popular Vote?* By the time of the final vote at the Sunday morning plenary session there was only one “no” vote. The motion to adopt the study more than met the requirement of support from 3/5 of the voting delegates.

In June, the NPV State Study Committee began its research. The timetable approved by LWVNYS board required that all study materials including consensus questions would be out to local Leagues by the end of January 2008. In fact, the NPV study guide is near completion.

Background on NPV

Under the U.S. Constitution, the states have exclusive and complete power to allocate their electoral votes, and may change their state laws concerning the awarding of their electoral votes at any time. Under the National Popular Vote bill, all of the state’s electoral votes would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The bill would take effect only when enacted, in identical form, by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes—that is, enough electoral votes to elect a President – meaning 270 of 538.

As of November 11th, the bill has 366 legislative sponsors in 47 states. 43 bills have been introduced in all but 8 States and **10 Legislative Chambers Have Now Passed the Bill:** Maryland became the first state to enact the National Popular Vote bill on April 10, 2007. The bill has also passed the Hawaii House (35-12) and the Hawaii Senate (19-4). The bill has passed the Colorado Senate and the Arkansas House. On May 2, 2007 The Illinois House of Representatives passed the National Popular Vote bill. On May 14th the California & the North Carolina Senates passed the National Popular Vote bill.

Clearly, the time is ripe to study this issue so that we know whether we support using a compact as a method for electing the President by National Popular Vote.

LWVUS Decides LWVNYS Can Not Adopt a Position on NPV

While conducting their research, the NPV Study Committee heard from Leagues across the country that they had been told that they could/should not do the NPV study for a variety of reasons. This concerned the NPV study committee and on September 17th requested clarification and assurances from LWVUS. On October 25th, after four months of work, LWVNYS was notified by our LWVUS liaison that LWVNYS could not adopt a position on the NPV because a State can not adopt a position on a National issue.

Many are distraught that LWVUS allowed us to spend precious resources on this endeavor. For four months, local Leagues have been holding education sessions, publishing articles, and educating ourselves about the NPV compact. Leagues reported that the study was generating a lot of interest from current, as well as potential new members.

In order to see why this idea merits further consideration go to: <http://www.lwvny.org/npv.html> or go to <http://www.nationalpopularvote.com/index.php>. For more information contact: Lori Dawson, LWV Saratoga, ldawson@skidmore.edu, 518-580-0547 or Carol Mellor LWV Hamptons, camellor@aol.com

TAKE ACTION



MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Dates to Remember

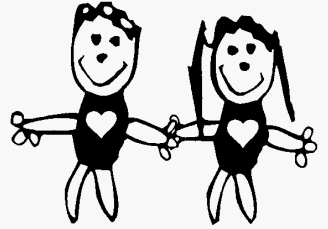
FEBRUARY 23	Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. Nancy Bleck 38 Elm Street, Fredonia 672-7363
MARCH 8	“The Erosion of Women’s Rights” – Joint Meeting with AAUW-Dunkirk-Fredonia 10:00 a.m. JCC North, Continental Breakfast. Honorable Judge Judith Claire, Speaker. Call Marti Burdick for more info. 672-5546 or martiburdick@netsync.net
MARCH 15	Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. Tillie Solomonson’s 2 Waldamere Way, Lakewood 963-8278 tilliesol@madbbs.com
APRIL 9	“What Cost Ethanol?” Clarion Hotel in Dunkirk at Noon More information in next Leaguer or call Gen Ludemann 672-4771
APRIL 26	Board Meeting, 9:30 a.m. Gen Ludemann 129 Lambert Avenue Fredonia, 672-4771
MAY 14	Annual Meeting at Shorewood Country Club

THANK YOU TO OUR ADVERTISERS

RANDY’S ANTIQUES
41 East Main Street
Fredonia, NY 14063
(716) 679-9587
Buy and Sell
Estate Sales Conducted


The 1891 Fredonia Opera House
Box Office 716.679.1891 www.fredopera.org
DFT Communications Spotlight
Lundquist Jazz Series
Folk in Fredonia
Carousel Family Series
Cinema Series
Special Events
Bach Festival
STORYTELLING FESTIVAL
Children's Cinema Series

Chautauqua County Association for the Education of Young Children



VILLAGE ELDERS YOGA
Carolyn Kieber Grady, RYT
Tuesdays 2:30-3:30 p.m.
Fredonia-Pomfret Senior Center
Cushing Street, Fredonia
Call to register: 672-2891
Donation: \$4.00 *****For ages 50+

DARWIN'S HEALTH CLUB, INC.



Open Mon. - Fri. 4:30 am-10 pm
Sat. 7 am-6 pm
Sun. 7 am-5 pm
679-1591
47-53 Water St.
Fredonia, NY 14063

Snowshoe Documentary Films
FOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE
www.snowshoefilms.com
PO BOX 1035
CHAUTAUQUA, NY 14722
Karen & Roy Harvey
The most powerful weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed – Steven Biko

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY



The League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

League of Women Voters of
Chautauqua County

Officers

President: Marcia Marrins

1st Vice President: Minda Rae Amiran

2nd Vice President: Nancy Bleck

3rd Vice President: Tillie Solomonson

Secretary: Claudia Ansell

Treasurer: Priscilla Bernatz

Directors: Gloria Garretson, Janet Jankowski-George, Gen Ludemann, Judy Parks, Judy Reynolds, Grace Perez de la Garza, Trudy Wojcik

Newsletter Editor: Carol Daniels

**Make Your Voice Heard
Join Us Today!**

**2008-2009 Membership
LWV Chautauqua**

Nancy Bleck, 38 Elm Street, Fredonia, NY 14063

Membership Dues: to December 31, 2008
Individual: \$60; Family: \$90; Student: \$25
(Check payable to LWV Chautauqua County)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

I would like to work on:

Local Issues

Voter Service

State/National Issues

Local Newsletter

Call me to discuss what I can do

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