




The Leaguer

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October 2008


THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY
www.lwvchautauqua.org 672-4275

**21st Century
Local Government**

Report of the New York State Commission on
Local Government Efficiency
& Competitiveness



April 2008



“Local Government Consolidation”

Noon Luncheon Meeting

OCTOBER 14

Fireside Restaurant

Stan Lundine, speaker

Reservations—Inez Krohn 792-9727

We cannot achieve real, sustainable property tax relief without addressing local government efficiency” -- Governor David A. Paterson

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**Send your dues now for
2009– 2010!**

**Use the form on the
last page !**

LWV Chautauqua County
42 Rosalyn Court
Fredonia, NY 14063

BIO

Stan Lundine serves on the Board of Directors of several private business companies, including American Capital Strategies, Ltd. (NASDAQ-ACAS), and John G. Ullman & Associates, Inc. in Corning, New York. He is on the Jamestown Advisory Board of the M&T Bank. He is also engaged in volunteer activities, including serving on the Board of Trustees of Chautauqua Institution and a member of the Board of Directors of the Robert H. Jackson Center, as well as a member of the Vestry of St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

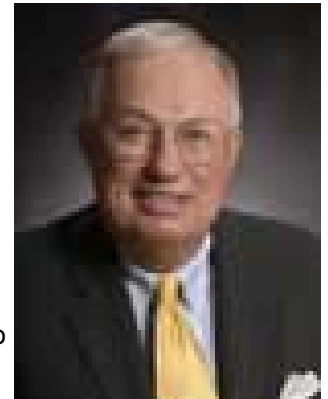
Mr. Lundine served as Lieutenant Governor of New York State from 1987 through 1994. Prior to that, he was a member of Congress for eleven years. He also served as Mayor of Jamestown, New York, from 1970 through 1976.

Lundine was Executive Director of the Chautauqua County Health Network (CCHN) and Chairman of the Board of the Chautauqua Integrated Delivery System (IDS) from its founding in 1995 until July of 2007. CCHN is a rural health network organized by the four hospitals in Chautauqua County and their physicians. The IDS consists of approximately 160 physicians and the four hospitals in the county, and provides local medical management for a Medicare managed care program.

In the past, Mr. Lundine served as Executive Director of the Foundation for Enterprise Development now known as the Beyster Institute headquartered in San Diego, California. He also served as Chair of the Worker Ownership Institute in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania which provided advice to employee-owned companies and their labor unions and as a Director of the Work in America Institute. He has served as a member of the Board of Visitors of the Terry Sanford Institute of Public Policy at Duke University and as a Director of the East-West Parliamentary Practice Project headquartered in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. He was also a visiting Professor at the Alfred University School of Business for the 1995-96 academic year.

Stan Lundine received his Bachelor's Degree from Duke University in 1961 and graduated from New York University Law School in 1964. He served as an attorney in private practice from 1965 through 1970 and also served as a part-time assistant Public Defender for Chautauqua County. Prior to his election as Mayor, he chaired the Jamestown City Planning Commission.

Born in Jamestown, New York on February 4, 1939, Mr. Lundine is married to Sara Sibley Lundine. They have two sons, John, a graduate of Duke University and a Director of Latin American Programs for Save the Children and Mark, a graduate of Dennison University, who is completing his Master's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning at Ohio State University.



“Government Consolidation”

RESERVATION FORM

OCTOBER 14th at Noon at the Stockton Inn

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Chicken Salad Croissant ____ Chicken Caesar Wrap ____

\$16

Please send in by October 1 to: Inez Krohn, 136 Mill Street, Brocton, New York, 14716

792-9727 or inezk@fairpoint.net



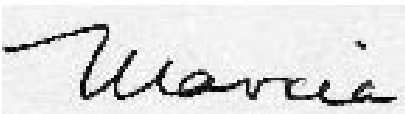
Dear League Members,

T'is the Season!

Election time is here and the internet, television, newspapers, bloggers...are all humming with campaign promises and spin doctors...and the League is busy with making sure we understand the issues, the process of voting and getting out the vote. Here are some of the things we are up to:

- Registration drive in several locations in Jamestown
- 8,900 elementary school children participating in our Take Me To Vote project
- Speaking to a political Communications class at SUNY Fredonia on the importance of voting and getting out their vote.
- Community Meeting with COPC, NAACP and Hispanic Community Leaders to get out the vote.
- Participating in a panel sponsored by the Black Students' Union following the Oct. 2 Vice-Presidential debate
- 2 meet the Candidates' Forums (see Calendar on page 7).

Before summer '08 fades into fall I want to be sure to thank our many workers at the Farm Festival. Esther Lanford did a wonderful job. Also a special thank you Carol Doino and Ann Manly who were invaluable to this project and the Chautauqua County Board of Elections who have supported us in all of our outreach efforts.



WELCOME OUR
NEWEST
MEMBERS!

Emily Ivey

29 Risley Street
Fredonia, NY, 14063
672-2463

emivey@stny.rr.com

Barb Wills

400 Lake Shore Dr. W.
Dunkirk, NY 14048
366-1934

bwills1@yahoo.com

Jean Haynes

P.O. Box 636
Brocton, NY 14716



Our September 13th kick-off event was very successful: we picked up a new member along with profit from our wonderful donated hand made items. Many thanks to those who contributed and Janet Jankowski George, who beautifully labeled everything, and Donnie Hover, who "cashed" people out.



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



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Fredonia, NY 14063
(716) 672-9674
www.5blessings.com
fiveblessings@mac.com

New York's local taxes are the highest in the nation - 79 percent above the national average. Outside of New York City, 62 percent of property taxes are school property taxes, and they have been increasing at twice the rate of inflation and salary growth. Nine of the top ten counties with the highest effective tax rates in the nation are in Upstate New York: Wayne, Niagara, Monroe, Erie, Chautauqua, Onondaga, Cayuga, Chemung and Schenectady Counties. Nassau, Westchester and Rockland Counties are in the nation's top ten in terms of prop-

LEAGUE WEIGHS IN ON TAX CAPS AND CIRCUIT BREAKER

On August 19, 2008 the League weighed in on Governor Paterson's Program Bill 62, introduced as S8736, imposing a tax cap on school district increases, and A11838, a need-based real property tax circuit breaker program and millionaire's tax. The League opposed both of the bills on the grounds that they represented one-house bills designed to provide political cover for the upcoming elections rather than the series of serious recommendations for real property tax reform and education finance reform outlined in the Suozzi Commission preliminary report, available on-line at:

www.cptr.state.ny.us/reports/CPTRPreliminaryReport_20080603.pdf . As predicted, each bill was passed by one chamber and went no further.

In formulating its positions on these two bills, the League drew upon its updated financing K-12 education and real property taxation positions to recommend:

- Awaiting the final Suozzi Commission report before tackling the issues of education finance and property tax reform;
- True implementation of a foundation approach to education, with annual cost-of-living adjustments. Under this approach the funds to provide a sound basic education would be provided by the state, after subtracting a reasonable local contribution;
- Creation of a reserve fund for education that would stabilize foundation funding (generated primarily by the state income tax) in times of economic downturn;
- Folding the entire STAR program into a real property circuit breaker program;
- Implementation of additional Suozzi Commission recommendations for cost saving as part of the reform package;
- Raising any additional state funds necessary to fund a foundation approach to education;
- Implementation of a tax cap only in conjunction with an entire reform package.

The League has had a longstanding interest in education finance and property tax reform, having studied these issues over the past 25 years as part of ongoing investigation into the manner in which New York State funds crucial services. The League last updated its positions in these areas in 2006, when, after a year-long study, it determined that:

- The state should adopt a foundation approach to funding education;
- Additional funding required to provide all children with a sound basic education should be provided by means of the state personal income tax, implemented in a progressive fashion;
- Cost-savings should be implemented by replacing the constellation of STAR programs with a real property tax circuit breaker program based on need and indexed to inflation;

Stability in the funding of education should be increased by creation of an education reserve fund, calculated to stabilize state funds available for education purposes in times of economic downturn.

Memo From LWVUS President Mary Wilson

LWVUS and 2008 Presidential Debates

August 28, 2008

Many of the delegates at the LWVUS Convention in June signed a petition requesting that I take steps to attempt to return the League of Women Voters to a role in the Presidential debates. As I indicated at Convention, I share your interest in restoring such a role for the League. To that end, I had on June 10 [sent letters to each of the presumptive nominees](#) of the two major parties offering the auspices of the League to them in presenting presidential debates, town halls or forums to the American voting public. At the time of the LWVUS Convention we had no response to the letters from either candidate despite having made specific contact with the persons we had been told by the campaigns were the appropriate staff persons to contact about debates.

Let me indicate that LWVUS had made efforts throughout the last year to reach out to the Commission on Presidential Debates in order to offer the services of the League. This included conversations last year between LWVUS Executive Director Nancy Tate and the Commission's Executive Director. On July 7, 2008, I wrote to the Commission on Presidential Debates [offering to assist them](#) in ensuring that the general election debates remain true to their overall goal: to educate voters on the candidates running for President and Vice President and their positions on the critical issues facing our nation. [I received this very brief reply in response.](#)

In the spirit with which you asked that I pursue all avenues, Nancy Tate and I scheduled a meeting with CPD Executive Director Janet Brown on July 30. We had a cordial discussion about the debates the CPD would be holding and began to explore ways that the League might fit into the CPD process. In general we discussed how the League can and always has educated the public about how to listen to debates. We also explored the need for the dialogue sparked by debates to continue among voters during the period between the three debates and whether there might be a role the League could play in that regard. Ms. Brown told us that the CPD intended to launch a web-based project as a way to keep that dialogue flowing. The next week the CPD announced a partnership with MySpace.com to create a new website, MyDebates.org, "to enhance the educational value of the televised debates, engage new audiences, and facilitate ongoing online conversation throughout the general election period." The details have not yet been announced. When they are, I will ask Nancy Tate to follow up with Ms. Brown to further explore ways the League might work with this new partnership on voter education.

Because I wanted to report to you more fully about our overtures in regard to the debates, on August 11 [I sent a second letter to the presumptive nominees](#) of the major parties asking for direct responses to our previous offer. LWVUS staff contacted the appropriate campaign staff about this matter. In response we received courteous responses from both the McCain and Obama campaigns declining our offer. View the [McCain response here](#) and the [Obama response here](#).

Although I will continue to explore ways to work with the CPD, I am sorry to report that at this time I see no opportunity for the League to have meaningful direct involvement in the presidential debates.

VOTE411.org

Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, [VOTE411.org](#) is a "one-stop-shop" for election related information. It provides nonpartisan information to the public with both general and state-specific information on the following aspects of the election process:

Absentee ballot information

Ballot measure information (where applicable)

Early voting options (where applicable)

Election dates

Factual data on candidates in various federal, state and local races

General information on such topics as how to watch debates with a critical eye

ID requirements

Polling place locations

Registration deadlines

Voter qualifications

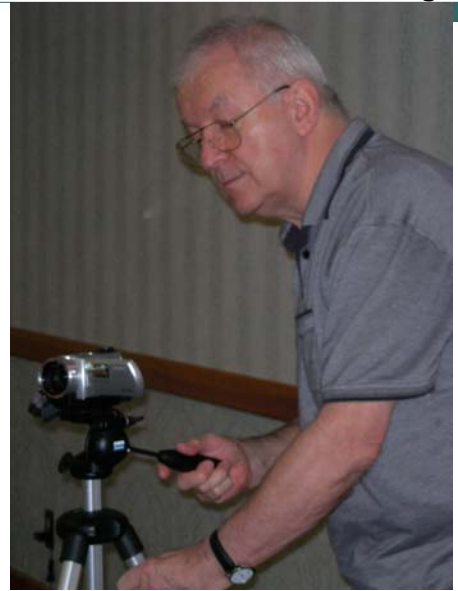
Voter registration forms

Voting machines

An important component of [VOTE411.org](#) is the polling place locator, which enables users to type in their address and retrieve the poll location for the voting precinct in which that address is located. The League has found that this is among the most sought after information in the immediate days immediately leading up to, and on, Election Day.



L-R Aaron LaVean, Steven Jasper, Janelly Alvarado Valle, Dyshan Gaines, with Minda Rae Amiran LWV Chautauqua, Voter Service Chair who did voter education class by class in August at the Cassadaga Job Corps Academy.



Bill Parks, video recording our meeting for You Tube.

We're On YouTube!

The presentation on **Project Sunlight** was sponsored by the LWV and held at the Clarion Hotel in Dunkirk, NY on Wednesday, September 17. The main speaker was John B. Maggiore, Policy Advisor, Executive Division, New York State Attorney General Office of Andrew M. Cuomo.

Volunteer Bill Parks expertly videoed the meeting and uploaded it to YouTube.

To view, click on the YouTube link:
www.youtube.com/lwvchautauqua



Project Sunlight presenter, John Maggiore

EARLY RESERVATION FORM

NOVEMBER 18TH LUNCHEON MEETING

“The National Popular Vote Compact Among States and the Electoral College” Noon at the Fireside Manor

Reservations Marti Burdick, 5206 West Lake Road, Dunkirk, NY 14048 672-5546

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

\$11 INCLUDES BEVERAGE, TAX AND TIP

Roast beef on Weck (with French Fries) _____ Tuna Salad Croissant (with Fresh Fruit) _____

Chicken Caesar Salad _____

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Dates to Remember

SEPTEMBER 17	LUNCHEON MEETING Noon, "Project Sunlight" Clarion Hotel –Reservations- Gloria Garretson at 366-3211
SEPTEMBER 18	Community Meeting with COPC, NAACP and Hispanic Community Leaders at the Clarion Hotel in Dunkirk
OCTOBER 14	LUNCHEON MEETING-Noon at the Stockton Inn "Local Government Consolidation"" with Stan Lundine Reservations—Inez Krohn 792-9727
OCTOBER 25	BOARD MEETING-9:30 a.m. Judy Parks' 6 Andrew Court, Fredonia 679-9613
OCTOBER 27	MEET THE CANDIDATES-Jackson Center, Jamestown 7 p.m.
OCTOBER 29	MEET THE CANDIDATES-1891 Fredonia Opera House, Fredonia 7 p.m
NOVEMBER 15	BOARD MEETING –9:30 A.M., Nancy Bleck's, 38 Elm Street, Fredonia
NOVEMBER 18	LUNCHEON MEETING- "The National Popular Vote Compact Among States and the Electoral College" Noon at the Fireside Manor Reservations Marti Burdick 672-5546

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Chautauqua County Association for the Education of
 Young Children



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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

Co-President: Marcia Marrins

Co-President Shirley Pulawski

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, Donnie Hover, Maggie Irwin

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

2009-2010 Membership

LWV Chautauqua

Nancy Bleck, 38 Elm Street, Fredonia, NY 14063

Membership Dues: to December 31, 2009
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
- State/National Issues
- 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.
- Voter Service
- Local Newsletter