



The Leaguer

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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

www.lwvchautauqua.org 672-4275



“Immigration in Chautauqua County” February 3rd at Noon The White Inn Jan Schwert, speaker

For the past 26 years, Jan Schwert has worked with immigrant Mexican farm families assisting primarily with education including recruiting children into migrant child education programs, helping to assimilate these children in schools during the day, conducting pre-kindergarten for 3/4 year olds and registering children for school. When discovering a new families she connects them with resources they need.

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LWV Chautauqua County
42 Rosalyn Court
Fredonia, NY 14063

Background Information

Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2006	Chautauqua County 4.7%	New York State 16.3%
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Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, County Population Estimates by Demographic Characteristics - Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin; updated annually for states and counties. <http://www.census.gov/popest/counties/asrh/>. **Definition:**

Hispanics or Latinos are those people who classified themselves in one of the specific Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino categories listed on the Census 2000 questionnaire -"Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano," "Puerto Rican", or "Cuban"-as well as those who indicate that they are "other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino." Persons who indicated that they are "other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" include those whose origins are from Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America, the Dominican Republic or people identifying themselves generally as Spanish, Spanish-American, Hispanic, Hispano, Latino, and so on.

Origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person’s parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States.

The 2002 data on the Hispanic or Latino population were derived from answers to a question that was asked of all people in Census 2000.

Estimates for states and counties for years after 2000 are developed using a cohort-component method whereby each component of population change - births, deaths, domestic migration, and international migration - is estimated separately for each birth cohort by sex, race, and Hispanic origin.

The Dunkirk Public Schools estimate that 20% of their pupils come from families where Spanish is spoken at home.

Reservation Form

“Immigrants in Chautauqua County”

February 3rd at Noon

The White Inn

_____ **Filet of Atlantic Whitefish**

_____ **Raspberry Chicken Salad**

_____ **Roast Beef Club Sandwich and Soup**

\$14

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ **Email** _____

Send to Debbie Schwert, 5162 W. Lake Rd., Dunkirk 14048

366-2218



Today is the tomorrow we worried about yesterday.

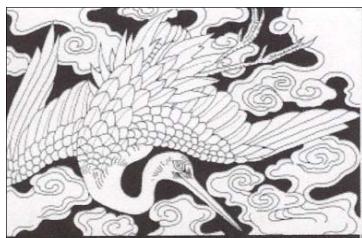
It's a funny thing about the future. Pretty soon it becomes the present; and later, the past. Remember the novel "1984", with its disturbing vision of the future? Do you remember feeling relieved, as I did, when its vision of the year 1984 did not come to pass? Some may have dismissed it as alarmist fantasy. Yet it served a purpose. It enabled us to look at trends and consider what could happen if those trends continued. People sometimes seemed to think the events of "1984" had really happened, though I doubt anyone really believed it. The book gave us a clearer vision of just why we feared those trends and helped us gather support in our work to reverse them.

It is now 25 years later, 2009, and once again we're facing an unknown future, with different issues occupying our minds. In the last decade, we've seen events that were nothing we could even imagine. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 were the stuff of horror films, not of the daily news. We have seen the results of our attempts to deal with the terrorist threats and are looking for a different solution that would give us as much protection, but not

at the expense of our civil rights. We've seen evidence of climate change and feel helpless to reverse it. We're faced with hard choices with regard to natural resources and the environment. We'd like to provide affordable health care to all Americans, a better education for our children, living-wage jobs for every American who is able to work, and more.

President Elect Obama has proposed major policy changes in many areas to try to correct these very problems. The League of Women Voters has an established reputation for studying issues and educating the public on the pros and cons of any proposal. We have earned a broad base of respect for our ability to present a fair and balanced study of any issue. Let us not automatically either accept or reject our new President's ideas based solely on our partisan sensibilities. Rather let us follow the League way. We can do new studies as needed, but more likely we will be able to evaluate proposed programs based on established positions, positions arrived at during the 20th century but equally applicable to the problems of the 21st century.

Some of these problems are discussed in our monthly luncheon meetings. For example, we will learn about the problems facing Hispanic immigrants in our county. Many thanks are due to the Program Committee and Debbie Schwert.



Laura Mitchell-Woolson, L.Ac.

Classical Five Element
Acupuncturist



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Fredonia, NY 14063

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Victory: Great Lakes Compact

The Great Lakes are a unique and precious resource, providing fresh water for the 40 million people who live within the basin. Each year, rainfall and snowmelt replenish only about one percent of the water in the basin; the remaining 99 percent is finite and nonrenewable. The Great Lakes Compact, for the first time ever, treats groundwater and surface water as one system subject to the same standard, considers the Great Lakes and their tributaries to be one ecosystem, establishes protection of Great Lakes ecosystems and economies as priorities everywhere in the basin, and ensures that every Great Lake state will have the same fair set of rational protections, while allowing each state flexibility. The U.S. Senate and House have approved the Compact and the President has signed it into law.

**Who will be LWV Chautauqua's
Leaguer of the Year 2009?**

**Send your nominations to Judy Parks:
Call 673-1157 or email JP7070@aol.com**



Background for the National Popular Vote Compact

The League has a long-standing position in support of the direct election of the president by popular vote. Now, League members have the opportunity to consider whether to support the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) as a viable process to achieve that result. The NPV Compact would avoid the need for a constitutional amendment abolishing the Electoral College (EC), and would assure that the individual receiving the most votes would become president.

The NPV Compact proposal uses the mechanism of the EC. States that legislatively enact the NPV Compact would agree that their state electors would vote for the individual that received the most votes nationwide. Thus, the popular vote count from all 50 states and the District of Columbia would be added together. State elections officials in all states participating would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes.

This alternative method of assigning a state's EC votes would take effect only when enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. This 270-vote threshold also corresponds essentially to states representing a majority of the people of the United States.

The plan includes procedural provisions to help assure smooth functioning of the agreement – conditions that deal with states deciding to withdraw from the Compact at the last moment, enforcement issues and recounts.

Currently four states have passed legislation to enact the NPV Compact.

There are pros and cons to this plan, which are discussed in full in papers found on the LWVUS Web site. Summaries of these papers are also available. League members can learn more about the plan from these sources and consider its ramifications at consensus meetings across the country. Be sure to participate! Who better than the League to be ready to speak to this good-government issue?

To prepare for the consensus meeting, please read the complete version of this paper (emailed separately) or go to www.lwv.org by the LWVUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.



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After you have registered at www.lwv.org:

- Login following the instructions.
- When you get to your "My League/Welcome" page, click on "(Update your information)" at the bottom of the page.
- Next, scroll to the bottom of the "Your Profile" page, click on the box "I wish to receive The National Voter electronically."
- Finally, click on "Submit Changes."

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Support for the National Popular Vote Compact

Because the League already supports direct election of the president, arguments against the Electoral College (EC) are not included in the material supporting the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact).

Constitutional Issues The NPV Compact is a way to assure that every person's vote counts equally and that the person receiving the most votes is the winner of the presidency. The same result would be achieved by constitutional amendment but the U.S. Constitution is difficult to amend. The NPV Compact is a viable way to attain the same goal as amending the Constitution to eliminate the EC.

A constitutional amendment is not needed to effectuate the NPV Compact because states already have the right to implement changes in how electors are appointed.

The NPV Compact is a compact between states – a method of concerted state action that has long been sanctioned by the Constitution and the courts.

Evaluating Fairness A candidate can be elected president by receiving the most electoral votes even though he or she did not receive the most popular votes. This is not a result voters expect or desire. As election campaigns are now waged, major emphasis and resources are concentrated in key EC battleground states because that is where elections are won or lost. The NPV Compact would eliminate the emphasis on battleground states and would be more apt to assure campaign strategies that appeal to a broad spectrum of the electorate which would foster greater voter participation.

The argument that the plan would negatively impact states' rights is countered by poll results showing that most voters want their individual vote to count, rather than allotting them to electors representing the state as a whole.

Any claim that the NPV Compact is an unprecedented disregard for the U.S. Constitution ignores the reality that voting rights have been changed through state action many times. Women's suffrage, for example, was instituted by twenty states before passage of the constitutional amendment that made the right universal.

Mechanical Considerations Those opposed to the NPV Compact cite mechanical issues that might lead the NPV to fail, but the Compact includes provisions that address issues of enforcement, winning levels and recounts.

Other Issues The Voting Rights Act and the NPV Compact are in harmony, assuring equality of votes throughout the United States.

League Issues Opponents say that the NPV Compact conflicts with the League's support of uniform voting standards. Supporters of the Compact advocate its passage in all states, which would result in uniform voting standards. It is true that the NPV Compact could be in effect for an interlude when not all states had signed on to it. The same could be demonstrated for other laws, such as the Equal Rights Amendment. Nonetheless, it must be remembered that uniform voting standards are not now in effect. The NPV Compact could help assure that every vote would be counted equally.

Further, implementation of a method which assures direct election of the president by popular vote is in keeping with the League's long-held position.

To prepare for the consensus meeting, please read the complete version of this paper (emailed separately) or go to www.lwv.org by the LWVUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.



Opposition to the National Popular Vote Compact

There is little respect for the Electoral College (EC). The League opposes it and most voters want a direct popular vote. But is the National Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) an appropriate way to achieve that result?

Evaluating Fairness Voters supporting the candidate who receives the majority of votes in their state want their state's electors to support their choice. Adoption of the NPV Compact may require a state elections official to direct its state's electors to cast their ballots in support of a candidate who was not favored by the voters of that state.

Passage of the NPV Compact will result in the emphasis of presidential campaigns shifting from the battleground states to areas of large concentrations of population. So, while some voters are disenfranchised by the EC, others might be disenfranchised by the NPV Compact. Because the Compact requires entry into a contract with other states which binds state elections officials to direct electors to vote in a certain way, regardless of the outcome of the election in their state, states' rights are diminished.

In addition, one can question the advisability of a method that bypasses the normal constitutional amendment process in this manner.

Constitutional Issues Many constitutional scholars argue that this plan will lead to extensive litigation involving challenges to the NVP Compact on issues such as the scope of constitutional powers, the Compact itself, the need for congressional approval, the concerns of non-compacting states, and constitutional protections of state interests and their role in elections.

Mechanical Issues/Flaws The methods for enforcement of this plan are unclear. Opponents question the power and timing to withdraw from the Compact and the power to enforce compliance.

Others express concern about an onslaught of lawsuits between compacting and non-compacting states, as well as procedures in close elections.

The plan, allowing the election of a president by a plurality of votes, does not improve on the current system; neither the present system nor the NPV Compact requires that the president be elected by a majority.

Other Issues The Voting Rights Act requires pre-clearance for legislative changes. This, too, has the capacity to engender lawsuits to ensure compliance.

League Issues This proposal does nothing to achieve the goal of uniform standards of voting. The NPV Compact is effective when passed by states representing 270 electoral votes, effectively negating the impact on presidential elections of the voters in states which represent the other half of electoral votes. A system which assures no voter disenfranchisement is a better way to assure that every person's vote counts.

The League has long supported the abolition of the EC. Although the NPV Compact purports to foster the same result, it creates additional concerns. Amending the U.S. Constitution is a difficult process, and we should seriously consider supporting the normal amendment procedures to abolish the EC versus this specific "work-around."

To prepare for the consensus meeting, please read the complete version of this paper (emailed separately) or go to www.lwv.org by the LWVUS National Popular Voter Compact Study Committee.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Dates to Remember

FEBRUARY 3	“IMMIGRANTS IN CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY” Noon at the White Inn Jan Schwert, speaker. RESERVATIONS: Debbie Schwert at 366-1822
FEBRUARY 5	PANEL ON CONSOLIDATION at the 1891 Fredonia Opera House at 7 p.m. Stan Lundine, Mayor Frey, Pat Christina
FEBRUARY 7	BOARD MEETING 9:30 A.M. Donnie Hover’s, 22 Matteson St., Fredonia, 672-1045
MARCH 7	BOARD MEETING 9:30 A.M. Judy Reynolds, 305 Chestnut St., Fredonia 672-4283
MARCH 12	“MEET THE NEW ELECTION INSPECTOR” and CONSENSUS MEETING OF THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT AMONG STATE. FULL DOCUMENT WILL BE DISTRIBUTED AT THE FEBRUARY MEETING, AND EMAILED. WE WILL HAND DELIVER FULL BACKGROUND INFORMATION TO MEMBERS WITHOUT EMAIL. Location to be announced.
APRIL 7	BOARD MEETING 9:30 A.M. Gen Ludemann’s, 129 Lambert Ave. Fredonia, 672-4771
MAY 20	ANNUAL MEETING, Shorewood County Club at 6 p.m.

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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.

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

League of Women Voters of
Chautauqua County
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and Shirley Pulawski
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**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)

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Local Issues

Voter Service

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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.