



The Leaguer

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March 2009

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

www.lwwchautauqua.org 672-4275

“Issues Facing Our County’s Families”

Family Court Judge Judith Claire, speaker

APRIL 21st at Noon, Moonbrook Country Club



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.

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LWV Chautauqua County
42 Rosalyn Court
Fredonia, NY 14063

RESULTS!

LWV Chautauqua County through the consensus process decided on the statements that best reflect their feelings regarding the National Popular Vote Compact Among States (NPV). The LWV Chautauqua consensus will join others Leagues in the country and if 2/3 are in agreement, they will direct the national League to advocate for this plan.

Amending the Constitution

Action by states through a compact process is an acceptable way to alter the method for electing the President and Vice-President.

Despite the novelty of the use of the compact approach to address a fundamental constitutional issue such as voting, the League should support the NPV Compact as a way of achieving an important goal.

Congressional Consent

The possibility that the NPV Compact will require congressional consent is not of sufficient concern to block the implementation of the plan.

Enforcement

Although it is not possible to determine whether the enforcement provisions will be sufficient to assure smooth operation of the plan, the plan should be passed anyway. Enforcement of the plan is likely to add uncertainty and bring the courts into the presidential election in ways that raise substantial concerns.

Uniformity

The NPV Compact is more important than uniformity of voting systems because it would succeed in achieving the popular election of the President.

Popular Election of the President

It is more important to achieve the goal of national popular election of the President than it is to achieve the goal of abolition of the electoral college.

Achievability

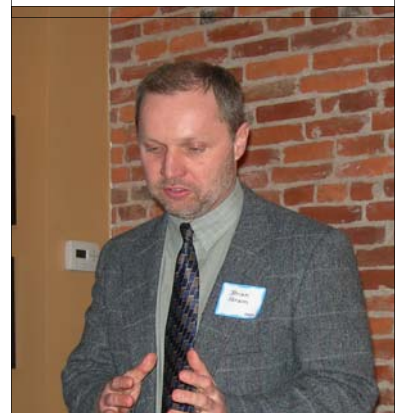
The NPV Compact will have problems being passed because of the need for congressional consideration and the need for action by so many states.

The agreed that a constitutional amendment to establish the direct popular election of the President and the abolition of the Electoral College will continue to have problems being passed.

The League met our new elections commissioners Brian Abram introduced by Norm Green.



Co-President Marcia Merrins leading members through the consensus process.



New Election Commissioner Brian Abram

"Issues Facing Our County's Families"

Family Court Judge Judith Claire, speaker

APRIL 21st at Noon, Moonbrook Country Club



Chicken Salad Croissant _____

Ham and Broccoli Quiche with fresh fruit _____

Mandarin Chicken Salad _____

(Cost includes tax, tip, and beverage)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

Reservations \$13 to Tillie Solomonson, 2 Waldamere Way, Lakewood, NY 14750

783-8278 tsolomonson@stny.rr.com



Dear League Members,

During March 2009, Women’s History Month, the League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County celebrates the achievements of women in the past and highlights the successes of today’s women, making a difference in our community and across the nation.

From our organization’s founder, Carrie Chapman Catt, a leader in the international suffrage movement born 150 years ago, to today’s female leaders, including numerous members of Congress, League members impact our democracy – and our lives. It is why we are one of America’s most trusted organizations.

The LWV is proud to honor the work of generations of women this month and are particularly moved by the incredible work women in Chautauqua County have done to improve our community, educate voters, and make our democracy work for every citizen. People like: Maggie Irwin working for animal rights, Pat Christina serving on the town of Pomfret board, Minda Rae Amiran, working hard to educate voters and get the vote out, Amanda Walden working for Literacy Volunteersand so many more.

League members work year-round to assist first-time voters, provide balanced information about important community issues, and improve the quality of life in Chautauqua County. This month, the League will be listening to Judge Judith Claire (a League member).

On May 20, we will have our annual meeting at the Shorewood Country Club, honor a League member and hear from Dr. Dennis Hefner on “Where is SUNY Fredonia Going? In preparation for this meeting please review our tentative budget for 2009-2010 on page 6.

The League is *the* place where active women leaders are bringing about change. What better way to celebrate Women’s History Month than to join the League and improve the lives of your family, your neighbors, and the whole Chautauqua County. Ask your friend to join!

We Welcome our Newest Member!

Sarah T. Schwab

526 Brigham Rd. N.

Dunkirk, NY 14048

725-5634

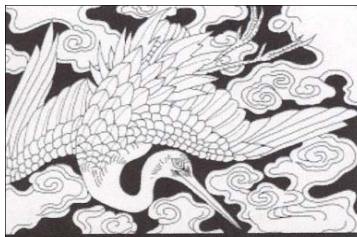
SarahT.Schwab@gmail.com

SAVE THE DATE!!

MAY 20TH

ANNUAL MEETING

WITH DENNIS HEFNER, SPEAKER



Laura Mitchell-Woolson, L.Ac.

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LWV Chautauqua Roster

for Fredonia Central Schools Vote on May 19th

2:00-4:00	4:00-6:00	6:00-9:00
Karen Mills Courts	Priscilla Bernatz	Minda Rae Amiran
Sallie Pullano	Anne Humberger	Carol Burelbach
Laura Sarek	Esther Lanford	Patricia Christina
Susan Sellers	Judith Reynolds	Marcia Merrins
Martha Burdick (alt.)	Nancy Bleck (alt.)	Judith Parks (alt.)

Thank You!

Controversy Over Language Contained in LWVUS' Citizens' Right To Vote

Because of the recent controversy over the application of language contained in an LWVUS Citizens' Right to Vote resolution (2006) to all voting systems, including lever voting machines, I have asked one of the authors of that Resolution for clarification. The Resolution affirms that the LWVUS only supports voting systems with a specific set of criteria. These criteria are listed in the Introduction to the January 2009 "Report on Election Auditing" by the Election Audits Task Force of the LWVUS. One member of that Task Force, Barbara Simons, Ph.D., LWV of Los Altos/Mountain View, CA, and former president, Association for Computing Machinery, was also one of the authors of the language of the 2006 Resolution. Dr. Simons has agreed to allow me to quote her as follows,

"In my opinion, the LWVUS statement opposes ALL paperless voting systems, not just paperless DREs. Therefore, the LWVUS statement should apply to paperless unauditible lever machines."

The League of Women Voters of New York State believes that, using the the criteria described in the Citizens Right To Vote Resolution, lever voting machines do not meet those standards. The full statement of our position is available on the LWVNYYS website (www.lwvny.org) under the title, "Why Lever Voting Machines Are Not An Acceptable Method of Voting."

League of Women Voters and NYVV Issue Joint Statement on Lever Machines

New York State's two leading Election Integrity organizations released a joint statement today reaffirming their commitment to the verifiable, auditable and accessible paper ballot/ scanner/Ballot Marking Device voting systems which will replace the state's lever machines.



The groups noted that the Help America to Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) requires replacement of the outdated lever machines which are not handicapped accessible and are incapable of producing a permanent paper record of individual votes that can be independently recounted or audited to verify the totals.

"The League of Women Voters supports voting systems which provide a voter verifiable paper record of their vote and allow confirmation of the results by an independent count of those paper records." said **Aimee Allaud, Elections Specialist for the League of Women Voters of New York State**. "Lever machines do not meet these standards."

"The strict requirements for verifiable and accessible voting fought for and won by New York citizens require that lever machines be replaced once the new systems pass New York's rigorous certification process." said **Wanda Warren Berry, Executive Director of New Yorkers for Verified Voting**. "The long process of gaining certification of new voting equipment for New York has been frustrating. But neither this frustration nor the current economic crisis should lead us to sacrifice superior standards that are crucial to democracy. The paper ballot based system selected by New York State meets these requirements."

The groups were critical of efforts to retain lever machines which produce no paper records of individual votes and ignore New York's obligations under HAVA and a United States District Court Order.

The statement is available online at the following link:

The statement is available online at the following link:

http://www.nyvv.org/newdoc/2009/LWVNYVV_LeverStatement020909.pdf

News From *Your* State League

Update from LWNYS

January 2009

New Yorkers for Alternatives To the Death Penalty

Has the League won its fight to abolish the death penalty in New York State? Effectively, yes. For the time being, things are going our way, but that could change in an instant with one horrific crime. Aware of this possibility, New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty decided to expand and change its mission. Under their new name, New Yorkers for Alternatives to the Death Penalty, they will seek to unite victims, law enforcement, advocates for the mentally ill, restorative justice practitioners and families of the incarcerated around policies that address their real and immediate needs and reduce the likelihood of violent crime. This holistic approach can empower constituencies by bringing them together to create a stronger, united voice to advocate for their common goals.

Call to Convention 2009

The LWNYS Biennial Convention will be May 15-17 at the Doubletree Inn in Syracuse, NY. The Convention theme will be "Fair, Vibrant and Strong". In addition to planning our program, electing a new board, adopting by-laws changes and a new budget, we will have helpful workshops, interesting and informative presentations, a special presidents' meeting, great speakers and entertainment, good food, and fun.

Mark your calendars and consider being part of Convention 2009, either as a delegate of your local League or as an observer. This is your opportunity to be sure the concerns of your community and your local League are represented at the Convention. Most important, working with other League members and seeing New York State League leaders in action is something you won't want to miss.

The Local League Board

Now is the time when local League nominations committees look for new members to serve on their Boards. Serving on your League Board, or serving your local League in any other capacity, is an amazing opportunity. The Board plays a major role in defining the League, not only to its members but also to the community at large. Every member of the Board plays a part.

Yes, you'll be serving your League when you serve on its Board. But you'll also be gaining personally. You'll be learning from more experienced members how to do the many tasks that make the League work. You will develop expertise that will carry over into your work on other issues with different organizations. With the self-confidence you'll develop, you will become a force to be reckoned with!

Students Inside Albany

This year's Students Inside Albany program will be held Sunday, April 19 – Wednesday, April 22, 2009 at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Albany, NY. The LWNYS Education Foundation has been able to acquire funding to cover the costs of one participant from each local League or two from local Leagues with LeaderSpark programs. Local Leagues are responsible for travel expenses for all students to and from Albany. If any of the participating Leagues desires to send an additional student — if there is room — that League's cost would be \$300 plus travel expenses. Customized SIA brochures can be obtained from the LWNYS office.

Lead Poisoning Update

The NYS Department of Health is, on Governor Paterson's urging, revising downward the child's blood level of lead that would trigger comprehensive follow-up interventions from 20 mcg/dl to 15 mcg/dl. This will enable more environmental assessments and house inspections to be made.

Legislative Agenda 2009

This year's Legislative Agenda will place emphasis on (1) reforming state government; (2) energy and the environment; (3) cost-effective and accessible health care. Additional positions will also be highlighted. Watch for copies of this Agenda at meetings of your local League or ask your local League President. You'll want to have a few extra copies to hand out during your lobbying visits to local legislators.

Economic Stimulus and Transportation

Effective and expanded public transit helps to reduce air pollution and conserve energy — one of our Legislative Priorities for 2009. Now is the time to lobby Congress to allocate some of the new Economic Stimulus funds to expand and develop public transit in New York State, especially upstate.

NYSPEC Strategizes

The New York State Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC) held a strategy meeting with its member organizations. One area of disagreement was whether the legislation should include "punitive damages" language. Such language makes the legislation enforceable. An alternative is the Canadian proactive model. The Canadian legislation requires the employer submit information showing that they are in compliance by a certain date. It was also noted that companies that do business in Canada have no trouble complying with the Canadian Pay Equity laws.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF NEW YORK STATE
62 Grand Street
Albany, NY 12207-1403
(518) 465-4162
Fax (518) 465-0812
Web Address: www.lwny.org
e-mail: lwny@lwny.org
GET INVOLVED!

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY
PROPOSED BUDGET 3/31/2009 - 4/1/2010**

Income	2008 Approved	Actual 4/1/08 Thru 3/11/09	2009 Proposed (based on 120 members)
A. Dues	7,440.00	6,170.00	7,200.00
B. Interest	20.00	6.93	15.00
C. Donations ¹	455.00	780.00	1,225.00
D. Luncheons	1,600.00	2,539.25	2,100.00
Annual banquet	1,275.00	1,188.00	1,275.00
E. Fund Raisers			
1. Vote Signs	1000.00	950.00	500.00
2. Election Night	65.00	220.00	65.00
3. LWVNYS Raffle Ticket Sale	125.00	177.00	125.00
4. Craft Sale	0	180.00	0
5. LWV Cloth Bag	0	20.00	825.00
F. Miscellaneous (One time only) ⁷		248.54	0
Total Income	11,980.00	12,479.72	13,330.00

Expenditures			
A. State Dues	1,964.00	1,955.25	2,080.00
B. National Dues	2,948.00	3,112.00	3,680.00
C. Voter Service ²	900.00	1,519.78	1,550.00
D. Luncheons	1,350.00	2,227.14	2,000.00
Annual Banquet	975.00	1,217.34	1,220.00
E. Conferences ³	1,200.00	917.00	1,000.00
F. Fund Raisers			
1. Promotion & advertising	175.00	175.00	175.00
2. South Paw for Vote Signs	1,103.00	645.97	300.00
3. Cost of LWV Cloth Bags	0	300.00	300.00
G. Fees for use of facilities ⁴	250.00	200.00	250.00
H. Support/Contributions ⁵	75.00	30.00	50.00
General Operating Expense			
A. Postage, Mailings, Bulletins ⁶	600.00	401.06	350.00
B. Office Supplies ⁷	100.00	42.18	35.00
C. Auditing Fee ⁸	60.00	0	60.00
D. Website ⁹	180.00	0	180.00
E. Miscellaneous	100.00	0	100.00
Total Expenses	11,980.00	12,341.21	13,330.00

¹Member and Non-member donations. Including Community Bank support of TMTV campaign and MainAlley donation

²Facts for voters, voter registration, meet the candidates expenses, TMTV.

³Transportation, lodging and meals.

⁴Opera House, Fredonia HS Library and Jackson Center

⁵Lake Erie Basin

⁶Does not include monies for State and National publications.

⁷Postage Refund, LWVNYS Education Fund

⁸Exchange for member dues

⁹Donated by MainAlley.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Dates to Remember

APRIL 4	BOARD MEETING 9:30 A.M. Gen Ludemann's, 129 Lambert Ave. Fredonia, 672-4771
APRIL 21	Luncheon Meeting with Judge Judith Claire at Moon Brook Country Club at Noon. Reservations Tillie Solomonson 763-8278 2 Waldamere Way, Lakewood, NY 14750 tsolomonson@stny.rr.com
MAY 20	ANNUAL MEETING , Shorewood County Club at 6 p.m. Dr. Dennis Hefner, speaker "Where is SUNY Fredonia Going?" RESERVATIONS Judy Reynolds 305 Chestnut St., Fredonia, 14063, 672-4283, jtrpurple@yhoo.com.

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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.

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

**League of Women Voters of
Chautauqua County**

Officers

Co-Presidents: Marcia Marrins

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, Donnie Hover,

Gen Ludemann, Judy Parks,

Judy Reynolds,

2009 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

____ 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.