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LWVB/N website

www.lwvbn.org

LWVNYSHome Page

www.lwvny.org

LWVUS Home Page

www.lwv.org

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eleven times this
year APRIL Voter
copy is due Friday,
March 11, 2011.

The American Association of University Women Buffalo Branch
presents its 10th Annual International Celebration
to celebrate the

**100th Anniversary of
International Women's Day**

Tuesday, March 8, 2011

**Samuel's Grande Manor
8750 Main Street, Williamsville, NY 14221**

Featuring speakers from Haiti:

Haiti's Past, Present and Future

Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara

5:30 p.m. social gathering

6:00 p.m. dinner (\$30 per person)

**Please write the name(s) and dinner choice of each person covered by
your check**

payable to AAUW/ Buffalo Branch and mail it by March 1 to

Lillis McLean
366 Victoria Boulevard
Kenmore, NY 14217

Dinner Choices:

Chicken Nomando (basil, wine, herbs)
Salmon
Pasta with Vegetables

League of Women Voters Mission:

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.

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President's Message



Plans are underway for our LWVB/N Annual Meeting on June 11, 2011 at Harry's Harbour Place Grille. Meeting chair, Judy Metzger, has selected a tempting menu and is arranging a program that features Joan Bozer and Amy Witriol.

Our Nominating Committee is hard at work and the Budget Committee has started work on the League budget for 2011-2012.

Theresa Pope will travel to Albany with Keira Grant, a senior at Hutchinson Technical High School, who will be our representative at Students Inside Albany.

As always, there will be awards at the LWVNYS Convention in Albany. I have written applications for some of our most outstanding programs and projects. I think we have a good chance of bringing home a couple of awards.

Plan to attend the program planned by our Natural Resources Committee detailed on page 3. The process of extracting natural gas known as hydro-fracking is potentially dangerous and rather controversial.

I want to thank Joann Mecca and Jean Flowers for their work in finding volunteers to represent the League at the Naturalization ceremonies throughout the year. A big thank you to all the volunteers, too.

Margaret Brunson, Co-president LWVB/N

LWVNYS Convention – May 20-22, 2011

If you would like to attend the state convention at the Desmond Hotel, Albany, NY, please let me know by Saturday, March 5. Contact the League office 884-3550 or e-mail events@lwvbn.org.

The board will select delegates at its March meeting. There are more details about the convention on the state League web site: www.lwvny.org

Margaret Brunson

Book Review

Alice Paul, an early worker for women's right to vote has been rather shortchanged by history. However a new book by Mary Walton titled, *A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot* hopes to change that lack of attention. This book is not only a biography of Alice Paul but also an in depth picture of the history of the suffrage movement from its earliest days to the culmination of its effort which ultimately gave rise to the League of Women Voters. The book is available at the Buffalo & Erie County Library call # JK1899.P38W35 2010.

Marie Hanrahan, Historian

Great Decisions

It's countdown time to Great Decisions 2011 when we will all, hopefully, meet Thursday, March 3 at 1272 Delaware from 10 AM- noon to receive our book for this year and get leaders for all eight topics.

Remember this year we will meet the first Thursday of each month from March - November so check your calendars. Final reminder: Bring your 2010 edition so we can compare our opinions with the national results.

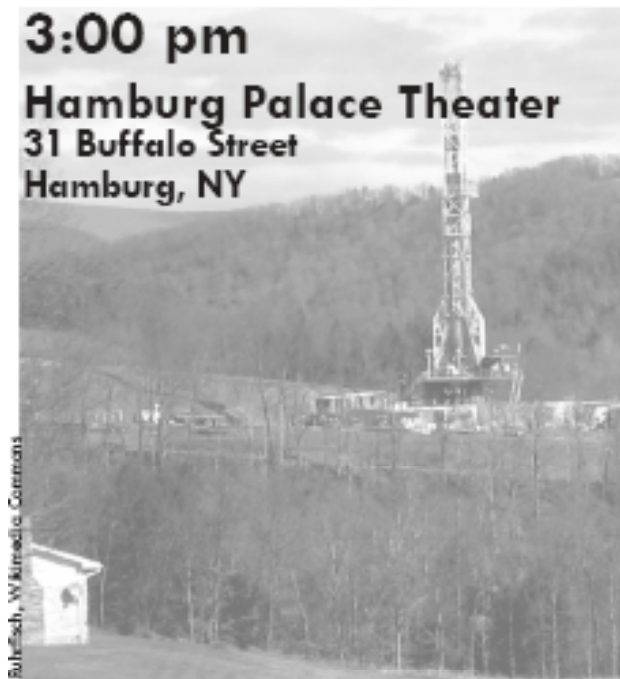
Bernice Baeumler.

GASLAND

comes to Hamburg on Saturday, March 19th

3:00 pm

Hamburg Palace Theater
31 Buffalo Street
Hamburg, NY



Buffalo, W. Kinetic Contents

AWARD WINNING DOCUMENTARY
ABOUT THE IMPACTS OF
NATURAL GAS DRILLING

Program

3:00 Film

5:00 Respondent, Brad Gill
Executive Director,
Independent Oil and
Gas Association of
New York

5:15 Q & A

Join the League of Women Voters Buffalo-Niagara and UBGreen for a **free** screening and discussion of **GASLAND**, winner of the Special Jury Prize at the 2010 Sundance Film Festival.

ABOUT THE FILM

"The largest domestic natural gas drilling boom in history has swept across the United States. The Halliburton-developed drilling technology of "fracking" or hydraulic fracturing has unlocked a "Saudi Arabia of natural gas" just beneath us. But is fracking safe? When filmmaker Josh Fox is asked to lease his land for drilling, he embarks on a cross-country odyssey uncovering a trail of secrets, lies and contamination"



<http://www.gaslandthemovie.com/>



Donations gratefully accepted at the door. Proceeds will be used for League's educational efforts.

Redistricting is underway now...The outcome will be decided this year

The population figures from the 2010 census are in and the crucial work of redrawing legislative district lines has begun. There is a lot at stake for us in New York. We know our numbers in the House of Representatives will decrease by two congressional seats and we anticipate one of these seats will come from western New York. There will be fewer but larger districts when both Erie and Niagara Counties downsize their legislatures. Municipalities will change their district boundaries to account for shifts in population.

The redistricting process promises to be controversial - again. Under current law, sitting legislators and party leaders custom design legislative districts to protect their own seats and to maintain party control. The results have been - what we have said many times - incumbents chose their voters before the voters choose them.

What we now have will look a lot different in 2012. How it will look will depend upon the success of our reform efforts. This year we think the stars are aligned in our favor. This year we have a real opportunity to achieve reforms that League believes can ensure an equitable and open redistricting process, free from partisan influences and gerrymandering.

If reform is to happen, the public needs to be engaged. We need Leaguers to spread the word. Here's what you can do:

- Attend public meetings and public hearings (*we'll give you the dates*)
- Contact your legislators (*come with us when we visit them*)
- Write letters (*the one to the Buffalo News by Judy Metzger is reprinted here*)
- Tell your friends and other organizations of our reform efforts (*our PowerPoint Presentation is ready to go on the road. View it at www.lwvbn.org*)
- Give us more suggestions *and join our reform campaign.*

Janet Massaro, for the Redistricting Committee

Letter Published in Everybody's Column, Buffalo News, 1-10-11

I read with interest the Dec. 30 News editorial, "Drawing the line," and the Jan. 1 Another Voice by Timothy Kennedy, "After census, independent redistricting is urgent." Both articles point out that "remaining in office depends not on governing well but on drawing the district boundaries that keep their gravy train chugging along the track to Mediocreville."

The League of Women Voters of New York has long advocated for an independent commission. Reformers have long argued that the method the state uses to draw legislative and district boundary lines is undemocratic and in need of reform. The new commission's members would be appointed by the legislative leaders from a pool of candidates selected by a nominations committee and also would set standards for the drawing of new district lines. Legislative support has been growing the past number of years and in the 2010 election all state candidates, when asked, were in favor of an independent commission. As The News noted, Gov. Andrew Cuomo promised to "veto any redistricting plan in 2012 that reflects partisan gerrymandering."

Kennedy points out that "Legislators today literally pick who they want to represent" and that "more competitive legislative districts mean better legislators, and better legislators will look beyond their differences." So now that the census data is completed, let's get going and demand reform.

Judith M. Metzger

An Opportunity Learn about Redistricting

On March 9, 2011 at 7:00 p.m., Anne Huberman and Janet Massaro will present the League's Power Point Program about redistricting at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Amherst, 6320 Main Street, Williamsville. League members are welcome. The UU church members committed to write to their legislators and endorse the LWWNYS position in favor of an Independent Redistricting Commission.

Contributors to LWVBN, February 2010 – January 2011

We sincerely thank all League members who have contributed to the League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara. The people named here contributed to our League from February 2010 through January 2011. They responded to the request on our membership registration form, to our 2009 Finance Drive, or sent a donation to the LWVNYS Education Fund on behalf of our local League. Your donations are essential to the work of LWVBN to fulfill our mission.

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Paula Bone | Kathleen McCarthy | Elizabeth Quinn |
| Mary Flickinger | Laura McDade | Gail Radford |
| Patricia Fraser | JoAnn Mecca | Clarine Radt |
| Ramona Gallagher | Lois M. Meyer | Nancy E Ryther |
| Dr. Teresa Gessner | Sandra A. Miller | Marge Samuelson |
| Jean Gooding-Cadwell | Valerie G. Moliterno | Diane Showalter |
| Ruth Haines | Ellen Moomaw | Dorothy Tao |
| Kathy Courtney Hochul | Ellen Neumaier | James & Karen Tarbell |
| Mary Frances Holmes | Robert North Jr | Lyle Toohey |
| Judy M. Huber | Barbara Metivier | Lynne Vallone |
| Jean Kaczanowski | Terri Parks | Francine Valvo |
| Marilee Keller | Karen Penfold | Dorothy Westhafer |
| Brett D. Kreher | Loretta Peszynski | Karen A |
| Joelle Logue | Joan Photiadis | |
| Janet Massaro | Ellen E. Pine | |

Education Committee News

Our community forum on the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education in January at the WNED Studio generated many positive messages! If you missed the actual event, you can hear it on our website, www.lwvbn.org thanks to Kris Allen's webmaster skills. Leagues across the United States will be studying this very timely subject for the next year and a half.

Historically education has been the responsibility of the states. The reduced cost or free National School Lunch Program was established under President Truman in 1946. In 1965 Head Start, an antipoverty, preschool program was initiated. The Federal Government has gradually become heavily involved in direct Federal Aid to Education, striving to make state funding more equal. There has been Federal Government textbook help, help for special education and for non-English speaking students. Now there are testing requirements and changing standards that are controversial.

The Education Committee will hold its next meeting on Thursday March 10 at 1:30 at our League office. Interested folks are most welcome to come and visit or join us.

Suggested reading:

The Death and Life of the Great American School System by Diane Ravitch

The Flat World and Education: How America's Commitment to Equity Will Determine Our Future by Linda Darling-Hammond

Why School by Mike Rose

Reclaiming Public Education by Reclaiming Our Democracy by David Mathews

Education Now: How Rethinking America's Past Can Change its Future by Paul Theobald

Lee Tetkowskí, Education Committee Chair

Unit News

Amherst Unit

The Amherst Lunch and Issues program will not meet during March and April. We look forward to working with you on redistricting issues and will keep you posted on up coming events. We continue to monitor Town Board meetings. For info contact Joyce Zobel, events@lwvbn.org. Send new or changed e-mail/telephone to Sally Metzger at events@lwvbn.org.

Meanwhile, please attend "Gasland" a documentary on hydrofracking to be presented on March 19th at the Hamburg theater at 3:00 P.M.

Judy Metzger, Arlene Miles, Sally Metzger, Co-chairs LWVBN Amherst Unit

Clarence Unit

The man who became the face and the voice of the local response to the crash of Flight 3409 and its aftermath, long-time Clarence Disaster Coordinator, David Bissonette, will speak to the Clarence Unit. This Lunch and Learn will be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2011, at 11:30 AM at Spilio's Family Restaurant, 5175 Transit Road.

Please come at 11:30 to place your lunch order from the menu. Lunch will be served promptly at noon. Reservations are requested so that the restaurant knows how many of us will attend.

We mourn the death of Eleanor Greatbatch, an early member of the Clarence League. (A veteran, she took me to my first meeting in 1963!) Though a severe stroke inhibited her mobility and speech more than a decade ago she continued to be a League supporter.

At the invitation of the Clarence school superintendent and the school board, Sally Moehlau represented the Clarence Unit at the annual legislative breakfast of the Erie County Association of School Boards on February twelfth.

Allene Falk, Clarence Unit Coordinator

Voter Service

We appreciate the service of the following League members at recent New Citizens Ceremonies:

January 6, Judy Clarke and Judy Huber

February 3, Helen Morrison and Mary Egan

February 22, JoAnn Mecca and Barbara Klobberdanz.

The League continues to inform the newly naturalized citizens about registering and voting and distributes voting registration forms as we congratulate each new citizen.



JoAnn Mecca

Riverkeeper Tours

League members interested in local water issues may find a current program by the Buffalo Riverkeeper worth looking into. "If our water could talk" tours of Riverkeeper facilities at 1250 Niagara Street, Buffalo, give attendees the opportunity not only to learn about their programs but also the impact of their work on the community. Tours last one hour and are free. They are held monthly on the second Wednesday at noon, on the second Thursday at 6:30 p.m. and on the third Thursday at 7:45 a.m. For more information, go to www.bnriverkeeper.org or phone 852-7483.

Marie Hanrahan

Membership dues and contributions to the LWV are not deductible as a personal or business expense for tax purposes.

JOIN

Make check payable to LWVB/N and send to LWVB/N, 1272 Delaware Ave.,
Buffalo, NY 14209-2401 (Attn: Membership Chair)

- \$65 Individual (Basic Membership) \$100 Household
 \$75 Carrie Chapman Catt Membership *(2 members living at the same address)*
 \$90 Elizabeth Cady Stanton Membership \$30 Student membership
 \$100 Susan B. Anthony Membership
 Enclosed is my additional contribution of \$ _____

Unit Affiliation (optional)

- Amherst
 Buffalo Metro
 Clarence

- Please send me the LWVB/N VOTER via email.

Name (s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

This includes local, state and national League dues.

Membership News

Membership Chair, Judy Huber, hosted a Coffee Klatch for new and perspective members at her home on Feb. 19th. League officers and committee heads were also present to explain the many facets of our local League. If you were unable to attend but would like this information Judy would be happy to meet with you at a local coffee shop or have a committee chair call you. Please e-mail her at events@lwvbn.org. We are always looking for volunteers and new members.



Reminder: Please notify the League Office, lwvbn@lwvbn.org if you change your e-mail address, Grassroots Lobby Coordinator, Elsa Bondar, events@lwvbn.org and also Terri Parks, events@lwvbn.org if you receive your VOTER electronically.

We welcome these people who have joined or rejoined the League in the past several months:

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------|
| Marian Bass | Amherst, NY | Mary Kennedy Martin | Buffalo, NY |
| Judith A Frank | Tonawanda, NY | Victoria Ross | Buffalo, NY |
| Thomas Giacobbi | Buffalo, NY | Rachael Schuh | Buffalo, NY |
| Susan Lach | Amherst, NY | DeLynn Walker | Snyder, NY |
| | | Marie Zafron | Amherst, NY |

Capitol Beat available on the LWNYS Website

The League of Women Voters of New York State is pleased to announce the return of "[Capitol Beat](#)." This informative and entertaining column, written by the LWNYS Legislative Director Barbara Bartoletti will contain legislative updates about League issues, as well as political gossip. We will also outline the budget and of course, will chronicle the always-lively end of session. We have created a blog page for "Capitol Beat" on our League [website](#) and we welcome your comments posted on this blog page.

We have also linked the [Legislative Calendar](#) so you have all the dates of the legislative session.

So, check out the blog and continue to watch it for updates - we hope to keep it lively and current. Get all the latest legislative info right on our website and blog!

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director, LWNYS

March 2011

| SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|------------|--|---|--|---|--|--|
| 10/31 | | 1 ISSUES COMMITTEE 4:30 p.m. | 2 | 3 GREAT DECISIONS Page 2 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | 7 BOARD MEETING 4:30 P.M. | 8 INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION Page 1 | 9 LUNCH & LEARN 11:30 a.m. LOCAL GOVERNMENT 1:15 p.m. | 10 NATURAL RESOURCES 9:00 a.m. EDUCATION COMMITTEE 1:30 p.m. | 11 APRIL VOTER COPY DUE | 12 |
| 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 GASLAND Page 3 |
| 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 ISSUES COMMITTEE 4:30 p.m. | 30 | 31 | 4/1 | 4/2 |
| 4/3 | 4/4 BOARD MEETING 4:30 P.M. | 4/5 | 4/6 | 4/7 GREAT DECISIONS 10:00 a.m. | 4/8 | 4/9 |