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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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VOTER is published eleven times this year. The June Voter copy is due Friday, May 6, 2011.

Join the members of the LWVBN Waterfront-Transportation Committee at a League Outing, Saturday, June 18, 2011. "How will the proposed Buffalo Harbor Bridge Impact our Waterfront's Future?"

Meet us at 10:00 a.m. at the Hatch on the Waterfront.



We'll stroll the promenade to Canal Side and end at the foot of Main Street in Buffalo, noting the alternative sites for the proposed Buffalo Harbor Bridge.

Our purpose is to see first-hand the possible sites for the Buffalo Harbor Bridge, as a basis for making informed assessments about the proposed Buffalo Harbor Bridge and evaluating its impact on Buffalo's waterfront.

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.

CONTENTS

Table with 3 columns: Item Name, Page Number, Item Name, Page Number. Includes items like President's Message, Health Care Notice, Delegates to LWVNY convention, Free Lectures, etc.

President's Message

You should have received a packet of Big League Raffle Tickets in the mail recently. This is a NY State League fund-raiser. The winning ticket will be drawn at the state convention in Albany.

Our local LWVB/N Fund Drive will be taking place in mid-April. You will receive a letter in the mail – please be generous – your support is greatly appreciated.

We are making final plans for the LWVB/N Annual Meeting. The Call is included with this mailing. In addition to the reservation form you will find the report of the nominating committee including the proposed slate of officers, the report of the budget committee including the proposed budget and the proposed local program for the coming year. Make plans now to attend the Annual Meeting at Harry's Harbour Place Grille on Saturday, June 11, 2011.

Thank you Theresa Pope for traveling to Albany with our delegate to Students Inside Albany, Keira Grant, a senior at Hutch Tech.

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Alan Dozoretz as the new Election Services Chair. Alan will be working on the Tenant Council Elections with the Buffalo Metropolitan Housing Authority and other related projects. We thank retiring Election Services Chair, Kathleen McCarthy, for a job well done. Kathleen will be working with Alan to get him oriented to the job.

Joyce Bol reports that there will be a School Board Candidates Forum in Hamburg and plans are already underway for candidates' nights for the general election next fall. Donna McNally will be the coordinator for the 2011 Voters Guide.

Margaret Brunson, Co-president LWVB/N

2011 League of Women Voters of New York State Convention

We will send eight delegates to the LWVNY State Convention this year, Eugene Abrahamson, Deborah Billoni, Margaret Brunson, Gladys Gifford, Judy Huber, Terri Parks, Loretta Peszynski, and Amy Witryol. Lyle Toohey will also attend the convention as its Parliamentarian. We have submitted our registration forms, prepared a contribution for the silent auction, entered the contests and started planning our agenda of assignments to each workshop and work session.

**Thank you, Kathleen McCarthy, for doing a terrific job
as the LWVBN Election Services Chair.**

Great Decisions

Tom Giacobbi, one of our new participants, will lead our Great Decisions discussion on Thursday, May 5 from 10 AM-noon at 1272 Delaware. The topic will be American National Security since 9/11. "U. S. national security priorities were expanded after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to include waging war in Iraq and Afghanistan, tightening border security, pursuing cyber-threats, halting nuclear proliferation and attempting to snuff out homegrown terrorism. How has the U. S. national security agenda evolved since 9/11? In what ways will this agenda shape the American way of life in the future?" Hope to see everyone there.

Bernice Baeumler events@lwvbn.org

Voter Services

Naturalization:



On April 14th, Laura McDade and Susan Witt participated in the New Citizen Ceremonies. On May 5th, Robert and Agnes Annis will represent the League at the naturalization services.

School Board Candidates' Night:

The Hamburg School Board Candidates' Night will be at the Charlotte Avenue School Auditorium on Monday, May 9th, at 7:00 p.m. It is sponsored by the Hamburg Parent Teacher Student Association. Laura McDade will be the moderator and Jean Flowers will be the timekeeper.

The League will provide leadership at the Amherst School Board Candidates' Forum on Monday, May 9th, at 7:00 p.m. at the Amherst Middle School.

The Clarence Unit and the Parent Teacher Organization will sponsor a forum for the Clarence School Board candidates on Tuesday, May 10, at 7 PM in the Clarence Senior High School lecture hall. Kathleen McCormick of the Amherst Unit will moderate. Rosemarie Cardoso and Barbara Kautz are the chairpersons. There six candidates running for three positions.

Fall Candidates' Meetings:

Two candidates' meetings for this fall have already been scheduled:

- October 24, 2011 at 7 pm in the Clarence Town Hall.
- October 26, 2011 at 7:30 pm at the Union Street School in Hamburg.

Joyce Bol, Voter Services Chair

Natural Resource News

We send many thanks to the 30-plus League members who viewed the film, *Gasland*, at the Hamburg Palace Theater on March 19. After the film, Brad Gill, president of the New York Independent Oil and Gas Industry Association, commented on the film and answered audience questions. His colleague, Dennis Holbrook, joined him. An estimated two hundred people attended the event, the majority of them non-League members. Credit for such a high level of public attendance goes to League members who helped publicize the event— Judy Capodicasa, PJ Fraser, Joan Herold, Paula Minklei, and Ellen Neumaier. PJ Fraser and Joan Herold deserve extra credit for spending many hours and traveling many miles to post flyers in businesses and community centers throughout the Southtowns.

The program was very well received. Of those who completed a written evaluation, nearly two-thirds rated the program as outstanding. Written comments about the program included “thought-provoking,” “helpful,” “very informative,” “excellent opportunity to hear multiple viewpoints on an important issue.” Special thanks to Ellen Moomaw for introducing the program and to Gladys Gifford for moderating the potentially contentious question and answer session following the film.

Bev Halligan and Kathleen McCormick, Natural Resources Committee

Redistricting Hearing Notice

The Erie County Advisory Redistricting Commission will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, May 11, 2011, at 5:30 p.m. in the Erie Community College's City Campus Auditorium, 121 Ellicott Street, Buffalo, 14203. The comments from the public will be posted on the Erie County website, easily accessed from the League website: www.lwvbn.org.

Health Care Notice

Abbey Bernardis has been representing the Buffalo/Niagara League at the New York State Health Care Campaign. She reports, "Our previous effort was to get the legislation passed. We started meeting again, this time to work on implementation. The first real sign of progress is the New York Bridge Plan."

The New York Bridge Plan is now being implemented. This is an interim program, which was passed as part of the Obama health care legislation.

The New York Bridge Plan is designed to make affordable health care available for New Yorkers who (1) have not had health insurance for six months (2) and who have a qualifying preexisting condition. The cost for upstate New York counties is \$362 per month. If you think that you partly qualify you may actually fully qualify. Don't second-guess your eligibility. Please call 1-866-693-9277 for more information and to enroll.

Abbey Bernardis

Free Lectures from the Erie County Department of Senior Services

Everyone is welcome to these programs sponsored by the Erie County Department of Senior Services Program University Express, but you must register by calling the host center.

Host Centers and Phone Numbers

- Clarence Senior Center, 4600 Thompson Road in Clarence, phone: 633-5138
- Orchard Park Senior Center, 70 Linwood Avenue in Orchard Park, phone: 662-6452.

Can Albany be fixed? This program addresses the question: Can government be reformed to restore trust and accountability, and be part of the solution to the many challenges we face? The instructor is Peter Galie, Professor of Political Science at Cansius College.

- Clarence Senior Center, May 2, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.
- Orchard Park Senior Center, May 23, 2011, at 1:00 p.m.

How Geography Affects History: John Percy, local historian, will be the instructor in a session that presents how the Niagara Region's unique geography allowed a sleepy early 19th century village to blossom into the 8th largest city in the United States, how the area began to fall apart and how it can rise again.

- Clarence Senior Center on Tuesday, May 24, 2011, at 1:30 p.m.

Hydrofracking: What are the environmental, economic and energy costs and benefits of hydrofracking? The instructor is Tracy Bank, assistant Professor of Geology, SUNY Buffalo.

- Orchard Park Senior Center on Monday, May 9, 2011, at 1:00 p.m.

Marie Hanrahan

The Education Study Background Papers

LWVUS Education Study Committee members are researching and writing background papers to help Leagues educate members and communities about *the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education* issues. If you receive this Voter electronically, you may click on the title and connect directly to the article on the LWVUS web site.

[Common Core Standards and Assessments](#) by Janelle L. Rivers, PhD

[Early Childhood Education, Equity and Funding](#) by Pat Aaron

[Funding and Equity Issues](#) by Jean Pierce

[Role Of Federal Government In Public Education: Historical Perspectives](#)
by Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins and Margaret Hawkins Hill

If you'd like me to e-mail you this edition of the Voter, contact me at events@lwvbn.org *Terrí Parks*

Membership News

Dear League Members,

With this issue, you receive the Call to our Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is a perfect time to invite someone to our luncheon as your guest so that they can see the breadth and depth of our organization and perhaps become a member. Our main source of revenue is through membership dues. Increased membership will make sure the work of the League continues long into the future.

Judy Huber, Membership Chair

Welcome to the League:

New Member: Eugene Abrahamson, Buffalo

Member who has Rejoined: Kim Burg, Clarence



In Memoriam

We sadly report the recent death of long-time League member, Betty Crittenden, of Clarence.

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.

Students Shadow Legislators to Learn Roles in Legislative Process

The 2011 *Students Inside Albany* Conference, an intensive three day program held April 10-13, was attended by 35 high school students from across New York to immerse the students in the process by which public policy is proposed, enacted and changed in the New York State and give them the tools they can use to influence and affect this process.

While in Albany the students heard numerous speakers including elected officials, journalists, good government organizations, and LWV experts, who spoke on varying topics from lobbying to an overview of NYS government, and from transparency in government to the role of media in politics, and much more. Role-playing as lobbyists with Assembly Members Teresa Sayward and Catherine Nolan actively engaged the students in the process.

In addition to listening to speakers, all students toured the NYS Capitol and shadowed both their Assembly Member and Senator. The students were all introduced on the floor of the Assembly and watched a bill on pay equity be introduced, debated and voted. The students were also invited onto the floor of the Senate when a bill concerning school suspensions was debated and voted on. Meeting personally with their own legislators and being a part of the process is always a highlight for the students.

Special thanks to our co-sponsors: CSEA, Golub Foundation, NYSUT, and Stewart's Shops.

LWVNYS

Please join us at the League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara Annual Meeting on June 11, 2011, to meet our *Student Inside Albany* participant, Keira Grant, and learn about her experiences.

Support the LWVNYS Education Foundation Virtual Auction

This year's Silent Auction to benefit the State League Education Foundation has "gone Virtual!" There are five ways to make bids on the fabulous auction items that will be auctioned at the state League convention in May. You don't need to attend the convention to win. Go to www.lwvny.org and see what Leagues and League leaders have donated. The link to the Silent Auction is in the **2011 LWV State Convention** information on the home page.

MAY 2011

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2 BOARD MEETING 4:30 p.m.	3	4 TRANSPORTATION/ WATERFRONT 10:00 a.m.	5 GREAT DECISIONS Page 2	6 VOTER COPY DUE	7
8	9	10	11 LOCAL GOVERNMENT 1:15 p.m. ERIE COUNTY REDISTRRICTING HEARING P. 3	12 NATURAL RESOURCES 9:30 a.m.	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 EDUCATION COMMITTEE 1:30 p.m.	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 ISSUES COMMITTEE 4:30 p.m.	6/1	6/2	6/3	6/4