



The Leaguer

Volume 16, Issue 4
December, 2011



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHAUTAUQUA COUNTY

www.lwvchautauqua.org 672-4275



Chautauqua County Environmental Management Council

Doug Conroe, speaker

January 11 at Noon SUNY –Technology Incubator
214 Central Avenue, Dunkirk

DIRECTIONS: Drive north on Central Ave, turn right at Second St (Observer). Go one block, turn right onto Washington Ave. Parking and entrance on right

The New York State Environmental Conservation Law defines the EMC's primary mission as to serve as a review and advisory board to local and state government on matters affecting the protection, conservation, preservation and proper management of the natural resources of natural resources of each county. The EMC is dedicated to understanding and promoting the wise use and development of Chautauqua County's natural resources while conserving the environment for the protection of all the people.

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LWV Chautauqua County
PO BOX 42
Fredonia, NY, 14063

What do Environmental Management Councils do?

EMCs strive to affect environmental improvement within the system. EMC projects often take the form of studies that provide recommended courses of action for decision-makers. Topics of study may include, but are not limited to: recycling, solid waste management, household hazardous waste, water quality, environmental review, hazardous waste management, and natural resource management.

EMC programs vary around the state – reflecting the diversity of the communities they serve. Concern for the environment is the common thread.

Who are the Environmental Management Councils?

Council members may include business people and other professionals, farmers, skilled and unskilled workers, students, teachers, senior citizens and the interested public, as well as representatives from municipal Conservation Advisory Commission [CACs]. Ex-officio members can include county legislators and agency personnel [e.g. Cornell Cooperative Extension, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Public Works].

Most EMCs have professional staff to provide technical and administrative assistance. An alphabetical listing of county EMCs is provided at NYSAEMC Directory.

New York State Association of Environmental Management Councils [NYSAEMC]

What is New York State Association of Environmental Management Councils (NYSAEMC)?

The New York State Association of Environmental Management Councils [NYSAEMC] is an organization open to all county and regional Environmental Management Councils. The goals of the NYSAEMC are:

- To advocate sound environmental management in New York State;
- To assist and enhance the work of county EMCs;
- To coordinate information and present opportunities for EMCs to learn from one another;
- To promote the formation of new councils;
- To network with federal, state, and local governments and agencies, such as the NYS Association of Conservation Commissions and the NYS Association of Counties.

BUFFET LUNCH RESERVATION FORM

Environmental Management Council

January 11 at Noon

SUNY –Technology Incubator, 214 Central Avenue, Dunkirk

\$13

MINISTRONE SOUP

SALAD

ASSORTED SANDWICH PLATTER

Ham & Swiss on Marbled Rye

Turkey & Provolone on Multigrain Bread

Tuna Salad on White Bread

DESSERT PLATE FOR EACH TABLE

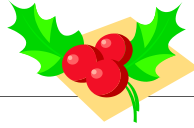
...to include Macadamia Nut Chocolate Chunk

BEVERAGES

NAME _____

PHONE _____ **EMAIL** _____

Please send checks paid to the order of LWV Chautauqua to Gen Lundemann, 120 Lambert Avenue, Fredonia, 14063, 672.4771, genl@netsync.net



Dear Leaguers,

In this holiday season, families and friends come together to share food, gifts, memories, and laughter. Many also think of those less fortunate, and donate food, clothing, and toys to the local agencies who help needy people in our community.

Your League also needs your help, because our democracy needs your help. If you don't think so, consider the attempts in various states to protect incumbents and advantage majority parties in redistricting, to disenfranchise voters who can't find their birth or marriage certificates, and to permit any amount of spending by corporations and unions in support of candidates. The League supports and promotes ethical and transparent government, impartial redistricting and election practices, and public information and education. We are your local voice for these matters, and many more.

And we need help--not money, but action. It may seem to you that everything is going along as usual in our League, but we have lost too many contributing members: people have moved away, become snow birds, suffered severe illness themselves or in their families, people have died. We need you to come forward to help. Please think about recruiting a friend to join the League, about volunteering for the Board, joining the Program Committee, becoming Board secretary. We are too thin on the ground: we need you to step forward.

Warmly,

Minda Rae Amiran, Perce Bernatz, Gloria Garretson, Gen Ludemann, Judy Reynolds, Tillie Solomonson, Paula Coats, Laura Sarek

SPECIAL INTEREST MONEY AND THE 2012 ELECTIONS by Elisabeth MacNamara



The U.S. House of Representatives in early December voted to do away with one of the most effective deterrents to campaign finance corruption our nation has relied on since the Watergate scandal of the 1970s.

The legislation (HR 3463), proposed by Representative Gregg Harper (R MS), will repeal the presidential public financing system and terminate the Election Assistance Commission, a federal agency set up following the failed 2000 Presidential election to improve how we run our elections.

If we look at the scary developments in the 2012 elections so far, it is not hard find the dominance of special interest money in the form of bundlers, Super PACs and the like. Shouldn't we be trying to repair the public financing system to keep our candidates from being indebted to deep-pocketed spenders right out of the gate? Also, unfortunately, elections in our country are still not well-administered, and we are concerned that many states and localities are not doing a good job ensuring federally-protected voting rights.

Let us not go back to the 2000 election but go forward, improving each election over the last. We know what needs to be done; now let us devote the resources to what should be done. The legislation is based on an ideological belief that there is no campaign finance corruption and that elections systems are just fine, thank you very much. In other words, this is a bill based in the sponsor's imagination and not reality.



ALEC isn't a guy. ALEC, the American Legislative Exchange Council, is a factory for anti-voter legislation, funded by power barons like Kraft Foods, McDonalds, Pfizer and the Koch brothers.

They are the driving force behind the recent flood of discriminatory voter ID laws, like the one in Texas, where a state-issued concealed handgun permit is an acceptable form of identification...but a state-issued student ID

from a university is not.

The League is working tirelessly to fight back against these voter suppression schemes that could disenfranchise up to 5 million Americans in next year's elections.

Voter impersonation is not the epidemic that these special interest groups would have you believe. Here are the facts:

5 Myths About Voter Impersonation

MYTH: Voter impersonation is a widespread problem.

FACT: Between 2002 and 2007, after undertaking a massive investigation into voting irregularities, the U.S. Justice Department did not prosecute a single individual for impersonating another voter at the polls.

MYTH: Third party registration drives contribute to voter impersonation.

FACT: Since 2008, only 31 cases of suspected voter impersonation have been reported to Florida authorities. But due to a restrictive new law there, the League has been forced to suspend its Florida voter registration activities for the first time in 72 years.

MYTH: Everyone either has an ID or can easily obtain one.

FACT: 11 percent of eligible voters or about 21 million people, don't have updated, state-issued photo IDs. Furthermore, most states require producing a passport or birth certificate to get one. This presents a tremendous burden for people who work multiple jobs, lack transportation, have disabilities, live outside the state where they were born, are poor or elderly.

MYTH: Election Day registration invites voter impersonation.

FACT: An investigation by the Secretary of State in Maine – which was the first state to adopt Election Day registration – did not find evidence of voting irregularities due to same day registration.

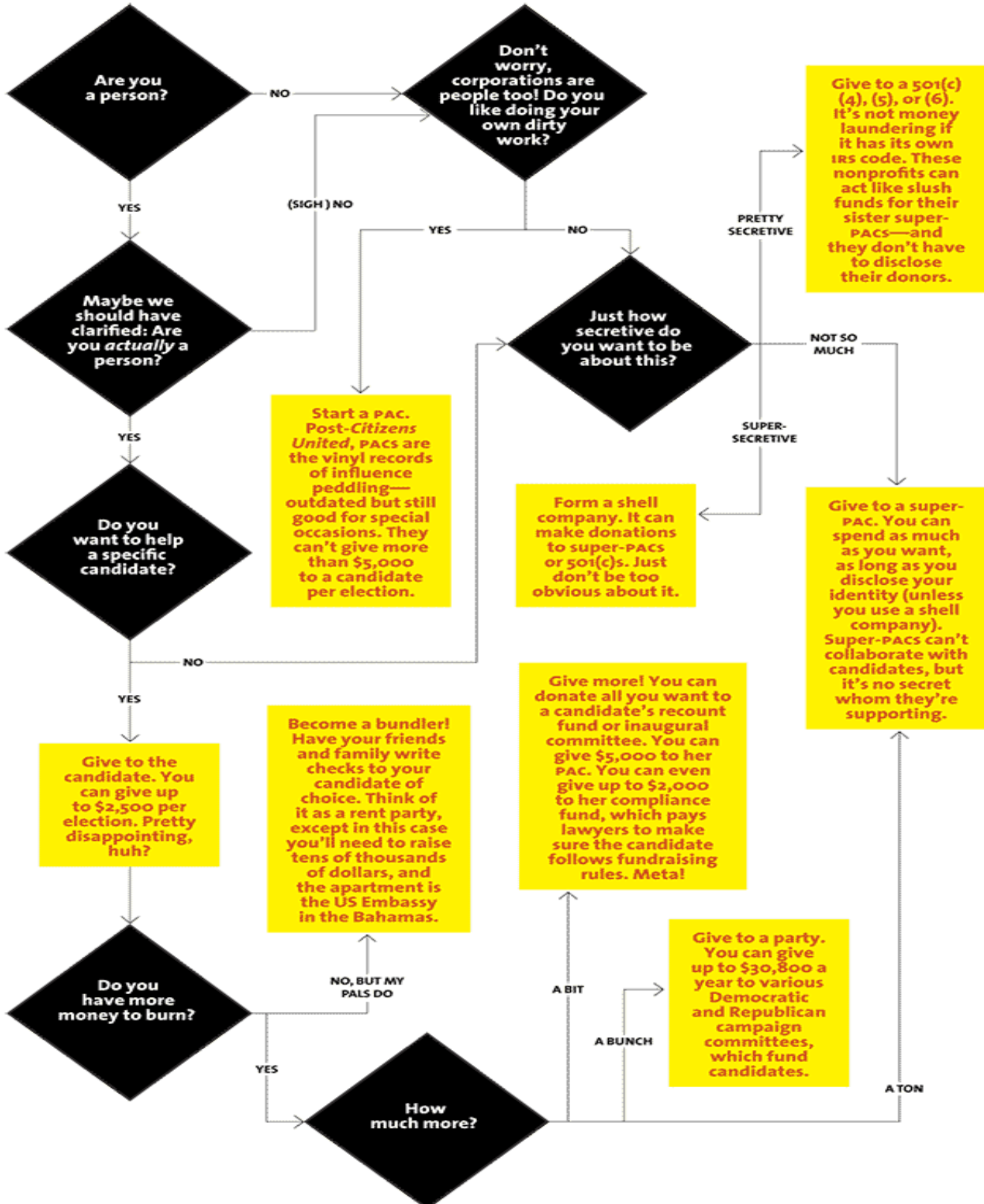
MYTH: Early voting increases voter impersonation.

FACT: Incidents of impersonation in early voting are just as rare as they are in Election Day balloting. A CBS News report on 17 early voting states revealed no widespread signs of irregularities in the 2008 election.

SO YOU WANT TO BUY AN ELECTION

By Tim Murphy *Mother Jones Magazine* Jan.-Feb. 2012

If you have a ton of cash and a political agenda, it's easier than ever to make powerful friends and influence people. Here's a handy how-to guide to the complex, cash-drenched world of federal campaign finance.



In response to the LWVUS consensus questions on federal funding of education, the Chautauqua County LWV arrived at the following answers, duly transmitted to the national organization:

1. The current role of the federal government in public education is too small in funding, too intrusive in testing.
2. The role of the federal government should be to ensure that all students preK-12 receive a quality education.
3. We strongly agree that a quality public education is important to perpetuate a strong and viable democracy.
4. The Common Core Standards developed by the states should be mandated for federal funding of all programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) where the needs qualify for funding.
5. There should be no national assessment aligned with the common core standards. Instead, districts should use a portfolio type of assessment where student projects and activities would be scored holistically.
6. National standards should lead to a suggested structure for states and local education agencies to develop their own curriculum.
7. National assessment consortia should provide criteria for determining readiness for college and careers.
8. If we have a national assessment, its data should be “criterion referenced” and clearly informative.
9. Information from nationally required assessments should be used to inform districts how their population compares to others similar to theirs.
10. Federal funding should be non-competitive for all applicants meeting requirements.
11. A combination of funded mandates and grants should apply.
12. Equity in public education means equitable access to high quality teaching/learning, adequate and current learning materials, clean and well maintained physical facilities, food and health care, safe and secure neighborhoods, and secure housing. All are highly important.
13. ESEA should remain targeted toward poverty and special needs.
14. The federal government has a role in supporting early childhood education, birth to 5, for all children.
15. Federal support for early childhood education programs should include funding for parent education and access to other supportive services, such as mental health for all children.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

January 11 Noon	Noon Luncheon at the "Incubator" in Dunkirk Reservations—to Gen Lundemann, 120 Lambert Avenue, Fredonia, 14063, 672.4771, genl@netsync.net
February 22	Noon Luncheon-Jim Rawcliffe speaks of his experiences with consolidation of governments in England
March 21	Noon Luncheon about the "Options for Care for Senior Citizens" Marianne Spanos
June 8-11	LWVUS Convention in DC! "The Power of the Vote—Imagine, Commit, Act!"



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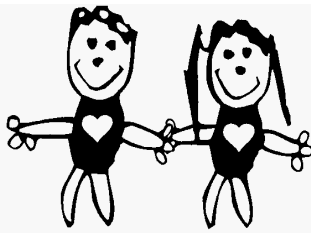
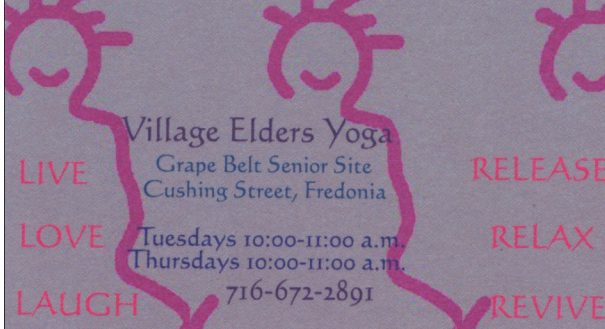


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Tillie Solomonson

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.

Invite a Friend to Join or Give the Gift Of League Membership!!

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

League of Women Voters of Chautauqua County Management Team

Minda Rae Amiran

Priscilla Bernatz

Paula Coats

Gloria Garretson

Gen Ludemann

Judy Reynolds

Laura Sarek

Tillie Solomonson

Membership Form

**Mail to:
LWV Chautauqua
P.O. Box 42
Fredonia, NY 14063**

**Membership Dues: through December 31, 2012
Individual: \$60; Family: \$90; Student: \$25
(Check payable to LWV Chautauqua County)**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

I would like to get involved with:

_____ Local Issues _____ Voter Service _____ State/National Issues

_____ Local Newsletter

_____ Assisting with minor tasks occasionally

Other: _____