



The League of Women Voters of New York State

STATE BOARD REPORT

May 2008, Issue #5

Presidents Report

~Attention: League Presidents

Advocacy & Issues

~Attention: League Presidents and Vice Presidents of Action

Membership

~Attention: League Presidents and Membership Chairs

Voter Service

~Attention: League Presidents and Voter Service Directors

Finance and Development

~Attention: League Presidents

Program and Education

~Attention: League President and Issues/Action Chairs

Additional Materials

~Attention: League Presidents

**STATE BOARD REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE—
www.lwvny.org**

(Click on *Local League Resources* to get to the link for State Board Reports)

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MARTHA'S MEMOS

TO: Local League Presidents
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“Springing into action” has gained a whole new meaning this season with the enormous amount of activity going on. Consistent with the pace, I’ll skip the formalities and move to the highlights.

Recently our **Council Kit** was mailed to all of you and I hope you have found the time to read the reports from your LWNYS board members included in the later part of that kit. These reports present a very good summary of the activities over this past year and hopefully will serve as a reminder of all that we as a statewide organization accomplish. In addition to reading those reports, I ask that you review the budget with your board and **complete and return the yellow pages included on pp. 14-16**. It is the generosity of our supporters and the incredible pool of volunteer services provided by our members that enables us to again avoid increasing our state Per Member Payment (PMP). While we continue to face substantial financial challenges, it remains our hope that we can work with our LLs to address this in other ways. For now, I hope you are encouraging your members to **support the Big League Raffle** as a mutually beneficial fund raising activity.

The Ad Hoc Off-Board Specialists Committee has completed its lengthy review of **procedures for Off-Board Specialists (OBS)** and distributed its nearly 60-page manual to those specialists for review and evaluation prior to a meeting with that committee on May 15th in Albany. We now have nearly 20 OBS and look forward to the benefits derived from these new procedures to better serve both our statewide and local issues and advocacy work.

We also have completed the update of our **“In League”** document and will be including that on our website in time to assist our LL leaders (both new and returning) as they prepare for the next year. I urge all of you to reference this document for assistance in managing your LL. It is truly a wonderful complement to the LWNYS “Basics” version and includes links to various resources to further assist you in your work.

Our development VP, Betsey Swan, has been working over this past year to develop our **Centennial Plan** to address the future of the LWNYS and that plan is being distributed to all of you directly and will be on our website: www.lwvny.org We will certainly have much more to follow on this, but I hope you will take the time to review this plan with your board. We recognize how substantial an undertaking it represents, but also feel we must address this critical issue now.

From April 27-30 we are holding our *Students Inside Albany* Conference. This annual event is always greatly rewarding for those participating either as facilitators, staff, or attendees. Contact our Citizen Action Director, JoAnn Ross, for more information about this or our other youth focused LeaderSpark program.

As I hope you all know by now, we will be **dedicating our office building** to Anne Holtzmann at a ceremony and open house from 4-6 p.m. on May 15th at 62 Grand Street. In preparation, many tributes, photographs, and various honors have been hung in our new building and we will have tours of that building in addition to the dedication and refreshments. I sincerely hope many of you will be able to join us for this special day to celebrate our organization – past, present, and future.

Thanks to a grant from the Omega Institute, the state board will be holding a **strategic planning retreat** at the end of May. In addition to board members, we have been able to invite some LL representatives to this planning session. Unfortunately, we are limited in the number of attendees we can include but hope to have a good cross section of league members based on various criteria including geographic diversity, league tenure, and league size.

Of course, we all look forward to the **LWVUS Convention** in Portland, Oregon in June. I have had responses from many of our LLs with the names of the delegates representing them at this event and have confirmed 30 NYS members will be there. If you have not yet sent me the name of your delegate, please do so. I know it will be an exciting event and look forward to having our own former president, Marcia Merrins, join the National board.

In addition to sharing with you all of these major “works progressing”, I do want to express my appreciation to our small (but slightly larger) staff. Last week our new part-time administrative assistant, Neil O’Brien, sent you a note of introduction and we welcome him. In his short time on staff, we already feel confident that he will be an excellent addition to our team and I certainly know that Kris and Stephanie are most happy to have an extra set of hands. I, for one, want to use my set of hands to applaud both Kris and Stephanie. The litany of activities outlined above has resulted in a substantial amount of work for them and we are all most appreciative.

Finally, I do want to express my heartfelt appreciation to my fabulous, hard working board. As each of you who have served as a LL president knows, the job of president tends to defy official “job description” listings. While this remains true on the state level as well, I have had the privilege and pleasure of support from a truly remarkable group of people. It has also been a pleasure to work with so many of you LL presidents throughout the state as well. Some of you will be stepping aside at the end of this year, but as we all know, even without the glamorous title, there is a lot to keep us all busy in League, so we’ll keep in touch. Thank you for making my job so pleasant and as always.... for all you do for League.

See you all soon.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
FROM: Edna Vincent, Vice-President, Advocacy & Issues
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ADVOCACY & ISSUES

Looking Back....

Goals for the Issues & Advocacy Committee (Vice-President, Legislative Director, Grassroots Lobby Director, and Off-Board Specialists) were discussed at the **September 2007** meeting of the Board of Directors. A committee was formed to study and evaluate the practices, procedures and protocols of the Issues and Advocacy Committee, in order to improve our activities and respond quickly to calls for action alerts, information and joining coalitions. The Board of Directors appointed the following to the Committee -- Chairs: Georgia DeGregorio, Betsey Swann and Members: Barbara Bartoletti, Edna Vincenti, and Helga Schroeder.

At the November meeting of the off board specialists, a preliminary manual was distributed. The following items were discussed : job descriptions, how to request action, how to write a state board report, action procedures, how to write an action alert, how to use a Bill Analysis Sheet, guidelines for action on a national level. Samples of action alerts, the list of NYS Board of directors, a list of local leagues and how to contact them were also included.

Georgia De Gregorio Co-Chair of the Study Committee conducted a discussion with the Off-Board Specialists, questions were asked and answered and many suggestions were made and noted by Georgia and the Study Committee. Many of these issues were included in the "Off-Board Specialist Manual 2008. The Study Committee and the OBS communicated by e-mail, telephone to discuss the contents of the manual and to make changes. The manual was approved by the Board of Directors and will be distributed at a meeting of the Off Board Specialists in May for approval and any last minute corrections.

The Legislative Priorities sent in by the local Leagues were analyzed and tabulated. The "**Legislative Priorities Brochure**" was developed by the Issues & Advocacy Committee, including the Off-Board Specialists, and distributed in January 2008. The Off-Board Specialists and the Issues and Advocacy Committee worked together to produce the "**Legislative Packet**" which is being used to lobby our state legislators.

I wish to thank the local leagues for their cooperation in sending in their legislative priorities and to promoting action on our priorities and answering the call to TAKE ACTION!

I wish to thank the Off-Board specialists for the work that they have done: developing the manual, developing action alerts, writing for the "Legislative Priorities Brochure" and the "Legislative Packet" and always meeting their deadlines.

Looking Forward

I look forward to applying the directions in the “Off-Board Specialist Manual” in order to be more efficient and able to respond quickly to all requests and suggestions. I look forward to better communication and better service to local leagues and their action chairs and members.

Remember the Issues and Advocacy Committee (Edna Vincenti, Barbara Bartoletti, Georgia De Gregorio and the Off-Board Specialists) are available to you to answer questions about their areas of expertise and give suggestions on how to lobby at the state, national and local levels.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
 FROM: Aimee Allaud, Off-Board Specialist, Gun Control/Elections/Government
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NEW YORKERS AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE
LOBBY DAY/APRIL 14, 2008

As the League’s Off-Board Specialist for Gun Control, I attended the annual NYAGV Albany Lobby Day on April 14th, at the Legislative Office Building. LWVNYS has been in coalition with New Yorkers since the mid-1990’s when the group formed following the Long Island Railroad massacre which motivated Carolyn McCarthy to run for Congress and to be elected to the House of Representatives to represent her Long Island district.

Our action in NYS derives from the LWVUS statement adopted at the 1990 convention and amended at the 1994 and 1998 conventions (See LWVNYS Impact on Issues, “Gun Control”). Implicit in our position is the support of sensible gun laws which reduce gun violence through laws limiting the flood of illegal guns into New York State, promote gun safety, and provide full funding for law enforcement efforts.

Here are the most statistics available (2004) on firearm deaths: In 2004, 29,569 people were killed by firearms in the US, including 951 people killed by firearms in NYS (CDC-National Center for Injury Prevention and Control).

United States	New York State
• 16,750 suicides	401 suicides
• 11,624 homicides	516 homicides
• 649 unintentional	22 unintentional
• 311 legal intervention	9 legal intervention
• 235 undetermined	3 undetermined

3,635 of those killed in 2004 in the US were under the age of 21, including 129 in New York.

This lobby day brought @100 people from NYC and upstate to move the sensible gun agenda in the Legislature. About half of the people present were NYC students who are members of NYAGV city chapters in schools. I was with one group of young women who spoke with an Assemblyperson (staff) who represents a district in Brooklyn where their school is located. At a rally in the “Well” of the LOB, students from the NYAGV Youth Program, reACTION, presented poems and personal stories about gun violence. These high schoolers are already very familiar with the effects of gun violence at a personal level.

April 16th was an especially appropriate lobby day since it was the one year anniversary of the Virginia Tech shootings. Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assemblypersons

Amy Paulin, Michele Schimel, David Koon, Steve Englebright, and Senator Eric Schneiderman were also present to speak in support of legislation. The Assembly passed their gun control package of bills later in the day at their session. With the exception of one bill, the other bills have been introduced for several years without successful passage in the Senate.

The new bill, A.9819A, introduced by Assemblywoman Michelle Schimel (AD 16), would require that all semiautomatic pistols manufactured or delivered to any licensed firearms dealer in the state be capable of microstamping ammunition by January 1, 2010. Microstamping ensures that when a gun is fired, information identifying the make, model and serial number of the gun is stamped onto the cartridge as numbers and letters. This technology allows law enforcement officials to trace firearms through cartridge casings found at crimes, even if the crime gun is never found. This legislation has Senate sponsorship (Sen. Martin Golden, (SD 22), and significant support from law enforcement organizations in the state. The League will review this bill for possible support.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
FROM: Aimee Allaud, Off-Board Specialist, Gun Control/Elections/Government
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ON THE HAVA FRONT

We're *almost* resting on our laurels now – since the February decision of the 61 counties in NYS which chose ballot marking devices compatible with optical scanners for the 2008 implementation, we have allowed ourselves some brief breathing space. However, while we reconnoiter, the NYS Board of Elections is on a fast track to perform “acceptance testing” of all the 8,000+ BMDs which will be deployed in every polling place in the state in time for the September primary. “Acceptance testing” is a preliminary testing out of the functionality of the devices here in Albany by the technical staff of the NYSBOE before machines are shipped out to the counties. So far, according to reports given at the BOE commissioners’ meeting in April, only minor flaws have been detected and the vendors were able to correct those before shipping. Whether Sequoia which has the largest contract for NYS machines can provide the required number of machines is still a question to be answered. There might have to be a reallocation of machines so that every county will have at least a partial order.

New York State Is Now a Paper Ballot State!

Last week (April 24) Liberty/Nedap Voting Systems announced that they were withdrawing their voting machines from the certification process in New York and would not fulfill their contract to provide eleven BMD machines for Hamilton County. Hamilton has now decided to purchase the Sequoia ImageCast as most of the surrounding counties have. Liberty’s decision to withdraw their DRE, along with the earlier withdrawal of the Avante Company, means that there are no DRE-type machines undergoing New York State certification. In essence, New York has become a paper ballot/optical scan state – a victory for the voters!

Final Report on Cattaraugus County Request to Change Machine Order

In late March, the Cattaraugus County election commissioners wrote to the NYSBOE to request that they be allowed to change their machine order to the Liberty BMD/DRE in order to use the machine for dual use in 2008 as a ballot marking device and for vote tabulating (replacing the lever machines). In an Action Alert we asked you to call the BOE before the commissioners met to make a decision to allow such a change. At the March 26 meeting, staff announced that during their weekly telephone conference call with the US Department of Justice, this request was discussed. However, the DOJ would not permit any changes at this point and said that, “...the ship has sailed, the door has closed, etc....” and denied the request. The League and NYVV had prepared a statement to be read at the board meeting to oppose any efforts to allow the use of uncertified voting equipment this year and the statement was distributed to the commissioners as a statement of our organizations’ position on any future requests by counties to use their 2008 equipment purchases before it has undergone complete testing. Some counties have expressed the wish to use their new equipment for accessible voting and for non-disabled

voters this year so that they do not have to operate two types of equipment in a presidential election year. We sympathize with their concern but the certification process must be employed to protect the integrity of all ballots. Both the Sequoia ImageCast and the Premier and ES&S optical scanners must be fully tested to the 2005 VVSG (Voluntary Voting System Guidelines) and our own NYS Regulations in order to ensure accurate and secure vote results.

As we move into the next phase of the HAVA implementation, we will be working closely with the Voter Service side of the League. Maggie Moehringer, LWVNY's Voter Service Chair, and I will be exploring how the League can provide information to the voters in this presidential election year on the BMDs, and on NYSVoter (the statewide voter registration database). We will be working with the NYBOE to complement their efforts. This will be the first year the database will be fully operational and voters will be able to check to see if they are registered to vote in advance of the election. However, as with any huge computerized system, there can be errors and we'll want to help voters through that process so that everyone who has registered is in the database.

STATEMENT

March 26, 2008

To: New York State Board of Elections Commissioners Evelyn J. Aquila, Helena Moses Donohue, Douglas A. Kellner, James A. Walsh

Submitted by: Aimee Allaud, NYS League of Women Voters, Wanda Warren Berry, New Yorkers for Verified Voting

Re: Public Comment on the request from the Cattaraugus County Board of Elections that you "approve and certify for use the HAVA and ADA compliant Liberty System to replace all existing lever voting machines in 2008 elections."

The League of Women Voters and New Yorkers for Verified Voting believe that it would be a serious mistake for the Board to comply with the request from the Cattaraugus County Board of Elections to replace its present purchase order with one for the Liberty Election Systems.

The argumentation offered by the Cattaraugus commissioners to support their request makes it clear that they are asking for authorization to purchase the LibertyVote direct recording electronic voting machine (DRE) so that it can be implemented for a full "Plan A" solution in the fall of 2008. They are asking you to approve this purchase before the stringent certification testing that New York requires has been completed which is anticipated to be in the late summer 2008.

The very reason for the staged deployment of the new systems, with Ballot Marking Devices in the fall of 2008 and machines that record and count votes in 2009, was that there was not time enough for full certification testing before orders had to be placed for

2008. Ballot Marking Devices only allow persons with special needs to create a paper ballot that then is to be counted along with absentee ballots. They were authorized for purchase after limited functional testing.

The Federal District Court Order of January 16, 2008, states that “it is the clear intent and Order of this Court that where possible, New York counties be able to utilize, for the fall 2008 federal elections, voting systems that are fully compliant with HAVA.” Further, that “all possible efforts to provide for certification of a Plan A voting system(s) in time for use of such system(s) in the fall 2008 federal primary and general elections,” be made. Notice that the Court does not speak of bypassing any of the certification testing processes which have been designed to protect the integrity of voting in this state, but only of “efforts” to complete them in time. Indeed, in the Plan submitted by the Board of Elections to the Court on January 4, 2008, under Part C, Full HAVA Compliance for 2009, the Board identifies the elements of the voting system certification process to include the following: testing, an independent review of the testing, the creation and review of corresponding reports, review of the voting devices by the CEMAC, and final consideration by the State Board Commissioners. Each of these steps is necessary for a complete certification testing of voting equipment and should not be circumvented or truncated.

Under our election law, counties may choose only voting equipment that has been authorized by the State Board of Elections. At this point, the Board has authorized the LibertyMark, to be used as a ballot marking device in the fall of 2008. If the Liberty DRE eventually is certified for Plan A, the Liberty Mark will require conversion to the LibertyVote DRE.

The Cattaraugus County Board of Elections is asking you to approve for purchase equipment that has not been certified; this would establish a dangerous precedent and violate your mission statement which holds you responsible “for administration and enforcement of all laws relating to elections in New York State.”

Many New York citizens and election integrity experts submitted recommendations that contributed to our strict certification regulations. The goal of those regulations is to assure citizens that New York has done everything possible to guarantee that all votes are counted accurately, as the voter intended. We urge you to insist upon full certification testing of all equipment that is to record and count the votes of New Yorkers before it is purchased.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
FROM: Joan Rosenthal, Off-Board Specialist, Lead Poisoning
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LEAD POISONING UPDATE

The League of Women Voters of New York State has long supported preventive health measures. Children who have been poisoned by lead have many neurological and behavioral problems throughout their lifetime. Ending childhood lead poisoning by preventive measures such as ridding homes of lead based paint hazards is the top agenda for many organizations such as the Coalition to Prevent Lead Poisoning in Rochester, New York, and the New York State Coalition to End Lead Poisoning. The League is an active member of both organizations.

A very cohesive group, the Rochester coalition has had much success in getting legislation passed in 2005 by the Rochester City Council. As a result of this legislation lead paint hazards have been removed from many homes and there has been a significant reduction in the number of new cases of children with elevated blood lead levels. Rochester continues to monitor the work being done to remove lead paint hazards from pre-1978 homes (paint in lead was banned in 1978). The goal is to end childhood lead poisoning by 2010, the deadline set by the Federal Government.

Work continues on contacting League chapters throughout the State to provide them with information about childhood lead poisoning, and the need to contact their State Senators to urge them to co-sponsor and/or support passage of S6350, “an act to amend the public health law, in relation to establishing the childhood lead poisoning primary prevention and safe housing act; establishes the childhood lead poisoning primary prevention and safe housing fund and authorizes a corporate tax credit for lead hazard reduction activities”

A similar bill with many cosponsors was passed in the State Assembly. Senator Joseph Robach from Rochester, NY, introduced the bill in the Senate but did not recruit any cosponsors.

Currently the Buffalo League has joined an effort started by the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo to tackle the high number of cases of childhood lead poisoning in their city. Members of the Rochester Coalition have been mentoring the Buffalo group in these efforts. Members from the Buffalo League have set up a meeting with the Republican State Senators in their area to urge them to support S6350.

Syracuse has printed information in their Voter urging League members to contact their Senators to cosponsor and/or urge passage of this bill. The League in the Ithaca area has also responded favorably to my requests to take action in pressuring their Senators.

A Memorandum of Support has been sent by the State League to the Health Committee, urging them to move it out of committee with a positive recommendation.

It is urgent to take action advocating passage of S6350 in this legislative session. I will continue to contact other Leagues in high risk areas and ask them to join the effort. So far it has been rewarding to connect with League members in various cities and know that we will try to do what we can to protect the health and future of our children.

TO: Local League Presidents and Advocacy & Issue Chairs
FROM: Roberta Wiernik, Off-Board Specialist, Natural Resources
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NATURAL RESOURCES

The bad news is that, again, the Bigger Better Bottle Bill did not make it through the budget process. But, many thanks to all of you who responded to our Action Alerts. The good news is that Governor Paterson has come out strongly in support of the BBBB and has said that he will fight for its passage this legislative session. Word on the street is that Democrats seem prepared to fight harder also.

Through the League's participation in The Friends of New York's Environment coalition, we were successful in lobbying for a \$5 million increase to the Environmental Protection Fund, raising its budget to an all-time high of \$255 million. Thanks to 2007 legislation, the fund will be increased to \$300 million in 2009. The EPF supports projects for air quality, water quality, open space, recycling, etc throughout the state. The coalition also worked and was successful in ensuring capital funding and staffing increases for NYS Parks, DEC, Agriculture and Markets and the Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Both the Assembly and Senate passed the Great Lakes Compact, an agreement between the eight Great Lakes US states and two Canadian provinces designed to protect both the quality and quantity of the lakes waters. It will put in place a water management program to protect against diversion of water out of the system and to promote water conservation within the basin.

Net metering, a League priority, has made little progress to date. Net metering allows consumers who are producing electricity (via solar, wind, etc) to sell excess capacity back into the electric grid. This would mean more clean energy and less reliance on CO2 producing plants. It is New York's restrictive policy that is prohibiting this from happening; this needs to change. Stay tuned.

TO: Local League President; Advocacy & Issues Directors
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PAY EQUITY UPDATES

Background – This SBR focuses on the activities of the NYS Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC), of which the LWVNY is a primary member.¹ With League guidance, NYSPEC takes actions to provide pay equity for equally evaluated job titles and equal pay to employees in New York State.

Recent Legislative Developments (Robach's Ruse²)

After Senator Joseph Robach became the Chair of the Labor Committee in February, NYSPEC representatives and NYSUT lobbyist, John Green, met with a staff member in Senator Robach's office to discuss the importance of the Fair Pay Bill and to explain the pay equity issue as it relates to different job titles of equal value. Senator Robach spoke at the April 2nd Gloria Steinem Day for Fair Pay and indicated support for pay equity. He mentioned his understanding that pay equity means eliminating the salary disparities between jobs that are dissimilar but that required equivalent composites of skill and responsibility done primarily by women and people of color.

Unfortunately, by April 14, 2008 Senator Robach's understanding of what pay equity means seemed to have slipped. On that date he introduced his own bill (S7521) which quickly passed by the Senate that day. Although Senator Robach called this a pay equity bill, it does not require that employers to pay jobs of comparable worth the same regardless of the gender and race of those who primarily do the jobs. It does not require that traditionally female jobs titles (for example social worker, clerk, food service worker, nurse, librarian and childcare worker be paid the same as jobs of comparable value that are primarily done by white men. It does not address pay equity nor is it a pay equity bill. It increases, *rarely if ever applied*, existing fines for *equal pay for equal work* laws or *failure to pay employees* period.

To get pay-equity type language into Robach's bill they called on the Commissioner of Labor to issue "*a report on or before May 1, 2009 on issues relating to the wage differential between men and women and between minorities and non-minorities in the same job and jobs that are dissimilar but that required equivalent composites of skill, welfare, responsibility and working in the New York state job market.*" When you want

¹ Other organizational members include NYSPEC's founding organization, Women on the Job Task Force (based on Long Island), many unions including NYSUT, UUP, UPSEU, SEIU, and DC37, many women's and civil rights organizations such as AAUW, NOW, BPW, and NAACP, Girl Scouts of America, Women's Sports Foundation, Capital District Labor and Religion Coalition, the NY Women's Agenda and the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE).

² Merriam Webster On line Dictionary – Ruse – noun – a wily subterfuge – synonyms see trick

Etymology: French, from Old French, roundabout path taken by fleeing game

to kill something you call for a report or study and hope the energy for the issue disappears in the meantime.

Why was it important for Robach to confuse the issue with the Ruse bill on April 14? In my opinion, it was because Senator Craig Johnson had introduced a motion to petition which came up for a vote on April 15, 2008. If passed, a big 'if', it would have gotten the real pay equity bill, the NYS Fair Pay Bill, (S3936) out of the Labor Committee and onto the floor for a vote. (NYSPEC organized an action alert to ask supporters to call their Senators and urge them to vote for the motion to petition.) As the April 14 Albany Times Union reported:

“Johnson needs a simple majority of the 62 senators to force the bill to the floor, which means that if all Democrats vote yes, he needs only two Republican votes. And that’s where Robach comes in. Johnson said if Robach means what he said at the speech, ‘I would expect that he would vote in favor of it. If he doesn’t, you should ask him why he isn’t supporting equal rights and pay equity.’ “

Most of the Senate Majority was not present in the chamber when the vote on the motion to petition took place, including Senator Robach.

So Robach needed something that was not really pay equity but which he could call pay equity and fool the uninformed media and public. Thus, Robach’s Ruse (S7521) was passed on April 14th and the media was told that the Senate GOP had passed “pay equity.” The Albany Times Union reported that

“Following approval of pay-equity legislation by the GOP-controlled Senate on Monday, Democrats on Tuesday failed to get their own version of the bill onto the floor for a vote.”

To be fair the *Times Union* reporters were not totally fooled. They did pointed out later in the April 16th article that the Robach bill actually only called for a pay-equity study.

An Historical Note

Perhaps this all sound a little familiar. As noted in the 2002 League Newsletters, the Senate GOP did the same thing in 2002, under pressure from pay equity advocates. In that year they raised the fine on employers in violation of the statute from \$50 to \$500. This year they have resurrected the same approach and are raising the, rarely if ever applied, fine from \$500 to \$1000. The fine is actually mostly for employers found **not** to be paying their employees period (as in human trafficking). There is only one mention of gender differences in salaries.

A Related Meeting with Labor Commissioner, Patricia Smith

NYSPEC Representatives met with Labor Commissioner, Patricia Smith on April 24th. She confirmed that the Robach bill raises fines in a rarely if ever used law. She also confirmed that NYS currently has no laws covering equal pay for jobs of comparable worth. So if these fines were to be imposed it would be for equal pay for equal work or for non-payment of employees. She also noted that it would cost more than a million dollars for the report mandated by Robach S7521 to be made.

Gloria Steinem Day for Pay Equity, April 2, 2008

NYSPEC owes a debt of gratitude to LWFVNY and many League officers and members for the key rolls they played in making the Gloria Steinem day a success.³ It is always dangerous to single out individuals for thanks when so many do so much, but we do want to particularly thank the two Barbaras, Barbara Thomas and Barbara Bartoletti. Barbara Thomas played a key role in the planning and execution of this event, not the least of which was her outreach and communications with so many who helped us “fill the Well.” Barbara Bartoletti also helped with the planning, meeting with and advising us many months ahead. Most importantly, on April 2nd she was key to the success of the event as she recognized and coordinated the formal recognition of legislators as they arrived.

NYS Pay Equity Coalition’s three events on April 2nd featuring Gloria Steinem were a great success heightening the visibility of the issue of pay equity among legislators, the media, and members of the general public. At least five hundred people attended the morning event at the Legislative Office Building including key members of the New York State legislature. Ms. Steinem did an excellent and engaging presentation about pay equity and why it is so important to pass the Fair Pay Bill.

Besides Ms Steinem those speaking included the bill sponsors, Senator Craig Johnson and Assemblymember Susan John, spoke. Senator Joseph E. Robach, chair of the Labor Committee spoke in support of the legislation. Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson, representing Senate Democratic Leader Malcolm Smith who was unable to attend, spoke elegantly in support of the legislation. Union leaders of two of NYSPEC’s member organizations Kenneth Brynien, President of the Public Employees Federation (PEF) and Alan Lubin, Executive Vice President of NYSUT spoke strongly for the passage of the NYS Fair Pay Bill. The morning session was expertly moderated by Dr. Helen Desfosses.

At least a dozen members of the press covered the event. Articles have appeared in newspapers around the state and several Albany television stations ran stories. Ms. Steinem was interviewed by Joe Donahue with a discussion that followed joined by Dr. Helen Desfosses on public radio station WAMC, on March 31, 2008. Ms. Steinem also taped an interview with Susan Arbetter, host of the public television show, “New York Now,” which aired on WMHT and other public television stations around the state during the week following her visit to Albany.

The fundraising luncheon for NYSPEC at 74 State Street was filled to capacity and those who attended shared a very special afternoon with Ms. Steinem.

The Town Hall Meeting sponsored by the Capital District Area Labor Federation at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany was another standing room only event. Renee Gecsedí of the New York State Nurses Association, SUNY professor, Dr. Alethia Jones, Hon. Barbara Smith, and Ms. Steinem discussed “Feminist Perspectives on Work, Immigration, and Health Care.” Distinguished guests at the Town Hall included the statewide secretary of CSEA, Denise Berkley.

³ Many other NYSPEC coalition members played key roles in the success of this event, including WOJ/LIFWG, NYSUT, UUP, PEF, AAUW, and the YWCA

Other Activities

Barbara Smith spoke to the Schenectady AAUW chapter about Pay Equity on April 16. Lois Haignere taped a small section concerning pay equity for a TV show called Real Conversations on April 24th.

Next Steps

Members of the Senate and Assembly will be sent Pay Day candy bars on Equal Pay Day April 22nd. Senator Robach's office requested a meeting with NYSPEC prior to his introduction of Bill S7521. A meeting is scheduled for April 30th.

Want to know more about this issue and how it relates to equal pay? A PowerPoint presentation is available, as well as speakers.
Call 518 464 0991

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
FROM: Gladys Gifford, Off Board-Specialist, Transportation
174 Capen Boulevard, Buffalo, NY 14226
E-Mail: schuford@earthlink.net

WAY TO GO!

From my perch at the western edge of NYS, I am constantly reminded in both urban and rural settings that the way we go, i.e., the transportation mode we use--car, train, airplane, boat--impacts every aspect of our daily lives. However, we may not realize the role that government plays in facilitating or providing the infrastructure for the transportation mode we habitually use. Every municipality, from village to town to county to state, is directly involved in building and maintaining roads and bridges and docking facilities and railroads. League members can play a crucial role in monitoring how government goes about providing this vital service to citizens.

Transportation in the 2008 LWVNYS Legislative Agenda

The specific transportation item in the Legislative Agenda 2008 appears under “Energy and Environment,” as an item to be included in the NYS budget. The latest information on the transit features of the budget; passed April 9 is that total transit operating assistance is up 4.36%. Funding for upstate transit systems was increased 6.95%, but downstate transit systems (outside of the MTA) suffered a 2% cut in operating aid.

The Legislature defeated the NYC congestion pricing proposal, thereby rejecting the Federal dollars that would have been available to help implement the proposal.

Transportation has impacts on other areas of the “Energy and Environment” focus. Keep in mind that public transit is the most “green” way to go. Transportation decisions impact all efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, foster energy efficiency, protect water quality, contain sprawl, and protect open space and watersheds.

Therefore, as all Leagues meet with elected officials at every level, please encourage elected officials to make inquiries related to the transportation infrastructure in your area.

For example: If the town allows more residential development (i.e., sprawl), what are the transportation/traffic impacts? If the NYSDOT wants to widen a road to relieve congestion, how much will that road cost taxpayers in maintenance dollars per year? Did the NYSDOT do an appropriate study to determine whether the widened road will actually attract more congestion (“induced traffic”)? Has improved public transit service been considered as a realistic option?

Rescission order for 2008

With the upheaval in the Governor's office upsetting schedules and staff assignments, the deadline for the rescission order was buried in the rush to pass the budget. Stay tuned!

At the LWVUS Convention

For all going to Portland, Oregon, for the LWVUS convention--please take full advantage of the fantastic public transit system, right from the moment you arrive! The LWVUS website has full directions in the convention materials: Tri-Met light rail leaves the airport for the city every 17 minutes, and costs only \$2.05--can't beat the price! And do sign up for the streetcar tours, for an eye-opening view of how great transportation boosts urban quality of life!

When you return, do send me your reports on what you saw and heard while tasting the premier American transit system. I've been there twice, so I know you are in for a treat!

Help available

If you'd like to activate a transportation group in your League, I can help--do email me! Local activities can be as easy as sending an observer to the public meetings of your local Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) or building a relationship with the nearest office of the NYSDOT.

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors
FROM: Off-Board Specialists for Urban Sprawl
Ruth Bonn, 47 Spruce Drive, Alplaus, NY 12008
E-Mail: rooty@nycap.rr.com

Anne Huberman, 303 Highland Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14222
E-Mail: anne.huberman@gmail.com

REPORT ON SPRAWL AND LAND USE ISSUES

A reminder: Our state position on land use and sprawl is

In order to conserve natural resources and improve the quality of life for its residents, New York State should take a proactive role in regional land use planning, enhancing urban neighborhoods, containing urban sprawl, and protecting agricultural land, open space, watersheds and other sensitive areas.

Of special concern to those of us concerned about revitalizing cities and curbing urban sprawl, is the Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP) created in 2003. Hailed as breakthrough legislation, in practice it has proved disappointing.

To provide incentives for the cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated sites, the bill provides generous tax credits and liability releases to developers who clean up brownfield sites to meet use-based standards. What has happened is that a few large development projects are receiving millions of dollars in tax credits while many worthy smaller projects are excluded from the program. The tax credits are given as-of-right for any project accepted into the BCP regardless of need. Additionally, the tax incentives provided are not tied to the level of cleanup.

Also created in the 2003 law is the Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) program which provides funds for community-based planning efforts to redevelop brownfields in ways consistent with community needs. These smaller projects are being undercut while the biggest, most expensive developments on the least contaminated sites are being supported.

The Law is not working as intended. Changes are needed to make it fulfill its original purpose and ensure that public funds are used as intended. Environmental groups propose these changes:

- Limit the tax credits for redevelopment and ensure that subsidies go to projects that need them
- Increase remediation tax credits for cleanups that are most protective of soil and groundwater.
- Provide bonus redevelopment tax credits for projects built consistent with BOA plans.
- De-link tax credits from program eligibility. Sites that do not need the tax credits may enter the BCP and receive other benefits such as liability releases.

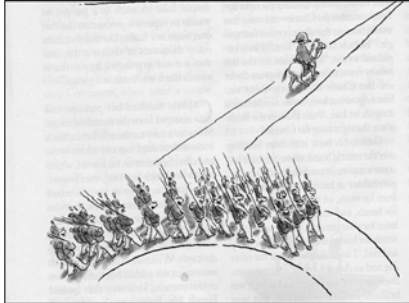
Expansion of eligibility is also recommended. The law should be amended to clarify that any sites contaminated by off-site sources or containing historic fill should be eligible for the BCP.

The law also needs amending to streamline administration of the BOA (Brownfield Opportunity Area) program. The current two agency administration of the program is cumbersome and inefficient. The law should be amended to transfer administration of the BOA program to the Department of State, and a mechanism for providing priority for strategic brownfield sites within a BOA should be established.

Reforms to the Brownfield tax credits were proposed by the Governor in the executive budget but they were not included in the adopted 2008-09 state budget. Negotiations over reforms to the brownfield tax credits are underway. A three month moratorium on processing new applications has been agreed to by the Senate, Assembly and Governor while they consider changes to the law.

TO: Local League Presidents, Membership Chairs
 FROM: Marcia A. Merrins, Vice-President Membership
 42 Rosalyn Court, Fredonia, NY 14063
 E-Mail: mmerrins@netsync.net

MEMBERSHIP MINUTE



Who's following you?

- Who will take your place when you are ready to move on?
- Does your League have the "bench-strength" to carry out the challenges of the next five years?
- Are you spending too much on recruitment and having difficulty filling critical positions?

I don't know the answers. I did hear a great idea the other day. One local League is operating with co-presidents. The unique thing is they are staggered. When the president had finished year one of a two year term, another is elected for a 2-year term. When the first president has finished 2 years the "newer" one has just finished her first year. She can now mentor the next president.

Changing Roles: Sole presidents are used to working independently. Having to share decision making, especially with a co-president is a real challenge. Once two people have to work together, the working relationship has changed. Partners are team members who have to talk, share decision making, and who have to learn how to disagree hopefully without hurting each other. Co-presidencies I believe may add more complexity to the new "team" relationship but it may help your situation.

Succession planning is not an easy process, especially if you've been president or on the board for years and years. This "selling feature", doesn't make succession planning very popular. However, if you want to transfer a viable League, then succession becomes an issue.

Goal Setting: Your long term vision feeds goal setting. Goals then provide direction. If you can't see where you're going how will you ever know if you get there?

League Viability: Financial stability is critical. It is pointless to talk about transferring a League in trouble to potential leaders.

Train successors: How can a member take over a League if they don't get any training? You would not want your son or daughter to say: "Dad taught me how to work but he never taught me how to run a business". As a leader, you are the coach, and your volunteers are potentially the future of your League. They need to learn how to make good decisions and how to seek out advice they can trust. They need skills in strategic decision making, planning, communication, finances, marketing, and member relations.

Here's another suggestion to help in succession planning: Ask board members or committee chairs to write an "Annual Report" at the end of each year describing their committees' activities and decisions. These reports can be included with the board minutes in their League's formal, permanent records.

Here is a simple format that committees can use for an "Annual Report of the Committee":

"Annual Report" from a Board Member/Committee. A summary report on the Committee's work this last year, with recommendations to the staff and the full board.

Committee: _____

Period of time this report covers: _____

Committee chair: _____

Committee members: _____

The main objectives for the Committee: _____

Summary of recent accomplishments and current activities:

List of activities in progress and upcoming events/discussions:

Recommendations:

Housekeeping

- Liaison phone calls. LWVNYS board members are having a tough time reaching several Leagues. We are contacting you so we can help in any way we can and get some great ideas to share with other Leagues. **PLEASE return their phone calls and e-mails. It is the right thing to do even if everything in hunky-dory!**
- By now your local Nominating Committee should be well underway, preparing to present their proposed slate to your board (as a courtesy) at the meeting prior to its publication in your Bulletin. Check your local League bylaws to see how far ahead of the annual meeting your membership should be informed and be sure it's known that nominations from the floor are acceptable procedure, providing the proposed nominee has agreed ahead of time.

- If your bylaws haven't been reviewed for a few years, a committee should be looking them over. Any recommendations for change should be presented to the membership ahead of time; again, the schedule is in the current bylaws.
- March is not too late for local program planning. Remember, local program is the heart and soul of local Leagues. A challenging local program, particularly one that includes one or two "hot" topics in your town, will energize your current members and attract new members! Action on local program will give you visibility in your community.
- Your annual meeting should be a celebration of League, an event to look forward to, not an occasion to dread. The secret - be prepared! A sample script can be found in "In League in New York State". Be sure all participants have a copy of the script so they know their responsibilities ahead of time. Make your annual meeting a social as well as a business event. Plan a luncheon, tea or dinner, invite an exciting speaker or have some fun entertainment. This will attract members - new and old -and might even bring in some prospective members. And it will ensure that you have a quorum at the meeting.

LWVNYS COUNCIL: As you know, this year Council will be done through the mail. Your participation is important!

NATIONAL CONVENTION: All local Leagues should be thinking about who will represent them at National Convention, which will be held in Portland, Oregon, June 13-17. National Convention is exciting and inspiring, a great learning experience for any Leaguer. Traveling is expensive; do try to think of innovative ways your League can raise money to send your full delegation to National Convention.

Whenever LWVNYS produces a publication, a membership application is included, at the request of our members. LWVNYS is always trying to recruit new members for our local Leagues. It is difficult to include all the possibilities for dues structures for many local Leagues across the state. You can cross out ours and add yours if you wish or add your membership form.

LOCAL LEAGUE INFORMATION FORM

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF _____

DO YOU HAVE AN OFFICE: _____ YES or NO (please circle one)

IF YES, OFFICE ADDRESS: _____

OFFICE TELEPHONE W/AREA CODE: _____

OFFICE E-MAIL: _____

WEBSITE: YES or NO IF YES, WEBSITE ADDRESS: _____
(please circle one)

ALSO, PLEASE FORWARD TO THE STATE LEAGUE OFFICE A LIST THAT INCLUDES NAME & E-MAIL ADDRESS OF PERSON THAT HOLDS THE FOLLOWING POSITIONS ONLY:

- PRESIDENT, CO-PRESIDENT AND/OR VICE-PRESIDENT
- ADVOCACY & ISSUES CHAIR (or anyone that you would like on the Advocacy listserve)
- TREASURER
- BULLETIN EDITOR
- MEMBERSHIP CHAIR
- VOTER SERVICE CHAIR
- PROGRAM AND EDUCATION CHAIR
- FINANCE/DEVELOPMENT CHAIR

DON'T FORGET THAT WE HAVE LEAGUES THROUGHOUT NYS, SO PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR AREA CODE.

DUE TO STATE OFFICE BY JULY 15, 2008

**LWVNYS/Local League Update
62 GRAND STREET, ALBANY, NEW YORK 12207
E-MAIL: Stephanie@lwvny.org
TELEPHONE: 518-465-4162 * FAX: 518-465-0812**

TO: Local League President, Voter Service Directors
FROM: Maggie Moehringer, Vice President, Voter Service
12 Coventry Road, Glenmont, NY 12077
E-mail: mmoehrin@nycap.rr.com

VOTER SERVICE REPORT

Getting Ready for the New Voting Machines: Things Your League Can Do

As you know, new ballot marking devices accessible to the disabled have been chosen by each NYS county and will be present in each polling place for use by the disabled population (although not strictly limited to that use) for the November, 2008 election. Your local Board of Elections might be glad of your League's help in the implementation, and this presents an excellent opportunity to foster good relations with your BoE. Here's some ideas of how your League can help voters prepare for the new machines.

- Put a statement on your web page about the new voting technology chosen for your area, stating that your League will do what it can to support the implementation and to help voters use the new technology.
- Learn about the new machines in your area. A list of what machine your county has chosen can be found elsewhere in this report. LWVNYS is in touch with the vendors and will be distributing information about the new machines to Leagues as soon as we get it and format it into an appropriate presentation. The information will be formatted for the public in our "Facts for Voters" (Voters Guide Part 1) next summer, and we are considering doing a special publication with more complete information geared to the disabled.
- Partner with your Board of Elections in reaching out to the disabled community (and possibly the community at large) and informing them about the new machines. Consider:
 - holding a series of joint forums, demonstrating the machines
 - composing and distributing informative materials.
- Offer your assistance to your Board of Elections. They might need help in:
 - training of poll workers
 - direct support for technology-shy poll workers on election day
 - staffing the polls in anticipation of an increase in the need for voter assistance
 - observing and documenting problems on election day.
- Offer to try to engage local college students in supporting the polls on Election Day. Explore your options with local colleges; perhaps poll support could be a project acceptable for fulfillment of course assignments.

ACCESSIBLE BALLOT MARKING DEVICE CHOICES BY NYS COUNTIES:

PREMIER AUTOMARK: Albany, Schenectady and Rockland Counties

<http://www.premierelections.com>

ES&S AUTOMARK: New York, Bronx, Kings, Queens, Richmond and Erie Counties

<http://www.essvote.com>

LIBERTY MARK: Hamilton County

<http://www.libertyelectionsystems.com>

All other counties have chosen the SEQUOIA DEMOCRACY SUITE

<http://www.sequoiavote.com>

Voters Guides, Fall 2008

As you know from the survey that was sent to all presidents and voter service directors, we are all presented with a confusing array of options for the Voters Guides for 2008. Here are the tentative plans:

Voters Guide Part I: “Facts for Voters”

- This will be a 2-color printed document in folded pamphlet format.
- Since this year the Part 1 document must include information on the new voting machines, we anticipate that it will be bigger than a tri-fold. If you wish to print it locally, you can purchase it from us in camera-ready format. The text will also be available for Leagues that wish to both format and print it locally.
- It will be separately priced from the Part 2 “Voters Guide”.
- The information in the document will also be on the LWVNYS web pages in a user (printer) friendly format (i.e. not a PDF of the pamphlet).

Voters Guide Part II: Guide to the Candidates

- Part 2 is more complicated. We anticipate that we have State League web site options and possibly Smart Voter options (using the state wide funded facility) that we haven’t taken advantage of in the past, and that we could use for both the statewide information and the regional information.
- If Leagues also want us to continue to do Part 2 as a printed document, plans are to continue the format of the “Voters Guide” from 2004 and 2006 with the outer shell pages being the statewide guide and the inner pages being the regional guides. The statewide shell will include general information, membership information and the presidential candidates’ info.
- The regional guides would have information about the congressional and state legislature candidates (both Assembly and Senate), including candidate responses to questions that local Leagues will collect. If we are to do regional guides, Leagues in your region would start soon to collaborate on formulating questions for candidates so that we will be ready when the time comes. State League would help by finding a regional coordinator and providing you contact information.

The results of the survey will take some discussion at the May State Board meeting so that we can let Leagues know our intentions soon after that. At this point, “Part 1 – Facts for Voters” will most likely be printed as planned. The original intention of the tabloid

format for Part 2 was to open up the possibility for Leagues of having their local papers distribute the document as an insert. Most Leagues, however, do not have a relationship with their local papers that makes that likely or possible, and they found the tabloid format very difficult to store and distribute, since the normal mode of distribution was to hand-carry or mail them. Some Leagues have relationships with local underwriters and contributed printing resources, and do not wish to make use of the more expensive statewide printing. Many Leagues, while they are interested in the text of the information, wish to use it on their web pages and in locally printed and distributed documents. We are still receiving survey responses at this writing and will get back to Leagues via email with the results and our decisions on Part 2.

The Simple Web Page: A Pilot

Many local Leagues do not have local expertise to establish even the most minimal of web sites, and have asked if LWVNYS could provide assistance in creating simple web sites for them. While 37 of 56 Leagues have at least rudimentary web pages, that means that 19 have no web presence. LWVNYS has convened a committee to design, pilot and implement a possible solution for those Leagues. Adam Gaus and Valerie Castleman, who both provide web services to local Leagues on Long Island and in Westchester County respectively, Deb Drake, who is the LWVNYS webmaster, Maggie Moehringer and Kris Myers are the participating members of the committee.

The committee has decided to implement, on a pilot basis, with two Leagues, a very simple web site, hosted on the LWVNYS web server, with a URL (web site address) appropriate for the local League. This web page would essentially consist of a simple mission statement, a list of important officers, and a contact form. When an interested party fills out and submits the contact form, an email would be generated with the information on the form. The participating Leagues would need to designate a person to receive the email that the contact form would generate.

We anticipate that this will be a very low cost alternative for Leagues with no web site. Initial implementation for two pilot Leagues will happen very soon.

2008 Voter's Guide Order Forms traditionally included in this State Board Report will be sent out by the end of May 2008. The process and style are still under review.

The final determination of style and cost breakdown will be based on local League feedback received to date.

Thank you for your patience.

TO: Local League Presidents, Program/Education Chairs and SIA/LeaderSpark Coordinators
FROM: JoAnn Ross, Citizen Education Director
116 Cranburne Lane, Williamsville, New York 14221
E-Mail: jross18@roadrunner.com

CITIZEN EDUCATION REPORT

An Update on the League of Women Voters New York State Education Foundation, Inc. (LWVNYSEF) Youth Development Initiative (YDI). The Youth Development Initiative consists of two program components, *LeaderSpark* and *Students Inside Albany*:

On April 6, 2008 the Saratoga County LWV completed the third year of their very successful *LeaderSpark* Program. Twenty-eight high school students from around the area participated in the program which was advertised through high school guidance counselors at area schools, and through other individuals involved in leadership in the community, including Boy Scout and Girl Scout troop leaders.

In Western New York, the first *LeaderSpark* program sponsored by the Buffalo/Niagara LWV concluded on April 24, 2008. This program was conducted on-site during school hours for sophomores at the Middle Early College High School in Buffalo, New York. Arrangements were made with school administrators allowing students to volunteer to attend the Leader Spark program in lieu of an early morning study hall.

The above are just two of many examples of how the *LeaderSpark* program curriculum can be adopted to fit what works best for your local League. The State League encourages all Leagues throughout NYS to take advantage of this unique opportunity to help shape the lives of tomorrow's leaders. For further information please check out the new LeaderSpark link on LWVNYS website (<http://www.lwvny.org/leaderSpark.html>).

While SIA has grown through the introduction of *LeaderSpark*, *LeaderSpark* has also grown through SIA. It seems that because of this year's SIA and what local Leagues and parents heard from the *LeaderSpark* students at the recognition breakfast, we have one more League interested in taking part in *LeaderSpark* (Saugerties) and we have gained one new coordinator and probably new League member for the Schenectady *LeaderSpark* program (parent of one of the students they sent.)

Students Inside Albany

The 2008 Students Inside Albany Conference held April 27-30, was an intensive three day training experience designed to immerse students in the process by which public policy is proposed, enacted and changed in the New York State Capitol. In addition to students selected from local Leagues across the state, two students from each LeaderSpark project were also offered the opportunity to attend. A component of *Students Inside Albany* included participation from LeaderSpark graduates, giving them an opportunity to use the skills they learned in their local programs.

Sixteen local Leagues sent 22 students to the SIA program: Broome/Tioga, Buffalo/Niagara/Cazenovia, Cooperstown, Geneva, Greater Five Towns, Greater Oneida, Great Neck, Mid-Hudson Unit, Port Washington/Manhasset, Rochester, Saratoga, Schenectady, Saugerties, Steuben (Steuben's student had to drop out at the last moment because of a death in the family) and Utica/Rome. Four of the sixteen local Leagues had held LeaderSpark program in their community: Buffalo/Niagara, Geneva, Saratoga, and Schenectady. The twenty-two students came from the following cities/towns: Ballston Spa, Buffalo, Campbell, Cazenovia, Cedarhurst, Cooperstown, Fort Edward, Glen Cove, Geneva, Great Neck, Guilderland, Johnson City, Kingston, Lake Katrine, Oneida, Rochester, Saratoga, Saugerties, Schenectady, and Utica. It looks like our local Leagues are reaching far and wide in their community to recruit their students. WAY TO GO!!!

The feedback that we received from the students described it as a memorable event, both for the learning experience and the opportunity to meet and interact with students across the state of New York. A few of the many quotes expressed by the students sum up the total experience:

- "I learned so many things about leadership and government...I will definitely use the resources. What I learned here I would never have learned in school out of a textbook."
- "I feel participating was definitely worthwhile because I met some very awesome people and learned so much from them as well as the speakers. It was amazing to be able to sit with my assembly member and for him to tell me more about what he was voting about and why."
- "I learned through this program that there is good lobbying, the media always portrays the bad, so I thought all lobbying was bad."
- "I learned, perhaps most importantly, how to meet and socialize with new people. My social skills were quite atrophied."
- "There is so many ways I can use the knowledge that I gained from *LeaderSpark* and *Students Inside Albany* that I don't think I will ever stop using it."
- ***And last, but certainly not least:*** "I had no idea that the League of Women Voters was such a phenomenal organization with such great people who worked for open government. My opinion of the League of Women Voters has certainly been elevated."

For additional information on *LeaderSpark* or *Students Inside Albany*, contact:

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518-465-4162
Stephanie@lwny.org

JoAnn Ross
LWVNYS Citizen Education Director
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jross18@roadrunner.com

TO: Local League Presidents, Local Study Committee Chairs,
Action and Issues Chairs
FROM: Lori Dawson, LWVNYS NPV Study Chair,
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E-Mail: iddawson@skidmore.edu

JoAnn Ross, Citizen Education, Director
E-Mail: jross18@roadrunner.com

**UPDATE ON LOBBYING EFFORTS FOR NATIONAL NPV STUDY:
“THE ADVISABILITY OF USING THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE
COMPACT AMONG THE STATES AS A METHOD
FOR ELECTING THE PRESIDENT.”**

- 1. Caucus scheduled for Saturday, June 14 at 8:30-10 pm at 2008 Convention:**
National Popular Vote of the President
LWV Arizona, LWV New York State and LWV El Dorado County, CA co-host this exploration of the National Popular Vote (NPV) Compact. Guest speaker Vermont Representative, Chris Pearson will provide an overview of the compact, already signed into law in some states and introduced in many (NPV website is www.nationalpopularvote.org book free on-line). LWVNYS will provide League analysis of pros and cons they have reviewed and why they are requesting a national study (materials posted on their website at <http://www.lwvny.org/npv.html>). LWVAZ will explain their rationale for a formal resolution on this matter versus a national study.
- 2. LWV Arizona is presenting the following resolution regarding the National Popular Vote (NPV) compact at the 2008 convention.**
“In keeping with the spirit of the LWVUS position on abolishing the Electoral College, LWVUS resolves to allow each state League to support, oppose or stay neutral on the National Popular Vote compact for handling the Electoral College within their state. LWVUS maintains its resolve to ultimately abolish the Electoral College”.
- 3. We have received positive feedback from Leagues visiting our website to view/utilize our NPV materials.**