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December 2009 - Early January 2010

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VOTER is published ten times each year. Copy for the next edition will be due Friday, 12/18/09.

Join us at beautiful Rosary Hall on the Daemen College Campus for a Holiday Dinner, Socializing and an Inspiring Program, Monday, December 7, 2009, at 5:30 p.m.

Rosary Hall is at the center of the campus, on the Main Drive.

If you enter the campus from Main Street, it is the third building on the left, just after Schenk Hall.

Parking is available in front of MusicalFare Theater. Use either the Getzville Road or the Main Street entrance.

Cost: \$22 per person

Dinner Menu: Mixed Green Salad, Rolls and Butter, Marinated Grilled Chicken Breast, Wild Rice Pilaf, Green Beans, Corn, Decadent Chocolate Cake, Coffee, Tea, Ice Water.

Program: Alison Hyde will give a presentation about Crossroad Springs, a Care Center in Kenya and we'll have a basket auction and seasonal sing-along.

Please Note: Space is limited to 40 people. Guests are welcome. Include the names of the people whose reservation is included in the total amount of your check.

Reservations must be received by December 2, 2009.

Send your check payable to LWVBN to:

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President's Message

We're off to a great start this year. We had four very well attended general meetings beginning with September's Local Government Committee's panel discussion on consolidation/downsizing of local government. In October, the Waterfront and Transportation Committees presented a most informative and entertaining program about the plans for Waterfront development. Later in October the League and AAUW co-sponsored a day-long conference, Re-Entry Support in Western New York, which was planned by Action for Mental Health, Inc. with Therese Warden's help and advice. Amy Witryol and Dr. Nils Olsen presented the November program: *Environmental Justice and Hazardous Waste Facility Siting*. I send my sincere thanks on behalf of LWVBN, to everyone involved in planning and presenting these fine programs for your able efforts.

We did something new this year. The **2009 VOTER GUIDE** was published online. Thank you to everyone who worked to make this happen, especially Kristin Allen and Janet Massaro.

I also want to thank Loretta Peszynski, Mike Egan, Judy Metzger, Judy Weidemann, Joyce Bol and Terri Parks for working at the Ten Thousand Villages Fund-raiser and spreading the word about the League. The LWVB/N earned \$284.00 from this event.



Jim Metzger has chaired the Waterfront Committee for several years and done so with skill and commitment to the League program. At the November board meeting, Jim announced his resignation as chair and that Ann Ingleman and JoAnn Ross have agreed to continue the work of the committee as co-chairs. We'll miss Jim's active involvement and send sincere appreciation to him for his able leadership.

We all look forward to the Holiday Social on December 7. Judy Weidemann promises a wonderful event with good food, fellowship, entertainment, and a basket raffle to benefit LWVBN. I look forward to celebrating the season with you.

Margaret Brunson, Co-president LWVB/N

November Board Meeting Highlights

- The board appointed Theresa Pope to the position of Director without portfolio.
- LWVB/N will cosponsor the Legislative Breakfast supported by the Erie County School Boards Association on February 6, 2010.
- The League will celebrate its 90th Anniversary on February 14, 2010. Our February general meeting will be a birthday celebration. A planning committee will make the arrangements. If you're interested in participating on the committee, please contact Loretta Peszynski.

Great Decisions

On October 26, I ordered 12 copies of the **2010 Great Decisions** for those who requested it and was able to get the 20% discount so the price again will be \$15.84 per book. As you know, we do not meet in December, but I'm keeping my fingers crossed that our order will arrive before our meeting on January 7, 2010, from 10 AM to noon at 1272 Delaware Avenue.

Bernice Baeumler 876 0672

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.



Voter Services

Candidates' meetings were held in Clarence, Amherst, East Aurora and Hamburg. In addition, Lee Tetkowsky and Janet Goodsell officiated at a candidates' meeting at the Family Life Center on Grand Island. Laura McDade and Jean Flowers were in charge of the Lackawanna City Council candidates' meeting at the Father Baker Knight of Columbus building. Thank you, organizers and participants, for your time.

Naturalization: On December 3rd, Terri Parks and Mary Herbst will represent the League at the New Citizens Ceremony.

Election Day Reporting: Judy Clarke and her husband, Alan Dozoretz, were the Election Night reporters for the Erie County Board of Elections, and Janet Goodsell did the Election Night reporting for Niagara County in Lockport.

Joyce H. Bol. Voter Services Chair

...to protect, extend and encourage the use of the franchise

The most interesting call that came into the League Office during election season was from a Niagara County woman who asked when the Permanent Personal Registration was enacted. Since she knew League was "involved with voting issues" she thought we might have the answer.

Indeed we did. The LWV New York State's *Impact on Issues* contained the following: "Permanent Personal Registration (PPR) became mandatory in 1967, primarily due to the unflagging pressure of the League of Women Voters." The campaign for PPR began in 1926 and, like many election reforms, began in controversy and took years to accomplish. A partial list of League backed reforms includes elimination of irrelevant information, such as employment status, from voter registration forms, purging of voter registration lists for failure to vote, mail-in and agency-based voter registration (Motor-Voter legislation), reduction of the 90 day residency requirement (it is now 30 days – the League advocates same day voter registration and expanding absentee and student voting opportunities). Our efforts to achieve election reform are ongoing.

We are now evaluating Electronic Voting Systems. League's point person for election law reform is Aimee Allaud. Aimee and Maggie Moehringer, Voter Service Chair for the State League, request our help in evaluating the "paper ballot optical scanning system" in use in some areas of the state this November. *If you used this system in the General Election in November, please respond to the survey below.* Thank you.

Janet Massaro

Please mail your answers to LWVNY, 62 Grand Street, Albany, NY 12207.

If you'd like to receive a WORD version of the questions, send an e-mail request to lwvoter@verizon.net. You'll be able to complete the survey without retyping the questions and e-mail your reply.

Please include your name, address, county, polling place and Local League.

Were you given adequate instructions on how to use the new voting machines by the poll workers?

Did the privacy booth give you adequate space and privacy?

Were the instructions on how to complete the ballot easy to understand and in large enough print?

Did you have difficulty in filling out the ballot?

Was a privacy sleeve provided for your ballot?

Did you use the privacy sleeve?

If a poll worker handled your ballot, did they use the privacy sleeve?

Did you have problem putting the ballot in the scanner?

While you were at the polling place did you observe how the poll workers handled rejected ballots?

Were there delays or lines of more than 5 voters waiting to scan the machines?

If you used the "Ballot Marking Devices", please provide comments on the machine, the process or the poll workers.

"The LWV believes that voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed."

Natural Resources News



Beneath the natural beauty of Allegany State Park and the surrounding community lie trillions of cubic feet of natural gas, trapped in the rock of the Marcellus Shale formation. Drilling companies propose to use a dangerous technique, hydraulic fracturing, often called "fracking" to extract this natural gas. Fracking needs millions of gallons of water and toxic chemicals per well. Already wells of nearby residents have been contaminated where drilling is permitted.

Currently, New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation is accepting input on a draft plan to regulate this drilling. To read the draft, go to: www.dec.ny.gov/energy/46288.html. The DEC needs to protect our air and water. To protect the health of our environment and natural resources, New York State must regulate this growing industry of gas drilling.

Finally! At long last! The Bigger Better Bottle Bill is law!

Green thinking from high school students: A group of East Aurora High School students met with their principal and told him that all students will boycott food presented to them on plastic disposable plates. They asked for REAL plates that can be washed instead of throwaways. The principal called the vendor to speak with the students. Results are pending but my bet is that a way will be found to reduce the garbage currently being created.

We thank Phyllis Banas, moderator; Joan Herold and Nancy Smith, timekeepers; Judy Weidemann, organizer; and Joe Logan, videographer; for our Aurora Candidates' Forum on October 20. We send a big thank you to all the other Leaguers who helped.

Thank you, Leaguers Walter and Nan Simpson, Ellen Moomaw and Sandy Chelnov, who organized the local International Climate Change Event Oct 24 at D'Youville College. This global day of action was coordinated internationally by 350.org and organized locally by the Western New York Climate Action Coalition and co-sponsored by LWVBN and a number of other local organizations. More than 5200 events in over 190 countries -- including an official underwater cabinet meeting in the Maldives, an area that will be flooded if global temperatures continue to rise-- took place on that day, bringing to the world's attention (often humorously) the need for a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions that meets what science is telling needs to happen: a drop of carbon dioxide emissions down to 350 parts per million. We are currently over that number at 387 ppm.

Along with many speakers and other performers, LWVBN members performed their Climate Change skit. Joan Photiadis narrated while Joan Herold, Ellen Moomaw and Ellen Neumaier played the parts of members of a League eco-team from our recent Low Carbon Diet program. The skit makes clear that as challenging as it might be to lower one's "carbon footprint", being on an eco-team is lots of fun! Leaguer Nancy Thayer made flags with "350" silk-screened on them for the parade to the waterfront where photos were taken to be uploaded onto the 350.org website together with tens of thousands of photos from around the world taken at climate actions that day.

Tip of the Month from Delta's magazine: Use a Rake, for Goodness Sake!

One hour of using a gas-operated leaf blower produces the same amount of greenhouse gases as **driving a car 4,400 miles!** That's a round-trip from Salt Lake City to New York City.

Ellen Neumaier, Natural Resources Chair

In *TIME* magazine, June 22 2009, in an article titled "A Delicate Undertaking", Bryan Walsh reports his evaluation of toilet paper made from recycled paper. "Switching to such material could make a big difference: the NRDC estimates that if every household in the U.S. replaced just one 500 sheet roll of virgin fiber TP a year with a roll made from 100% recycled paper, nearly 425,000 trees would be saved annually."



Joan Herold, Natural Resources Committee Member

Joan Bozer Honored by the Zonta Club

The Zonta Club presents its bi-annual Marian de Forrest Award to an individual who has demonstrated a strong dedication to improving the quality of life of the community and is engaged in one of the areas in which Marian de Forest, founder of Zonta, excelled: music, education, drama, business and media. The award was presented this year to LWVBN member, Joan Bozer, who richly deserves the honor.

Joan K. Bozer has worked with many organizations to improve our quality of life including the Junior League, Landmark Society, League of Women Voters, WNY Sustainable Energy Association, Pan American Women's Pavilion 2001, Working for Downtown, the National Women's Hall of Fame, and as an Erie County Legislator.

Loretta Peszynski

An Early Leader of Our Local League

Mrs. Berend J. Burns served as the fourth League chair in 1923 to 1924. Mrs. Burns, nee Margaret Broad, was a native of Buffalo, attended local public schools and graduated from Vassar College where she studied economics, history and sociology. After she graduated from Vassar, she was a member of the first graduating class of Teachers' Training School and became a member of the Masten Park High School faculty and conducted classes at a continuation school, a school for children who had to leave regular school to help support their families.

After her marriage to Berend J. Burns, a grain broker, and leaving the teaching profession, Mrs. Burns became active in the League. During her tenure as League Chair, the Erie County League of Women Voters hosted the 1924 National League convention.

After her term as chair, Mrs. Burns stayed active in the League. In the 1930s she served as chair of the Municipal Affairs Committee where she worked on the Election Bulletin. At this time she was also involved with the local LWV radio program series on political affairs. The program covered subjects such as city planning, off year elections and imprisonment or probation for women prisoners in Buffalo. Also because of her involvement with the continuation schools, they became a case study for the League. Mrs. Burns was also a much sought after member of the LWV Speakers Bureau and traveled throughout Western New York to convey the League's messages.

In addition to her work with the League, she traveled widely and was active in church mission work and the YWCA.

Marie Hanrahan, Historian

State Consolidation/Shared Services Study

The LWVNYS 2009 Convention approved a new state study on local government consolidation and shared services. Noreen Fisher of the Scarsdale League is the chair of the study committee, and Anne Huberman is representing the LWVBN on that state committee.

Noreen has noted that consolidation is not limited to a simple merger of two local governmental units or the merger of school districts but also contemplates the consolidation of special districts such as fire, library, water, sewer, etc., the consolidation of local public authorities, and the consolidation of a municipal service without the loss of the underlying governmental units (e.g., civil service hiring, assessing, IT, purchasing, etc.), all with the intent of reducing costs. This considers a broader range of possibilities than those included in our recent LWVBN study. Having looked at the work we did and at our list of criteria, the committee is clearly drawing ideas from our study.

Committee members are still in the process of gathering information and deciding what to distribute to local leagues. In the meantime, they recommend that all League members planning on participating in the consensus process visit the following websites to begin to get up to speed:

- www.nyslocalgov.com (a good overall explanation of the State initiatives)
- www.nytowns.org/core/contentmanager/uploads/Government.Efficiency.The.Case.For.Local.Control.pdf (a publication of the Association of Towns)
- www.dos.state.ny.us/lqss/publications.htm - **SharedServices** (a good site with several additional reports)

By January, the committee will provide local leagues with the consensus questions. Let's be prepared!

Anne Huberman, Local Government Committee

2009 Voter Guide – Inaugurating Our Online Edition

The *2009 Voter Guide*, Erie County Edition, was published on the LWVBN web site this year. Because of time constraints we were unable to do a printed edition; however, a PDF version was available on the web site for downloading and printing by individuals who visited the site. Again because of time constraints, we were unable to produce a *Voter Guide* for Niagara County.

We thank Mike Egan, Janet Goodsell, Sandra O'Hara, Barbara Klobberdanz, and Ann Marie Malachowski for their help with typing and proofreading. We appreciate their help on these essential tasks. We are grateful for the guidance of Laura McDade and Joan Mondul who shared their experiences from previous *Voter Guide* preparation. And our thanks to Terri Parks for preparing the PDF version and the flyers announcing the online *Voter Guide* that were distributed to the Erie County Libraries and our members. We acknowledge the support of M&T Bank for their grant for printing costs.

Voter interest in election information was reflected by increased traffic at the LWVBN web site. The number of web site visits increased from 752 in September to 1379 in October. In the first three days of November there were 849 visits. The *Voter Guide* PDF was viewed 356 times.

Kristin Allen & Janet Massaro, 2009 Voter Guide editors

Waterfront Committee News

Other Leaguers and I attended The Erie Canal Development Corporation public hearing on Tuesday, October 20, to learn about the proposed "Canalside" Development Plan. The questions following the presentation ranged from complete approval to total disapproval. As this meeting was the first (generic impact) of many public hearings, I sent the League's position on waterfront development, which "supports coherent regional planning processes which are arrived at, and adopted with adequate public participation". The League's concern is always that public participation is not marginalized. Please stay tuned.

Tim Tielman, Executive Director of Campaign for a Greater Buffalo History, Architecture and Culture, spoke at the Marine Drive Apartments meeting to discuss with tenants their concern over "Canalside" plans to build a 1200 car-parking ramp at the proposed Bass Pro site, which would gravely impact their quality of life. I attended that meeting as a private citizen. It should be noted that the League in the past had worked with framers of the 2004 Inner Harbor Waterfront Plan that resulted in public access, restoration of the Erie Canal terminus site and other recent projects.

Jim Metzger, Waterfront Chair

Amherst Unit News

Thank you all for taking gifts for Haven House to our November Lunch & Issues. There will be no Lunch & Issues in December. Please save January 15, 2010, for the next Lunch & Issues. The topic will be the Amherst Town Board Conservation Committee, Amherst State Park Update.

Judy Metzger, Arlene Miles & Sally Metzger, Amherst Unit Coordinators

Dear Local Leaguers~

We will be sending the "**New York State Voter**" via e-mail to all of our members starting in November. In order to do this, it would be very helpful if you made sure that your e-mail address is in the National Database and updated whenever necessary. Procedures are also being developed to make paper copies available of the NYS Voter at a small cost to those request it. Watch for more information on this option.

How to update e-mail address with National: This is not and should not be a painstaking task.

- You can Log into the National website <www.lwv.org>,
- Click on (For members)
- From the drop-down menu, click on: (update your information), then Click on "Manage Your Account" on the left hand side.
- (Log in), update your e-mail address, or Register, with your ID and password.
- OR you can contact your president or me (Stephanie Lopez www.lwvny.org) to let us know to please put your e-mail address into or update your e-mail address on the National Database.

Stephanie Lopez, LWVNY

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

JOIN

CUT OUT AND MAIL TODAY

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

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$62 Individual (Basic Membership) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$95 Household
<i>(2 members living at the same address)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Carrie Chapman Catt Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Student membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$90 Elizabeth Cady Stanton Membership | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Susan B. Anthony Membership | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is my additional contribution of \$ _____ | |

Unit Affiliation
(optional)

Amherst
 Buffalo Metro
 Clarence

Name (s) _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please send me the LWVB/N VOTER via email.

This includes local, state and national League dues.

Membership

Dear League Members,

We are asking guests at our events, who have an interest in the League, to give us information so that we can send further information to them. If you bring a guest to a League event, encourage them to consider joining. The membership committee will do the rest.

Election time brings the League to the forefront and could inspire others to join in the good work we do.

If you'd like an electronic copy of our Membership Directory, please send an e-mail request to the League office, lwvbn@lwvbn.org.

Yours in the League,
Judy Weidemann, Membership Chair

If you change your e-mail address, please send an e-mail notifying us of the change from your new e-mail address to: lwvbn@lwvbn.org, and to me at embondar@gmail.org. We need this notification to reach you by e-mail with the latest news, advocacy requests, and information.

Elsa Bondar, LWVB/N Grassroots Coordinator

If you're willing to receive your VOTER by e-mail, please send an e-mail to me at lwvoter@verizon.net. You will help the environment, save printing and postage costs, and learn about upcoming events at least a week earlier than folks who receive the printed copy.

Terrí Parks, VOTER Editor

Welcome to New Member:

Beverly Tomasi, Williamsville, NY



December 2009/January 2010

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