



The
LOCAL VOTER
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN AREA

DECEMBER 2009

Syracuse Metro LWV
 PO Box 11866
 Syracuse NY 13218
 (507 Plum St -2nd Fl. Syr. 13204)
 Phone: (315) 448-7199
 Fax: (315) 448-7299
 Email: league@lwvsyr.org
 Web Sites:
 Local: www.lwvsyr.org
 State: www.lwvny.org
 National: www.lwv.org

UPCOMING EVENTS
Friday, Dec.4th
 Annual Legislative Breakfast

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STAYING INFORMED ON THE ISSUES AND EVENTS
 Local: www.lwvsyr.org
 State: www.lwvny.org
 National: www.lwv.org



There are a few vacancies on our Board. If you are new to the League the best way to learn about the organization and to meet the membership is to serve on the Board or a committee. To learn more about opportunities to serve, please call us at 448-7199 or email us at league@lwvsyr.org

Syracuse Metro League of Women Voters
ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2009
7:45 am - 9:30 am
Steak & Sundae Restaurant
1830 Teall Avenue, Syracuse 13203
(just north of shop city)

Budget woes, the economy, property taxes, aid to localities, and government reform are just a few of the issues our state delegation will be up against when the 2010 Legislative Session convenes in early January 2010. This is your opportunity to learn where your state leaders stand on the issues and what they hope to accomplish in Albany next year.

Family Style Breakfast \$16.00
Bring a Friend for \$8.00

If paying by check, make payable to the Syracuse Metro LWV

Reservation must be received by November 27th. The breakfast is optional. There is no charge to attend the program at 8:15 AM.

To make your reservation:
 Phone: 448-7199
 Email: league@lwvsyr.org
 Mail: PO Box 11866, Syracuse NY 13218



Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Reservation @ \$16.00 _____ Friend@ \$8.00 _____

You are responsible for payment if you make a reservation for the breakfast and do not attend.

BOARD NOTES

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

**WE WELCOME NEW MEMBER
Carol Burrit**

**WE WELCOME TO OUR BOARD
Mary Clare Hatch-Pennello
Director of Advocacy**

**THANK YOU
TO ALL WHO HAVE RENEWED
THEIR MEMBERSHIP**



**CELEBRATING 90
YEARS - 1920 - 2010 -**
*We are planning a
special event for the
90th anniversary of
the 19th amendment
and the founding of
the League of Women
voters.*

*To serve on the committee, call us at 448-7199 or email
us at league@lwvsyr.org.*

NATURALIZATION CEREMONIES



Registering new citizens at Naturalization Ceremonies is a vital part of our Voter Service Activities. Volunteers are needed to provide this service to our newest citizens. Please contact Susan Bush at 673-7253 or email Susan at sjbushyca@cnyemail.com.

2009 SCHEDULE

Dec 17 2 pm County Court, Room 400

2010 SCHEDULE AVAILABLE SOON

Going Green -

Both the National and State leagues now communicate with members mainly through the Internet and email. Locally we are also moving in that direction. If you have not provided us with your email, please consider doing it now.



If you would like your Local Voter sent to you electronically, please let us know. Not only does it save us money but it is also environmentally sound. To receive your Local Voter on line email us at league@lwvsyr.org.

Officers

Co-President...	Rae Rohfeld
Co-President...	Vacant
Vice-President...	Vacant
Secretary...	Karen Smith
Treasurer....	Donald MacLaughlin

Directors

Advocacy...	Mary Clare Hatch-Pennello
Fund-Raising...	Vacant
Membership...	Mary Lou Green
Program....	Vacant
Publications...	Joan Johnson
Public Relations...	Lenore Rapalski
Voter Service...	Susan Bush

Off-Board Positions

Budget Director....	Rhonda Hungerford
Nominating Committee.....	Roberta Millert
	Joan Durant
	Vacant
Optical Scan Liaison....	Lenore Rapalski
Technical Support...	Roberta Millert

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. For more information please call the League office at (315) 448-7199 or e-mail to league@lwvsyr.org

Diversity Statement

The Syracuse Metropolitan League of Women Voters is committed to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to participation in any League activity on the basis of age, race, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, or national origin.

Please let us know your email address.

- It is the most efficient way to communicate
 - You will be notified of upcoming local events
 - LWV National & State Action Alerts
- Your e-mail address will not be shared or sold. Please respond to league@lwvsyr.org

FROM THE PRESIDENT

We hope you are all preparing to join us for our annual legislative breakfast on Friday, December 4. (See the front page for details.) This event is always a highlight of the year. Do you want to know what your assembly representative thinks about cutting the State budget this year or what your state senator thinks we can do to get fairer election districts when we redistrict after the census? Come and ask your questions, and hear what other people are concerned about. This is a great time to connect with your state representatives, your League colleagues, and other friends and community members.

It's not quite 2010 yet, but we're already celebrating the 90th anniversary of the birth of the League of Women Voters and the ratification of the 19th amendment which provided women's suffrage. We'll be highlighting these great developments this year. Come and help us plan activities and programs to mark our 90th year. Anyone can participate.

CALENDAR

Friday, December 4, 2009 - 7:45 - 9:30 AM
Steak & Sundae, 1830 Teal Av, Syracuse

Tuesday, January 12, 2010, 5 PM
Unity Mutual Conference Room

June 12- 15, 2010



LWVSYR Annual Legislative Breakfast

LWVSYR Board Meeting

LWVUS Convention - Atlanta GA



MILESTONES ON THE ROAD TO EQUALITY -

1840 - The World's Anti-Slavery Convention is held in London, England. When women delegates from the United States are not allowed to participate, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton determine to have a women's rights convention when they return home.

1848 - July 19 - The first woman's rights convention is called by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott. It is held on July 20 at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls, NY. A reconvened session in Rochester NY is chaired by Amelia Bush. She becomes the first woman to preside over a meeting attended by both men and women. New York State Legislators pass a law that gives women the right to retain possession of property they owned prior to their marriage.



KEY DATES – THE 2010 CENSUS AT A GLANCE

Fall 2008

Recruitment begins for local census jobs

Spring 2009

Census employees went door-to-door to update address list nationwide

Fall 2009

Recruitment began for census takers needed for peak workload in 2010

March 2010

Census forms are mailed or delivered to households

April 1, 2010

National Census Day – use this day as a point for sending your completed forms back in the mail

April – July 2010

Census takers visit households that did not return a form by mail

December 2010

By law, the Census Bureau delivers population information to the President for apportionment

March 2011

By law, the Census Bureau completes delivery of redistricting data to the states



GIVE THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP

FROM _____

TO _____



One year membership in the League of Women Voters



Our local newsletter for information and appreciation

CONTACT MEMBERSHIP CHAIR MARY LOU GREEN FOR INFORMATION

membership@lwvsyr.org

or

GAS DRILLING IN THE MARCELLUS SHALE

There is much discussion on the merits and concerns over drilling in the Marcellus Shale. Marcellus Shale is a low density, carbonaceous shale that occurs in the subsurface beneath much of southern New York State.

Environmentalists say it is a safety and health issue. Gas companies and many landowners as well as local government officials see it as a boon to upstate's stagnant economy.

The following is an article published in the Tompkins County LWV Local Voter by Natural Resources Chair, Kay Wagner:

The League does not per se have a position with regard to drilling in the shale. It does, however, have long-standing positions on the preservation of our water supplies and our environment, issues of health and safety, strains on government agencies, and many other aspects of the proposed drilling project. For this reason the Tompkins County League is studying the possible impacts of future drilling and is seeking to help educate the public on this important issue.

The type of drilling to be used poses potential health and safety problems and may change the nature of upstate New York from its current economic base of agriculture, tourism and education to one with a large physical and economic presence of the gas companies. The Tompkins County LWV Natural resources Committee would like to bring a few of our concerns to your attention.

1. The process of horizontal hydraulic fracturing and the chemical cocktails being used are quite new, having been developed in the late 1990's. The gas companies state that hydrofracking has been done for 50 years with no problems. They fail to state that the older wells were vertical, not horizontal, and that much safer fluids were used. It is also not clear that the older techniques caused no contamination or other problems to the environment.
2. Safety of our water supplies is one major concern being studied. There are reports of spills and well contamination near drilling areas in Pennsylvania and other states. The drilling to be done in the Marcellus Shale is currently exempt from the Clean Air and Water Act. H.R.2766, known as the Frac Act and sponsored by Rep.Hinchey and Rep. Massa, addresses this issue, but it has not yet come up for a vote in the House. There is a companion bill in the Senate, S1215. A recent resolution sponsored by Congressman Hinchey instructs the EPA to do a new review of hudraulic fracturing, since the review done by them in 2004 is considered to be highly flawed. It is expected that this resolution will be quickly passed in the senate and signed into law by President Obama.
3. It is expected that thousands of wells will be constructed in New york State. Each well takes up several acres when completed. Holding ponds for the fluids removed from the wells take up an additional 5

acres each. Land will be cleared for all of these activities and there will be connecting roads plus pipelines permanently in place.

4. Tank trucks estimated at 125,000 pounds when full will make 200-500 trips each time a well is fracked, causing damage to roads and bridges.
5. Diesel run compressors will be used to pump the gas out of each well for the next 10-50 years. The 24/7 noise, air and light pollution produced will dramatically change the living environment on nearby properties and will pose additional health hazards. The economic impact on homeowners in the areas near the drill sites has not been considered. Air pollution from the compressors is believed to have led to serious health problems for residents and animals in the town of Dish, Texas.
6. The total carbon footprint of the gas extraction is high.
7. Companies doing the drilling are to a great extent international companies with no vested interest in our at least one has declared bankruptcy, leaving behind contaminated sites.
8. Local organic and non-organic farmers are quite concerned about possible contamination of water supplies and long-term pollution.
9. Individuals and municipalities negatively affected by the drilling in other states have had little if any compensation for damage created so far. This could leave local tax payers with large bills for any clean-up and repair that it is necessary to do. There is concern that local municipalities and their tax payers will also be held responsible for the costs of monitoring well sites and water during the drilling process and the future decades of gas extraction. The recent suit brought against the city of Ithaca by First Energy concerning the cleanup of coal tar underscores our concerns about who will pay the costs of any future cleanup and repair resulting from gas drilling operations.
10. It is not clear how much of the gas extracted will stay in the U. S. to help the country solve its energy needs.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation has released a draft Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) supplementing a 1992 DEIS. Four public hearings have been held throughout southeastern and southern New York State. The deadline for submitting written testimony is December 31, 2009. For more information go to the DEC's website and link at www.dec.ny.gov/energy/46288.html.

Kay Wagner
Natural Resources Chair
Tompkins County LWV

LWVNY CONSOLIDATION AND SHARED SERVICES STUDY

You are invited to be a part of the Syracuse Metro LWV's committee on Consolidation and Shared Services. With the growing need for finding ways to modernize local government and to carry out programs in a more efficient manor, the issue has attracted attention across the state and the country.

The topic has been of special interest to many area citizens groups since the release of the Lundine and Suozzi Commission reports and the passage of Attorney General Cuomo's New NY Government Reorganization and Citizen Empowerment Act.

The committee assignment includes examining documents, gathering information from people involved in the study, scheduling speakers to educate ourselves on both the pro and con of consolidation, discussing of consensus questions arrived at by the state league, and finally a meeting of our membership to arrive at a local consensus.

The timeline for the study calls for local leagues to hold meetings and prepare answers to consensus questions between January and April of 2010. The State Study Committee will review input from local leagues and prepare a draft position for approval by the State Board.

Please call the League office at 448-7199 or email us at league@lwvsyr.org if you would like to serve on the study committee or participate in the study. Membership in the League is not necessary but only members can participate in the consensus process.

Here are some sources to get you started:

Consolidation Study Bibliography General Background

21st Century Local Government	This is the final report of the New York State Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness chaired by Stan Lundine, April 2008. http://www.nyslocalgov.org/pdf/LGEC_Final_Report.pdf?pagemode=bookmarks
Government Efficiency: The Case for Local Control	A report prepared for the Association of Towns of the State of New York by Wendell Cox in May, 2008 in response to the recommendations of the New York State Commission on Local Government Efficiency and Competitiveness. http://www.nytowns.org/core/contentmanager/uploads/Government.Efficiency.The.Case.for.Local.Control.pdf
The New York Government Reorganization and Citizen Empowerment Act. (Effective March 2010)	An easy to read restatement of the legislation which will facilitate the consolidation and dissolution of governmental units in New York State. Gov. Patterson and Lorraine Cortez-Vazquez Sec. of State. June 2009 http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/pdfs/ConsolidationDisolutionLaw.pdf
The New York Government Reorganization and Citizen Empowerment Act. Summary of Procedures (Effective March 2010)	An easy to read, twenty page summary of the process for consolidation and dissolution. Gov. Patterson and Lorraine Cortez-Vazquez, Sec. of State. June 2009. http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/pdfs/ConsolidationDissolutionProcedures-Summary.pdf
The New York Government Reorganization and Citizen Empowerment Act. Citizens Guide to Petitioning (Effective March 2010)	An easy to read 12 page guide to how a citizen may petition to begin a consolidation or dissolution of his/her municipality or fire or other special district. Gov. Patterson and Lorraine Cortez-Vazquez, Sec. of State. June 2009. http://www.dos.state.ny.us/lgss/pdfs/CitizenGuideToPetitions.pdf
Reforming Local Government	This is the Attorney General's website promoting the new legislation that will simplify consolidations and dissolutions of local governments. http://www.oag.state.ny.us/bureaus/legislative/government_consolidation/about.html

LWVNY VOTERS SURVEY

The State League asks for your help in evaluating your experiences using the new voting machines during the November election. If your county used the paper ballot optical system (part of a pilot project under the NYS Board of Elections) we are asking for your cooperation in a simple survey detailing your experiences in using the system and your observations of the procedures in use while you were at the polling place to vote. The survey results will be shared with the local boards of elections and the NYS Board of Elections so that corrections and improvements in the process can be made before we all vote on the new system next year.

If you were on the State League email list you were able to complete the survey electronically. To league members without email, you can submit the information via regular mail to: **LWVNYS, 62 Grand St Albany NY 12207**

I. Identifying Information: name, address, email address, county, polling place, local League

II. Questions on Voting:

1. Were you given adequate instructions on how to use the new voting machines by poll workers? **Yes/no**. If no, please explain.
2. Did the privacy booth give you adequate space and privacy? **Yes/No** If no please explain.
3. Were the instructions on how to complete the ballot easy to understand and in large enough print? **Yes/no**. If no, please explain.
3. Did you have difficulty in filling out the ballot? **Yes/no** If yes, please explain.

III. Questions on Scanning your Ballot

1. Was a privacy sleeve provided for your ballot? **yes/no**
2. Did you use the privacy sleeve? **Yes/no** Please explain if necessary.
3. If a poll worker handled your ballot, did they use the privacy sleeve? **Yes/no** Please explain if necessary.
4. Did you have any problems putting your ballot in the scanner **yes/no** Please explain if necessary.
5. While you were in the polling place, did you observe how rejected ballots were handled by poll workers? **Yes/no** Please explain.
6. Were there any delays or lines of more than five voters waiting to scan their ballots? **Yes/no** Please explain if necessary

IV. Please provide your comments, general or specific on the machine, the process or the poll workers

V. Ballot Marking Devices:

1. Was the Ballot Marking Device well located in the polling place to protect the voter's privacy? Was a poll inspector assigned to assist the voter using it?
2. Did you observe any voters using the Ballot Marking Device and having problems? If you are able, describe the problem.

THANK YOU



SYRACUSE METRO
 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
 PO BOX 11866
 SYRACUSE NY 13218

December 2009

Non-Profit
 Organization
 U.S. POSTAGE
 PAID
 Syracuse, NY
 Permit no. 372

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**League of Women Voters
 Membership Application**

*Democracy is not a spectator sport
 It's efficient activism*

*It is a way to make your voice count
 It is a way to make politics a process for the people*

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Work Phone _____ E-mail _____

___ *Individual Level....\$55*

___ *Household Level*....\$80*

___ *Student Level **....\$25*

*Please make check payable to:
 Syracuse Metro Area League of Women Voters
 P O Box 11866
 Syracuse, NY 13218*

* *Two members in the same household*

** *Full time student under 25*

___ *I would like to support the League with a donation.*

For more information call us at (315) 448-7199 or visit us at www.lwvsyr.org