



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF EAST NASSAU

voter

www.lwvofeastnassau.org

info@lwvofeastnassau.org

*At local, state and national levels
the League works to influence public policy
through education and advocacy.*

June/July 2015

Please Join Us for the LWVEN 2015 Summer Social



Sunday, August 9th, 2015
11:00 am – 2:00 pm

at the home of
Mimi and Mike Hirsch
84 Victor Street, Plainview
\$ 10.00/person



Directions: from south – Southern State Parkway to Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway N (28A North). Seaford-Oyster Bay Expressway North to Old Country Road. Make a right turn onto Old Country Road going East. Make a left turn onto Rex Place, then an immediate right onto Knowles St. Remain on Knowles, which makes a left curve and becomes Victor St. The house is on the left.

Enclosed is my check for _____ for ____persons (\$10.00/person) for the LWVEN Summer Social on August 9th.

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Address: _____

Email address: _____

*Please clip and mail, with your check payable to LWV of East Nassau, before August 1, to:
LWVEN, c/o Barbara Josepher, Treasurer, 339 Cold Spring Rd., Syosset NY 11791*

Meet Your New Board

Leadership Team:

Barbara Epstein (Affordable Housing,
Redistricting)
Barbara Josepher (Treasurer)
Norma Schaeffer (Voter Service)
Peggy Stein (Webmaster)

Secretary:

Janet Spar

Elected Directors:

Lorraine Newman (Court Liaison)
Mary Price (Bulletin Circulation)
Mimi Hirsch (Membership)
Marilyn Benson (Membership)
Paula Blum (Bulletin, Water for L.I. Liaison)
Sandra Mintz (Women's Issues)

Nominating Committee Chair:

Marion Schurade

LWVEN 2015 Annual Meeting

Gemma Bartholomew

This year's annual meeting was held on June 17th at Domenico's Restaurant in Levittown. Peggy Stein of the Leadership Team conducted the meeting, beginning with welcoming remarks. She also reviewed our activities throughout the year, and reported on the New York State League convention that she and Paula Blum attended as representatives of our local League.

The proposed budget was presented by Barbara Epstein in the absence of Budget Director Mimi Hirsch. Barbara explained that we had to increase our dues to \$55 because both National and State Leagues have increased their per member payments.

Norma Schaeffer discussed our monitoring of the Freeport Housing Authority elections on June 26th as well as the lobbying of our State Legislators and the reports that are to be submitted to State League. Marion Schurade presented the proposed slate of officers and directors, which was approved unanimously.

Barbara Epstein announced coming events:

Summer Social - Sunday, August 9th, at the home of Mimi and Mike Hirsch.

Candidates Forum for the Nassau County District Attorney race, co-sponsored by the Nassau County League, the Hofstra Political Science Dept. and Hofstra Law School - **Wednesday, October 14** at Hofstra.

Our **special guests were Brian Herman**, the student we sent to the LWV of NYS **Students Inside Albany** conference, and his family. After being introduced by Lorraine Newman, Brian spoke about his experiences in Albany. His inspiring speech can be read in its entirety on our website: www.lwvofeastnassau.org.



Students from all over the state attended the 2015 LWVNYS Students Inside Albany conference.



Brian Herman with State Senator Michael Venditto, whom Brian had the opportunity to shadow while at the LWVNYS Students Inside Albany Conference.



LWV of East Nassau's Students Inside Albany chair, Lorraine Newman with Brian Herman at League's Annual Dinner

Photo by Carol Bergman

LWV of Nassau County Biennial Convention

The Nassau County League ILO (Inter-League Organization) held its Convention on June 4th, at Jonathan's Restaurant in New Hyde Park. After the business part of the meeting, during which the annual budget was accepted and the new board was elected, the attendees had the opportunity to hear from newly elected Congressmember Kathleen Rice, who shared some of her experiences as a freshman member of Congress. She explained how she is learning to negotiate the ins and outs of national politics.

As the representative for the 4th Congressional District in Nassau County, Ms Rice represents many members of our East Nassau League, and since many of our members attended, this was an excellent opportunity for us to meet her and learn where she stands on several issues.



LWV of NYS Biennial Convention

Peggy Stein, LWVEN Leadership Team

A Voice for Citizens a Force for Change was the title of the LWVNYS biennial convention in Albany on the weekend of June 5–7. The convention offered participants inspiration and companionship while we explored the issues of the day.

Outgoing state League President, Sally Robinson, passed the gavel that has been traditionally used at our state conventions to Dare Thompson, who was elected President for the next two years.

(The gavel is one of two used by Susan B. Anthony at the National Suffrage Convention in Atlanta in 1895. Shortly after that convention she and Carrie Chapman Catt were at a meeting of the National Council of Women when we believe Susan B. Anthony gave the gavel to Ms Catt who was her chosen successor. The date March 3, 1895 is inscribed in ink on the gavel head. Mrs. F. Warren Green of Larchmont presented the gavel to the State League at its 50th Anniversary Convention in 1969.)

- A decision was made to change the state's bylaws due to changes in the law. This will impact local Leagues' bylaws as well. Local Leagues will receive direction on what is required, but we will not have to make these changes until the next League year.
- After much discussion it was agreed that the state PMP should be increased by two dollars per member. This is the first increase in the state PMP in 12 years.
- The budget for the coming year was passed. The budget for the 2016 – 2017 year will be passed at the State League Council next year.

I attended a few workshops, one on League's visibility, which stressed the importance of using social media. During moments in the sun I had two minutes to tell the audience about East Nassau's accomplishments and plans for the coming season. We came home with a check for \$150.00, due to the efforts of East Nassau members on voter registration.

Paula Blum (see her in the photo above, waiting to make a statement at one of the plenary sessions) and I greatly appreciate the opportunity afforded us by LWVEN to attend the convention.

Long Island's Drinking Water

Brenda Reiss, Chair, LWV Huntington Environmental Committee



On May 21st, at the Half Hollow Hills Library, the LWV Huntington hosted a program on the problems and possible solutions for preserving and protecting our sole source of drinking water here on Long Island, the aquifer system. The speakers included **Sarah Meyland**, Associate Professor in the Department of Environmental Technology and Sustainability at NYIT. She also serves as the Director for the Center for Water Resources Management at NYIT. She is chair of *Water for Long Island*, a steering committee comprised of many environmental organizations and local Leagues of Women Voters from Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The other speaker was **Christopher Schubert**, a Supervisory Hydrologist with the United States Geological Survey.

The facts were presented using power point presentations and were supported by evidence that had been collected by the USGS over the years. The main point of the evening was to show how a lack of clear management of the water on Long Island has created situations that could become disastrous if not corrected. It was stated that per capita use of water on Long Island is going up while the rest of the nation's use is going down. "Clearly," stated Ms. Meyland, "we need some sort of agency to manage the use of water and to see that it is protected." We are using up some of the highest quality drinking water in the United States to water our lawns and wash our cars. Our aquifers are not recharging (filling up with water) as fast as we are using it.

Contrary to popular belief, when we water our lawns, the water doesn't just go back into the aquifer. Much of it evaporates and most of what does soak into the ground is used by the plants. Thus, very little water actually trickles back into the aquifer, and what does, takes hundreds of years! Furthermore, when we use more than what gets replenished, water from the ocean seeps in to replace what was used. Eventually, this could make the aquifer undrinkable forever. Salt water intrusion is already happening in coastal areas of Long Island.

More needs to be done to educate our public. Hopefully, when people learn that indiscriminate use of this precious and limited resource, which we cannot live without, is in jeopardy, they will act in a more positive way to change negative habits, and be willing to pay the small price necessary to preserve our vital drinking water.

How Our Elections Can Work Better for Voters

Stephanie Drahan

[In May we marked]... the 22nd anniversary of the passage of the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA). Commonly referred to as the "Motor Voter Law," the NVRA was passed in 1993 to make it easier for Americans to register to vote.



The League of Women Voters has worked to expand access to the ballot since our founding 95 years ago and we served as a key player in advocating for the NVRA, working for years to ensure its passage and implementation. In the years since the NVRA became law, the League has worked tirelessly to help it live up to its potential of helping millions of Americans register to vote when they visit their local motor vehicles offices or public assistance agencies.

But there remains so much more to do to make our elections fair, free and accessible. The League believes that our democracy will be stronger when the American electorate is more representative of the communities we live in. To that end, the League has registered hundreds of thousands of new voters in recent years – focusing our efforts in high schools, community colleges, community events and naturalization ceremonies for new citizens. The League has also worked in over 20 states in the past decade to defend voting rights when they come under threat. Finally, we're working right now to bring about improvements to make our voting systems more modern and responsive to voters' needs.

At a time when Americans can accomplish so much online, from signing contracts to paying bills, our election systems should reflect the 21st Century by developing a secure online voter registration system. Online voter registration cuts costs, increases the accuracy of voter rolls and eases the administrative burdens on elections officials, and also increases voter registration numbers. While the League is encouraged to see many states currently considering online voter registration proposals, we want to make sure those new systems will not be limited to those with a driver's license or non-driver's ID with a signature on file in their state. This type of restriction would exclude **millions of eligible voters who lack the proper ID** and impose a restrictive ID requirement on online registration where there isn't one for offline registrations.

Beyond secure online voter registration, the League is also working to make voter registration permanent and portable within a state, allowing voters to transfer their voter registration when they move to a new address without needing to re-register every time. With the average person living in the U.S. moving roughly 12 times in their lifetime, and with young people especially likely to move, this common-sense reform could make it much simpler for ALL eligible voters to weigh in on our nation's elections.

In addition to seeking to expand voter registration opportunities, the League is also working to expand early voting, improve polling place management and electronic streamlining. Learn more about the reforms we're proposing in our new video [which can be found at lwv.org]...

Intergenerational Communication

Paula Blum

Many of us have given in and begun to communicate with our younger relatives via electronic media. First it was having to call them on their cell phones, because either they ignored or actually got rid of their landlines. Now, they seem to communicate mostly via social media such as Facebook (although even that is now considered by some to be passé), Twitter, Linked-in, etc.

I have not yet succumbed to the lure of social media online, but have begun texting on my cell phone. For those of you who have joined me in this endeavor, allow me to share some of the abbreviations that I was not aware of until recently:

DWAI = Don't worry about it.
GTG = Gotta go.
IDK = I don't know.
SRSLY = Seriously

NBD = No big deal.
SMH = Shaking my head.
ILY = I love you!
IMHO = In my humble opinion.

TTYL = Talk to you later
IMU = I miss you.
IU2U = It's up to you.
GR8 = Great!

Of course, we cannot forget the more commonly used abbreviations such as LOL (laughing out loud), 4U (for you), BTW (by the way), CUL8R (See you later), EZ (easy), FYI (for your information), and IC (I see).

The League of Women Voters,® a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

 <p>THOMAS MCKEVITT MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY 17TH DISTRICT</p> <p>1975 HEMPSTEAD TURNPIKE, SUITE 202 EAST MEADOW, NEW YORK 11554 516-228-4960 FAX: 516-228-4963</p> <p>546 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BLDG. ALBANY, NEW YORK 12248 518-455-5341 FAX: 518-455-4346</p> <p>E-mail: mckevitt@assembly.state.ny.us</p>	 <p>MICHAEL A. MONTESANO ASSEMBLYMAN 15TH DISTRICT</p> <p>ROOM 437 LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING ALBANY, NEW YORK 12248 TELEPHONE: 518-455-4684 FAX: 518-455-5477</p> <p>111 LEVITTOWN PARKWAY HICKSVILLE, NY 11801 TELEPHONE: 516-937-3571 FAX: 516-937-3632</p> <p>E-mail: montesanom@assembly.state.ny.us</p>	 <p><i>Thank You</i> LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of East Nassau <i>for your dedication and commitment to the residents of Nassau County</i></p> <p><i>There is no better time than now to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude for giving so freely of yourselves. "Unless someone like YOU cares a whole awful lot - nothing is going to get better. It's not." Dr. Seuss</i></p> <p>Nassau County Legislator Judith Jacobs , 16th LD (516) 571-6216 Fax: (516) 571-6287 jjacobs@nassaucountyny.gov</p>
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Understanding Money In Politics

Background Papers - Money in Politics Review - LWVUS

Introduction

Official definitions for many terms are found in the statutes dealing with campaign finance reporting. For example, many terms are defined in the Federal Election Commission's (FEC) compilation and index of federal election campaign laws at <http://www.fec.gov/law/feca/feca.pdf>. Those include: "election," "candidate," "political committee," "campaign committee," "national committee," "state committee," "political party," "contribution," "expenditure," "independent expenditure," "coordination," and "public communication."



For convenience, unofficial definitions of some of these terms and others follow, but it is important to know that for legal purposes many of these have detailed and well-established meanings in law, that are only approximated here.

Terms

Candidate's Committee or Party Committee. These have the purpose of aiding an individual candidate or a particular political party respectively.

Contribution. Gifts, money, loans, or anything of value given for the purpose of influencing an election (candidate or ballot initiative), including services paid for by a third party. Services provided by volunteers are excluded.

Coordination. An expenditure for express advocacy made in "cooperation, consultation or concert" with or at the request of a candidate, or an agent of the candidate's committee or of a political party committee. However, the FEC's interpretations exclude many common-sense examples of cooperation.

Corruption. In *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), the Supreme Court ruled that corruption or the appearance of corruption is a justification for limiting free speech rights in campaign finance law. The current Court has continuously narrowed the definition of corruption as a quid pro quo exchange. This fails to recognize the corruption of the political process when millionaires and billionaires can spend unlimited sums in an election. It also fails to recognize the subtle influence or favored access granted to a large donor by an elected official who was supported by big spending. (See *quid pro quo*.)

Dark Money. Political spending, the source of which is not disclosed under current regulations. This is typically accomplished through an arrangement whereby the originating donor contributes to a nonprofit corporation (that is not required to disclose) and that in turn makes an expenditure disclosed under the name of the corporation rather than the originating donor.

Electioneering Communication. Broadcast, cable or satellite transmissions that refer to a clearly identified candidate, targeted to the relevant electorate and made within 30 days before a primary election or 60 days before a general election.

Expenditure. Any purchase, payment or other use of money or anything of value for the purpose of influencing an election. It includes the transfer of money or anything of value between political committees. It does not include any news story, or editorial; any nonpartisan voter registration or get out the vote activity; or communications by an organization to its members.

Express Advocacy. Political communications that explicitly advocate for the defeat or election of a clearly identified federal candidate. *Citizens United v. FEC* (2010) allowed corporations, unions and non-profit groups to use their general treasuries to fund express advocacy so long as it was not done in coordination with a candidate. (See *coordination* and *independent expenditure*.)

Federal Election Commission (FEC). The six-member, bi-partisan federal commission with enforcement, regulatory and interpretative authority over federal campaign finance law. Four votes are required for the FEC to act.

Hard Money. Direct contributions to a political candidate. These contributions may only come from an individual or a political action committee, and are limited to \$2,600 per election for an individual. They are subject to broad disclosure rules set by the FEC. Corporations and unions may not contribute directly to federal candidates. (See *soft money*.)

Independent Expenditure. An expenditure that is not coordinated with any candidate or political party committee. (See *coordination* and *express advocacy*.) See, Money in Politics “Independent Expenditure” issue paper.

Issue Advocacy. Political communications in the form of advertising that is framed around an issue. Outside the election cycle, many groups use issue ads as part of their lobbying campaigns, but close to an election they can point a voter toward or against a candidate even if the ad doesn’t contain express advocacy. Congress and the Court have not been able to agree what constitutes a “true” issue ad and a “sham” one for regulating contributions and expenditures in elections. Issue ads that explicitly mention or depict a candidate that are broadcast within 30 days of a primary election or 60 days of a general election must be reported to the FEC as electioneering communications.

Political Action Committee (PAC). A political committee organized for the purpose of raising and spending money to elect and defeat candidates. Most PACs represent business, labor or ideological interests. PACs can give \$5,000 to a candidate committee per election. (See *hard money*.)

Public Financing. Money provided by local state, or federal governments to candidates to fund their campaigns. Public financing is a way to reduce the dependence on private money from individuals and organizations that characterizes our current campaign finance system. For decades, the presidential public financing system worked to reduce corruption, protect the election process and move toward greater political equality. Inflation, the rise of soft money and unlimited independent expenditures sounded the political death knell for the presidential system. Legislation has been introduced to reestablish the presidential system and to provide for congressional public financing.

Quid Pro Quo. A Latin phrase that literally means “this for that.” In the context of political campaign finance, it refers to the kind of corruption that justifies limits on First Amendment rights. The Supreme Court has been narrowing its definition of quid pro quo corruption so it is virtually the same as bribery – an explicit agreement by a candidate or elected official to perform a specific act in exchange for something of value. Hence the Court ignores the subtle influence or favored access granted to a large donor, and rejects the notion of corrupting the election process or achieving greater political equality. (See *corruption*.)

Soft Money. Prior to the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (BCRA, 2002), soft money consisted of huge contributions to a political party for “party-building activities.” Such contributions had no limits but could not lawfully be used for express advocacy. They did, however, provide access and special treatment for donors. Soft money is still barred by BCRA, but *Citizens United* opened a similarly large loophole by providing for unlimited independent expenditures by corporations, unions and non-profit organizations.

SuperPAC. A political action committee that makes unlimited independent expenditures that are not coordinated with any candidate or party. SuperPACs run ads, send mail or communicate in other ways with messages that may advocate the election or defeat of a particular candidate. There are no limits or restrictions on the sources of funds or on the amounts of SuperPAC expenditures. However, both PACs and Super PACs are required to file timely financial reports with the FEC that include the names and amounts from donors above a base level (generally \$200), along with the amounts of their expenditures.

It's time to renew your membership for the 2015 – 2016 League year. If you haven't already done so, you can go to page 5, fill in the form, and send it with your check. This will save the cost of sending reminders and allow us to use our limited funds more productively. Thank you!

The League of Women Voters of East Nassau

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