



THE LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS
of Schenectady County New York

BULLETIN

www.lwvschenectady.org

April 2016

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 5, 3:30-5:30 PM

Board Meeting

1060 Parkwood Blvd., Schenectady
Contact: Cheryl Nechamen, 346-4820

Thursday, April 14, 6:30 PM

What's In Your Water: Issues in Schenectady County

Paul LaFond,

Director of Water/Wastewater, City of Schenectady

Jason Pelton,

Groundwater Management Planner, Schenectady County
Schenectady County Public Library
99 Clinton St., Schenectady
Contact: Cheryl Nechamen, 346-4820

Tuesday, April 19, noon- 9 PM

Presidential Primary!

Saturday, April 23, 8 AM- noon

Textiles Recycling

SCCC parking lot
78 Washington Ave., Schenectady



Message from the Steering Committee

Well, this has been the most exciting campaign season in my memory. Certainly no one can say that the candidates are all alike, mouthing platitudes in an effort not to offend anyone. Although a few platitudes might be welcome at this point.

The parties' candidates have generally been determined by the time New York's primary rolls around, which takes place on April 19th this year, but things may still be undecided by then.

Voting, whether it's registering voters, protecting voting rights, candidate forums or get out the vote efforts, is what the League of Women Voters is best known for. We have had successful registration drives at Union College and SCCC. We have also taken advantage of the opening of the Phyllis Bornt Library to reach new groups of voters in conjunction with library programs in March.

Another exciting opportunity has been the League's collaboration with the Schenectady County Historical Society (SCHS) on their exhibit on voting. Jami Floyd, journalist with WNYC, gave an engaging talk on March 12th, centered around the film *Mr. Smith goes to Washington* on what we are looking for in our leaders when we're choosing a President. It was a lively discussion with lots of audience participation. The SCHS will continue their focus on voting with events at the Mabee Farm to reach families.

On another note, Board members have been thinking about how to better meet the needs of our members. Some members have time to do short-term projects; others are willing to do more time-consuming jobs as long as they don't have to attend Board meetings and others enjoy coming to monthly Board meetings to chat with new and old friends (we have the best coffee, tea and cookies at Board meetings!).

To balance these different interests and needs, the Board has clarified the structure, presented on p.7 of this Bulletin, with Board officers (Steering Committee or President and Vice-President, plus Treasurer and Secretary) and Board members who are elected and Project Coordinators who are appointed by the Board. While all League members are welcome at Board meetings, elected Board officers and members are expected to attend Board meetings on a regular basis. Positions that fulfill our most crucial tasks, such as Voter Services and Action, or who need a thorough familiarity with the workings of the League, such as Membership and Bulletin Editor, are elected positions.

Project Coordinators perform important tasks that don't necessarily require their presence at every Board meeting and generally serve off the Board. For instance, people chairing candidate forums, VOTE411, voter registration and the Budget and Audit committees, perform their tasks at certain times of the year and are asked to attend Board meetings at those times.

We also have the position of At Large Board member for people who would like to learn more about the League and might be interested in leadership roles; or they might just enjoy the tea and cookies! These Board members are elected and expected to attend Board meetings.

People filling other positions, such as Outreach and Publicity, Observer Corps Chair, Fundraising Chair and Committee Chairs, have the option of being elected to the Board with expected attendance at Board meetings or serving off Board. The Nominating Committee has a unique structure, as explained on p.7 of this Bulletin.

We hope that these changes in the structure of the Board will provide more opportunities to participate in the League.

Cheryl Nechamen, Lead

What's In Your Water: Issues in Schenectady County

Join the League and ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse in a timely program on water infrastructure in Schenectady County on April 14th at 6:30 PM in the McChesney Room of the Schenectady County Public Library, 99 Clinton St. Jason Pelton, Schenectady County Groundwater Management Planner, will talk about the aquifer, its geologic history and what testing is done to ensure the quality of the groundwater. Paul LaFond, Director of Water and Wastewater for the City of Schenectady, will discuss water infrastructure in the City of Schenectady.

You Can Recycle Those Old Clothes, Sheets, Towels, Etc!

Saturday, April 23rd
8:00 AM- noon

Bring your old clothing, footwear, backpacks, handbags, etc. to the Schenectady County Community College parking lot on Saturday, April 23rd between 8:00 AM and noon and do a good deed for the Earth. These items will be recycled or reused, instead of going into the waste stream. Old sheets and blankets, towels, curtains, stuffed toys, etc. can also be donated. Items that aren't reusable will be sent to textile recycling facilities. All items must be clean and dry; stains and missing buttons are okay, but please, no grease or solvents.

The Recycling Committee of Schenectady County Environmental Advisory Council (SCEAC) is organizing the event; ECOS: The Environmental Clearinghouse is providing volunteers through its Schenectady Recycles! Committee. The City Mission will provide a truck. Volunteers are being sought. Contact ECOS (info@ecosny.org) if you wish to help on April 23rd.

Not only does donating reusable clothing help low-income people, it also benefits the environment. According to the State DEC website, New York residents and businesses throw away almost 1.4 billion pounds of usable and recyclable textiles every year. A benefit often overlooked is that recycling textiles helps reduce the amount of pesticides and fertilizer needed to grow more cotton, as well as the amount of water and petroleum used in manufacturing new textiles, and the amount of greenhouse gases produced by decomposition of textiles in landfills. Even the economy benefits. The expense to municipalities of discarding these materials in landfills is reduced, and new jobs are created for people processing textiles.

You can learn more about this by going to <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/100141.html>. Another good resource is New York State Association for Reduction, Reuse, and Recycling (NYSAR³) at <http://www.nysar3.org/page/re-clothe-ny-78.html>.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Cheryl Nechamen	(346-4820)	Lead for March – May, July 2016
Carol Furman	(346-2746)	Lead for December 2015, January, February, June 2016
Ruth Bonn	(384-0804)	Lead (completed)

Bulletin Editor: Cheryl Nechamen (346-4820)

Mission Statement: The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization. We encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. We work to increase the understanding of major public policy issues and influence public policy through education and advocacy.

Vote Here! Vote Now!

The Schenectady County Historical Society has just opened a new exhibit **Vote Here! Vote Now!** It is a very interesting interactive presentation and looks at the American presidency, women's suffrage, voting rights, campaign design, local political movements and current issues. Visitors are encouraged to share their thoughts on what matters most to them, while also reflecting on the opinions and ideals of others. The LWV of

Schenectady County was consulted in the development of the exhibit which includes mention of the League's activities in the community and displays early copies of *Who's Who*. The Historical Society is located at 32 Washington Avenue in the city of Schenectady and is open Monday through Saturday. Go take a look!

Gearing Up for Voter Registration

Voter Services has already received requests to conduct voter registration at many locations. In March, we conducted several voter registration opportunities at the Phyllis Bornt Branch Library and at Schenectady County Community College. It takes many hands to meet all the requests we get. If you have an interest in helping with voter registration and are not receiving e-mails about

voter registration needs, please e-mail or call Kay Ackerman and let her know. Her e-mail address is kaydonack@aol.com; phone number is 399-5000. If you are unsure because you've never worked on voter registration before, you will be paired with someone with experience so you can learn "on the job."

Kay Ackerman, Voter Services Chair

Update on Schenectady Civilian Police Review Board

The Civilian Police Review Board (CPRB) members have finished organizing the structure of the meetings. Members of the Board have received the necessary training which includes a number of classroom training sessions, riding with a police officer on his/her routes, and an evening of witnessing the training of police dogs.

The Board has nine members, representing the LWV, Human Rights Commission, NAACP, Schenectady Municipal Housing Authority, Schenectady United Neighborhoods, Capital Region Chamber, Schenectady Inner City Ministry, City Council and the general public, of which five of these members are needed to make a 'quorum'. Also present at the meetings are Lt. Edward Barbagelata, Office of Professional Standards (who prepares the cases which are distributed to the Board members), and Ryan Bailey, Corporation Counsel.

The Civilian Police Review Board pamphlet and by-laws have been updated. Minutes of each meeting are available at the following meeting;

meetings are open to the public which take place at Schenectady City Hall, Room 209, on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:00 PM.

The members review the cases a week in advance (copies picked up at the Schenectady Police Department). Four or five cases are reviewed at each meeting. Complaints can include police allegedly being discourteous, wrongful arrests, mistreatment or excessive force.

Overall, the Board has become well-organized under the leadership of Richard Homenick, chairperson, with minute-taking by Rose Harrell. All members take seriously their responsibility in performing the duties that are required in making the Board meaningful and successful.

Flora Ramonowski, LWV representative

Students Inside Albany

Camille Nowak from Schenectady High School and Evan Pritchard from Niskayuna High School have been chosen to attend this year's *Students Inside Albany* program sponsored by the LWVNYS Education Foundation.

The program, on May 22-25, will bring about 60 students from across NYS to get a birds-eye view of state government. Students will learn

about the state budget process, lobbyists and legislation, the right of citizens to access government information, the role of the media in politics and efforts to reform state government. The high point of the program is the opportunity for students to shadow their Senate and Assembly representatives during a Chamber session.

Mary Pritchard, Chair

LWV of Schenectady County Weighs in on Issues

The Daily Gazette has published two Letters to the Editor recently, written by Joan Elliott and signed by Cheryl Nechamen and Ruth Bonn as Steering Committee Leads.

The first letter, published on March 1st, urged NYS Senators to support the Paid Family Leave Insurance program. The Governor and Assembly have already pledged their support for the program.

In an editorial on March 12th, The Daily Gazette voiced its opposition to the Paid Family Leave Insurance program as being too generous to employees and burdensome for small businesses.

The second letter, published on March 17th, advocated for greater equity in financing of education and supported the efforts of the coalition Fight for Education in Schenectady to obtain more money for the needy students of Schenectady.

League Files Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction Against EAC

The League filed a Temporary Restraining order and injunction enjoining the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) and Executive Director Brian Newby from enforcing the decision granting state requests to amend the national uniform mail-in voter registration form to require

documentary proof of citizenship. This is part of a filed suit in federal district court to stop the recent illegal action by the Executive Director of the EAC that allows these states to restrict voter registration.

League Opposes SENSE Act and BRICK Act in U.S. House

The League joined other partner organizations on a letter to the House Energy and Commerce Committee. The SENSE Act (H.R. 3797) and the BRICK Act (H.R. 4557) would weaken health

safeguards for Americans on behalf of special interests and result in more air pollution and health hazards.

Excerpted from LWVUS League Update March 3, 2016

Local Program 2016-2017 (proposed changes in bold italic)

Justice and the Law

Support improvements to the local criminal justice system by:

- * ***monitoring and strengthening the Probation and Parole procedures, with an emphasis on rehabilitation and supportive services with programs such as the Ex-Offender Re-Entry Program in Schenectady County.***
- * facilitating the implementation of alternative courts (problem solving courts) in Schenectady County and promoting collaborations to support them.
- * monitoring the juvenile justice system including Family Court and promoting community-based rehabilitation.
- * ***supporting restorative justice programs such as the Community Accountability Board.***

Local Government

- * Monitor activities of county governmental units, including town boards, the Schenectady City Council and the Schenectady County Legislature, monitor activities of other quasi-governmental units, public authorities and agencies such as Metroplex, IDAs and Planning Boards, monitor activities of elected public Boards of Education.
- * Support standards of high professional qualifications and political nonpartisanship in manager form of government.
- * Evaluate opportunities for inter-municipal cooperation and examine options for the consolidation of governmental services in Schenectady County.

Children at Risk

- * Collaborate with other organizations to identify the needs of children in Schenectady County, facilitate programs on their behalf and educate the community about their needs and challenges.
- * ***Study early childhood education and caregiving needs in Schenectady County from a policy and financing perspective.***

Local Education

- * Monitor local initiatives related to schools and promote and advocate adequate and equitable funding for all school districts so the students can reach their potential.

Environmental Issues

Support the protection of environmental resources, land, water and air in Schenectady County:

- * Advocate for the protection of water resources in the County.
- * Promote understanding of global climate change and support efforts to mitigate its effects.
- * Support energy conservation and development of renewable energy alternatives.
- * Support solid waste management programs that increase reuse and recycling in the County and City.

Health Services

- * Educate and advocate for national/state/local health care reform that provides quality physical and mental health care for all citizens.
- * Educate our membership and others about long term care and develop recommendations for local options.
- * Encourage and support countywide comprehensive health care planning and access, ***equity, and safety*** in health care.

Suggestions made to LWVUS: under Agricultural Policy, add humane to sound farm practices; under Water Resources, add Study the condition of water and investment in water and what to do in the future with attention to infrastructure/potable water problems; Paid family leave should be in Social Welfare section not in Women's Issues.

League of Women Voters of Schenectady County Officers and Board Members

A. Board Composition and responsibilities:

1. The Board consists of: Elected Officers (no more than 8), Elected Board members (no more than 8) and Appointed Board members
2. Board members are expected to attend Board meetings on a regular basis.
3. Board members have the right to vote at Board meetings.
4. **Elected Board offices are for a term of two years. Terms of elected Board members shall be staggered. Up to 4 officers and 4 elected Board members will be elected each year.**

B. Elected Officers (up to 8):

1. 3 or 4 Steering Committee Members (or President and up to 3 Vice Presidents)
2. Treasurer
3. Secretary

C. Elected Board Members- (No more than 8)

1. Voter Services Chair
2. Membership Chair
3. Bulletin Editor
4. At Large Board members
5. Action Chair
6. Others who may be elected to the Board
 - a. Outreach / Publicity Chair
 - b. Observer Corps Chair
 - c. Issue committee chairs (judicial, education, etc.)
 - d. Fundraising Chair
 - e. Other positions as appropriate

D. Appointed Board members are appointed by the Board when a vacancy occurs or a need is identified during the year. Appointments are for the year or the remainder of the League year.

E. Project Coordinator positions

- a. *Project Coordinators are appointed.*
- b. Project Coordinators are sought for Voter Services tasks such as chairing Candidate Forums, Vote 411, Voter registration coordination etc.
- c. **Project Coordinators** usually would serve off the Board. They have the option of being appointed to the Board.
- d. Project Coordinator positions may be announced/presented at the Annual Meeting, but are not voted upon by the membership.

F. Committee chairs who opt to decline Board membership but fulfill other responsibilities of their position may serve off the Board.

G. Nominating Committee:

- a. Consists of three elected members and two members appointed by the Board from the Board. One shall be the Membership Chair.
- b. Elected Nominating Committee members do not serve on the Board.

H. The Budget Committee and the Audit Committee are appointed by the Board. Chairs and members may be on or off the Board.



Gil's GARAGE INC.
Established 1961
 ♦ **Complete Car Care Center** ♦
Family Owned and Operated Since 1966!
Burnt Hills | **Halfmoon**
 518.399.3363 | 518.631.6700
WWW.GILSGARAGE.COM



Suzanne Hartz
Stephen Hartz
 1714 Union St.
 Schenectady, NY 12309
 374-6647
 M-F 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
 Sat 8 a.m. to Noon




346-3000
 2867 Aqueduct Road
 Schenectady, NY 12309-2107
 www.SmithsAutomotive.com
Skip Smith
 Owner
 skip@smithsautomotive.com

Our League goals are to educate citizens about government and public policy, encourage citizen participation in elections, and influence public policy relating to issues we've studied. Dues money makes working on our goals possible.

DUES for July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017 (half-year dues reduction available- contact Connie Young at 393-7061)

Return to: LWV of Schenectady County, P.O. Box 9135, Schenectady, NY 12309

New or Renewing Members Please Confirm this Contact Information

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

_____ \$60 Individual _____ \$85 Household _____ \$20 Full-time student

_____ Additional support for the League, dues plus \$10 contribution (\$70 or \$95 – circle one)

(Confidential arrangements for special payment or partial assistance can be made. Contact Connie Young at 393-7061 with any questions. Dues and contributions are not tax deductible.)

.....
 _____ *I am sending my membership dues payment, but please consider me an **INACTIVE member**.*

ACTIVE MEMBERS: The League depends upon the work of its members, even for a short task. Please check any activities that interest you. We appreciate your help.

Committees Judicial _____ Health _____ Membership _____ Fundraising _____
 Environment _____ Observer Corps _____ Education _____

Voter Services Voter Registration _____ Candidate Forums _____ Voter Information _____

Computer Skills Graphics/Layout _____ Databases _____ Website Work _____

Facebook _____ Electronic Publicity _____

Other Technical Skill? (Describe) _____

Bonnie McGuire Jones PLLC
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Trust & Estate Planning and Administration
throughout the stages of your life.™

4 Emma Lane
Clifton Park, NY 12065
Phone: 518-373-0333
www.bmjlawoffice.com

Serving the greater Saratoga-Capital Region for over 30 years

eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
northeastern ny

YWCA NorthEastern NY
44 Washington Avenue
Schenectady, NY 12305
518.374.3394
Domestic Violence Hotline
518.374.3386

- Domestic Violence Services •
- Housing •
- Early Childhood Education •
- Health & Wellness •

Visit our website or "like" us on
facebook to get the most current
information about our
YWCA programs & services.
www.ywca-northeasternny.org

The Open Door
Bookstore & Gift Gallery

*A Locally-Owned Independent
Bookstore Since 1971*

128 JAY STREET • SCHENECTADY
(518) 346-2719



KING CORK
Wine & Liquor

Tom Pacelli, owner

2430 Watt Street
Crosstown Plaza
Schenectady, NY 12304

(518) 393-3955
www.kingcork.com



Estate Planning / Estate Administration / Elder Law
Real Estate / Business & Corporate Law

CIOFFI • SLEZAK • WILDGRUBE P.C.
ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELORS AT LAW

2310 Nott St. East, Niskayuna, NY 12309-4303
T: 518.377.6700 • F: 518.377.6110 • cswlawfirm.com

NOTT STREET OFFICE

"Your Office Away From Home"

Copies / Fax
FedEx / UPS
Color Copies
Digital to Paper
Office Supplies

Monday-Friday 8:30-6
Saturday 10-3

2215 Nott Street
Niskayuna, NY 12309
518.382.2663



Authorized ShipCenter



**League of Women Voters
of Schenectady County
P.O. Box 9135
Schenectady, NY 12309**

Bulletin
10 issues per year

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID PERMIT NO. 402
ALBANY, NY

Or Current Resident

April Calendar of Events

Tues. April 5...Board Meeting

3:30 PM, 1060 Parkwood Blvd., Schenectady

Thurs. April 14...What's In Your Water: Issues in Schenectady County

6:30 PM, Downtown Schenectady Public Library

Tues. April 19...Presidential Primary

Sat. April 23...Textiles Recycling

8 AM- noon, SCCC parking lot