



The League of Women Voters
of Buffalo/Niagara

VOTER

Volume 21 Number 5

Winter, 2016

Terri Parks
Co-President
events@lwvbn.org

Judy Metzger
Co-President
events@lwvbn.org

Susan Stievater
Membership Chair
events@lwvbn.org

Office:
1272 Delaware Ave
Buffalo, NY 14209
716-986-4898
Fax: 882-3797
lwvbn@lwvbn.org

Office Open
Tues., 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Always call first

Office Manager:
Mary Ann Turkla

Hours
Tues., 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Wed., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Fri., 10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

LWVBN Home Page
www.lwvbn.org

LWVNY Home Page
www.lwvny.org

LWVUS Home Page
www.lwv.org

Sandra Chelnov
Voter Copy Editor
events@lwvbn.org

Barbara Jezioro
Voter Layout Editor
events@lwvbn.org

The **VOTER** is published
10 times per year. Items
for the March issue are due
Friday, February 5, 2016

League of Women Voters Issues Luncheon

for the public and members of LWVBN

Why Safe Staffing of Registered Nurses Matters!

Presenters: Sara Buckley, RN, Legislative Director, Communications Workers of America Local 1168; Jennifer Tuttle, Legislative Director, Communications Workers of America District 1; and Ann Converso, RN Organizer, Communications Workers of America

Hear registered nurses (RNs) tell real stories about how short staffing has impacted their patients. Learn about health care risks that are rarely talked about – how and why the number of registered nurses at hospital bedsides is insufficient for quality care. Our speakers will discuss the importance of safe staffing to patient outcomes, the research that supports safe staffing ratios, and legislation currently before the New York State Legislature.

Thursday, February 18, 2016, 11:30 a.m.

Scotch ‘n Sirloin Restaurant, 3999 Maple Road, Amherst 14226

Make reservations online at www.lwvbn.org

or call the League office at 986-4898

by noon Tuesday, February 16, 2016.

Luncheon cost: \$20.00. Pay at the door with cash or check written to LWVBN. Please call the League office at 986-4898 if you’d like to join us only for the program.



Mission of the League of Women Voters:

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.

CONTENTS

Presidents’ Report	2	Advocacy	4
Awards Committee	3	LWVUS	4
Volunteers	4	LWVNY	5



Presidents' Report



It is always special to socialize with League members. Conversation never lags and folks have interesting and insightful comments to share. This year's holiday party was a fine example of the good will and generosity of our League members. We enjoyed the comments about Vive Inc. and Jericho Road Community Health Center by Sister Beth Niederpruem, the social worker at Vive, and Anita Lakareber, a refugee from Uganda. They were both eloquent in sharing Vive's mission and their insights into the refugee experience.

We had a laundry basket for warm wear donations from those of us who attended. The most generous League members probably donated at least three times the number of items that filled the basket and made many comments about how much they enjoyed the afternoon. Please let us know of other organizations that we can feature at future holiday parties. We send many thanks to the folks who attended for your enthusiastic and generous donations to the refugees at Vive.



Gladys Gifford and Norma Stevenson



Sister Beth and Anita with LWVBN Co-Presidents Terri Parks and Judy Metzger

League Nominating Committee: Chair Judy Weidemann and elected members of the 2016 Nominating Committee have begun work to select a slate of candidates for the 2016-2018 board of directors. Please consider service to the League as a board member if you are contacted by Judy or any of these fine committee members: Judy Clarke, Mary Herbst, Ramona Gallagher, Kathleen McCarthy, Joan Mondul and Lori Robinson.

Reminder: The League's main phone number has changed to (716) 986-4898. It will be easier to reach Mary Ann Turkla at this cell phone number. By the time you receive this Voter the new hours at the office will be on Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mary Ann will work from home on Wednesdays and Fridays, but will go to the office on Wednesdays or Fridays in an emergency. Mary Ann requests that you communicate with her via email so she can keep track of requests for meeting rooms, materials and other needs.

Honoring community leaders with the League's Making Democracy Work Award: This edition of the Voter includes a nomination form for the 2016 Making Democracy Work Award. Please consider nominating a community member who you feel has made memorable efforts to make democracy work. Recent honorees include Attorney Michael Kuzma, Erin Heaney, Bill Nowak, Sam Magavern, and Bonnie Smith from the Westminster Economic Development Initiative Inc. (WEDI). We welcome your nomination for the 2016 award by February 16, 2016. The nomination form has the details.

LWV New York Voter Services: In her report in the December State Voter, Chair Judy Gorenstein wrote: The bad news this fall is what we all know. New York ranks 49th in low voter turnout! What as the League can we do?

It was clear from the surveys, as well as the teleconferences held this fall, that local Leagues are constantly striving to run successful candidates nights and voter registration drives, but are also frustrated by the low turnout. The state League hears you. By February 2016, we will be setting up a Google group to have an online conversation where we can learn from one another and share ideas, concerns, problems and resolutions. (In January we will let you know how to be part of this conversation.) This spring we will hold voter service workshops but even before then we will be providing templates not only of recommended policy guidelines, but also of letters to the candidates, and press releases and templates for public service announcements (PSAs).

Our League members seek to have a well-defined and organized effort to get out the vote in 2016. We need you to join us in planning and carrying out this most important effort. This news from the state is most welcome. Please contact us at lwvbn@lwvbn.org or call the League at 986-4898 to become part of our efforts. Your suggestions and relationships with other organizations – social, religious, civic, etc. – will all be important as we seek to reach as many citizens in Western New York as possible with the message to be informed and educated voters and cast ballots in 2016.

-Judy Metzger & Terri Parks

Awards Committee

Honoring local League leaders

It's time again to think about honoring local League leaders. Janet Goodsell has agreed to chair the Awards Committee to nominate recipients for our two local League awards that will be submitted for board approval.

The Joan K. Bozer Leadership Award recognizes outstanding League leadership that reflects on some of the many qualities that Joan has demonstrated in her long experience as a League and community leader.

We selected five key characteristics exhibited by Joan that we feel are essential qualities for recognition: **ethical, innovative, resourceful, respected and steadfast. Please submit a paragraph of up to 250 words that describes how your nominee embodies these characteristics. Be sure to include each characteristic as you write about your nominee.**

The **League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara LEE Award** is presented to a League member who has made a **Long-term commitment to the League with Energy and Excellence** – hence the initials LEE.

The award honors Lenore Tetkowski, Leonore Lambert and Lenore Banks. **Please submit a paragraph of up to 250 words about your nominee in which you note the approximate number of years the person served the League actively and give examples of her/his Energy and Excellence in League activity.**

Please email completed nominations to events@lwvbn.org by February 15, 2016. Be sure your name is noted as the nominator.

-Janet Goodsell, chair, Awards Committee

Volunteer News

Fifty-eight volunteers represent LWVBN at naturalization ceremonies in 2015

The LWVBN was represented at 29 naturalization ceremonies by 58 volunteers in 2015. Gladys Gifford and Alvin Schuster attended the ceremonies at the U.S. Courthouse in November as well as the year's last ceremony in December. Josette Cunningham and Joyce Bol represented the League at a ceremony earlier in December.

The LWVBN is very appreciative of the commitment our volunteers make to these ceremonies. A list of dates for 2016 has been published. The most immediate need is for dates early in the year, including ceremonies on January 7, January 21 and February 4. If you are interested in any of those dates let me know at events@lwvbn.org

-Judith Clarke, LWVBN volunteer coordinator



Advocacy

A new Advocacy Committee this spring!

"Action is agitating, organizing, educating, pleading, and persuading." – Carrie Chapman Catt, a leader of the women's suffrage movement and founder of the League of Women Voters

I would like to thank all of the volunteers who visited elected officials last spring. We are beginning to ask for volunteers now to visit New York State elected officials this spring. Save the date – **Saturday, March 12, 2016** – when we will host an advocacy information and training session from 9:30 a.m. till noon at the Harlem Road Community Center. This will be open to both members and non-members of LWVBN, so bring your interested friends even if they are not members of our League.

It would be wonderful to form a committee, to exchange ideas via email and to meet periodically. If you are interested in exchanging ideas before March 12, or if you already know you would like to visit your own New York State elected official this spring, please contact me by email at events@lwvbn.org.

-Joan LoCurto

From LWVUS

The League of Women Voters' 52nd National Convention 2016 will take place June 16-19 in Washington, D.C.

Participate in LWVUS program planning for 2016-2018

Leagues have an opportunity to offer input for the LWVUS program for the 2016-2018 biennium. This important League process will culminate with the adoption of a program of education and action at the LWVUS Convention scheduled for Washington, D.C., in June 2016. Program planning materials are posted in the [Convention section](#) of the [League Management website](#). For additional information or questions contact Program Outreach Committee Chair Barbara Zia at progplan@lww.org. The Issues Committee and board will discuss this in February and respond to LWVUS requests.

Opportunity to attend U.N. Commission on the Status of Women session

All members are invited to participate in the 60th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, to take place March 14-24, 2016, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. The priority theme is "Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development." We are limited to 20 attendees. Please contact unobserver@lww.org if you are interested in attending.

From the State Voter

Living Wage Committee

The Living Wage Committee was charged by the LWVNYS Convention in 2015 to determine what is an appropriate living wage for our state and its localities.

LWVUS has said that Leagues may take action on a living wage under the national position on Meeting Basic Human Needs that includes the statement, "People who are unable to work, whose earnings are inadequate or for whom jobs are not available have the right to an income and/or services sufficient to meet their basic needs for food, shelter and access to health care." The position further states that, "one of the goals of social policy should be to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families." Guidance from LWVUS requires that state and local Leagues do the research necessary to determine what an appropriate wage would be for their own community.

The committee further defined a living wage using the LWV Buffalo/Niagara concurrence with the LWV Kansas position: *A living wage should provide sufficient income, without government assistance, for food, clothing, housing, energy, transportation, health care, education, child care, and a small amount of discretionary income.* With this analysis, the state League can now support the proposed \$15 minimum wage.

-Barb Thomas, chair, Living Wage Committee, LWVNY, barb.lwv@nycap.rr.com

Energy, Environment and Agriculture Committee: Addressing the ripple effects of food waste on the climate

In 2013, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, 21.1 percent of America's 167 million tons of municipal waste consisted of food. This organic waste decomposes in landfills, emitting methane gas that has a global warming potential more than 25 times greater than carbon dioxide. That's a whopping 35.2 million tons of food that could have been used to feed people and livestock or composted to grow a new cycle of food, if handled differently. All that food waste contains significant resources that are also wasted, such as water, fertilizer, paper products, fossil fuel for growing, transportation and storage, and human labor. This food waste/climate change link is so critical that the country now has a national policy to address it. On September 16, 2015, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy and U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced the United States' first-ever national food waste reduction goal of 50 percent by 2030. Coming in the week before the United Nations General Assembly met to discuss sustainable development practices, this announcement signaled the urgent need to shift how our nation produces, sells, uses and discards its food.

On December 7, 2015, United States Congresswoman Chellie Pingree (D-ME) introduced the Food Recovery Act, a comprehensive bill that seeks to address food waste from farm to table. (See <http://thinkprogress.org/climate/2015/12/14/3731628/food-waste-bill/>) Although the New York State League cannot take action without coordinating with National, the goals in this bill are worthy of consideration for action to reduce food waste in New York.

Closer to home, Beth Radow met on December 15, 2015, with Assemblyman Steve Otis, who sits on the New York State Assembly's Environmental Conservation Committee. Mr. Otis has been appointed to lead the Legislative Commission on Solid Waste and the Assembly's 10-member Climate Change Task Force. Mr. Otis and Ms. Radow discussed climate change, the role of food waste management and related topics. The conversation will be ongoing. League members with local or proposed statewide solutions to reduce food waste (whether lending themselves to legislation or otherwise) are encouraged to send them to Beth Radow by email at enradow@gmail.com.

-Beth Radow, chair, Energy, Environment and Agriculture Committee, LWVNY



OF BUFFALO/NIAGARA
1272 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14209-2401



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Mid January and February Meetings & Events

Tues., 1/12, 6:30 p.m.

**Money in Politics Consensus Meeting,
Harlem Road Community Center**

Wed., 1/13, 12:30 p.m.

**Money in Politics Consensus Meeting,
League Office**

Wed., 1/20, 1:30 p.m.

Local Gov., League Office

Wed., 1/27, 1:00 p.m.

Social. Economic Justice Committee

Tues., 2/2, 4:00 p.m

Issues Committee, Harlem Road Com. Cntr.

Mon., 2/8, 4:00 p.m.

Board Meeting, League Office

Wed., 2/10, 1:30 p.m.

Local Gov., League Office

Thurs., 2/18, 11:30 a.m.

**Lunch & Issues
Scotch 'n Sirloin Restaurant**

Thurs., 2/25, 1:30 p.m.

Education Committee, League Office

REMINDER: The next deadline for the Voter is Friday, February 5. All copy, photos, etc., should be sent to Sandy Chelnov.

Important: The League Office has a new phone number: 716-986-4898. The office will be open on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.; Mary Ann will usually work from home on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and Fridays from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.