



THE LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS
of Schenectady County New York

BULLETIN

www.lwvschenectady.org

May 2016

SAVE THE DATE
Annual Meeting
and Restaurant Gift Card Raffle

Tuesday June 7, 5:30- 9 PM

Turf Tavern Restaurant, 40 Mohawk Avenue, Scotia

Speaker- Philip Morris

CEO of Proctors

Schenectady: the “Inside-Out City”

We usually think of the Capital District as a *region* of four small cities (Albany, Schenectady, Troy, and Saratoga), some very small cities (Cohoes, Watervliet, and Scotia), some small towns, some open land, and many suburbs. The region is a complex matrix, rich in history, but hard to wrap one’s arms around as a planner. And it certainly makes for fragmented politics.

What if we thought of it as one city? How big would it be? Are there advantages to looking at things this way? Mr. Morris will un-wrap these sorts of questions in a wide ranging and informative talk which should not be missed by anyone with an interest in our area.

Menu entrée choices: Chicken Florentine, Panko Parmesan Tilapia, or Eggplant Parmesan. Please indicate if you require a gluten-free meal or other accommodation.

Cost \$30.00, **reservations are due by May 31st**, call or e-mail Carol Furman, 346-2746, cfurman@earthlink.net. Cancellations cannot be accepted after May 31st unless a replacement can be found, as we must guarantee the number by that date.

Please bring program statements, budget and slate of officers from March, April and May bulletins to meeting.

Message from the Steering Committee

The State LWV had a number of successes with the State budget this year after intensive advocacy efforts. The League was pleased that the Legislature did not enact an Education Tax Credit although the League was less pleased that the Legislature, once again, failed to enact ethics reform.

The minimum wage was raised in a complicated scheme whereby NYC workers in large businesses will see an increase to \$11/hour by the end of 2016 and \$15/hour in 2018. NYC workers employed by small businesses and workers in downstate counties will see wages increase to \$10.50 and \$10/hour, respectively, by the end of 2016, increasing to \$15/hour in 2019 and 2021, respectively. For workers in the rest of the state, including in the Capital District, the minimum wage will increase to \$9.70/hour by the end of 2016 and eventually reach \$12.50/hour by 2020.

A strong paid family leave program was enacted which will include 12 weeks of leave when the program is fully implemented over the next four years. The program will provide coverage for private sector workers in New York; public sector unions will be able to opt into the program.

In good news for education, Foundation Aid was increased by four percent and the Gap Elimination Adjustment was finally phased out.

The State League devotes considerable time and effort into translating the interests expressed by League members into legislative initiatives. We appreciate their efforts.

Please note that your membership dues should be paid by June 30th for the 2016-2017 fiscal year.

Cheryl Nechamen, Lead

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.

U.S. Supreme Court Reaffirms Total Population as Basis for Redistricting

In a unanimous decision, the U.S. Supreme Court endorsed the current practice of drawing district lines based on the total number of people who live in a state legislative district in *Evenwel v. Abbott*. Opponents had argued that redistricting should be based solely on the number of voters in a district. The League submitted an amicus brief in *Evenwel* that supported the current practice of drawing district lines based on population counts.

Excerpted from LWVUS League Update April 14, 2016

Funding for Indigents Defense Services

The Schenectady County Legislature responded to the LWV of Schenectady County's request to pass a resolution to be sent to the Governor and State Legislature urging them to pass Assembly Bill 6202-B and Senate Bill 6341-A which asks for more equitable state funding for indigents defense services to the counties. The resolution was put on the April 12th meeting agenda, sponsored by Karen Johnson, and was passed

unanimously. Other counties have sent similar resolutions. The State LWV position has been strongly in favor of a state-wide consistent and adequate indigent defense system with greater oversight and funding by the State. Helga Schroeter urged the Legislature under privilege of the floor to pass the resolution in her role as judicial specialist as well as a member of the Committee for Modern Courts.

Human Rights Award nomination submitted by the Schenectady County LWV

At its April Board meeting, the League voted to nominate SAFE Inc. for the annual Human Rights Award under the group category. SAFE has provided 30 years of service helping run-away and sexually exploited youths of both genders as well as LGBT youths. SAFE provides counseling, advocacy, shelter and case management to get kids off the street into self-sufficiency, helping with many issues, including mental health and drug abuse problems. At any given time, 12 youths can be housed at the shelter with follow-up services when they leave. The population served is very diverse across racial, gender and socio-economic lines. The

last five years have seen a shelter expansion. SAFE has given shelter to around 1000 kids and has conducted outreach and follow-up services to 800-1000 youths. The program helps the kids out of the cycle of exploitation and homelessness and assists them to heal from serious trauma, empowering them to become self-sufficient and to give back to the community. The Awards breakfast is from 7-9 AM on May 19th at the Glen Sanders Mansion. Please come to honor our nominee.

Helga A. Schroeter, LWVNYS Judicial Specialist

Observer Corps Report on Rotterdam Town Board

The New York State Department of Transportation is undertaking a large traffic improvement project along Route 146. Therefore, the Town of Rotterdam has a unique opportunity to install a sewer main under Route 146.

In February of 2016, the Rotterdam Town Board issued a resolution requesting permission to create the Hamburg Street Sewer District. A bond of \$4,167,000 has been issued over a 30 year period for this project. The initial cost for each homeowner will be \$1,738 with a yearly cost of \$1,204 per homeowner.

Doug Cole, Director of Wastewater Systems for John M. McDonald Engineering, spoke at the March 23rd Rotterdam Town Board meeting about the needs of the wastewater treatment plant. The treatment plant is located on Campbell Avenue, near the Viaport Rotterdam Mall, and is in need of many urgent repairs. Too many repairs have been neglected over the years. Another bond will have to be submitted to address these issues. Supervisor Steven Tommasone stated, "We have to take care of what we have, if we want further development of our town".

Eunice Chouffi, LWV observer

What's in Your Water: Issues in Schenectady County

Paul LaFond, Commissioner of General Services for the City of Schenectady, and Jason Pelton, Groundwater Management Planner for Schenectady County, gave a well-attended talk on water infrastructure on April 14th. The LWV of Schenectady County and ECOS co-sponsored the event.

LaFond has 36 years of experience with water and wastewater systems. "Schenectady is fortunate to have such a high quality source of water", said LaFond. The city is permitted to draw up to 37 million gallons/day but so far the peak draw has been 27 million gallons on a particularly hot summer day.

Members of the audience were concerned about a plume of TCE (trichloroethylene) that has been detected migrating from the old Naval Depot towards the river. According to Pelton, a curtain of zero-valent iron has been injected to detoxify the TCE.

Recent PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid) contamination in nearby communities was also a concern for the audience. According to LaFond, "the city has tested for PFOA and it's below detection levels. A second sample was recently pulled" and is being tested. Copper and lead testing is done on a three year cycle and has always been under federal limits. The City has

an aggressive maintenance program to deal with aging infrastructure, with the oldest water mains in the city 100 years old.

Pelton talked about the geologic history of the Great Flats Aquifer which serves 150,000 people in Scotia, Glenville, Rotterdam, Niskayuna and Schenectady. The river and aquifer are intimately connected, with the aquifer recharged by the river, contributing to its large capacity. According to Pelton, the sand and gravel deposits that make up the aquifer were deposited during a catastrophic drainage of the glacial Lake Iroquois. Scientists estimate that the flow during that event was over 11 million gallons/second. By comparison, the average flow rate of the Mohawk River is 45,000 gallons/second and reached 975,000 gallons/second during Hurricane Irene.

"The first public water supply in Schenectady was an infiltration trench dug parallel to the Mohawk River, near the current pumphouse on Ferry Street, in 1871", according to Pelton. The current City of Schenectady wellfield was developed in 1944, based on land that was first purchased in 1893.

Schenectady County has a number of programs to regulate and protect the aquifer, to preserve it for future generations.

The **Health Committee** has been facilitating a community workgroup focused on preventing falls among seniors in the community in collaboration with the Schenectady Coalition for a Healthy Community. The focus is on expanding evidence-based programs (proven to reduce falls) and access to information about home modifications which help make the home

environment safer as we age in our homes. The NYS Department of Health is sponsoring programs to train the trainers for some of these programs and a number of people have been trained with other programs being presented in the fall. If you are interested in joining the committee in this work, contact Carol Furman 346-2746 or cfurman@earthlink.net.

League Lawsuit Against EAC Continues to Get Attention

This week, the New York Times and Washington Post both highlighted the League's pending lawsuit against the Executive Director of the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Brian Newby, who unilaterally decided to amend the national uniform mail-in voter registration form to require documentary proof of citizenship in three states. If allowed to stand, this illegal action could free other states to erect this new restriction on voter registration.

Excerpted from LWVUS League Update April 14, 2016

Help Wanted

The League has undertaken a very ambitious schedule to conduct voter registration opportunities this year. Can you help? Here are dates and time frames. If you could give us two hours or more, please contact Kay Ackerman, Voter Services Chair, at kaydonack@aol.com or 393-5000 and specify your preferred times.

Wednesday, May 25, 8 AM- noon, SICM Food Pantry

Saturday, June 19, 11 AM- 5 PM, Juneteenth Celebration, Central Park, Schenectady

Saturday, July 16, 11 AM- 3 PM, Schenectady County Historical Society Canal Fest at Mabee Farm

Sunday, August 14, 10 AM- 2 PM, Greenmarket, Downtown Schenectady

Tuesday, September 27, 9 AM- 6 PM, various locations (National Voter Registration Day)

Wednesday, September 28, 8 AM- noon, SICM Food Pantry

Saturday, October 8, 9 AM- 6 PM, various locations

New Member

Rhoda Gilbert recently moved to this area. She previously lived in Columbus, Ohio and was a League member there. She is a retired Assistant Occupational Therapist and has also been a Nursing Home Activities Director. Rhoda enjoyed reading the Columbus LWV bulletin information on political issues and candidates. She plans to attend LWV programs that are of interest to her.

In Collaboration with Other Community Organizations

Thursday, May 5th, 5:30- 8:30 PM, Stockade Inn [sponsored by BPW] **Attorney Andrew Howard**, parliamentarian for University at Albany, will speak on "Honing Your Leadership Skills: Mastering Meetings Using Robert's Rules of Order". Cost is \$40 for members, \$45 for non-members; dinner is included. Contact: Elena Alvarez, e-mail: ealv111@aol.com.

LWVUS Announces Money in Politics Position, Support for FEC Reform

The League of Women Voters today announced a new Money in Politics position and its support for legislation to reform the Federal Election Commission (FEC). The positions were based on consensus reached by 336 local and state Leagues and ILOs who participated in the Money in Politics study. In addition to the traditional reason for campaign finance regulation – preventing corruption and undue influence in government – the League now supports several other goals, including enhancing political equality for all citizens, protecting representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns, providing voters sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices, ensuring transparency and the public's right to know who is using money to influence elections and enabling candidates to compete equitably for public office

Excerpted from LWVUS League Update April 14, 2016

LWV Schenectady <u>Proposed Budget 2016-2017</u>		2015-2016 Budget	As of Feb. 28, 2016	Projected Year End Amount	2016-2017 Proposed Budget
INCOME					
A. Dues		6,745.00	6,335.00	6,985.00	7,535.00
B. Contributions					
1. Membership		300.00	490.00	500.00	500.00
2. Non Member		0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00
3. Earmarked Funds					
a. Take Me To Vote		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
b. Escrow Ed. Fund		50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
c. Silent Auction		750.00	108.00	650.00	1,000.00
d. Who's Who		2,300.00	0.00	2,400.00	0.00
C. Other Contributions					
1. Bulletin Ads		500.00	400.00	550.00	550.00
2. Interest		12.00	6.42	13.42	15.00
3. Election Monitoring		100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
4. Election Reporting		1,000.00	1,040.00	1,190.00	1,000.00
5. Meeting Revenue		3,000.00	2,628.00	3,528.00	3,200.00
6. Co-sponsorship/collaboration		50.00	150.00	150.00	0.00
D. From Reserves					
1. LWVNY Ed Foundation					
a. Youth Programs/Inside Albany		600.00	0.00	600.00	600.00
b. Other Grants		2,475.00	1,422.00	1,442.00	475.00
2. Our Reserves		2,211.00	0.00	0.00	2,476.00
E. Miscellaneous Income		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Income:		20,093.00	12,879.42	18,308.42	17,501.00
EXPENSES					
A. Operating Costs					
1. General Supplies		110.00	0.00	0.00	200.00
2. Postage--Bulk Mail		300.00	200.00	300.00	300.00
3. P.O. Box & Bulk Mail Permit		300.00	311.00	311.00	325.00
4. Bank Charges		35.00	0.00	0.00	35.00
5. Copy Expense		50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
6. Bulletin					
a. Copying		1,576.00	898.84	1,488.00	1,576.00
7. Web Page		200.00	102.42	300.00	400.00
8. Meeting Expense		3,000.00	2,430.02	3,330.02	3,200.00
<i>sub total:</i>		<i>5,571.00</i>	<i>3,942.28</i>	<i>5,729.02</i>	<i>6,086.00</i>
B. Board & Admin Committees					
1. President		50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
2. Board Tools & Expenses		50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00

3. Fundraising				
a. Copying	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
b. Postage	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
4. Membership Committee				
a. Copying/Supplies	300.00	38.01	38.01	350.00
b. Postage	25.00	26.50	26.50	30.00
<i>sub total:</i>	<i>525.00</i>	<i>64.51</i>	<i>64.51</i>	<i>580.00</i>
C. Delegates				
1. State Convention	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,600.00
2. National Convention	2,200.00	0.00	2,200.00	0.00
<i>sub total:</i>	<i>2,200.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>2,200.00</i>	<i>1,600.00</i>
D. Financial Support of the League				
1. National PMP	3,552.00	3,552.00	3,552.00	3,960.00
2. State PMP	2,220.00	1,665.00	2,220.00	2,400.00
<i>sub total</i>	<i>5,772.00</i>	<i>5,217.00</i>	<i>5,772.00</i>	<i>6,360.00</i>
E. Educational Activities				
1. Environment	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
2. Health Care	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
3. Observer/Action/Lobbying	25.00	0.00	0.00	25.00
4. Judicial	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
5. Youth Programs/Inside Albany	600.00	0.00	0.00	600.00
6. Voter Services				
a. Facts For Voters	450.00	15.00	15.00	250.00
b. Take Me To Vote	350.00	0.00	350.00	350.00
c. Meeting Space/Taping/Ed Fund	1,400.00	1,368.42	1,368.42	875.00
d. Who's Who	2,300.00	0.00	2,306.00	0.00
7. Other Studies/Consensus	50.00	124.05	124.05	100.00
8. Education Committee	50.00	0.00	0.00	25.00
9. Community Outreach	50.00	0.00	0.00	25.00
10. SCED	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00
<i>sub total:</i>	<i>5,675.00</i>	<i>1,507.47</i>	<i>4,413.47</i>	<i>2,650.00</i>
F. Position Support				
1. Affiliation				
a. Martin Luther King	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00
b. Human Rights Commission	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00
c. Fair Campaign Practices	125.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2. Co-sponsorship/collaboration	100.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
<i>sub total:</i>	<i>275.00</i>	<i>25.00</i>	<i>50.00</i>	<i>150.00</i>
G. Miscellaneous				
1. Escrow Ed. Fund	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
2. Other Expenses	25.00	0.00	0.00	25.00
<i>sub total:</i>	<i>75.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>75.00</i>
Total Expenses:	20,093.00	10,756.26	18,229.00	17,501.00



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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) _____

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Speaker- Philip Morris

CEO of Proctors

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