



*The League of Women Voters of New York State*

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# STATE BOARD REPORT

March 2009, Issue #4

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## Presidents Report

~Attention: LL President

## Advocacy & Issues

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Action Chairs

## Membership

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Membership Chairs

## Voter Service

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Voter Service Chairs

## Finance & Development

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Finance/Development Chairs  
(Fundraising)

## Program & Education

~Attention: LL Presidents & LL Program Chairs  
(SIA/LeaderSpark/NPV Study)

STATE BOARD REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE:

[www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)

*(Click on Local League Resources)*

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

## **PRESIDENT**

Martha's Memos .....	3
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## **ADVOCACY & ISSUES**

Lobbying Season.....	4
Domestic Violence .....	5
Great Lakes .....	6
Ledbetter and Beyond .....	8
Sprawl and Land Use Issues .....	11

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership Minute.....	13
------------------------	----

## **VOTER SERVICE**

VS Survey 2008: LL Highlights .....	15
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## **FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT**

## **PROGRAM & EDUCATION**

Citizen Education/Youth Programs Update .....	20
LWVUS NPV Study Update .....	22

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## COME ONE....COME ALL!!!

March is a transition month - not quite to spring but certainly no longer winter. Similarly this time of year can be viewed as a transition period for your League. Nominating committees and budget committees, program planners and study groups, are all winding down their current cycle's work with an eye toward that Annual meeting and the next league year. The State Board and Committees also are addressing these issues as we plan the 53rd biennial LWVNYS Convention. You will soon be receiving the Registration Kit that includes the tentative agenda, workshops, speakers, and information about our bonus Pre-Convention Leadership training session. The Convention, to be held May 15-17 in Syracuse, promises to be an exciting and stimulating opportunity for all. We hope that every local League will be part of this important and enjoyable event.

I remind you all to return those yellow awards nomination forms found in the Jan. SBR. It is so important that we acknowledge the accomplishments of our local Leagues, but without your nomination, some of those truly noteworthy efforts make go unrecognized. This is your chance, as a local leader, to let others know where your League has excelled.

In addition, start thinking about something to present during "Moments in the Sun". This one-minute opportunity during plenary session for each local League to share something your league has done provides both the chance to inspire others and to simply take a bow.

On Sunday morning at convention, local League presidents will have breakfast together and discuss issues of special concern as well as learn more about plans being presented on the statewide level. It provides an opportunity to network and address the nuances of leadership among the various leagues throughout our diverse state.

While we plan and prepare for Convention, you are reminded that there is much to be done before that May event. April 19-22 we will again be holding our fabulous *Students Inside Albany* Conference and look forward to meeting those students sent by your local League to take advantage of this truly impressive program. As you all know, we are in the middle of legislative session and our advocacy work is at its most intense. Please be sure to read reports about these and other issues included in this SBR and be especially attentive to Action Alerts and updates included on our website ([www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)). You are encouraged to contact any state board member or the office if you have concerns, questions, or suggestions. We all benefit from our collective voice.

As always, with appreciation for all you do for league.

TO: Local League Presidents and Issues and Advocacy Chairs  
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## **LOBBYING SEASON**

Local Leagues should have received the “Legislative Agenda 2009” brochure. If you have not ordered them, send in your order as soon as possible. Call Stephanie Lopez at 518-465-4162 or e-mail her at [stephanie@lwvny.org](mailto:stephanie@lwvny.org). The “Legislative Packet 2009” has been sent out by the State League Office.

Lobbying for this Agenda should begin *AFTER* the state budget is done. Organize your Lobbying Committee and set up a meeting to go over the “Legislative Packet”. It includes the following topics: Legislative Lobbying- Purpose and Timetable, 2009, Tips for Successful Lobbying, Action Guidelines for Local Leagues, and most importantly, Background Information on our three Priorities – Reforming State Government, Energy and the Environment and Cost-Effective and Accessible Health Care. Lobby Report Forms should be filled out by the Lobby Committee after each legislative meeting. Once the Lobby Report Form is filled out, it should be sent to the State League Office. This information is critical to the development of effective League action plans.

### Tips For Successful Lobbying

- Keep the meeting friendly and focused. If there is disagreement on a particular issue, make clear the League position but avoid argument. How the legislator arrived at a particular position is sometimes revealing; it provides an opportunity for explanation (for better or worse!) but it also can give the League a clue for future approaches on the subject.
- Keep the lines of communication open. There will be other issues, and other days for finding agreement and support.
- If you do not know the answer to a legislator’s question, please tell her/him that you will get the answer and provide her/him with the information as soon as possible.
- Give the legislator a copy of our brochure, *2009 Legislative Agenda*.

TO: Local League Presidents & Issues and Advocacy Chairs  
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### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ISSUES**

Legislation on Domestic Violence will have new bill numbers and some new sponsors as we begin the 2009 session. The bills we are recommending that League members follow most closely are:

Prohibit Discrimination in Employment to DV Victims: A.755/S.1166  
Prohibit Discrimination in Housing to DV Victims: A.1055/S.936  
Unpaid Leave of Absence for DV Victims: A.438, no Senate sponsor yet

An action alert regarding funding of the national Violence Against Women Act and Victims of Crime Act in the stimulus bill is being sent out as I write.

Many Leagues have had interesting presentations on Domestic Violence since September 2008. I was asked to present a power point on this subject at the Buffalo/Niagara League in November and this May the Rochester League Day will be on this issue with a lawyer explaining the current legislation and a person who has experienced discrimination in employment and housing. Shelter Island had an excellent panel on this topic with a panel that included a shelter administrator, a person who needed the help of the legislation we are concerned about, and the head of the local police department. A member of the Larchmont/Mamaroneck League has coordinated an Issues Forum on DV this February.

Besides helping out with the above programs, our domestic violence list serve has grown. These people receive relevant information that comes to me re legislation or specific problems to be addressed. There is always room for more participants, so just email me and tell me you would like to be on this e-mail list.

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## **GREAT LAKES UPDATE**

The article below was sent to me by Sean Mahar from Audubon, NY as the *February Regional Water Issues Update*.

### **REPORT TO DETAIL, ADDRESS COASTAL POLLUTION IN NY**

*By MICHAEL VIRTANEN*

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — Faced with more beaches closures, depleted shellfish beds and sharply reduced commercial fisheries, New York is poised to act against a rising tide of unhealthy coastal waters.

Officials were scheduled to release a plan Thursday to exploit state jurisdiction over waters extending three miles from the coast to reverse what critics call years of federal inaction, in hopes of reviving fisheries, protecting beaches and restoring the economy.

As with similar efforts in other states, the goal in the Northeast is to turn back the decline of the Atlantic as a source of jobs, revenue, wildlife and natural beauty.

In New York, officials will release a comprehensive plan for "ecosystem-based" management of the Great Lakes and Atlantic coasts, which will address land and water uses, economy, climate change, energy and building capacity.

The stakes are high. The plan shows, for example, that New York's commercial and recreational fisheries are valued at \$60 million annually — only 21 percent of their value 50 years ago — and the port of New York contributes \$18 billion in annual economic activity.

New York lawmakers established the state Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council in 2006 and ordered the heads of nine state agencies to devise a long-term coast management plan. The report — meant to resolve turf issues that fragment the government's response to problems — was due Nov. 1 but delayed in part by the state's financial problems.

The Legislature also established a task force on rising sea levels to recommend measures to protect communities and ecosystems from flooding. The panel began hearings this month.

Environmentalists said they turned to the coastal states for help because of difficulty making progress with the Bush administration or Congress. Elsewhere, California lawmakers have established an ocean protection council, Massachusetts' coastal plan is expected this year and several states are working regionally.

"Worldwide, our ocean systems are in a silent state of collapse," said Sarah Chasis, ocean initiatives director for the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Nationally, 1,167 — or 32 percent — of all monitored beaches had closings or advisories in 2007, according to state data collected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. That compares with 23 percent a decade earlier.

Chasis said Long Island waters experienced many problems last summer, including a reappearing brown tide in Great South Bay and 5,000 acres of shellfish areas closed along the north shore because of a toxic bloom.

Long Island, once one of the nation's leaders in hard clams, producing about 700,000 bushels a year, now produces fewer than 10,000 bushels, she said.

Meanwhile, the population of shad, a commercial fish caught in the Hudson River, has dropped to a fraction of what it was. Some scientists suspect shad are the victims of "bycatch," dying in the nets of ocean trawlers chasing other species.

New York's beaches and seafood contribute more than \$8.5 billion to Long Island's economy and \$5 billion in western New York's Great Lakes region, environmental advocate Jeff Jones said. The timing of the report is jarring, he said, because Gov. David Paterson has proposed cutting Environmental Protection Fund money for the oceans and Great Lakes from \$5 million to \$2 million in the coming year.

Scientists monitoring Lake Erie and Lake Ontario said the biggest chemical issue is toxics — inorganic forms of toxins — affecting fish and wildlife. Major sources are inefficient water treatment and industrial and municipal wastewater treatment, sewer and storm water overflows, and contaminants in sediments left by industrial discharge.

"We're seeing a resurgence of an anoxic or dead zone," Donald Zelazny, the state conservation department's Great Lakes programs coordinator, said of oxygen depletion predominant in Lake Erie from the 1930s to 1960s that is also occurring in the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic. "Now it seems to be coming back."

On the Net:

- New York Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council: <http://www.nyoglecc.org>
- National beach closings report: <http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/beaches/seasons/2007>

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## **LEDBETTER AND BEYOND**

*Background – This SBR focuses on the activities of the NYS Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC), of which the LWVNY is a primary member.<sup>1</sup> With League guidance, NYSPEC takes actions to provide pay equity for equally evaluated job titles and equal pay to employees in New York State.*

*The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act was the very first bill signed into law by President Obama. **Many thanks to Lilly Ledbetter for all her work and dedication!***

**Does this mean that we can stop working for passage of the NYS Fair Pay Act? NO!** The Ledbetter Act restores the **1964 Civil Rights Act equal-pay protections** for people whose jobs involve the *same* work (truly an “historic victory” in more ways than one).<sup>2</sup>

**NY State Fair Pay Act (A3911, S955)** is aimed at **job- title pay equity** that removes discrimination in the pay of **job titles** in fields such as library, food service, clerical and office management where women and people of color are the majority of the workforce. *Job titles traditionally done by women and people of color have been undervalued in the marketplace.* Unfortunately, the Ledbetter Act does not address pay inequities across different but equally-valued job titles.

Just as **apples and oranges can be compared** using common denominators like vitamins and calories, secretarial, maintenance, dispatcher and most other job titles are commonly compared by employers using common denominator job requirements such as levels of education and responsibility (for safety, budgets, etc.) and the hazards encountered. The NYS Fair Pay Act requires that employers use the same job evaluation system to evaluate both male and female job titles and pay them accordingly.

We are very thankful to Lilly Ledbetter and everyone who worked to restore equal pay for equal work protections. But as President Obama stressed in his speech, there is still much to be done. Most other westernized countries have already corrected for bias against traditionally female and minority *job titles*. If it is illegal for employers to pay an *individual* woman or person of color less than someone

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<sup>1</sup> Other organizational members include NYSPEC’s founding organization, Women on the Job Task Force (based on Long Island), many unions including NYSUT, UUP, UPSEU, SEIU, and DC37, many women’s and civil rights organizations such as AAUW, NOW, BPW, and NAACP, Girl Scouts of America, Women’s Sports Foundation, Capital District Labor and Religion Coalition, the NY Women’s Agenda, the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE) and the Northeast Council of YWCA.

<sup>2</sup> In 2007, the Supreme Court *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire* decision erased the 1964 equal pay protection by requiring victims of pay discrimination to file complaints within six months of their **first** discriminatory paycheck. The Ledbetter Fair Pay Act restores the previous legal interpretation that victims can file claims within 180 days of **any** discriminatory paycheck.

else doing the same work, why should a *group* of mostly women and/or people of color be paid less than a *group* of mostly white men if their work requires equal levels of knowledge, skills and responsibilities?

### 2009 NYS Legislative Actions and Beyond

The NYS Fair Pay Act has passed the Assembly with overwhelming bipartisan support every year since 2002. Many thank to Assembly Leader Sheldon Silver, the Assembly Members and especially *Assemblymember Susan John* who has always been there for pay equity reform and has again introduced the NYS Fair Pay Act in the Assembly 2009 session. But, despite its Assembly passage each year, the Fair Pay Act bill never made it to the floor of the Senate when the Senate was controlled by the Republicans. With the change to a *Democratic majority in the NYS Senate* there is renewed hope. **Senator Craig Johnson**, who proved to be a forceful active advocate for pay equity last year, has again picked up the mantle. *He has introduced the bill and it is in the Labor Committee. Now we need to build support in both the Labor Committee and the entire Senate.*

Below we have listed the recently-appointed Senate Labor Committee members, their Senate District (SD) number and the county/counties in those districts. We do not assume that all the Democrats support The NYS Fair Pay Act, or that all the Republicans oppose it. Can you help us educate these state senators about job-title pay equity and the NYS Fair Pay Act? Is one of these senators from your district? *If so, would you be a member of our NYS Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC) Senator Education Committee?* Your participation could be crucial for this issue.

***The color coded members are already co-sponsors of the legislation.*** Please thank them for their support. **Nothing ensures their continued support more than their constituents noticing and thanking them.** We need support from at least five other senators on the Labor Committee. Please email NYSPEC at [haiguer@nycap.rr.com](mailto:haiguer@nycap.rr.com) or call 518 464 0991 if you are in the district of any senator listed below.

### The Senate Labor Committee:

#### Democrats

<b>Chair – Onorato, George</b>	Long Island City, Queens, SD 12
Stachowski, William	Eire, SD 58
Breslin, Neil	Albany, SD 46
Dilan, Martin	Brooklyn, SD 17, – new to committee
Klein, Jeffrey	Bronx & Westchester, SD 34 – new to committee
Savino, Diane	Staten Island and Brooklyn, SD 23
Stewart-Cousins, Andrea	Yonkers, Westchester, SD 35– new to committee
Perkins, Bill	Harlem, Manhattan SD 30
Addabbo, Joseph	Queens, SD 15 – newly elected – new to committee

#### Republicans

Robach, Joseph	Greece, Monroe, SD56
Marcellino, Carl	Nassau, Suffolk, SD5
Alesi, James	E. Rochester, Monroe, SD55
Fuschillo, Charles	Merrick, Nassau, Suffolk, SD8
Morahan, Thomas	New City, Orange, Rockland –new to committee

Leibell, Vincent Dutchess Putnam Westchester, SD40–new to committee  
McDonald, Roy Rensselaer, Saratoga, SD 43 – newly elected, new to committee

**If your senator is *not on the committee***, you can still help by contacting their office and asking where they stand on the NYS Fair Pay Act bill. *Let us know what you find out - 518 464 0991.*

**A Stimulus Passage?** – *Passage of the NYS Fair Pay Act could stimulate passage at the Federal level.* A similar Fair Pay Act languishes in the House and Senate. **President Obama was a co-sponsor for this legislation when he was in the Senate.** If NYS passes its Fair Pay Act there would be renewed national attention to job-title pay equity. So everything we do now could have nationwide impact for millions of workers and their families.

### Some Plans

We do not assume that all Democrats support The NYS Fair Pay Act, or that all of the Republicans oppose it. **The NYS Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC)\* is working on several strategies to move the legislation:**

- Coalition members will meet with supportive Senators and labor committee members to develop strategy. The first meeting will be on February 26 with Senator Savino. Three lobbyists will attend this meeting with us, one from NYSUT, one from YWCA-NE Region, and one from LWWNYS. We will be discussing what to do to facilitate Senate passage of the NYS Fair Pay Act bill.
- NYSPEC member organization the New York Women's Agenda will sponsor a rally to build public and legislative support in NYC around the time of Equal Pay Day on April 28<sup>th</sup>.<sup>3</sup>
- Additional union support connections and activities are being explored.
- We will be asking member organizations to distribute some of the information above to their constituents and to help us organize a network that will allow us to orchestrate a blitz of phone calls or email messages to all Senators when needed.

*Want to know more about this issue and how it relates to equal pay? A PowerPoint presentation is available, as well as speakers.  
Call: 518-464-0991*

<sup>3</sup> Equal Pay Day was originated by the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) in 1996 as a public awareness event to illustrate the gap between men's and women's wages. The day, observed on a Tuesday in April, symbolizes how far into the year a woman must work, on average, to earn as much as a man earned the previous year. **Wear RED on Equal Pay Day to symbolize how far women and minorities are "in the red" with their pay!**

TO: Local League Presidents, Advocacy and Issues Directors  
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## **REPORT ON SPRAWL AND LAND USE ISSUES**

A reminder: Our state position on land use and sprawl is

*In order to conserve natural resources and improve the quality of life for its residents, New York State should take a proactive role in regional land use planning, enhancing urban neighborhoods, containing urban sprawl, and protecting agricultural land, open space, watersheds and other sensitive areas.*

### **LWVNYS Has Joined Empire State Future**

What is Empire State Future? This is the description given on the website: [www.empirestatfuture.org](http://www.empirestatfuture.org)

It's a coming together of many civic improvement organizations, planning groups, and individuals interested in advancing the principles of "smart growth" and turning them into reality in cities, towns and villages all across the Empire State.

The organization will build on the generally accepted ideas that our cities need nurturing, suburban sprawl is ruining our landscape and killing our economy, and it's no longer possible to build our way out of congestion.

Empire State Future will compliment and expand on efforts to bring sanity to the way we plan our future. And a big element of our work will involve communications: our intention is to provide the smart growth constituency and the general public with a lively web site that is current, informative, and easily used.

Our participation in this organization will enhance our ability to act on our state land use and sprawl position (above). Empire State Future will monitor the activities of the governor's Smart Growth Cabinet and let us know when action is required. The organization also promises to create "educational materials that will empower willing and able individuals throughout the state already engaged in some aspect of smart growth to augment their efforts and increase the capacity for local outreach." This can help all of us.

### **Statewide CPA Bill Reintroduced in 2009**

On January 7, 2009, Senator Breslin prefiled S381, Statewide Community Preservation Act (CPA) legislation. It has been referred to Environmental Conservation Committee.

The League has been working for several years with a coalition, the Campaign for CPA, in support of a statewide Community Preservation Act. Piece by piece legislation has so far been the rule. The CPA is an important tool that will allow cities and towns to create community protection funds to protect open space, support working farms, and preserve community character.

After approval by voters in a referendum, real estate transfer fees of up to two percent can be collected to build up a local fund for preservation and conservation efforts and to curb sprawl.

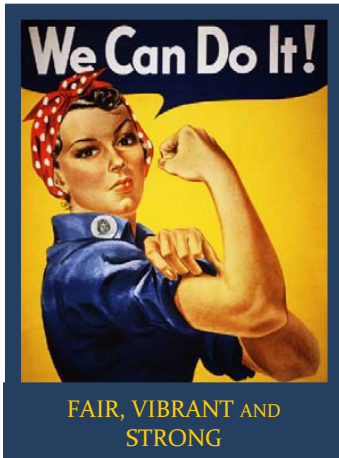
The State Smart Growth Infrastructure Policy Act Reintroduced in 2009

Sam Hoyt has reintroduced The State Smart Growth Infrastructure Policy Act, A543. During the last session of the legislature, this bill was watered down to the point it directed state agencies only to *consider* smart growth principles. It passed both the Assembly and the Senate, but the governor vetoed it, claiming that it was too vague to implement and that it was unnecessary because of the work of the Smart Growth Cabinet.

The 2009 version of the bill attempts to define smart growth principles clearly and requires state agencies to base funding on these principles.

TO: Local League Presidents & Membership Chairs  
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## MEMBERSHIP MINUTE



### ***LWVNYS CONVENTION 2009***

Delegates will review our bylaws, decide our budget for 2009-2010, our program for 2009-2010, and elect our officers and directors for 2009-2010. I hope your League will be represented.

**Sending delegates to state convention is an investment in your League's future.** This is a great opportunity to energize members so do not hesitate to send new members to convention as delegates or as observers which will be held in Syracuse May 15-17. State Convention is exciting and inspiring, a great learning experience for any Leaguer.

Choose from an array of workshops to hone your League leadership skills. Join US in special Friday afternoon dedicated to strengthening your

League. **"A 360° View for 365 Days"**

Delve into issues close to your heart. Engage in caucuses

### **What is your League donating to the Silent Auction?**

It's pretty obvious that we are always looking for ways to increase our non-PMP dollars. This year we are looking forward to seeing what theme basket your League has created! This part of Convention is always fun and gives busy delegates trapped by plenary, caucuses, and workshops a chance to relax and SHOP! I spend a bit of the time there as well. Let's shop together!

### **Subscribe to LWVUS lists**

You can more effective if you are learning more about what membership is all about. **BE SURE YOU ARE SUBSCRIBED TO THE lww-membership email list and Leaders Update.** To subscribe go to [lww.org](http://lww.org) and login. Click on "For Members". Click on "Get Involved" Scroll down to League Sponsored Email Lists and Join!

## **MARCH**

March is a time to look forward to the coming of spring and to many important and fun League activities.

- Consider whether or not you want to plan any formal spring recruitment activities.
- Are there any proposals for bylaw changes that will aid in recruiting and/or retaining members?
- Prepare report of year's activities and results for file and/or Annual Report.
- By now your local Nominating Committee should be well underway, preparing to present their proposed slate to your board (as a courtesy) at the meeting prior to its publication in your Bulletin. Check your local League bylaws to see how far ahead of the annual meeting your

membership should be informed and be sure it's known that nominations from the floor are acceptable procedure, providing the proposed nominee has agreed ahead of time.

- If your bylaws haven't been reviewed for a few years, a committee should be looking them over. Any recommendations for change should be presented to the membership ahead of time; again, the schedule is in the current bylaws.
- March is not too late for local program planning. Remember, local program is the heart and soul of local Leagues. A challenging local program, particularly one that includes one or two "hot" topics in your town, will energize your current members and attract new members! Action on local program will give you visibility in your community.
- Your annual meeting should be a celebration of League, an event to look forward to, not an occasion to dread. The secret - be prepared! A sample script can be found in "In League in New York State". Be sure all participants have a copy of the script so they know their responsibilities ahead of time. Make your annual meeting a social as well as a business event. Plan a luncheon, tea or dinner, invite an exciting speaker or have some fun entertainment. This will attract members - new and old -and might even bring in some prospective members. And it will ensure that you have a quorum at the meeting.

#### APRIL

- Issue special invitation (via mentor?) to new members for Annual Meeting.
- Plan recognition of new members at Annual Meeting.
- Evaluate the year's goals, tasks, successes, problems with committee and board.
- Decide how members attending Annual Meeting can help with next year's membership plans/tasks.
- Clean out and update your files.
- Pat yourself on the back -then your committee and Board!

TO: Local League Presidents & Voter Service Chairs  
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## **VS SURVEY 2008: LOCAL LEAGUE HIGHLIGHTS**

We are very grateful to all of the local Leagues that responded to the Voter Service Survey. The intention of the survey is to inform you about each other's activities; if you read of a League that's doing something you'd like to do, you know where to start with inquiries. I've tried to summarize the major points for each League's response, and circulated a draft of this report via the Voter Service email listserv. Thanks to those of you who sent in updates, additions and corrections. Here are the results:

**Albany County:** well attended forum for DA with the Law School, NAACP, Council of Churches, NYCLU, good TV and press coverage; forum for school board with PTA; capital district Leagues collaborated to bring about televised congressional district forum, station did it without the League, except audience participation; distributed 6000 VGs; members adopted libraries and kept special tables stocked with VGs and VR materials – very visible and useful service; 9 VR events – street fairs, conferences – registered about 200 voters; Vote 18 at Albany High - got front page Times Union coverage with picture.

**Bronxville:** 2 televised forums for town councils, rebroadcast up to election day, one for state and federal offices; moderators from other Leagues; used Part 2 along with Westchester VG, used a distributor for 12,000 guides; VR drives at colleges, assisted living facilities, PTAs; good press coverage for events and League input.

**Broome/Tioga:** 2 debates, one forum; County Exec forum, partners were Chamber, community college, PBS station, broadcast on radio and TV; successful use of cross-questioning and more informal forum format; good print media coverage; one “debate” became a “forum” when some candidates didn't show; one debate was filmed and put on newspaper's website for streaming and podcasting; many VGs distributed free, some to 16 high schools and com coll; did a local VG in addition. Many voters registered – Sam's Club, mall, YWCA, Urban League event. PIG class involvement: VGs and materials to about 20 schools and invitations to forums; students help with election night reporting.

**Buffalo/Niagara:** televised candidate debate with studio audience for congressional district with WNED and Rochester station, good advance publicity; 4 well attended forums in local suburbs; distributed 1000 state voters guide, 300 in Spanish; materials from National were too late; with grant from M&T Charitable Foundation, distributed 55,000 local VGs to schools, libraries, town and city halls, senior centers, assisted living facilities, churches, schools and colleges. Registered about 450 voters; visited 13 senior classes at 4 high schools; observed “Vote18; “Take Me to Vote” project with the school districts; “Learn and Lunch” groups at Grumman; local colleges and UB, Jewish center and churches; sent letters to school supers in Erie County to describe voter services – 4 responded. Leader Spark class registered 200 students at Erie Community College. Observed “Vote18”

**Cazenovia:** forum for DA, good press coverage; did VR and distributed VGs at farmers market, high school, libraries; letters to the editor to get out the vote.

**\*Chautauqua County:** 2 meet the candidates forums, one sponsored with AAUW for state and federal offices, family court judge and town board; used cross questioning; great print media coverage, live coverage for one with call-in question capability, one taped and rebroadcast; did great pre-event publicity, good turnout; distributed 2000 VGs to libraries, assisted living facilities, public offices; week of VR drives with AAUW, 3 days at farm festival, 2 other drives, registered 200 voters; VR at Job Corps; did letters to the editor, PSAs, TV and radio spots to get out the vote; helped with 3 poll inspector trainings with suggestions about communicating with voters with limited English, and did a special event for new and minority voters in problematic polling places with NAACP and SUNY; continued "Take Me to Vote" – 9500 cards in 22 schools affecting 6000-8000 households; classroom work at Fredonia HS.

**Chemung County:** worked with AAUW, Chemung women's group on federal office forums, some press coverage; school board forums; VGs to high school gov classes, also distributed through Literacy Volunteers in Spanish and English, "Curves"; wants the VGs earlier; registered some HS students, some through Literacy Volunteers; screened "Iron Jawed Angels" at a local theater – big impact on attendees, students invited. One member put together a presentation "The Power of One Vote" and took it to local HSs/BOCES classes; registered college students and distributed absentee ballot forms at "Octagon Fair".

**Cortland:** held 3 forums for DA position, co-sponsored by Area Agency on Aging; hosted a Meet the Candidates brunch (Congressional, state and local offices) co-sponsored by AAUW, SUNY's Women's Study Committee, YWCA and Zonta; did one forum for a local race. All forums were videotaped and shown four times each locally; newspaper coverage good for selected meetings; same group of organizations involved with the brunch also published a series of 14 "op-ed" columns on issues (e.g. climate change, pay equity, health care) before the election; distributed 2000 State Voter Guides to libraries, senior centers, schools, etc. and would appreciate earlier publication, if possible; registered about 100 at local Pumpkinfest; wrote letters to the editor.

**East Nassau:** distributed VG to members; local guide distributed through sponsors – 2300 distributed; registered at least 400 voters; 10 drives at Hofstra, libraries, free lunch program; at the train station with bullhorn distributing VR materials; addressed 700 students at Calhoun High School.

**Hamptons:** 6 forums: school board, village, town, congressional district, state assembly and senate; co-sponsored 2 with Southampton Press; great attendance, SRO at congressional forum; used cross questioning with good effect, red card, cumulative time, and used "empty chair" policy; televised and aired multiple times, and good press coverage; compliments to the League on fair, well-run events; distributed VGs at all events and other locations; would like earlier delivery and ability to fill in a different amount for dues; 20 VR drives ; PSA recorded by president and aired on local station; letters to the editor to get out the vote; Hamptons originated the Vote 18 program for the League at state and national conventions and continue to carry it on at local high schools, 6 schools, multiple classes; present an award yearly to a local HS student for leadership and combined that with SIA. Distributed "I Voted Today" stickers at polling places.

**Huntington:** Meet the candidates night with AAUW; moderated events for school board and library, reimbursed by school board; monitored elections for the housing authority; League-sponsored movies showings; VGs distributed; 8 VR drives, many voters registered, including at Suffolk Co Comm Col and SUNY Farmingdale; Newsday coverage, NPR; very useful palm cards for voters to tell them how to check for registration and what to do at the polls. Very active early League adopter of Vote 18 – 22 high school and college sessions done this year; 7 League members can now do the presentation, trained by serving with an experienced presenter; reached 1300 students; did Rock the Vote with Farmingdale.

**Larchmont/Mamaronek:** well attended forum for state and local offices, televised live, rebroadcast and covered in print media; VGs distributed through Starbucks, at nursing homes, libraries; VR drives at village locations, fair; conducted environmental forum with students and solicited questions for debate from AP Government class.

**Mid-Hudson:** 4 candidate events for new county exec/controller (new county charter) with Chamber and LWV Saugerties; candidate that didn't make the ballot was troublesome; in spite of great brochure and publicity about new charter, local citizen interest was not great; televised on public access stations many times; weeklies covered the events but major newspaper did not; presidential race trumped local races for citizen attention; distributed 8000 VGs to schools, offices, libraries, county employees; thing VG works better when smaller, fitting in #10 envelope; did their own VG online and put Saugerties' online also; did VR drives with AAUW and campaign personnel with understanding that no electioneering is done during drives; public housing door-to-door drives, farmers market, Marist; letters to the editor to get out the vote.

**New York City:** 30 members voter service team was very busy; sample of activities: distributed 2500 VG; want the guide to fit into #10 envelope; held VR drives in every borough, registered 1500-2000 voters – Head Start, hospitals, malls; mailed VR kit to those who wanted to do their own; did radio spots; very useful palm card distributed at all events and mailed to callers; telephone service answered 3,697 calls and performed requested services; appeared at youth groups; “Student Parent Mock Elections” project.

**Orleans County:** set up a table of information and voter registration forms for the local branch of the community college, registered about 25 voters through that project; contacted by the Iroquois Job Corps and presented a program to its students on voter responsibility at which 40 students registered to vote; held various candidate forums for local races.

**Plattsburgh Area:** televised and radio broadcasted congressional forum, excellent partnership with PBS station, screened email questions; challenges with judicial candidate no-show after agreeing to event – partnered with Domestic Violence Task Force; VR drives with VGs distributed at HSs, through BoE, county legislators, Literacy Volunteers for new citizens, Clinton Com Coll and SUNY Plattsburgh, libraries; do very extensive “packet” distribution to graduating senior HS classes in Clinton and Essex counties in the Spring – VR materials and “First Vote” – use BOCES mailing system to distribute 1,194 packets.

**Port Washington/Manhasset:** well attended forum for state and federal offices with Great Neck League; good coverage from some local papers; produced own Nassau County VG distributed as insert in local papers at substantial cost to the League, circulation 13,000, hope to have it underwritten in the

future; more to schools, libraries and businesses; VR drives at colleges, libraries, supermarkets, church – registered 163.

**Rensselaer County:** town meetings on re-charter of the library; forum with neighborhood association; distributed many VG, and their local VG with Part 2; registered many voters – farmers markets, Head Start, shelters, local “corn maze”, etc.

**Rochester:** distributed "Voters Guides", "Who Represents You", "One Vote Does Count", "History of Voting", "Vote Questions & Answers for College Students" at colleges, libraries, City/County/Federal Government Buildings and at voter registrations; voter registrations at Sojourner House Empowerment Tea, Block Fair, Family Festival, Clothesline Art Show, Constitution Day/Nazareth College(covered by local media), area Junior/Senior high schools, elementary schools, colleges, senior housing facilities, Topps grocery stores, naturalization ceremonies; worked with Rochester Voters Alliance to register voters; speakers at area schools on the importance of voting - done at parent nights/open houses; Fair Election Practice Committee established to encourage fair election practices; a Signing Day Ceremony to announce candidates who pledged to practice a fair campaign was covered by local media; composed "Who Represents You" booklet so that Rochester Area voters can be informed of their representatives; contracted with the Board of Elections to open absentee ballots on Primary Day - Sept. 9th and Election Day - Nov. 4th.

**Saratoga:** forums: Republican and Democratic primary forums for the 43rd Senate seat (100+ attendees); forum for 112th Assembly (70); for the 44th Senate (30); for the 109th Assembly (125); for the 43rd Senate (125); wide print media coverage, some TV coverage, taped for public access and as webcasts on our website; Capital District Leagues collaborated to bring about televised congressional district forum, station did it without the League, except audience participation. Voter Registration at Farmers' Market every other Saturday morning (107 registrations and lots of goodwill); First Vote (materials to 2260 HS seniors); also reg forms distributed to homebuyers by realtors group in packet given at closings. Get Out the Vote: TAKE ME TO VOTE! program to encourage parents of fifth graders to go to the polls and to take their children with them; 80 classes in 25 schools completed the program, and the materials were distributed to approximately 2100 households. Voters Guides: distributed 3,500 copies each of Part I and Part II mainly through libraries, but also at the Farmer's market. Part II was too late for ease of distribution and not very helpful to voters because it did not have info about non presidential candidates.

**Schenectady County:** forum with AAUW, videotaped; need VGs sooner – problem receiving Part 2; had trouble getting print/air for their letters to the editor and articles, PSAs, etc; do “Take Me To Vote” program; did tactical planning and great research by town/zip code to identify locations where VR drives would be more fruitful; registered many voters at community and other colleges, local fairs and festivals, food pantries, Price Chopper; collaborated with AAUW and Hispanic groups, and worked hard to establish joint efforts with many other groups; good collaborative efforts with their BoE.

**Schuyler:** Very good turnout at meet the candidates luncheon for federal and state offices, an annual event; voters guides to POs, restaurants, others; register HS students in the Spring, did drives at Wal-Mart, Head Start open house; “Political Picnic” with high school students.

**Shelter Island:** school board forum – 11 candidates, contentious, good attendance, press and TV coverage, editorial praise for the League; difficulty scheduling candidates for other forums; VG from material supplied by Suffolk ILO; several VR drives – most registered already; commentary in the

local paper on the “power of one”; their problems with the USPO refusing to allow absentee ballot distribution in their facilities was covered in the NY Times, and USPO changed its national policy to permit absentee ballots because of this story.

**Smithtown:** distributed Part 1 – it should come earlier; helped staff other League’s forum; did LeaderSpark with 25 students with YMCA for Counselors in Training, very successful.

**Somers:** forum for state assembly with Bedford League taped by HS volunteer and televised; disappointed that because one candidate’s opponent canceled at the last minute they felt they had to exclude the other; VG mailed by Westchester County ILO; VR drive at local shopping center.

**Southwest Nassau:** 4 forums – judicial, congressional, state; judicial candidates very grateful for the opportunity; major newspaper coverage; Republican incumbent candidates refused to come – said League members were all Democrats – planning to meet with Rep leadership; were paid for services for two forums – charge \$100; distribute Part 1 and Nassau County’s local guide; sold to libraries -\$40 for first 100; registered about 1000 voters at Adelphi Univ in 2 weeks with Central Nassau League; have done SIA for years, choose a school and have SS teacher pick the student.

**Steuben County:** Got good press coverage for candidates forum cancellation due to non-participation; TV broadcast (twice) of sheriff forum, co-sponsored with AAUW; strongly prefer VGs with candidates’ answers to questions, and need Part 1 sooner; VR drives at fair and farmer’s markets. SIA problems getting selected candidate/alternate to attend.

**Suffolk County:** Suffolk County Leagues conducted about 70 VR drives!

**Syracuse Metro:** 3 congressional forums, with Alliance for Retired Persons, parents group, Rotary; 1 forum for congressional and state offices with county human services coalition; audience participation in two televised forums; co-sponsored with Syracuse Univ and LeMoyne “Intelligent Conversation Series: Choosing our Next President”; produced a PSA and distributed to local stations, Carrier Dome, State Fair, encouraged them to air in prime time, hope to market to other Leagues; used LWVNYS student voting brochure with Rock the Vote campaign at Syracuse You; worked with a SU photo journalism student to follow events; did VR at state fair, local major corporations, Headstart, libraries, street fairs, community centers; spoke to 4 church groups, 4 senior groups, AAUW, DKG.

**Utica/Rome:** partnered with Center for Ind Living on live televised, simulcast congressional forum; good coverage by print media; distributed 2000 VG to members, libraries, colleges, convenience stores, hospital waiting rooms, service agencies and community groups; 6 VR drives registering 250 voters – farmer’s markets, colleges, partnering with students, NAACP, Latino Ass’n; partnered with YWCA to host televised presidential debates; presidents were interviewed on local radio shows; local TV station ran LWVUS’ PSA frequently; got a CD of non-affiliated registered voters and intended to call them to get out the vote; like the statewide VGs this year and the new “Your Right to Voter in NYS” series.

**White Plains:** televised forum for state offices, co-sponsored with Scarsdale League; attendees included middle school students; distributed state VGs with 7000 County VG; Part 2 came too late and looked too much like County guide, so confusing; distributed to schools, stores, apt houses, community centers not covered by county League; registered about 80 voters at 4 events; provided VR materials to high school in Sept and June.

TO: Local League Presidents/Education/Youth Program Chairs  
FROM: JoAnn Ross, Citizen Education/Youth Programs Director  
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## **CITIZEN EDUCATION/YOUTH PROGRAMS UPDATE**

### **Citizen Education Reminder:**

The League of Women Voters: “*The organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. We are the advocates at city halls, statehouses, and in the US Congress and together we are advocates for the League*”. This quote comes from the welcoming message in the Presidents packet from the League of Women Voters US.

### **Youth Programs for Local Leagues**

Civic participation is one of the core values of the League of Women Voters. What can be more rewarding than to provide the high school students in your area with the opportunity to learn about civic participation? Programs such as Leader Spark, Vote 18, Kids Voting USA, and others give your local league the opportunity to do just that. 2009 presents your local League with an opportunity to partner with schools, libraries, business and a variety of youth-orientated organizations in your community and to enlist their support for programs that will benefit the youth. I hope that each local league will consider developing a Youth orientated program. The League of Women Voters New York State League is here to assist you with the implementation of any of these programs. There will a workshop at the State Convention in Syracuse which will give you an opportunity to learn about the types of programs that your local league can implement to assist the youth of your community to become civically involved.

### ***Students Inside Albany*: A component of the New York State League of Women Voters Education Foundation, Inc., Youth Leadership Development Initiative**

Has your League chosen its student representative to this year’s *Students Inside Albany* program?

The dates of this year’s conference will be April 19-22 and the conference will be held at the Hampton Inn & Suites in downtown Albany. *Students Inside Albany* is designed to increase high school students’ awareness of their responsibility in representative government and provide information about the tools necessary for meeting that responsibility. Each league is urged to choose a student representative to attend this very important program for youth.

Please check the January 2009 SBR and the packets sent to local Presidents, LeaderSpark Coordinators, and *Student Inside Albany* Coordinators for the details including Cost, Selection Process, How to Choose A Student, A SIA Brochure and forms. Remember, because the conference is designed for students only, local Leagues are not permitted to send chaperones with their students. League staff and volunteers will serve as chaperones will be staying in the hotel with students and accompanying students whenever they are attending events outside of the hotel.

### **LeaderSpark: A component of the New York State League of Women Voters Education Foundation Youth Leadership Development Initiative**

The favorable outcome of LeaderSpark programs are due to the participation and hard work of the local leagues and their community partners. Congratulations to Buffalo/Niagara, Schenectady,

Saratoga and Smithtown for already completing successful programs in the 2008-2009 Program year. Smithtown was successful in securing funding for a second program scheduled to begin in March in partnership with both the Smithtown Library and Smithtown Youth Bureau. The LWV Saugerties are planning to begin their first program early next year.

For further information on LeaderSpark, *Students Inside Albany*, and developing a Youth Program Component for your Local League, contact:

Stephanie Lopez  
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[www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)  
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TO: Local League Presidents, Local Study Committee Chairs  
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**THE ADVISABILITY OF USING THE NATIONAL POPULAR  
VOTE COMPACT AMONG THE STATES AS A METHOD  
FOR ELECTING THE PRESIDENT**

**Deadline for the LWVUS NPV consensus is May 1, 2009**

All of the NPV study materials are now on the LWVUS Web site at:

[http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=National\\_Popular\\_Vote\\_Compact&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=157&ContentID=11960](http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=National_Popular_Vote_Compact&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=157&ContentID=11960)

Materials include: text of the NPV bill, background paper, supporting arguments, opposing arguments, suggested resource list, a study guide, consensus questions and the consensus response form.

You will also find a series of Voter ready articles that can be published.

**LWVUS NPV Study Discussion List**

Local Leagues will benefit greatly by having someone in their League subscribe to the discussion list. The NPV study committee members along with hundreds of members from across the country are on the list. In a matter of moments, one can have a question answered or a suggestion given.

Sign up by logging in at: <https://member.lwv.org/Login.asp>

Under "Role Related Lists" select "National Popular Vote Study". Provide an email address with which you wish to receive and send postings to the discussion list. You will be sent an email confirmation to which you need to reply. Once you are registered on the NPV Discussion list, you can log in and click on "view recent posts" where you can read all of the postings since the inception of the discussion list. I encourage Leagues to turn to this discussion list for information about the study.

**Other unofficial NPV Resources**

1. A valuable chart prepared by Barbara Klein, LWV Metropolitan Phoenix, AZ that presents the pro and con arguments side by side can be downloaded at:  
<http://www.lwvaz.org/azvoterservice/Information%20on%20NPV.pdf>
2. On Chautauqua, NY League's YouTube site there is a video of a political science professor from SUNY Fredonia giving a non-partisan, informative and historical talk on the NPV and how it may or may not play out. Because YouTube has an 11-minute limit to submissions, it's broken into five parts. Start with the first one on the Electoral College:  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/LWVchautauqua>
3. LWV Schenectady held a NPV education meeting on September 10<sup>th</sup>. Christopher Pearson from National Popular Vote presented the mechanics of the NPV compact. Channel 16 public access TV recorded the event for LWVNYS. The recording on DVD can be purchased & shipped for \$10. Contact the LWVNYS office to get a copy 518-465-4162/  
[Stephanie@lwvny.org](mailto:Stephanie@lwvny.org).