



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SARATOGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

BULLETIN

APRIL 2011

OUR MISSION

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.

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of Saratoga County, in both its values and practices, is committed to inclusion and diversity.

This means:

There shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of economic position, gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

We recognize that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making.

We believe inclusiveness enhances the organization's ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs.

We affirm our commitment to reflecting the diversity of Saratoga County.

You say tomato, I say....

KEEPING CIVIL DISCOURSE CIVIL

Tuesday, April 12 from 6:30-9pm

Saratoga Springs Public Library.

Preregistration is required, contact 587-8376 or email dsarno@saratogavitalaging.org.

Nancy Belowich Negron will facilitate this free workshop, which trains leaders how to find common ground.



More on page 5

Earth Day SEE PAGE 3

Want to do something to help the League?

Here's a sampling of things you might do:

- Sit at a table and check people in for the Annual Meeting.
- Help set out the chairs when we have an event at the Library.
- Be a timer at events that need them
- Staff an information table.
- Write an article for the Bulletin.
- Register Voters.
- Represent our LWV on the board of Fair Campaign Practices.
- Call a list to encourage people to attend events.
- Stuff envelopes, prepare mailings.
- Invite a friend to join you at a League event.
- Organize a League presence at a Farmer's Market, Community Day, etc.
- Greet people, and get them to sign in at LWV events.
- Become a board member.
- Distribute handouts at the Annual Meeting.
- Chair or serve on a committee to monitor what is happening in a specific area of League interest, such as the environment, domestic violence, gun control.
- Respond to LWV calls for action.

What are you willing to do?

Call Barb at 885-9769 or email at barb.lwv@nycap.rr.com and she'll put you on a list.



**League of Women Voters
of Saratoga County (NY-639)**
Official address: LWV of Saratoga County
PO Box 1029, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
www.lwvsaratoga.org (518) 728-0237

Board of Directors

All phone numbers in 518 area code, unless noted

President:

Barbara Thomas, 220 West Milton Rd, Ballston Spa, NY 12020 885-9769(h) — summer home: 315-357-3340

1st Vice President/Membership/Citizen's Rights

Lori Dawson, 4 Marion Place, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 580-0547(h) 580-5383(w)

2nd Vice President/Public Relations

Patricia Nugent, 20 Secretariat Lane, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 584-4255(h)

Treasurer:

Diane Whitburn, 11 North Hill Dr., Ballston Lake, NY 12019 877-5310(h)

Secretary/ Farmer's Market

Pattie Garrett, 537 Union Av., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 584-4271(h) 402-7124 (w)

Annual Meeting:

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Margot Ammon, 238 Nelson Av., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 584-4204

Health Care Advocacy

Patricia Reed, 12 Clubhouse Dr., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 583-1376 &

Selma Harwood, 230 Nelson Av., Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 584-3794

Nominating Committee

Mary Lou Classen, 4 Blue Spruce Lane, Ballston Lake, NY 12019 877-8874(h)

Poll Reporting

Katherine Chansky, 3168 Route 9, Greenfield Center, NY 12833 893-7817

TAKE ME TO VOTE!

Mary Ratzer, 433 County Rd. 68 Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 587-8376

Voters Service- Candidate Events

Ann Kril, 60 Hillcrest Drive, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866 584-1436(h)

**League of Women Voters of New York State or
League of Women Voters of New York State
Education Foundation**

62 Grand Street, Albany, NY 12207
465-4162 www.lwvny.org

Executive Director: **Laura Bierman**, laura@lwvny.org
Project Administrator: **Stephanie Lopez**, stephanie@lwvny.org
President: **Betsey Swan**, betsey@lwvny.org

League of Women Voters of the United States
1730 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036-4508
202-429-1965 www.lwv.org



From the President ~

Last year at our Annual Meeting I announced that I would not run for reelection when my term as president ends in June, 2011. I did this because it was time for a change – and our League now has a lot of good people who are capable of stepping into leadership roles. At the time I didn't know that my husband would get brain cancer, making it absolutely necessary that I be available to support him. It was good that the decision had already been made.

Our nominating committee, under the leadership of Janice Burns, has been meeting frequently and working diligently to develop a full slate for next year. They report that they have someone for president, vice-presidents, and board members. Diane's term as treasurer doesn't end till 2012, so that leaves the position of secretary still to be filled.

I want to appeal to any of you who haven't already agreed to serve on the board to **consider becoming secretary**. The position is a great way to get to know what is happening in the League and to know the players, but it doesn't require you to have experience in the League. You do have to be available to attend most board meetings and to be able to write a sentence. **Call Janice at 587-3436 if you are willing to be nominated for this position.**

May's Bulletin will have the reports of the by-laws, nominating and budget committees and any other information you need for the Annual Meeting on June 5th (the by-laws require that you get at least 30 days notice of these things).

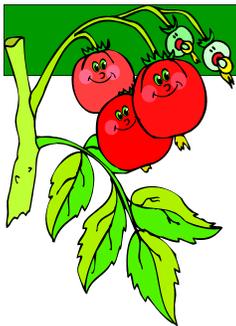
This League now has a cell phone and a number of its own: 518-728-0237. The phone will be passed from president to president (or to someone else if the president is away) so that the LWV of Saratoga can always be contacted. We are working to get this number listed on our publications and in community directories.

LWVUS reports that **"the LWVUS study on the "Role of the Federal Government in Public Education"** is well underway. The study on the federal role in pre-K through grade 12 public education is to be limited to issues of equity, funding and standards/assessment. The target schedule is for Leagues to have materials (papers, consensus questions and Leaders Guide for taking consensus) in May. Local Leagues will have from May through November to conduct their local study and take consensus. The committee is writing papers to be posted on the LWVUS website.

The committee will begin with an overview of the history of the federal role and where it is today. They will then focus on the components of the Elementary and Secondary Education act which speak to the equity issues. Finally, the committee will address the Common Core Standards and the subsequent assessment issues. **WILL YOU SERVE ON THE LOCAL STUDY COMMITTEE?** Let me know if you are interested.

Barb

EARTH DAY



On the first Earth Day (4/22/70) 20 million Americans took to the streets, parks, and auditoriums to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment in massive coast-to-coast rallies. Thousands of colleges and universities organized

protests against the deterioration of the environment.

Groups that had been fighting against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness, and the extinction of wildlife suddenly realized they shared common values.

Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, city slickers and farmers, tycoons and labor leaders. The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts.

The theme of this year's Earth Day is: **A BILLION ACTS OF GREEN** Pledge to do something for the environment. A billion individual acts will add up.

The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) has provided more than \$1 billion since 1993 to support critical programs that protect our area's natural heritage, public health, and local industries such as tourism and agriculture. Our local economy and good quality jobs have been enhanced and supported thanks to the EPF, which has pumped **more than \$38 million into our local economy.**

Jessica Ottney Mahar, Director of State Government Relations for The Nature Conservancy and **Carol Ash** of the Open Space Institute's Alliance for New York State Parks, formerly Commissioner of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, will talk about the EPF and its impact on projects, parks and trails in the Capital District.

Eating Locally: Farm-to-table's new frontier is local wheat. Local-food enthusiasts may know where to find ground run chickens, farmstead cheeses and locally grown greens, but where does the wheat in your bread come from?

Matt Funicello, the owner of Rock Hill Bakehouse has started using regionally grown wheat in his

bread. And other, smaller-scale bread bakers around the region are also starting to use regionally grown wheat.

That's because last year North Country Farms, a new stone mill in Watertown began selling its New York-grown wheat flour in the Hudson Valley. Fieldcrest Foods, a small bakery specialty supply company based in Saratoga Springs, distributes the North Country Farms flour.

Want to learn more about the Environmental Protection Fund? Find out what it is? What it is supposed to do? How it is funded? Why it is at risk? Learn about Capital District projects funded by EPF?

Come to an April program jointly presented by the League of Women Voters of Albany County and the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy

Monday, April 11, 2011

St. Stephens Church, 16 Elsmere Avenue,
Delmar, New York

5:30 - 6:30 Supper Salads

6:30 - 8:00 Presentation and discussion on NYS's
Environmental Protection Fund

In honor of Earth Day we are going GREEN.
Please bring a supper salad to share and your
own plate and utensils

Carpool from Saratoga 885-9769.

League President Honored!!!

Barbara Thomas was nominated for the 2011 Prestigious Jefferson Award for Public Service and has been selected as a Medalist among a large group of nominees.

Since 1972, the Jefferson Awards have honored ordinary local people who do extraordinary things for other people, their community, their nation, or the environment.

A finalist will be selected from the Medalists that best represent the spirit of volunteerism in New York's Capital Region and will compete at the national level.

The Times Union, St Peter's Hospital and Channel 13 sponsor the Award. Stay tuned.



MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY UPDATE



A DAY OF DOING inspired these folks to volunteer at the Saratoga Springs Senior Center and at the Soul Saving Station for Every Nation Church. All around town similar “Doings” were taking place in honor of Mr. King’s legacy. At the library, there was story time, games and goodies for the children, while their parents volunteered.



Left: Rebuilding Together of Saratoga County members Deb VanDerMar (top), and Jane Greiner and Sherie Grinter finish up the painting project at the Saratoga Springs Senior Center.



Above: Christine Smith, a volunteer and George Manuel show off the kitchen they helped paint at the Soul Saving Station for Every Nation Church



Guidelines for Presenting Differing Views of an Issue at a LWV Information Meeting:

1. When the LWVSC does not have a position on an issue every effort must be made to secure representation from all sides of the issue and to locate knowledgeable spokespeople for the various positions.
2. When the LWVSC has studied an issue and arrived at consensus, it is legitimate that we inform the public of our position and why we support the stand. In such cases, it is not necessary to present opposition views.
3. For Voter’s Services activities, for a question that will appear on a ballot it is important that the pros and cons be presented, even when the LWV has a position.

The above policy was adopted by the Board at it’s March 2011 meeting in response to questions raised by some members regarding the meeting on gun control planned for May 19th.

GET INVOLVED
GIVE 2 HOURS A MONTH TO THE
OBSERVER CORP

Contact Denny Finneran at 583-1478

SUNSHINE WEEK MEETING LIVELY

Robert Freeman is the Director of the Committee on Open Government, NYS Department of State, one of the few governmental entities in the country dealing with open meetings and public access.



Robert Freeman discusses your right to know and how to access government records.

He was enthusiastic, informative and entertaining as he explained the Open Meeting Laws and the Freedom of Information Laws (FOIL) to a large group at the Saratoga Springs Public Library. He briefly outlined the mandate and duties of his Committee, then opened the floor for questions. Every question was answered succinctly in an open, fun, and free-flowing dialog.

Freeman urged the LWV to continue its Observer Corps activities. He stated that merely being a presence is a very effective way to keep government open and democratic. *We have found this to be true.*

The Sunshine meeting was jointly sponsored by our League, the Saratogian, and the Saratoga Springs Public Library.



Keeping Civil Discourse CIVIL



The topic of an upcoming community workshop sponsored by the League of Women Voters and the Saratoga Vital Aging Network.

The session will be held on Tuesday, April 12 from 6:30-9pm in the Saratoga Springs Public Library. It will be facilitated by Nancy Belowich Negron, who works at SUNY Albany and is certified to conduct training for the National Coalition Building Institute's Controversial Issues Process.

Attendance will be limited to 30, with elected officials and civic leaders being strongly encouraged to participate. The program is designed to train leaders to deal constructively with tough conflicts, enabling them to move toward future cooperation. It teaches a set of skills that are essential for effective conflict resolution by mapping out points of agreement and disagreement and then reframing the issue to allow the disputing parties to find common ground. Using a structured methodology, it enables people on both sides of an entrenched issue to express their concerns and to listen attentively to those on the other side in a respectful way that takes into account the concerns of both sides.

The process has been used successfully with members of Congress, church leaders, college students, and firefighters, to name a few, on issues as polarizing and controversial as abortion, capital pun-

ishment, affirmative action, marriage equality, environmental concerns, and assisted suicide.

On April 12, the assembled group will decide what issue they want to use as the vehicle for learning this conflict resolution process; it is not actually about resolving the issue at the session. Participants will simply learn techniques for talking about controversial topics without getting personal or heated.

According to Patricia Nugent, event chair, "The two groups decided to collaborate on offering this program in response to current polarization and heated rhetoric around public policy issues, which affect our members. We have a general concern about how public debate is being framed, and we are looking forward to this opportunity to increase our community's capacity for conflict resolution. We are hoping for strong representation from our elected officials and civic leaders because there are many tough decisions ahead of us, and we want to ensure the best outcomes for those impacted."

To register for the civil discourse event, contact 587-8376 or email: dsarno@saratogavitalaging.org.

IT'S PARTY TIME!
SAVE THE DATE—MAY 5
 Let's honor Barb Thomas for
 20 years of Leadership
 Speakeasy Party Room
 at The Factory in Ballston Spa
 Your invitation will arrive soon.



Coffee Themed Basket

Our LWV has put together a basket of coffee and coffee themed items to call attention to the important role that coffee houses and shops play in the social life of this county.

Thanks to Café Lena, Coffee Planet, Fortunate Cup, Starbucks's, Uncommon Grounds and Virgil's House for their contributions to the basket, which will be in the Silent Auction at the LWVNY convention. You can bid on this and other items at www.lwvny.org, starting in May.

LeaderSpark 2011



Leader Spark Coordinator, Kristin Overholt explains the next activity to the 20 students participating in this year's leadership training program. Students are from Ballston Spa, Burnt Hills-Ballston Lake, Saratoga Springs, Shendehowa, Stillwater and The Waldorf High Schools.

LeaderSpark is based on developing awareness of leadership skills, practicing the skills and then applying them in real life.



Volunteering at LeaderSpark:are (L to R) State Farm Employees Derrick Legall, Caitlin Ahern, Greg Russ and Agents Sherry Hoffman, Keith Stewart. Not pictured: Rose Fonseca.



Working in groups, **LeaderSpark** students have fun planning and building a tower, then pitching their tower as the best one. This activity prepares the students to develop an action plan for a community project.

LeaderSpark is made possible with grants from State Farm and Stewart's Shops

Did you miss this film when it was at the Spectrum or the Saratoga Film Forum?

MADE IN DAGENHAM
A Case for Pay Equity

Friday April 29, 7PM.

**Unitarian Universalist Society,
Channing Hall**

405 Washington Avenue, Albany

*There will be no charge but
donations are appreciated.*

<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1371155/>
for film images and trailer

**Following the film, join in a discussion about how
we can get Pay Equity in NY State!**
(No, we don't already have it.)

In 1968 "women machinists" who sewed upholstery at a Ford factory in Dagenham, England fought back in response to an attempt to downgrade their job title and pay because it was "women's work." This inspiring and engaging film tells the true story of "ordinary" factory workers who are transformed into courageous activists and leaders. They convincingly made the case against sex discrimination in pay, went on strike and won a change in England's labor laws. Featuring Sally Hawkins, Andrea Riseborough, Bob Hoskins and Daniel Mays.

Co-sponsored by the New York State Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC) and the Solidarity Committee of the Capital District. *LWVNYS is a member of NYSPEC.*
Car Pool from Saratoga County: 728-0237

Register Now!

**“Webinar” on How to Conduct a
National Study,
Thursday, April 21, 3:00 PM**

If you would like to learn more about the process surrounding a national study, we welcome you to sign up for this webinar at:

<http://lww.na4.acrobat.com/education/event/registration.html>

Learn how to help your League get ready to participate in national studies directly from Education Study Committee Chair, Peg Hill and National Education Fund and Privatization Committee Chair, Janis McMillen.

AT THE NY STATE CONVENTION

***Strong Members, Strong Leaders,
Strong Government*** is the theme of LWVNY's biennial convention, which will take place **May 20th-22nd, at the Desmond Hotel in Albany.**
Friday's Pre-Convention Activities are open to all League Members for only \$10:

Noon: Buffet Lunch

1- 3pm: A League Primer: Exploring the Nuts and Bolts of the LWV in the 21st Century, a forum facilitated by Betsy Swan, President, LWVNY

3:15- 4:15: Small Group Sessions for Presidents, Treasurers, Education and Advocacy, Membership, Voter Service, Problem Solving. Lots more details are available at www.lwvny.org,
Register in advance!!

LWV Saratoga County ANNUAL MEETING JUNE 5,2011

PLEASE RESERVE BY MAY 20, 2011

NAME(S) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PREFERRED PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

HOW MANY _____ X \$25= \$ _____

Make your check to: LWV of Saratoga County
Mail to: Diane Whitburn, 11 North Hill Drive, Ballston Lake, NY 12019

COMING EVENTS

April 12—7pm Workshop on Civil Discourse SSPL see pages 1 & 3

May 5—Party honoring B. Thomas for 20 years as LWV SC President The Factory, Ballston Spa, \$28., 5:30 to 7:30

May 6—Tough Talk.About Hard Decisions, 1pm SSPL see page 3

May 19—Thursday Guns ‘N Roses Why the League supports gun control. 7pm, SSPL

May 20, 21 &22—LWVNY Convention. Desmond Hotel, Albany

June 5, Sunday LWVSC 45th Annual Meeting & Luncheon at The Vista Restaurant, Van Patten Golf Club, Clifton Park. 1pm *Who Speaks for me? Free Speech, the Constitution and Corporations.* Speaker: Ron Seyb. \$25. per person.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SARATOGA COUNTY
P.O. BOX 1029 SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY 12866

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

April 2011

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Part time volunteer job opening—
FARMER’S MARKET MANAGER
Hours: 9am to 1pm, 2 Saturdays/month
Duties: Set-up and take down pop-up tent, Arrange for volunteers, hand out LWV info. August thru October
Questions? Call Pattie Garrett, 584-4271

JOIN US & MAKE A DIFFERENCE

YES! I would like to join the League.
 2011–2012 dues enclosed.
 \$50. Individual \$75 Family \$20 Student
 Please send more information
In addition, I would like to contribute \$ _____

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE _____
E-MAIL _____

**Mail to: Membership, League of Women Voters
P.O. Box 1029, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866**

TOUGH TALK ABOUT HARD DECISIONS

Exploring Legal and Ethical End of Life Issues

Friday, May 6 at 1pm
Saratoga Springs Public Library
Dutcher Community Room

Speakers—
George Jolly, MD
Rabbi Linda Motzkin,
Carol Pinsley

Co-sponsors
Single Payer New York, Saratoga Vital Aging Network and
The League of Women Voters of Saratoga County