



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SARATOGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

BULLETIN

September 2012

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.

Candidate Event for the Primary Election

**Republican and Conservative Primary Candidates for the 43rd SD
Roy McDonald (R, I) (attending) vs. Kathleen Marchione (C, R) (invited)
vs. Edward Gilbert (C) (attending)**

The 43rd Senate District includes The Saratoga County Towns of Moreau, Greenfield, Wilton, Northumberland, Saratoga, Stillwater, Halfmoon and Waterford, and the City of Mechanicville and most of the City of Saratoga Springs, except a small part in the northwestern part of the city.

Thursday, September 6th, 7pm

Maple Ave Middle School 515 Maple Avenue (Route 9)
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866



One of the League's primary missions is to encourage participation in the sacred democratic process of voting. We are committed to protecting the vote this election season and will be conducting voter registration at many sites.

Please call Janice Burns at 587-3436 or e-mail jburns14@nycap.rr.com to volunteer to register voters this fall. Our democracy hangs in the balance. See page 7

To Change or Not to Change

(the Saratoga Springs City Charter) – That is the Question.

Wednesday, September 19, 7pm

Auditorium, Saratoga Springs High School

Blue Streak Boulevard, off West Avenue, Saratoga Springs

Please check www.lwvsaratoga.org after Labor Day for speakers.

Media partner: *Saratoga Wire*



**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

President

Patricia Nugent, Chair, Program and Public Relations
20 Secretariat Lane, Saratoga Springs—584-4255

1st Vice President

Ann Kril, Chair, Voter Services
60 Hillcrest Drive, Saratoga Springs—584-1436

2nd Vice President

Darnell Rohrbaugh, Chair, Youth Programs
6 Almeria Drive, Clifton Park—371-2588

Secretary

Donna Dardaris, Chair, Membership
64 Middle St. Ballston Spa—884-9070

Treasurer

Mary Lou Classen
4 Blue Spruce Lane, Ballston Lake—877-8874

Directors

Amy Durland, Co-Chair, Action & Issues
33 Lakewood Drive, Saratoga Springs—583-0646

Patricia Garrett, Chair, Special Events, Social Media
537 Union Ave., Saratoga Springs—584-4271

Louise Golub, Co-Chair, Action & Issues
10 Hathorn St., Saratoga Springs—584-7518

Barbara Murphy, Chair, Good Government
2 Granada Drive, Clifton Park—371-6534

Peter Neenan, Chair, Observer Corps
24 Secretariat Lane, Saratoga Springs—587-9698

Carol Schupp-Star
6 Chipmunk Chase, Saratoga Springs—587-9391

Ann Sheppard
9 Kirby Road, Saratoga Springs—583-6318

Schedule of LWVSC Board Meetings

Ballston Area Community Center (BACC)
6:45-8:45pm

1st Tuesday of each month

September 4, October 2, November 13 (Election
Day is 1st Tuesday), December 4, January 8,
February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, June 4.

**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
Administrative Assistant: Katrina McEwan, katrina@lwvny.org
President: **Sally Robinsonn**, robinntwins@gmail.com

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...

A Gift from the People

Having recently completed my first year in office, I can't as readily plead ignorance when I goof up. Yet there is still so much to learn, and I continue to be grateful for those who gently prod me along.

We had a wonderful annual meeting, with great enthusiasm from members and

a highly motivating speaker on the politicization of women's health care. Our program planning meeting was also very well attended in June, with lots of passion for so many causes – perhaps more than we can reasonably pull off this year. But we'll give it our best, and hope that many of you will jump in with us. This fall, our efforts are mainly focused on the following, under the theme of *Democracy in Action*. Look for details on related events, and PLEASE consider getting involved by helping us plan or by attending:

- Conducting voter registration at numerous sites;
- Educating voters regarding new election districts;
- Facilitating candidate forums;
- Opening dialogue on the proposed charter change for Saratoga Springs;
- Sounding the alarm on hydrofracking and global warming;
- Advocating for campaign finance reform.

I have a new obsession with Mary Todd Lincoln (although she strongly disapproved of the suffragists), and I am reading avidly about her life and times. (There's a much longer story here that I'll share if/when asked in person.) One thing that I found most interesting in my reading is that elected office was considered a gift from the people, not a prize to be sought (and certainly NOT to be bought). There was a strong belief back in Abraham Lincoln's day that if you were meant to serve your country, the public would seek you out to do so. THEY would decide if you were worthy to represent them. And, although it was considered a privilege to be asked to run, most wives did not want their husbands to win because to do the job well, you had to be completely devoted and selfless to the cause of democracy, away from home much of the time to conduct "the people's business." Compare that concept with the millions of dollars spent today to win elected office and the disenfranchisement of constituents. Where did we go wrong, and how can we affect a course correction? Getting involved with LWVSC this fall is a good start.

Hope to see you soon. Onward,

Pat

**AROUND THE WORLD PEOPLE ARE DYING FOR FREEDOM
AND THE RIGHT TO VOTE! FIGHT VOTER SUPPRESSION!**

ONLINE VOTER GUIDE

Compare the candidates who will be on your ballot in the September 13th primary election! Our league, working with four neighboring leagues in the Capital Region (Albany, Rensselaer, Schenectady and Warren Counties), has produced an online Voter Guide for the State Senate and State Assembly primaries in the Capital District. For Saratoga County, the primary races include the heated Republican Primary in the 43rd district of the State Senate between incumbent Roy McDonald and challenger Kathleen Marchione, the Saratoga County Clerk for the last 14 years, as well as a Conservative Party primary in the same district between Kathleen Marchione and Ed-

ward Gilbert of Rensselaer. In addition, there is a Democratic Primary in the 108th State Assembly district (which includes Waterford) between John T. McDonald, III, the Mayor of Cohoes and the President of Marra's Pharmacy, and Carolyn McLaughlin, Albany Common Council President. Go to our website, www.lwvsaratoga.org to find a link to the online Voter Guide on Vote411.org as well as a print version of the Voter Guide. You will also find a listing of the towns and cities in Saratoga County included in each of the new State and Congressional districts now that the redistricting process is completed. *Chris Alexander & Francine Roger*

SECRET MONEY IN ELECTIONS

The U.S. Senate has now twice refused to allow full debate on the DISCLOSE Act of 2012. This bill would require complete disclosure of spending on big money advertising in candidate elections.

Independent spending in federal elections exploded after the Supreme Court's 2010 ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission (FEC)*. That decision freed corporations and unions to spend freely on elections. A subsequent lower court ruling used the *Citizens United* decision to free individuals to contribute unlimited amounts in groups known as super PACs.

Voters have a right to know whether it is a corporation, union, trade association, or non-profit advocacy group making unlimited campaign expenditures

and influencing elections. The DISCLOSE Act is an important step towards eliminating secret money. It would tell voters where the money is coming from to let them make informed voting decisions.

We are proud that the Senators from our state supported the bill and stood up for the voters against the special interests pouring huge sums of secret money into the elections.

The League of Women Voters of Saratoga County joins the National League in supporting this legislation because we believe that Americans deserve all the information they can get before they vote. We will continue to push nationwide for passage of DISCLOSE because secret campaign money has no place in America's democracy. It undermines the role of the voter and corrupts the election process. *Barbara Murphy*

A CITIZENSHIP CEREMONY, held July 4th at the Saratoga National Historical Park, involved several organizations including the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), Friends of Saratoga Battlefield, and Saratoga National Historical Park (SNHP).

Thirty men and women from twenty-three countries – Afghanistan to the United Kingdom – were present to take the Oath of Allegiance administered by James Wyrrough of the USCIS. Gina Johnson of the SNHP coordinated the event that featured music from the Sons and Daughters of Ancient Liberty Fife and Drums; a musket salute, and later a can-

non salute, by the park staff; an address by Roy J. McDonald, New York Senator, 43rd District; and lemonade toasts by Ranger Joe Craig. Around 200 people attended the ceremony, some relatives of the new citizens, others who welcomed the commitment made by natives of other countries to become good citizens here.

Our League gave each new citizen a copy of *First Vote: A Guide for New Voters in New York State*, written by the League of Women Voters of New York State. Keep the Citizenship Ceremony in mind for July 4, 2013. It is an impressive and inspiring celebration. *Helen Crawshaw*

FROM LWVUS CONVENTION

Louise Golub and Peter Neenan represented the Saratoga County LWV at the bi-annual national convention held in Washington, DC earlier this summer. Over 800 delegates were in attendance, and several topics commanded delegate's attention, either through floor action or in thorough discussion in caucuses and workshops.

The impacts resulting from the **Citizens United** decision of the U.S. Supreme Court (providing for unlimited campaign and political contributions by corporations and interest groups) were widely discussed. In addition, the efforts of several states to enact more stringent "**voter identification**" procedures and their consequent potential to suppress minority, elderly and student voter participation were a major topic.

Hydrofracking and its potential for environmental damage and unlimited lease rights by drilling companies was a topic that is of potential concern to the New York and Saratoga County leagues, and Peter attended workshops and caucuses on this important issue.

All current positions per our last Impact on Issues will be retained. In addition, we now have positions on Privatization and the Role of Federal Government in Education. We voted to concur with the Sentencing Policy position of the LWV of DC.

Throughout the convention, increased use of social media and the internet were emphasized. One goal of this is to reach younger citizens.

Louise attended several workshops related to our food supply, water and agriculture. A new study will be undertaken to update our policy on Agriculture. Watch for information on the progress of this year's Farm Bill which wasn't passed before Congress adjourned. We will use our updated policy in a few years when the next Farm Bill is introduced.



Louise Golub and Peter Neenan at the LWVUS Convention in Washington DC

Make sure you see the wonderful outside speakers we heard at convention. Videos are available to watch at LWVUS.org. Here is the link for videos of the convention speakers. Unfortunately videos shown during the speech are not included.

<http://library.lwv.org/events-series/convention-2012>

The **Campaign Finance Task Force** will educate the public and our members. Be on the look out for misleading political ads by third parties. These can be reported on flack-check.org.

We thank LWV Saratoga for the opportunity to attend and to represent all of you.

By Louise Golub & Peter Neenan

LWVUS Adopted Three New Positions this Year!

Following Studies in which our League participated, The LWVUS Board announced a position on **The Role of the Federal Government in Education** (March 2012). The introduction to the full position states:

The League of Women Voters believes that the federal government shares with other levels of government the responsibility to provide an equitable, quality public education for all children pre-K through grade 12. A quality public education is essential for a strong, viable, and sustainable democratic society and is a civil right.

The introduction to the full position on **Privatization** (June 2012) states:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that when governmental entities consider the transfer of governmental services, assets and/or functions to the private sector, the community impact and goals of such transfers must be identified and considered. Further, the LWV believes that

Continued page 7



YOUR 2012-13 BOARD OF DIRECTORS L to R:
 (Back row) Patricia Nugent, President; Peter Neenan; Amy Durland; Ann Kril; Barbara Murphy. (Front row): Louise Golub; Darnell Rohrbaugh; Mary Lou Classen and Carol Shupp-Star. Not shown: Pattie Garrett, Ann Sheppard.

ANNUAL MEETING RECAP

Right: Barbara Thomas congratulates Kristie Krulcik, the recipient of the BT Scholarship, at the Annual Meet-



Barbara K. Thomas Scholarship Award Winner: Kristi Krulcik

Kristi is a Saratoga Springs High School student who accepted Early Decision to Cornell University, Proposed major: Communications and Media Studies

Kristi was one of, if not THE, most well rounded student who submitted an application. Her range of activities and interests ran the gamut from Key Club to National Honor Society to LWV LeaderSpark, with side ventures into the Technology Committee; the High School literary and art magazine; reporting for AllyKatz, a blog for teens that raises awareness about organizations such as GirlUp, a UN program which enables girls in developing countries to gain opportunities for education and leadership; NY Math League; Tennis; and Soccer, just to mention a few. She was invited to the Washington Journalism and Media Conference, a six-day journalism conference in Wash. DC, culminating in an appearance on C-Span's "Washington Journal". She also attended the Year of Youth Culmination Celebration at the United Nations in NYC because of her essay written on Global Partnership. Her activities in the Community run the gamut from organizing the 'Senior Prom' at the Saratoga Springs Senior Center in the spring of 2011; participating in Story Time at Caroline Street Elementary School and earning a black belt in traditional Japanese Karate.

Janice Burns, chair, Barb Thomas, Terry Lowenthal, Francine Rodger



Left: Retiring board members: Margot Ammon, Pat Reed and Diane Whitburn, show off gifts of appreciation for past service.

Political Influences on Women's Healthcare

Tracey Brooks, CEO of Family Planning Advocates, spoke at our annual breakfast meeting on June 2nd about how the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) affects women's healthcare. New York is in the process of designing our state health insurance exchange that in 2014 will be a marketplace where small business and individuals can purchase health insurance. Ms. Brooks described how this would work, and shed some insight into the political influences on women's healthcare. See the powerpoint presentation from this talk at lwvsaratoga .org.

Parking Cars for the League!

Thanks to those who helped us earn \$861 for the League by parking cars in *The Saratogian* parking lot on Friday evening, June 15. They were: Chris Alexander, Janice Burns, Mary Lou Classen, Carl Danna, Donna Dardaris, Lori Dawson, Mary Jane Ellis, Joe Geiger, Kathy Kennedy, Bev LaBarge, Mike LaBelle, Barb Thomas, and Bob & Margie VanMeter. And a big THANK YOU! TO THE SARATOGIAN for making their lot available to non-profits as a fundraiser. The weather was beautiful, the Metro provided music, and we got to learn more about each other.

Barb Thomas

EMERGENCY SERVICES STUDY UPDATE/REVIEW

At the annual meeting in June, the membership voted to review and update the Emergency Services position. The position dates back to 2000 and after discussion at the meeting, it was felt that it should be updated to reflect current environment and circumstances. There may be necessary changes based on different county circumstances and technology.

There will be an organizational meeting at 10am at my home on Sept. 14th to organize the update. The work load will not be heavy and the time frame will be short -- almost a one shot involvement.

For background, please see the following at : www.lwvsaratoga.org:Emergency Services position: scroll down under Issues and Actions, Public Commentary: *The Saratogian* newspaper of May 25, 26, 27 and July 19.

I hope anyone who is interested in participating will attend and join the discussion. If you are interested, please call me: 587-2516

Terry Lowenthal

Welcome New Members

Julia Bauwin

Michael M. Piccirillo



LWV BOOK CLUB

Last year a group of us got together once a month to review the LWVUS positions. We learned a lot, had lots of sidebar chatter, and decided we wanted to continue again this year, studying the LWVNYS positions. So, we will be meeting on the 2nd Tuesday of the month (Oct, Nov, Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr and May) at 1:00.

If you are interested in joining us, will you email Francine Rodger at aerodger@aol.com or call her at 371-8032. We are trying to determine how many copies of Impact on Issues New York State we will need.

Our first meeting will examine our government position. It will be held at the Clifton Park Halfmoon Library, Moe Road, Clifton Park, on Tuesday, October 9th.

Francine Roger

Thank You to Our Contributors

Nancy Bellamy	Barb & Ed Murphy
Belinda Cunningham	Bob & Josie Pasciullo
Donna Dardaris	Marian Potter
Carol Fleming	Barbara Stamas
Dorothy Mancusi	Margie VanMeter

Contributors to the LWV Education Fund:
Patricia Reed

In Celebration of Helen Crawshaw's Birthday
Marion (Sonia) & Lewis Taub
Barb Thomas

New Name for LWVNY Hydraulic Fracturing Committee

Last month the LWVNY's Hydraulic Fracturing Committee unanimously agreed to change its name to the **Committee on Energy, Agriculture and the Environment**. They felt that "these topics are inter-related; focus on one has required focus on the other (particularly in New York where we would drill where we grow food). Certain of the health impacts from chemicals which relate to fossil fuel energy use also apply as well to agriculture. Subsidies also apply to both economies".

Congratulations to Denny & Kathleen Finneran
On the occasion of their May 29th Marriage!



CONGRATULATIONS

Marriage Equality is
Good for Everyone!
Lori Dawson is very principled,
and she didn't think that she
should take advantage of the legal
protections and privileges that marriage provides
when homosexual couples didn't have the same
rights. Lori worked hard on the national and state level
in support of marriage equality and when NYS
passed Marriage Equality, Lori and long time companion
Micheal LaBelle decided it was finally time to
get married too. Congratulations to all! *Barb Thomas*

Continued from page 4

transparency, accountability, and preservation of the
common good must be ensured.

These positions can be found in their entirety at
www.lwvsaratoga.com in the Studies section.

Janis McMillan (LWVUS board member) states
that the new Sentencing Reform position is a con-
currence with the position of the Washington DC
League that was adopted at the June 2012 conven-
tion. Here is the wording of the position we adopted:

Sentencing Policy: The LWVUS believes alter-
natives to imprisonment should be explored and uti-
lized, taking into consideration the circumstances
and nature of the crime. The LWVUS opposes man-
datory minimum sentences for drug offenses.

FIGHT VOTER SUPPRESSION

REGISTER VOTERS!

Sign up for any of the following events:

- **Sept. 2**, SPAC (Jason Mraz)
- **Sept 16**, SPAC (Florence and the Machine)
- **Sept. 8, 22, and Oct. 3**, Saratoga Springs Farmers' Market
- **Sept. 22, 25**, 11am-6pm, Boscov's, Clifton Park
- Wilton Mall, Global Foundries, Irish Fest, and more are in the works.



Contact **Janice Burns** at jburns14@nycap.rr.com
to volunteer and join this important effort. Expect to
hear from her through Mail Chimp, e-mails and
phone calls as she develops opportunities for
you to volunteer.



POWER THE VOTE!

BE PART OF THE IMPORTANT
WORK OF VOTER REGISTRATION!



Jacob Devasagayam at-
tended Students Inside
Albany as a representative
of our League. A BSHS
senior, Jake is shown
here with Barbara Bar-
toletti, one of the SIA
speakers. Jake credits
his LeaderSpark 2011
experience with giving
him "a lot of new tools
and strategies that
helped me in the last
two years".

This is the position the delegates (including Pe-
ter and Louise) concurred with:

Criminal Sentencing (Adopted April 1982 by LWV DC)

The primary goal of imprisonment should
be the protection of society.
Rehabilitation of the individual wrongdo-
er and deterrence of others are also im-
portant. In the District of Columbia, how-
ever, imprisonment serves mainly as a punishment
and does little to achieve these goals.

Improvements are needed in our criminal justice
system, but a law mandating imprisonment would
not be an improvement and would not be an effec-
tive or appropriate tool of the criminal justice sys-
tem. Alternatives to imprisonment should be ex-
plored and utilized, taking into consideration the cir-
cumstances and nature of the crime. Sentences
should be tailored to fit both the crime and the in-
dividual wrongdoer. Judges should retain discretion to
tailor sentences in this way. The League does not
support mandatory sentences at this time.

Some means of prohibiting or lessening plea
bargaining should be explored.

Suspended sentences, except in very rare and
special instances, should be prohibited. The League
believes the prison population should be reduced and
does not favor building additional prisons. Rather,
the focus should be on developing more constructive
methods of combating crime. These should include
increased attention to improving education and train-
ing programs, more effective handgun and narcotics
abuse control, and sentencing reform.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Thursday, September 6, Primary Candidate Forum, Maple Avenue School (Route 9, Wilton), 7pm

Thursday, September 13, Primary Election, (Republican/Conservative) noon-9pm

Wednesday, September 19, To Change or Not To Change (the SS Charter) – That is the Question, Auditorium, Saratoga Springs High School, 7pm

Tuesday, October 9, Book Club, Clifton Park/Halfmoon Library, 1-3:30pm

**Oct. 18, 43rd SD; 113 AD
Oct. 23th, 20CD, 49SD, 112AD**

See page 7 for Voter Registration events and how you can POWER THE VOTE!



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SARATOGA COUNTY

P.O. BOX 1029 SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY 12866

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

September 2012

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Saratoga Springs, NY
Permit No. 16

CONTENTS

Candidate Forums.....1, 3
 From the President2
 Online Voter Guide.....3
 Secret \$ in Elections3
 Citizenship Ceremony3
 LWVUS Convention Report4
 LWVSC Annual Meeting5
 Book Club, Parking Cars, Emergency Services Study, New Members, Contributors, LWVNY News.....6
 Voter Registration sites7
 Students Inside Albany7

Thank you to Adirondack Trust Co. for underwriting the cost of the 1500 LWVNYS Voters Guides that we distribute in Saratoga County and for underwriting some of the costs of our online Voter Guide!

JOIN US & MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- YES!** I Would like to join the League. 2012/13 dues enclosed.
- (Note: The Bulletin is free with membership) \$55. Individual \$80 Family \$20 Student
- Please send more information I would like to subscribe to the BULLETIN, \$15. enclosed
- In addition, I would like to contribute \$ _____
- Please send a gift membership to:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE (home) _____ (work) _____

E-MAIL _____

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