

LWW of Albany County

Educate

Participate

Advocate

May 2006

Audrey Kibrick and Marggie Skinner, Co-Presidents

MAY ANNUAL DINNER

Speaker: Edith Allen, NYS Public Service Commission
Judy Jarnefeld, NYS Energy Reserch and Development Authority

Topic: Women and Energy in New York State

When: Wednesday, May 17th, 5:30 p.m.

Where: Normanside Country Club (Normanside Room), Delmar (See map page 9)

Dinner and Cash Bar \$22 per person (See menu choices page 9)

RSVP: To Gael Vecchio at gaelcasey@aol.com or 459-9958 by May 12th

Agenda:

5:30-6:15 cocktails

6:15-6:45 annual meeting

6:45-7:30 dinner

7:30-8:30 speaker

Edith and Judy will bring us up to date on aspects of energy policy in New York State from the perspective of working within the field. Edith will discuss the sources of electricity for the state and what it is like to work in the power business. Judy will give an overview of New York's solar energy program, including New York and federal government incentive programs.

Be prepared to learn some new terminology and how we can all reduce energy consumption and reliance on foreign oil sources.

We are very happy to welcome Edith and Judy, Albany County League board members, and professionals in the energy field, as our guest speakers.

(See page 7 for background information on LWWUS Energy position)

FROM THE PRESIDENTS

It's hard to believe that our League year is coming to an end and Audrey and I have survived and even agreed to give this partnership one more year. Join us at the annual dinner on May 17th to help us celebrate our 1st anniversary, to hear from two of our local board members who are respected experts in the energy field and to share your thoughts on the League as a national organization with Audrey Kibrick, Susan Coleman and Ann Brandon who will be our delegates to the League's National Convention in Minneapolis in June.

(The convention will be tackling such knotty issues as management of the League at the national level, changing the name to the League of Voters, adding a new study on immigration, updating our position on representative government, concurring with the Illinois League's position in opposition to the death penalty and more. Our delegates will be representing us and they will be available at our annual dinner to discuss these and other issues- and they will be at the Pot Luck Supper in September to report on what actually got accomplished.)

Our calendar is overflowing this month and we hope that you will be able to attend our Law Day program at Albany Law School on the 1st to get the latest on the issue of judicial selection. If you are new to the Albany League, we really want to get to know you better, and to tell us more about ourselves at breakfast at the Perfect Blend in Delmar on May 6. Be sure to let Susan Coleman know that you are coming. And there are ongoing opportunities for you to join in our global issues discussions during the day or in the evening- check the calendar.

Finally, even though we take a break from program activities in the summer, we will be busy coordinating debates for two statewide Democratic primaries- for Governor and for Attorney General. Maggie Moehringer is handling this and will be looking for help. Check for the latest developments on our website www.lwvalbany.org.

It's been a great year. We look forward to working with all of you again in 2006-07.

Marggie & Audrey

Reminder: Dues for the 2006-07 year are due. Please send yours in to Mary Berry, Treasurer, as soon as possible. Thanks

From the Editor: Look for your next newsletter in midsummer and have a happy safe summer wherever you are and whatever you're doing!

Welcome our new members

Barbara Orris
Blaise Salerno
Carol Hart

Guilderland
Watervliet
Delmar

League of Women Voters of Albany County Board

Co-Presidents	VP Administration	VP Program	Treasurer	Secretary
Marggie Skinner	Gael Vecchio	Wendy Dury-Samson	Mary Berry	Judy Jarnefeld
489-5311	459-9958	439-1113	439-5679	869-3228
Audrey Kibrick	Voter Service	Membership	Development	International Relations
489-9931	Maggie Moehringer	Susan Coleman	Lori Keegan-Brady	Kay Wilkie
	475-0969	433-9446	475-0396	768-2901
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Aimee Allaud	Margaret Sawyer		Raymond Blanchard	Betsey Swan
482-2617	783-9424		438-0550	426-3711

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LWV of New York State: 35 Maiden Lane, Albany 12207, Phone: 465-4162, Fax: 465-0812, E-mail: lwwny@lwwny.org, Web Site: lwwny.org

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan citizen organization that promotes the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

This newsletter is published by the League of Women Voters of Albany County, 12 Coventry Road, Glenmont, New York 12077 and mailed to League Members. The frequency of publication is as follows: one mid-summer issue followed by nine monthly issues from September to May.

LeaderSpark results are in!

As you all know, Albany County LWV was one of the 5 pilot programs for Leader Spark. Over the past 6 weeks, we have been having HS students from many different districts in the Capital Region meet together and learn about various aspects of Leadership. Our topics included Qualities and Styles of Leadership, Working with Groups, Planning Projects, Dealing with Conflict and Presenting Yourself.

Now for our winners:

We had a total of 12 regular participants, ranging from one eighth grader to one senior. We had 4 males and 8 females representing schools in Albany, Rensselaer and Columbia County. Our students came from Albany High, Guilderland, Voorheesville, South Colonie, Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk and Albany Academy for Girls, as well as Columbia High in East Greenbush and Ichabod Crane in Kinderhook. We were allowed to choose 3 to go to the Students Inside Albany Conference, but actually 4 of our participants will be attending. The criteria for selection for the Conference involved good attendance and participation, interest in learning about how government works, and a brief written piece (not necessarily a formal essay) stating reasons why they should be allowed to attend the conference. At first about 8 of the students indicated they wished to attend the conference, and I thought I would have to make a difficult choice. I enlisted the Board's help in case we had to narrow our choice down to three. As it turned out, the Conference is scheduled for the week that AP exams are starting, and many of the students decided they would not be able to attend the conference if chosen.

Our three winners are:

From Albany County, Shayna Bentley, a 10th grader from Guilderland; Samuel Broadaway, an 11th grader from Albany High and Miralem Prijic, an 11th grader from South Colonie.

We were fortunate in that the Columbia County League, who had difficulties with their essay contest this year, was looking for a student to send. Since Claudine Murphy, a 9th grader at Ichabod Crane, lives in Columbia County, that League agreed to sponsor her (thank you to Kathy M. White).

We are all very proud of this fine group of students who gave me a lot of great feedback which will prove valuable for the next time we run this ambitious but worthy program.

Our sessions ended recently, and I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly thank all of you who helped out with the programs. It is very difficult to do something "the first time", and I could not have done it alone. I'd like to thank Ruth Dinowitz, Marggie Skinner, Angie Sherman, Ray Blanchard, Pearlle Stricklin, Bonnie Beard, Bob Thierrault and Barbara Bartoletti. They all gave up a few precious hours of their time on at least one Sunday afternoon during March or early April, and a few of them came and helped out at many. I'd like to thank Girls' Inc. for allowing us to use their facility at 25 Western Ave. I'd like to also thank Senator Neil Breslin, who was our guest speaker at the closing award celebration on Sunday, April 9th. Also, words of gratitude to Rob Marchiony, Joan Elliott and Stephanie Lopez at State League for their support. There are many more who deserve thanks, for example our sponsors and individuals who gave me contact names, but a more complete report will be issued in the Annual Report.

Wendy Dury-Samson
VP - Program

Exciting Debates Coming Up this Fall

Our Albany League has volunteered to work with the LWVNYS and a local media partner on a couple of interesting debates for the statewide primaries this Fall!

State League is partnering with the local League chapters to bring together a series of debates for those running for statewide office. We're very excited to have been asked to co-sponsor the debates for the Democratic Attorney General candidate's primary, and for the Democratic candidates for Governor. Democratic primary for AG **is a highly visible race with many Democratic challengers, including (at this point):** Richard Brodsky (State Assemblyman and attorney); Andrew Cuomo (former US Housing Secretary, attorney and '02 Governor candidate); Mark Green (former NYC Public Advocate, attorney and '01 NYC Mayor nominee); Charlie King (attorney, Democratic activist and '98/'02 Lt. Governor candidate); Sean Patrick Maloney (attorney, former Clinton White House aide & Gay Rights activist); and Denise O'Donnell (former US Attorney & former social worker). Democratic challengers for Governor are (again, at this point) Elliot Spitzer (the current Attorney General of NYS) and Thomas Suozzi (current Nassau County Executive).

The LWV of NYS and the local Leagues each have tasks to accomplish to bring these debates about. Tasks for the Albany County League include securing a local broadcast media partner and site. We hope that we can partner with WMHT, and discussions with them are underway. We also have been encouraged to recruit professionals to moderate the debates, and to determine a format that, while exquisitely fair in true League fashion, might be a little more interesting and exciting than our more traditional formats. The Albany League would work to establish the themes, issues and questions that would be put to the candidates, help select a studio audience, and would provide any necessary volunteer effort (timekeepers, etc.). So stay tuned! If you like to volunteer for Voter Service activities, this could be a really exciting one for you!

Maggie Moehringer
Voter Service

Citizens to Converge on Albany for Reform NY Day 2006

More than 30 organizations from Buffalo to Long Island are organizing a statewide day of Action in Albany entitled "Reform NY 2006". The event will occur on Tuesday, May 9, 2006 at the Hart Lounge in the Egg in the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY.

Buses will be leaving from Rochester, Syracuse, Westchester County, Kingston and New York City. To get a spot on the bus, call 1-800-300-8707 or sign up on line at www.commoncause.org/springcleaninginalbany

The event will begin at 10:30am in the Hart Lounge with refreshments and an issue briefing. **Then at 11:30am, gubernatorial candidates have been invited to speak on their respective reform plans . Then the citizens and groups will hold a media event on west side steps of the State Capitol at 1pm** and then will meet with their legislators from their home districts in the LOB.

THIS REFORM DAY FOLLOWS UPON THE VERY SUCCESSFUL 2005 EVENT. If you're "mad as ——, and not going to take it anymore," (about politics as usual, that is), come join the League and other organizations to make a stand on the following issues:

Campaign finance reform, Redistricting, Ethics, and Lobbying reform. The detailed agenda is in formation as the bulletin goes to press, but call the the League office, 465-4162, or the Common Cause number above, to join in the event.

LEAGUE DAY AT CHAUTAUQUA INSTITUTION

Monday, July 24, 2006

Global Climate Change: Securing the Future

This week will examine the science, politics, economics and effects of global climate change. Where do scientists agree about global warming and where is there disagreement? Speakers will explore the current politics, both national and international, of climate change, discuss the economic motivations that either prevent or promote action toward a sustainable future, and note examples of observed effects on the biosphere.

LWV Chautauqua will greet you at the main gate any time from 8:00 am until 10:30 am. We will provide a discounted day pass. If you are planning to attend, it would help us greatly if you could respond to Marcia Merrins at mmerrins@netsync.net. LWV New York State will have a special welcoming gift for you.

For information about accommodations, theater tickets and other items of interest, please check www.ciweb.

We have not made arrangements for lunch. You may buy lunch on the grounds or bring your own. We are invited to enjoy our lunch at Florence Norton's. Her address is 14 Whittier Avenue.

Other Events

9:15 - Barbara Brown Taylor

10:45 - Al Gore, former U.S. vice president; environmental advocate and author

2:00 - Paul Gorman, executive director, National Religious Partnership for the Environment

4:00 - Chautauqua Quartet

7:30 - Opera: Sister Angelica & Gianni Schicchi

8:15 - Chautauqua Festival Dancers. Jean-Pierre Bonnefoux, director. MSFO, Timothy Muffitt, conductor

League World View

League members have enthusiastically joined with the International Center of the Capital Region (ICCR) to support a number of initiatives in recent months, including welcoming and meeting with a number of prominent international visitors being hosted in our area by the ICCR, such as the Attorney General of Botswana, and legislators from Vietnam, Jordan and Pakistan. Please contact Bonnie Beard if you would like to join our volunteer team.

An evening "Great Decisions" group of LWV and ICCR members and friends has formed! Our first meeting on March 23rd involved foreign policy discussions about India and China. Upcoming meetings are slated for Thursday evenings, 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at ICCR conference room facilities at the Council of Community Services in Menands, 272 Broadway, April 20th on Turkey; May 18th on Iran, and June 22nd on Energy Policy.

Please e-mail Bonnie Beard, (babeard@nycap.rr.com), 475-1326 or Kay Wilkie (kbellakarma@aol.com) if you'd like to join us. Great Decisions books are available from Bonnie and at the Book House.

Kay Wilkie, International Relations Chair, 768-2901

NYS League Has a Transportation Specialist!

The March State Board Report announced the appointment of *Gladys Gifford*, of the Buffalo-Niagara League, to the position of off-board specialist for Transportation issues. The following is reprinted from her first SBR. We look forward to further issues as we all try to find measures to conserve gasoline and enhance realistic transportation alternatives in NYS.

"One task I will undertake is to analyze the LWWNYS Impact on Issues to suggest an organized approach to transportation based on the various parts of our positions on Natural Resources, Social Policy, and State Finances which apply.

Meanwhile, the NYS Department of Transportation is currently in the process of finalizing its long-range plan for transportation. The deadline for public comment was February 24, 2006. The document is called "Transportation Strategies for a New Age: New York's Transportation Plan for 2030." It was formulated by an advisory panel that held hearings in 2004 to gain citizen input. The plan is available at the NYSDOT website: www.dot.state.ny.us. To view it, select "NYS Transportation Plan" located at the bottom of the lower left list in the NYSDOT home page and click on "Draft Transportation Plan 2005-2030."

The NYSDOT has issued a long-range plan in previous years, but it was largely ignored by the transportation planners. The current plan may be a positive document, if implemented. Therefore, when every League makes transportation policy a part of their activism, we can ensure that the NYSDOT and the Governor will take this long-range plan seriously."



FINAL CALL FOR POUNDING THE PAVEMENT IN ALBANY

The finish line is getting close for the Freihofer Walk/Run on June 3rd in Albany, so please remember to go on line (www.freihoferstrun.com) and register if you plan to participate in either the Community walk at 8am or the Run at 10:15 a.m. Details are available at that website for both events. We are hoping to have a significant League presence in downtown Albany on that Saturday morning and have plenty of t-shirts which will be available below cost for \$5 to those who wear them at the event whether walking, running, or cheering from the sidelines. The goal is to have fun and provide some League visibility to the thousands who participate in this annual event for women in Albany.

In addition if you are coming from outside the area and would like overnight accommodations at the home of local League member on Friday night or could provide such accommodations if you reside in the Capital Region, please contact Stephanie at the League office (stephanie@lwvny.org or 518-465-4162)

There will be a League table at the Expo in the Concourse level of the Empire State Plaza from noon until 9 p.m. on Friday and from 7 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Saturday. We ask you to stop by that table to pick up your t-shirt and get further directions for the events of the day. Finally, if you would be able to give a few hours to staff that table, please let contact Martha Kennedy (dkennedy2@nycap.rr.com or 518-439-4559) or Stephanie at the office.

Don't miss this unique opportunity to join other members and show your support for the League while experiencing this exciting event and having fun!!

Some Background Information on the LWVUS Energy position (under Natural Resources)

The League advocates a national energy policy emphasizing increased fuel-efficiency standards for automobiles, opposition to oil drilling in environmentally sensitive areas including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) and support for government action in the development and use of energy conservation and renewable energy sources.

In the 108th Congress, the Senate voted twice not to open ANWR to destructive oil drilling. The House, however, included drilling in its version of the Energy Bill. The League also opposed and lobbied against the Energy Bill in the 108th Congress because it would have undermined existing clean air protections, made global warming worse and failed to provide for needed energy conservation measures. Currently, there has been a renewed effort to obtain drilling rights in the ANWR by proposing it as part of a budget resolution for the 2007 fiscal year. The LWVUS opposes this back door move. (See LWVUS site at www.lwv.org)
(Excerpted and reprinted from LWVUS *Impact on Issues, 2004-2006, A Guide to Public Policy Positions*)

NATIONAL BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION AT 2006 LWV NATIONAL CONVENTION

Board recommends retaining all current LWVUS positions

Board recommends a three-year study of immigration policy

Board recommends concurrence with the LWV Illinois Death Penalty Abolition Position

Board recommends adoption of the proposed FY 06-07 budget that includes a \$2.50 PMP increase

Board recommends an additional \$.50 PMP increase for FY 07-08 to assist with the needed funding for the proposed immigration study

Board recommends adoption of two proposed bylaws amendments- a) changing Article II, sec. 1. Purposes: The purposes of the LWVUS are to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation **[of citizens]** in government and to act on selected governmental issues. and b) sec. 2. Types of Membership a. Voting Members. Citizens at least 18 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of local Leagues, State Leagues and of the LWVUS; (1) individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League; (2) those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or shall be state members-at-large; (3) **[those who make a lump-sum life membership payment to the LWVUS shall be paid life members and]** those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be honorary life members excused from the payment of dues. (Proposed changes will eliminate material within brackets)

The first change reflects a League commitment to promote participation in government of all, not just citizens and the membership change recognizes that there has not been a “lump-sum life membership” option for several years; for some reason it was not removed from the by-laws.

There is a great deal of information on the LWVUS website about the convention- go to our website www.lwvalbany.org and follow the links to LWVUS and the members only section.

If you have questions, comments, recommendations regarding LWVUS, please bring them to our annual meeting and pass them along to our delegates.

Law Day and NYS Court Reform A Panel Discussion on New York State Court Reform – How Judges Are Chosen

Date: May 1st, 2006

Place: Albany Law School, Room 200

Time: 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Panelists: John Feerick, former Dean of Fordham Law School, Chair of NYS Commission to Promote Public Confidence in Judicial Elections

Senator John DeFrancisco, 50th State Senate District, Chair, Senate Judiciary Committee

The League of Women Voters of Albany County has received a grant from LWVUS under the “Safeguarding U.S. Democracy program, to convene a meeting on the timely issue of how judges are elected. We have chosen Law Day, established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1957 as a national day to celebrate the rule of law, to bring together this distinguished panel of jurists.

Please see the April bulletin for more details – and plan to attend this forum

Membership 2005-2006
Join & Make a Difference

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

e-mail _____

- Individual membership \$45/year
- Household membership \$60/year
- Student membership \$15/year
- Contribution in support of my local league
- Please send me more information

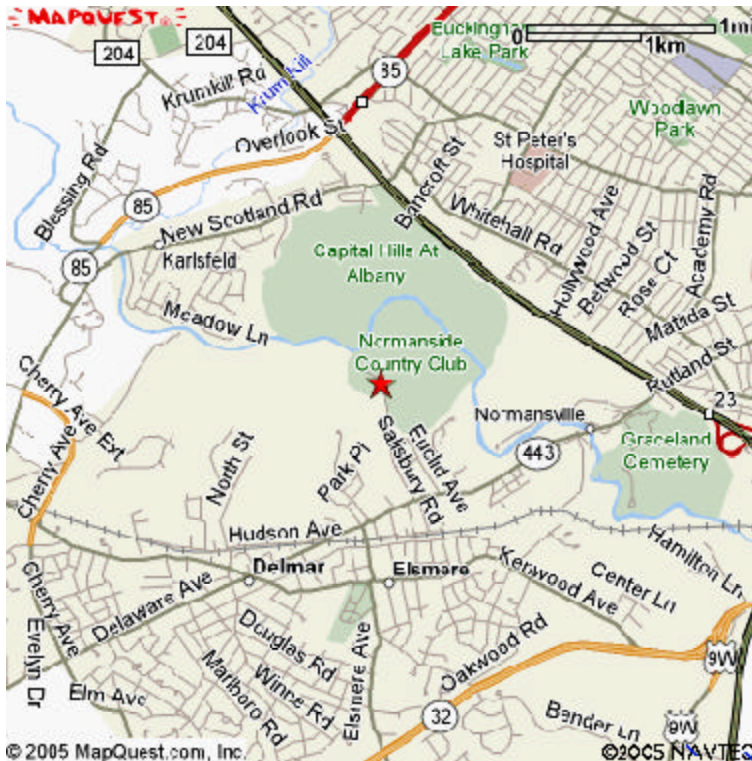
Mail to : League of Women Voters of Albany County
P.O. Box 611 Slingerlands, NY 12159

Or contact: Susan Coleman Tel: 433-9446

Letters.....

we get letters (we hope!)

Express yourself! We are starting a new column for the bulletin. Let me know your ideas and opinions...keep it short and to the point, and primarily on League issues. Mail your letter to Aimee Allaud, Editor, LWVAC bulletin, 85 Melrose Avenue, Albany, NY, 12203, or 85aimee@nycap.rr.com. Bulletin deadlines are the board meeting each month, generally the first Tuesday of each month.



Dinner Menu

1. Parmesan Risotto with Grilled Vegetables
2. Roasted Breast of Chicken
Granny Smith
3. Filet of Sole Florentine

UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

Law Day

Monday, May 1st, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
Albany Law School, Rm. 200
Panel on NYS Court Reform and
Election of judges

LWVAC Board Mtg.

Tuesday, May 2nd
Albany Public Library
1st floor large meeting room
Washington Avenue
Members welcome

New Member Coffee

Saturday May 6th, 9:00-11:00 a.m.
Perfect Blend Espresso Bar & Cafe
376 Delaware Avenue
Delmar NY 12054

Great Decisions Discussions

Monday, 9:30-11:30 a.m.
May 8th – Pandemics &
National security
For information on locations
call Katie Hendrickson,
439-4308

Great Decisions Evening Discussion

Thursday, May 18th, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
(Iran)
Thursday, June 22nd, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
(Energy Policy)
Council of Comm. Services
272 Broadway, Menands
call Kay Wilkie, 768-2901

Albany County Legislature

Monday, May 8th
Albany County Courthouse
2nd floor, Legislative Chambers
7 p.m. (6:30 public comment)

LWVAC Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 17th, 5:30 p.m.
Normanside Country Club
Delmar NY

Freihofer Walk/Run

Saturday, June 3rd

National Convention

June 10th – 13th
Minneapolis, MN

The League of Women Voters of Albany County
P.O. Box 611
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