



The Broome-Tioga Voter

Bulletin of the *League of Women Voters of Broome & Tioga Counties*

www.lwv-broometioga.org

lwvmyers@stny.rr.org

Volume 60, Number 9

September 2008

**League of Women Voters of
Broome & Tioga Counties**

P.O. Box 944, Vestal, NY 13851-0944

Co-Presidents

Clare Simeone 775-0035

csimeone@stny.rr.com

Anne Taft 724-6830

anci@stny.rr.com

1st Vice-Pres./Ed. Finance

Carol Oestrich 797-0026

coestrich@aol.com

2nd Vice-Pres./Program

Mary Johnson 797-3225

mjohnson23@stny.rr.com

Secretary

Joanne Gee 775-4856

raygee@echoes.net

Treasurer

Alice Brooks 754-8277

fbrooksjr@stny.rr.com

Voter Service

Doris Lawton 723-0890

dal22@verizon.net

VOTER Editor/Website Mgr.

Sue Garing 775-5041

rgrajewski@verizon.net

Tioga Liaison/Nominations

Jane Ebert 785-0323

wsebert@yahoo.com

Public Relations

Sandy Kosty 754-8051

dkosty@aol.com

Isi Trapper 723-3410

isitrap@hotmail.com

Local Government

Barbara McMann 724-8796

w.d.mcmann@att.net

Members at Large

Carole Coppens 625-4362

ccoppens@stny.rr.com

Julie Larson 669-4367

julielars@aol.com

Election Reform

Jane Park 748-4192

janepark@stny.rr.com

"Energy Conservation and Sustainability"

Sally Oaks

Director of Physical Facilities Business Affairs at
Binghamton University



Tuesday, September 23, 2008

7:00 p.m. Refreshments

7:30 p.m. Program

Vestal Public Library

Vestal Parkway E., Vestal, NY

Public Welcome

(The Library is accessible to people with disabilities.)

Co-Presidents' Message

While Fall marks the end of the beauty and bounty of summer, for me it has always been a time of new beginnings – the beginning of a new school year, the beginning of a new year of activities in most clubs for women, and the beginning of a host of indoor activities to take the place of the outdoor picnics, sports, and general outdoor fun of summer. And so it is with the League, which always begins a new cycle of activities in September.

Traditionally, we honor one of our most active members at the Status of Women Council Women of Achievement Dinner. This year we will honor Carol Oestrich. The dinner will be held on Wednesday November 12. The deadline for ticket sales is early this year: October 20! Alice Brooks will be handling ticket sales to League members and their guests.

It is time once again to select LWVNYS Legislative Priorities for next year (2009). These priorities will determine what we focus on when we lobby our legislators in Albany. Be sure to read the article elsewhere in this Voter and send us your response. The League is an effective grass-roots organization, but only if you participate and let us know what you consider the most important issues. Please bear in mind that issues that don't make our Legislative Priorities list will not be forgotten – they remain the responsibility of the appropriate issue specialist and will continue to receive attention.

The LWVUS National Popular Vote study committee is preparing for the Consensus this winter, when consensus questions will come out. Leagues across the nation are holding informational meetings on this important topic. Our League got ahead of the game with our informational meeting last March.

Preparations are beginning for the LWVNYS Convention May 15-17 in Syracuse. The state Nominating Committee is asking members across the state for nominations for the positions to be filled this year. These are President, four Vice-Presidents (for Advocacy & Issues, Membership, Voter Service, and Development), Secretary/Treasurer, four Directors (Legislative, Citizen Education, Grassroots Lobby & Membership Outreach, and Publication), and a Nominating Chair and two Nominating Committee members. You can make any number of nominations, and you can even nominate yourself! Details on the nomination process and a copy of the nomination form are in the September 2008 State Board Report (SBR), which is available on the state League website. If you have trouble doing

this, I'd be glad to mail you a hard copy – just ask! Remember to send your nominations to the state Nominations Chair and not to the State League office.

State Convention is also the time for considering possible amendments to the State League bylaws. You can find the current bylaws on the State League website, in the September 2008 SBR. As always, if you have trouble downloading these materials, I'll be glad to mail you a hard copy. To propose an amendment to LWVNYS bylaws, just copy the section you'd like to amend, enclosing material to be deleted in parentheses and underlining material to be added. Also, please give the reasons for your proposed changes. Proposed bylaws amendments are to be sent in by the local League and not by the member or members who draft the proposal. We need to consider proposed amendments at the November Board meeting, since they need to reach the state League office by December 12. To allow time for me to email copies to our Board, so they'll have time to read and think about your proposals before the meeting, I need to receive your proposed amendment(s) by November 11.

We don't want to get so busy preparing for the LWVNYS Convention 2009 and the National Popular Vote study and consensus that we forget to enjoy all that the League has to offer this fall. There's two candidate forums, our annual Legislative Breakfast (once again in the fall), and our December Brunch, all before the end of 2008. Then there are primary elections, the presidential election along with local, state, and other national races. Wherever our political loyalties lie, everyone will realize that there is much at stake and so will be interested in the outcome. As Leaguers, we can all agree on the importance of having every vote count.

Clare and I hope to see many of you at the September Program Meeting. We wish you a wonderful fall season!

~ Anne

 **The "Be a Part of the Action" brochure was mailed with this voter.**

LWVNYS Legislative Priorities for 2009

In November, the LWVNYS Board will determine the NYS League's legislative priorities for 2009.

Three criteria will be used:

1. Is the issue "unfinished business" from 2008?
2. Is the issue likely to receive legislative attention in 2009?
3. Is action on the issue supported by a League position?

In 2008, the State League gave priority to legislation on the following issues:

Good Government

The League has consistently advocated for government reform and will continue to work with the Governor's office, legislative leaders and the public to realize the following reforms:

- **Campaign Finance Reform:** support measures to close loopholes and reform New York State's lax campaign finance laws; move toward full public financing of campaigns.
- **Redistricting:** support the creation of an Independent Redistricting Commission.
- **Voting Technology:** support of a single statewide voting system using paper ballot/optical scan.
- **Election Law:** support of measures to protect, extend, and encourage the use of the franchise. Support uniformity in election laws and procedures. Support adequate funding for training of election personnel.
- **Court Restructuring/Judicial Selection:** Support a constitutional amendment to restructure the NYS court system to combine current trial courts into a statewide two-tier system guaranteeing litigants a hearing in one court by one judge. Support of a constitutional amendment to replace judicial elections with a qualification-based appointive system for selecting all judges in New

York State and the establishment of a broadly based, diverse nonpartisan nominating commission.

- **Legislative Procedures:** Support measures to allow legislators better and more equitably distributed staff and resources, distributed independently of partisan control. Support the use of conference committees to resolve differences in similar bills.

Cost-Effective and Accessible Health Care

The League of Women Voters supports:

- A single-payer system as an acceptable way to contain cost and provide equitable access.
- A basic level of quality physical and mental health care for all state residents.
- Planning and regulations assuring New Yorkers, including the medically indigent, access to a basic level of quality care.
- Containment of costs without compromising accessibility or quality care.
- Enhanced budgetary appropriation for health promotion and disease prevention.

Energy and the Environment

The League will support viable legislation that will:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Foster energy efficiency and encourage renewable energy.
- Protect water quality.
- Promote programs dealing with waste management and hazardous waste.
- Promote smart growth, contain sprawl, encourage regional planning, enhance urban neighborhoods and protect agricultural land, open space, watersheds, and other sensitive areas.
- Support a budget appropriation that will expand effective public transit, in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and encourage smart growth.

Additional League Positions

- **Capital Punishment:** The League supports abolition of the death penalty, with the use of life without parole as the primary alternative.
- **Equity in School Financing:** – The League supports narrowing the spending gap between the wealthiest and the least wealthy school districts in New York State. It supports reform to the STAR (School Tax Relief) program to make it less regressive, in furtherance of the goal of targeting tax relief where it is most needed.
- **Reproductive Rights:** – The League supports a woman’s constitutional right of privacy in making reproductive choices.
- **Salary Equity Reform:** - The League supports legislation requiring the use of gender neutral job evaluation systems, to end underpayment of job titles where women and people of color predominate. We support legislation to enable employees to obtain salary information and reveal salaries, without reprisal.

Your Input Needed – Act Now!

What do you think the New York State League legislative priorities should be in 2009?

Your local board needs your input by October 13.

Please review the above summary of the 2009 legislative priorities, and select three issues you believe should be considered. Prioritize your selections from one to three, one being the highest, and include your rationale for each.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

Name (optional) _____

Please submit your suggestions either on the form above or in the format of your choice to Anne Taft by e-mail (anci@stny.rr.com) or by regular mail to 38 Oakridge Drive, Binghamton, NY 13903. Or contact any Board member (see directory on p.1).

Deadline: October 13, 2008

Voter Service

Voter Service Committee members have been out and about this Summer. No vacation in a presidential election year. Much has been done and there are more voter service activities in the works.

Our voter registration drives in August were very successful. The first three Saturdays at Sam's Club saw upwards of 175 eligible voters stopping by our table filling out voter registration forms, which we delivered to the board of elections on Monday morning, taking forms with them, getting information on such issues as absentee ballots, enrolling in a party (not required) or having appropriate identification (required). Many thanks to Sara and Karl Wokan, Issy Trapper, Claire Burkhardt, Barbara Shope, Sondra Proudén and Bobbi Dean for making it happen.

The last Saturday of August found us in Center Court at the Oakdale Mall. Traffic not quite as heavy as Sam's but a good number. We collected completed registrations (delivered promptly to the board of elections), gave out forms and instructions along with our LWV Voter Guides. Made sure that students knew that if they were 18 by November 4 they were eligible to vote. Carol Taren, Issy Trapper, Barbara Shope, Elaine Doupe, Joan Eisch and Doris Lawton were among those who staffed our space from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In September we continued the delivery of 4,000 Voter Guides, Parts I and II, to many sites in Broome and Tioga Counties. We also provided Voter Guides to 16 area high schools for use by their Participation in Government teachers.

Two candidate debates are coming up in October. The first is October 1 with the League of Women Voters and the Greater Broome County Chamber of Commerce co-sponsoring a debate between the two County Executive candidates, Barbara Fiala, the incumbent, and her challenger Michael Marinaccio. The debate is scheduled to be held at 5:30 p.m. in the studios of WSKG.

The second debate will be held on October 21, tentatively in the cafeteria of U-E High School, between the candidates for Union Supervisor - John Bernardo, the incumbent, and his challenger James Testani. More on this event later.

We continue to work with other community groups as part of Broome Community College's initiative for civic en-

agement. We have agreed to provide voter information at the YWCA, when asked, at their events. A voter service presentation was made on September 8 for residents of Renaissance Plaza in Binghamton.

~ Doris Lawton

National Popular Vote Compact Study

Delegates at the June LWVUS Convention in Portland adopted a fast-track study of the National Popular Vote Compact. Carolie Mullan (TX) has been appointed to the 2008-2010 LWVUS Board to chair this study. During calendar planning local Leagues are urged to save a date in January or February 2009 for a consensus meeting.

If Leagues are going to have consensus meetings in January or February, it means that they need to have a NPV educational meeting in the fall. Educational materials will be supplied by the LWVUS Committee and they will also supply the questions for consensus (or not) vote in January or February.

The League Position on Selection of the President, by the National Board, as updated June 2004 is:

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the direct popular- vote method for electing the President and Vice-President is essential to representative government. The League of Women Voters believes, therefore, that the Electoral College should be abolished. The League also supports uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The League supports changes in the in the presidential election system – from the candidate selections process to the general election. We support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates and their positions, public policy issues, and the selection process itself. The League supports action to ensure that the media, political parties, candidates and all levels of government achieve these goals and provide that information.

Some members in our League have shown strong support for the NVP Compact. If anyone is interested in forming a committee to take on this study please call any one of the Board members.

The LWVNY State has information concerning NPV and the issues involved on its website at www.lwvny.org,

click on the link National Popular Vote where you will find information on the following topics:

- National NPV Compact Explained With Detailed Pro and Con Arguments
- Electoral College History
- The Electoral College and How It Works
- Process For Amending the Constitution
- Reference Materials

~ Clare Simeone

September Program:

Energy Conservation and Sustainability

The 2008-2009 program year will open September 23 with a topic that is of concern to all who face the rising costs of energy consumption and are concerned about the environment. Our speaker is Sally Oaks, Director of Physical Facilities Business Affairs at Binghamton University. The University has made great strides in energy savings and sustainability in the last two years.

Some of the areas that will be addressed are:

- New construction, available grants and LEEDS
- Energy saving initiatives at the University
- Environmental impacts
- What is a carbon footprint
- Recycling and resource recovery

In addition, Ms. Oaks will point out how these programs can benefit us in our own homes and everyday lives. As usual, we will have coffee at 7:00 and the program will begin at 7:30. Please feel free to bring friends and family to what promises to be an interesting program.

~ Mary Johnson

Identification Statement

The Broome-Tioga Voter *is published 9 times a year (January, February, March, April, May, July/ August, September, October, and November/ December) by the League of Women Voters of Broome & Tioga Counties, 38 Oakridge Drive, Binghamton, NY 13903.*

The Broome-Tioga Voter

The League of Women Voters of Broome & Tioga Counties
P.O. Box 944
Vestal, NY 13851-0944
(607)772-4936

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
BINGHAMTON, NY
PERMIT # 2

Calendar

Tuesday	September 16	Board Meeting
Tuesday	September 23	Program: Energy Conservation and Sustainability
Tuesday	September 9	PRIMARY ELECTION
Wednesday	October 1	Broome Co. Exec. Debate
Tuesday	October 14	Board Meeting
Tuesday	October 21	Union Supervisor Debate
Tuesday	November 4	GENERAL ELECTION
Wednesday	November 12	Women of Achievement Dinner, Owego Treadway
Saturday	November 15	Legislative Breakfast
Tuesday	November 18	Board Meeting

Contents

Co-Presidents' Column	2
LWVNY Legislative Priorities for 2009	3
Voter Service	4
National Popular Vote Compact Study	5
September Program Details: Energy/Sustainability at Binghamton University	5