



## League of Women Voters of Cortland County NEWSLETTER

March-April 2010

**President:** *Shawn C. Smith* [mrs.shawnsmith@gmail.com](mailto:mrs.shawnsmith@gmail.com) **Editor:** *Mary Beilby* [beilby@cortland.edu](mailto:beilby@cortland.edu)

### CALENDAR

**Mar. 10-5:30-6:45 “Government Modernization through Consolidation and Shared Services”**  
**Vito Sciscioli, Executive Director of SYRACUSE 20/20 and Adjunct Professor at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs—Beard Bldg. 9 Main St. Cortland.**

**Mar. 17-Board Meeting 5:30 at Community**

**Apr. 10-5:30-6:45 “Child Welfare in Cortland County”****Tiffany Parker & Colin Cummins,**  
**Cortland Co. Dept. of Social Services—Beard Bldg. 9 Main St. Cortland.**

**Apr. 21-Board Meeting 5:30 at Community**

### **President's Message:**

Greetings CCLWV Members! I hope are enjoying the snow! Whenever we have those big fluffy snow flakes it reminds me of childhood – trying to catch a snow flake on your tongue, making snow angels, and building snow forts. If you have caught yourself grumbling about shoveling and winter driving, take a step back and watch the delight in a child's eyes as they dance in the snow and build snow men & women. It really does help put things in perspective.

We will continue looking at governmental cost cutting strategies in March's program taking place on March 10<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 6:45 pm at SUNY Cortland Downtown, Beard Building (9 Main Street) with a presentation on Government Modernization through Consolidation and Shared Services. Vito Sciscioli, Executive Director of Syracuse 20/20 and adjunct professor at SU, will be our featured speaker. This is an important and timely topic because while the stock market's performance seems to be improving ever so slightly, challenges will continue to be felt at the state and local government levels due to a number of factors including high employment rates, healthcare costs, and reductions in both income and sales tax revenues. Looking for ways to consolidate and/or share services may save limited resources, as well as improve the quality of services provided to local community members.

In honor of Child Abuse Prevention month, we will turn our focus in April to the state of children in Cortland County. Our April program entitled “Child Welfare in Cortland County” will take place on April 6<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 6:45 pm at SUNY Cortland Downtown, Beard Building (9 Main Street). Tiffany Parker, Director of Social Services and Colin Cummins, Child Protective Services Supervisor, will speak about services in Cortland County, our local data, and the trends that they are seeing.

I invite you to mark your calendars and plan to attend both of these thought-provoking, opportune, and important presentations. Feel free to bring a friend – these sessions are free and open to the public.

You are also invited to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the League of Women Voters at a luncheon sponsored by one of our sister leagues – the Syracuse Metro League of Women Voters taking place on March 26<sup>th</sup> (RSVP by March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010). Call (315) 448-7199 for more information.

Lastly, for those of you who are interested in additional communications, the LWV NYS has a new place to catch-up on the most recent legislative happenings - it's a Blog Spot! Go to <http://lwny-blog.blogspot.com> to check-it out.

Until our next meeting, enjoy the snow! I look forward to seeing you all in March!

### **Betty Brevett — In Memorium**

The League of Women Voters of Cortland County has lost an invaluable member and friend with the death of Elizabeth "Betty" Brevett on February 12th at the age of 85. A graduate of Smith College with a Master's Degree from SUNY Cortland, Betty was a teacher and later a several-term county legislator. Her league membership was at the 50 year mark, we believe, since early records are unavailable. Betty served as an informed and enthusiastic board member until 2008, and was our accurate newspaper reporter for many years. Her ability to see the "bigger picture" in many of the issues that the league studied, and to frame perceptive questions for speakers was exceptional. Although her health problems accounted for a "slow-down" in her activities during the last two years, she maintained an upbeat attitude and amazing independence of spirit. Some of us last saw her at a rally for health reform at Congressman Arcuri's office in August. We will miss that wonderful smile, distinctive voice, positive outlook, and sense of justice with compassion that were so integral to her character. —Linda Eberly

#### *League Mission Statement*

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, & influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**2010 DUES REMINDER:** Your membership dues are **essential** to the LWV. A large share of your dues goes to the national and state Leagues that provide direction and useful resources to our local league. Our only source of funding is our annual membership dues and contributions made by friends of the League. So please make sure you pay your dues as soon as you can. Also, urge friends and acquaintances who support the mission of the League to join.

### **Our Chapter Needs Support and Members—Encourage Others to Join!**

#### **League of Women Voters Membership Application-Cortland County Chapter**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership dues: \$50 per year**

**Please send with check payable to Cortland County Chapter, League of Women Voters**

**To: Lenore Schwager, Treasurer 42 Pearl St. Cortland, NY 13045**

## THE LEAGUE THROUGH THE YEARS

The Founding – From the spirit of the suffrage movement came a great idea that a non-partisan, civic organization could provide the education and experience the public needed to assure the success of democracy. The League of Women Voters was founded on that idea.

The 1920's – The first League convention voted 69 separate items as statements of principle and recommendations for legislation including support for collective bargaining, child labor laws, a minimum wage, a joint federal-state employment service, compulsory education and equal opportunity for women in government and industry.

The 1930's – The League took a firm position in support of U. S. membership in the League of Nations and launched a nation-wide campaign for support of the merit system for selecting government personnel that led to the removal of federal jobs from the spoils system and placed them under civil service.

The 1940's – The League's primary efforts during the war years centered on support for price control, rationing, and higher income taxes. The Dumbarton Oaks proposals for the establishment of the United Nations became the focal point for the most vigorous citizen education effort ever undertaken by the League.

The 1950's – The witch hunt of the early fifties inspired the League to undertake a two-year community education program focusing on the individual liberties guaranteed by the Constitution.

The 1960's – In response to the growing civil rights crisis the League directed its energies to equality of opportunity and built a solid foundation of support for equal access to education, employment and housing.

The 1970's – The League 1972 convention overwhelmingly approved support for ratification of the equal rights amendment. Two years later, League membership was broadened to include men.

The 1980's – The League was in the forefront of the struggle to pass the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1982 and contribute significantly to the enactment of the historic Tax Reform Act of 1986. The 1990's The League launched "Take Back the System", a voter campaign to reclaim government and elections.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century – The League was instrumental in the enactment of the Help America Vote Act of 2002 and the Bipartisan Campaign Finance Reform Act of 2002. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century holds promise for a strong vibrant organization dedicated to "Making Democracy Work."

Reprinted from the Syracuse League of Women Voters

## Government Consolidation/Shared Services State Study

We will hold a meeting in May to discuss and come to a consensus on government consolidation. Please see the Discussion Guide/Consensus Questions; Government Consolidation/Shared Services State Study January 26, 2010 <http://www.lwvny.org/consolidation/DiscGuide011010.pdf> and "Consolidating Local Government" [http://www.lwvny.org/consolidation/Fisher\\_FullReport1109.pdf](http://www.lwvny.org/consolidation/Fisher_FullReport1109.pdf)

### Consensus Questions: Government Consolidation/Shared Services State Study January 26, 2010

#### SECTION I

#### *Standards for Judging State Legislation or Constitutional Amendments*

What standards should the League apply when evaluating statewide legislation or constitutional amendments concerning the implementation of local government dissolution/consolidation/major shared service proposals (answer affirmatively all that you would support):

A. Does the legislation or constitutional amendment encourage a process that [is]:

1. Cooperative and collaborative?: Y \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ U \_\_\_
2. Transparent?: Y \_\_\_ N \_\_\_ U \_\_\_ (cont'd on next page)

SYRACUSE METROPOLITAN LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
90TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION LUNCHEON  
MARKING THE SIGNING OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT  
AND  
THE FOUNDING OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 2010  
12 :00—1:30 pm  
RENAISSANCE HOTEL (TOP FLOOR)  
701 EAST GENESEE STREET, SYRACUSE NY 13210  
GUEST SPEAKER: KAREN DECROW  
WITH COMMENTS FROM  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE JOANNE MAHONEY  
\$21.00 LWV Members - \$25.00 Non Members

Luncheon Choices

- Cobb Salad  
 Asian Chicken Salad  
 Caesar Salad

Luncheon includes soup of the day, coffee/tea and dessert.

- Number of Reservations @ \$21.00 (LWV Members)  
 Number of Reservations @ \$25.00 (Non Members)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your luncheon choices by Thursday March 18th to  
Syracuse Metro LWV, PO Box 11866, Syracuse NY 13218.

The event is open to the public—Bring a friend

**Consensus Questions (cont'd)**

**3. Contain well defined channels for citizen input and review?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_**

**4. Provide affected citizens with sufficient and timely information necessary to make informed decisions?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_**

**Consensus Questions, cont'd.**

**5. Other?: (add any additional process standards you support)**

**B. Does the legislation or constitutional amendment contain operational standards that, taken as a whole:**

**1. Promote administrative efficiency in the decision/process to dissolve, consolidate, or share services: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_**

**2. Promote fiscal efficiency in the decision/process to dissolve, consolidate, or share services: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_**

**3. Other minimum operational standards we should support when evaluating state legislation/ amendments affecting dissolution/consolidation/major shares services proposals. Attach separate page if necessary.**

**C. Possible State Funding of Government Dissolution/Consolidation/Shared Services (answer unsure if you do not have an opinion):**

**1. Should the state provide grants or loans to local governmental units that wish to consider dissolution/consolidation/major shared services to enable them to do all or any of the items specified below? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_**

**2. Specifically, should the grants or loans be available to:**

**a. Conduct a feasibility study: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_**

**b. Implement the mechanics of dissolution/consolidation/major shared services(e.g. legal, accounting, consulting fees and costs of referenda(if any)) : Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_**

**Consensus Questions (cont'd)**

- c. Pay employee expenses related to the integration of staff, early retirement, buyouts: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- d. Provide an incentive (thru municipal aid) to dissolve/consolidate/share services: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- e. Other? (Please list any other costs of consolidation/dissolution/shared service, if any, that you believe should be funded by state grants, in whole or in part)

**3. Should the aid consist primarily of:**

- a. Grants or \_\_\_
- b. Loans? \_\_\_

**4. Should grants, if any, cover 100% of the costs, be limited to matching grants (ie 50%), be limited to some other percentage, or you are unsure? (please indicate the consensus, if any)**

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**SECTION 2**

*Standards for evaluating a specific local proposal for the dissolution or consolidation of a local governmental entity (county, city, town, village, district, authority) or major shared service.*

Answer affirmatively all that you would support as one of multiple standards for evaluation of a proposal, not necessarily as a prerequisite for supporting a proposal.

**A. Is the process with respect to the proposal:**

- 1. Cooperative and collaborative?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 2. Transparent?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 3. Containing well defined channels for citizen input and review?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 4. Providing affected citizens with sufficient and timely information necessary to make informed decisions?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 5. Other?: (add any additional standards you support)

**B. Operational standards in deciding whether to support a proposal (vote for as many as you feel should apply) :**

Costs/Tax Impacts

**Whether or not the proposal:**

- 1. Results in overall cost savings/positive effect on taxes in the short term?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 2. Results in projected cost savings/positive effect on taxes over the long term? : Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 3. Results in cost savings/positive effect on taxes for citizens of both/all entities? : Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_

If cost savings for all are not possible for both/all:

- 4. Results in the governmental entity(s) with higher projected costs/taxes having those costs/taxes phased in over time or otherwise mitigated?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 5. Relies on increases in state aid to show an economic benefit from the transaction or does it stand on its own merit?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 6. Requires any governmental entity affected by higher costs/taxes to accept such increased costs/taxes by means of a majority vote of the governing board? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_

**Impact on Service Standards:**

**Whether or not the proposal:**

- 7. Results in increased quality and/or efficiency of services?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 8. Results in, at a minimum, a maintenance of services?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 9. Results in diminution of services but ones that could be purchased more cheaply in the private sector?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 10. Requires any governmental entity to accept any plan where residents would see a diminution of services by means of a majority vote of the governing board? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_

**Other Items to be evaluated**

**Whether or not the proposal:**

- 11. Fairly addresses disparities in employee contracts?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_
- 12. Results in increased social/economic justice? : Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_

**Consensus questions (cont'd)**

13. Results in a reduction in the number of governmental entities?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_

14. Maintains sense of community?: Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_ U\_\_\_

C. Other? (list on back) (any other areas of inquiry that you believe should be evaluated in any study of a dissolution/consolidation/major shared service proposal) \*\*\*\*\*

**HELP WANTED**

The Candidate Forum for State and National candidates is coming up in the fall. We need someone to represent the league on the planning committee that will work throughout the spring and summer to set a date, arrange a venue, contact the candidates and the media, get a moderator, etc. We will be working with members of the Women's Coalition (YWCA, AAUW, Zonta, Access to Independence and SUNY Women's Studies Dept. on this. It's an opportunity to meet people from the other organizations and participate in an important community event.

The League would like to develop a website and/or facebook page to notify members and others of important news and events and provide another means of recruiting new members. If you or someone you know can help us with this project, please contact Shawn Smith at [mrs.shawnsmith@gmail.com](mailto:mrs.shawnsmith@gmail.com)

We will soon be looking for new officers and members of the Board of Directors. Please notify one of the officers or board members If you are willing to serve the league in any of these positions.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CORTLAND COUNTY 2009-2010 BOARD:**

**Officers:**

<b>President</b>	<b>Shawn Smith</b>	<i>mrs.shawnsmith@gmail.com</i>
<b>1st Vice President Voter Service</b>	<b>Nancy Hansen</b>	<i>nancyh14@verizon.</i>
<b>2nd Vice President Membership</b>	<b>Charlotte Farris</b>	<i>farrisdc@yahoo.com</i>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Linda Eberly</b>	<i>leberly2 @twcny.rr.com</i>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>Lenore Schwager</b>	<i>Lenore_Schwager@yahoo.com</i>

**Directors:**

<b>At Large/Newsletter/Advocacy</b>	<b>Mary Beilby,</b>	<i>mary.beilby@cortland.edu</i>
<b>At Large</b>	<b>Jane Richards</b>	<i>Janerr@odyssey.net</i>
<b>At Large</b>	<b>Christine Buck</b>	<i>christine@buckengllc.com</i>

LWV NYS website [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)

LWV US website [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

To get on the e-mailing lists for LWV-US bulletins and action alerts, go to <https://member.lwv.org/Subscribe.asp>  
The State Board Report is published six times a year on the state website and provides vital information on all activities and actions of the State Board. The State Voter (no longer printed and mailed) is also available on the state website.-