



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

LWV of East Nassau

# Voter

*At local, state and national levels  
the League works to influence public policy  
through education and advocacy.*

*February, 2010*

## Save the Dates

**\*\*Wednesday, Feb. 3 – 3:00 PM**

**LWVEN Board Meeting**

Levittown Library

(\*\*Please note change in time.)

**Tuesday, Feb. 9**

Special Election for 15<sup>th</sup> AD

*See page 4.*

**Sunday, February 14**

Valentine's Day

*90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the*

*League of Women Voters*

**Monday, Feb. 15**

Presidents' Day

**Wednesday, Feb. 17 – 1:30 PM**

**LWVEN General Meeting**

Speaker: David Gabor, Esq.

Levittown Library

**Wednesday, Mar. 17 – 7:30 PM**

Consensus Meeting – Consolidation

/Dissolution of Government Entities

Levittown Library

**Thursday, March 18 - 4:00 PM**

**LWVNC Women's History Dinner**

See page 3. Invitations will be sent.

"Strive not to be a success, but  
rather to be of value."

- **Albert Einstein**

"Our greatest glory is not in never  
falling, but in getting up every  
time we do."

- **Confucius**

"Don't count the days, make the  
days count." - **Muhammad Ali**

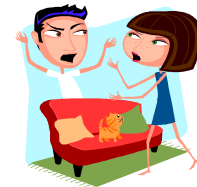
"Science is organized knowledge.  
Wisdom is organized life."

- **Immanuel Kant**

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT In the Workplace

### Violence in the Home

**David Gabor, an attorney in the fields of employment law and alternative dispute resolution, will discuss social, political and legal aspects of this pervasive issue, together with highlights of case histories.**



**Wed. Feb. 17, 1:30 P.M.**

**Levittown Public Library**

**Bluegrass Lane, Levittown**

**For information call 516-796-6211**

**Speaker is presented with the cooperation of the Nassau County Bar Association.**

**Bring family and friends. This should prove to be extremely informative.**

### Barbara's Corner



Plans for 2010 are in full swing and inspire us to join in celebrating the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The League of Women Voters of the United States on February 14. Watch for further announcements by our enthusiastic committee which is putting together a library display about the League. It may be in your local library.

**FIX ALBANY NOW** is our slogan as the legislative session begins and we plan lobbying visits to the local offices of our State Senators and Assembly members. Some of our newer members always enjoy accompanying a more experienced League member on these visits to hear the discussion on issues such as campaign finance reform, redistricting and improving procedures for registration and voting.

**Continued on page 3**

## League of Women Voters® of East Nassau

**Barbara Epstein, President**  
**Paula Blum, Editor**  
 1385 Lyon Place, Wantagh  
 Tel/Fax: 785-3213/3263  
[paulablum@hotmail.com](mailto:paulablum@hotmail.com)

**Mary Price, Circulation**  
**Lesley Pollak, Advertising**

### County Legislature Meeting Schedule

Monday, Feb. 22	10:00 AM
Monday, Mar. 8	10:00 AM
Monday, Mar.22	10:00 AM

The Nassau County Legislature meets in the Legislative Chamber, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, 1550 Franklin Ave, Mineola, 571-4252. An admittance pass must be obtained. Call for scheduled committee meeting dates and times.

### Town of Hempstead Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, Feb. 9	7:00 PM
Tuesday, Feb. 23	10:30 AM
Tuesday, Mar. 9	10:30 AM

The Hempstead Town Board meets at Town Hall, in the Nathan H. Bennett Pavilion, 489-5000.

### Town of Oyster Bay Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, Feb. 9	10:00 AM
Tuesday, Feb. 23	10:00 AM
Tuesday, Mar. 9	10:00 AM

The Oyster Bay Town Board meets at 54 Audrey Ave., Oyster Bay, 624-6390.

**Call before  
attending.  
Schedules  
are subject  
to change.**



## LWVEN Board of Directors – 2008-2009

### OFFICERS

<b>President/Affordable Housing:</b>	Barbara Epstein	221-1948
<b>Vice Presidents:</b>		
<b>Executive VP &amp; Judicial</b>		
<b>Liaison &amp; Environment:</b>	Lorraine Newman	735-4876
<b>Voter Service &amp; HAVA:</b>	Norma Schaeffer	489-3133
<b>Bulletin Circulation &amp; Special Events:</b>	Mary Price	731-0812
<b>Secretary:</b>	Shirlee Bergman	249-5276
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Barbara Josepher	921-8749

### DIRECTORS:

<b>Administrative Assistant:</b>	Judy Schmertz	221-1576
<b>Bulletin:</b>	Paula Blum	785-3213
<b>Budget/Bulletin Advertising:</b>	Lesley Pollak	731-1066
<b>Education:</b>	Maxine Stolzer	938-1172
<b>Health Care, Advocacy:</b>	Polly Nager	796-6211
<b>Immigration:</b>	Carole Goldfarb	626-3338
<b>Membership:</b>	Bobby Stim	731-1067
<b>Nat. Res./Health Care:</b>	Anne Ostling	681-8996
<b>Public Relations:</b>	Shirley Bard	781-9570
	Dell Smith	520-9366
<b>Voter Service:</b>	Claire Gavrin	781-7274
<b>Programs:</b>	Janet Spar	735-8673
<b>Special Districts &amp; Students Inside Albany:</b>	Lillian Broad	781-8685
<b>Students Inside Albany:</b>	Judy Schecter	221-5448
<b>At Large:</b>	Mimi Hirsch	822-5086

### In this issue:

1. Save the Dates, Meeting: Sexual Harrassment in the Workplace, Violence in the Home, Barbara's Corner
2. Legislative Meeting Dates, Officers and Directors, *Keeping Connected*
3. Fourth Annual UOCAVA Summit, FYI, Save the Date – March 18, Fix Albany Now, Recruiting Ruth S. Shur Fellows
4. Special Election, Did You Know..., Greener Light Bulbs Save Energy, Verified Voting Launches VVBlog
- 5 & 6. Advertisers, *Membership Enrollment Form*
7. Understanding Your Real Estate Taxes
8. LWVNYS News

## Keeping Connected

### LWVUS & LWVUS Education Fund

1730 M Street, NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20036-4508  
 202-429-1965, [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org), [lwv@lwv.org](mailto:lwv@lwv.org)

### LWVNYS & LWVNYS Education Foundation

62 Grand Street, Albany, NY 12207  
 518-465-4162, [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org), [lwvny@lwvny.org](mailto:lwvny@lwvny.org), [www.lwvny-bulletins.org](http://www.lwvny-bulletins.org)

### LWV of Nassau County:

Post Office Box 539, Point Lookout, NY 11569, 516-431-1628  
[www.lwvofnassaucounty.org](http://www.lwvofnassaucounty.org), [vote@lwvofnassaucounty.org](mailto:vote@lwvofnassaucounty.org)

**Barbara's Corner – continued from page 1.**

New voting machines are expected to be in use in November. What an opportunity for us to get involved in educating our fellow citizens about using the new machines!

All this, plus interesting speakers and timely programs at our meetings make us eager to participate. Call me at 221-1948 or email [byeppie@aol.com](mailto:byeppie@aol.com) with your comments, suggestions and, of course, offers to help.



**Fourth Annual  
UOCAVA Summit**

LWVUS's partner, the Overseas Vote Foundation (OVF), has helped give voice to tens of thousands of military and overseas voters all over the world. With new developments in voter research, voting technology and election education, the remarkable efforts of the OVF, LWV and other election organizations to enfranchise military and overseas voters continues to grow.

This March, the 4th Annual UOCAVA (Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act) Summit, coordinated by OVF, takes place in Munich, Germany. It brings together voting agencies, secretaries of state, elections officials, business leaders, nonprofit organizations, thought leaders, researchers and academics, technologists, innovators, and overseas and military voters. Its goals are to address the most serious issues of enfranchisement, the direction of technology development, building outreach and participation, evolving research and data gathering, and the implementation of the new Military and Overseas Voting Empowerment (MOVE) Act. Go to [lwv.org](http://lwv.org) to learn more about this important event.

**FYI:**



**Seatguru.com** – details the seating on planes flown by more than 25 airlines. This allows passengers to determine the legroom and quirks of a seat before booking a flight.

**Lastminute.com** – If your time is flexible, this site offers last minute deals for flights, road trips, etc.

**- SAVE THE DATE -**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2010  
For Dinner**

The League of Women Voters of Nassau County welcomes you to a grand three-way celebration:

Women's History Month

The 90th Anniversary of the Passage of the 19th Amendment

The 90th Anniversary of the League of Women Voters

Join us for a dramatic presentation starring your sister (and fellow) League members.

The voices of the suffragists  
The issues which brought them together  
The conflicts which drove them apart

**Fix Albany Now**

We are planning our annual visit to lobby our New York Senators and Assembly members. Specific topics are: Campaign Finance Reform, Ethics Reform, Election Reform, and Redistricting.

Join us whether or not you have prior experience. Study material will be provided. It's a grand experience.

Please call Polly at 516-796-6211.

**Recruiting Ruth S. Shur Fellows  
for a National League Coaching Team**

The LWVUS is seeking 12 national coaches who will become Ruth S. Shur Fellows to help expand the number of state and local Leagues that can participate in our successful program based on the Membership Recruitment Initiative and building in leadership development. Coaches will receive national training, participate in regional and state training sessions for Leagues and receive ongoing support from the LWVUS. Go to the member page at [LWV.org](http://LWV.org), and click the appropriate link for more information and an application. (Ruth Shur was a League member from Nassau County.)

## Special Election February 9



There will be a special election for the 15th NYS Assembly District seat, formerly held by Rob Walker (who is now Chief Deputy County Executive of Nassau County). The candidates are: **Mathew T. Meng** (D) and **Michael A. Montesano** (R, I, C).

The district includes the following communities (or parts therein): Bethpage, Brookville, East Garden City, East Hills, East Meadow, East Norwich, Glen Head, Glenwood Landing, Greenvale, Hicksville, Jericho, Lattingtown, Laurel Hollow, Levittown, Locust Valley, Matinecock, Muttontown, New Cassel, Old Brookville, Oyster Bay Cove, Plainview, Salisbury, Syosset, Upper Brookville and Westbury.

To find out if you are in the 15th AD, when the polls are open, etc., contact the Board of Elections at 571-2411.

## Did You Know...

On November 2, 1929, a **group of women pilots** met in an airplane hangar in Valley Stream, to create the "Ninety-Nines," the first organization exclusively for women pilots.

Its first president was Amelia Earhart who presided over the group's founding members. Today, the "Ninety-Nines" has grown to over 7,000 worldwide.



**The Wantagh Foundation for Educational Excellence** has been offering free computer classes, from 10:00 AM to Noon, two Saturdays a month, to Senior Citizens in the community, for the past two years. Seniors do not need a computer at home to attend, but if they have laptops, they can bring them to the class. The instruction is one-on-one, and geared to the needs of each individual. For information, call 781-5055.



## Ethics And Campaign Finance Reform Update



On January 13th, leaders in both houses of the NYS Legislature (Assembly majority and minority along with Senate majority) announced an agreement on a reform bill for campaign finance enforcement and ethics reform, which creates an executive ethics and compliance commission and the NYS commission on lobbying ethics and compliance. LWV representatives were at the Capitol during the negotiations and offered input to the process.

What emerged from the negotiations was a bill that contained some, but not all the proposals the League has long sought. The bill does not purport to address the issue of limiting campaign contributions. We will continue to press for this piece separately.

While not everything that LWV and our good government colleagues sought, the proposed changes in S6457 would improve both ethics and campaign finance enforcement and create greater transparency.

Specifically it will:

1. Strengthen the enforcement unit within the State Board of Elections and increase transparency of filings and enforcement.
2. Create three new oversight agencies for ethics and lobbying.
3. Require more extensive disclosure from legislators and lobbyists.

"Although this is far from a perfect solution to the reforms needed in Albany, this moves us further toward increased enforcement and more transparency. We will continue coming back to the legislature for stronger campaign finance legislation and other reforms for which the League has long advocated" stated our LWVNYS Legislative Director, Barbara Bartoletti.

The Governor announced a more sweeping set of reforms in his State of the State address earlier this month but those proposals have not been the subject of negotiations between the Governor and the Legislature and are not expected to receive two-house consideration. We know that reform will remain front and center during the coming year and, in formulating our position on this bill, we have taken care to ensure that we can continue an ongoing dialogue pressing for further reform.

## Verified Voting Launches VVblog - A New Resource for Voting News & Commentary

Verified Voting has announced VVblog, a new resource for current news and commentary on national and state voting technology and election administration issues. They're bringing together essential news and information to help people keep pace with election issues around the states, the nation and the world. The blog features articles and front page links to breaking news reports, the latest legislation updates, and other voting blogs.



# Understanding Your Real Estate Tax Statement

## (Do You Know Where Your Money is Going?)



Homeowners on Long Island, like those throughout New York State and across the United States, are subject to real estate taxes for a variety of municipal services. These services typically include but are not limited to solid waste sanitary services, sewer services, drinking water, police protection, fire and rescue protection, road and infrastructure maintenance, public school services, library services, and overall government administration. Unlike many areas throughout the state and the nation, homeowners on Long Island and particularly in Nassau County, are provided and taxed for these services largely on a decentralized or a-la-carte basis.

Most homeowners in Nassau County receive two real estate tax statements annually, each payable on a semi-annual basis. They are:

- the School Tax Bill, payable in October and April, which accounts for the largest portion of a homeowner's real estate tax, on average approximately 65%. Most school tax bills also contain the tax levy for library services.
- the General Tax Bill in Nassau County, payable in January and July. This bill is the most comprehensive and often confusing real estate tax statement. General taxes cover three main taxing categories: county, one of the three townships, and special district taxes.

County taxes are levied for services such as Nassau Community College, fire prevention (county Fire Marshal), police headquarters, county police, county sewers, county parks, county roads, county government administration, and various bond debt such as the environmental bond debt service.

Town taxes are levied for services such as town highway, town building and zoning, town code enforcement, parking, solid waste (garbage) collection and disposal, town parks, and town government administration.

The third category of the General Tax Bill is typically the largest and most misunderstood group of real estate taxes, special district services. Special taxing districts provide many of the basic municipal services for the majority of homeowners in Nassau County. Drinking water (water districts), solid waste collection and disposal (sanitary districts), fire and rescue services (fire districts and fire protection districts) are just three of the major municipal services, but there are also parks and recreation districts, street lighting districts, bridge authorities, and even a Memorial Parade district, among others. Similar to other taxing entities, districts have the same tax levying process

and, depending on assessed valuations, total taxes can vary for homeowners based on how their homes are assessed.

Homeowners who live within any of the 64 Incorporated Villages throughout Nassau County or in the Cities of Glen Cove or Long Beach, receive a third tax bill from their local government. These local governments provide their own services, such as government administration, zoning, code enforcement, and in the majority of cases sanitary services and road maintenance. Some villages, like both cities, also provide police protection and fire and rescue. Taxes at this local level can vary greatly from village to village or city to city, due to varying economies of scale, the number of services provided, the commercial tax base, or the basic fiscal management by the local boards of trustees, councils, or administrators. Homeowners in these municipalities typically have a lower general tax liability than those homeowners who receive these services from the county, their town, or special districts.

To derive the tax rate, a taxing entity divides the total amount to be raised from taxes by the total assessed value of all classes of properties within its jurisdiction (residential, commercial, multi-family housing and utilities), with the result being the tax rate. The tax rate is identical within each classification of property type within that entity, be it a school district, village, special district, county, town or city. If a property is over-assessed its owner will be paying more than would the owner of a similar property in the same classification who is under-assessed. When property owners receive reductions in their assessed valuation due to filing tax grievances, the burden from their reductions shifts to other property owners. Sometimes a municipality will boast of no budget increase, yet due to the examples mentioned, a property owner's real estate taxes will still increase.

All homeowners (whether they pay their real estate taxes directly or through their mortgage escrow account) should review and understand their real estate tax statements, their annual cost for the various municipal services, know who provides those services, how those services are managed and budgeted, and how and when those public officials or district commissioners are selected, chosen, or elected to their positions of authority. Knowledge, accountability and transparency are the three major criteria for ensuring best practices and responsible governance for the benefit of all homeowners, businesses, and taxpayers.

**Joseph J. Troiano, Board Member (RES)**  
**Residents for Efficient Special Districts,**  
**Former Mayor: Incorporated Village of Stewart Manor,**  
**Member: LWNVC Special Districts Study Committee**



# State News

## The League of Women Voters of New York State January 2010

### Save the Dates

**February 9, 2010**

Public forum on redistricting followed by celebration of League's 90th birthday;  
Rockefeller Institute, Albany.

**April 20, 2010**

Fair Pay Summit and Advocacy Day - annual event to advocate for pay equity; LOB, Albany.

**May 14-16, 2010**

Spring Fling weekend in New York City including theater, tours and party.  
Come join the fun!

**June 11-June 15, 2010**

LWVUS Convention; Atlanta, GA.  
Info available on LWVUS website,  
[www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

**May 20-22, 2011**

LWVNY State Convention; Albany.

**Find more information on all these events on the state League website, [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org).**

### Youth Programs

The **2010 Students Inside Albany Conference** will be held April 11-14, 2010 in Albany. This three day conference brings high school students to Albany to learn more about their roles and responsibilities in representative government including their own abilities to make or influence public policy decisions. The students also shadow their state legislators for two afternoons. Contact your local League if you know of a student who could benefit from this program

We are also excited to announce that the Capital Region served as a pilot for the implementation of **Vote 18** programs statewide. Training for League members and presentations in two Capital Region high schools occurred in early Dec. Work is underway to create a cadre of Vote 18 presenters who can then train other League members and hopefully spread the program across NYS.

Contact Stephanie Lopez at 518-465-4162 or [Stephanie@lwvny.org](mailto:Stephanie@lwvny.org) for brochures and more information.

### Fix Albany Now!

The LWVNY State Board adopted *Fix Albany Now!* as the slogan for this year's legislative priorities. The 2010 priorities are steps to a new and better State government:

- Redistricting
- Campaign Finance Reform
- Ethics Reform
- Election Reform

Copies of the 2010 Legislative Agenda brochure (free except for shipping) and "Fix Albany Now!" buttons (\$1 each plus tax and shipping) are available from the state League office.

On January 13, leaders in both NYS house announced an agreement on the reform bill for campaign finance enforcement and ethics reform. While not everything that the League sought, the proposed changes would improve both ethics and campaign finance enforcement and create greater transparency. Info and a Memo in Support of S6457/A9544, is posted on the state League website for use in lobbying your legislators.

### Voter Service

The state League is talking with major PBS affiliates about co-sponsoring a series of debates for statewide offices in the fall 2010. The statewide offices include US Senate, NYS Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General and Comptroller.

A new publication for military voters is being developed and will become part of the series "Your Right to Vote in NYS," joining the brochures specifically for homeless individuals, college students, individuals convicted of crimes, and individuals with physical or mental disabilities. Copies of these special Voter Guides are available for purchase from the state League office.

### NYS BOE Certifies Voting Systems for 2010 Elections

A milestone in the six year saga of the state's implementation of the federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA) was reached in December when the NYS Board of Elections voted unanimously to approve two voting systems for use by the voters in NYS. Now, that the machines have been selected, the League will be needed to educate voters on the machines and monitor the machines usage. Watch for more information on how your League can assist in your community.

### State Study on Local Consolidation/ Shared Services

The State Board approved Consensus questions at its January meeting. A Leader's Discussion Guide is currently being developed. The questions and the Guide will be distributed to all local Leagues by the end of January.

Prepare for the consensus meeting in your League by reading the materials on the website, [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org), and materials in your own local bulletin. Everyone needs to have their voice heard so join the consensus discussion!

### LWVNY State Board Resignation

JoAnn Ross, LWVNY State Board Member and Citizen Education Director, has announced her resignation from the state League due to relocation to the Baltimore area. She will continue to consult with us, though, on the continued development of the new youth leadership program.

### Help Us Make a Difference

You will be receiving the League's Direct Mail Appeal later in February. We understand that personal funding is limited for many people, but we ask that you once again consider supporting the League's many activities. We can't do it without your help! So, please give generously.

### New State Voter On Its Way - Don't Miss It!

Don't miss the League's news! The state *Voter* went electronic in November because the cost of the printed *Voter* became prohibitive in light of current League funding realities. You will receive the electronic *Voter* automatically free of charge if we have an e-mail address for you. If not, you may order a printed version for \$20.00 for the rest of this fiscal year (4 issues @ \$5 each) or send us your e-mail address to get on our free electronic list.