



The Voter

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Public Relations/Fundraising
Donna Bushover

Newsletter
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Holiday Party!



Save the Date-Sunday,
December 14
at Dele's house.
Hor'dourves, dessert
and holiday cheer!

President's Message

Dear Members and friends,

We are getting close to the half-way mark of this year with the League of Women's Voters of Orleans County.

An historic presidential election is upon us. Debby Keller, Voter Service Chair, has worked with GCC-Medina and the Iroquois Job Corps to register students and staff to vote.

The Board of Elections provided training for the Election Inspectors in the use of the Optical Scanning Machines for handi-capped individuals. Debby Keller and Rosalind Lind attended this training.

The re-establishing of the Breakfast Meeting highlighted Brenda Radzinski of the Orleans County Dept. of Social Services speaking on housing issues. Chris Sartwell is planning our second Breakfast Meeting of the year in January.

Fund raising efforts are underway with the Movie Night ("Iron Jawed Angels") at Medina's Shirt Factory Cafe, scheduled Oct. 29th.



LWV Breakfast Meeting. LtoR Dele Theodorakos, Lynne Philipps, Brenda Radzinski, Chris Sartwell

A Gas Raffle is being developed, and Donna Bushover is planning a Walking Tour in the Spring.

As you see, there are so many different ways to participate in our organization. Our members are very important. Communication with members is a key to our success. Board meetings are held each month, and are open to all members to attend. We alternate our meetings between Elsewhere Café, Albion and the United Way Office in Medina. **Please join us in Albion on November 20th at 7pm.** Hope to see you soon.

Lynne Philipps, President

Gas Raffle Fundraiser

In the next few weeks, members will be asked to participate in a Gas Raffle fundraiser for LWV-Orleans County. First Prize will be \$100 in gas/merchandise from K&K Food Marts. Second Prize is a \$25 gas certificate and a large one topping pizza from K&K. Ticket will be sold for \$1 each and the drawing will be held at our Annual Christmas Party on December 14th.

Each member will receive 16 tickets, unless you want more.

Your support is greatly needed and appreciated to help our purpose of promoting political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.



Virginia: The New Florida? *by: Andrew Gumbel, The Nation*

In the crush of the first few hours of Election Day, the crucial swing state of Virginia was emerging as the country's number-one voting trouble spot. As of 10:30 a.m. ET, more than two dozen polling places across the state were reported to be close to a standstill because of machine failures, lack of back-up paper ballots and other problems. Dozens of other locations were experiencing abnormal delays and long lines, raising serious questions about the ability of Virginia voters to exercise their democratic rights before the scheduled close of voting at 7 p.m.

Many of the problems were concentrated in the DC suburbs in the northern part of the state; in Richmond, the state capital; and in the Hampton Roads area around Norfolk and Virginia Beach. All three are seen as strongholds for the Barack Obama campaign, where turnout could be crucial in putting the state in the Democratic Party column.

The nationwide, nonpartisan Election Protection coalition - spearheaded by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law, the NAACP and others - was urging state officials in Richmond to extend voting hours by two hours to 9 p.m. so people turned away in the morning rush would have time to try again. The coalition did not exclude legal action to force the state's hand if the governor's office and the State Board of Elections did not take

the initiative itself.

"The problems are so widespread, it's going to take action on part of state election officials to deal with problems they are facing today," Election Protection's top lawyer John Greenbaum said. "If they don't, we might potentially have to seek other recourse."

In contrast to Florida in 2000 or Ohio in 2004, activists interested in maximizing voter access to the polls are not dealing with a politically hostile state leadership. Virginia's governor, Tim Kaine, is a Democrat and the head of the State Board of Elections, Nancy Rodrigues, is a Kaine appointee. Both say they welcome the surge in turnout.

It has been obvious for weeks, however, that the state is woefully underprepared for its role as a high-profile swing state - something it has not experienced since the height of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. Virginia law allows for absentee voting, including in-person absentee voting - a process leading to lines of up to six hours on the final day on Saturday. However, in contrast to Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and a clutch of other states seeing a marked increase in African-American turnout, Virginia has no early voting. State officials struggled to process all the new registration forms in time to allocate enough machines to

polling stations, leading to widespread predictions of a meltdown.

"Unfortunately, these were expected problems," Jonah Goldman of the Lawyers' Committee said.

State officials say they have almost doubled the number of voting machines available since 2004, and have created an extra 300 polling places. It is clear, however, that they have been simply swamped. Some polling locations did not open on time. In others, electronic or optical-scan voting machines failed to function properly. Precincts either did not have back-up paper ballots available, or else chose to regard them as provisional ballots - something they should not do, according to election lawyers. In Richmond, where it was raining, some voters accidentally got their ballots wet, causing the optical-scan readers processing the votes to jam.

Last week, the NAACP unsuccessfully filed suit to try to force the state to allocate more machines to key high-population areas with large numbers of African-Americans, and to extend voting hours. The State Board of Elections, in response, insisted it had "the minimum number of voting machines in each precinct as required by the Code of Virginia." Clearly, though, the minimum is proving not nearly enough.



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Understanding DSS Housing Issues

On September 13, 2008, the LWV-Orleans County hosted a breakfast meeting at the Apollo Restaurant in Albion with Brenda Radzinski, Principal Social Welfare Examiner with the Orleans County Dept. of Social Services. Brenda has been with the department for 23 years. After the meeting, she emailed us with the following statistics: In 1994, two years prior to the Welfare Reform Act, Orleans County had approximately 850 public assistance cases.

Currently we are under 500 cases. She also

indicated that Medicaid is, by far, more costly to taxpayers than cash assistance (which is what the housing allowance is from.) In 2008, we will spend 7.5 million dollars on Medicaid versus 3.3 million for public assistance.

The two main agencies in Orleans County providing for housing is DSS, which provides individuals with cash assistance but does not have any jurisdiction over the environment the tenant chooses, and Section 8 housing, which requires inspection and approval of the housing environment.

Factoids

Chances that a U.S. home is currently vacant: 1 in 35.

Rank of this among highest recorded vacancies in U.S. History: 1

Percent change between 1989 and 2007 in the median price of an American single family home: +130.

Percent change in median down payment: +3.7

Portion of U.S. subprime mortgage buyers since 2003 who might have qualified for a prime mortgage: 3 in 5



Observer Corp is vital to the function of a well informed League of Women Voters. *If each member could try to attend at least one meeting a month*, the community will get used to seeing us and we can be sure that the meetings will be using correct protocol. Please consider picking one meeting and attending as you can. Any one wanting copies of the pamphlet “Your Right to Know”, summarizing the sunshine Laws, can get one from Rosalind or Debby.

Governmental Bodies Board Meetings-Orleans County

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Primary Observer	Alternate Observer
1st			Village of Albion-7pm Workshop			
2nd	Town of Albion-7pm Lyndonville-7pm Village of Medina-7pm	Carlton-7:30pm Holley-7pm Shelby-7:30pm Murray-7pm Gaines-7:30pm	Barre-7pm Village of Albion-7pm County Legislature-4:30pm	Yates-7pm Kendall-7:30pm		
3rd	Ridgeway-7pm	Clarendon-7pm				
4th	Village of Medina-7pm		Orleans Co. Legislature-4:30pm			

Orleans County School Boards

	Monday	Tuesday	Primary Observer	Alternate Observer
1st	Albion-7pm			
2nd	Lyndonville-7:30pm	Kendall-7:30pm		
3rd	Medina-6:30pm Holley-7pm			
4th	Lyndonville-7:30pm			

Are you receiving your emails and mail from the LVW-Orleans? If not, don't miss out on all of the news. Send your updated email address, phone number or address to:



Marsha Winters at Treasurer
@orleanscounty.ny.lwvnet.org

League News

The League of Women Voters of Orleans County is a non-partisan organization dedicated to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected governmental issues. We encourage participation in this process to further the freedoms we enjoy in the United States of America.

We are developing a quarterly newsletter to aid in keeping everyone abreast of the many programs offered by the league. To produce the newsletter, we are seeking some sponsors who may place a business size advertisement in the newsletter.

The cost for this sponsorship is \$20 per publication. The newsletter will not only reach the members of our organization, but will also be made available at the many programs we provide in the communities. For approximately 5 years, the League of Women Voters of Orleans County has provided free programs to the public on Freedom of Information Laws, Ethics in Government, Government Consolidation and the Upstate/Downstate Divide.

Our Meet the Candidates Forums have been very successful in gathering together individuals to question

candidates running for many of the local elections. By advertising in our newsletter, the public will see that you support the organization that promotes an active participation in local government.

We thank you for your consideration to support us and if you decide to join us by helping our work, please send you card or design and a check for \$20 to the League of Women Voters of Orleans County, Attn: Newsletter, PO Box 163, Medina, NY 14103

Lynne Philipps, President