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LWVB/N website www.lwvbn.org

LWVNYSHome Page www.lwvny.org

LWVUS Home Page www.lwv.org

Terri Parks, Voter Editor events@lwvbn.org

VOTER is published eleven times this year. January Voter copy is due Friday, December 10, 2010.

The LWVBN Education Committee will host our League's initial program related to the LWVUS 2-year study about the role of the federal government in education,

**Thursday, January 20, 2011
7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.**

Reserve the date to hear our keynote speaker and panelists as they share their views about

Race to the Top: Hope or Flop?

Keynote speaker: Paul G. Theobald, Ph.D. Interim Dean of the School of Education at Buffalo State College

Panelists already confirmed:

Donald Ogilvie, district superintendent Erie 1 BOCES: Administrator's view

Claity Massey, director of King Center Charter School: Relationship with families of pre-schoolers

Sam Radford, Vice president of the Buffalo Schools' Parent Organization: Parents' views

Additional panel members and details will be published in the January Voter.

Plan to join us and bring your friends.

League of Women Voters Mission:

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

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President's Message

We have come to the end of a very busy and productive fall election season. Congratulations to the Voter Service committee and all the volunteers who helped out in any way, and committee chair, Joyce Bol. Thank you all for a super job. Also, a big thank you to Kris Allen for her immense contribution to insure publication of the Voter Guide and for publishing the information on our web site. It looks great! Thank you, too, Eugene Abrahamson, for all your hard work on the Voter Guide and other fall projects.

We're moving right along into the fund-raising season. You will receive a letter from our local League requesting a donation to help us continue our work at the local level. Please be generous in your support of the League of Women Voters Buffalo/Niagara.



We will staff the gift-wrapping table at Eastern Hills Mall during this holiday season. Please sign up to work a few shifts at this table from November 26 through December 24 by completing the sign-up form or calling Eugene at the League office, 884-3550. We need the most help in the middle shifts each day. The League earns the proceeds from the table after paying the expenses incurred from the purchase of gift-wrapping supplies. We appreciate the donation of gift-wrapping supplies from the Bon-Ton to get us started.

At the November board meeting, the board appointed Lyle Toohey, Joann Mecca and Donna McNally as the board members on the 2011 LWVBN Nominating Committee.

Elsa Bondar, our Grass Roots Lobby Coordinator, is back on the job. Thank you for all your work, Elsa. Elsa would like to have someone help her do the job. If you're willing to help her, please contact her at events@lwvbn.org.

The January board meeting will be January 10, 2011. We'll have a post holiday gathering and welcome reception for new members after a short business meeting.

I hope you have attended at least one of the great programs sponsored by LWVBN this fall and please make plans to attend our Education Committee Program, "Race To The Top – Hope or Flop?" on January 20. This program will be co-sponsored by Buffalo State College. Have a wonderful holiday season with your family and friends.



Margaret Brunson, Co-president LWVBN

LWVNY CONVENTION – May 20-22, 2011 at the Desmond Hotel In Albany, NY

Great Decisions

Achtung! Achtung! A major change! At the November 4, 2010 meeting of Great Decisions, those present decided to try a new schedule for the coming year.

We will meet from MARCH - NOVEMBER, still from 10 AM-noon on the first Thursday of each month at 1272 Delaware. This means we will not meet in January and February when weather conditions are unpredictable in Buffalo, but will meet in July and August. I hope to see all of you on Thursday, March 3, 2011, when I'm expecting to hand out the new books in exchange for \$17.38. I hope you'll be well rested and ready to tackle foreign affairs once more.

Bernice Baeumler, events@lwvbn.org

This quote from an anonymous source is the essence of our work on Issues as League members:

"Action without study is fatal. Study without action is futile."

Voter Services

Naturalization: Agnes Tufariella and Joan Mondul officiated for the League on November 4. The last naturalization ceremony for new citizens in 2010 will be December 2. Helen Morrison and Mary Eagan will participate on behalf of LWVBN.

Election Night Reporting for the Associated Press: JoAnn Mecca and Allen Dozoretz reported for Erie County. Janet Goodsell and a friend reported for Niagara County.

Candidates' Forums: There were about 50 people at the Amherst Candidates' Forum. Allene Falk reported about 40 people in the audience at the Clarence Candidates' Forum. Ellen Neumaier reported that over 75 people attended the East Aurora Forum with coverage by Channel 4 News. This meeting was also videotaped and shown on local cable channel three times daily. Laura McDade reported that the Hamburg Candidates' Forum began with an estimate of 175 people, but attendance dwindled to 50 at its conclusion.

2010 Voter Guide: Kris Allen attended the November board meeting and presented a detailed overview of the six months' work leading to the publication of the Voter Guide in October. She is preparing a descriptive plan for the execution of the next Voter Guide to be given to the Board in early 2011.

Joyce H. Bol, Voter Services Chair

To many people in the community, the Voter Guide is their main source of reliable information about candidates for local, state and national office. We gratefully acknowledge the work of League members and community volunteers.

The preparation of the Voter Guide is a significant League undertaking, and cannot be done without the generous help of volunteers. Thanks go to League members Joyce Bol, Judy Clarke, Loretta Peszynski, Chuck Peszynski, Terri Parks, Maxine Johnson, Kathleen McCormick, Mary Egan, Sandra O'Hara, Janet Massaro, and Theresa Pope; and to non-League volunteers Elaine Elliot, Denise Subach, and Jamie May. I offer special thanks to Eugene Abrahamson who shouldered many tasks.

Kristin Allen, 2010 Voter Guide Coordinator

Thank you, thank you, thank you to the following members and friends who distributed the 2010 Voter Guide across Erie and Niagara Counties: Joan Mondul, Ginny Ziebart, Judy Metzger, Sally Metzger, Arlene Miles, Katherine McCormick, Marlene Katzel, Aaron Amrose, Dot Brown, Mary Scheeder, Delight and Chet Dann, JoAnn Mecca, Lynda Stephens, Dick Hemann, Judy Weideman, Lee Tetkowski, Janet Goodsell, Laura McDade, Loretta Peszynski, Judy Clarke, Bonnie and Harold Asch, Mike Egan, Donna Gioia, Joan Broderick, Dorothy Westhafer, Phyllis Banas, Betty and Jack Howell, Agnes and Bob Annis, Marian Deutschman, Judy Huber and eight students in Dr. Wendy Fisher's BOCES government class from Medaille College.

Laura McDade, Voter Guide Distribution Chair

Natural Resources Report

Conceived and supported by the Community Foundation, the WNY Environmental Alliance was formed to bring environmental groups together to accomplish greater local good. LWVBN is considering membership in this coalition. Anne Huberman has been attending meetings. Sandy Chelnov, Ellen Moomaw, Janet Goodsell and Kathleen McCormick have volunteered to attend meetings also.

Horizontal hydro-fracking to release natural gas is a major issue among people living along the Marcellus Shale and is a hot topic with New York State League. The Natural Resources committee is considering a public showing and discussion of the film, *Gasland* produced by local film maker, Josh Fox.

Plan to attend our Spring Natural Resources Event—a tour of the Massachusetts Ave. Project-- with lunch at a nearby restaurant. The details will be in a future VOTER.

October 31, 2010 was the first anniversary of the Bigger Better Bottle Bill. In that short time \$120 Million in unclaimed deposits have gone to New York State and plastic recycling of PET has increased by 4.5 Billion containers because NY, OR and CT include a deposit on water bottles in their price. Did you know that for every gallon of bottled water, another two gallons are wasted in processing?

Ellen Neumaier

Education Committee News

The controversial documentary, "Waiting for Superman", has made education of our children a hot issue, but it misses many very relevant problems. The film blames teachers' unions for poor children's lack of school testing success, ignoring the ills of society that deter these children from readiness to pay attention and learn. What about family breakdown, unemployment, crime in neighborhoods, poor nutrition, poor health? The film also focuses on charter schools as the panacea, showing incomplete and some inaccurate statistics.

Our committee agrees with serious critical reviews of the film by Diane Ravitch and other educators. We have learned that Finland has an excellent school system. But while the film praises the outstanding quality of Finland's schools, it does not include that their teachers are unionized, have tenure, and that families benefit from a cradle-to-grave social welfare system that includes universal daycare, preschool and healthcare, which are proven to help children do better at school. The movie is oversimplified.

There is much disagreement on the value of high stakes testing. Is knowledge that can't be measured unimportant? Under the requirements for winning those Race To the Top funds New York State has agreed to use test results of students as part of measuring the quality of teachers. Think about this quote from Albert Einstein: "Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted."

A two-year study item was adopted at the last League of Women Voters of the United States Convention. Here is the wording accepted: "A study of the federal role in public education. The study will focus on the role of the federal government in education policymaking, with possible consideration of funding, common standards and/or governance relationships among all levels of the government. A study on privatization: the policy agenda to transfer government functions, services and assets to the private sector."

We will host a dynamic program for the League and the community about problems and solutions to today's realities in our schools on January 20, 2011. Our Keynote Speaker is Paul Theobald, Ph.D., Interim Dean of the School of Education at Buffalo State College. He recently received the Critics' Choice Award for his book, ***Education Now: How Rethinking America's Past Can Change Its Future***. This begins our League participation in the study. Don't miss it!

Lee Tetkowski, Chair, LWVBN Education Committee

Local Government Committee News

Position on Consolidation of Governmental Units and Sharing of Major Governmental Services

Adopted July 15, 2010

The League of Women Voters of New York State (League) supports the efficient and effective operation of government. Consolidation of governmental units and the sharing of major governmental services may be a way of promoting the efficient and effective operation of government. In achieving this goal, the League supports a cooperative and transparent process, in which citizens have sufficient and timely information with which to make informed decisions about proposed actions and well-defined channels for citizen input and review. Administrative and fiscal efficiency should be included in the criteria by which local governments consider whether to consolidate or share major services. The League supports a system of state-funded grants to local governments to study the feasibility of the consolidation of governmental units or sharing of governmental services. In determining whether to support a consolidation/shared services proposal at the local level, as a way of making government more efficient and effective, local Leagues must consider both the adequacy of the process and the likely effects of the proposal's implementation.

In determining whether to support a consolidation/shared services proposal as a way of making government more efficient and effective, local Leagues should apply the following criteria. While it is not necessary that each standard be met, the League recognizes that these standards represent potential benefits of consolidation, leading to more efficient and effective government:

- Will the proposal result in projected cost savings and a positive effect on taxes over the long term?
- Will the proposal either result in an increased quality and/or efficiency of services or, at a minimum, maintain services at existing levels?
- Will the proposal fairly address disparities in employee contracts?
- Will the proposal result in increased social and economic justice?
- Will the proposal result in a reduction in the number of governmental entities?

Anne Huberman, Local Government Committee Chair

Eastern Hills Mall Gift Wrap Schedule

The schedule below reflects volunteers and open shifts as of November 18, 2010. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to date. There are still opportunities for your assistance. Please join us by completing this form or by calling me at the League office. This fund raising opportunity has great potential for helping the League continue its important service to voters.

Please return your completed form(s) to as soon as possible to the League of Women Voters, 1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14209 or by e-mail to lwvbn@lwvbn.org. *Respond today!* **Please note that whatever date(s) you sign up for are confirmed and you should write them down on your calendar.** If for some reason this doesn't work for us, I will contact you by telephone.

Best regards,
Eugene Abrahamson

EASTERN HILLS MALL SCHEDULE

DATE (no .of wrappers)	11:00 am – 2:00pm	2:00 pm - 6:00 pm	6:00 pm – 9:00 pm
Friday, 11/26 (2)		Luann Sanquist	Emily Paulson Luann Sanquist
Saturday, 11/27 (2)	Sawitree Chantakwaw Marissa Kosak Lynne Vallone	Lou Ann Bajdas Courtney Bajdas	
Sunday, 11/28 (2)	Sawitree Chantakwaw Marissa Kosak		
Monday, 11/29 (2)	Judy Clarke Sally Metzger	Sandra O'Hara	Emily Paulson Joyce Bol
Tuesday, 11/30 (2)	Joan Sillman Kris Allen		Judith Huber Mary Scheeder
Wednesday, 12/01 (2)	Lyle Toohey		Amanda Ruthman Samantha Wik
Thursday, 12/02 (2)	Jean Forster Carol Rommel	Joyce Bol	Judith Huber
Friday, 12/03 (2)	Judy Clarke Janet Goodsell	Arlene Miles Joyce Bol	Donna McNally Rich McNally
Saturday, 12/04 (4)	Dorothy Westhafer Betty Howell Sawitree Chantakwaw Marissa Kosak		Donna McNally Rich McNally
Sunday, 12/05 (2)	Sawitree Chantakwaw	Donna McNally Rich McNally	Mall Closed
Monday, 12/06 (2)	Jean Forster Carol Rommel	Sandra O'Hara	
Tuesday, 12/07 (2)	Lois Benson 10 – 11:15 Anne Huberman Kris Allen		Lou Ann Bajdas Courtney Bajdas Judith Huber Mary Scheeder
Wednesday, 12/08 (2)	Lyle Toohey		Amanda Ruthman Samantha Wik
Thursday, 12/09 (2)	Arlene Miles Judy Clarke		Joyce Bol Judith Huber, Terri Parks

DATE (no .of wrappers)	11:00 am – 2:00pm	2:00 pm - 6:00 pm	6:00 pm – 9:00 pm
*New Hours ----->	10:00 – 2:30 p.m.	2:00 – 6:30 p.m.	6:00 – 10:00 p.m.
*Friday, 12/10 (4)		Joyce Bol	Luann Sanquist
*Saturday 12/11 (4)	Sawitree Chantakwaw Marissa Kosak Amy Abrahamson		Joyce Bol
*Sunday, 12/12 (4)			Joyce Bol
*Monday, 12/13 (6)	Sally Metzger Dorothy Tao Joyce Bol		Lou Ann Bajdas Karen Glanowski
*Tuesday, 12/14 (6)	Anne Huberman Joan Schultz Lynne Vallone	Kris Allen Sandra O'Hara Terri Parks	Judith Huber Mary Scheeder
*Wednesday, 12/15 (6)	Joan Sillman Lyle Toohey	Janet Goodsell	Joyce Bol Luann Sanquist
*Thursday, 12/16 (6)	Lois Benson 1 –11:15 ? Judy Metzger Dorothy Tao		Joyce Bol Judith Huber
*Friday, 12/17 (8)		Arlene Miles	Joyce Bol
*Saturday, 12/18 (8)			
*Sunday, 12/19 (8)			
*Monday, 12/20 (8)	Sally Metzger Judy Metzger	Terri Parks	
*Tuesday, 12/21 (8)			Judith Huber Mary Scheeder Terri Parks
*Wednesday, 12/22 (8)	Lyle Toohey		
*Thursday, 12/23 (8)			Judith Huber
*Friday, 12/24 (8)	Lou Ann Bajdas		**WE ARE DONE!!

You will receive confirmation and information on mall procedures with your conformation packet as quickly as I can send it. Please mark your calendar now, as what you sign up for will be your assigned days and times. Transportation and parking are your responsibilities. Thank you again for your commitment to the League of Women Voters!

Name: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

Birthday: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Membership dues and contributions to the LWV are not deductible as a personal or business expense for tax purposes.



Make check payable to **LWVB/N** and send to **LWVB/N, 1272 Delaware Ave., Buffalo, NY 14209-2401 (Attn: Membership Chair)**

- \$65 Individual (Basic Membership)
- \$75 Carrie Chapman Catt Membership
- \$90 Elizabeth Cady Stanton Membership
- \$100 Susan B. Anthony Membership
- Enclosed is my additional contribution of \$ _____
- \$100 Household
(2 members living at the same address)
- \$30 Student membership

Unit Affiliation
(optional)

Amherst

Buffalo Metro

Clarence

Name (s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please send me the LWVB/N VOTER via email.

This includes local, state and national League dues.

Membership News

Dear League Members,

We continue to receive renewals. Hopefully, you have sent yours in by this time. If not, please do so now! If you are a prospective member, please contact the office at 884-3550 or me at events@lwvbn.org. We are an organization that promises to keep you informed and give you opportunity to help your community through active citizen participation. You may also clip and send the RENEW coupon on this page, but make sure you let us know that you are a new member at this time.

Judy Huber, Membership Chair

Please Consider Joining the League Board

As the Nominations Committee begins its responsibility to seek members for the League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara 2011-2012 Board of Directors, we invite you to consider volunteering to be considered for a position on the board. Openings include President, 1st Vice-President, Secretary, 4 directors (portfolios to be decided later), and new nominating committee members. Lee Tetkowski, Nominating Committee Chair, would love to hear from you. events@lwvbn.org



Lee Tetkowski, Nominations Committee Chair

LWVNYS Lobby Corps

The League of Women Voters of New York State is developing a group of trained volunteers who will communicate the League's position on proposed legislation in person directly to the members of the state Senate and Assembly. It would be expected that the Lobby Corps volunteers would agree to lobby on a regular basis as assigned in Albany.

Come make a difference - and try something new in the League! Submit your name and contact information to Stephanie (stephanie@lwvny.org) at the state League office and we'll send you more information and an application.

If you change your e-mail address, please send an e-mail from your new address to: lwvbn@lwvbn.org. We don't want you to miss any news from the League.

December 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		11/30 ISSUES COMMITTEE 4:30 P.M.	1	2	3	4
5	6 BOARD MEETING 4:30 p.m.	7	8 LOCAL GOVERNMENT 1:15 p.m.	9 NATURAL RESOURCES 9:30 a.m. TRANSPORTATION 10:00 a.m.	10 VOTER COPY DUE	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	