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May 2010

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VOTER is published ten times each year. Copy for the June Voter is due Friday, May 7, 2010.

Join us for lunch followed by a presentation by

Dr. Brenda Young,

Professor of Environmental Science at Daemen College:

Building the Daemen College Ecotrail

Saturday, May 15, 2010 at noon

in the Business Building, Room 107/109 ,

Daemen College, 4380 Main Street, Snyder, NY 14226.

Dr. Young will also lead a tour of the **Ecotrail**. An optional tour of the new "Green" Information and Technology Building on the Campus will be available after the **Ecotrail** tour.

The Business Building is the first building beyond the parking lot located at the Getzville Road entrance to the campus. Getzville Road is located between Main Street and Sheridan Drive, just east of the Main Street entrance to Daemen College.

Menu:

Assorted Wraps, Tossed Salad, Fresh Fruit Salad, Cookies, Iced Tea, Ice Water, Coffee

Send checks written to LWVBN for \$18 per person to Judy Weidemann by May 12, 2010.

Contact:

Judy Weidemann events@lwvbn.org



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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The blue Annual Meeting Packet will be mailed to all current League Members at the same time as this edition of The Voter.

President's Message

The LWVB/N Board received the report of the nominating committee at its April 2010 meeting and thank the following committee members for their hard work: Judy Clarke, Janet Goodsell, Judy Huber, Sandra O'Hara, Lynda Stephens, Judy Weidemann and Kristin Allen, committee chair.

The board approved the 2010-2011 Proposed Local Program as presented by the issues/Action committee to be presented for membership approval at the annual meeting on June 5th.

The details for the gala 90th anniversary celebration that will be a part of the 2010 LWVB/N annual meeting are written in the Call to the annual meeting packet that will be mailed to all current League members at the same time as this edition of the Voter.

Loretta and I want to thank Janet Massaro for her fifteen years of service as our LWVB/N office manager. We appreciate her hard work and we will miss her presence in the office. (We will miss her as office manager but she will continue to be an active League member,)

There was much discussion of the process for selecting a new office manager for our LWVB/N office. We have a transition team working very hard to make this an orderly changeover. We approved a job description for the position. We expect to fill this position by the end of May if possible so that we can provide a suitable training period for our new employee. League members are welcome to apply. League experience would be a plus but is not absolutely necessary.

Kathleen McCarthy, Janet Massaro and I attended the orientation meeting for candidates for the BMHA Tenant Commissioner election. There are four candidates running for two positions. The real work will start in May, culminating with the election in June.

Margaret Brunson, Co-President

HELP WANTED

It's time to start preparations for the 2010 Voter Guide for Erie and Niagara Counties. We need a new editor or editorial team in addition to a full staff of writers, typists, proofreaders, and distribution personnel. This is one of the most visible of our League activities and one of the most important services we perform in our community. Please consider joining in this effort. If you are interested in working on the Voter Guide please call Janet at the League office or Margaret Brunson at events@lwvbn.org

LWVUS National Convention will be June 11 – 15, 2010 in Atlanta, Georgia at the Marriott Atlanta Marquis – Room Rate is \$179+tax (205.85). You may make your hotel reservation online – www.lwvus.org. More information on the convention program and activities has been posted on the LWVUS web site and is updated as new information becomes available.



If you would like to attend this convention please call Janet at the League office or leave a message for Margaret Brunson at 652-5836. LWVB/N is entitled to three delegates. Currently Joan Photiadis plans to attend. She seeks another LWVB/N delegate to share the travel and room.

LWVUS will make awards in four categories to Leagues across the country at the convention. The categories are: Connection with Community, Pioneer, Online Engagement, and Strengthening Democracy through Reform. See the LWVUS website for details and application information. Call Loretta Peszynski at events@lwvbn.org with your suggestions.

Great Decisions

Kristin Allen will lead us in discussing our topic, "China looks at the world: the world looks at China", on Thursday, May 6 from 10 AM-noon at 1272 Delaware. "China's influence is growing, along with its military expenditures. How will this growth affect China's relations with its neighbors and with the U.S.? Will China's expanding military and economic power affect traditional U.S. roles and U.S. alliances in East Asia? How will countries like Japan, South Korea and India respond?" Please join us.

Bernice Baeumler events@lwvbn.org

Part-time Office Manager for the League of Women Voters Buffalo/Niagara

The applicant must be a self-starter, have good interpersonal and communication skills, ability to multitask and work independently. Responsibilities include clerical, working with the board of directors, volunteers and the public. Requirements for this 12-16 hour per week position include proficiency in Microsoft Office and flexibility to work occasional weekend and evening hours.

Submit a cover letter, resume and three references by e-mail: lwvbn@lwvbn.org or by mail to LWVBN, 1272 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, NY 14209. Resumes will be accepted until the position is filled.

League of Women Voters of New York News and Events

Congratulations to Georgia DeGregorio, LWVNYS Vice President of Membership, who was selected to be part of the first class of Ruth Shur Fellows. The purpose of this program is to promote membership and leadership in the League.

On May 5, 2010, the League will co-sponsor "Albany on the Record", an educational event, which will bring citizens to Albany to hear the positions of the state's leading political figures on how they will reform Albany. The League is organizing busses to this event from around the state; locations will be determined based on registrations received. Travel is free, and lunch will be provided. Sign up on the state League website, www.lwvny.org, by e-mail to may5@lwvny.org or call the state office (518) 465-4162. Several people from LWVBN have already registered.

"Spring Fling in New York City" will be May 14th & 15th featuring a cocktail party fundraiser Friday evening, Visit the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island and see the King Tut Exhibit or see the Broadway Revival of "South Pacific" at the Lincoln Center. Complete details are available on the LWVNY website. (www.lwvny.org). Reservations for the tours and theater may be limited. Call the state office to make reservations.

Exploring the Greening of Daemen College

On May 15, 2010, LWVB/N members and guests will have the opportunity to hear a presentation by Dr. Brenda Young, Natural Sciences Chair at Daemen College. Last June she was awarded national LEED Professional Accreditation by the Green Building Certification Institute that recognizes excellence in green building performance and practice. LEED certification is awarded for Leadership in Environmental Engineering and Design.



Dr. Young will describe the process that led her and Professor of Design, Kevin Kegler, along with their students to create a campus **Ecotrail**. After her presentation, attendees will have the opportunity to walk the **Ecotrail**. At the starting end is a green roof - a small shed whose roof is dotted with succulents. The original purpose of green roofs is to insulate buildings and to protect the roof itself. There is a Rain Garden on the trail. Spider Warts and Sedges are planted to help absorb water from surrounding lawns and parking lots. A large drainage pipe on the property was not moved away, but serves as a seating bench. Heavy stone parking barriers now serve as stepping-stones along the trail and as crossing stones in a small brook on the trail.

After the **Ecotrail** tour, interested members and guests may tour the new Information and Research Commons Building on Campus. It is designed to conserve energy, water and other resources, maximize the use of recycled materials and minimize the use of toxic materials. It is one of the first freestanding "green" buildings on a WNY Campus.

Judy Weidemann

"Sustainable development is a dynamic process which enables all people to realize their potential, and to improve their quality of life, in ways which simultaneously protect and enhance the Earth's life support systems."

Forum for the Future Annual Report 2000

The Census: Reallocating Political Power in America

Beginning in May census enumerators will fan out across the country to count every person in America. Government officials will cheer them on as will countless civic, racial, ethnic, and cultural organizations – and for good reason. The stakes are high. The census numbers will be the basis for determining financial benefits (\$400 billion in 2010) at every level of government for everything from roads and bridges, to education, health care and social services.

But even more important, the population figures will determine how seats in the House of Representatives and other legislative bodies are reapportioned. The Constitution requires that all people living in the country be counted every decade to determine the number of seats each state will have in the House of Representatives. The first House had only 33 members; each state had one seat and the remaining seats were divided according to population. After the census in 1790 the number of seats jumped to 66. As the population grew after each census so did the number of House seats until 1910 when the number reached 435 and was then capped. As a result, the average number of constituents per representative increased from 30,000 in 1790 (total population 3.9 million) to 670,000 in 2000 (total population 291.4 million).

Originally each state was free to determine the boundaries and the size of its congressional and state legislative districts. Citizens argued endlessly about the how redistricting should be accomplished and over perennial problems such as population inequality. (In 1930 New York's smallest district contained only 90,700 voters, but the largest had 776,400 voters.) All this changed dramatically during the 1960's with a series of stunning U.S. Supreme Court decisions on apportionment. In 1962 the Court declared the "one person, one vote" principle, which required states to draw Congressional districts based on equal population. It later extended this principle to include all governmental legislative districts. In 1965 it forbid political gerrymandering to dilute the votes of black and then Hispanic minority populations.

With apportionment clearly a federal issue, the LWVUS initiated a national study and in 1966 announced member agreement in support of the Supreme Court's "one person, one vote" principle, that government legislative bodies be apportioned substantially on population.

The New York State LWV had reached similar consensus a few years earlier but included additional standards that would require legislative districts to be: geographically compact; contiguous; respectful of existing political boundaries and minority communities; and competitive. The League has been highly critical of the present system in which sitting legislators draw legislative districts that protect incumbents and their political parties. The League has long supported an independent non-partisan redistricting commission that would draw districts in a fair and impartial manner and a redistricting process that provides for public participation and comment. The commission's redistricting plan would be submitted to the legislature for approval.

We are meeting our state legislators this spring. We will ask them to firmly commit to redistricting reform that includes an independent redistricting commission.

Information on the census is at www.2010census.gov

League action on reapportionment is available in *LWVUS and LWVNY Impact on Issues*.

The census count will be delivered in December 2010. In 2011 redistricting will occur.

Have you been counted?

Janet Massaro, Janet Goodsell

The Annual Meeting and 90th Birthday Celebration on June 5, 2010 will include a Basket Raffle to benefit LWVBN. We welcome donations from League members. Some "basket" items you might want to donate include gift certificates for restaurants, businesses, special events, books or games for children, coffee, tea, snacks, your creations- such as hand crafted items or food items, and books and games for League members. We'll also raffle the beautiful quilt that Ann Marie Malachowski pieced and contributed earlier this year.

Please contact Terri Parks at events@lwvbn.org to let us know what you'll contribute.

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

JOIN

CUT OUT AND MAIL TODAY

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

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$62 Individual (Basic Membership) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$95 Household
<i>(2 members living at the same address)</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Carrie Chapman Catt Membership | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 Student membership |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$90 Elizabeth Cady Stanton Membership | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Susan B. Anthony Membership | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enclosed is my additional contribution of \$_____ | |

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.

Please check your information in the LWVBN Membership Directory. If your contact information has changed or is listed incorrectly please let me know and I will make the change in our records.

Margaret Brunson (margbrunson@yahoo.com).

If you change your e-mail address, please send an e-mail notifying us of the change from your new e-mail address to: lwwbn@lwwbn.org, and to me at events@lwwbn.org. We need this notification to reach you by e-mail with the latest news, advocacy requests, and information.

Elsa Bondar, LWVB/N Grassroots Coordinator

If you're willing to receive your VOTER by e-mail, please contact me at events@lwwbn.org. You will help the environment, save printing and postage costs, and learn about upcoming events at least a week earlier than folks who receive the printed copy. We currently are sending VOTER by e-mail to 70 members who requested it. Their comments about the electronic delivery have been positive.

Terrri Parks, VOTER Editor

Voter Services

Naturalization Ceremonies for New Citizens: On April 1, Sandra O'Hara and Donna McNally represented the League. On April 15, Lauren McDade and Susan Witt were the League participants. The League is grateful to these members for this important work of the League.

School Board Elections: If any of our members would like to moderate the Ken-Ton School Board elections on May 6 or the Williamsville School Board elections sometime in May, please contact me or Jo Ann Mecca.

Joyce Bol, Voter Services Chair

Clarence Unit News

Because there are three candidates running for two seats on the Clarence School Board, the Clarence Unit will sponsor a candidates' forum. It will be held on May 11, 2010, at 7 p.m. in the Clarence High School lecture hall.

Allene Falk, Clarence Unit Coordinator

MAY 2010

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
4/25 ETHICS.. IN ALBANY? SPEAKER AND PANEL	4/26	4/27 ISSUES/ACTION 4:30 p.m.	4/28	4/29	4/30	1
2	3 LWVBN BOARD 4:30 p.m.	4	5 “ALBANY On the ROAD” Page 3	6 GREAT DECISIONS Page 2	7 VOTER COPY DUE	8
9	10	11	12	13 NATURAL RESOURCES 9:30 a.m. TRANSPORTATION GROUP 10:00 a.m. League Office	14 “SPRING FLING” in NYC Page 3	15 BUILDING the DAEMEN COLLEGE ECOTRAIL EVENT Page 1
16	17	18	19	20 CHARTER SCHOOLS 1:30 p.m.	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29