League of Women Voters Buffalo/Niagara Forum
Co-sponsored by
Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo Social Justice Task Force

MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION:
MULTI CHALLENGES AND MULTI OPPORTUNITIES

October 18, 2012  7:00–9:00 p.m.
Unitarian Universalist Church of Buffalo
695 Elmwood Avenue, Buffalo NY

Slide presentation by Dr. Tamara Alsace, Director of Multilingual Education, Buffalo Public Schools:
Extent of the Refugee Immigrant Population in Buffalo

There are now 70 different languages spoken by children in the Buffalo Schools. One third of recent valedictorians are immigrants.

A panel discussion will follow:
Mary Cummings, Professor, Buffalo State College
Doreen Regan, ESL Coordinator, Adult Education, Buffalo Public Schools
Loretta Lynch, classroom teacher, Buffalo Public Schools
Refugee parent to provide personal experience

Guests are welcome. Refreshments will be served. Let’s bring our own mugs!

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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Great Decisions

Joan Photiadis volunteered to lead our seventh 2012 discussion on Thursday, October 4, 10:00 a.m.–noon at 1272 Delaware Avenue. The topic is “Indonesia: Prospects for Prosperity.” “Having emerged from authoritarianism in the last 15 years, Indonesia has made remarkable strides politically, economically and socially. Yet the new, democratic Indonesia is still a developing country facing considerable challenges. How can Indonesia continue its path of growth, reform and prosperity? What is Indonesia’s role in the global community?” Join us as we explore another of our world’s countries. Also please note that we once again must make our own “Great Decision” for next year. If we are to continue for 2013, commitments should be made at the October meeting or by calling Bernice Baeumler.

Bernice Baeumler
National League History: Belle Sherwin

“Suffragette dies, July 10, 1955. Miss Belle Sherwin a pioneer for women’s suffrage and a former president of the National League of Women Voters died tonight in her home.” (New York Times, July 10, 1955)

Belle Sherwin succeeded Maud Wood Park as National League of Women Voters president. She was elected at the League’s fifth annual convention in Buffalo. She served in this capacity from 1924-1934. A graduate of Wellesley College and an early associate of Susan B. Anthony and Carrie Chapman Catt, Miss Sherwin was a strong advocate of equal economic and educational opportunities for women and a persistent supporter of the right of women to serve on juries. She vigorously encouraged all women to take an active part in politics.

Miss Sherwin began her term as president by unifying the League's administration around the goal of political education. Through her work, the League earned its reputation for being a non-partisan organization that published accurate and objective educational materials. During her term, the League supported United States entry into the League of Nations, a child labor amendment to the constitution, and establishing a federal department of education.

After leaving office in 1934, Miss Sherwin continued her national involvement. President Roosevelt appointed her to the Consumers' Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration and to the Federal Advisory Committee of the United States Employment Service.

Upon ending her government career, she returned to her hometown of Cleveland, Ohio and remained there until her death.

Marie Hanrahan, LWVBN Historian

LEAGUE MEMBERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Dot Brown, Lynne Vallone, Margaret Brunson, Charles Paganelli and Judy Casassa represented the League at citizenship ceremonies in August and September. Sandy Chelnov spoke about Climate Smart Communities at Daemen College’s Environmental Summit on September 29. Janet Massaro will speak about fall campaign issues at the Mang Center in Kenmore on October 10, 1:00 p.m. and at Kenmore United Methodist Church on October 28, 10:45 a.m.

The number of requests for speakers to present the League’s non-partisan perspective on important issues has increased dramatically during this busy election season. If you would like to become a member of the League's speaker bureau, please contact Mike Eagan.

Mike Egan, Volunteer Coordinator

NEW MEMBERS

The League welcomes returning member Bonnie Flickinger of Buffalo, and new members Betsy Berchou of Tonawanda, Carolyn Kerr of Tonawanda, and Patricia Townsend of Amherst.

Judy Metzger, Membership Chair
**VOTER REGISTRATION DRIVES**

As of September 10, our League had conducted eight voter registration drives in Buffalo and the surrounding suburbs. Over fifty voter registration forms were collected. All the shifts at the remaining eleven drives are fully staffed. All of the approximately forty volunteers who have offered their services for these drives are to be commended. Kate Wagner continues to do a marvelous job communicating with volunteers about their shifts. If any volunteer is suddenly unable to do her/his shift, please contact Kate so she can find a substitute.

Our League also participated in the National Voter Registration Drive on September 25 in collaboration with Massachusetts Avenue Project (MAP) and People United for Sustainable Housing (PUSH). This nation-wide event endeavored to register thousands of citizens. Our local and national leagues were among the hundreds of organizations that participated.

**Candidate Debate and Forums**

A debate between U.S. Representative Kathleen Hochul and Chris Collins, candidates for U.S. Congressional District 27, has been scheduled for Tuesday, October 16, 7:00 p.m. in the WNED-TV studio. It will be broadcast on WNED-TV and WGRZ-TV at that time. The debate is sponsored by WNED and WGRZ in partnership with the League of Women Voters of Buffalo Niagara, WXXI Rochester, and The Buffalo News.

The following candidates’ forums are scheduled: October 22, 7:00–9:00 p.m. at Clarence Town Hall with Laura McDade moderating; October 24, 9:00 a.m. at the Amherst Senior Center with Ramona Gallagher moderating; October 24, 7:00 p.m. at Union-Pleasant School in Hamburg with Marian Deutschman moderating.

Joyce H. Bol, Voter Services Chair

League members Mary Scheeder and Peg Mergenhagen worked the voter registration drive on September 1, 2012 at the Walmart in Cheektowaga.

The League of Women Voters:

Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

Work with the LWV to help shape the issues that keep our community fair, vibrant and strong.
Amherst Unit

Sarah Bishop, Executive Director of Buffalo First, will be the guest speaker at Lunch and Issues on Friday, October 19 at the Scotch and Sirloin Restaurant, 6999 Maple Road, Amherst. Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m. Founded in 2006, Buffalo First is a nonprofit membership organization comprised of local businesses, concerned citizens, and other nonprofit organizations. Buffalo First’s mission is to build a local, green, and fair economy in the Buffalo-Niagara region by encouraging people to shop locally, by helping businesses access local goods and services and by giving businesses a united voice to shape better business policies.

The cost for Lunch and Issues remains $16.00 all inclusive, payable to LWVBN. Contact Sally Metzger or Judy Metzger for reservations. As always, this program and luncheon are open to the public. We look forward to seeing all interested League members and friends!

The Amherst Unit will host a candidates’ forum on October 24, 9:00 a.m. at the Amherst Senior Center, 370 Audubon Parkway. Ramona Gallagher will moderate the forum.

Judy Metzger attended the August Town Board meeting. Attendees expressed concern that so few town committees post agendas or minutes for their meetings. Neither Supervisor Weinstein nor any board member responded to these concerns during the meeting.

Judy Metzger, Sally Metzger and Arlene Miles, Amherst Unit Co-coordinators

League of Women Voter Buffalo/Niagara Hosts Online Voter Guide

The League is hosting VOTE411.org, an online voter guide. VOTE411.org provides general, state-, and county-specific information for the 2012 election. Users can enter an address to build a customized voter guide for a specific location, compare candidate positions side-by-side, and print out a customized sample ballot prior to election day.

Candidates were invited to submit their qualifications and answer questions. Responses from national, state, Erie and Niagara County candidates will be available from September 28 through election day, November 6, 2012. Candidates who did not submit their material are listed with “Candidate has not responded.”

The guide also provides information on:

- Absentee ballots
- Election dates
- ID requirements
- Military and Overseas voting
- Polling place locations
- Registration deadlines
- Voter qualifications
- Voter registration forms
- Voting machines

VOTE411.org can be accessed at http://www.vote411.org/ and at the League website (http://www.lwvbn.org/).
LWVBN To Participate in Concurrence on Great Lakes Ecosystem Position

All members are invited to participate in a half hour meeting on November 12, 5:30 p.m. at 1272 Delaware Avenue to decide whether our local League will concur with the Great Lakes Ecosystem position printed in this issue of the VOTER. Because this position already has been adopted by another league, the Buffalo/Niagara league does not need to conduct a study. If there are concerns about the position, please contact the League office (lwvbn@lwvbn.org) by October 15 so those concerns can be addressed at the November 12 meeting.

Background
In 1966, League members in the four states surrounding Lake Michigan organized the Lake Michigan League of Women Voters to address serious problems with the lake. More recently, the organization voted to expand its focus to include all the Great Lakes. They are asking leagues in all the states bordering the Great Lakes to adopt the Great Lakes Ecosystem position so that the unified voice for restoration and conservation efforts becomes even louder.

The New York State League of Women Voters (LWVNYS) approved undertaking a concurrence for the Great Lakes Ecosystem position at the 2012 Council meeting. Concurrence is a process by which one state league can adopt a position already thoroughly studied and adopted by another state league. The state league undertaking the concurrence asks their local leagues to evaluate and then concur, or not, with the position as stated. LWVNYS can adopt the position if at least one third of the local leagues participate and at least two thirds of the participating leagues concur.

As the largest body of freshwater in the world and the source of drinking water for forty million people in the United States and Canada, the Great Lakes are critical to human and ecosystem health. The health of the lakes, and of all those who depend on them for water, recreation, or livelihood, is being challenged by toxic sediments, invasive species, nutrient loading, and shoreline development. To learn more, visit these websites:

- Great Lakes Information Network: http://www.great-lakes.net/
- Healing Our Water–Great Lakes Coalition (LWVNYS is a member): http://healthylakes.org/about/
- Great Lakes Commission: http://www.glc.org/
- Lake Michigan League of Women Voters: http://lakemichiganlwv.wordpress.com/

Kathleen McCormick and Terri Parks

GREAT LAKES ECOSYSTEM POSITION


The League of Women Voters of Michigan supports preserving and enhancing the environmental integrity and quality of the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Ecosystem. We support the attainment and maintenance of high water quality standards throughout the Great Lakes Basin, with emphasis on water pollution prevention. Water conservation should be a high priority of all governments in the Basin.

I. Protective Measures
To achieve protection and improvement of this valuable, international resource, the League of Women Voters of Michigan supports efforts to:

A. Limit uses of “fragile,” historical, cultural and scenic shoreline areas.
B. Preserve wild and pristine areas within the watershed, with no new development in these special
habitats without adherence to strict criteria as prescribed by federal, state, or local governments.

C. Provide for appropriate recreational opportunities in and public access to sensitive areas without destruction or harm to the ecosystem.

D. Protect the quality of the air and waters of the ecosystem by strict adherence to agricultural, industrial, residential, environmental, and commercial zoning regulations that prohibit the introduction of toxic or polluting discharges or detrimental land use techniques within the Basin.

E. Protect the remaining dune formations. Enforce strict regulations of sand dune mining or development on the dunes.

F. Strengthen upstream land management to eliminate sources of siltation and pollution.

G. Control the invasion and spread of non-native aquatic and terrestrial nuisance species.

II. Threats to the Ecosystem

The League of Women Voters of Michigan opposes the following activities as they can lead to the degradation of the special natural resources of the Great Lakes Ecosystem:

A. Inefficient or excessive water uses. Proposals for new or increased withdrawals within the Basin, e.g. for agricultural or municipal uses, should be carefully evaluated before being permitted. Withdrawals should be regularly monitored for potential or actual damage to the ecosystem.

B. Destruction of marshes and other wetlands throughout the watershed. Mitigation should be accepted only as a last resort. Mitigation proposals should be rigorously evaluated and projects should be strictly monitored to assure no net loss to the ecosystem.

C. New or increased diversions or transfers by any means of Great Lakes waters and adjacent ground waters to a place outside the Basin. Projects already in place should be carefully monitored and restricted if there is evidence of damage to the ecosystem.

D. Dredging and filling of river inlets, harbors, lakes or wetlands except for tightly-controlled, non-degrading and non-repetitive activities.

E. Discharge to air or water of toxic pollutants and other material from industrial, agricultural, residential or commercial operations that may damage the ecosystem in violation of laws and ordinances.

III. Public Participation

The League of Women Voters of Michigan supports informed and responsible action on behalf of the preservation of the Great Lakes Ecosystem. Relevant information should be readily available to the public. Opportunities for public input should be timely, accessible, convenient and well advertised.

IV. Role of Government

The League of Women Voters of Michigan supports:

A. Coordination of functions among various governmental agencies charged with protecting the Great Lakes and elimination of unnecessary overlap.

B. Use of area-wide coordinated management plans and techniques in the solving of Great Lakes Ecosystem problems.

C. Participation by all affected governments in the Basin in review and decision-making on Great Lakes agreements and projects, facilitated in open meetings and hearings.

D. Strengthening of existing mechanisms for intergovernmental discussions and decision-making.

E. Separation of responsibility for submitting recommendations for governmental projects from issuing permits for such projects.

F. Monitoring and enforcement of treaties, ordinances, laws and master plans.

V. Research Priorities

The League of Women Voters of Michigan believes that research on Great Lakes issues should focus on:

A. Effective, non-toxic control and removal of invasive aquatic and terrestrial species.

B. Restoration of health to the overall resource.

C. Survival of native aquatic and terrestrial species and their nutrient sources.

D. Continual testing of Great Lakes water quality for impact from the following: pesticides and fertilizers, resistant bacteria, persistent pharmaceuticals and other chemicals.

E. Evaluation of water accountability systems, groundwater monitoring and water use planning and conservation efforts throughout the Basin.
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<td>Board Meeting 4:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>Transportation/ Waterfront 10:00 Local Government 1:15 p.m.</td>
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<td>Hochul/Collins Debate 7:00 p.m.</td>
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