



The League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara

VOTER

Volume 21 Number 6

March, 2016

Terri Parks
Co-President
events@lwvbn.org

Judy Metzger
Co-President
events@lwvbn.org

Susan Stievater
Membership Chair
events@lwvbn.org

Office:
1272 Delaware Ave
Buffalo, NY 14209
716-986-4898
Fax: 882-3797
lwvbn@lwvbn.org

Office Open
Tues., 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Always call first

Office Manager:
Mary Ann Turkla

Hours
Tues., 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Wed., 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Fri., 10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

LWVBN Home Page
www.lwvbn.org

LWVNY Home Page
www.lwvny.org

LWVUS Home Page
www.lwv.org

Sandra Chelnov
Voter Copy Editor
events@lwvbn.org

Barbara Jezioro
Voter Layout Editor
events@lwvbn.org

The **VOTER** is published
10 times per year. Items
for the April issue are due
Friday, March 4, 2016



Citizen Lobbying Workshop

Saturday, March 12, 2016

9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

[Harlem Road Community Center](#)

4255 Harlem Road, Amherst, NY 14226

Free and open to the public

***Democracy is not a spectator sport.
Acting as participants, rather than spectators, citizens do make a
difference.***

Our elected officials should hear from us regarding League issues. This training and information workshop will provide useful tools for effective lobbying. In a short role-playing skit, League members will model the essentials. You'll get a packet of helpful materials, plus time to share ideas, make suggestions and ask questions. There'll be refreshments, too.

Make reservations online at www.lwvbn.org
or call the League office at 986-4898
by Wednesday, March 9

Join us and make your voice heard!

Every spring the League of Women Voters of New York State collects information from all Leagues in the state and requests volunteers to present the top three priorities to elected officials in their local offices. It's important that each team visiting an elected official include at least one of his or her constituents. Several LWVBN members have already signed up. If you'd like to be part of a team, contact me at events@lwvbn.org

Joan LoCurto, advocacy chair

Mission of the League of Women Voters:

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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Presidents' Report



Certainly, Janet Massaro can breathe a huge sigh of relief. The Money in Politics Study work is complete, and consensus has been approved and posted to the League of Women Voters of the U.S. We appreciate the thorough efforts

Janet and her fine committee put forth this past year. The responses and comments of League members who attended the consensus meetings again show that we are a very special group of people, dedicated to **making democracy work!**

Janet Goodsell submitted the names of two candidates for **Students Inside Albany** this year. These two young people were both very highly qualified to represent our League in May. After careful consideration, the board selected Sage Cihak, who is in 11th grade at City Honors School. We appreciate the interest and support from last year's student, Kate Ryan, and her guidance counselor at City Honors, and the principal of Grand Island High School.

The Issues Committee and board recommended the **proposed LWVUS program** for the next two years. The three issues that have been proposed are **Protection and Expansion of Voting Rights, Money in Politics, and Redistricting Reforms** based on a task force to determine a single focus. The emphasis is on being realistic regarding resources and measurement of effectiveness.

The board appointed Ramona Gallagher and Lyle Toohey as members of a Bylaw Review Committee to be chaired by Wynnie Fisher. Terri Parks will serve ex officio.

We hope that LWVBN has a good number of members at the **Regional Training Meeting on April 9**. We'll be the host League for the session that will include some very fine folks from neighboring Leagues. One among many important discussion topics: **Get Out the Vote – Ways to Increase Voter Participation**. Please contact the League office at 986-4898 or lwvbn@lwvbn.org after you send your registration to LWVNY.S.

If you haven't signed up for the **Citizen Lobbying Workshop on March 12**, please do so! It will be helpful and fun. We all need to be comfortable meeting with our elected officials. They serve us and should be eager to let us know how they stand on League issues. The League is highly respected with good reason. Join us whether you have never participated in advocacy or are very comfortable doing so.

Two special notices:

The League of Women Voters' 52nd National Convention 2016 will take place Thursday, June 16, through Sunday, June 19, in Washington, D.C. Please contact the League office by March 2 if you'd like to be a delegate from LWVBN. It will be an exciting and worthwhile experience.

Erie County has experienced extremely low voter turnouts in recent years. Several League members have suggested that we develop plans to encourage people to not only register, but actually vote in the primaries and, more important, in the general election in November. We need **YOU** to help in this effort. Please contact the League office if you're willing to work with League members and other people in our community who are interested in this important effort.

Judy Metzger & Terri Parks

Great Decisions

Fortunately 10 people signed up for the 2016 Great Decisions briefing book, which qualified us for a 10% discount. Unfortunately the price went up this year, so I hope to collect \$26 from each of you when we meet on Thursday, March 3, from 10 a.m. till noon at 1272 Delaware. I am also hoping everyone can find and bring her 2015 book since we will be discussing the last topic from there: Brazil's Metamorphosis. I will facilitate since Joan Photiadis will be out of town. "Brazil is the 'B' in the acronym BRICS – five emerging economies once seen as soon-to-be superpowers. After economic troubles in the 1990s Brazil has risen to new global prominence – it's drawing in more investment, working on global issues ranging from climate change to peacekeeping, and even hosting the 2016 Olympics. But some of Brazil's trickiest problems – deep divisions over how to tackle serious income inequality, weak civic institutions and poor regional leadership – have held it back." It will be interesting also to see what else has evolved as we pursue this topic together if Buffalo weather co-operates.

Bernice Baeumler,

Waterfront Committee Report

What's next for the Outer Harbor?

Action by the NFTA Board of Commissioners on January 28, 2016, transferred ownership of the two warehouse buildings – Terminals A and B – on the Outer Harbor to the Erie Canal Harbor Development Corporation (ECHDC). How does this action impact plans for the Outer Harbor? Are there creative ways to use these buildings as part of a water-focused area open to the public? Will the ECHDC encourage the public to participate in such planning?

The Waterfront Committee continues to meet, and will consider ways to encourage effective public participation in decisions and planning for our Outer Harbor. We are happy to include anyone ready to work on this issue. Our next meeting is set for Monday, March 14, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m., in the classroom building at Sail Buffalo, located at the north end of Fuhrmann Blvd. Please contact me at events@lwvbn.org if you plan to attend.

Gladys Gifford, chair

Membership Report

Welcome, new members!

Since last July, 13 new members – including one student – have joined our League. Please welcome Ross Giese (husband of Pat Costanza) of East Aurora; Carolyn Koemel, Ann Venuto and Albert Olszowska (husband of Janice) of Williamsville; Robert Rosenthal (husband of Alice) of Amherst; Ann Lazroe of East Amherst; Florence Summe and Kathy Macaluso of Kenmore; Christine Whipple and Dana Just Lamb of Hamburg; Karen Neimeier of Buffalo, and Susan Petherick of Lancaster. Our new student member is Anita "Lucky" Lakareber. "Seasoned" members are contacting them to see how they are faring and encourage their involvement. With these additions, we now have 19 men.

Thank you to all who have renewed their membership. We are now about 190 strong.

Several of us on the board had another conference call on January 14 with Lisa Scott, the membership and leadership development (MLD) coach from LWV of New York. Together, our thrust is to stress our areas of strength and work on efforts such as increasing membership, especially bringing young members into our League, as we have a critical role in continuing to assure democracy prevails in our country.

Sue Stievater, chair

2016 Membership Directory

All members with email addresses recently received the updated League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara Membership Directory. If you would like a printed copy of the directory, please send \$3.00 to the League office to cover copying and mailing costs.

Volunteer Services

Volunteers welcome new citizens

We started off the year with volunteers Judy Casassa and Ramona Gallagher representing the League at a naturalization ceremony on January 7 at the U.S. Courthouse where they greeted 60 new citizens. We have been fortunate to fill our commitments for February, March and April. However, two new dates have opened up – March 24 and April 28. We need two volunteers for each date at the U.S. Courthouse. If you are interested in representing LWVBN at those ceremonies, please let me know via email to events@lwvbn.org

-Judith Clarke, LWVBN volunteer coordinator

Voter Services

Voter Services call for volunteers!

Speakers may be needed to talk about the importance of voting in upcoming elections. We will also need volunteers to work at voter registration sites. It's not too late to express an interest in voter services – simply email me at events@lwvbn.org to add your name to our list of volunteers.

Margaret Brunson, chair

Money in Politics



LWVBN Money in Politics Consensus Report sent to LWVUS

Thank you, thank you, to all LWVBN members who came to one of two meetings in the middle of January to participate in the National League's Money in Politics Study and update consensus!

The consensus questions were surely comprehensive, divided into three parts and claiming four pages in the Voter. Part I addressed the goals of campaign finance in terms of democratic values. Part II determined the extent to which the First Amendment protections of free speech and press should apply to various speakers and activities in the campaign finance context. Part III asked about methods of campaign finance regulation. After a discussion of all questions at the two meetings and consideration of additional responses received by mail, our MIP Committee evaluated the consensus discussions and our report was approved by the LWVBN board. The report was then sent to LWVUS to be tallied with the responses from local Leagues across the country.

The new LWV position on campaign finance will be announced at the National Convention in June. Stay tuned – you'll be the first to know!

The study and consensus culminated two years of intense work by our committee. A highlight was Zephyr Teachout's terrific presentation to League members and the Western New York community at the WNED studios on Constitution Day, September 17, 2015. What an energizing event that was, inspiring us to march forward with confidence to achieve our campaign finance goals.

As chair, I want to thank each and every committee member for making this important study and consensus a success. Our committee also thanks the LWVBN board for its generous support. Finally, to all LWVBN members, a thank you and an invitation: **join the MIP Committee!** Campaign finance reform is an ongoing challenge. The League works best when we are working together.

Janet Massaro, chair, MIP Study Committee

Don't let this be your last Voter!

Receipt of the Voter, the bulletin that LWVBN produces ten times each year, is a benefit of League membership. If you failed to renew your membership or are an elected official, the address label on this mailing includes the term **LAST VOTER**. If you think you renewed your membership, please contact Mary Ann at the League office at 986-4898 or lwvbn@lwvbn.org.

We'll be happy to include you as a **non-member subscriber** to the printed edition for \$15 per year to cover printing and mailing costs, or for \$5 per year for the electronic edition. Complete this form for a one-year subscription that will conclude with the June 2017 edition and mail it with your check written to LWVBN.

Please note that future annual subscriptions will begin with the Summer Voter. The subscription fee will be prorated for the editions remaining until the next June edition.

Name _____
 Position (if an elected official) _____
 Number and street _____
 City, state, zip _____
 Phone number _____ Email _____
 Edition (select one) _____ Printed Voter _____ Electronic Voter

AAUW Buffalo Branch and League of Women Voters celebrate

International Women's Day

Tuesday, March 8, 2016

Co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Buffalo/Niagara

UB Center for Tomorrow
 SUNY at Buffalo – North Campus
 101 Service Center Road, Buffalo, NY 14260
 (Flint Entrance from Maple Road – first building on left)

Registration & refreshments: 6 p.m.
 Welcome: 6:30 p.m.
 Buffet dinner: 6:45 p.m.
 Cost: \$21 per person

Everyone is welcome to join us on **Tuesday, March 8**, for dinner and a presentation by Anne Cheung and Anne Rapin, co-founders of A2Empowerment, a non-profit organization dedicated to empowering women through education. Since its founding in 2008, A2E has awarded more than 700 scholarships to young women in Cameroon, Africa. Anne Cheung, a scientist at biopharmaceutical company Biogen, was named to Fortune magazine's 2015 Heroes of the 500 list. Anne Rapin, who served with the Peace Corps in Binka, Cameroon, manages the Hygiene Promotion/Community Mobilization Program in the Za'atari Refugee Camp in Jordan.

Please direct all questions to Lillis McLean at events@lwvbn.org



For reservations, send your name, phone number, and the names of everyone covered by your check to Betty Preble, 6935 East Quaker, Orchard Park, NY 14127, by February 26.

Please make your check payable to AAUW Buffalo Branch and write your phone number on the check.



OF BUFFALO/NIAGARA
1272 Delaware Ave, Buffalo, NY 14209-2401



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



March Meetings & Events

Tues., 3/1, 4:00 p.m.

Issues Committee, Harlem Road Com. Cntr.

Thur., 3/3, 10:00 a.m.

Great Decisions, League Office

Mon., 3/7, 4:00 p.m.

Board Meeting, League Office

Tues., 3/8, 6:00 p.m.

International Women's Day Dinner
UB Center for Tomorrow

Wed., 3/9, 1:30 p.m.

Local Gov., League Office

Sat., 3/12, 9:30 a.m.

Citizen Lobby Workshop, Harlem Road Com. Cntr.

Mon., 3/14, 3:00 p.m.

Waterfront Committee, Sail Buffalo

Thurs., 3/17, 1:30 p.m.

Education Committee, League Office

REMINDER: The next deadline for the Voter is Friday, March 4. All copy, photos, etc., should be sent to Nancy DeTine (nancy@nancydetine.com).

Important: The League Office has a new phone number: 716-986-4898. The office will be open on Tuesdays from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.; Mary Ann will usually work from home on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. and Fridays from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.