The League opener

Labor Day is behind us, and students are back in classes. Are you ready for a new League year? On Tuesday, September 27, 2005, all League members are urged to attend a covered dish supper and panel presentation on “The Role of the Administrator in County Government,” at the Elm Park Methodist Church, across from Rite Aid on Chestnut Street, Oneonta. Bring a “dish to pass,” your table service, prospective members and your dedication to improving local government. We gather at 6:00 p.m., have dinner at 6:30 with the program following at 7:15.

We expect David Brenner, honorary League member, and former Otsego County Board Chair who wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on county administration to introduce the program. Panelists will be Tim Joseph, Tompkins County Board Chair, John Bryne, County Manager, Tioga County, and Dominic Mazza, Administrator for Livingston County.

Our concern about county management goes back to the 1980s. In 1987 the Leagues in Cooperstown and Oneonta adopted a study of county government. After consensus meetings in May, 1989, we adopted the position statement you will find on page 8.

Later that year the County Board Chair from Genesee County addressed League members and county board members whom we had invited to this dinner meeting. He spoke about the changes that had taken place from the time he was first on the board without a manager to the current time when as board chair, he had concrete evidence of the benefit of professional management.

We have continually updated our information. Most recently, this spring the Oneonta League again surveyed comparable counties. You will find the results of this survey on pages 6-8. The respondents from all surveys have agreed that professional management had improved the efficiency of county government and more than paid for itself.

With a budget of over $80 million, Otsego County is big business. We remain convinced that professional management will benefit Otsego County in many ways.

Moderator training

September 28, 2005 will be a busy day for League members as the Cooperstown League will be hosting a luncheon and training workshop for moderators of candidate nights at the Otsega from 11 - 12:30.

Who better than LWVOA’s Peg Hathaway, past Voter Service Director, LWVNY to lead such a workshop? Even if you’re just curious, plan to attend and enjoy this luncheon before looking in on voting machine demonstrations.

Voting machine demos

At this writing, demonstrations of voting machines are scheduled from 1 - 4:00 on September 28th at the County Office Building, second floor, and in the County Courthouse, in the basement across from the Board of Elections.
The League has an 85 year track record of promoting citizen education and participation in our democracy and this morning I would like to present some information concerning the selection of voting machines. That was the second sentence of my presentation this morning (September 7) to the Otsego County Board of Representatives during the Privilege of the Floor.

What can I say? People listen to the League. When a League representative speaks, he/she reflects a strong heritage of nonpartisan, voter education and advocacy. The public knows that we do our research and are working for the fundamental goals of our democracy - an educated and active electorate.

Do two things for the League this month: (1) Write a letter to the editor in support of precinct based, optical scan voting machines. The August Update contained a great insert providing information on this system. Or check out the state league site at www.lwvny.org (2) Invite a friend to meet the League at our September 28th meeting. This is a luncheon focused on Moderator Training for our Candidates Nights. Voter Service activities are the core of the League.

Remember, "Democracy is not a Spectator Sport." Get off the bench and join the playing field.

- Ellen Tillapaugh, President, LWV Cooperstown Area

Fall is upon us, first color is appearing in the tree tops. September is the time we traditionally get together to renew friendships and look forward to the coming year. I do hope you will join us September 27th for our opening covered dish supper. The location is different from past years: Elm Park Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut Street, Oneonta (across from Rite-Aid). If you can’t come for dinner, join us for the program at 7:15. This is a wonderful time to introduce the League to people you know or work with. I particularly look forward to meeting those of you who joined us this past year. Please set this evening aside so that you can get to know us and we can get to know you.

Many issues are of joint concern to LWV Oneonta and Cooperstown Areas. The purchase by Otsego County of accurate, reliable and cost effective voting machines has been a major concern this summer. For many years we have worked together for better county administration and environmental policies. Let’s continue to make a positive impact on our communities together.

- Kay Stuligroß, President, LWV Oneonta Area

Household hazardous waste duty

Household Hazardous Waste Day, September 24, at the Morris Fair Grounds. OCCA provides the volunteers for Otsego County’s Household Hazardous Waste Day, and I will be signing up volunteers. Can you help? We stir paint, direct traffic, help unload cars, and give out information. The event will be held this year at the Otsego County Fair Grounds in Morris. The shifts are from 7am – 11am and 11am – 3pm. A meal will be provided during each shift. Volunteers need to wear old clothing, hard toed shoes, shades, hat, and sunscreen. If you are able to participate please email me back or give me a call at OCCA, 547-4020 or at home, 293-6654. If you know of any one else who might want to help please let me know, I would be happy to call them.

- Martha Clarvoe
Cooperstown Calendar

September 27 Covered Dish Supper and program: Panel on County Administration. Elm Park Methodist Church, Oneonta. See page one.

September 28 Luncheon and Moderator Training: Otesaga from 11-12:30 with Peg Hathaway. See page one.

September 28 Voting Machine Demonstrations: Machines will be set up from 1-4:00 in the County Office Building (second floor) and in the County Courthouse (basement, across from the Board of Elections Office.

October 19 Ida Trager Regional Workshop: First United Methodist Church, Oneonta. See below.

October 23 Pancake Breakfast fundraiser Firehall, Cooperstown. Directed by Al Keck, staffed by fun(d) loving League members.

October Candidates Nights: TBA

November 16 League Day at the UN; 9-2:00 pm. Details at www.lwvnyny.org

January 25 "Civil Liberties: Balancing Liberty and Security": time and location TBA A film in which LWVUS hosted a panel discussion featuring Washington insiders discussing the intricacies of balancing civil liberties and homeland security and the impact on communities across the country

Ida Trager regional workshop

League members from our region of the state will be meeting right next door on Wednesday, October 19, 2005, so plan to attend. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet members of other Leagues outside of Otsego County as well as state board members who will be presenting workshops.

Funded by the Trager family in memory and in honor of Ida Trager’s dedication to the League, Registration for the event is only $5.00 (the Oneonta League will be paying registration fees for its members) and begins at 9:45 with coffee. Workshops will be given by LWV Education Foundation President, Jaqui LoFaro, LWVFE Development Consultant, Lauren Candela-Katz, LWVNY VP/Membership, Martha Kennedy and LWVNY President, Marcia Merrins.

Adjournment will be at 2:00, but you’ll be leaving with a renewed confidence in the League’s ability to remain a vital force for change in your community. Networking with members of other Leagues will give you new ideas, and new resources to draw from for years to come.

The event will be held at the First United Methodist Church at 65 Chestnut Street, which is the corner of Chestnut and Church Streets (across from the former P & C grocery store). Enter from the Church Street side.
The Coalition for Democracy (CFD) of Central New York has been working with the League of Women Voters on a campaign to support Precinct Based Optical Scan (PBOS) voting machines for our county. In recent months more and more individuals and groups around the state have become alarmed about the speed with counties seem to be deciding in favor of Direct Recording Electronic, or touchscreen, voting machines (DRE's)--rather than PBOS, which appears to be more reliable and cost-effective. We are concerned that much misinformation about PBOS is being circulated.

**Background**
New York State law designates county Boards of Elections (BOE's) as the entities which will select voting machines for their counties. Once BOE's have made their choice, the federal government will then pay the chosen vendors directly, with no approval required by any other county entity. Federal funds have been allocated to cover the initial costs of machines for the 2006 elections. HOWEVER, expenses for maintenance, storage, and replacement beyond that time will be incurred by the counties.

The New York State Board of Elections does not appear to be very far along in the process of arranging for approval and purchase of voting machines. The timeline for certification, approval and purchase of machines is extremely vague. Every machine must first be federally certified, then certified by NY State. All of this will take some time, and the State Board of Elections may not even yet have a full quorum of members to begin the process. The entire state BOE approval process appears to be months behind schedule and has been anything but transparent to the public.

No machines which fulfill NYS's requirement for a full face ballot and a verified paper trail have yet been manufactured, while 3 vendors--Sequoia, ES & S, and Liberty--are all vying for attention. Highly-paid lobbyists for the vendors have been funneling out across the state to persuade counties which ma-
machines they should purchase. There have been many demonstrations of machines, but these demonstrations have often lacked optical scan machines, or optscan machines have been dismissed as problematic, giving an erroneous impression about their viability. One third of the US now uses optical scan systems, which appear much more reliable and cost-effective than DRE's--yet no one we know has yet seen a full, clear, and supportive demonstration of an optical scan machine in New York State.

Local campaign

The CI&D PBOS campaign met on August 23, along with Oneonta LWV president Kay Stuligross, to update ourselves and do some joint strategizing. Members from Otsego, Delaware, Chenango and Schoharie Counties were present.

A major element of our campaign for PBOS is to pressure county legislatures (as well as informing our local BOE) with any new information we may have about voting machine choice. The reasons for focusing on the legislature, despite the fact that they won't be making any decision directly now, are several:

If our campaign remains purely a private dialogue with commissioners, there will be less incentive to respond to it.

It will be the county, not our Board of Elections, which will have to fund major expenses for any system we choose in the years to come--and these will be considerable.

The public needs to be informed about the issues, and this is a very good venue.

Since voting is a very basic citizen's right, citizens should be fully involved and have a major voice in any decisions.

So far, Dave Grodsky of CI&D has made a presentation to the county board back in May, accompanied by a handout. The LWV has written a guest editorial for The Daily Star which appeared July 23, 2005. On August 5, I forwarded to all BOE members and legislators with email an article from the LA Times about the failure of Diebold machines to pass a test in California, which also mentioned the general unreliability of DRE's.

A presentation to the County legislature was make on September 7. Both CI&D and the LWV made brief presentations and brought others along to show citizen support. We have been encouraged to attend board meetings regularly to continue to make our points with brevity and clarity.

In addition to working with the county legislature, we have launched a petition campaign in support of PBOS. Several dozen signatures have been collected for Otsego County so far. Nearby counties--Chenango & Schoharie--have collected hundreds. We will have a table with this petition at the Grand and Glorious Garage Sale, Main St, Oneonta on Saturday Sept. 10.

Other elements of an Otsego County campaign plan include:

1) Arrange a meeting with the editorial board of the Daily Star to request endorsement of PBOS. Dave Grodsky from the Coalition is prepared to go with one member of the LWV to do this. This could have a major impact on the community.

2) Make copies of the DVD which has been made of our training session and circulate them.

Other ideas to consider:

a) Should we meet with our county treasurer?

b) What about a citizens' hearing on this?

c) There will be a public viewing of voting machines on Sept 28, and we should be prepared with questions, etc.

Local Voices

LWVUS has released the findings and recommendations from its Local Voices: Citizen Conversations on Civil Liberties and Secure Communities project.

The findings reveal that Americans don't have a full understanding of the issues and how they relate to each other. This is not an easy set of issues to understand and the public wants and needs more information.

The film, Civil Liberties: Balancing Liberty and Security, will be shown in January by the Cooperstown League.

Copies of the report are available online at www.lwv.org. Look for Local Voices report.
LWV Oneonta Area survey results

Seventeen counties having populations between 45,000 and 70,000 were surveyed. (Otsego County has a population of 61,676)

Twelve counties have administrators or managers.
Median salary for administrators: $75,000.
Salary range: $60,000 - $117,000
Median of administrators' total budget costs: $118,491
Budget range: $90,000 - $312,432

Five counties have Boards of Supervisors: Chenango, Columbia, Delaware, Fulton, Wyoming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Admin Salary</th>
<th>Office's Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Allegany (Administrator)</td>
<td>49,927</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>$118,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Franklin (Manager)</td>
<td>51,134</td>
<td>$69,000</td>
<td>$226,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genesee (Manager)</td>
<td>60,370</td>
<td>$85,837</td>
<td>$285,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greene (Administrator)</td>
<td>48,195</td>
<td>$90,000</td>
<td>$90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herkimer, (Administrator)</td>
<td>64,427</td>
<td>$72,409</td>
<td>$72,409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livingston (Administrator)</td>
<td>64,328</td>
<td>$117,000</td>
<td>$185,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison (Chair w/ Admin Asst.)</td>
<td>69,441</td>
<td>$82,500</td>
<td>$92,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orleans (Chief Administrator)</td>
<td>44,171</td>
<td>$65,142</td>
<td>$95,006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tioga (Manager)</td>
<td>51,784</td>
<td>$82,234</td>
<td>$107,595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren (Administrator)</td>
<td>63,303</td>
<td>$67,000</td>
<td>$312,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington (Administrator)</td>
<td>61,042</td>
<td>$60,325</td>
<td>$207,281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cortland (Administrator)</td>
<td>48,599</td>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td>*$531,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Several office sites and employees are included in this amount.
Questionnaire results

All the surveys received from legislators in those counties that have administrators or managers were supportive.

Copies of the local laws creating the office of county administrator and defining his/her job description were sent by Allegheny, Greene, Franklin, Livingston, Tioga and Warren Counties

RESPONSES OF LEGISLATORS TO QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS:
Question: Does the structure of the county administrator/manager enhance or interfere with your role as an elected official?

Survey Choices               Number of Responses
Greatly enhance               8
Moderately enhance            2
No effect                     1
Moderately interfere         1
Greatly interfere             0
No Response                   1

Comments:
- Had great experience prior to being hired.
- The knowledge and experience of the Administrator provide a sounding board for my initiatives and role as chairman.
- Our particular form of government greatly enhances and magnifies our role as elected officials by making us more effective.
- Acts as a blocker between management, staff and legislature.
- No single legislator (part time) can keep up with day to day county business, contractual, and complex issues.
- He does all the day to day works and keeps us informed.
- We both have various job duties, but are involved in each other's work.
- Our Administrator has a thorough understanding of all departments. Brings stability to the county budget.
- Too soon to know.

Question: Does an administrator have an effect on taxes? For example, does s/he increase county efficiency thus saving dollars; does s/he bring in grant monies; does s/he anticipate problems? Or does the position cost the taxpayers?

Survey choices                         Number of responses
Very cost effective                    7
Moderately cost effective              5
Pays his/her salary                    0
Not at all cost effective              0
No response                            1
Comments:
- Acts as county budget officer.
- Interpretation of various positions and laws and has a good effect in legislation enactment.
- The County Administrator develops the County Budget with a complete understanding of all departments and their inter-relationship, which allows for the most effective allocation of tax dollars.
- Ours is cost effective and I would guess most are.
- As long as legislature wants to do so because they are directing the administrator to do so.
- He prepares the budget and the legislature raises or lowers and adapts.
- Our county Administrator is very good on long range planning, forecasts and presentation.
- We have had great success with our Administrator.
- Too soon to know.

Question: Does an administrator/manager create more county government bureaucracy? (There is a concern that an administrator/manager becomes another layer of government, thus compounding rather than streamlining government.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey choices</th>
<th>Number of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greatly increases Bureaucracy</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately increases</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No better/no worse</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately lessens Bureaucracy</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant lessening</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comments
- The County Administrator is able to deal with issues as they arise in a much timelier manner than a part-time elected official.
- Manager still works for legislature brings professionalism.
- He does have an office and I think a County Manager or Administrator should save the county enough money to pay for his dept. Our county manager does this. Our county manager works for the 9 legislators and does not have a contract. He works for us as we direct. He plays no games with us and we have a good relationship. I am very satisfied with our arrangement.
- Problems or concerns are directly presented to Committee for resolution.
- The position takes much of the "Politics" out of the discussion.
- Too soon to know.
County government position statement

A joint position of the League of Women Voters of the Oneonta & Cooperstown Areas

Support of an appointed county administrator who has demonstrated the necessary education, training, experience and ability to manage the day-to-day operation of Otsego County Government.

The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing and coordination among the different agencies, departments and levels of government.

The primary responsibility of the Board of Representatives should be to set policy and enact the laws of Otsego County. It should provide general oversight as well as be responsible for the long-range planning policies of the county.

Therefore, the Leagues of Women Voters of the Oneonta Area and of the Cooperstown Area support the creation of the position of county administrator. This position will free the Board of Representatives from the routine administration of county business and allow them to concentrate on their primary responsibilities.

A county administrator would provide a full range of services to the Board of Representatives and its committees. S/he would coordinate the activities of the officers, employees, agents, departments and agencies so that the policies and programs of the Board of Representatives are implemented at minimum expenditure and with maximum benefit to the citizens.

The county administrator should be a non-political appointee of the Board of Representatives who has demonstrated the necessary education, training, experience and ability and who is not currently serving on the Board of Representatives.

League Principles

The Principles are "concepts of government" to which the League subscribes. They are a direct descendant of the Platform, which served from 1942 to 1956.

The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.

The League of Women Voters believes that the democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination.

The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.

The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.

The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems and that development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

Update April 1999 Issue 7
MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION FORM
LWV of the Oneonta & Cooperstown Areas

How can you help our League? Your membership is important and your participation will help keep your League a vital part of the community.

Look over the following and see where we can best use your time and talents.

Fill in the following and send it back to the appropriate address below, or bring it to the September 27th dinner meeting in Oneonta.

Maggie Winne, 3 Handsome Ave. Oneonta, NY 13820
OR
LWV Cooperstown Area, P.O. box 426, Cooperstown, NY 13326
THANK YOU.

Name__________________________________________Telephone______________email________________________

____REFRESHMENTS for General Membership meetings

VOTER SERVICE (Candidates Nights for LWVCA to be announced):
Forums: ______ Timer October 25 ______ Timer November 1
______ Greeter October 25 ______ Greeter Nov. 1
______ Register voters at various locations.
______ Distribute voter information

ACTION: Our position of supporting a County Manager is the top local issue this fall. Calls to action also come from the state and national Leagues throughout the year. Legislators need to be constantly informed on our positions; therefore, select the area of interest for your participation:

______ LOCAL _______ STATE ________ NATIONAL
______ Letter Writing _______ Phone Calls _______ E-mails
______ Lobbying _______ Attending meetings locally (observing public meetings)

Any particular area/issue of interest?

PUBLIC RELATIONS: _______ Advertising special events with flyers, etc.

BULLETIN: _______ Write articles about local League programs, action on positions, or other issues of interest to the members

______ Copy-edit or proofread _______ Take photos at LWV programs/events for publication in newsletter

______ Word processing or desktop publishing - putting the pieces together (basic typing skill required, expert help and FREE professional computer training available for someone willing to learn).

FINANCE: _______ Explore/write grant proposals to support local LWV projects

______ Help with follow-up phone calls for appeal letters.

ROAD CLEANUP ON I88: _______October 27, 2005 at 8:30 am

________________________ May 4, 2006

1 0 ........................................................................................................................................ Update April 1999 Issue 7
Advantages of Paper Ballot/Precinct Based Optical Scan Voting Systems Over Electronic Touch-Screen Voting Machines (DREs)

Federal law requires that New York State change its voting system. The State legislature has given to the counties the power to choose between two types of voting systems to replace our lever machines. To qualify for funding under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), this choice must be made soon. The law allows either (1) the Paper Ballot/Optical Scan (PB/OS) system or (2) Direct Record Electronic voting (DREs). Non-partisan groups such as NY League of Women Voters and New Yorkers for Verified Voting as well as major newspapers have endorsed the hand-marked paper ballot system because it is the most reliable, auditable, secure and cost-effective voting system available today. Below are some comparisons of the PB/OS system with the electronic touch-screens (DREs). Keep in mind that there are now federally certified ballot-marking devices that allow disabled persons to use ear phones, font enlargement, and "sip & puff" technologies to mark the same paper ballot used by all other voters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper Ballot/Optical Scan Voting System</th>
<th>Touch-Screen Systems or DREs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is inherently voter verified. Voters know what they have marked as they mark it so no second step for verification is involved.</td>
<td>Voter verification depends on a printout which MAY NOT correspond with the electronic record (count inside computer cannot be observed.) Voting is on large screen; printout format is small (ATM style) &amp; awkwardly located. Verification takes time, slowing down the voting process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optical scanner has only one function – to count the votes.</td>
<td>DRE must be programmed for 3 different tasks: (1) marking the ballot, (2) counting the votes, &amp; (3) voter-verification. More complex, hence more likelihood of error.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL voters use identical ballots whether voting in-precinct, absentee, military, disabled, or provisional ballots. (Cost per ballot diminishes with higher bulk orders.)</td>
<td>Can be used only for in-precinct voting. Provisional, absentee, &amp; military paper ballots must be printed. (Cost per ballot higher for smaller orders.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same equipment used to count ALL ballots (in-precinct, absentee, military, disabled, &amp; provisional).</td>
<td>Separate equipment needed to count absentee, military and provisional ballots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recounts by hand easier with less likelihood of error. (NYS requires 3% of each district’s votes be recounted by hand.)</td>
<td>Paper verification on small thermal paper (ATM style). Difficult to handle &amp; keep organized. More room for error.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several people can vote at the same time (in inexpensive privacy booths). Scanning the ballot for counting and storage in attached ballot box takes only a moment.</td>
<td>Only one person at a time can vote and verify on each machine; a much slower process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Optical scanning is a mature technology (in use for 20 years – time enough to work out the &quot;bugs&quot;). 30% of U.S. precincts use this system.</td>
<td>A new technology. Machines are still prototypes since NY has unique requirements. No way to know how many &quot;bugs&quot; there are. Experts say software always has bugs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In case of equipment failure (reported very rarely), voting can continue on paper ballots to be counted later.

In case of equipment failure (reported frequently), voting stops or must continue on paper ballots.

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