Annual Dinner Recap

Our Annual Dinner on May 24th at Iannelli's was a memorable evening for several reasons: a new location for the event, a birthday celebration, and a historically informative and entertaining presentation by Otsego Town Historian Tom Heitz which culminated in the entire group singing suffrage anthems.

In honor of LWV-Oneonta's 40th birthday, outgoing president Maggie Winne presented corsages to the several past-presidents in attendance, as well as a cake commemorating the occasion. Members and guests enjoyed a social hour, dinner and Heitz' program, which was followed by the business meeting.

Guest speaker Tom Heitz, who is also a member of the Cooperstown LWV, told us about Susan B. Anthony's visits to Otsego County during her campaigns for women's suffrage back in the mid-1800's. He read a range of opinions expressed in contemporary accounts and editorials in the Freeman's Journal, Otsego Democrat, and other local publications. Many of the writers Heitz quoted ridiculed the suffragettes, or "strong minded women" as well as their "weak minded" male supporters. Some locals unsuccessfully tried to block a Woman's Right's Convention from being held at the courthouse in Cooperstown on February 9, 1855.

He also shared lyrics adapted to the music of traditional songs that were used by the suffrage campaign, including (to the tune of America):

```
Our country, now from thee
Claim we our liberty
In freedom's name
Guarding home's altar fires
Daughters of patriot sires
Their zeal of our own inspires
Justice to claim.

And to the tune of Oh, Dear, What can the matter be?
Women have husbands, they are protected
Women have sons by whom they're directed
Women have fathers, they're not neglected
Why are they wanting to vote?

The lyrics continue in this vein until this verse:

Women have reared all the sons of the brave
Women have shared in the burdens they gave
Women have labored this country to save
And that's why we're going to vote ✴
```
Dear Members and Friends of the League,

Thanks to Cathy LaFontaine and Paddy Lane, the 2005-06 League year began with energy and enthusiasm. Their careful planning resulted in an excellent health care forum. (See article on page 4)

Summer is usually a break from League activities, but your board is busy planning our fall dinner. It will be the usual date, the fourth Tuesday in Sept., but in a new location: Elm Park Methodist Church. We plan to start our program year with a panel discussion on county administration, which we expect to be THE issue in Otsego County Board elections this fall. Voter Service activities are underway with plans for registration as well as forums and Guides.

Our membership increased last year. That is good news. We value all our members and understand that many cannot actively work with us. Perhaps you can attend a meeting or two a year. You'll find them packed with information. Perhaps you can help with a committee. Watch next month’s bulletin for ways in which you can participate without chairing a committee or making a long-term commitment.

However, we need members to work with the board so that we can accomplish our mission. You will also find that working with Leaguers is fun and rewarding. So give serious consideration to helping with one of these positions which are currently available: Finance Director, Bulletin Editor, Action Director. These are usually board positions, but the responsibilities could be accomplished in an off-board manner with written reports to the board.

Other positions are more short term: bulletin ad coordinator, observer coordinator, school board observer and telephone answerer. Mystified by what they involve? Give me a call. 432-6974.

I look forward to working with the excellent board which you elected at the Spring Dinner. Working in an off-board capacity are Lucille Wiggin, Highway Clean Up chair; Peg Hathaway, County Gov’t Committee Chair; Cheryl Carter Lipari and Scott Fielder, environmental monitors; and our Observer Corps: Cheryl Carter Lipari, -Common Council; Mary Simpson - County Board; and Gerrit Gantvoort - Town Board.

I hope to see you Sept. 27, for our covered dish dinner and opening meeting.

Kay Stuligross, LWV Oneonta President ☆

Upcoming LWV Events

Sat. Sept. 10
Grand & Glorious Garage Sale

Mon. Sept. 12
LWV Oneonta Board Meeting
7pm, at Kay Stuligross’ home.
All members welcome, call for info/directions: 432-6974

Tues. Sept. 27
Fall Membership Meeting & Potluck Supper
Panel discussion on County Administration
Elm Park Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut St., 6pm

Oct. 19
LWV Regional meeting
First United Methodist Church, 66 Chestnut St. 9:45am

Tues. Oct. 25 & Tues. Nov. 1
Candidate Nights
Morris Hall, SUNY-Oneonta

Wed. Nov. 16
League Day at the UN – Briefings on the Status of Democracy in Iraq & Afghanistan

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Alice Collins Secretary  Elizabeth Burns Treasurer
Karen Geasey Voter Service  Barbara Hein Publicity
Cathy LaFontaine Health Care  Shirley Fioravante Programs

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization whose purpose is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The LWV does not support or oppose candidates or political parties, but does support or oppose issues after study and member agreement. Membership is open to all men and women of voting age.

The LWV Oneonta Bulletin is published 10 times per year for members and friends. ☆
NY State needs optical scan

In order for New York State to implement the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), our lever voting machines must be replaced, and each polling place must provide at least one voting method that allows individuals with disabilities to vote in privacy.

The accessibility requirements can be met in several ways, singly or by a combination of systems through Direct Recording Electronic voting machines (DREs) or optical scan voting machines with the addition of ballot marking devices.

The New York State legislature has been under heavy lobbying pressure from the top three lobbying firm in Albany who represent the voting machine manufacturing companies ES&S, Liberty and Sequoia. The firms have of course been spotlighting their most expensive DRE machines, even though they manufacture both types of systems. Rather than choose one type of voting machine to be standard across the state, legislators have decided to pass the decision on to local Boards of Elections in each county.

Every local League is urged to contact its county Board of Elections and let them know why we want optical scan voting systems used across New York State. They are an affordable and reliable voting system proven to be so by use for over twenty years. In the 2004 election, they were used in over 36 percent of all precincts and by 35 percent of registered voters in the United States. Michigan, Arizona, Oklahoma, North Dakota, South Dakota, Oregon and Rhode Island will be using the optical scan exclusively in 2006. Thirty seven other states will use optical scan as part of mixed systems of voting.

The League supports the use of paper ballot precinct based optical scan voting systems because they best meet national and state League requirements that voting systems must be secure, accurate, recountable and accessible.

An optical scan system’s ballot is similar to that used in the standardized multiple choice school tests. The ballot is then fed into a counting machine (optical scanner) which electronically scans the information and records it for tallying at the end of the voting period. The ballot then drops into a storage area at the bottom of the scanner. The paper ballot marked by the voter is the official record of the vote and is used in recounts. ♦

This article appeared in the LWV-Cooperstown’s Summer 2005 Update newsletter.

PRIMARY ELECTION – VOTER INFORMATION

PRIMARY DAY IS TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2005 - Otsego County Polls open at 12 NOON and close at 9PM.

Voter Registration forms and absentee ballot applications can be obtained from the Otsego County Board of Elections 547-4247, or by calling 1-800-FOR-VOTE.

ONLY VOTERS ENROLLED IN A POLITICAL PARTY MAY VOTE IN THAT PARTY’S PRIMARY

Must be registered by Aug. 19th in order to vote in primary.

ABSENTEE VOTING: Ballot application must be postmarked by Sept. 6, or apply in person by Sept. 12.
   Absentee ballot postmarked by Sept. 12, or hand-delivered by Sept. 13.
Walk for Health Care & Forum

Three Tompkins County Health Care Task Force Walkers strode into Oneonta about 2:00 on hot, muggy June 13 wearing sandwich boards proclaiming the need for health care for all Americans, pulling a cart with all their belongings and waving a wind spinner. After leaving Delhi at 6:30 that morning, they followed Route 28, dodging cars and dead animals, and avoiding road construction. Stopping for an ice cream on their way into Oneonta, leaguers bought them each a cone and welcomed them to town. Possessing seemingly endless energy, they showered, then walked around Oneonta "to cool down!"

Their walk began in Kingston with a rally, then a walk and a ride to Delhi. From Oneonta they began their trek to Jamestown and back to Ithaca. Along the way they participated in 14 forums, heightening awareness of the situation and explaining how a single payer system will begin to solve many of our problems.

At Oneonta's Forum on June 14, 32 members of the public gathered at Fox Care as the Health Care Task Force explained their mission and Dr. Andrew Coates and Dr. Ben Friedell delineated many of the problems facing Americans. A video of a Tomkina County forum described the crisis for county government. Some major points:

- The County Share of Medicaid (25%) has increased to the breaking point, causing taxes to rise and consideration of reducing services. Care for the elderly is a major factor - and we are an aging society.

- Most jail inmates are poor and on Medicaid before they enter the system. However, once they are incarcerated the county is responsible for 100% of their care.

- HR 676, sponsored by John Conyers, proposes a national discussion and then implementation of a single payer system.

- A 06576/S3459, the Gottfried/Schneiderman Health Care Reform Bill in New York State proposes a single payer system.

- A single payer system, which the League supports, is the best alternative to the current system to provide care to those who need it and to rein in costs.

- The system must change. Citizen action is important. Contact your representatives in Albany and Washington and ask them to support these bills.

---

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Cherilyn Lacy  
64 East St.  
Oneonta  
432-5340

Diane Slocum  
7 Garden St.  
Oneonta  
432-3017
The Year in Review
2004-2005

August  
Road Clean Up of I 88 on the south side from exit 15 to exit 16.

September  
Fifty leaguers and guests gathered to hear Kay Maxwell, President of the LWVUS speak about election issues at our opening dinner.

Voter Service: registered 300 voters & sponsored Primary candidate meeting for County District 13

October  
Candidate meeting – Otsego County District 13
We distributed 2500 copies of the LWVNYS Voter’s Guide.

I 88 Road Clean Up

November  
Death Penalty Study Committee led our consensus meeting which became part of the LWVNYS position.

December  
Thirty Leaguers and government representatives celebrated the Holiday Season at Sandee Fleisher’s.

January  
Our annual Saturday brunch provided a review of LWVNYS and LWV Oneonta positions and an opportunity to recommend new studies or updates.

We reported a membership of 109 to LWVUS, an all time high.

February  
Marti Stayton led a fascinating discussion of the history of school financing and possible solutions to the problem of equitable funding for public schools in New York State.

The County Study committee began researching other counties’ County Administrator budgets and experience.

March  
We joined AAUW at BOCES for luncheon and a CCAL presentation.

April  
Cathy LaFontaine updated us on Medicare and other health care issues. Judith Sweet demonstrated the technology with which patients at home can have a face to face office call by way of the telephone

Students Inside Albany – John Pontius and Sarah Sason of Oneonta High participated

May  
I 88 Road Clean Up

Forty-two members and guests adopted the budget and program for 2005-06, elected board members and enjoyed Tom Heitz’s entertaining account of Susan B Anthony and Pay Equity at our 40th Anniversary Celebration at Iannelli’s
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and Pizzeria

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Delegates' Report on LWV-NYS Convention

Friday May 20th through Sunday May 22nd LWVNYS members, guests, and visitors gathered at The Desmond Hotel in Albany, NY for our annual convention. League of Women Voters of the Oneonta Area was represented by Karen Geasey, Cathy LaFontaine, Bette Wagner and Maggie Winne.

The 3 Plenary Sessions for organization of convention business, for presentation of reports, for presentation of 2005-2007 programs, for presentation of slate of officers, and for discussion and decision making about all of the aforementioned were conducted in such a polite informed manner that we certainly qualified for a "how to" documentary. The slate was accepted as presented. Marcia Merrins continues as our LWVNYS President.

Recommended LWVNYS Programs for 2005-2007 essentially are the same as 2003-2005. Some additions: Under Health Care include dental. Under Judicial add opposition to the death penalty with the use of life without parole as the primary alternative. Under State Finances kindergarten will be replaced by pre-school. And, we will update of our eight-year old position on State Financing of Education.

The convention was a splendid opportunity to get acquainted with representatives from other leagues, relay experiences, exchange ideas, and become more energized to fulfill league goals. Enthused would be another great description. We certainly were after listening to NYS Chief Judge Judith Kaye at the Opening Plenary Session, NYS Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton at our Saturday Luncheon, and LWVUS President Kay Maxwell at our Saturday Night Awards Dinner! Each speaker praised our issues platforms and congratulated us on our successes. — Report submitted by Bette Wagner.

---

LWV of the Oneonta Area
Membership Dues 2005-06*

Name (s) ____________________________

Address ____________________________

Phone __________________ Email __________________

Individual Dues ($40) $________

Add. Household member ($20) $________

Additional Contribution to LWV Oneonta
(NOT Tax-deductible) $________

Total (payable to LWV Oneonta) $________

Tax-deductible contribution to The Education Foundation $________

(Make separate check payable to Oneonta LWV EF)

LWV-ONEONTA, PO BOX 434, ONEONTA NY 13820

*The LWV Oneonta year is June to June. Dues are now due for continuing members who last paid anytime during 2004. If you joined after Jan. 1, 2005, your dues are paid until next spring.

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The Magnificent Seven ride again

They come early in the morning. They don’t say much, but their actions resound through the valley.

Or is that the screeching brakes of the sag wagon?

If you happened to be travelling eastbound on Route 88 on Thursday August 4, around 8:30 am, perhaps you noticed their orange vests and yellow hard hats glowing in the fog along side the road. Lucille Wiggin and her intrepid crew- Gay & Gerrit Gantvoort, Norma Lee Havens, Dave Hutchison, Dolly Layman and Paul Scheele took a stand and made the world just a little bit nicer place on that morning.

Let’s all tip our hats to these road warriors, and say “thanks, mister (and ma’am)” for their good work.

If you’d like to join their heroic ranks, Lucille will be rounding up another posse for Thursday, October 27th to fulfill LWV Oneonta’s Adopt-a-Highway pledge. If you can spare a couple of hours that morning, give her a holler at 432-1022 — she’ll be mighty pleased to hear from ya. ★