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Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of the Oneonta Area, in both its values and practices, is committed to diversity and pluralism. There shall be no barriers to participation in the League. The League of Women Voters of the Oneonta Area, in both its values and practices, is committed to diversity and pluralism. There shall be no barriers to participation in the League. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization whose purpose is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government. The LWV does not support or oppose candidate or political parties, but does support or oppose issues after study and member agreement.

DUES ARE DUE.

To the forty-one members who have renewed their membership a big “Thank You”. For those who haven’t, it’s now past due but we don't add interest so PLEASE save me a phone call or letter, and send in your dues with the form at the end of this newsletter NOW. Your $45 or $62.50 helps your local, state, and national Leagues carry out our mission “as a nonpartisan political organization whose purpose is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government”. Locally, we will continue informing the voters the need to register if they have a new address, if they are new to the area, or are new to the voting process. Look for us at the Farmer's Market, at the Grand and Glorious Garage Sale, and at other locations throughout the fall. We will again host Forums for the candidates and will be distributing Voter’s Guides. All of this takes time and money. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to seeing you at our various locations and meetings coming up this year. New members are always welcomed. For general inquiries call 436-4050 to leave a message and someone will get back to you. For specific membership information, call Maggie at 432-6206.

Maggie Winne, Membership Chair

ANNUAL DINNER RECAP

Our annual dinner on May 27th at the Oneonta County Club included a social hour, buffet dinner, meeting and presentations by Sheila M. Ross, Republican, Deputy Commissioner, Otsego County and Cindy A. Jarvis, Democrat, Deputy Commissioner, Otsego County.

Members and their guests enjoyed a delicious buffet dinner before the invited speakers began their presentations. Also, prior to the featured guests speakers, Maggie Winne and Cathy LaFontaine, shared the official business meeting duties as the League’s Co-Presidents. Members attending introduced their invited guests to the group.

Our guest speakers each gave an overview about making a difference when YOU cast YOUR VOTE.

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Our guest speakers each gave an overview about what the last several months have been like preparing for the accessible voting machines. Both speakers explained to us how they have met some of the challenges the newly established HAVA (Help America Voting Act) of 2002 has presented. In their own words, Cindy and Sheila told us how they have continued to move forward with the mandates HAVA requires. For example, many hours have been spent learning how the new “accessible voting machines” actually work. One of the main purposes of the new voting machines is to allow people with varying degrees of disabilities to vote independently and privately for the first time. We learned that the Board of Election controls all training connected to voting. Some of the terms associated with the voting systems include, digital recording electronics (DREs), optical scan systems, electronic ballot marking systems, internet and phone voting, absentee ballot, and voter verified paper trail.

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Each year at our annual dinner meeting we try very hard to include topics that are both timely and purposeful to our members and their guests. On November 4th, “Exercise Your Citizenship” and make a difference when YOU cast YOUR VOTE.

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We have reserved the Craven Lounge in Morris Hall at SUNY Oneonta for Candidates’ Forums on Monday, October 20 and Tuesday, October 28. IRC-TV staff and crew are planning to provide live coverage and we will invite representatives from the local media to form a panel for questioning candidates. I will be happy to hear from anyone who wishes to help us out with timers and ushers for these evenings.

Anyone who can help the League with any of the Voters Service activities above, please call Karen Geasey, 432-8158 or Cathy LaFontaine, 431-1125. It’s going to be an exciting fall!

**City Charter Study**

The Charter study committee has been meeting every 2-3 weeks, plus attending Common Council meetings. The Star published our article on 6/24/08, which invited interested city and town residents to join our study group in various ways. We plan to attend as many of the various commission, board and committee meetings as we can over the next several months. We will have guest speakers at some of our committee meetings to share their personal experiences with city government and how these experiences pertain to the Charter. There is a lot to learn about our City Charter, the State and local laws that apply to charters, and the various ways that cities organize their government. It’s been fun so far and the more the merrier, so please call Karen Geasey, 432-8158, or Mary Simpson, 433-0168 to join the committee!
The Year in Review 2007-2008

**August**  
Primary Candidates’ Forum – Morris Hall, SUNY Oneonta Campus

**September**  
Voter Registration - Grand and Glorious Garage Sale.  
Hosted the Russian Women - Sponsored by the Open World Program and the LWV USA.  
Membership Dinner: Speaker: Barbara Bartoletti – New York State Legislative Director for LWVNY - “Reform: Are We There Or Do We Have Miles To Go?”

**October**  
Candidates’ Forums for General Elections- Held on Two separate evenings- SUNY Oneonta Campus  
Bank Window-Main Street Oneonta-LWV & Voter Information

**November**  
General Meeting – Consensus on Immigration Study- Held at The United Methodist Church, Oneonta  
Catskill Teachers’ Showcase – League Information, Voter Registration SUNY Oneonta- Hunt Union

**December**  
Holiday Party held at Lucille Wiggin’s home

**January**  
Program Planning Meeting – National and Local Planning- Rowe House, Oneonta  
Martin Luther King Celebration-SUNY Oneonta- Voter Registration and Information

**March**  
Women’s History Month – Program at Hartwick College- “Nonpartisan Politics, Then and Now”.

**April**  
AAUW/LWV Brunch- Clarion Hotel; Guest Speaker- Dr. Lisa Curch, Assistant Professor, SUNY Oneonta Sociology Dept.  Topic: “Aging in Everyday Life in America and the 21st Century”

**May**  
Annual Meeting and Dinner – Guests Speakers: Shelia M. Ross and Cindy A. Jarvis, “What’s New In Voting Machines for Otsego County?”

Membership Report:  
May 2008 - 106 members and just over 50% of whom participated in the LWV organization this year.

At the annual meeting, LWV members adopted the budget and program for 2008-2009, elected board members, and listened to informative presentations by our guest speakers on new accessible voting machines.
Dear Members and Friends of the League,

When I reflect back on the year’s accomplishments, I am amazed at just what our “Little League” has accomplished. There is no doubt that we have remained active and engaged in the community because of the dedication and strong commitment of our Board and the many volunteers who work behind the scenes. Throughout the year, it is the calendar of events from which we measure our activity level. This past year we carried out all of the planned events. During the course of the year we added a few as well. The latest additions to our League sponsored activities include a study of Oneonta’s City Charter and a table setup at Oneonta Farmer’s Market. On some Saturdays during the summer and into the fall months, you will find the LWV of Oneonta represented on the Muller Plaza at the Market. We hope to have members stop by and check us out and possibly volunteer a couple hours on a Saturday morning. Our other goal is to help educate the public on voting regulations and to register voters.

Now that I have blown our “Little League’s” own horn, I want to let you know that you can reflect back and look over “The Year in Review” located on page 4 of this bulletin. We have accomplished what we set out to do this past year and we are looking forward to the year ahead. We realize some members are not able to attend every event that the League sponsors. Keep in mind that the Board and its directors work as a team in order to bring our membership and the local community a number of venues throughout the entire year.

In order for the League to continue to thrive and carry out its mission, we look to our members for support and participation. As we continue to move forward in 2008-2009, please consider making the LWV of Oneonta one of your priorities. We often receive compliments and praise for the vital services we provide within the community. The League’s visibility peaks during the fall forums, debates, primaries and elections. But you know and I know that our “Little League” serves the community all year long.

If you are already a member, try to volunteer this year for one or two events. If you cannot volunteer, maybe you could encourage a friend to join the League. We can always use new members.

It seems a ways off today, but our annual covered dish supper in September will be here before we know it. Why not consider inviting a guest to join you at this event. Maggie and I hope to see YOU there!

- Cathy LaFontaine, LWV Oneonta Co-President

Voters’ Service - It’s almost Presidential Election Day 2008... and other Important Races Season!

Our League will be planning voter registration drives throughout the area with the goal of getting as many new and re-registered voters as possible in the community. If there is a particular location where you wish to help people with voter registration forms and absentee ballot applications, please contact us and we will help get everything set up. The process itself is very easy to learn and we will pair an experienced volunteer with a new member. The Presidential election year is always a time for extra focus on voter registration since interest is usually at its height and this year is no exception! A schedule will be on our website soon of dates and locations where we will need our members to volunteer.

The LWVNYS Part I Voters’ Guides will be here shortly and we need our members to help distribute them as well as the Part II Guides which will follow. Some guides will be available at the Fall Membership Dinner so please plan on picking some up that night and helping us with this important service to the community. Our League will also publish a local Voters’ Guide which will cover the NYS Senator and Congressional races for the Oneonta area voters. This is a very important voters’ service project which is a great supplement to our live Candidates’ Forums. Anyone who has the skills or anyone would like to learn them is welcome to assist with this publication.

Upcoming LWV Events

Wed., Aug. 20  
LWV-Board Mtg., 6 PM  
C. LaFontaine’s home,  
35 So. Belmont Circle, Oneonta.

Mon. Sept. 8  
LWV Oneonta Board Meeting  
7 pm, at Cathy LaFontaine’s home.  
All members welcome,  
call for info/directions: 431-1125

Sat. Sept. 13  
Grand & Glorious Garage Sale  
Downtown Oneonta, 9AM-4PM.  
Volunteers needed for Voter Registration table.  
Call Cathy LaFontaine 431-1125  
to sign up for a 1-2 hour shift.

Wed., Sept. 24, 6 PM  
Fall Membership Meeting & Potluck Dinner  
Presentation by Barbara Thomas, LWV of Saratoga County - Compact for a National Popular Vote.  Question & Answer time after presentation - Elm Park Methodist Church, Chestnut St., Oneonta.

Mon., Oct. 20 and Tues., Oct. 28  
Candidate Nights  
Morris Hall, SUNY –Oneonta

Tuesday, November 4, 2008  
ELECTION DAY!