Mission Statement
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.

FELLOWSHIP, FOOD AND FACTS
LWV-Oneonta’s 2009/10 year began with a pot luck supper at the Elm Park Methodist Church on Sept. 29. A delicious array of appetizers, salads, main dishes, and desserts provided the meal for over 25 members and guests.

Following dinner, Karen Geasey introduced other members of the Charter Study Committee, Barb Hein and Steve Londner, each of whom discussed an aspect of the study. (See City Charter Study article enclosed) The presentation was informative, and sometimes surprising. We look forward to the final presentation of information and recommendations from the committee in February, and the consensus meeting in April.

Mark your calendars now so you are prepared to participate in this most important League process.

Watch for information on ordering the 2010 Legislative Priorities brochure. A new format for the Issues and Advocacy portion of the website is being developed. We have a new home page for the Advocacy Areas section, which explains the League advocacy process, highlights current action, and guides the reader into specific advocacy areas, where more detail is provided. Issue areas are being added as information is compiled - watch the website!

Fix Albany Now!
The LWVNYS State Board adopted Fix Albany Now! as the slogan for this year’s legislative priorities. The 2010 priorities are steps to a new and better State government.

• Redistricting
• Campaign Finance Reform
• Ethics Reform
• Election Reform

Happy Holidays to all and Wishes for a Great New Year!

ALICE SIEGFRIED, POTTER
67 Church Street Oneonta
Pottery available at the Artisans’ Guild
148 Main St. Oneonta
432-8673 or 432-1080

New Members Always Welcome - contact Sandee Fleisher, Local Membership Director at 432.3783 or leave a phone message at 436.4050 and someone will get back to you.

League of Women Voters
P.O. Box 434 Oneonta, NY 13820

December 2009
League of Women Voters
of the Oneonta Area ~ Bulletin
P.O. Box 434 Oneonta, NY 13820 ~ (607) 436-4050 ~ www.lwvoneonta.org

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 recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making.

LWV Steering Committee
Chairman
Karen Geasey..........432-8158
Secretary
Alice Collins
Treasurer/Membership
Sandee Fleisher.........432-3783
Finance
Diane Slocum .............432-3017
Voter Service
Laurel Elder...............431-4887

Our League really outdid itself this year! We received many compliments on the great service we provided for the greater Oneonta community with the three nights of debates this fall! I would like to thank Laurel Elder who organized and coordinated nearly all of the events this season (despite being pregnant with her first child). Laurel also contributed by moderating one of the forums on short notice and it was greatly appreciated! The forums provided opportunities for our voting citizens to make more informed decisions since so much information became available through the evenings.

We also need to thank Cathy LaFontaine and Barb Hein for each moderating a forum, sometimes under challenging circumstances. Many other League members volunteered to be greeters, timers, answering the phone and making name placards to include: Kay Stuligross, Shirley Fiorvanti, Alice Collins, Susan Hughson, Paul Conway, Bob Holstead, Anne Payne, John Ruland, Sandee Fleisher, Barb Hein, Denny Shea, Diane Slocum and Penny Wightman. We can all be satisfied that the local media thoroughly advertised and covered our events, providing a great service to us and our voters. I’d also like to thank Dave Geasey and the other IRC TV staff who arranged and provided for the live broadcast coverage and rebroadcast on Public Access Channel 23. In addition this year, they offered the opportunity for those at a distance to view the forums live via web streaming. Thanks to SUNY Oneonta for again providing the lovely venue and advertising, and for their radio station WUOW to have the recorded events available on their website through the election.

Thanks to everyone who helped distribute 1,000 local Voters’ Guides throughout the community that contained candidates’ qualifications and positions on issues.
LWVNY Adopts Study of Local Government Consolidation

At the 2009 LWVNY Convention, a new State Study looking at local government consolidation was adopted. The State League Committee has compiled a bibliography which is available on their website, http://lwvny.org/consolidation_sss.html. Our League will not participate unless someone wishes to chair the committee, recruit members and facilitate the study. Short of that, we could also have a League member to be the monitor for this topic, which is someone to keep current with the status of the State Study. Please call Karen, 432-8158 if you are interested!

Ongoing Gas Drilling Regulations Testimony

Roberta Wiernik, our Natural Resources Specialist, has worked with interested League members to develop testimony for a series of DEC hearings on gas drilling regulations for the Marcellus shale area of the state and protection of the state’s water supplies. We expect members of this ad-hoc committee will testify orally at hearings, the NYC League has already testified at the November 10 hearing in New York City, and the State League will submit written testimony at the end of the comment period. Members can keep updated on this project on the LWVNY website, www.lwvny.org.

Oneonta City Charter Study

Three members of our Charter Study Committee presented information at the fall membership dinner in September. Our group has been meeting for the past 2 yrs. and during that time, we attended many City Council meetings, some Board and Commission meetings, many meetings of our committee, and interviews with two past Oneonta Mayors, the City Attorney and a member of the charter revision committee from the 1970s. The group shared that they have studied the City Charter quite thoroughly as well as resources that are available online through the New York State Conference of Mayors and municipal officials and government sites.

Through our research this far, the committee has noted many cases where the Charter lacks clarity, specificity and definition for the functioning of the Mayor and Aldermen who together comprise the Common Council, as well as the actual legislative components which guide the city government. Of note is the apparent lack of process and procedure for the Mayor to properly supervise and discipline, as he/she may need, the City employees. The most active City Boards and Commissions being comprised solely of Aldermen and there are no rules for the functioning duties of the Aldermen except those they set for themselves according to the Charter.

In summary, the group pointed out some areas where clarity and definition is needed, as well as the need for discussion of some substantive issues that are contained within the Charter such as the functions of the relationship between the Mayor and Aldermen. More information and the consensus questions will be forthcoming to the League members through Bulletins and the General Membership Meeting on Feb. 23. The consensus meeting is planned for April 27, 2010.

January Program Planning Meeting

We will not be having our traditional January program planning meeting unless someone would like to volunteer to organize it and be a facilitator. Leagues review their local and national positions in 2010. If enough members wish to participate in a lower-key version of this meeting, and informally discuss the present positions, we could do that as an alternative. We could have a combined New Year get-together and an informal discussion of issues and positions. It is not too late to find a date, time and location, so if you are interested in planning or attending such a meeting, please contact one of the Steering Committee members by phone or e-mail (Committee info is on back of Bulletin).

Please add the following members to your membership booklet:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone/Suite</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doug and Dorothy Fielder</td>
<td>433-2727</td>
<td>8 Walnut Street, Oneonta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Billie and Fred Miller</td>
<td>3 Arrowhead Dr., Box 20</td>
<td>Oneonta, 432-3459</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian and Liz Burns</td>
<td>9 Union Street, Oneonta</td>
<td>433-2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patricia Gourlay</td>
<td>36 Monroe Street, Oneonta</td>
<td>432-3357</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joyce Gelbsman</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 Walnut Street, Oneonta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dolly Layman</td>
<td></td>
<td>P.O. Box 525, Oneonta</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catherine Gallagher</td>
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<td>P.O. Box 512, Oneonta</td>
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<td>Paul and Sarah Patterson</td>
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<td>40 Elm Street, Oneonta</td>
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State Voter Returns!

The State Voter is back! LWVNY has just put their first online issue of the State Voter on the website for our members. It is a very user-friendly document, and it prints out nicely as well for anyone who wishes to print it. LWVNY has offered for anyone who wishes it to be mailed to them hard copy to pay $5 per issue or $20 for all 4 of the issues that will come out for the ’09-’10 League year.

Save the Dates!

February 23, 2010- General Membership Meeting, 7pm, First United Methodist Church, City Charter Study Presentation

March 20, 2010 - LWV/AAUW Joint Luncheon, 12:00pm, Farmhouse Restaurant, speaker TBA