ENFORCING AND PROTECTING
THE RIGHT TO VOTE, Part II

In the January-February issue of The Voter, we began an exploration of various ways to enforce and protect our right to vote, beginning with the idea of universal registration. This month we will discuss the idea of Election Day Registration. In future issues of The Voter, we will examine possible reforms to voting practices and the controversial topic of identification requirements.

Part II. Election Day Registration

A second plan to encourage voter registration is called Election Day Registration (EDR). Under these laws, a person can wake up on Election Day, never having registered to vote, and appear at the polling place, where he or she can register and vote.

This is not a new idea—Maine, Minnesota, and Wisconsin adopted EDR in the 1970s. Idaho, New Hampshire, and Wyoming enacted Election Day Registration two decades later. More recently, Montana implemented EDR in 2006 and in 2007, Iowa and North Carolina both enacted same-day registration (although in North Carolina, it is connected to early voting, a concept that will be explored in a later article).

The major advantage of EDR is that it apparently results in significantly greater voter participation. Studies show that EDR states consistently boast higher turnout than non-EDR states. In the 2004 presidential race, EDR states had an average turnout 12 percentage points higher than the average turnout for non-EDR states. While that full increase cannot solely be attributed to EDR, research shows that at least 3 to 6 percentage points of the increase is directly related to EDR. In the 2006 election, more than 787,000 votes were cast by individuals who registered on Election Day in the six EDR states for which data is available, representing 5.5 to 18 percent of citizens in those states.

Many states (including New York) close off voter registration 25 or more days before the election—well before many would-be voters have fully focused on the up-coming election or have had an opportunity to explore the candidates and campaign issues. Competition can also increase in the final weeks of an election. One study classified 25 U.S. House seats across 16 states as highly competitive in early October 2006. By November 6, after all registration deadlines had passed, the number of House seats considered to be highly competitive increased to 39 across 23 states. An unregistered voter moved to action in this final week would have been ineligible to cast a countable ballot in 42 states.

The principal argument against scrapping advance registration requirements is the threat of increased fraud. However, there is no evidence
The Voter

President’s Message

Never give advice unless asked.

German Proverb

Well, we are asking. We want to know what you, the members, want us to do. Where do you want the Hamptons League to expend its efforts? What do you want to study? What action do you think we should be taking?

At the next general membership meeting on March 10, the members will have the opportunity to tell the Board of Directors and officers what they think the League should be doing. Formally, this is known as a program meeting. Informally, it is the time and place where you can help influence the League’s direction for the next year.

The League, as we know, acts based on its positions. There are national, state, regional (Suffolk County), and local positions, which have been adopted by consensus and which, once adopted, can be the basis of action by the League. Each year, at the annual meeting, we review the positions and decide whether to retain, revise, or drop them. There are, however, many positions—too many to permit concerted action on every one. As a result, we must select priorities. This is where you come in, and this is where we would like to hear your voice. Tell us what you think we should do. Your input can help shape the direction of the League.

So, let us hear your ideas. This is your opportunity to influence the activity of the League in 2008. Don’t miss this opportunity to share your thoughts and concerns. The meeting will be casual, food and drink will be provided. Please come.

Carol Mellor, Co-President

537-6998

LWVSC Trip to Philadelphia

Independence Hall Historic Park & National Constitution Center

Thursday, April 10, 2008

Cost: $50 members; $60 non-members

Send checks, made out to LWVSC, to Marilyn McKeown, 15 Mott Lane, Brookhaven, NY 11719. Include your name, address, phone, and email with the check.

Payment due by March 15, 2008. Seating requests will be honored in order of checks received.

Lunch is on our own. A list of restaurants will be provided a few weeks prior to trip. LWVSC will provide juice, water, and snacks for the bus in both directions.

Entertainment: The historical musical 1776 and the PBS special on Benjamin Franklin will be shown on the bus.

See page 5 for departure and arrival information.

Any questions, call Barbara Jordan at 631-324-6144.

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FINALLY—SOME GOOD NEWS ABOUT NEW VOTING MACHINE SELECTION

After another roller coaster set of events during the last week of January and the first week of February about the selection of voting machines, the following e-mail arrived from state LWV officer Aimee Allaud late on February 8th:

“At last the waiting is over. Check out what we have obtained through YOUR ADVOCACY. The overwhelming number of counties in NYS will have optical scanners with ballot markers either as part of the machine (Sequoia ImageCast) or as two separate units (scanner with AutoMark). We’re not saying ‘victory’ yet, but I want to applaud you for your hard work. The voters of NYS can thank you!”

The relieved tone of the communication refers to the fact that most county board of elections commissioners, including those in Suffolk and Nassau counties, have selected a machine that the LWVNYS has endorsed. In Suffolk County the choice was for one called ImageCast by Sequoia Voting Systems Corporation.

It needs to be noted, however, that this selection meets only the minimum requirement of the Department of Justice’s suit against New York State and that there will be only one of these machines at each polling site for use by the disabled voters and, in some cases, by some other voters who volunteer to use it. So most of us will be still using the lever machines for the presidential election in November.

The next decision still to be made is what machines to purchase to replace all lever machines by 2009. We will still be vigilant about the progress in the next round since there is a possibility of the unreliable touch-screen machines (called DRE’s) being selected for use by the vast majority of voters.

The Hamptons Voter Services Committee has been meeting and planning ways to inform citizen organizations about the change that is coming and to offer its services to the Board of Elections to instruct larger numbers of citizens once a wholesale selection is made. Please join us at our regular meetings—the second Wednesday of the month at noon at the Bridgehampton Library. Our next meeting is March 12.

Anne K. Marshall, Chair  537-3257

THE ABSENT ABSENTEE BALLOT

LWVH Board member Ursula Lynch, who is spending the winter in Florida, describes her absentee ballot experience prior to the primary election. It is something to keep in mind if you plan to be out of town in early November.

Thanks, Ursula.

This is my tale about registering to vote and requesting an absentee ballot.

Having moved from New York City, my husband and I registered to vote in Suffolk County. We indicated on the form that we needed absentee ballots for the primaries and provided, as requested, the time and reason for our absence. We promptly received our confirmation voter card (I lack a better word for this) at our post office box while we were still in Westhampton Beach.

Because we have our mail forwarded to Boca Grande, I expected the absentee ballots any day after our arrival. They did not come. After the New Hampshire primaries I got concerned enough to telephone the Suffolk County Board of Elections. After expressing my problem about the absent absentee ballots to a sympathetic and friendly woman, I was informed that the absentee ballots had been mailed on January 4 to our post office box in Westhampton Beach, but could not be forwarded by the post office. The absentee ballots would be returned to the Board of Elections by law. Who knew?

This is my point. If you are away during the mailing of the absentee ballot, you should be able to give your new address to the Board of Elections. The request form does not allow for this, at least on the voter registration form. Fortunately, the woman at the Board of Elections offered to mail new absentee ballots to us in Florida, which we received in record time.

The lesson I learned was not to take things for granted. If you requested an absentee ballot and need it mailed to a different address, call the Suffolk County Board of Elections at 631-852-4500.
The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons started the New Year with a program much in keeping with our emphasis on preservation of our natural resources. Members of the Trustees of both Southampton and East Hampton spoke on the historical background of their offices and their perception of their roles.

We had invited the presiding officer of each group, Jon Semlear, President of the Southampton Town Trustees and Diane McNally, Clerk of the East Hampton Trustees, to address our meeting, and each brought other members of the Trustees along to participate in the meeting. In all, four of the five Southampton Trustees and three of the nine East Hampton trustees attended and contributed to an animated and informative evening.

Through a patent given to the towns in 1686 by Thomas Dongan on authority of King James II, the Town Trustees were given jurisdiction over the waterways on the South Fork. Both Boards of Trustees now see their role as stewards of the environment, a task made much more difficult by the population explosion which the East End has experienced in the past twenty years.

Among the topics discussed were beach access for motor vehicles; the success of use of pump-out boats to lessen the pollution of area waters; piping plover protection; and the establishment of shellfish hatcheries and eelgrass programs.

A most gratifying aspect of the evening was the appreciation which the Trustees expressed for having been invited to the meeting. Apparently, this is the first time the Trustees had been given an opportunity to answer questions from the public not in connection with an election, and the Trustees were pleased to have the chance to explain to the audience what their goals were and what challenges they faced without, at the same time, asking for votes.

Written by Carol Mellor

At the LWVH meeting on January 14, trustees from the towns of East Hampton and Southampton were on hand to explain their areas of expertise in protecting the East End’s beaches and bottomlands. Featured speakers were, seated left to right, Diane McNally, new Clerk of the East Hampton Trustees, and Jon Semlear, President of the Southampton Trustees. Standing with LWVH co-presidents Anne Marshall, left, and Carol Mellor, right, were East Hampton trustees Timothy Bock and Lynn Mendelman and Southampton trustees Brian Tymann, Ed Warner, Jr., and Fred Havemeyer. (Photo and caption by Arlene Hinkemeyer.)

that the states with same-day registration have had a problem with voter fraud. Also, there are remedies to protect against this risk. Some of the recommended anti-fraud measures include: requiring same-day registrants to sign an oath or affidavit; requiring adequate proof of identity and residence; requiring election-day registrants to vote by paper affidavit ballots, subject to challenge; and promptly verifying election-day registrants with a non-forwardable postcard sent to their address. Centralized, computerized state registration records (which HA V A [Help America Vote Act] now mandates) would also significantly protect the process against increased fraud.

When he was Attorney General, Governor Spitzer and a handful of other politicians called for the state to adopt same-day registration procedures, but Albany did not budge.

Written by Carol Mellor
March 2008

**Note:** Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please confirm with committee chairperson.

The Education Committee will be contacted regarding meeting date. The Membership Committee will meet on an ad hoc basis. No Natural Resources Committee meeting in March.

March 5 Wednesday LWVH Board meeting. Bridgehampton National Bank, Montauk Highway, Bridgehampton. 5:30-7:30 p.m. All members welcome.

March 10 Monday **General Membership Meeting.** Program Planning Meeting. Unitarian Universalist Meetinghouse, 977 Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Turnpike, Bridgehampton. 7:00 p.m.


March 15 Saturday Deadline for April issue of *The Voter.*

March 19 Wednesday LWVSC Board meeting. Riverhead Library. 10:00 a.m.-noon.

March 19 Wednesday Fundraising Committee meeting. 2:00 p.m. Contact Susan Wilson at 283-6549 for location.

March 20 Thursday Health Committee meeting. 1:30 p.m. East Hampton Library, Main St., East Hampton. Contact Judi Roth at 283-0759.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

April 2 Wednesday LWVH Board meeting. Bridgehampton National Bank. 5:30-7:30 p.m. Members and guests welcome.

April 10 Thursday **LWVSC Trip to Philadelphia. Independence Hall Historic Park & National Constitution Center.** See page 2 for other details.

Southampton pickup: 6:00 a.m. Omni, County Road 39. Western Suffolk pickup: 7:00-7:15 a.m. LIE Exit 49N (Rte. 110), westbound Park-and-Ride.

Arrive Philadelphia: 10:30 a.m. Depart Philadelphia: 3:00 p.m. (Arrival and departure in Independence Hall area.)

Return from Philadelphia: Arrive Exit 49 about 6-6:30 p.m. Arrive Southampton about 7:00-7:30 p.m.


May 4 Sunday LWVH Annual Meeting. Bridgehampton Community House. 3:00 p.m. Details to come.

**OTHER MEETINGS OF INTEREST**

March 16 Sunday “Brunch with Bill.” NOW (South Suffolk chapter), Planned Parenthood, and Pro-Choice League co-sponsor brunch with Bill Baird, reproductive and civil rights activist, and other guests. The Snapper Inn, 500 Shore Drive, Oakdale. 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Reservations required; seating is limited. For information, call 631-435-1896 and leave message for Linda.

April 2 Wednesday “A Gloria Steinem Day for Fair Pay.” Sponsored by NYS Pay Equity Coalition (NYSPEC), Albany, N.Y. For information, contact NYSPEC at Women on the Job, wojtf@optonline.net, 516-396-9857, ext. 9, or in Albany, haigner@nycap.rr.com, 518-464-0991.

www.lwv-suffolkcounty.org/Hamptons.htm
For Suffolk County’s network of health-care centers, the outlook is bleak and getting bleaker, according to Dr. Joseph Harder, Co-Chair of the Liaison Committee representing all the county health centers in negotiations with the County Executive and the Legislature. Dr. Harder is the former medical director at the health center in Shirley and Chair of the Brookhaven Health Centers.

On January 16, representatives of local leagues joined LWV of Suffolk County’s board members to meet with Dr. Harder. He believes that unless County Executive Steve Levy’s priorities change, the County’s system of health-care centers will be eliminated or taken over by for-profit HMOs or private clinics. Established 30 years ago, Suffolk’s system has been a model for providing comprehensive care at reasonable cost for the under- and uninsured. These facilities were built and maintained with taxpayer funds, and if they are sold to private operators, patients will be shunted to local hospital emergency rooms, where their inability to pay for services will further strain already-stressed hospitals’ financial stability.

Suffolk has eight family health centers and three satellite offices, mostly in western Suffolk. Seniors and the working poor are the biggest consumers of services. The Riverhead facility and its East Hampton and Southampton satellites provide the only public health care available to East End residents. Even before further cuts are contemplated, problems at these clinics include:

• A wait of many months for an appointment—while the medical condition can worsen.

• Difficulty, especially in summer, for East End residents to reach Southampton Hospital for services such as cardiac, prenatal, and WIC. Accessing services available only in Riverhead is even harder.

• No evening or weekend hours forces patients to take time from work.

• Limited facilities east of the Shinnecock Canal pose severe financial and logistical hardships for the aged and low-income workers living as far east as Montauk.

• The lack of a Director of Nursing leaves a void coordinating public health-care services and providing advocacy.

The centers are under the supervision of the Suffolk County Health Commissioner, a position currently held by Dr. Humayun Chaudhry, a physician with no background in public health. The centers do not all offer equal services, due in part to lack of staff. Funding existed for 53 positions but the positions were frozen and then eliminated in the 2008 County budget. In the 2008 budget, only 6.8 percent goes for all public health services—compared to 21 percent for police. At the same time, the population of eastern Suffolk County is expanding, with many retirees coming to live full-time. Legal and illegal immigrants also contribute to the increase. “With present limitations on funding and staffing, we are being set up to fail,” said Dr. Harder.

It seems clear that unless public pressure leads County government to reassess the value of maintaining or expanding health-care centers, the public health system will cease to be a safety net for those most need one. As the population ages and people lose jobs (and health insurance), pressure on these health-care centers will increase just as resources shrink. The group present on January 16 agreed to seek ways to pressure the County Executive and Legislature to provide more support for health-care centers. For starters, League representatives will accompany Dr. Harder and the Liaison Committee to future meetings with the County to voice our concerns.

After a report on the meeting, the Health Committee agreed to help raise awareness of the increasing need for low-cost, readily available health-care facilities. On January 22, Health Committee Chair Judi Roth wrote to Dr. Chaudhry, inviting him to share his views of the proposed changes. To date, he has not replied. We will also contact Governor Spitzer’s office to seek his views in light of the proposed changes to hospitals included in the Berger Report.

Written by Judy Samuelson
Suffolk County Health Centers: Funding, Services, Privatization and other Issues for 2008

a presentation by Dr. Joseph Harder

At the January SCLWV Board meeting, the Chairman of the Health Center Liaison Committee, Dr. Joseph Harder, spoke about challenges currently faced by the Suffolk County Health Center System. The system, which now has eight family health centers (Amityville, Brentwood, Coram, Greenlawn, Patchogue, Riverhead, Shirley and Wyandanch, and three satellite centers, East Hampton, Central Islip and Southampton) was established during the seventies to provide comprehensive care for residents of Suffolk County, particularly those who could not afford care from private physicians. Six of the centers are backed up by proprietary hospitals, which welcomed the establishment of the centers because they could care for patients who would otherwise have had to rely on their hospital emergency rooms.

Two other health centers, Riverhead and Tri-Community, are run by the Suffolk County Health Department through its Division of Patient Care. Fees at the centers are paid by private insurance and Medicare, by patients who pay on a sliding scale, and by patients covered by Suffolk Plan, which is an HMO established for health center patients. The majority of patients are families, roughly 50-55%; about 20% are seniors, while the remainder are single persons.

Each center has an Advisory Council which meets regularly to provide community support for the health centers. Dr. Harder, who has been Chair of the Advisory Council for the Brookhaven Health Centers, East and West, since 1998, is also Co-Chair of the Liaison Committee, which represents all the Health Centers in their negotiations with County Executive Levy and the Legislature. The Liaison Committee is currently concerned about the lack of support from the County Executive for the Health Centers. The center managers have been instructed to submit no-growth budgets for 2008, despite a two-percent rate of inflation, and an increase of 4.5% for medical supplies for all centers. In addition, there is a 4% increase for staff in the centers which are backed up by a contract hospital. Underfunding the health centers would impact the hours of service, as well as the ability to recruit critically needed staff and to schedule prompt appointments. The Coram Center has been seriously underfunded this year by one million dollars (a very significant percentage of their operating budget).

Editorial CPEP: An Unmet Responsibility

Suffolk County has generally suffered from a shortage of services for the mentally ill, but the problem has grown more acute in recent years. Limited housing options, insufficient inpatient psychiatry beds, and long waits for many outpatient services have left many individuals seeking psychiatric help with few options.

The CPEP (Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program) facility at Stony Brook Medical Center was established in 1990 to provide emergency evaluation and triage services for the public mental health system. These growing systemic deficiencies have made this crucial program the default for virtually every unmet mental health need. The CPEP provides a safety net for both the immediate care needs of the general public as well as for the chronically mentally ill, many of whom may be homeless, uninsured, and lacking in social support. Of the nearly 6000 visits per year to the CPEP, more than half arrive in the custody of police. The police are often called to provide secure transportation for people suffering from schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, clinical depression, and substance abuse as well as personal and family crises.

About 25% of the patients brought to CPEP require admission to an inpatient psychiatric unit at Stony Brook or other community hospitals but the lack of ready access to such beds may lead to...
Suffolk County Voter

Suffolk County Health Centers, continued

Of greater concern is the possibility that the County Executive and his staff are reviewing all options for the future of the health center system on the grounds that efficiency may dictate privatizing them, and even possibly selling the Suffolk Health Plan. Despite figures that show that the Suffolk Health Plan has earned money, County Executive Levy is exploring the possibility of selling the plan to a private insurance provider. To make a profit, a private provider might choose to target healthier patients, and limit services for patients requiring more care. No effort has been made to bring the idea to the public. There is no indication that it has been found to be a sound medical decision by the Division of Patient Care. Changing to a privatized system would eliminate the funding from New York State and from Suffolk County that covers any shortfall, therefore making it impossible for the health centers to fulfill their mission, which is to cover all persons in need of health care.

Contrary to the direction taken by Mr. Levy, Governor Spitzer is working to reform the New York State Health Care system, focusing on lowering the cost of health care while improving patient outcomes. He hopes to target primary and preventative care to reduce the long term costs. In the same vein, the Berger Commission in 2007 reported that in New York State "Primary care is insufficient, so that some patients go without preventative care and basic services. Inadequate primary care worsens health care status, allows chronic conditions to go unmanaged, and results in back-end care that is more costly and less beneficial than front-end services. New York should expand primary care capacity, including facilities, equipment, information technology and workforce."

The Suffolk County Liaison Committee plans to meet with County Executive Levy to endorse the concept of comprehensive affordable care and to present its requests for adequate funding. It will also oppose the idea of privatizing the health centers and the Suffolk Health Plan. The Liaison Committee would welcome the support of League members, either through contact with their legislators, or attendance at a meeting with County Executive Levy when it is scheduled.

The Advisory Council at each health center would welcome anyone who is interested. The Advisory Council for the two South Brookhaven centers meets the first Thursday of every month at either the Patchogue or Shirley Center. The next meeting is March 6 at the Shirley Marilyn Shellabarger Health Center at 9:30 am. For more information about any of the centers, or about the Liaison Committee meetings, you may call Millie Riggio at the Patchogue Center, 854-1307 or Joe Volodka at the Shirley Center, 852-1022.

Nancy Marr and Marilyn McKeown

Editorial: CPEP: An Unmet Responsibility, continued

delays in placement and congestion in the CPEP. In general, the goal of the program is to provide short-term assessment, stabilization, and triage services which often lead to cost effective outcomes by avoiding unnecessary hospitalization. Many Suffolk County agencies rely heavily on the availability of the CPEP program. Many referrals are made by the Sheriff’s department and the Riverhead Jail, by Adult and Child Protective Services, the Family and Criminal Courts, along with the network of County sponsored outpatient clinics and housing providers. Moreover, a significant homeless population depends on CPEP to access housing services provided by the Department of Social Services.

Overcrowding and over-utilization of the available facilities, the lack of sufficient inpatient beds, and long waits for housing placements for people with mental illness through Single Point of Access (SPA) drive up the length of stays in CPEP, leading to congestion and delays in placement. As a result, the limited space and capacity of the program is frequently saturated, leading the facility to go on “diversion” as much as 25% of the time. When this occurs, the police are notified and all transports are directed to the nearest community hospitals which are far less well equipped to provide the range of services available at CPEP.

The Stony Brook University Medical Center is currently working on a plan to build a new CPEP annex which would greatly improve the capacity and functionality of the program. The goal is to substantially increase the physical size of the unit, double the evaluation and intervention space, and provide a more therapeutic environment conducive to the comfort and care of the patients. It will also increase significantly the number of available beds.

The cost of this expansion presents a significant challenge to the facility. The NYS Office of Mental Hygiene has committed some capital funding to support the plan, indicating its recognition of the justification of both its need and the specific plan. At the same time, the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science at Stony Brook has sought additional resources from private philanthropic sources as well as from Suffolk County. Dr. Mark Sedler, Chair of Psychiatry at the Stony Brook Medical Center, has described the CPEP as the “cornerstone of the Suffolk County public mental health system.” He adds that “we have been overwhelmed with so many diverse demands and unmet needs that it is apparent that an expansion at this time is the right thing for both the hospital and for the county.”

It is the county’s responsibility to provide adequate care for its residents. Such vulnerable people cannot be dismissed to live on the streets. They often barely survive, and may present public safety concerns in many communities. Moreover, an expanded CPEP program is likely to be the most cost effective solution to the current crisis in services for the mentally ill compared to the expenses associated with repeated emergency room services, unnecessary in-patient stays in hospitals, as well as incarceration for behaviors resulting from untreated mental illness.

County Executive Steve Levy and the Suffolk County Legislature should recognize the critical role that CPEP plays in the public mental health system, accept the responsibilities which our government has for supporting public health programs, and produce the funding which is so urgently needed. The League strongly recommends that they do so.

Katherine Hoak
Information Items
• The Suffolk County League is sponsoring a trip to Philadelphia on April 10, 2008. The bus trip, a fundraiser, will highlight Independence Hall and the National Constitution Center. All are encouraged to attend.
• Jeanne Abbot’s thank you note to the Board for its donation to the Rotary in honor of her husband was read.

Committee Reports
• The Fundraising Committee announced its next meeting date and stated that the June member meeting will be a luncheon honoring women in the public sphere.
• The Membership Committee distributed the current membership list for 2008 to Board members. There was a discussion about what should make up the prospective member information packet and how and when it should be distributed. The committee will consider this and a draft condolences policy for the Board at its next meeting.
• The Natural Resources Committee reported that our League will co-sponsor a forum with GAIN on April 14 at 7:00 p.m. at the Rogers Library. Southampton and East Hampton Town Board members or their designees will be asked to report on “green” programs planned or in place by the towns.
• Voter Services announced their next meeting and it was reported that former Southampton mayor Bill Hattrick expressed an interest in our League sponsoring a panel discussion on the issue of homeowner voting rights similar to that held in August, 2001.

Discussion Items
• The Board accepted unanimously the Immigration Consensus results from the December 10 meeting which was reviewed at a follow-up Committee Meeting on December 28 that included the Immigration Committee members, Jacqui LoFaro, and the two co-presidents. The results will now be sent to National. The Immigration Committee was thanked for its work.
• Town Trustees from East Hampton and Southampton are being invited to explain their programs and answer questions at the Member Meeting on January 14.

The next Board meeting will be February 6, 2008 at 5:30 p.m. at the Bridgehampton Bank. All members are invited to attend.

Submitted by Joy Lupoletti

February 6, 2008
Information Items
• It was announced that there have been very positive responses to the Health Committee’s handout, “Presidential Candidates and Their Health-Care Plans,” which members received in a recent issue of The Voter.
• There was a reminder about the LWV Suffolk County’s planned trip to Philadelphia on April 10 and that the deadline for sign-up is March 1 [extended to March 15].
• The Board has received and has accepted an invitation to speak at a meeting of a local chapter of a noted honor society in Patchogue in June. The speakers have yet to be determined.
• Plans are in the works for a June luncheon honoring women in the public sphere. The event will take place on a weekday in early June.

Committee Reports
• The Membership Committee reported that 31 people attended the “Winter Blahs” luncheon on January 22 at Bobby Van’s restaurant.
• The Natural Resources Committee announced that a group of elected public officials have received invitations to serve on a panel at an event in April. The LWVH is co-sponsoring it together with GAIN (Green and Involved Now) and the Rogers Memorial Library. It will take place at the library on Monday, April 14 at 7:00. Also, members were encouraged to write to Governor Spitzer informing him of the League’s position against the Broadwater project.
• The Education Committee reported that the VOTE 18 program will be presented at Pierson High School on February 29 to two separate classes.

Discussion Items
• A motion was made and carried to fund the costs to cover registration, travel and lodging for two Board members to attend the LWVUS convention in June in Portland, Oregon.
• Numerous ideas about choosing the topic for the May 4th Annual Meeting were discussed. It was decided to seek someone who is an expert on the issue of voter ID. Carol will pursue finding someone through the Brennan Center.

The next meeting of the LWVH Board is scheduled for Wednesday, March 5 at 5:30. All are welcome to attend.

Submitted by Anne Marshall
Written by Judy Samuelson

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS

Orest E. Bliss
P.O. Box 473, Southampton NY 11969
631-283-2373
OrestEBliss@msn.com

Southampton resident Orest Bliss became aware of the League of Women Voters through candidate debates we sponsored in that village. “I wanted to be part of a group that performs an essential public function,” he said.

With degrees from Princeton and Columbia, Orest spent a career in corporate finance on Wall Street. Currently, he employs his financial acumen as an appointee to the Southampton Village Finance Committee. Orest plans to become familiar with various committees before joining any. His financial background would be an asset to many, while his interest in the election process suggests he might find a home with Voter Services.

David Cory
19 Cove Drive, Sag Harbor, NY 11963
631-725-4118
dhcory@hotmail.com

Two voting-related items brought the League of Women Voters to David’s attention recently. One is the sincerity and dedication he observed in the volunteers registering voters at Sag Harbor events this summer. The second is HAVA (Help America Vote Act)—the need to select a new voting machine. “I think it’s important for people of good sense to weigh in on this important issue,” he declared.

David is now retired from two careers: first as a merchant seaman and captain of a cargo ship, followed by years as a realtor. Now he’s busy with various volunteer activities, including the board of directors of the Sag Harbor Whaling Museum.

David is not actually a new member—a recent contribution to the Education Fund brought his name to the attention of the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons.

Gail Gambino
33 Seely Lane, Sag Harbor, NY 11963
631-725 2943

A series of coincidences inspired Gail Gambino to join LWVH. Arlene Hinkemeyer invited Richard, Gail’s husband, to speak at our November 2007 general meeting, where the National Immigration Study was introduced. Dr. Gambino taught immigration history at Queens College and was friendly with colleague Mike Hinkemeyer (Arlene’s husband). Renewing the acquaintance led to interest in our organization.

Gail has retired as a marital and family therapist and is considering where next to put her energies and experience. “Coming from a politically active family, I’ve always been interested in public affairs,” she said. With a master’s degree in education as well as an MSW, she might be interested in the Education Committee. She’s giving herself time to get to know our organization before choosing where to become more involved. Meanwhile, after summering on the East End for almost 40 years, she has settled into a home in Sag Harbor and is enjoying the pleasures of living here.

Written by Judy Samuelson

CONDOLENCES

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons expresses its condolences to Jane Lapple on the loss of her father.

AN APOLOGY AND OVERDUE THANKS

The editor had a senior moment back in January and failed to thank Carol and Richard Mellor for once again hosting the very well-attended Holiday Party in December. We all appreciated their hospitality, congeniality, and patience. Thanks also to all those who provided the delicious food and generous contributions to East End Hospice.

LWVH GETS WIDER MENTION

Take a peek at the back page of the February issue of New York State Voter. There you’ll find three references to the LWVHamptons as well as a terrific picture of Arlene and Gene Makl! They, along with League members Joy and Richard Lupoletti, attended the UN briefings in New York City in November.

The other two references were to Mireille Lister’s receiving the LWVH’s Voter Services Award and to our holiday contribution to East End Hospice.
MEMBERSHIP DUES

Dues may be sent to: LWVH, P.O. Box 2253, East Hampton, NY 11937

_____ Full-time Student $15  _____ Supporting $ 85
_____ Individual $55  _____ Education $125*
_____ Household $85  _____ Donation $_____

Dues Year is June 1, 2007 through May 31, 2008.

_____ Member Renewal  _____ New Member

Please make checks payable to LWVH and mail to:

LWVH, P.O. Box 2253, East Hampton, NY 11937

*For Education membership, amounts above dues level are tax deductible. In this case, please make checks payable to EDUCATION FOUNDATION—LWV/Hamptons.
MAKE A DONATION
in Honor of and/or in Memory of
a friend, family member, or neighbor.

Call Arlene Makl at 324-8662 or e-mail at Arlene.Makl@Gmail.com.

We will send a card to notify the friend or family member
that a donation has been made.

INDIVIDUAL’S NAME__________________________________________________________
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MEMBER’S NAME__________________________________________________
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