The Voter
The Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons
Founded in 1977
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May/June 2016

What’s Inside

Special Events Committee Report ...........1
President’s Message ................................2
Education Committee Report ...............3
Health Committee Report .....................3
Voter Services Committee Report ........4,17
Natural Resources Committee Report ......5
Membership Committee Report .............5
Board Meeting Summary .....................6
Suffolk County Voter ............................15
New Members ....................................16
Green Tips .......................................16

SAVE THE DATE
Sunday, May 15, 1 to 3 pm
LWVH Annual Meeting
Guest speaker: County Legislator Bridget Fleming
Make your voice heard during our only “business meeting” of the year. Review by-laws, budget, non-partisan policy and vote on slate of nominated board members and officers.
Southampton Cultural Center, Levitas Hall
25 Pond Lane, Southampton

Thursday, June 2, 7 pm
Democratic Congressional Primary Debate
Candidates Anna Throne-Holst and Dave Calzone will be debating in their effort to become the Democratic candidate to run against Republican incumbent, Lee Zeldin in November.

Thursday, June 9, 11 am to 3:30 pm
Celebrating Bridgehampton
Join us for a wonderful tour of the cultural sites Bridgehampton has to offer including

Continued on page 18

Special Events to Visit and Celebrate Bridgehampton
By Gladys Remler and Joanne Samborn
“Celebrating Bridgehampton” (Thursday, June 9th) is the League’s first very special event of 2016. This small area of the Hamptons which is celebrating its 360th birthday this year, has a host of interesting places to visit.

Our day will begin at the Children’s Museum of the East End (CMEE) where we will be given a tour and hear how CMEE sparks children’s imagination and playful learning through interactive exhibits. Next up is the South Fork Natural History Museum (SOFO) and Nature Center which opened in 2005. It is the only state-of-the-art natural history museum on the South Fork. It encourages children and adults with its natural habitat exhibits and outdoor nature walks and programs to “discover, explore, learn and engage”.

Next we visit the Dan Flavin Art Institute on Corwith Avenue. A tour

Continued on page 18

http://www.lwvhamptons.org
The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons

Mission Statement
The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Diversity Policy
The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, in both its values and practices, is committed to diversity and pluralism. This means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of economic position, gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability. The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that inclusiveness enhances the organization’s ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs. The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of the East End.

Membership
Any person who supports the mission of the League may become a member.

The Voter Newsletter
The newsletter of the Hamptons League, The Voter, is dedicated to bringing useful information, background, perspective and commentary on public policy issues confronting League members and other community citizens in Southampton and East Hampton, Suffolk County, and the State of New York. It explores the work of the League to promote positive solutions, and it empowers people to make a difference in their communities.

The Voter is published seven times a year (January/February/March, April, May/June, July/August, September, October, and November/December) by the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, P.O. Box 2253, East Hampton, NY 11937.

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President’s Message

By Glorian Berk

When I speak with potential league members, I’m often told that they can’t join the league because they belong to a political party. I then clarify the league’s non-partisan policy. I’d like to share the information I tell them.

Each league has a written non-partisan policy that is reviewed and approved by its members at each annual meeting. As a member of a committee that reviewed LWVH policy several years ago, I learned that our policy is more restrictive than those of the Suffolk County and State Leagues. As we discussed whether this policy should be changed at a board meeting, it became clear that because we are such a small, tight-knit community, no change should be made to liberalize it. If you want to read the entire policy, you can find it on our website under, “About Us”. Let me point out that the policy itself applies only to members of the Board of Directors.

LWVH non-partisan policy limits what elected and appointed board members can do. A Board member can’t publicly identify with a political party, attend political party functions, support a candidate for public office or support a clearly partisan initiative. Board members can, personally and as representatives of the league, advocate for initiatives where the League (nationally, state or local) has a position based on a study and consensus. For example, the national league has a very broad position on protecting the environment, which enabled our local League to support the plastic bag ban enacted in both Southampton and East Hampton Towns.

All board members are encouraged to check with the rest of the board if they have a concern that the action they plan to take may appear to be partisan. For example, all letters to the editor from board members are vetted by the two co-presidents before they are submitted.

Again, the most important aspect of the league’s non-partisan policy is that it applies only to league board members. In other words, individual league members can join and be active in a political party, campaign for candidates or work within their community to advocate for change in their government. In fact, it is encouraged!
Upcoming Activities of the Education Committee

By Judi Roth

Two students from Bridgehampton High School, Madeline Koral and Rachel Hoyt, will be representing the Hamptons League at the annual “Students Inside Albany” program on May 22nd-24th, 2016. On April 14th Anne Marshall and I met with Madeline and Rachel to prep them for their experience. We found them to be perfect representatives for our League and we thank Guidance Director, Danielle Doscher, for selecting such outstanding students.

We have asked them to prepare an essay for us upon their return answering questions such as:

1. Tell us one or two things that surprised and/or impressed you during your trip.
2. Tell us about other students you met who were particularly interesting to you and why.
3. What was your opinion of the time you spent with Assemblyman Thiele and Senator LaValle and did they answer questions you asked?
4. What will you tell other students, your teachers and your parents about your experience?

Stay tuned for that report in the next issue of the Voter.

Applications have started to arrive for the Betty Desch Scholarship which will be awarded at the Annual Meeting on May 15th. From a brief peek at some of the essays we will once again have a very hard decision to make as our East End students continue to astound us with the amount of curricular and extracurricular activities they undertake.

In May we will continue with Vote 18 and plan to visit classes in Southampton and Hampton Bays High Schools.

Public Information Meeting on July 11th will feature Health Care film called “Fix It”

By Naomi Epstein

The League of Women Voters of New York State issued a Memorandum in Support of a bill sponsored by Assemblyman Gottfried and Senator Perkins titled the “New York Health Act”. If passed, this bill would amend the public health law and the state finance law, and would establish “New York Health”, a single payer health insurance system. The bill was passed in the Assembly last spring. It has support from various segments of the political spectrum including labor, community groups, and the Center for Health, Environment and Justice. Some physicians, public health advocates and others have been working on this legislation under the umbrella organization, the “Campaign for New York Health”.

Your local league and the Suffolk County League which encompasses the five local leagues in Suffolk County will be working on educating the public and our County Legislature about this bill. Our Representative in the Assembly Fred Thiele voted in the affirmative on this bill. On July 11th, the LWVH will hold a public information meeting to show a film about how our health care system can be improved. It is called “Fix It”; speakers will be announced on our website, www.lwvhamptons.org Please put this date on your calendar.
Hamptons Participates in LWVUS Get Out The Vote Pilot Project

By Carol Mellor

In an effort to determine what is effective in getting people who are registered to vote to the polls, the LWVUS ran a pilot project employing research which is believed to encourage voting. Focusing on three districts in the country (Cincinnati, Mid-Hudson New York and Brookhaven New York) a phone bank was used to reach out to persons who are registered to vote as either Republicans or Democrats and who have a spotty record of prior voting.

Ten members of our league, working over 2 Sundays, participated in this project. In total, there were over 2,745 total calls made by members of our league and other Suffolk County leagues. We look forward to the results of these efforts.

Federal Election Commission Issues and State Election Laws Highlight Confusion and Difficulty in Getting to Vote

by Judi Roth

The New York Times Editorial (Sunday, April 17, 2016) with the headline “Why Americans Can’t Vote” is echoed in the LWVUS editorial by Kelly Ceballos titled “Federal Election Commission Must be Restructured” (April 14, 2016) reprinted below.

From Maricopa County in Arizona cutting the number of polling places to 60 from 200, to Wisconsin arbitrarily rejecting or forcing voters to go through a maze of three separate waiting lines for identification, registration and balloting to New York scheduling four separate balloting days and not publicizing that people who wished to register to vote in a party primary had to do so six months in advance, our election commissions continue to make it confusing and difficult to vote. According to the Times article there are 43 states using computerized machines 10 to 15 years old that are increasingly unreliable and insecure and the New York University School of Law Brennan’s Center for Justice says it might cost upward of $1 billion in the next few years to replace aging machines. Some of the fixes they propose sound simple such as online registration, early voting, more poll workers, and the use of technology such as we have in New York State, paper ballots backed by scanners – a battle which was fought and won by the LWVNY.

As Chair of the Education Committee who goes into the local high schools with my colleague and former history teacher, Martha Potter, we find that history is fraught with a give and take away in allowing and encouraging people to vote. From giving African American men the right to vote after the Civil War, then passing Jim Crow laws to today’s battles over voter identification laws and the weakening of the Voter Rights Act, our county continues to struggle over how and who can vote. For good or bad, this year’s presidential primary has brought this into the public eye and educated many people on how our party system works – let’s hope this focus on voting will continue and will bring improvements in the future.

Federal Election Commission Must Be Restructured

04/14/2016 | by Kelly Ceballos |
League of Women Voters Announces New Position on Money in Politics

The League of Women Voters today announced a new position statement on “Money in Politics” and called for the Federal Election Commission (FEC) to be restructured as a five-member commission. The FEC is the only civil enforcement agency for federal laws governing money in politics – PACs, Super PACs, dark money, campaign contributions and election spending – and is paralyzed by its current structure. The result is that even the nation’s weak campaign finance laws currently on the books are not enforced.

“Today’s FEC has shown repeatedly that current laws are not effective when they are not enforced. Big money, secret money, is taking over our elections while the FEC sits on its hands. It is time for a change – a big change. The existing bipartisan approach, with each major party having an equal number of commissioners, has led to gridlock. It must be replaced by an enforcement agency with an odd-number of commissioners so the public interest comes before partisan interests,” said Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Continued on page 17
Natural Resources Hosts Citizens Climate Lobby Speakers at PIM

By Judi Roth

People who attended the PIM (Public Information Meeting) on Monday, April 11th at the Hampton Bays Senior Center were avid listeners as Watermill resident Tip Brolin, nuclear engineer and member of the Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) told us about the non-profit organization’s efforts to enact legislation that would:

- Place a fee on fossil fuels at the source, i.e., the well, mine, or port of entry.
- Distribute all revenues to U.S. households to offset higher energy costs.
- Include a border tariff adjustment to discourage businesses from relocating where they can emit more CO2 and encourage other nations to adopt equivalent carbon pricing.

Mr. Brolin said that this plan will reduce demand for fossil fuels and make alternative, no/low-carbon energy sources more affordable. The overall aim of this shift in how energy is produced, paid for and used could cut U.S. greenhouse gas emissions by 33% in 10 years and 52% in 20 years. It could also create 2 million jobs nationally in 10 years as consumers have more money in their pockets to spend and new energy businesses such as hydroelectric, geothermal, solar, wind and nuclear energy are built up.

In a lively Q and A session Mr. Brolin was joined by Don Matheson, Chair of the NY Long Island East chapter of CCL, and they responded to questions about the feasibility of their mission. They told us they have thousands of volunteers across the county and meet regularly with members of Congress and do public outreach events, such as this one, to energize people to join them.

Natural Resources Report

Membership Committee Report

By Estelle Gellman and Joanne McEvoy-Samborn

The Membership Committee is delighted to welcome two new members: Judith E. Kron of East Hampton and Elena Rivera-Williams of Southampton. We look forward to welcoming them in person at upcoming events.

We would also like to remind all our current members that our dues year is from June 1 to May 31 and you should have already received our early bird dues renewal request. Please note that, in view of the increase in the amount of dues we have to pay to the state and national League, there is a modest increase in dues this year. An individual membership has been raised to $60 and a household membership to $90; student memberships remain at $15. We need this increase in order to continue with the level of programming we have had and we hope we can count on your continued support.
Information Items

• The new membership brochure is ready and 250 copies will be ordered. In the future a copy of the membership application will be published in the Voter.
• The correct date for the Health Public Information Meeting is June 13th; not June 11th (See Save the Date).
• Incoming Treasurer Cathy Peacock distributed an “In Kind Contribution” form that members should use when they donate things to the League, such as food for PIM meetings, photo copies done at home, etc. This will better show the real cost of doing business when we pursue fund raising.

Discussion Items:

• The Non-Partisan Policy became an issue for a League board member in Nassau County who wrote a partisan letter to Newsday and was identified as a League member. At our annual meeting this policy will be highlighted. Also Letters to the Editor(s) authored by Board members should be vetted with the co-presidents and appropriate committee chair.
• LWVUS Convention will be June 16-19 in Washington, DC. Three voting members can attend and LWV pays for registration, travel and the cost of a shared room. Barbara McClancy, Naomi Epstein and Estelle Gellman have expressed interest in attending.
• Our annual meeting is on May 15th, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. at the Southampton Cultural Center with County Legislator Bridget Fleming as our guest speaker. Board members will provide food and beverages.

Committee Reports:

• Voter Services has been asked by the Southold Democratic Party to moderate the debate between the two candidates vying for the right to run against the Republican incumbent in the House of Representatives. Cathy Peacock will moderate this debate and the LWVH will receive a stipend of $50. The LWVH will sponsor these same two candidates in a debate on June 2nd at the Southampton Senior Center in Hampton Bays.
• April is the month when our League covers voter registrations at the Islip Court House.
• Voter Services is participating in a pilot project to encourage voting in Brookhaven by calling voters to remind them to vote in the Presidential Primary on April 19th. These calls which will be made on April 10th and 17th are part of a national effort and the calling data is generated by computer.
• Special Events has finalized their plans for the “Celebrating Bridgehampton” tour on June 9th.
• Education Committee will present the “Vote 18” program in May/June at Southampton and Hampton Bays high schools.
• Membership reports 91 members, 12 related household members and 5 other lifetime members for a total of 108. We gained 2 new members this month.
• Government will be visiting East Hampton Supervisor Larry Cantwell to speak about Town Managers.

SAVE THE DATE

tours of the Children’s Museum of the East End, the South Fork Natural History Museum, the Dan Flavin Art Institute, the Horticultural Alliance, the Bridgehampton Historical Society and the Good Shepherd Farm

Reserve by June 1st for $45. Send checks to Gladys Remler at 180 Melody Court, Eastport, NY 11941

Monday, June 13, 6 pm

Transforming Health Care on the East End!

Featured speaker: Robert S. Chaloner, President & CEO of Southampton Hospital
Presented by the Partnership of Southampton Hospital and Stony Brook Hospital
Parrish Memorial Hall Southampton Hospital
Herrick Road and Lewis Street
Suffolk County Voter

May 2016

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LWVSC Board approves focus on transparency issues

Members of the LWVSC board monitor activities, discussions, and decisions of the Executive and Legislative branches of Suffolk County government throughout the year. After discussion, the LWV board approved the following:

“LWVSC will work to obtain evidence needed regarding Suffolk County waivers, certificates of necessity and similar methods of decision making and passing legislation that have not been publicized or distributed in a timely manner to the Legislators and citizens. This inhibits transparency and LWVSC is considering ways to comment on its findings to the media and the Legislature.”

Local Leagues should schedule meetings with their county Legislators as well as leaders in the Executive branch of county government. We hope to gather information from our elected officials and have a clearer understanding of the scope/details of possible transparency issues in decision making. We encourage non-board League members to assist us in this effort during the second half of the year.

Suffolk County local Leagues team up for recent Voter Engagement Project

With the assistance of volunteers from the Hamptons, Huntington and Smithtown local Leagues, LWV Brookhaven’s pilot project for LVUS on voter engagement was successfully executed. There were robo-calls made reaching 5104 live recipients (people who picked up the phone) and 8286 messages left and 2745 volunteer calls placed over three days of phone-banks. Thanks to all who participated!!!

Update on Suffolk County proposed plastic bag ban

The bill (IR1207), originally introduced by Legislators Spencer, Hahn and Krupski had been scheduled for a vote at the Legislature’s April 12 General Meeting, but has been put on hold. It was tabled at the Legislature’s Health Committee on April 7. Although many members of the public spoke in favor of the ban, there has been opposition from Melville based Poly-Pak Industries (a plastic bag manufacturer) as well as from seniors complaining about the permitted ten cent cost per (paper or heavy plastic) bag by retailers.

48th Annual LWVSC Convention and Luncheon
Tuesday May 3, 2016 11:30am preceded by tour
Outerbanks at Indian Island Country Club, Riverhead

Luncheon Speaker:
Carolyn Peabody PhD, LCSW, ACSW
Director, Community & Political Social Action Specialization
School of Social Welfare, Stony Brook University

Cost: $35 LWV members in advance;
$40 at door for LWV members and all non-members

LWCSC selects Bianca Taipe for Students Inside Albany conference

Bianca Taipe, a junior at Deer Park HS, hopes to major in international relations with a focus on Latin American regions and cultural diversity, working towards the goal of becoming an immigration lawyer.

Bianca volunteers at her town’s Youth Court and participates in the court process serving as both prosecuting and defense lawyer. She also volunteers at Make the Road New York’s office in Brentwood as an assistant teacher in Adult Literacy classes that teach English to adult immigrants. She traveled to Ecuador in 2014 and volunteered at university English classes.

Bianca is looking forward to learning about New York State’s legislative process and meeting with legislators, while getting to know students from all parts of New York State. We hope to hear about her experiences at the end of May.

LWVSC Annual Convention and Lunch 11:30am Tuesday May 3 at Outerbanks at Indian Island CC, Riverhead, preceded by Riverhead wastewater plant tour, 10am
LWVSC Board Meeting: 10:00am Wednesday June 22 at SCCC, Main St., Riverhead

http://www.lwvhamptons.org
Welcome New Member: Judith Kron

By Marsha Kranes

Judith was born and raised in New Bedford, Mass. After earning a BS in chemistry at the University of Massachusetts, she married, settled in Randolph, N.J. and raised two daughters. Then she returned to school, earned an MLS (library sciences) at Rutgers University, and launched a successful career as a library director -- most recently as head of the Livingston Public Library.

Judith began spending time on the East End in 1995 when she purchased a summer home in East Hampton. She moved in full-time two years ago after selling her house in New Jersey. She enjoys hiking with the East Hampton Trail Preservation Society, swimming, snorkeling and traveling. She was introduced to the League by Judi Roth, who she met hiking, and joined because of her interest in politics and the political process.

Meet Your Water Heater

By Joanne McEvoy-Samborn

For maximum water heater efficiency:
Set your water heater thermostat to 120 degree F
Make an appointment for a water heater tune-up
Put water setting to “OFF” or “PILOT” when you are going away
To insulate your water heating system:

If your water heater was manufactured before 1989, install an insulation blanket
Insulate the first 5 feet of hot water pipes with foam sleeves (but make sure the foam does not touch the exhaust on gas water heater).

NOTE: DO NOT INSTALL INSULATING BLANKETS ON GAS WATER HEATERS!
Federal Election Commission Must Be Restructured

To address the enforcement problem, the League has endorsed legislation by Senator Tom Udall and Representative David Price that would restructure and rename the FEC as the Federal Election Administration with a five-member commission. Only two members can be from the same political party and the fifth will be appointed on a nonpartisan basis. A system of administrative law judges will have jurisdiction over enforcement matters and can only be overturned by the commissioners for cause.

The new League Money in Politics position comes as a result of a two-year study by its members. The position also calls for:

- Full public financing of Congressional as well as Presidential elections;
- Abolishing Super PACs and spending coordinated or directed by candidates, and
- Restrictions on direct donations and bundling by lobbyists.

In addition to the traditional reason for campaign finance regulation – preventing corruption and undue influence in government – the League now supports several other goals, including:

- Enhance political equality for all citizens;
- Protect representative democracy from being distorted by big spending in election campaigns;
- Provide voters sufficient information about candidates and campaign issues to make informed choices;
- Ensure transparency and the public’s right to know who is using money to influence elections; and
- Enable candidates to compete equitably for public office.

“League members believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy and our recent study and new position statement on Money in Politics will reenergize and focus their work at every level of government,” MacNamara said. The League of Women Voters has been a leader in seeking campaign finance reform at the state, local, and federal levels for more than four decades, supporting the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974 (FECA), working for the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA), and participating in numerous court cases, including Citizens United v. FEC (2010).

"Men of New York, Cast Your Votes for Women!" Advertisement, 1917. This New York State Woman Suffrage Party advertisement appealing to "Men of New York" appeared in the Babylon South Side Signal on November 2, 1917. Four days later, on Nov. 6, 1917, women won the right to vote in New York state. Three years later, that right was granted to women nationwide.
Special Events to Visit and Celebrate Bridgehampton

Continued from page 1

and talk is planned to learn about internationally known artist Dan Flavin and his fluorescent light sculptures. This is a small outpost of the Dia Beacon Foundation in upstate New York.

Then on to a catered lunch (included in your fee) where we have a chance to chat with old and new friends. Our location is the Horticultural Alliance of the Hamptons where we will learn how this organization fosters the art and science of horticulture and we can visit their extensive horticultural library. After this we walk just across the street to visit the Bridgehampton Museum (the Corwith House, c.1830) where League member and Bridgehampton history writer (“Grandfather Lived Here”), Ann Sanford, will speak with us and we can tour the period rooms and Corwith family exhibit.

Our final stop is right next door at the Good Shepherd Farm, a cooperative community vegetable and flower garden, established in 2006. Dr. Jay Hunt or LWV member Sandi Ferguson will escort us through this one acre of Bridgehampton “loam” telling us the farm’s story.

The cost of this full day, including lunch, is $45. We are usually happy to say “sold out” and our deadline is June 1st. Please mail your checks, payable to LWVH, to Gladys Remler, 180 Melody Court, Eastport, NY 11941. Questions? Call Gladys at 288-9021 or Joanne at 283-9648.

The Special Events Committee also has plans for a sensational luncheon in the early fall when our guest speaker will be Ms. Kathleen Marshall, Tony award winning choreographer and director. Ms. Marshall is the daughter of past-President and Board Member Anne Marshall who is considering acting as interviewer. Details will follow.

Lastly we’d like to thank members of the Special Events committee for their creativity and hard work.

Membership Application

Not a member of the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons?

Please join us by mailing this application form and a check payable to LWVH to:
League of Women Voters of the Hamptons; P.O. Box 2253; East Hampton, NY 11937

Individual Member’s Name

Other Household Member’s Name

Address

Email(s) Home phone Cell phone

Membership Dues: □ Full-time Student $15 □ Household $90 □ Individual $60

Donations to our local league may be made payable to LWVHamptons and may be included in your dues check. Tax-deductible donations may be made by separate check payable to: LWVNYS - Education Foundation

Questions? Call us at 631-324-4637 or email: membership@lwvhamptons.org
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The League of Women Voters

Making democracy work through voter education, issue advocacy, and civic participation.