

*THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
SCHENECTADY COUNTY
BULLETIN*



**Judicial
Committee
Report:**

The committee will meet from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 14, to get updates on the progress in Civilian Police Review Board issues and to help prepare for the March 21 program on a panel to address the “Raise the Age of Criminal Responsibility” and the need for adequate funding and services for indigents’ defense services. Please look for further information on the meeting place.

Interested members are invited to attend the 2017 Hugh R. Jones Memorial Lecture at Albany Law School on Wednesday, March 29, 2017, at 6:pm. The Key note speaker will be the Hon. Jonathan Lippman, retired Chief Judge of the State of New York. A reception will follow.

Please contact Helga A. Schroeter at 518-370-5042 to make a reservation. There is no cost involved.

Equal Justice for All?



Tuesday, March 21, 2017, 6:00-7:30pm

Schenectady Public Library

Main Branch, McChesney Room

Raise the Age of Criminal Responsibility

Adequate Funding for Indigents’ Defense

Panelists: Assemblyman Phil Steck

City Court Judge Mark Blanchfield

Moderator: Helga A. Schroeter,

LWV of Schenectady

Free and Open to the Public

President's Letter

I have to confess that when Metroplex was first proposed, I was pretty skeptical. It seemed like yet another program to funnel taxpayer dollars to ill-advised ventures in the hope of stimulating economic development.

There were a few missteps in the beginning, but under Ray Gillen's leadership, Metroplex has achieved a remarkable turnaround in downtown Schenectady and has also done a number of projects in the other towns of Schenectady County.

But there is something crucial missing from the Metroplex success story- accountability to the public.

The NY Public Authorities Law section 2655, which authorizes Metroplex, requires a detailed five-year capital projects plan to be presented by the director of Metroplex to the County Legislature, with annual updates thereafter. The capital plan should describe proposed projects, including sources of capital and operating funds, the economic development potential, the impact on the community's natural resources, the potential for tourism and arts development and human and physical infrastructure needs.

Metroplex apparently gives a report to the County Legislature but the report lacks the detailed information that the public needs in order to properly evaluate the activities of the organization. In addition, the law requires that the board members that represent Schenectady, Niskayuna, Rotterdam, Glenville, Duanesburg and Princetown give a similarly detailed report to their municipal governing bodies.

According to League member Elmer Bertsch, who brought this issue to my attention, these annual reports to city and towns have not been made. The Chair and Board members of Metroplex should have made these detailed reports on their own initiative, but failing that, it's up to the local governments to demand these reports.

Metroplex has done a good job in the nearly ten years of its existence, but transparency and accountability are essential to ensure that Metroplex continues to use taxpayer dollars wisely.

Cheryl Nechamen

Metroplex Reporting to Schenectady County, City and Towns

New York Authorities law 2655-C requires Metroplex to provide reports of their five year capital plan to municipalities and New York Authorities Law 2655-D requires Metroplex to deliver reports of details of projects undertaken during the year. These laws require oral and written reports to be delivered in the February/March time frame each year.

Observer Corps members have contacted the Niskayuna Town Board, the Glenville Town Board, the Schenectady City Council, the Duanesburg Town Board, Rotterdam Town Board and Metroplex to assess compliance with the laws.

Schenectady City Council and County Legislature - Kay Ackerman reports that Leesa Perazzo (City Council President) said that Ray Gillen (Metroplex Chair) has been invited to the City Council City and County Development Committee meeting in late February or March after his report to the Legislature. Dates can be confirmed with the City Clerk and with the Clerk to the County.

Niskayuna Town Board – Johanna Petersen reports that Joe Landry (Town Supervisor) gets updates from Ray Gillen regularly. Paul Webster (Niskayuna representative to Metroplex) gives regular reports to the board as well. Metroplex is presently funding 20% of a grant to reconfigure the parking lot and side walk in front of the Niskayuna Co-op.

Glenville Town Board – Betsy Chase reports that Chris Koetzle (Town Supervisor) has spoken with Ray Gillen to schedule a presentation to the town board sometime in March or April. The presentation date will be announced on the Town web site. The Glenville representative to Metroplex is Bob Dietrick (CFO of First National Bank of Scotia). It does not appear that Glenville has been previously getting the required Metroplex presentations.

Duanesburg Town Board – Betsy Chase has spoken with Roger Tidball (DuanesburgTown Supervisor). He is going to ask Todd Edwards (Duanesburg and Princetown representative to Metroplex) to schedule a report from Metroplex. Metroplex just approved more than \$150,000 for the Duanesburg sewer project. We are waiting for additional feedback. It does not appear that they have previously been receiving the required presentations.

Rotterdam Town Board – Ray Gillen told Betsy Chase that he is scheduled to give his report to the Rotterdam Town Board on March 22nd.

Metroplex – Johanna Petersen spoke with Sharon Jordan (Metroplex Board Member) who mentioned that Ray Gillen gives an annual report to the County Legislature, usually in late February or March. The public is invited. Metroplex feels this is sufficient since the report is on the website.

Submitted by Betsy Chase, Observer Corps Coordinator

Shirley Readdean, the LWV congratulates you!

Our member Shirley Readdean was honored on January 19, 2017 by the Schenectady City Schools Education Foundation with the Distinguished Alumna Service Award. Shirley was educated in the city schools, graduating



from Nott Terrace High School, followed by a distinguished professional career. She has also been a volunteer in many community activities, serving as the first woman of color on the school board, including as its president. Her involvement with the United Methodist Church, the YWCA, Schenectady County Embraces Diversity (SCED) and many other organizations has earned her many distinguished awards, including the League’s Susan B. Anthony award. She is a great role model for us all!

Submitted by Helga Schroeder, Judicial Committee Chair.

“Democracy Is Not A Spectator Sport”

You've heard that before. Especially if you find fault with what is happening in government be it local, state or federal. Not everybody has to hold office---or even run for office to be a participant. There are plenty of ways to be active and to get involved.

*If you admire a candidate for office---actively support them. You can carry their petitions, campaign for them---go “door to door” with them---write endorsement letters to the Editor---financially support their campaigns.

*Become involved in the community---volunteer for a commission or board in which you have an interest, especially if you have expertise or special knowledge that would benefit the work of that body.

*Publicly support (or speak out against) issues that concern you and find allies to work with to see these issues resolved.

*The League of Women Voters offers you many opportunities to participate in the business of democracy. Join us in registering voters, volunteer to help us conduct a candidate forum, collect returns at a polling place on election night.

The main thing is look for ways to be involved and then get involved. Be a game player, not a spectator!

Help Wanted

The Schenectady County Board of Elections needs people to work at the polls on Primary and Election Days.

Poll workers are responsible for performing a variety of tasks including: signing in voters, directing voters to their correct polling place, assisting voters that may need help voting and documenting information on appropriate forms.

In order to serve as a poll worker you must be a registered voter, resident of Schenectady County and attend a two to three hour training session. Training sessions are scheduled at various times over the summer and fall. You can select the time that is most convenient for you. Day and night sessions are available.

You will be paid:

- \$30 for training
- \$160 for serving as a poll worker on an Election Day
- \$100 for serving as a poll worker on Primary Day

If interested in this position call 377-2469, or download the application form available on the Board of Election's web page.

Submitted by Kay Ackerman, Voter Services Chair

“League members must keep in mind that
THE LEAGUE SPEAKS WITH ONE VOICE.

It is the prerogative of a member to take no action or to take contrary action as an individual. Thus, as individuals, we all have the right to contact our public officials about matters of concern. What we learn from League sources can always be used to inform a person's individual action. “

LWVNYS

New Members

Joan Fucillo and her husband Robert joined the LWV after the recent presidential election. Joan is a writer (articles, speeches and technical material and editor for the New York State Bar Association. Her League interests include education, voter information and candidate forums.

Robert Millman is also employed by the New York State Bar Association doing post production work on continuing education videos. He made the 2006 film Voting Machines “Bought and Sold” which was used by the LWVNY to promote paper ballots in New York. His interests include gerrymandering, audio/video/film making, public presentations, carpentry and construction.

LeeAnn Veniger-Mandrillo and her family moved from New Jersey to Niskayuna four years ago. She is a Community Nutritionist and holds a graduate degree in Public Administration and Public Policy. Upon residing in New York, LeeAnn started LMC Solutions, a full service consulting firm. Her interests include civic engagement and public service. The recent presidential election elicited her to become more involved at the local level. LeeAnn is interested in all facets of the LWV activities. She would like to help us to recruit millennial and Gen X women.

Vicki Hosko retired in 2016 from the Schenectady County Office of the Aging where she was in charge of caregivers. She is a member of Capital District Caregivers Association and Alzheimer’s Association and currently works part time at the Open Door Bookstore.

Vicki’s other interests include membership in Blue Star Mothers, church activities and traveling. Her LWV interests include Health Care and Voter Registration.

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Women in Politics: Past, Present & Future

**A CONFERENCE COMMEMORATING
THE CENTENNIAL OF WOMEN'S
SUFFRAGE IN NEW YORK STATE**

Friday & Saturday, April 21 & 22, 2017

The League of Women Voters of NYS Education Foundation is pleased to announce its co-sponsorship on this educational conference to be held in Hyde Park, New York in April. League members are encouraged to attend for an exciting presentation and discussion of women in politics and women's history in NYS.

The Conference is being held on Friday, April 21, at the Wallace Center at the FDR Library in Hyde Park and on Saturday, April 22, at the Lecture Center at SUNY New Paltz. You can attend just one day, if you wish.

The League has arranged a luncheon and tour of Val-Kill, the home of Eleanor Roosevelt for League members and friends on Friday, April 21 preceding the conference. The cost of the luncheon is \$50 and includes the tour of Val-Kill.

For registration information:

www.lwvnys.org.

Carrie Chapman Catt

**"Action is agitating, organizing,
educating, pleading and persuading"**



NEW YORK archives Magazine Speaker Series



“Petticoats of Steel” Thursday, March 2, 2017 5:30 PM

Huxley Theater, Cultural Education Center 222 Madison Avenue Albany, NY 12230

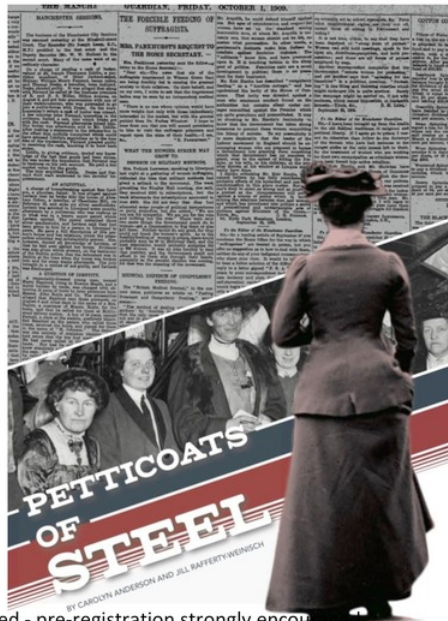
Celebrate the 100th anniversary of women’s right to vote in New York State with this powerful theater production. Experience the battles for women’s suffrage told in the voices of the brave warriors who fought them.

Petticoats of Steel uses primary sources to tell the true stories of New York women and the roles they played gaining voting rights for all.

15 minute post-show talk back with the Capital Repertory Theatre performers.

Regional Sponsors:

League of Women Voters of Albany, Schenectady, Rensselaer and Saratoga Counties



Event is FREE but seating is limited - pre-registration strongly encouraged online http://conta.cc/2k6ccRF or (518) 474-1303

MEMBERSHIP

Our League goals are to educate citizens about government and public policy, encourage citizen participation in elections, and influence public policy relating to issues we’ve studied. Dues money makes working on our goals possible. DUES for July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017 (half-year dues reduction available- contact Connie Young at 393-706.

Return to: LWV of Schenectady County, P.O. Box 9135, Schenectady, NY 12309

New or Renewing Members Please Confirm this Contact Information

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

_____ \$60 Individual _____ \$85 Household _____ \$20 Full-time student

_____ Additional support for the League, dues plus \$10 contribution (\$70 or \$95 – circle one)

(Confidential arrangements for special payment or partial assistance can be made. Contact Connie Young at 393-7061 with any questions. Dues and contributions are not tax deductible.)

_____ I am sending my membership dues payment, but please consider me an INACTIVE member.

ACTIVE MEMBERS: The League depends upon the work of its members, even for a short task. Please check any activities that interest you. We appreciate your help.

Committees Judicial _____ Health _____ Membership _____ Fundraising _____ Environment _____ Observer
Corps _____ Education _____ Voter Services Voter Registration _____ Candidate Forums _____ Voter
Information _____ Computer Skills Graphics/Layout _____ Databases _____ Website Work _____ Facebook
_____ Electronic Publicity _____ Other Technical Skill? (Describe) _____

**League of Women Voters
of Schenectady County**
P.O. BOX 9135
Schenectady, NY 12309

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Albany, NY

BULLETIN
10 issues per year

or Current Resident

Petticoats of Steel
Thursday, March 2, 2017 at 5:30 pm
Huxley Theater, Cultural Educ. Ctr.
222 Madison Ave. Albany, NY
Check p. 7 for details.

WOMEN IN POLITICS: PAST PRESENT & FUTURE
A CONFERENCE COMMEMORATING THE
CENTENNIAL OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE IN
NEW YORK STATE
Friday & Saturday, April 21 & 22, 2017
See page 6 for details.

8 Mission Statement: The League of Women
Voters is a non-partisan organization. We encourage the informed and active participation of
citizens in government. We work to increase the understanding of major public policy issues and
influence public policy through education and advocacy.