

# *INSIDE* the New York City League

League of Women Voters of the City of New York

45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, New York, NY 10016 ♦ Tel. (212) 725-3541 ♦ Fax (212) 725-3443

<http://www.lwvnyc.org> ♦ [lwvnyc@hotmail.com](mailto:lwvnyc@hotmail.com)

Winter 2006 - 07

## GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday December 6<sup>th</sup> 5:45 p.m.

At our office: 45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street (Between Madison and Park Avenues)

## WENDY R. WEISER

Deputy Director of the Democracy Program at the Brennan Center for Justice at  
NYU School of Law

will speak about  
***NEW BARRIERS TO VOTING***  
*(Are Photo IDs in Our Future?)*

Ms. Weiser will discuss the current status of statewide databases as required by HAVA. She will also update us on the latest news about New York's selection of voting machines.

### EXCERPTS FROM ADRIENNE KIVELSON'S TESTIMONY BEFORE THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK ON PROPOSED NEW VOTING SYSTEMS

...Until recently the sanctity of the vote was a given. People believed that election results as reported were accurate. Confidence in the electoral process is the foundation of democracy and to see that confidence shaken by the failures of new voting technology and charges of vote tampering and manipulation threatens the very future of our city, state and nation.

That's why decisions you make on which voting system we will use in New York City for years, and possibly decades, to come can either ensure the integrity of our electoral process or add to the cynicism and distrust of the electorate.

The League of Women Voters of the United States and the New York State League of Women Voters have adopted the following statement of position on criteria for voting systems. The Citizen's Right to Vote Resolution reads: "In order to ensure integrity and voter confidence in elections, the LWWUS supports the implementation of voting systems and procedures which are secure, accurate, recountable and accessible." Using these criteria to evaluate the choices available to New York State in complying with HAVA requirements, the League of Women Voters of New York State has endorsed precinct-based paper ballot optical scan voting with the addition of a ballot marker to provide accessibility...

11/21/2006

## ***FROM THE PRESIDENTS' DESK***

Election day 2006 has come and gone and brought some relief. Yes, people do care, do respond to threats to our democracy, and indeed the pendulum still swings, the voting systems work and, with persistent efforts on the part of individuals and groups such as the League of Women Voters, I feel encouraged to believe that reliability, verifiability and public confidence will yet be achieved. But remember, there is still much to accomplish. Our heartfelt thanks to members and friends who have been fighting the HAVA battles in New York City and State, led by Adrienne Kivelson and Mary Lou Urban. Keep up the great work.

Helping answer the TIS lines has a special reward -- you get to assist people in a very direct way. It also exposes one to the anxiety and near hysteria that some voters have been led to feel because of the abuses of recent years. Rebuilding voters' trust has just begun; so much needs to be accomplished technically, administratively, and when we select a new system through communications, training of poll workers and voters. We need to build on the increase of participation by younger voters. Let's think of ways we can convince them that, when you make voting a continuing responsibility in your life, it helps to prevent some of the "dirty tricks" and mischief that can weaken democracies. Much thanks to Donna Landay, our loyal TIS staff, and those who come to help out when the phones are "ringing off the hook".

Ellie Miller, Co-President

## ***Thank You !***

*There are many intangible ways in which members contribute to the vitality and effectiveness of the League of Women Voters of the City of New York—and they are all important. But tangible support is important too, and the response of members to our annual appeal for financial contributions has been very satisfying. We can all be proud of what our organization accomplishes, but we could not do it without your help.*

*Toni Coffee, co-president, on behalf of the Members of the Board*

### **League of Women Voters of the City of New York 2006-2008 Board of Directors**

#### **Co-Presidents:**

Toni Coffee Elinor Miller

#### **Officers**

First Vice President: Gladys Krasner  
Second Vice President: Laura Altschuler  
Third Vice President: Sheila Hosni  
Secretary: Georgia Guida  
Treasurer: Eileen McEvoy

#### **Board Members**

Miriam Adelman  
Robin Bahr  
Barbara Barr  
Beatrix Dinitz  
Helen Heller  
Adrienne Kivelson  
Donna Landay-Laden  
Mary Lou Urban  
Valerie Warner  
Rose Yalan

**Executive Director**  
**Inside Editor**

Alison Alpert  
Beatrix Dinitz

*On October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
 Selma Toback, a two-term president  
 of the League of Women Voters  
 of the City of New York passed away.  
 She was honored and loved by  
 both family and friends as  
 well as by her colleagues. We will miss her.*

**Welcome New NYC Members**  
**Local New Members since January 2006**

Janice Brown	LeCee G. Johnson
Violette Benjamin & Abda Buisson	Billie Jones
Maryann Caliri	Miriam Kartch
Christy Carey	Laurie Lauterbach
Kelly Ann Carrero	Mary Mastropaolo
Marcia Cavell	Jocelyne Mayas
Jane Colvin	Eileen Mullarkey
Meritta Cullinan	Day Piercy
Sandra Dann	Carolyn Prager
Curran Estreicher	S. Rafaj
Martin Feinberg	Eva Schulz
Hope Freeman	Nancy Schwartz
Janet Goldberg	Helen Sheldon
Joan Gordon	Cynthia Walsh
Frances Herms	Michele Williams
Colleen Johnson	Karen Zabinski

Many Thanks to Members of  
 South East Queens Branch

There it was - many checks, totaling over \$1,000.00 as a contribution to our League from the members and friends of the South East branch. The unexpected donations and the generosity were gratifying and encouraging. Many thanks to the members of this branch for coordinating such a successful outreach campaign.

**TRIBUTES**

**IN MEMORY OF**  
**SELMA TOBACK**

BY  
 LAURA ALTSCHULER  
 NICKY HELLER  
 GLADYS KRASNER  
 JOAN P. RUDY

**ELIZABETH SCHACK**

BY  
 CORNELIA MARWELL

**IN MEMORIAM**  
**AGNES R. ALLEN**

BY  
 WINIFRED A. RICHMAN

**IN SUPPORT OF THE NYC LEAGUE**

BY  
 MARY COX  
 WANDA YOUNG  
 VERONICA MITCHELL  
 BLONDELLE BURGESS  
 JOYCE JAMES

**IN HONOR OF**  
**PHYLLIS WELLS**  
*for a Speedy Recovery*

BY  
 ROSE AND HARVEY YALAN

## FINANCING EDUCATION CONSENSUS

### Financing Education Consensus

Our study of Financing Education continued this fall with two meetings on the subject of Charter Schools, chaired by Nicky Heller. At the first meeting, on October 18<sup>th</sup>, Ira Schwartz of the State Department of Education presented the subject to the large, enthusiastic audience with a delightful summary in rhyme (below) and then provided details of the Charter School program and the ways in which the schools are established, administered, and evaluated. Areas of uncertainty were clarified during the lengthy question period.

On the foundation of the first meeting and additional printed materials, and with the invaluable assistance of the study committee, members who attended the Consensus meeting on November 8<sup>th</sup> were able to reach overall agreement on matters related to Charter Schools, which may be the subject of state legislation in the coming session. The results of the lengthy, sometimes heated, discussion were approved by our own board and forwarded to the State League, which must determine whether there is statewide agreement on these complex issues.



October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2006 General Meeting  
*Financing Education: Charter Schools*

### An Ode to Charter Schools *Ira Schwartz*

Charter Schools are not about rules  
But about finding new tools  
To build good public schools  
In which no student will lose.

We want charter schools to succeed  
But first we must agree  
That they cannot charge a fee  
And must to all be free.

Charters may teach in new ways.  
They may have extended years or days.  
They can combine work and play.  
But in them children may not pray.

If a charter is very hot,  
And every mother wants every tot  
To be there on the dot  
Then admissions must be done by lot.

A charter application must be first read  
By SUNY or SED  
Or even a Board of Ed  
But not by the Feds.

When we talk about oversight  
The charter entity and local board have the right  
And the Regents also have the might  
To inspect a school day or night.

It's on the State tests  
That students must do best.  
But the school's goals and all the rest  
We also treat as not a jest.

At the end of five years  
There will be laughter and cheers  
And we hope few or no tears  
When decisions on renewals become clear.

The number of charters will grow  
Maybe fast or maybe slow.  
Will we sail to success or to woe?  
Surely for our children, to achievement we must go.

Now you may think it a crime  
To talk of charters using such poor rhyme  
But it could have been worse  
I could have sung this in verse.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All meetings take place at LWVNYC offices  
unless otherwise indicated

### December, 2006

Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup>, 5:45 p.m. GENERAL MEETING  
Wendy R. Weiser will speak on  
"New Barriers to Voting"

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. Meeting of City Affairs  
Committee

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>, 11:00-1:00 p.m. Meeting of Lobbying Corps

Monday 25<sup>th</sup> to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> Office closed for holidays

### January, 2007

Monday 1<sup>st</sup> Office closed, New Year's Day

Monday 15<sup>th</sup> Office closed, Martin Luther  
King, Jr. birthday observed

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. Meeting of City Affairs  
Committee

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>, 11:00-1:00 p.m. Meeting of Lobbying Corps

### February

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup>, 5:45 p.m. GENERAL MEETING  
"Lobbying Priorities  
& State Program Review"

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. Meeting of City Affairs  
Committee

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> Office closed, Presidents' Day

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11:00-1:00 p.m. Meeting of Lobbying Corps

### March

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup>, 10:00 a.m. Meeting of City Affairs  
Committee

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11:00-1:00 p.m. Meeting of Lobbying Corps

WOMEN'S HISTORY  
CELEBRATION (Details to follow)

## BRANCH MEETINGS

Members are welcome to attend any branch meeting;  
please call the contact person to confirm time and location

### Midwood (Brooklyn)

No meetings in January and February

### North Shore (Queens)

**Contact:** Marjorie Ferrigno (718) 461-5774  
for date, time, and place

### Bronx

**Contact:** LWVNYC office (212) 725-3541  
for date, time, and place

### Riverdale

**Contact:** LWVNYC office (212) 725-3541  
for date, time, and place

### Southeast Queens

**Contact:** Mary Cox (718) 341-3082 for location  
**Date/Time:** Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, February 17<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m.

### Upper West Manhattan

**Contact:** Sylvia Berman (212) 923-0800  
**Date/Time:** Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at noon

## NATIONAL IMMIGRATION STUDY

Immigration is a hot topic in our country. Easy solutions have not emerged, but solutions must be found. Maybe the League of Women Voters can help Congress and the Executive Branch in this effort; it would NOT be a first. Please consider joining this study which was voted into being at National Convention last June.

We welcome your emails or calls of interest, and let us know whether day or evening meetings would work for you.

## League Launches *HOW TO RUN FOR PUBLIC OFFICE* Course

We are busy preparing to teach our course *HOW TO RUN FOR PUBLIC OFFICE IN NEW YORK CITY* at three City University campuses.

During the Spring 2007 semester the CUNY campuses to host our course will be Borough of Manhattan Community College, LaGuardia Community College, and Kingsborough Community College. Two more CUNY campuses, Bronx Community College and The College of Staten Island, will host the course during the Fall 2007 semester.

If you would like to receive a brochure giving details on the course including the topics we will be covering, meeting dates, how to register, and fee/scholarship information, please call Alison at the League office: 212-725-3541. Or email your name and address to [office@lwvny.org](mailto:office@lwvny.org).



The Windows of *ABC Carpet and Home* displayed The League's Placards for weeks before Election Day

## UPDATE ON LOBBYING CORPS

**Redistricting, Campaign Finance/Ethics, and Equitable Funding for Public Education** are the issues that were chosen by the Lobbying Corps and approved by our board for recommendation to the State League for its legislative priorities for 2006-2007. On November 20<sup>th</sup>, after we made this decision, the NYS Court of Appeals ended the landmark legal fight over education financing that had been working its way through the courts for 13 years, ruling that at least \$1.93 billion more of state funds must be allocated to New York City's public schools. A lower court had called for a minimum of \$4.7 billion in state funds as the amount needed to give City children a chance for a sound basic education.

We have also written to Governor-elect Spitzer to urge him to address these issues as part of his program of reform. Our committee remains an active member of the Coalition for Reform of State Government and supports the Brennan Center in its ongoing efforts to democratize the legislative rules that will be adopted by the Senate and Assembly in January.

As we have for the past three years, the Corps will lobby for action on its recommendations with personal calls on elected representatives, letters, telephone calls, and participation in Lobby Day in the spring. With a new Governor who has championed reform, we believe this is the year for change and welcome new members to help in this crucial effort to bring accountability and responsibility to Albany. The Corps meets at the League office on the fourth Thursday of every month, from 11am to 1pm.

**Join us in our Community Board Study. Be a Community Board Reporter.**  
**Community Board Reporting Form**

Community Board Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Borough: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Community Board Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# of People Attending Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Appointed Board Members Present \_\_\_\_\_

# of Vacancies on Board \_\_\_\_\_

***Please write briefly about 2-3 issues that were discussed at this Community Board Meeting  
(Attach extra sheet if needed.)***

---

---

---

***What Committees reported at this meeting?***

---

---

***Please list any concerns:***

---

---

---

***Thank you for being a Community Board Reporter.***

***Please answer one more question for us and then mail this form to:***

***The League of Women Voters of the City of New York, 45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, NY, NY 10016.***

**RE: Community Board Study**

The purpose of the study is to better understand Community Board functions and assess the extent to which they are living up to their responsibilities as delineated in the New York City Charter. **We need your help to do this !!**

**Our Community Board study is in transition. We will have a new meeting time, and need broader participation across the boroughs. Call or email the office to indicate interest and your preference for day and time of committee meetings.** You can broaden the study just by attending a Community Board meeting (meetings are open to the public).

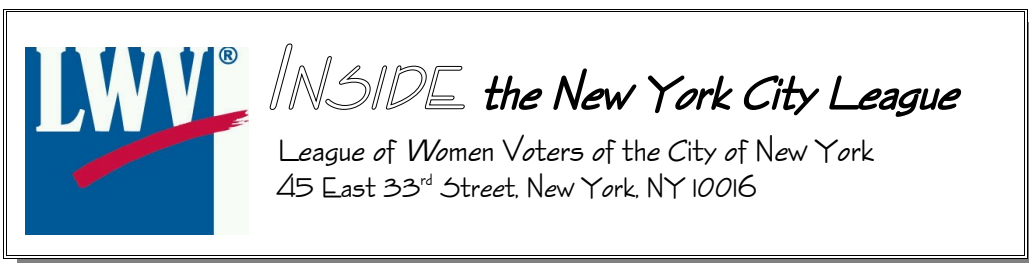
## FYI

- Board meetings are generally held on the second Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. Branch chairs are more than welcome to attend.
- The League office receives copies of a few newsletters of other Leagues in New York state. Anyone interested is invited to come to the office to read them.
- **HOLD THE DATE:** On Thursday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007 we will be visiting the birthplace of Theodore Roosevelt. Please plan on joining us – more information will follow.

### **ASSOCIATED PRESS REPORTING RESULTS**

We again received thanks from the Associated Press for participating in Election Day reporting.

Forty-three League members called in the results and the League office will reap the reward for their work. The next time we need reporters will be for the 2008 election. We hope that even more members will want to participate.



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
New York, NY  
Permit No. 6897