

# 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)

Spring 2007

## Women's History Month Celebration

"WOMEN WHO HAVE OPENED DOORS"

Co-hosted by

League of Women Voters and National Council of Jewish Women - NY Section

SPEAKER:

**Rosalind Rosenberg**

*Professor of History at Barnard College*



Dr. Rosenberg will focus on the opening of politics to women throughout the twentieth century, and will discuss the work of such women as Virginia Gildersleeve, who, in 1912 took the unorthodox position that women should be able to study politics; Molly Dewson, head of the Women's Committee of the Democratic Party in the 1930s; Harriet Rabb, a lawyer in a number of successful class action suits on behalf of female journalists in the 1970s; Ellen Malcolm, who created Emily's List in the 1980s; and Anita Hill, whose Senate testimony led directly to the Year of the Woman in 1992. Professor Rosenberg has written widely on the history of women and feminism and teaches popular courses in women's history at *Barnard*.

TIME:

Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 p. m.

LOCATION:

Offices of National Council of Jewish Women -- New York Section  
820 Second Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor (between 43<sup>rd</sup> & 44<sup>th</sup> St.)

No charge for members ✕ Non-members: \$5.00 per person  
Light refreshments will be served.

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Please make your reservation by **March 26, 2007**  
212-725-3541; (Fax) 212-725 3443; [lwvnyc@hotmail.com](mailto:lwvnyc@hotmail.com)  
or send to

**League of Women Voters of the City of New York**  
45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, Rm. #331, New York, NY 10016

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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

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Toni Coffee Elinor Miller

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*A Word from the Co-Presidents*

Dear Members,

What a year this has turned out to be! With our smash-hit course on "How to Run for Public Office," our unrelenting efforts to bring secure, recountable voting machines to New York City and State, and our new study of immigration, we are actively pursuing our mission, "to promote the active participation of informed citizens in government," along several paths. At the same we are working to insure the strength of our organization, with new approaches to attracting and retaining members, and an exciting plan for our annual Award Luncheon, our principal fundraising event.

Our 2007 Award Luncheon will be on Tuesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, at the Hotel Roosevelt, and will honor five Women of Distinction: Dr. Kathleen Foley of the Pain and Palliative Care Service at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, Department of Neurology; Dorchen Leidholdt, Director of the Center for Battered Women's Legal Services at Sanctuary for Families; Dr. Louise Mirrer, President & CEO of the New-York Historical Society; Alair Townsend, Vice President and Publishing Director of *Crain's New York*; and Kathleen Waldron, President of Baruch College. Lew Leone, Vice-President and General Manager of Fox5 & My9 Television Stations, is Honorary Chairman of the event. Rosanna Scotto, Anchor, Fox News, will present the awardees.

Tickets for the luncheon are available to League members @ \$150.00 and can be purchased through the League's website, [lvwnyc.org](http://lvwnyc.org). If you would like an invitation to be mailed to you, please call the League office at 212-725-3541. It would be wonderful to see many members at this sparkling event.

*Toni Coffee*

Dear Members and Friends,

Much of what keeps us volunteers so busy is striving to provide interesting program, service to voters, having an impact on issues we've studied and achieving fiscal health. One way or another, we are working for you. Now let me tell you what you can do for us. We need help from a few members—Here's our WANT AD!

**Wanted!** League members to volunteer up to one full or half day each week in the League office. The jobs all require common sense, good judgment, reliability and a sense of humor--especially as our office space is very limited. Job titles would be:

- Publication Manager
- List Manager
- Membership Mailings and follow-up
- Research and Communications

Typing and some computer skills will help, but are not always required.

We are proud of our publications and especially grateful to those who author them. As I write this, *They Represent You, 2007* is being prepared for the printer. Watch for yours in the mail some time late in March or April.

**Help** is needed to create/update a list of potential buyers and to reach more than our members and the government offices that we regularly supply.

*Ellie Miller*

# IMMIGRATION

Ellie Miller, Committee Member

Our national study of Immigration has begun and the first meeting was an energizing experience. Several fairly new members became acquainted by explaining why they care deeply about this complex subject. Each one's motivation was different and each was an expression of the complexity and importance of this issue for our country. National's Immigration Study Committee has prepared a scope of the study as follows:

- What are the underlying values and principles regarding immigration?
- What causes migration from other countries, which is to say what motivates refugees, asylees, and other immigrants to come?
- What are our current federal immigration policies and are they effective in uniting families, are they meeting the needs of business, are they enforceable and do they show concern for human rights?
- What are the economic effects of authorized and unauthorized immigration, on diversity and on the inclusion of immigrants in American society?

We have bibliographies, and "white" papers to digest. We hope more of you will join us in this, the first new National League study since 1992!! There will be a Committee Meeting each month and a May 1<sup>st</sup> General Meeting with a speaker to help guide us to and through the issues of greatest importance. Quite unexpectedly, the length of the study has just been abbreviated and the consensus process will begin in September 2007!!

## City Affairs Committee Explores the Availability of Affordable Housing

Adrienne Kivelson, Committee Chair

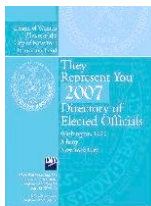
It was the consensus of the newly reconstituted City Affairs Committee to focus on housing this year. The League has very strong positions, at both the state and national levels, in support of increased state and federal funding of affordable and accessible housing for those low and moderate income families whose needs cannot be met through the market. Our plan is to determine how we can become effective advocates for these League positions in New York City. The committee is reviewing housing programs in the city, the needs and availability of rental housing for low income New Yorkers and the Mayor's plan to provide 68,000 units of affordable housing by 2008

Victor Bach, Senior Housing Analyst of the Community Service Society, spoke at our January meeting on the housing crisis for low income New Yorkers and the continuing loss of housing for those least able to afford market rents. At our March 8th meeting we will focus on the creation and preservation of rentals and home ownership opportunities for middle income New Yorkers.

Since City Affairs covers more than housing, we are monitoring other city issues, such as campaign finance and HAVA implementation and acting on them when appropriate.

All League members are encouraged to attend a meeting and join our committee. Our next meeting is on **Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m.** The speaker is **Kim Hardy**, Deputy Commissioner for Community Partnerships, NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) She will be speaking about the Mayor's Housing Plans.

### HOT OFF THE PRESS



*THEY REPRESENT YOU, 2007* has contact information on all elected officials representing New York on the national, state and city levels. Also included are: Useful websites \* Election dates and information \* Addresses of the 59 Community Boards \* Articles on How a Bill Becomes a Law, Choosing the President and the Department of Education.

*Each member will receive a free copy. If you wish to have an additional copy or want to send one as a gift--the price is still only \$8.00 plus tax, and shipping and handling.--please send your check, to the League office (45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, NY, NY 10016) or charge it on our website (<http://www.lwvnyc.org/publications.html>).*

## CALENDAR of EVENTS

DATES TO KEEP IN MIND

### March\*

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 a.m.

#### City Affairs Committee Meeting

Kim Hardy will speak about the Mayor's Housing Plans.

Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11:00 a.m.

#### Lobbying Corps Committee Meeting

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup>

#### WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Joint meeting at the offices of the National Council of Jewish Women. Speaker: Rosalind Rosenberg of Barnard College and Columbia University. (see p.1)

\* In the event of inclement weather, call the office to confirm dates.

### April

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 a.m.

#### City Affairs Committee Meeting

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a.m.

#### Lobbying Corps Committee Meeting

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup>, noon to 2:00

#### AWARD LUNCHEON

at the Roosevelt Hotel (see p. 5)

### May

Tuesday 1st

#### GENERAL MEETING

on IMMIGRATION (speaker to be announced)

Thursday 10<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 a. m.

#### City Affairs Committee Meeting

Friday 18<sup>th</sup>-- Sunday 20<sup>th</sup>

#### LWVNY'S CONVENTION

in White Plains, NY at the Crowne Plaza (See p. 6)

Friday 18<sup>th</sup>, 10:45 a. m.

Visit to Fraunces Tavern Museum (includes tour)

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 a. m.

#### Lobbying Corps Committee Meeting

### June

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 a. m.—2:30 p. m.

#### ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup>, 10:45 a.m.

Guided tour of Theodore Roosevelt's Birthplace

## BRANCH MEETINGS

(members are welcome to attend any branch meeting;  
please call the League office to confirm time and location)

### Midwood (Brooklyn)

Contact: Rose Yalan  
Judith Rosenblatt

Date/Time: Thursdays at 1:00 p.m.  
March 22<sup>nd</sup>, April 26<sup>th</sup>

### North Shore (Queens)

Contact: Marjorie Ferrigno

Date/Time: Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.  
April 18<sup>th</sup>, May 16<sup>th</sup>, June 13<sup>th</sup>

### Bronx

Contact: Fannie Conner:

Date/Time: Tuesdays from 1:00-3:00 p.m.  
March 13<sup>th</sup>, April 17<sup>th</sup>, May 8<sup>th</sup>

Place: 4101 White Plains Rd. (East 229<sup>th</sup> St)

### Riverdale

Contact: LWVNYC office (212) 725-3541

### Southeast Queens

Contact: Mary Cox

Date/Time: Meetings are generally the third Saturday  
of the month at 2 p.m.

### Upper West Manhattan

Contact: Sylvia Berman

Date/Time: April 24<sup>th</sup>—Award Luncheon  
Tuesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> at 12 Noon  
June Luncheon - please call for date/time

## 2007 ANNUAL MEETING

### Save the Date

Saturday, June 9, 2007

9:30 a. m. - 2:30 p. m.

45 East 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, 1<sup>st</sup> floor

**The formal announcement will  
be sent to you soon.**

*Only current, paid-up members  
may participate and vote in the  
Annual Meeting.*

In order to assist you in determining  
your membership status, the address  
label on this mailing includes the date  
on which your current membership  
expires. If no date is given, your  
membership has expired and this is  
your last *INSIDE*.

TUESDAY, APRIL 24<sup>TH</sup>, 2007

## AWARD LUNCHEON

### Honors Women of Distinction

**Dr. Kathleen Foley**

Attending Neurologist

*Pain and Palliative Care Service, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center*

**Dorchen Leidholdt**

Director, Center for Battered Women's Legal Services

*Sanctuary for Families*

**Dr. Louise Mirrer**

President & CEO

*The New-York Historical Society*

**Alair Townsend**

Vice President & Publishing Director

*Crain's New York Business*

**Kathleen Waldron**

President

*Baruch College*

*Presented by*

**ROSANNA SCOTTO**

*Anchor, Fox5 News*

### Event Chairman

**LEW LEONE**

*Vice President and General Manager*

*Fox5 & My9*

TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2007  
12 NOON - 2 PM

TERRACE ROOM  
THE ROOSEVELT HOTEL  
MADISON AVENUE & 45<sup>TH</sup> STREET

✂ ----- Print and send to: LWVNYC 45 E 33<sup>rd</sup> Street, New York, NY 10016 -----

Tickets: \$150.00/member \$250.00/non-member

**Please make check payable to: LWVNYC Education Fund**

Any amount over \$90.00 per ticket is tax-deductible

NAMES(S): \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ # ATTENDING: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information call the League office: 212-725-3541

## CAMPAIGN FOR OPTICAL SCANNERS GAINS MOMENTUM

Mary Lou Urban

With ever increasing problems with Direct Recording Electronic (DRE) voting systems reported across the country and mounting delays in testing and certifying new voting machines for New York State, more civic organizations and elected officials are joining the League in advocating for optical scan voting.

This month the League, along with the Brennan Center, NYPIRG and New Yorkers for Verified Voting called upon Governor Spitzer to endorse a single unified system statewide of paper ballot, precinct-based optical scanners with accessible ballot markers.

And now we have bills in the Assembly (A05170) and Senate (S1648) to mandate the State Board of Elections to adopt this system, purchase the equipment through a competitive bidding process and provide the voting equipment to the counties. **We urge our members to contact their State Legislators and ask them to join as multi-sponsors of these bills in their respective houses.**

At this point it is virtually impossible for us to have new voting machines in place for the 2007 elections, as required by both a court order obtained by the U.S. Department of Justice and New York State Law. Meetings are taking place between the State and City Boards of Election, the Justice Department and the State Legislature to postpone these deadlines to 2009.

Introducing new machines in 2008 is really not practical. Time is short for production, quality control, training and public education. Additionally, it is a Presidential Election year with two primaries, a general election and larger turnouts than in any other year.

So we're all hoping that the parties will agree to a 2009 date for putting a new voting system in operation. Even though there will be a Citywide Election that year, we believe that the two-year lead time will provide ample opportunity to identify and purchase a secure, accessible, reliable and affordable voting system, train workers and educate voters. The system that best meets these requirements is optical scan voting with the addition of ballot marking devices.

If you are interested in being part of the voting process, the Board of Elections is looking to upgrade the quality of poll workers. Training sessions will be a full day instead of three hours--one hour will be spent on sensitivity training.

If you would like to join us in our efforts, call the League office and leave a message for me. I will let you know when a demonstration, press conference or hearing is being held, the greater our numbers the stronger the effect we will have.

### TRIBUTES

#### IN MEMORY OF:

**ROSE YALAN'S BROTHER SIDNEY**

BY

MARILYN & LEN KLANIT

DAISY K. REINER

JUDITH B. ROSENBLATT

**SELMA TOBACK**

BY

JOAN C. KOVEN

**ANN REISS**

BY

THE UPPER WEST MANHATTAN BRANCH

**MARY WESLAN**

BY

MARY LOU URBAN

### **Convention of the League of Women Voters of New York State**

This year the State Convention will be held in White Plains, NY at the Crowne Plaza from Friday May 18<sup>th</sup> to Sunday May 20<sup>th</sup>.

The theme will be "*Reaching Out/Reaching In.*" This is a unique opportunity for our city members to attend a State Convention so close to home. Would you like to be a delegate from New York City, or are you interested in serving as a volunteer at one of the registration tables? Call the League office (212-725-3541) for more information.

# *League Courses Have Begun*

**Gladys Krasner**  
Board Chair

The weather was very cold outside on Tuesday evening, February 6<sup>th</sup> but warm and stimulating inside the Borough of Manhattan Community College where former Manhattan borough president . C. Virginia Fields opened the first class in the League's six-session course, "How to Run for Public Office in New York City."

Ms. Fields displayed a passion for teaching. Her topic was "How to Be a Candidate". The 22 students represented the diversity of our city plus a mix of political novices, community activists, Community Board members, and campaign workers.

The following is a list of the topics and faculty:

**Session I: What Makes a Candidate**

**C. Virginia Fields**

*Former Manhattan Borough President*

**Session II: Election Law**

**Jerome A. Koenig**

*Former Chief of Staff*

*New York State Assembly Election Law Committee*

**Session III: Campaign Management & Fundraising**

**Jay H. Townsend**

*President*

*The Townsend Group*

**Amy M. Loprest**

*Executive Director*

*New York City Campaign Finance Board*

**Session IV: Developing Positions & Endorsements**

**Douglas Muzzio**

*Professor, Public Policy*

*Baruch College of the City University of New York*

**Session V: Debate Techniques**

**Laura C. Altschuler**

*Special Projects Director and Member Board of Directors,*

*The League of Women Voters of the City of New York*

**Rick Jungers**

*Director of Community Outreach and Media*

*Manhattan Neighborhood Network*

**Session VI: Build your Base & Get out the Vote**

**Adrienne Kivelson**

*Elections Specialist and Member Board of Directors,*

*The League of Women Voters of the City of New York*

On Wednesday March 6<sup>th</sup> the LaGuardia Community College, Queens, will host the next series of seminars; and Kingsborough Community College, Brooklyn, will host the seminars on two consecutive Saturdays in May--May 5<sup>th</sup> and May 12<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

THE ENTIRE SERIES HAS BEEN FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM THE NEW YORK COMMUNITY TRUST.

***EQUITY IN SCHOOL FINANCING:***

***UPDATE ON THE CONSENSUS***

The League supports transitional aid to school districts for Charters Schools but opposes an increase until professional evaluation of Charters has been undertaken to measure their effectiveness as an alternative or addition to public schools. The League opposes lifting the cap of the number of Charter Schools. To read the full consensus report, go to <http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy.html>. The State consensus on Charter Schools agrees with the views of our members in almost every respect. The State League decided that because there was not enough interest in a study of gambling as a source of funding, that study will not be done.

## *Lobbying Corps* **Robin Bahr**

The good news for the League and all members of the Coalition for Reform of State Government is that Governor Spitzer is “making good” on his campaign pledges. In his State of the State, Governor Spitzer addressed the need to reform Campaign Finance, Ethics, Redistricting and Equitable Funding of Public Education, among other things. These are the 4 issues which our League has selected as its legislative priorities.

The state League has added other critical issues to its legislative agenda but the NYC Lobbying Corps has elected to concentrate its advocacy on 4 priorities for the present time, in order not to dilute its efforts or voice.

The committee has prepared briefings on each of these issues which are available in the office. The short version is as follows:

### **School Funding.**

- The League supports the increase in state aid to schools by \$7 Billion over four years and the restructuring of the old formula for distribution of aid within the state, as outlined in the Governor’s Budget.
- The League opposes an increase in Charter Schools until professional research on Charters has established criteria for success. The League supports transitional aid to limit the negative impact of Charters upon district schools.

### **Campaign Finance**

- The League supports lowering the contribution limits of individuals to candidates (the highest in the country) and a move toward full public financing of campaigns.

### **Redistricting**

- The League supports the creation of an Independent Redistricting Commission to draw district lines, preferably by constitutional amendment.

### **Ethics**

- The League supports curbs on the infusion of money by special interests into political campaigns and the extension of the one year prohibition to legislators and political party officials to become lobbyists.

The League remains an active member of the Coalition for Reform and will participate in the annual Lobby Day in Albany, tentatively scheduled for Monday, April 23. We will keep you informed as details of the trip are finalized. We will once again contact elected officials from New York City to engage their support for League positions by way of mailings and personal calls. We hope you become part of this effort. Those of us who have long despaired of the “dysfunction in Albany” must remain vocal and active in the cause of reform.

If you are interested in participating in Lobby Day, personal calls to the local office of New York City state elected officials and/or in writing our positions to New York City legislators, please call Robin Bahr at 212 595 0755.