



Mid-Hudson Region *Commentator* April, 2008

Jean McGarry, President
Betty Chin, Membership
Lee Ridgway, Newsletter

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

The LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region covers the Mid-Ulster County area and the Dutchess County area. We belong to the LWV of New York State and the LWV of the US.

CALENDAR

APRIL

- | | | |
|-----------|--------------|---|
| 1 | 7:15 to 9:15 | Board meeting at Jacki's |
| 26 | 10:00 to 12 | Panel discussion with community leaders on the future of the Golden Hill Health Care Facility. Meeting to be held in the Kingston City Hall Council Chambers from 10 AM until noon. |
| 29 | 7:15 to 9:15 | Board meeting at Jacki's |

MAY

- | | | |
|-----------|--------------|--|
| 3 | All day | Women's Health Expo, Tech City |
| 13 | 6:00 to 8:30 | Annual members' meeting and potluck at Unitarian Universalist Church on Sawkill Road, Kingston |

JUNE

- | | | |
|----------|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| 3 | 7:15 to 9:15 | Board meeting, place to be announced |
| 8 | 1:00 to 4 PM | Luncheon at Wiltwyck Country Club |

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region does not support or oppose candidates for public office but does encourage its members as individuals to participate actively in the political process. The League acts on those issues the membership chooses for study and action

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**Remember Susan B. Anthony Honorees Luncheon June 8th, 1 P.M. -- At
The Wiltwyck Golf Club -- Reservation to our Treasurer Now!**

Prez Sez...

Greetings,

Our annual meeting is fast approaching and I hope you are all marking your calendars to attend on May 13th. One item on the agenda for that meeting will be voting on the new League Board for the new fiscal year. As you review the slate, you will certainly notice a different look. There is now only one vice-president, rather than three and there are no specific coordinators for different committees. All members of the board except those of the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary will simply be referred to as Directors.

At this point, you may be musing, "that's interesting but how do you expect to get anything accomplished, especially the huge job of Voters Service?" Voters Service is a huge job and that is one good reason why we had to reorganize our board. Given the demands on everyone's schedule, we had to have a more "user-friendly" method of getting business done and this required greater flexibility. I liken it to job-sharing or flex-time that is offered in the work place to accommodate the needs of workers. Encouraging members to be involved in an array of tasks that suit their strengths and interests allows for more creativity and greater sharing of the workload.

So back to the question, how do we accomplish what needs to be done? Presently a list of all duties from all standing committees is being compiled and this will be the basis for assignments when the Board meets in June at its annual organizational meeting. As we transition into our new system, we will continue to refine and implement.

Change. Transition. These seem to be the buzzwords today, not only in our

league but most certainly in Ulster County. Learn more. Get informed, all while you eat delicious food. See you May 13th.

Jean

Election Slate

President term of service 2008-2010

Jean McGarry

Vice-President term 2007-2009:

Jacki Moriarty

Secretary term 2008-2009

Emilie Hauser

Treasurer term 2008-2010

Dare Thompson

At-large directors

Renee Sachs term 2008-2009

Cindy Bell term 2008-2010

Margaret Sellers term 2008-2010

Esther Stickley term 2008-2010

Christine Henning 2008-2010

Irene McInnis 2008-2010

Nominating Committee:

Karen Goetzel

Jill Hudler

Susan Hirsch

Directors continuing 2008-2009

Betty Chin

Lee Ridgway

PROPOSED 2008-2009 BUDGET

<i>Proposed Income 2008-2009</i>		<i>2007-2008 Budgeted Income</i>
Dues	5350.	5125.
Interest	150.	110.
Contributions	2000.	3200.
Fund Raising	2000.	2000.
Ads	1500.	3600.
Voter Service	700.	645.
From Ed. Fund	1000.	
TOTAL	12700.	14680.

<i>Projected Expenses 2008-9</i>		<i>2007-8 Budgeted Expenses</i>
Operations	900.	1530.
Phone/Web	600.	600.
Org. Activity	500.	500.
Educ. Activity	1880.	2100.
Public Programs	220.	220.
Delegates	400.	400.
Commentator	2000.	1815.
Mailing	800.	800.
PMP LWVNYS	1900.	1845.
PMP LWVUS	2745.	3000.
Fund Raising	500.	2125.
TOTAL	12700.	14680.

CURRENT ASSETS	
Education Fund	1190.
Checking Acc't	964.68
Savings Acc't	17603.99

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March was Women's History Month

The International Women's Day (March 9), started in 1909 and is celebrated around the world. In the U.S it was first observed as National Women's History Week in 1981 to coincide with International Women's Day and expanded in 1987 with a proclamation issued annually by the president.

The Charter of the UN signed in 1945 was the first international agreement to proclaim gender equality as a fundamental human right.

Few causes promoted by the UN have generated more intense and widespread support than the campaign to promote and protect the equal rights of women.

In the Hudson Valley there are many women of note. These are some of them:

Sojourner Truth: born Isabella Baumfree in Hurley, New York 1797, she changed her names to that which she is best known as; freed in 1827, she spent her life giving voice to the rights of blacks and women.

Renee C. Byer-Pulitzer Prize for Feature Photography in Journalism, 2007; works for the

Sacramento Bee (CA); graduated from UCCC, 1978 and from Bradley University in 1980

Clara Lou Gould-first women mayor of Beacon, N.Y. Jan. 1, 1990-Dec. 31,2007.

Joan Town-member of the faculty of Bard College since 1972; Winner of 3 Grammy Awards for 2008: Classical Music Album, Made in America, as well as the award for the Classical Contemporary Composition and the Orchestral Performance (Nashville Symphony- Leonard Slotkin, conducting).

Marjorie Rovereto-first woman named President and CEO of Ulster Savings Bank, 8-28-06

Lucille Pattison-first woman elected County Executive in Dutchess County and NYS, serving from 1979-1991.

Marie Anderson-first woman principal of Kingston High School, appointed 8/2000

Alice Tipp-first acknowledged woman elected to the Ulster County Legislature and longest serving legislator, man or woman of the same body: 1976-2006

Joan Isgro-1982-first woman chairman of the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce of Ulster County.

Alice Chandler-first, and only woman president, SUNY, New Paltz and longest serving, president-1980-1996.

Karen Peters-first woman elected as judge in the Third Judicial District in 1993 and is still serving.

Carol Crews-first lay woman chairman of the Board of Directors of the Benedictine Hospital, January, 2003-December 31,2004.

Laura Fliegner-first woman district superintendent of Ulster BOCES, and the first woman to hold that position in New York State: March, 1987-February, 1995.

Nationally, there are many women who have contributed to the advancement of women and society in general.

Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Carrie Chapman Catt. Each of these women devoted her life to advancing the cause of women's rights. Only Catt, who founded the US League of Women Voters in 1920, lived to see the passage of the 19th amendment to the US Constitution granting women the right to vote. In NYS February 15 has been designated Susan B. Anthony Day.

1775 **Mary Katherine Goddard-**first

woman post master in America (Baltimore)
1865 Mary Walker served as a surgeon during the Civil War; first and only woman to receive US Congressional Medal of Honor presented by President Andrew Johnson

1885 **Susanne Medora Salter** first woman elected mayor of an American town, Argonia, Kansas

1916 **Jeannette Rankin** (Montana) first woman elected to the US House of Representatives.

1933 **Francis Perkins** first women appointed to the president's Cabinet, Secretary of Labor, appointed by FDR

1934 **Florence Allen** first woman federal appeals court judge

1939 **Jane Bolin** first black woman judge in US and first black woman to graduate from Yale Law School

1960 **Oveta Culp Hobby** first woman Secretary of HEW, first director of Woman's Army Auxiliary and first woman recipient of US Army Distinguished Service Medal

1964 **Margaret Chase Smith** (Maine) first woman nominated for US president by a major political party-Republican National Convention in San Francisco

1965 **Patsy Takemoto Mink** (Hawaii) first Asian-American woman elected to Congress serving 24 years

1966 **Constance Baker Motley** first black woman appointed to the federal bench serving 24 years

1969 **Shirley Chisholm** (NY) first black woman elected to Congress, serving 14 years

1970-71 **Anna Mae Hays** first woman general-nurses; Elizabeth Hosiugton, first woman General in US Armed Forces (WACS), Jeanne Hoim first woman general in US Air Force 1974 Ella T. Grasso first women elected, in her own right, governor of a state (Conn.) 1981 Sandra Day O'Connor first woman appointed to the US Supreme

Court (by President Ronald Reagan)

Jeane **Kirkpatrick** first woman ambassador to the United Nations

1984 **Geraldine Ferraro** first woman nominated by major political party to run for vice-president (Democratic)

1989 **Ilena Ros-Lehtainen** (Fla.) first Hispanic woman elected to Congress

1990 **Dr. Antonio Novello** first woman and first Hispanic to be sworn in as US Surgeon-(General

1991 **Sharon Pratt Dixon** first black woman to serve as mayor of a major city (Washington D.C.)

1992 **Carol Mosely Braun** first black woman elected to the US Senate, served until 1998

1993 **Janet Reno** first woman appointed US Attorney General in president's cabinet

1997 **Madeline Albright** first woman appointed to become Secretary of State

1998 **Lt. Kendra Williams**, USN first US female pilot to bomb enemy target (operation Desert Fox in Iraq

2005 **Condoleezza Rice** first black woman appointed Secretary of State

2007 **Nancy Pelosi** (CA) first woman Speaker of US House of Representatives.

Sources of Information: Material from National Women's Hall of Fame; National Women's History Project www.nwhp.org Famous First www.infoplease.com/spot/womensfirst.html. America's Women by Gail Collins published 2004; The World Almanac 2008 ed.; Leading Ladies by Kay Bailey Hutchison published 2007; Women's History in America <http://www.wic.org/mixc/history.htm>

Lee Cane

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Charter Transition

This address was given to the Ulster County Legislature on March 12, 2008.

We, the League of Women Voters, as part of the most trusted political organization in America, are making our thoughts known to you concerning the charter transition and your role in it.

The LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region fully supported and campaigned for the Charter referendum in 2006. This is because we passionately believe that the form of government which offers a balance of power, through checks and balances between the Executive and Legislative branches, is historically most efficient and democratic. We commend the 2006 Legislature again for having the foresight to pass the enabling legislation for the charter.

We also believe that the transition to this new form of government, which **must** be completed by January 1, 2009, is critical to its success. 2009 is less than ten months away and we **have** to be ready. Your bipartisan Charter Transition Team, headed by Gary Bischoff, and the County Attorney's Office team led by Bea Havranek, have devoted countless hours to producing a well-researched and comprehensive Administrative Code. In order to assist you in absorbing the voluminous information it contains, your Transition Team is offering informational prep sessions. We trust that you will **all** take advantage of this useful resource.

The LWV will do everything

On our power to support the 2008 Legislature during this transitional period, and also to keep the county residents informed as to the progress being made. We are planning a series of town meetings for the public in several

locations around the county. They will explain the various changes and challenges which are occurring during this transition and beyond. We will also be sponsoring candidates' events where those who aspire to be the first Ulster County Executive as well as the first Comptroller may express their views. Election Day is November 4th 2008, less than eight months away! We intend to ask legislators to participate in their own districts at the town meetings to explain the Charter and the Administrative Code so that their constituents will be informed. We trust that we can count on you.

Thank you very much for your time and we appreciate any suggestions you may have for us.

Students Inside Albany

Every year, the State League hosts a number of high school students chosen by the local Leagues for a weekend in Albany, visiting the Legislature, meeting Legislators and learning about the workings of the state government. This year our local league is sending two students from Kingston High School, Emily Dubord and Arianna Braden. They are both seniors studying Civics. We hope they find the weekend as rewarding as students in the past have done.

History of Golden Hill

The mission of the Golden Hill Health Care Center is "to care for the poor and indigent elderly county residents regardless of ability to pay." The 1963 Handbook of Ulster County written and compiled by the LWVs of Kingston, New Paltz and Woodstock notes the existence of the Kingston Infirmary (96 beds), the New Paltz Infirmary (26 beds), and the County Home (65 beds). In 1963 the total budget for the three institutions was \$468,841. The Kingston Infirmary was located at 300 Flatbush Avenue, and the New Paltz Infirmary and County home were on Libertyville Road, New Paltz, now the site of the Ulster County Fairground. These facilities were administered by the County Department of Public Welfare. Residents were expected to pay if financially able.

Prior to the enactment of Social Security, many people were in straitened circumstances and were financially unable to maintain themselves. They became dependent on local governments for support. Almshouses or poorhouses were erected as a place for the homeless indigents to live. The Social Security Act at least partially alleviated this situation.

Previous to 1954, the Almshouse on Flatbush Avenue, Kingston, was sold to Ulster County for \$1.00. After renovation, a 95 bed, 3-story facility was equipped and opened for \$300,000, and the first patient was admitted in November, 1954. In 1968, NYS condemned the building's third floor and 17 patients had to be relocated, reducing the capacity to 78.

The old Tuberculosis Hospital on Golden Hill became obsolete because of the development of effective TB medication and it became known as the Infirmary Annex.

As longevity in the general population increased so did the need for additional nursing home beds. The County Infirmary could not cope with the growing numbers of patients and many residents had to be placed in facilities in Connecticut and Massachusetts. This created hardships for patients' families and friends, some of whom were unable to visit at such great distances.

In 1969 the Ulster County Legislature authorized construction of a new infirmary at a cost of \$4.7 million. On November 24, 1972 patients from the Flatbush Avenue facility and the Annex were moved to the new 200 bed infirmary on Golden Hill. The Infirmary Annex (old TB Hospital) opened as a new concept in health care: a "health-related facility." Here 52 resident patients were cared for by nurses aides.

The County Home in New Paltz was razed and is part of the fairgrounds. The Flatbush Avenue facility now houses the Public Health Department and other county offices.

A change in state regulations deemed the Health Related facility inadequate in size and structure. The Legislature allocated \$2.5 million for a new structure to be built adjoining the new infirmary and in 1981 a new 80 bed unit was opened. Federal regulations have now eliminated the designation "health-related." The current Golden Hill Health Care Center (the name was officially changed in 1988) has a capacity of 280 skilled-nursing beds. It has always maintained a waiting list.

Since the official opening in 1972, Golden Hill had served 8,701 individuals as of mid-January 2008. This number does not reflect patients who may have had multiple admissions to receive short term rehabilitation care.

I wish to thank the Administrator, Ms.

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Sherree Cross and the Coordinator of Admissions, Ms. Deborah Sinsabaugh for their assistance in giving me access to their historic documents and a tour of the facility.

--- Renee Sachs

Membership

Welcome to our returning member, **Phyllis Huntley**, who lives in Cairo, NY.

Best wishes to **Shirley Kobran**, recovering from a nasty cold/flu infection. She reminds us that we must take care of our environment.

Observer Corps

Members have been being observers this month and we thank them for doing so. Next month we'll print reports from Lee Cane, Tom Kadgen, Cindy Bell and others.

Protect Our Environment

New York State Energy and Research Development Agency (NYSERDA) has published the following ideas.

DO:

- Bring reusable bags when you shop
- Find out about recycling in your area
- Turn off and unplug appliances when they're not in use
- Avoid using heat or A/C when possible
- Clean with eco-friendly products
- Use energy-saving light bulbs

-Carpool

DON'T:

- Take long showers
- Leave water running while brushing your teeth
- Run washing machine or dryer for small loads
- Litter
- Throw out items that can be recycled or donated
- Forget to set a good example
- Forget to spread the word

Earth Day is coming soon! Do your bit for our planet.

**Susan B. Anthony Honorees
Luncheon**

Wiltwyck Golf Club, June 8, 1 PM, \$40

Buffet includes:

Mixed green salad, rolls and butter

Chicken Piccata, Salmon

Penne ala Vodka, Mixed Rice Pilaf

Fresh mixed vegetables

Red, white and blue dessert

Soft drinks, tea, coffee

Come One, Come All to hear

Peter Schickele, Martha Kennedy