



League of Women Voters of Albany County

April 2011

Educate

Participate

Advocate

Want to learn more about the Environmental Protection Fund?



Find out what it is?

What it is supposed to do?

How it is funded?

Why it is at risk?

Learn of Capital District projects funded by EPF.

Come to our April program jointly presented by the League of Women Voters of Albany County and the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy

Monday, April 11, 2011

St. Stephens Church, 16 Elsmere Avenue, Delmar, New York

5:30 - 6:30 Supper Salads

6:30 - 8:00 Presentation and discussion on NYS's

Environmental Protection Fund

In honor of Earth Day we are going GREEN.

Please bring a supper salad to share and your own plate and utensils.

The Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) has provided more than \$1 billion since 1993 to support critical programs that protect our area's natural heritage, public health, and local industries such as tourism and agriculture. Our local economy and good quality jobs have been enhanced and supported thanks to the EPF, which has pumped **more than \$38 million into our local economy**. Come learn more about what the EPF is, what it is supposed to do, how it is funded, why it is at risk and what projects in our area are funded by the EPF.

Speakers:

Jessica Ottney Mahar, Director of State Government Relations for The Nature Conservancy, and **Carol Ash** of the Open Space Institute's Alliance for New York State Parks, formerly Commissioner of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation

They will talk about the EPF and its impact on projects, parks and trails in the Capital District.

League of Women Voters of Albany County

Website: www.lwvalbany.org Email: lwvac@lwvalbany.org

Mary Berry, President

Monica Sharp (475-9736) and Margaret Danes (438-7218), Membership Co-Chairs

Laura Ladd Bierman, Newsletter Editor



From the President

During this month, in recognition of Earth Day on April 22, we are focusing on environmental issues. This year's theme for Earth Day is "A Billion Acts of Green." At our program on April 11, we will learn about the Environmental Protection Fund. The EPF provides a dedicated fund for environmental protection, including open space conservation, land acquisition, public access, historic preservation, park development, urban waterfront redevelopment, and water quality improvement projects and activities. We are fortunate to have as our guest speakers Jessica Mahar of the Nature Conservancy and Carol Ash of the Open Space Institute.

This month is also the time to renew your league membership. You should have received your renewal form in the mail. If not, please use the tear off in this bulletin. You will note on the renewal form, we ask that you please make sure your name, mailing address and phone number and your email address are accurate. We don't want to lose you! We will use this information when our membership directory is printed. I urge you to included your email address as we are trying to become more "green" as an organization. We are improving our use of electronic methods of communication. We are moving closer to becoming paperless although we are not there yet. In doing so, we save trees, space in the landfill, and money for printing and postage as well as hours performing those tasks. And sending email is quicker, too! Please let me know if you do not have email and we will continue to send those members paper copies.

Coming up in May is the State League Convention which is held every other year. This year it will be held at the Desmond Hotel in Albany from May 20-22. We are the host League and I know many of you have volunteered to work at convention. Thank you for giving your time. It is a great opportunity to learn about the League, learn about issues and make new friends from Leagues across the state.

Lastly, we will be holding our annual business meeting on June 15 at Wolfert's Roost. Please save the date. As I write this, it isn't quite Spring yet, but it is just around the corner. The snow is finally melting, the grass is turning green, and we are energized by the change in seasons. Please come to our league events, bring your energy and get involved and think about reducing carbon emissions and supporting sustainability.

Yours in league,
Mary

CONDOLENCES

We express our sympathy to our league members and their families upon the deaths of:



Julius Feinstein, died March 3, 2011, husband of Bea Feinstein, who was a long time member of the LWVAC before retiring to Florida. If you would like to send a card to Bea, her address is 305 Durham 1, Deerfield Beach, Florida 33442.

John "Jake" Oakley died March 7, 2011, husband of Geraldine "Gerry" Oakley, a long time member of LWVAC. Gerry was very active in the Financing Education study in the 80's. If you would like to send Gerry a card, her address is: 57 Hawthorne Avenue, Albany, New York 12203.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan citizen organization that promotes the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Any person of voting age, male or female, may become a League member.

This newsletter is published by the League of Women Voters of Albany County, PO Box 611, Slingerlands, New York 12159 and mailed to League members. The frequency of publication is as follows: one mid-summer issue followed by nine monthly issues from September to May.

Annual Land Acquisition Reports

The commissioners of DEC and OPRHP annually report to the Governor and appropriate legislative leaders their land acquisition activities for the preceding calendar year, as required by State Environmental Protection Fund Legislation.

The reports document land acquisition activities undertaken using funding from multiple sources such as the Environmental Protection Fund, the Natural Resources Damage Fund, Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act, Court of Claims and Federal Forest Legacy Funds.

New Members

- Arlen Westbrook - Delmar
- Paula Hemmings - Slingerlands
- Jane Poklemba - Loudonville
- Lucy Siegel - Albany

Welcome!

At our March program, we watched the movie "Iron Jawed Angels" about the women who put their lives at risk to help American women win the right to vote. One of the leading figures was Alice Paul. I looked up information about her and came across a number of quotes attributed to her. One I especially like and believe it reflects the League is as follows: **"I always feel the movement is a sort of mosaic. Each of us puts in one little stone, and then you get a great mosaic at the end."** - Mary Berry



Celebrate Earth Day April 22nd

Earth Day is a day that is intended to inspire awareness and appreciation for the Earth's natural environment. Earth Day was founded by United States Senator Gaylord Nelson as an environmental teach-in first held on April 22, 1970. While this first Earth Day was focused on the United States, an organization launched by Denis Hayes, who was the original national coordinator in 1970, took it international in 1990 and organized events in 141 nations. Earth Day is now coordinated globally by the Earth Day Network, and is celebrated in more than 175 countries every year. April 22 corresponds to spring in the Northern Hemisphere and autumn in the Southern Hemisphere. Numerous communities celebrate Earth Week, an entire week of activities focused on environmental issues. In 2009, the United Nations designated April 22 International Mother Earth Day. This year's Earth Day theme is "A Billion Acts of Green."

Help Wanted Ads

Nominating committee is looking for officers and board members for next year. Self nominations are very welcome. Call Julie Elson at 482-0981 or email Jelson510@earthlink.net with any suggestions.

We are looking for volunteers to help with web design and to train our members in maintaining our web site. Contact Mary Berry at 439-5679 or maryb424@aol.com.

State League Convention is being held May 20-22 in Albany. Volunteers are needed to help. Come help and also join the Convention activities and business meeting. Contact Marian Schwager at 439-0344 or schwager@nycap.rr.com.

Membership 2011-2012 - Join & Make a Difference

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address, City, Zip: _____

Email: _____

- Individual Membership \$50/year
- Household Membership \$75/year
- Student Membership \$15/year

- Contribution in support of my local League
- Please send me more information

For financial aid information, contact Monica Sharp, 475-9736

Mail to: League of Women Voters of Albany County PO Box 611, Slingerlands, NY 12159

NEW EPA EMISSIONS STANDARDS FOR MERCURY AND OTHER AIR TOXICS WILL SAVE LIVES

March 16, 2011-Washington, DC: In response to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) announcement today of its proposed Mercury and Air Toxics Standard, 13 leading public health and environmental advocacy groups released the following statement:

"Today, the Environmental Protection Agency took sensible action to protect public health by limiting for the first time emissions of life-threatening toxic pollutants like mercury, arsenic and acid gases, dioxin and lead from power plants. This long overdue and critically important action is a significant public health safeguard that will save 17,000 American lives and prevent 120,000 asthma attacks.

"The Mercury and Air Toxics Standard protects public health by reducing a wide range of toxic, particulate and dangerous pollutants that directly threaten public health, and is particularly important for its protection of children. The rule will significantly reduce emissions of mercury, a potent neurotoxin that can harm developing fetuses and young children, causing cognitive difficulties later in life. According to the EPA's own data, over 300,000 babies are born each year at risk of mercury poisoning and at least 1 in 12, and as many as 1 in 6, American women have enough mercury in their bodies to put a baby at risk.

"Americans across the political spectrum support reducing toxic power plant pollution including mercury. February 2011 polling by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner and Ayres McHenry showed that 79% of Americans, including 70% of Republicans and 81% of Independents, support stricter limits on mercury pollution.

"The EPA's move will also level the power generation playing field because the mercury and toxics standards are based upon the performance of the country's cleanest and best-performing power plants. This sensible approach produces standards that are both reasonable and effective in reducing air pollution and protecting public health. It also ensures that power plants with good pollution controls are not at a disadvantage compared to competitors with no controls.

"Nevertheless, some power companies that have successfully delayed Clean Air Act implementation requirements to reduce the toxic air emissions from their facilities are already fighting the Mercury and Toxic standards, by working to roll back and weaken these public health safeguards. Congress should choose protection of our families and children's health over protecting polluter profits, and let the EPA do its job."

The statement above is approved by the following groups:

Clean Air Task Force
 Clean Water Action
 Earthjustice
 Environment America
 Environmental Defense Fund
 Greenpeace USA
 League of Conservation Voters
League of Women Voters of the United States
 Natural Resources Defense Council
 Physicians for Social Responsibility
 Republicans for Environmental Protection
 Sierra Club
 Union of Concerned Scientists

Open Space Funding from the Environmental Protection Fund

Created in 1993, the New York State Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) provides mechanisms for open space conservation and land acquisition.

Title 7 allocates funds to the Department of Environmental Conservation and the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for purchase of land to be included in the Forest Preserve, State Parks, the State Nature and Historical Preserve, State Historic Sites, Unique Areas and other categories.

Title 9 provides funds for local governments and not-for-profit organizations to purchase park lands or historic resources as well to develop and preserve these resources. Within the Adirondack and Catskill Parks the Department of Environmental Conservation administers the Title 9 grant program through the Division of Lands and Forests, Bureau of Public Lands.

A portion of the revenue from New York State Bluebird License Plates supports the EPF.

**LWV OF ALBANY COUNTY
PROPOSED BUDGET 2011-2012**

EXPENDITURES	BUDGET 10-11	ACTUAL / PROJECTED	PROPOSED 11-12	CATEGORY EXPLANATION
A. OPERATING COSTS				
1. General Supplies	\$400	\$200	\$300	General repro/printing
2. Postage	\$200	\$380	\$200	Bulk mail permit
3. Misc. Expenses	\$100	\$100	\$100	PO box, other
Subtotal	\$700		\$600	
B. BOARD & ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES				
1. President	\$50	\$50	\$50	Discretionary spending
2. Board Administration	\$200	\$1,030	\$200	Meeting rooms, gifts
3. Administrative Committees				
a. Publicity/website	\$240	\$0	\$240	Hosting, domain name services
b. Fund Drive/Development	\$200	\$0	\$200	Postage/repro
c. Membership	\$400	\$200	\$400	Publications, directory, invoices, events
Subtotal	\$1,090		\$1,090	
C. DELEGATES, TRAVEL & AFFILIATIONS				
1. State Convention	\$3,000	\$1,000		State Convention 2011
2. National Convention	\$0	\$0	\$3,000	National Convention 2012
3. Affiliations	\$1,100	\$1,100	\$2,150	Fair Camp. Comm., LWVNYS donation
Subtotal	\$4,100		\$5,150	
D. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE LEAGUE				
1. State PMP	\$3,609	\$3,591	\$3,636	Per member payments to LWVNYS
2. National PMP	\$6,095	\$5,955	\$6,060	PMP to LWVUS
Subtotal	\$9,704		\$9,696	
E. BULLETIN				
1. Supplies	\$900	\$733	\$200	Printing & mailing supplies (move to ema
2. Postage	\$250	\$250	\$200	Mailing (for those with no email)
Subtotal	\$1,150		\$400	
F. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES				
1. Program Study	\$200	\$0	\$200	
2. Voters Service				
a. Facts for Voters	\$300	\$100	\$100	LWVNYS Guide Part 1
b. Candidate Meetings	\$50	\$72	\$100	
c. Voters Guides	\$400	\$108	\$200	LWVNYS Guide Part 2, other guides
3. Student Sponsor	\$600	\$1,200	\$1,200	Increased for more student projects
4. Special Projects/Programs	\$300	\$0	\$200	Increased for more special projects
Subtotal	\$1,850		\$2,000	
G. EVENTS				
1. Annual Meeting	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	Subsidized in part
2. Potluck Dinner	\$300	\$1,318	\$300	Subsidized in part
3. Other Event	\$0	\$1,510	\$1,000	Special event, like the museum reception
4. Luncheon	\$1,200	\$1,248	\$1,200	Self-funding
Subtotal	\$3,500		\$4,500	
EXPENDITURES TOTAL	\$22,094		\$23,436	

**LWV OF ALBANY COUNTY
PROPOSED BUDGET 2011-2012**

INCOME	BUDGET 10-11	ACTUAL / PROJECTED	PROPOSED 11-12	CATEGORY EXPLANATION
AA. MEMBERSHIP DUES				
Subtotal	\$10,000		\$10,000	Based on 1/1/2011 numbers
BB. CONTRIBUTIONS				
1. Member	\$700	\$425	\$700	Often made with dues payments
2. Fund Drive	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	
Subtotal	\$5,700		\$5,700	
CC. EVENTS				
1 Annual Meeting	\$1,700	\$0	\$1,700	Collections from attendees
2 Potluck	\$150	\$0	\$50	Collections from attendees
3 Luncheon	\$1,200	\$1,215	\$1,200	Collections from attendees
4 Other Events		\$510	\$300	
Subtotal	\$3,050		\$3,250	
EE. OTHER INCOME				
2. Poll Reporting	\$2,000	\$2,013	\$2,000	For Channel 13 and AP
3. Speakers Bureau	\$0	\$0		
4. Misc. Income/Grants/Raffle	\$500	\$0	\$3,000	e.g. AHA elections, State League raffle
Subtotal	\$2,500		\$5,000	
FF. BANK INTEREST				
Subtotal	\$50	\$0	\$0	
INCOME TOTAL	\$21,300		\$23,950	
BUDGETED EXPENSE TOTAL	\$23,436			
BUDGETED INCOME TOTAL	\$23,950			
TO (FROM) RESERVES	\$514			

Electronic Voter Guide Available to ALL Local Leagues

The State League is committed to developing a statewide electronic voter guide – and it will be offered free to all local Leagues this summer. This program will enable your League to publish an in-depth, customized, electronic voters guide in a number of easy steps. Training will be provided at Convention – and after for those not attending Convention.

State Convention: May 20-22, 2011

The State Convention will be held at The Desmond Hotel in Albany from May 20-22, 2011. **Registration Kits have been distributed and are on the state website. Register now!** PreConvention workshops are open to all members; you don't have to be coming to Convention – just join us on Friday!

We are once again organizing a Silent Auction which will be available online and at Convention so everyone, not just attendees, can participate. Donations can still be made and forms are available by calling the state office. Watch for the posting of the items on the state website – and instructions on how to bid. Everyone can participate!

This year we are planning to sell ad space in the Awards Program to businesses and individuals as a way of raising money for the state League. We are asking members of local Leagues to sell space to local merchants, banks, and individuals. A prize will be presented to the local League that sells the largest dollar amount of ads and the local League that sells the greatest dollar amount of ads per local League member. Call the state office for more information or the Ad solicitation form.

New Way to Buy Merchandise, Donate or Join LWVNYS!

The League is pleased to announce new pages on the website to donate to the League or the Education Foundation, to join the League and to view and purchase merchandise from the LWVNYS. Take a look at our t-shirts, mugs and pins available for sale on our website. Just click on Merchandise on the left side of the homepage. You can donate or join the League from website, too!

Education Testimony

On February 15, 2011, the League submitted to the Joint Legislative Public Hearing on the 2011-2012 Executive Budget Proposal on Elementary and Secondary Education. This testimony, which was prepared by President Betsey Swan, emphasizes League positions on financing education and property taxation and calls for:

- Adding the final two years of foundation aid into the budget prior to application of the Gap Elimination Adjustment;
- Replacement of the STAR program with a STAR circuit breaker, which would provide more meaningful relief to taxpayers according to need;
- Defeat of tax caps until the state fully implements the foundation aid approach to financing education.

Lobby Training Day

Over 20 people attended our first Advocacy Training day on February 7th. We invited all Issue Specialists, Lobby Committee members and Lobby Corps members to come to Albany for the day. Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director, and Sally Robinson, VP for Issues and Advocacy, provided training on our advocacy agenda and process and answered lots of questions about our issues, local advocacy, etc. The group toured the Capitol and then attended committee meetings or watched the legislative session from the gallery.

Membership – We can do it!

As expected, membership has dropped by 50% in the past 10 years. We have only one way to go...that is UP. And it can be done. Some local Leagues will join the Membership Recruitment Initiative, a national program to assist in increasing membership. All local Leagues, however, are invited to bring their best examples of recruitment ideas and membership successes to state Convention in May to share with others. Let's learn from each other and build back the strength of the League.

Youth Programs

All but 3 local Leagues have now responded to LWVNYS's youth program survey. There are several creative programs for youth that Leagues have developed. The three most popular programs are: Students Inside Albany, Vote 18, and Take Me to Vote. Results of this survey and information about all the youth programs conducted by local Leagues will be put on the state website and presented at state Convention so other Leagues may replicate the programs.

ReShapeNY

ReShapeNY, a campaign to achieve redistricting reform organized by Citizens Union, with the League and NYPIRG on the Leadership Team, was launched this month in a simultaneous announcement in Albany and New York City by its distinguished co-chairs and diverse coalition of thirty member organizations.

The campaign seeks to end partisan gerrymandering in New York State and create a fair and independent process to draw state legislative and congressional district lines in time for the 2012 elections. It is a broad-based campaign made up of 9 distinguished New Yorkers serving as co-chairs, and 30 civic, issue advocacy, business and labor organizations. The campaign will lobby legislators and engage in public education across the state to ensure redistricting reform is realized. See more at www.reshapeny.org.

1919 Society

Don't forget to include the state League in your will - and join the 1919 Society. If you already have included the League in your will, just let us know and we'll add you to the members of the Society. **Thanks to Barbara Bartoletti, Elizabeth Hubbard and Paula Blum for including the state League in their wills and joining this new Society.** As a member, their names will be engraved on a plaque in the state League office, listed in the *State Voter*, and on the website.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NYS
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E-mail: lwvny@lwvny.org

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ALBANY COUNTY
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Slingerlands, NY 12159

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“Remember - democracy is not a spectator sport!”

League Calendar

<u>WHEN</u>	<u>WHAT</u>	<u>WHERE</u>	<u>MORE INFO</u>
Tues., Apr 5, 7PM	Board Meeting	St Stephens Church, Delmar	
Apr. 11, 5:30 pm	Supper Salads Program on the environment with Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy	St. Stephens Church, Delmar	see page 1
Tues., May 3, 7PM	Board Meeting	St. Stephens Church, Delmar	
May 20-22	LWVNYS Biennial Convention Volunteer Needed	Desmond Hotel Albany	see page 3
June 8 5:30-8:00PM	Voter registration table	Parsons Child and Family Center lawn festival	
June 15	LWVAC Annual dinner	Wolferts Roost	