

# LWW of Albany County

Educate

Participate

Advocate

January 2007

Audrey Kibrick and Marggie Skinner, Co-Presidents

## JANUARY MEETING

**Topic:** WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU ARE LOBBYING

**Speakers:** David Higby, Director of Federal Government Relations for the Nature Conservancy of New York. (See bio. page 3)

Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director for the League of Women Voters of New York. (See bio. page 3)

**When:** Wednesday January 24<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 p.m. soup and .. 6:30 p.m. program

**Where:** BETHLEHEM PUBLIC LIBRARY, 451 Delaware Avenue, Delmar N.Y.

Join us for an inside look at the new Congress and at the new line-up in Albany as the legislative season begins.

As we go to press, there will be new leadership in both houses of Congress. How will this play out on the environmental front, and in other areas? David Higby, Director of Federal Government Relations for the Nature Conservancy of New York, will share with us his insights on the Federal picture.

AND- on Day 24, what will happen in Albany? There is at least one new "man in the room" at the Capital, Governor Spitzer. Barbara Bartoletti, member of our league and Legislative Director for the League of Women Voters of New York, served on Gov. Spitzer's transition team for legislative reform. She'll give us her views on the issues that will be given priority and what we can expect as the session unfolds.

We'll start the evening at 5:30 pm with soups, salads and sweets from fabulous league cooks and then hear from the speakers at 6:30. Bring any questions you may have. This promises to be a wonderful evening.

To assure that we will have enough food for everyone, please RSVP to Gael Vecchio, 459-9958.

## FROM THE PRESIDENTS

**D**o you make New Year's Resolutions? I (Audrey) used to do that but have given it up for the past few years. Instead of what I call "setting myself up for failure" pledging to make major changes in my life that I never seem to accomplish, I have substituted examining my life for "possibilities." What this means is taking an inventory of what I have accomplished in the past and what I would to work on in the future. Rather than having goals "set in stone," I envision what I could do in each area I have identified. Is this self-serving? Does it mean I am afraid of failure? You bet. Though I like to think of it as a more realistic view of life.

How I make this philosophy operational is simple. For example, how did I do with charity last year, both hands on and monetarily? Could be better. OK, now I have to decide what I'd like to do. I might say that I know I won't have much money to donate this year so an alternative would be for me to choose a cause and work to achieve goals set by the organization that oversees that cause.

Here's a good example of what I might do...January 15<sup>th</sup> has been set aside to honor the life and work of Martin Luther King. I think this year I'd like to pay tribute to his legacy of peace, equality and tolerance by working within an organization that adheres to his values. Now I have to identify where I'd like to volunteer.

Does this make sense to you? I think it is much more potent than weight loss, cutting back on shopping or going to a gym.

And, it wouldn't be a bad idea if you could fit in helping our League out by bringing your interests to print through an article for our bulletin or bringing a potential member to the next meeting on January 24<sup>th</sup>.

Whatever you decide to do, we wish you health and happiness for 2007 and way beyond.

*Audrey and Marggie*

### League of Women Voters of Albany County Board

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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, 12 Coventry Road, Glenmont, New York 12077 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.

### Barbara Bartoletti

Barbara Bartoletti has been the Legislative Director for the League of Women Voters of New York State since 1988 and lectures statewide on advocacy/issues and citizen participation in government. She also does political commentary for *Channel 9 News* in the Capital Region and writes a column for the *Post Standard* newspaper in Syracuse, New York. Barbara has also presented at conferences and led workshop training in advocacy, media relations, and coalition building in Russia and Armenia. Her community involvement extends to organizations such as the Council of Community Services, Family Planning Advocates of New York State, League of Women Voters of Albany County, and Center for Women in Government.

Most recently she represented the League on Governor Spitzer's transition team in the area of government reform and chaired the sub-committee on election reform.

### David Higby

David Higby is a seasoned lobbyist and policy analyst in Albany and Washington. For eight years he served as a senior project director for Environmental Advocates of NY, where he headed several issue-specific programs, including: the Solid Waste Project, the Hudson River PCB Cleanup Project, the Adirondack Project and the Water Resources Project. In 2006, David assumed the position of Director of Federal Government Relations for the Nature Conservancy of New York.

David spent six years on the Board of Directors of Family Planning Advocates, and in 1992 was a candidate for the New York State Assembly (100th AD - Saratoga and Washington Counties). He lives in Salem, New York with his wife Nancy Hand, a landscape architect, and their two children, Margaret and James.

## **EDUCATION DEVELOPMENTS**

*By Betsey Swan*

### **I. CHARTER SCHOOL POSITION ADOPTED**

The LWVNYS board's December adoption of a charter school position, following completion of Phase II of our financing education consensus, enabled the League to weigh in with the legislature in opposition to the immediate increase in the number of charter schools. Although no agreement was reached, Eliot Spitzer has indicated support for increasing the number of charters, so that this issue will be likely to re-emerge when the legislature returns in 2007. A copy of the new position is attached at the end of this article. If you have any questions about the consensus, please feel free to contact Betsey Swan at faircamp@nycap.rr.com or 518-426-3711.

Our thanks to all who worked so hard and under such tight time constraints to make the charter school consensus possible.

### **II. FINANCING THE CAMPAIGN FOR FISCAL EQUITY (CFE) ORDER**

On November 20, 2006 the New York State Court of Appeals reaffirmed the state's responsibility to increase funding for New York City schools. Although its decision established as reasonable an additional funding figure of \$1.9 billion in operating expenses, or \$2.5 billion statewide, adjusted for inflation from 2004, the court noted that the governor and legislature were best able to arrive at the appropriate figure to provide all New York City students with the opportunity for a meaningful high school education. To that end the Campaign for Fiscal Equity, which the League supported in this litigation, has called for additional funding of between \$4 and \$6 billion for NYC, a figure previously supported by both Governor Spitzer and former Governor Pataki.

The League's positions support the higher level of funding in two respects. First, the LWVNYS new financing education position provides that money must be sufficient to enable children to meet all Regents standards in addition to enabling districts to provide a sound basic education, the constitutional minimum. Those of you who have followed the CFE litigation will remember that the first Court of Appeals decision in this case noted that funding need not be at a level sufficient to enable children to meet all Regents standards. While this distinction was relatively unimportant in light of the Appellate Division decision supporting CFE funding in the \$4 to \$6 billion range, it becomes paramount in light of the intervening Court of Appeals decision in support of the lower minimum remedy. Secondly, the LWVUS has a position in support of early childhood education, including preschool, as part of its social policy position advocating early intervention for children at-risk. Studies have shown that at-risk children enter school without the requisite readiness skills, and they are unable to overcome the initial gap. Quality pre-school education can help to alleviate this gap. In keeping with these positions, the League has joined a number of advocacy groups in calling for a higher level of funding.

### **III. PHASE III OF FINANCING EDUCATION CONSENSUS CANCELLED**

The third phase of our financing education consensus was to have considered the use of gambling revenues as a means of financing education. Local Leagues registered consensus fatigue when an insufficient number to constitute a valid consensus elected to participate, thereby necessitating cancellation of the study.

## CHARTER SCHOOL POSITION

The League recognizes that charter schools represent an educational experiment whose efficacy has never received appropriate validation. Moreover, a review of the performance of charters in New York State indicates that, while some do an excellent job of educating children, others are less successful than the most substandard traditional public schools. Therefore, The League supports public funding of academic research into the characteristics of charters that lead to student academic success.

Authority to grant, oversee, renew and revoke charters, other than those granted in public school conversions, should be vested in a single entity. Charters should be subject to more stringent oversight of charter compliance in the renewal/revocation of process, with greater emphasis on positive educational outcomes.

The League supports measures to limit the negative financial impact of charter schools on their home districts, including: transition assistance; home district payment to charters based on the same standard used to pay operating aid to school districts (While the League supports enrollment as the appropriate measure, it believes the measure should be identical for both charters and traditional public schools.); separate levels of reimbursement for elementary and secondary education to charter schools based on what the home districts spend for the level of schooling provided; limitation of the percentage of a school district's budget that could be paid to charter schools. The League is opposed to State provision of capital construction and renovation services and reimbursement of capital expenditures for charter schools.

The League supports limitation of the number of charters issued in New York State. As a general matter, it believes that the number of charter schools should not be increased without prior successful implementation of the improvements outlined in this position. In lieu of amendment of the Charter School Act to increase the total number of charters that could be granted, it supports retention of the current total (100) with amendment of the Charter School Act so that a charter could be reissued if a charter school ceased to function for any reason. Any increase in the cap on charter schools should be tied to amendment of the Charter School Act so that charters are required to prove positive educational outcomes for all children (disaggregated by special needs) exceeding those in traditional public schools as a precondition for charter renewal. To more accurately measure student outcomes in charters and to compare them to those in traditional public schools, the League supports public funding to measure educational growth in individual students as they progress from grade to grade in charter schools (a value added approach).

### LWVNYS ON THE MOVE !!

...that is, the State League office has moved to 62 Grand Street, (across town), in downtown Albany. The Grand Street location is just off Madison Avenue, one block south of the Times Union Center (formerly Pepsi Arena), and across from Café Capriccio, in the Mansion neighborhood. The mansion referred to is the Governor's mansion – what more appropriate location for the League than within walking distance of the Governor's residence and the State Capitol? December 7<sup>th</sup> was moving day and we are operational but still need some cosmetic touches to the outside. Best news is that we have a small parking lot! If you want to visit, please give Stephanie or Kris a call at 465-4162.

## STATEMENT BY MARY G. WILSON, PRESIDENT

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES

## U.S. ELECTION ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

## PUBLIC MEETING ON THE 2006 ELECTION

DECEMBER 7, 2006

It is a privilege to be here, and I commend the EAC for convening this important and timely discussion of the 2006 election. As a strong supporter of effective implementation of the Help America Vote Act, the League of Women Voters believes in the work of the EAC – and in its mandate to improve the administration of elections across the United States.

The question we are here to talk about today is a simple one: How did it go? After all the hard work and all the struggles – on a whole range of issues, from election equipment to statewide voter registration lists – was the 2006 election, in fact, an improvement? And the answer we give, after discussions with nearly all state League presidents, is a resounding ... “It depends.”

Thankfully, the major meltdown that many had feared did not come to pass. As compared with Election 2000, this year nearly two-thirds of voters used new voting machines, every polling place administered new ID requirements, and virtually every voter registration record was managed in new ways. Despite all these changes, and despite the multitude of challenges that come with implementing reforms in a large, complex and decentralized election system like ours, the bulk of the news stories on the morning of November 8<sup>th</sup> were about who won and who lost – not how the voting went. And, despite all the talk about the potential for fraud in the absence of restrictive (and blatantly discriminatory) voter identification procedures, it simply doesn't seem to have happened. Yes there were problems, but widespread voter fraud wasn't one of them. Exit polling data showed that 87 percent of voters were confident that their votes would be counted accurately. Yet, as discussions this week at the Technical Guidelines Development Committee have highlighted, there are still important issues to be resolved with respect to the types of equipment on which voters cast their ballots.

Overall turnout was nothing to brag about, but voters were engaged and enthusiastic. The League's election-information Web site, VOTE411.org, logged nearly one million visitors in the ten days leading up to and on Election Day, the vast majority of them seeking information about the location of their polling place.

Thus, there was some good news. But there was some not-so-good news as well.

The League of Women Voters has always judged the success or failure of elections by one criterion above all others: Were the voters well served? And whether you were well served as a voter in 2006 depended on three factors: where you live, who you are, and how you voted:

First, where you live. Voters in many communities across the country had an easy time of it on November 7<sup>th</sup>. And that is indeed something to celebrate. But if you live in Sarasota or in Denver, or any of the other places where there were serious problems with long lines, ballot shortages, equipment malfunctions and other issues, celebrating is the last thing on your mind.

Second, who you are. Countless numbers of voters across the country were asked for photo identification when it was not required. Also, verified stories of voter intimidation in Virginia and elsewhere showed that, 40 years after the civil rights movement, your race, income level or age still can make you vulnerable to surreptitious tactics designed to keep you from exercising your right to vote.

Lastly, how you voted. What kind of ballot design you faced, what kind of machine you voted on, whether you voted early, by mail or in person – all of these were factors in whether you were well served as a voter or not in 2006.

The fact that your experience as a voter depended on all these different things – where you live, who you are and how you voted – suggests that we still have a great deal of work to do in order to achieve the promise of American democracy. Does this mean we need to consider another major revamping of U.S. elections before 2008? Now, one month after the last election, I believe it is too early to answer that question. What is clear, however, is that we – and, by “we,” I mean all of us who care about voters and to whom voters look for assurance about our election process – need to do a better job at designing, administering, implementing and overseeing election systems. We also need to ensure reforms we've already begun are fully implemented. And the EAC has a critical role in ensuring uniform, nondiscriminatory, effective implementation of election reform measures across the nation.

During the three months immediately prior to the November election, I traveled around the country and visited with elections officials, voters and League leaders. I talked to people about elections in their communities, about what was changing, about how to protect voters and how to make sure they are able to cast a vote and have it counted without any problems. Then, since the election, I've talked with League leaders around the country about how things went in their communities and their states. And, yes, during those conversations, I heard a lot about the need for a voter verifiable paper record of votes cast to give officials an independently auditable record as well as to give voters confidence in the voting process. This is a topic that our League members care greatly about and at our Convention in June the delegates adopted a Resolution calling for all election systems to have a voter verifiable paper ballot or record that could be randomly audited. The EAC will hear more from the League on this issue in the months to come as the Commission reviews recommendations for the 2007 voluntary voting system guidelines.

Today, though, I want to highlight an issue that dominated what I heard, both before and after the election. Regardless of the type of machine used at a polling place, the key to a successful election is How well does the election workforce – from professional elections officials to volunteer poll workers – do their jobs? Critical questions are how the polling place is organized and administered, and how the election workforce is recruited, trained and managed.

If you look at the problems we saw in the 2006 election, you see that most are related to management issues – long lines, poor ballot designs, paper ballot shortages, confusion about ID requirements, etc. All of these are election administration problems. The EAC can play a powerful role in assessing why these problems happen, sharing best practices, and offering guidance to elections officials about how to make the system work better for the voter. Through investments in research, the EAC also can lead the way to a better understanding of how to organize and manage polling places for maximum efficiency. We need to look at issues of flow – what happens to voters from check-in until they leave. We need to look at the numbers and types of voting and list management equipment that need to be in place to serve a given number of voters, and we need to look at what kinds of back-up systems can help. We need to audit election systems so we know whether they are really working properly. We also need to do more in the area of ensuring that every polling place is “ready to go” on Election Day. The voters should not be guinea pigs.

And, of course, we also need to do more on the issue of poll worker recruitment and training. In my conversations with League leaders and elections officials around the country, this topic comes up again and again. If we examine the overall issue of election management, we can see that many of the election management problems are the result of poll workers not being adequately supported or prepared to do their jobs. This is not the poll workers’ fault at all. They simply have not been provided with the tools or the training they need to keep things running smoothly, and to address problems as they arise. From the League’s perspective, the one issue that must be a priority for the EAC between now and 2008 is poll worker management. The League commends you for your work in this area thus far and is proud to be a part of the team the Commission has worked with to put together a first-of-its-kind guidebook on poll worker recruitment, training and retention. We look forward to continuing this collaboration in the future. There needs to be a better understanding of the types of skills that are needed for various tasks at the polling place, the training requirements for poll workers, good training practices, performance standards and more. For example, everyone talks about the usability of various voting machines for voters, but what about their usability for poll workers? We need systems in place that are pro-voter; but they can’t be pro-voter if they are not pro-poll worker as well.

Whether we’re looking at poll worker management or at any of the other administrative issues I have talked about, the League believes the EAC can play an important role in spreading the word about innovative practices – new

approaches to old challenges. Earlier this year, we published a monograph called “Thinking Outside the Ballot Box,” where we explored the use of Vote Centers, early voting, electronic poll books and other polling place innovations in use by jurisdictions across the country. Elections officials can learn a great deal from their peers who are experimenting with these and other approaches to improve elections. The EAC is perfectly positioned to support that learning by convening officials and sharing information about innovative practices that are delivering good results for voters.

But the job is not just to spread the word about all these wonderful innovations. Even more important, we need to help elections officials understand how to do innovation right – and what needs to happen to make these innovations work. In Denver, for example, we saw elections officials embrace a polling place innovation – Vote Centers – that has proven quite effective elsewhere in the state. But Denver’s Vote Centers, in fact, caused more problems than they solved. And, again, the issue was how these polling places were managed – getting things up and running on time, the numbers of provisional ballots on hand, the functioning of the equipment, poll worker training, and so forth.

Better election administration. It may not be the sexiest issue out there, but in the League’s view, it is an issue on which we must focus. We may never get it exactly right, but we need to create an elections system that is always striving to do better by the voter. Electoral participation in this country is still far below what it should be. And my hunch is that if we do better by the voter, we will begin to attract a lot of non-voters back into the system as well.

The 2008 election is going to be a crucial one for our country. We need to apply the lessons of 2006 to make sure that voters are well served regardless of where they live, who they are, or how they vote. We need to make sure that the answer to whether the system works in 2008 is not “It depends” but a resounding “Yes.”

Thank you very much.

League Members, the Albany County League is gearing up for the 2007 LeaderSpark program. To those of you who volunteered and participated in last year's pilot run of this wonderful leadership training program for young people, thank you!!! WE are in need again of facilitators to help me on Sunday afternoons in March. Facilitators can help with program planning, working with the young people attending the program, presenting topics, providing food and snacks, and in many other ways from setting up to cleaning up. This year's major facilitator training will be held at the NYS league's new offices on Saturday, January 20th from 10 AM to 3 PM. If you are interested in helping out with our high school students this year, please email or call Wendy Samson, 439-1113 or midjill@nycap.rr.com. More information about the program is available at [www.Leaderspark.com](http://www.Leaderspark.com).

I hope to have your assistance to move forward with this program. I have sent out mailings to all local schools, and will email more contacts the first week of January to recruit students. I could use a few good, dependable people who need not be present at every session, and if you are interested in presenting on the topics (training materials are provided)—which are : Leadership Qualities and Styles, Working with Groups, Planning Projects, Presenting Yourself and Dealing with Conflicts, please let me know. I know many of you deal with these subject areas in your work life, and it would be great to have league members show young people these important skills.

Please let me know as soon as you can if you are interested and can attend the January 20th training session which is led by Karen Dawson, the founder/creator of the program.

## Meet your board members

**Raymond S. Blanchard, 3 Essex Circle, Albany, NY 12209. [RSB206@aol.com](mailto:RSB206@aol.com)**

I have had a successful but 'checkered' career, including the partnership in a construction company "Deck Guard" that designed membrane waterproofing systems for bridge decks, Vice President of Marketing for a data processing service company in the 1960's, and became the Chief Administrative Office of a multi-million dollar State Public Benefit Corporation, retiring in 1985.

**Recipient of the 1997 Third Age Award for work in Health & Human Services**

**Recipient of the 2001 Eddy Patterson Award for 'Wisdom, Experience, Creativity, Energy and Leadership' in health care.**

**Writer - Producer - Host, TV series 'Conversations Regarding Health Care' lasting more than ten years and 250 plus shows.**

**Writer, Published Poet and Novelist**

**Member of the Board of Directors:**

**Albany County League of Women Voters.**

**Member and/or chair of several Committees at the First Universalist-Unitarian Society.**

**Member of the Board of Directors of Memorial Society Hudson-Mohawk Region.**

**President of the Board of Directors Whitehall Station Home-Owners Assoc.**

**Member of the Advisory Board of OASIS.**

Member of the Advisory Board - Institute for the Advancement of Long Term Care - School of Business - SUNY.

Member of the Albany Jewish Community Center.



# Leadership...Now's Your Chance!

You can't get any closer to home.

Students Inside Albany / LeaderSpark  
A Skills Development Leadership Program for Students

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of New York State

Your community is about to change. Soon a group of youth and young adults will participate in the LeaderSpark leadership skills development training. The training focuses specifically on the resources and needs of your local area. Participants will learn practical leadership skills and work with others in completing projects which strengthen this community. And they need your help now.

**Community volunteers from a range of careers and volunteer experiences are needed to help facilitate the LeaderSpark training program. While the volunteer facilitators provide an introduction to concepts and serve as resources, most of the program time is spent in large and small group settings where participants discuss strategies to address real-life, local situations, practice their leadership skills, and launch their community projects.**

Facilitator coaching is provided in using all curriculum materials and in working with participants. A program coordinator manages the program schedule, material preparations, and communications.

The program curriculum is delivered in multiple sessions over approximately twenty hours. **Volunteer facilitators need not be present at every session. Instead you can be involved as your schedule allows by selecting the sessions that fit into your busy life.** The session topics are:

1. Styles & Qualities of Leadership
2. Working with Groups
3. Planning Projects
4. Dealing with Conflict
5. Presenting Yourself
6. Recognition

Please join us in this unique opportunity to bring skills and self-confidence to emerging local leaders.

To find out more or to register, please contact:



Albany County League  
Wendy Dury-Samson  
112 Fernbank Ave.  
Delmar, NY 12054  
518-439-1113  
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## About.....The International Center of the Capital Region (ICCR)

The International Center of the Capital Region (ICCR), a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, has a 50-year history of helping international newcomers throughout New York's Capital District. The ICCR has experienced major shifts in its community functions over the decades.

Begun in the 1950's as an informal dinner club providing hospitality and friendship to international visitors in the Capital region, the Center's objective gradually transitioned during the 1960's into becoming a direct service provider for immigrants and refugees. From 1956 to 2005, the ICCR offered essential services to international newcomers to our area. Now, the vision and mission of the Center has shifted once again, to increase global-local citizen diplomacy, intensify regional multicultural outreach, and deepen foreign affairs education and dialogue.

The International Center of the Capital Region, Inc. owes its founding to the experiences and efforts of John and Ruth Blackburn. The Blackburns traveled to Denmark in the late 1950's under the auspices of a program called "Meet the Danes at Home." Upon their return to the States, they decided to establish a similar program for newly arrived immigrants from Europe. In 1965 the Albany Rotary Club founded the Albany International Center in the building adjacent to the Blackburns' townhouse in downtown Albany. By the late 1960's, the Center had joined the Council on International Visitors (CIV) network. Visitors were able to stay at the Center, the city's first bed and breakfast. Active volunteers and host families ensured that there were significant hospitality and sight-seeing opportunities. In 1971, the Center expanded its services to meet the needs of foreign students coming to the ten colleges in the Capital Region. Sight-seeing trips and homestays helped students to learn about life outside the U.S. academic environment.

With the US withdrawal from Vietnam in 1975, the Center entered yet another phase; focused on services to refugees. The ethnic diversity of the region began to change rapidly in the 1980's and the Cen-

ter expanded its services to include legal representation for immigrants and direct services to all of the foreign-born population living or visiting in the Greater Capital District. The Center's name and by-laws were changed to reflect the expanded service area and mission.

Over the decades, dedicated staff provided refugee and asylee resettlement services, immigration counseling, cultural adjustment services, vocational English as a Second Language training, job placement, citizenship support and translation services. The Center served an average of 1,000 immigrants and refugees per year, from as many as 100 countries. The ICCR assisted local businesses in hiring qualified and dedicated international newcomers as employees, and promoted public awareness of the many international community contributions to our region. The ICCR was unique in its primary focus on services to immigrants with limited financial resources, often struggling with adjustment to a new language and culture. The ICCR was also the region's major non-faith-based provider of such services.

### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS:

In recent years, diverse internal and external factors led to another transition for the ICCR. Shifts in national priorities, international demographics, and federal refugee and immigration policies following the events of September 11, 2001 sharply reduced the number of refugees to the US, which in turn dramatically reduced the ICCR's main federal funding – cutting ICCR operational resources by about 90%. The ICCR was also set back by the loss of its much admired director, Helene Smith, who passed away in 2003 after a long illness. In an effort to avoid suspending services, ICCR board and staff had explored numerous options to ensure future viability, and, with the Council of Community Services assistance, engaged in extensive discussions with other community service providers to develop strategic alliances. The ICCR board reluctantly took action to end the provision of direct program services to international newcomers at the end of April 2005. Fortunately, the ICCR Board successfully arranged for the continuous provision of services to refugees and immigrants, through transitioning direct services to the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants,

operating out of the Center's former offices.

Since June of 2005, ICCR programs have shifted focus to outreach, educational, and advocacy activities. The ICCR serves our local and global communities through hosting international visitors to the region (as the region's officially designated member of the National Council for International Visitors - NCIV, convening educational exchanges and symposia, fostering dialogue on the contributions, opportunities and challenges presented by the global economy, and advocating for greater appreciation and understanding of the international community in our region.

With respect to educational events, in October 2005, the ICCR worked in partnership with The League of Women Voters of Albany County, the UN Foundation, the SUNY Center for International Development and the Returned Peace Corps Volunteers of the Northeast, to convene a public "The People Speak" event at the WAMC Auditorium: featuring an expert panel with audience discussion of "Trade vs. Aid."

As the agency has transitioned, some former Board members have let go of involvement, while others have engaged enthusiastically in current activities and have recruited new members. The Board has revised by-laws to reflect the new vision and mission, and has developed a formal statement of Board responsibilities for existing and new members. The ICCR currently provides CIV, educational and outreach services through volunteers, without paid staff. Since the beginning of 2006, the ICCR has been based in donated office space at the Council of Community Services.

The Center recently celebrated its 50th anniversary on November 30th with a celebration honoring five exemplary local-global community leaders. Plans for 2007 include world affairs policy discussions, community outreach and citizen diplomacy programs. The website is [www.iccralbany.org](http://www.iccralbany.org).

LWVAC members, Kay Wilkie and Bonnie Beard, are respectively, ICCR board president and off-board international visitors consultant.

**Schenectady League is participating in the *LWVUS three-year Immigration Study*.**

They are kicking off their local study with several programs open to the public:

Tuesday, January 23 – 7-9 p.m., at First Methodist Church, 603 State Street, Schenectady.  
(parking lot behind the church)

Film: "Uprooted" which explores the status of legal and illegal immigrants and how their status has changed since 9/11.

Speakers: attorney from Copeland, Brenner law firm which specializes in immigration law and Bobbie Short from the International Center of the Capital Region.

Tuesday, March 13 – 7-9 p.m. at the First Baptist Church, 1944 Union Street (corner of St. David's Lane and Union Street, Schenectady

Film: "The Sixth Sense" about immigrants in New York State

Tuesday, January 30 – 12 Noon, "Friendly Lunch" at Friendly's Restaurant, Nott Terrace, Schenectady  
Topic: Education of Immigrants in the Capital Region

Speakers from Literacy Volunteers and the Washington Irving School in Schenectady

For more information, call Connie Young, 393-7061

## Mentoring Opportunities

The Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Services project (APPS) is a federally funded mentoring program that matches adults with young people aged 21 and under who are at risk of becoming or already are parents. *Northeast Parent & Child Society* provides training and ongoing support for the mentors. Mentors are asked to spend just a few hours a week with a young person with whom they have been matched. Research shows that the involvement of a non-related adult role model makes a real difference for at-risk youth. Being a mentor provides an opportunity to encourage youth and build their confidence so that they can discover their own way, and their self-worth.

### Success of mentoring programs :

*52% of children that are mentored are more likely to attend school and graduate.*

*30% are less likely to resort to violence to solve their problems.*

### Types of mentoring experiences:

*Rick and Chadwick* have forged a strong relationship. As an avid Yankees fan, Rick brought Chadwick to a home game so Chadwick could experience the legendary stadium for the first time.

*Bob took Jordan* to the Schenectady Airport Museum and to the International Guard Base in Schenectady, where Jordan sat in a private airplane and in the pilot seat of a C130 aircraft. In return, Jordan showed Bob his stick wielding skills.

*Arlene and Reniquiwa* enjoy knitting and crocheting, mini-golf and bumper boats.

*Lisa and Larinda* love window shopping and playing with animals in the pet store.

### What does it take to be a mentor?

A Mentor is someone who wants to make a difference in a young person's life.

A Mentor is less about being a teacher, and more about being a coach.

A Mentor is less like a parent, more like an older sibling.

A Mentor has a shoulder to lean on.

A Mentor is patient and has an open mind.

A Mentor has an ear to listen.

A Mentor needs just a few hours a week to spend with a youth.

If you think you're that type of person, Northeast Child and Parent Society needs you. Please contact Kim Mitchell at 518/372-4100, ext. 226.

## Great Issues

The Great Issues group will begin its winter sessions on Monday, January 29. The group will meet on eight alternate Mondays to study the Great Decisions topics for the year.

This year's topics include Global Warming, Middle East, Mexico, Migration, South Africa, War Crimes, Central Asia, Children.

The Great Decisions Briefing Book, published by the Foreign Policy Association out of New York City, will be available for \$15 from the Book House in Stuyvesant Plaza or from Bonnie Beard at the International Center (272 Broadway, Menands) in mid-January.

For further information on meeting places and times, contact

Katie Henrikson at 439-4308 or [khenriks@nycap.rr.com](mailto:khenriks@nycap.rr.com)

**Membership 2005–2006**

Join & Make a Difference

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

- Individual membership \$45/year
- Household membership \$60/year
- Student membership \$15/year
- Contribution in support of my local league
- Please send me more information

Mail to : League of Women Voters of Albany County  
P.O. Box 611 Slingerlands, NY 12159

Or contact: Susan Coleman Tel: 433–9446

**Letters** .....

**we get letters (we hope!)**

Express yourself! We are starting a new column for the bulletin. Let me know your ideas and opinions...keep it short and to the point, and primarily on League issues. Mail your letter to Aimee Allaud, Editor, LWVAC bulletin, 85 Melrose Avenue, Albany, NY, 12203, or 85aimee@nycap.rr.com. Bulletin deadlines are the board meeting each month, generally the first Tuesday of each month.

**Welcome our new members**

- |                  |          |
|------------------|----------|
| Fredda Peritz    | Albany   |
| Carolyn Broadway | Albany   |
| Arlene Urell     | Albany   |
| Amy Pollard      | Altamont |

Condolences.....

The Albany County League of Women Voters notes with regret the passing of two of our members, Alice Harvey of Albany, and Barbara Rau of Guilderland.

**Alice Harvey**, age 100, of Slingerlands, on October 26, 2006. Alice had been a League member for over 50 years and had served both the NYS League and the Albany County League. She was a lobbyist for the state League. The Albany County League booklet, "70 Years, Albany County League of Women Voters, 1922-1992," lists her on the board during 1938-1940 as Director of government in operations.

**Barbara Rau**, age 89, of Guilderland, on November 14, 2006. Barbara participated in many Voter Service activities.

(The editor welcomes any additional contributions to the above memories which members and friends would like to share).

## UPCOMING EVENTS CALENDAR

**Tues. Jan 2, 5:45 p.m.**

Board Meeting  
Albany Public Library  
Members welcome

**Wed. Jan. 17, 6 p.m.**

Krause Center, RPI  
2212 Burdett Ave, Troy  
“Global Warming and Climate  
Change”  
dinner is free, talk at 7 p.m.  
call Marcie Easterling, 273-5416  
sponsored by Rensselaer Cty. LWV

**Sat., Jan. 20, 10 – 3 p.m.**

**Leaderspark Training Session**  
10 a.m. – 3 p.m.  
NYS LWV office  
62 Grand Street  
Albany  
(see article)

**Tues. Jan. 23, 7-9 p.m.**

Immigration film/discussion  
Schenectady LWV  
First Methodist Church  
Schenectady  
(see article)

**Wed. Jan. 24, 5:30 – 8 p.m.**

LWVAC Mtg.  
Legislative Outlook  
Bethlehem Public Library  
Delmar

**Mon. Jan. 29**

Great Issues Discussion  
Call Katie Henrikson, 439-4308  
For location

**Tues. Jan. 30, 12 N**

“Friendly Lunch”  
Schenectady LWV  
Education of Immigrants  
(see article)

**Tues. Feb. 6, 5:45 p.m.**

LWVAC Board Mtg.  
Albany Public Library  
Washington Avenue  
Albany

The League of Women Voters of Albany County  
P.O. Box 611  
Slingerlands, NY 12159

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