

LWV of Albany County

Educate

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Advocate

May 2005

Courtney Burke, President

President
Courtney Burke
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Audrey Kibrick
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Government
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MAY ANNUAL DINNER

Speaker: Susan Arbetter, Host/Producer of the Roundtable, WAMC
Northeast Public Radio

Topic: "Where Have You Gone Edward Murrow?: The state of
journalism today"

When: Wednesday, May 25th, 5:30-8:30

Where: Normanside Country Club, Delmar (See map page 7)

RSVP: To Katie Henrikson at khenriks@nycap.rr.com
or 439-4308 by May 20th (see page 9 for details)

Agenda:

5:30-6:15 cocktails
6:15-6:45 annual meeting
6:45-7:30 dinner
7:30-8:30 speaker

For 6 years journalist Susan Arbetter was the News Director at WAMC. She is currently the host & producer of the award-winning "Roundtable" show on that public radio station.

She has worked in radio for 17 years, starting as the Assistant Public Affairs Director & News Anchor in Boston at WBOS-FM; and a morning show host on WPYX-FM in Albany, NY.

Susan is the recipient of many awards including a national Scripps-Howard Award for Excellence in Electronic Journalism; the National Press Club Kozik Award for Environmental Journalism; and numerous regional Murrow, New York State Broadcasters and New York State Associated Press Awards.

The Roundtable Show has won the New York State Broadcasters Excellence in Broadcasting award for Best Public Affairs Program for 4 consecutive years. Susan also recently (2004) garnered a New York State Broadcasters Award for Best Feature Reporting.

Ms. Arbetter was voted the Women's Press Club's "Media Person of the Year, 1998" as well as 1998's "Best Voice of the Capital Region" by the Albany Times Union newspaper. In May of 1999, the Albany Times Union voted her "Best Local Radio Talk Personality".

FROM THE PRESIDENT

This year, thanks to the efforts of many individuals, the League has been able to provide fabulous programs. May's annual dinner and program will again be extremely interesting, featuring one of the area's most interesting women, Susan Arbetter, Producer and Host of the Roundtable on WAMC Northeast Public Radio. Susan is an accomplished journalist and wonderful example of a successful women. She will share her insights on changes in the media over the past several decades. This is sure to be another wonderful program at a great venue, so I encourage you to bring friends to the annual dinner. (See cover for details).

This program follows on what was a fascinating program in April on Land Use Planning, which featured five Albany County town supervisors. This event was attended by close to 100 people and the question and answer period was particularly enlightening. Special thanks to Nancy Heinzen who did the bulk of the organizing for this event.

As the program year comes to a conclusion, I remain very excited about what the League will be able to accomplish in the coming year. We have established good relations with the County Elections Commissioners and County Legislators so that we can build upon previous successes with voter services activities. There also remain many important issues that the League will feature during its monthly programs. Your opinions about the topics for our programs are always welcome. I am also optimistic that our membership will continue to grow as it has done this past year. There are many reasons why our membership has grown, including our relevance to encouraging an open

democratic process, our attention to organizing timely, educational events, our nonpartisan voter service activities, our wonderful membership chair (Linda McKenna) and her membership "ambassadors", and the efforts of our Board to reach out to people in our community and welcome them into the League.

I have thoroughly enjoyed serving as President of such a wonderful organization for the past 2+ years. I relish being part of something that is so important to the democratic process - and through which I can witness democracy in action. A second, but equally important reason I have enjoyed my time as League President is that I have met so many committed, dynamic women and men that help make the organization and our democracy a success. It was a privilege to work with such a wonderful Board - most of whom also work full-time - but still dedicate their time to make the League a great organization.

Not only do I appreciate the work of individual Board members but I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people that have helped in various capacities to make the League vital. There are so many of you who dedicate your time to registering voters, participating in educational events, doing administrative work, helping with League activities, etc. - and it is YOU that make the organization a success. Thank you to all of you.

I look forward to seeing you at the May annual meeting!

Courtney Burke

Reminder

If you have paid your dues, thank you, but if you have not please respond promptly with your support

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.

LWVAC NOMINATIONS SLATE 2005-6

OFFICERS

Co-Presidents	Marggie Skinner, Audrey Kibrick	2005-6
VP Action	Jessica McMullen	2005-6
VP Administration	Gael Vecchio	2005-7
VP Program	Wendy Dury-Samson	2005-7
Treasurer	Mary Berry	2005-6
Secretary	Judy Jarnefeld	2005-7

DIRECTORS (On Board)

Voter Service	Maggie Moehringer	2005-7
Membership	Linda McKenna & Meredith Ray	2005-6
Development	Lori Keegan-Brady	2005-6
Local & State Government	Marggie Skinner & Pat McGowan-Webb	2005-6
Public Relations	Margaret Sawyer	2005-7
Poll Reporting	Melanie Trimble	2005-7
At Large	Raymond Blanchard	2005-7
At Large	Betsey Swan	2005-6

DIRECTORS (Off Board)

National Government	Edith Allen	2005-7
Natural Resources	Nancy Heinzen	2005-6
Information Specialist	Don Kennedy	2005-6
Bulletin Distribution	Peg Tucker	2005-6
Speaker's Bureau	Barbara Bartoletti	2005-7
International Relations		2005-6
Bulletin Editor	Aimee Allaud	2005-7
Bulletin Layout	Guy Allaud	2005-7
Nominations	Courtney Burke	2005-6
Social Policy	Courtney Burke	2005-6
Budget Director		2005-6

EXPENDITURES	ACTUAL 03-04	BUDGET 04-05	ACTUAL 01/31/05	ROPOSED 05-06
A. OPERATING COSTS				
1. General Supplies	218.45	100.00		100.00
2. Postage	225.16	175.00	150.00	175.00
3. Misc. Expenses/Grants	26.58	-	24.00	24.00
Subtotal	470.19	275.00	174.00	299.00
B. BOARD & ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES				
1. President	71.12	50.00		50.00
2. Board Tools				
3. Administrative Committees				
a. Publicity	100.00	100.00		360.00website
b. Finance Drive/Developme	86.60	175.00	145.53	175.00
c. Membership	286.88	275.00	132.67	275.00
d. Meetings		100.00	12.03	
Subtotal	544.60	700.00	290.23	860.00
C. DELEGATES, TRAVEL & AFFILIATIONS				
1. State Convention		1,500.00		not til spring
2. National Convention	1,976.70			2,000.00
3. Annual Meeting	2,099.89	1,200.00		1,800.00match w/income
4a. Potluck	185.44	700.00	621.68	300.00
4b. Luncheon	642.30		1,005.91	1,000.00match w/income
5. Affiliations	300.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Subtotal	5,204.33	3,500.00	721.68	5,200.00
D. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE LEAGUE				
1. State PMP	3,528.00	3,357.00	1,678.50	3,294.00
2. National PMP	4,994.50	4,289.50	2,169.35	4,641.00
3. Local fundraising		1,500.00	506.55	1,500.00match w/income
Subtotal	8,522.50	9,146.50	4,354.40	9,435.00
E. BULLETIN				
1. Supplies	1,264.66	1,300.00	726.89	1,300.00
2. Postage	354.43	400.00	212.38	400.00
Subtotal	1,619.09	1,700.00	939.27	1,700.00
F. EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES				
1. Publications	227.75	100.00		lwv election book for s.s. tchrs
2. Program Study		100.00		100.00
3. Voters Service				
a. Facts for Voters		350.00	593.30	350.00ffv + brochure
b. Candidate Meetings	48.16	150.00	150.00	300.00
c. Voters Guide	-	150.00	-	150.00
4. Student Sponsor	298.98	300.00	34.78	300.00
5. Special Projects		200.00		100.00
Subtotal	574.89	1,350.00	778.08	1,300.00

G. POSITION SUPPORT

1. Publications	-	100.00	-	-
2. Program Action		100.00		
Subtotal	-	200.00	-	-
GRAND TOTAL	16,935.60	16,871.50	7,257.66	18,794.00

INCOME

AA. MEMBERSHIP DUES 6,952.50 7,500.00 1,305.00 7,500.00

BB. CONTRIBUTIONS

1. Member	938.55	1,000.00	38.55	1,000.00
2. Fund Drive	3,974.62	3,000.00	4,457.00	4,000.00
3. Friends of the League				
Subtotal	4,913.17	4,000.00	4,495.55	5,000.00

CC. PUBLICATIONS

1. Facts for Voters	-	-	-	-
2. Other Publications	-	-	-	-
Subtotal	-	-	-	-

DD. OTHER FUNDRAISING

1. Annual Meeting	1,866.50	1,100.00		1,700.00
2a Potluck	60.00	100.00	150.00	150.00
2b Luncheon	662.00	500.00	895.00	1,000.00
3. Events	348.00	2,000.00	1,005.00	2,000.00
Subtotal	2,936.50	3,700.00	2,050.00	4,850.00

EE. OTHER INCOME

1. Bulletin Ads	-	-	-	-
2. Poll Reporting	1,013.00	1,500.00	2,182.00	1,500.00
3. Speakers Bureau		-	656.00	100.00
4. Misc. Income/Grants				
Subtotal	1,013.00	1,500.00	2,838.00	1,600.00

FF. BANK INTEREST

	132.89	120.00	49.65	80.00
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Subtotal 15,948.06 16,820.00 10,738.20 19,030.00

(TO) FROM RESERVES	987.54	51.50	-3,480.54	-236.00
GRAND TOTAL	16,935.60	16,871.50	7,257.66	18,794.00

BALANCE 6/30/03

PREPAID POSTAGE	\$143.59
ED FUND	65.00
MEM FUND	2,290.23
GEN FUND	13,506.13
	<hr/>

TOTAL \$16,004.95

BALANCE 6/30/04

PREPAID POSTAGE	\$128.76
ED FUND	345.75
MEMBERSHIP FUND	2,182.84
GENERAL FUND	12,360.06
	<hr/>

TOTAL \$15,017.41
\$987.54

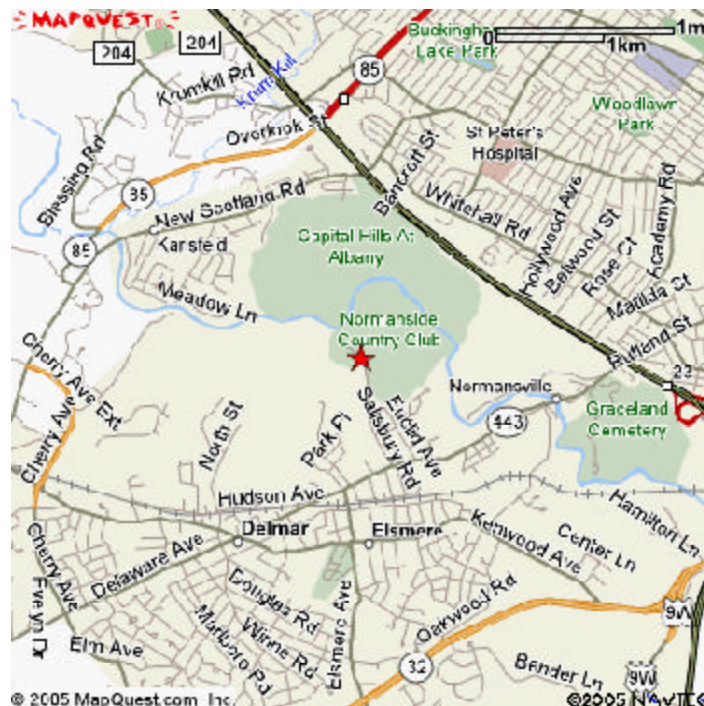
Bill of Rights Restoration Committee

Congress is currently taking a second look at the USA PATRIOT Act as they consider whether or not to let several provisions sunset on January 1, 2006. One of the most controversial provisions being considered is Section 215, the provision that allows law enforcement agencies access to "any tangible thing," including library and medical records, without criminal judicial authorization.

The Bill of Rights Defense Committee in Albany worked over the last two years to pass resolutions calling upon Congress to repeal the unconstitutional provisions of the Act. They were successful in both the City and County of Albany. Although these resolutions are not binding, they along with hundreds of others passed throughout towns, counties and states across the country, have helped to persuade Congress that not all of the provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act respect our constitutional rights and liberties.

The Bill of Rights Restoration Committee has recently begun an educational campaign to let people know what provisions are set to expire, which provisions concern constitutional difficulties and a general historical perspective on the use of the Act and it's effectiveness in fighting terrorism. The League has signed on as a sponsor of a forum to be presented on Thursday, May 26, 2005 at 5:30 pm at the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany, 405 Washington Avenue, Albany. Featured speakers will include Udi Ofer, project director for the Bill of Rights Defense Committee of the NYCLU and an expert on privacy rights.

Please join us for what will prove to be a stimulating and informative evening. Help us protect the Bill of Rights, for it cannot protect itself.



TO: Local League Presidents, Issues Directors
FROM: Ann Brandon, Off-Board Specialist, Death Penalty

DEATH PENALTY ACTION

This is a story with a happy ending!

On April 12th the Assembly Codes Committee voted NOT to discharge to the floor a Republican Assembly version of the Senate death penalty bill. That means the bill is dead in the Assembly, at least for this year. As Chairman Lentol said, this issue will not go away, so we will need to remain alert for future attempts to bring it back.

The Senate had passed a 'quick fix' to the law in February that the Court of Appeals had ruled unconstitutional last summer. During this time the Assembly Codes, Judiciary, and Corrections committees held five joint hearings where 146 witnesses testified and 24 additional persons submitted written testimony. (I testified for the League on February 8th.) Of that number, 148 opposed the death penalty, 9 favored it, and 5 others favored it with specific changes. The diversity of people testifying was amazing - those whose families had been directly affected by a murder, judges, professors, people who had been wrongly incarcerated, citizen groups, religious groups, attorneys, former legislators who had become convinced of the futility of the death penalty, etc. When the Codes committee met for their vote, several members referred to the hearings as definitive in making them decide to vote against the death penalty.

Let's all take a little credit for helping to turn the tide against capital punishment in New York State and remember the other states and the federal government where Leagues and other groups are still working to end this medieval form of punishment.

Committee staff summarized the testimony in an 85 page report, "The Death Penalty in New York." The report can be accessed at <http://assembly.state.ny.us>, or call the public information office at 518-455-4218 to mail you a copy.



CAPITOL BEAT

Volume 5, No. 1

Albany is very quiet. It's almost as if no one in State government knows what to do next. After 20 years of wrangling over a budget well into the late summer, the budget was done on time this year. Well OK, it was really done the following week. Now, however, we don't seem to remember exactly what should come next. There is speculation that the session will end earlier than late June. If that is the case, and they do not address any of the "reforms" on the League's agenda, we will not consider this a productive session. After all, their first job is to pass a budget, but it is not their only job. Before I propose exactly what the League thinks the Legislature should be doing for the next two months, I will try to sum up what happened in the legislature during the budget battles just ended.

There are several reasons why the budget was on time this year. First and foremost, the voters in New York State get the greatest credit for an on-time budget. Their frustration level after 20 straight years of late budgets was taken out at the ballot box last November when three incumbents lost their seats primarily on the reform issue. Many candidates who ran for open seats also ran on reform platforms and won. Legislative leaders knew that this was the year they had to bring a budget in on time and so began to work together toward that end.

Of course, the Court of Appeals decision last December which gave the Governor total control over constructing a budget helped focus them. The Court of Appeals ruling was the result of lawsuits going back to 1998 and 2000 in which the Assembly Speaker and then the Legislature sued the Governor for creating policy within the budget. The Court said that the Governor was the "constructor" of the budget and the Legislature could add, delete, delay or negotiate but could not "substitute" for the Governor's language in the budget. Another reason for the on-time budget was the Governor's own poll ratings. His job approval was lower than it had been at any time in his tenure; he also needed to look like a reformer and he could not let his legacy be one of never having an on-time budget during his Governorship.

The actual budget process was fascinating to watch. The Governor gets credit for pushing open the leaders meetings which were held in the red room on the second floor of the Capitol and were actually open (we had to push our way into the first one). They included the two minority leaders so there were actually five men in a room and perhaps five is their lucky number because the minority leaders did seem to have a calming effect on the usually caustic atmosphere around the Speaker and Governor. Having all the press and reform advocates in the room avoided stalemates or stonewalling. They could not just cross their arms and refuse to negotiate. A time frame was set up and followed. The joint budget conference committees were done in a very short time and were in many respects nothing more than a reporting mechanism to report what the staff had negotiated in private.

Rank and file legislators did get to articulate broad policy guidelines during these conferences and perhaps for now that is all that can be expected. The budget did get passed on the afternoon of March 31st in both houses. The atmosphere in both chambers was a little like a cross between New Year's Eve and the last

day of senior year in high school. The Speaker presided in the Assembly, the Comptroller sat on the floor (actually on the floor) watching in giddy anticipation (he has to certify the budget balanced). After the last budget bill passed there was a standing ovation for the staff of the Ways and Means committee who had been there for days including Easter weekend. The same procedure was replicated in the Senate with different players but the staff there also received a standing ovation. Clearly the leadership knows who to give credit to for the tenacious work of putting together a \$106.6 billion budget.

Following the April 1 deadline, when the spotlight receded, the hard negotiations for the “big” issues that had been taken off the table during the open process actually began. Yes, you guessed it, behind closed doors. Funding in the amount of \$1.1 billion was still out there for the TANF (temporary assistance to needy families), Environmental Protection Funds and HAVA money to fund voting machines and the statewide voter database along with Medicaid issues. Those issues did finally get resolved 11 days later and the budget was finally done. That scene was much more typical of the Legislature; it was done at night with the bills warm from the copying machine. Well, there’s always next year and this process was an immense improvement.

CFE funding was not done. The Governor has appealed the decision of State Supreme Court that had taken the recommendations of the Special Masters. That appeal will now go to the Appeals Court and then to the Court of Appeals. The Legislature did agree to \$880 million more in education funding in this budget, but they did not change the funding formula.

What does the League want out of the rest of the session? Our first priority is completion of HAVA implementation. The important issues of voting machine selection, disability access to polling places and verification of ID’s has yet to be done by the joint conference committees in the legislature. Right now the biggest problem is that the conference committees are not meeting and there is finger pointing about whose fault that is. The League has called for this committee to meet quickly and resolve the outstanding issues so that there can be adequate poll worker and voter education done before the 2006 election. There is speculation that the ID verification legislation is so politically contentious that it will be one of the last pieces of legislation done in the session. STAY TUNED.

The League also wants lobby reform, ethics reform and public authorities reform. There has been legislation introduced in both houses of the Legislature, but there is a sense that these issues may be kept until next year, which is again an election year.

Annual Meeting Dinner Menu

1. Parmesan Risotto with Grilled Vegetables or
2. Chicken Saltimbocca (chicken cutlet with prosciutto/sage)

\$19.00 per person

RSVP to Katie Henrikson by May 20th

NYS LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS STATE CONVENTION IN ALBANY!

WHEN: May 20-22, Opening plenary session will convene at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 21
WHERE: Desmond Hotel, Albany
WHO: League members and delegates from across the state will be attending
WHAT: Events include plenary sessions, chances to learn about administrative issues and to hear from prominent women (**including Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton, Chief Judge Judith Kaye, and LWVUS President Kay Maxwell**) on a variety of issues.

Message from the Convention Chair –

Whether this year's Convention will be your first or your 51st, it promises to provide the opportunity for a full-immersion League experience as we renew our passion for League while taking care of business. Many events have been planned to ensure a well-deserved fun, informative, celebratory weekend.

To get off to a good start, those who arrive early on Friday will be able to enjoy a guided tour of the New York State Capitol with our own Barbara Bartoletti sharing the inside scoop. On Saturday evening you will have the opportunity to be entertained by Albany's political satire troupe, "OINK" (Only in New York), prior to our networking cocktail hour. Of course, the Awards Banquet that evening and our keynote address will cap off a very exciting day. In addition to these events, our Saturday luncheon, local Leagues "Moment in the Sun," and visits to our Silent Auction room as well as the hospitality suite, will provide lots of opportunities to become acquainted with other League members and build friendships.

I am delighted to announce that our national League president, Kay Maxwell, will be spending the entire weekend with us, so you should all have the chance to become acquainted with her. In addition, our esteemed Chief Judge of New York State, Judith Kaye, will be joining us for our judicial workshop and delivering comments for our opening plenary session on Saturday morning. Having covered the executive and judicial areas, we have rounded out our program with Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton!

As you can see, we have a very full agenda planned and know the final measure of success now rests in your hands. Please plan to attend this Convention and encourage as many of your members as possible to come as well. We hear so frequently that one of the best parts about League is its members – lets all take advantage of this great opportunity to get acquainted!

*Sincerely,
Martha Kennedy, Convention Chair*

VOLUNTEERS, VISITORS AND OBSERVERS ARE WELCOME!

Registration details and costs for attending various events/sessions are posted on the state League website at <http://www.lwvny.org> or call Stephanie at LWVNY, 465-4162



Not planning to attend the whole LWVNYS Convention this year?
Please come and join us for the FUN!!!

League members and guests are invited to attend our Saturday hospitality events:

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Lunch w/guest Hillary Rodham Clinton 12:30-2:00 pm
 OINK Performance 6:00-7:00 pm
 Cocktail Party (cash bar) 7:00-8:00 pm
 Awards Banquet 8:00-10:00 pm

Join us for the networking lunch
 w/ special guest:
Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton !!!

Don't Miss the Live Saturday Night Performance of OINK!!



Only in New York (OINK!) is a political comedy troupe that turns state and national headlines into punchlines and song parodies. **OINK** has performed its smart, silly, nonpartisan show for dozens of major associations at annual dinners, fundraisers, "lobby days" and other events. Some of our clients have enjoyed the show so much, they've asked us back two or three times!

And please remember, OINK is **FIRMLY** committed to taking a nonpartisan approach, unless we find out there's more money to be made by being partisan!



PRICE LIST

- Package 1 - Saturday Lunch, Member \$50
- Package 2 - Saturday Lunch, Non-Member \$75
- Package 3 - Saturday Evening, Banquet, OINK and cocktail party \$75
- Package 4 - Saturday Evening, OINK and cocktail party \$35
- Package 5 - Saturday Evening, OINK only \$20

<u>Attendee Name</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>	<u>Package Number(s)</u>	<u>Price</u>
_____	_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	_____	\$ _____
_____	_____	_____	\$ _____
Total Enclosed			\$ _____

My check is enclosed (payable to LWVNYS), *or please*
 Charge My: Master Card Visa AmEx

Card Number: _____ Exp Date: ____ / _____

Cardholder Name: _____

Signature: _____

All payments must be made to LWVNYS by May 15, 2005

(Please attach additional names on separate sheet if necessary)

Phone:
518-465-4162
Fax:
(credit cards only)
518-465-0812
Mail to:
LWVNYS
35 Maiden Lane
Albany, NY 12207

Tickets will be available for pickup at the Convention Registration Desk

2005 Membership Form

I want to get involved !

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
about the League of Women Voters

Mail to :

League of Women Voters
of Albany County

P.O. Box 611
Slingerlands, NY 12159

Linda McKenna
Tel: 463-1805

Or contact:

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

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