



Commentator

APRIL 2014

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 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

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

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2014		CALENDAR
APRIL		
1	Tues. 7:15 PM	LWV MHR Board Meeting , home of Shirley Kobran, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine, 845-382-6989
3	Thurs. 2 PM	Resource Development Committee Meeting. Home of Margaret Sellers, 80 Ringtop Rd, Kingston. Confirm date, time, location: 339-3180 or 340-2003
8	Tues. 6:30 PM	Consensus meeting on the LWVUS AGRICULTURE UPDATE Esopus Town Library, 128 Canal St., Port Ewen (just off 9W, immediately south of Kingston). Help us share our opinions with those of other Leagues across the U.S. on current agricultural issues. Free light supper provided.
11	Fri. 10:00 AM	Shared Services Study Committee , home of Suzi Stoller, 27 Brentwood Drive, Poughkeepsie, 845-462-6798, suzi.stoller@gmail.com
14 – 20		Passover through Easter Sunday
21	Mon. 8:30 – 9 AM	Listen to LWV members on Kingston Community Radio on WGHQ, AM 920. Go to www.mykcr.org to listen to it on your computer. Call 845-331-1004 to ask a question or make a comment. We are guests every 3 rd Monday of the month from 8:30 – 9 pm. TOPIC this month: Earth Day
MAY		
1	Thurs. 4:30 – 7 PM	May Day Party at the Kirkland Hotel, 1899 national landmark structure and cornerstone of Kingston's Stockade Area Historic District. An appreciation party for LWV members and prospective members plus allies and other friends. info@lwvmidhudson.org or 845-340-2003.
6	Tues. 7:15 PM	LWV MHR Board Meeting , home of Shirley Kobran, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine, 845-382-6989
8	Thurs. 2 PM	Resource Development Committee Meeting. Home of Margaret Sellers, 80 Ringtop Rd, Kingston. Confirm date, time, location: 339-3180 or 340-2003
13	Tues. 5:30 PM	LWV Materials Management (Solid Waste) Study Committee , Gateway Diner Rt 9W just north of the Mid-Hudson Bridge, Highland. For info or to confirm: Cindy Lanzetta, 845-236-7288 or packback56@yahoo.com
19	Mon. 8:30 - 9 AM	Listen to LWV members on Kingston Community Radio on WGHQ, AM 920. Go to www.mykcr.org to listen to it on your computer. Call 845-331-1004 to ask a question or make a comment. We are guests every 3 rd Monday of the month from 8:30 – 9 pm. TOPIC this month: LWV Students Inside Albany
22	Thurs. 4 – 7 PM	LWV-MHR ANNUAL MEETING. Business meeting details included in this Commentator. Speakers and the location in New Paltz being confirmed. Details in next Commentator and on website soon. Tentative meeting place: Reformed Church of New Paltz, 92 Huguenot St, New Paltz, NY 12561

PREZ SEZ...

As the winter winds and snows fade into memory, it's lovely to be thinking of farms and food and we have a lot of both for you.

Re farms, we've been busy trying to wrap our heads around big issues in agriculture that are the subject of an update of our national LWV agriculture position. Please look over the information in this Commentator - especially the conversation we just had with some farming "stars" in our MHR community - and plan to attend the April 8th consensus meeting.

Re food, we're feeding you three times in the next two months! First, we'll have a light supper at the consensus meeting (4/8), then we'll have appetizers and wine and more at the May Day Party (5/1), and finally Main Street Bistro will be catering our annual meeting in New Paltz again (5/22).

Food always adds a festive air to the good talk and makes these especially good events to bring prospective members to so please don't come alone! It's spring, folks. Let's party!

Dare**MEMBERSHIP
NEWS**

Monthly Board meeting minutes and more can be found at: <http://lwvmidhudson.org/Committees.html>

ANNUAL MEETING: SEE NOTICE AT END OF THIS ISSUE

The Ulster County Chamber of Commerce picked **Barbara and Joe Cohen** as Honorary Irish People of the Year at the annual Peter B. Mathews Irish Person of the Year breakfast held on March 17. Barbara is a current member of the league and both she and Joe have been long supporters of the LWVMHR. Congratulations to both!

VOTER SERVICE**Moderating
Guidelines**

Guidelines for moderating and sponsorship of candidates' events by the League are our website at <http://lwvmidhudson.org/Moderating.html> or from the [Home](#) page and the [Elections](#) page.

**Naturalization
Ceremony**

The first naturalization ceremony of the year will be held Friday, March 28 at the Ulster County Court House on Wall Street. The LWVMHR will again participate by handing out voter registration information. The league is an integral part of this ceremony and we are always so moved and gratified from doing so. But, do we ever fully understand and appreciate the long path toward citizenship that all candidates must travel before that proud day when they are declared United States citizens?

Since the LWVMHR are standing guests on Gary Bischoff's morning show (Kingston Community Radio on WGHQ, AM 920) every third Monday of the month, we thought it would be a great opportunity to learn more about the naturalization process by interviewing league member and Ulster County Clerk, Nina Postupack. Nina was responsible for bringing the naturalization ceremony back to Ulster County after an absence of 18 years. Prior to this, Ulster County residents had to travel to Manhattan to be sworn in. And since reintroducing the ceremony locally, it is now scheduled four times a year, naturalizing upwards of 200 individuals a year. Some facts we learned: It can take up to three years or more to become a citizen. You do need to pass a test that requires a working knowledge of U.S History, the Constitution and political system. The application fees, fingerprinting and other certification requirements add up to \$680. An ability to understand, read and write the English language is required. Felons need not apply. Probably most on the minds of those who are thinking of becoming citizens is how to start the process and what help is available for passing the test? To find out all the information needed, one should go on-line to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services at www.USCIS.gov.

The ceremony begins at noon but league members should be at the court house at 10:45 to be able to greet individuals as they pass their last hurdle, certification by immigration examiners that they have met all the requirements to become a United States citizen. That is our opportunity to congratulate them and to hand out voter registration material. If interested in volunteering for this rewarding event, contact Jean McGarry, 336-6622.

**PROGRAM
NEWS****MAY DAY PARTY - Mark Your Calendar
Thursday, May 1, 4:30 - 7 pm, Kirkland Hotel, Kingston**

Is it over yet? Let's hope by May 1st we can really celebrate the end of this bad winter and make up for the holiday party we didn't have!

Watch your mailbox for an invitation to this special event - this time at the beautiful and historic Kirkland Hotel in Kingston, between the County Office Building and the Stockade Area Historic District. And note that for a change we're trying a weekday evening.

The party is free to all members, allies, special friends - and potential members. If you'd like to help by bringing a dish or beverage or by lending a hand at the event, just let us know at 845-340-2003. But mostly, just please plan to come. It's always a happy time.

STUDY AND ADVOCACY**LWVUS
Agriculture
Update Study****WHAT SHOULD BE THE LWVUS POSITION ON AGRICULTURE?
6:30 - 9 pm, Tuesday, April 8**

Town of Esopus Library, 128 Canal Street, Port Ewen
(just off 9W) (845-338-5580 for directions)

Join us at 6:30 for a light supper and a discussion on farming, with the goal of reaching consensus on how to update our LWVUS Agriculture position. You'll find the full Consensus Questions at the end of this issue.

**Interview with
Farm Experts -
Mark Adams &
Jerry Cosgrove**

The League's Agriculture Study Committee* met with two farming experts on March 25th in preparation for the April 8th consensus meeting on the LWVUS Agriculture Update.

Mark Adams of the Adams Fairacre Farms family manages the extensive greenhouses on the family's original farm. He is also president of the Dutchess, Putnam and Westchester Farm Bureau and a member of the Farm Bureau's state board.

The Farm Bureau is an advocacy organization for farmers. "We want anything that will help farmers," said Mark, and he stressed that this means all farmers, from small to large operators. Its main activity is talking with policy makers. Started in 1916, the Bureau is four years older than the League, and like LWV, it's a grassroots organization that represents its members' agreed-upon views. There are 6.2 million members, 24,000 of them in NY and 800 in his 3-county chapter. "You don't have to be a farmer to join, you just have to like to eat," Mark quipped as he passed out membership brochures.

Mark stressed that the U.S. food supply is the healthiest and most affordable in the world. As net exporters, farmers contribute greatly to the trade balance. Local exports include apples, maple products, cabbage, and dairy products, including yogurt.

Jerry Cosgrove, the associate director of the New World Foundation's Local Economies Project, is working at the former Gill Farm in Hurley. The former sweet-corn-only farm is becoming a training and research center that will provide a "food hub" to support and strengthen a sustainable regional food system, and this year it will be farming a variety of cover crops. The farm was bought for New World by the NoVo Foundation headed by Peter Buffett (Warren's son) and Peter's wife, Jennifer. NoVo's mission is "to foster a transformation from a world of domination and exploitation to one of collaboration and partnership." The Local Economies Project supports "vibrant, interconnected communities that are powered by the people who live there."

Because Jerry's organization's goals are social as well as economic, there was a friendly tension between him and Mark, a businessman who said the Bureau wants to "keep the government from messing up what we're doing." That said, both men clearly see a role for the federal government. The Bureau totally supported the recently passed Farm Bill and Jerry said that the recent bill was definitely moving in the direction the League's original 1988 Agriculture Position was recommending. Both agreed that direct payments to farmers have been replaced by a much greater emphasis on insurance and Mark pointed out that Northeastern farmers never really got direct payments anyway, so this is good.

The men were asked to zero in on the first set of consensus questions having to do with the economic health of agriculture (printed elsewhere in this Commentator). Mark immediately questioned the word "subsidized" in relation to loans, saying they have to be paid back in full, with interest. He had to agree that insurance is subsidized but in his experience most local farmers "don't make a nickel off crop insurance." It's to be seen whether this will improve once the new Farm Bill is implemented. Organic farmers, who are well-organized, had a big win concerning insurance in the new bill and will be paid back at a higher price if they lose their crop. He said that even if insurance is helpful, disaster assistance will still be needed for all farmers.

Both men agreed that the government has an important role to play in soil and water management -

e.g. EQIP, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. EQIP and conservation programs have been increased in the new Farm Bill. But Mark stressed that farmers don't want the government involved in animal management. It's best if consumers drive changes in this – e.g. McDonalds is pressuring its meat suppliers to use better methods because its customers are pressuring them for this. Farmers do listen to veterinarians, however.

Re GMOs and genetic engineering (GE) in general, Mark said that farmers see this as the new frontier – “We're all for GMOs.” GE has many impacts that everyone likes such as decreased use of pesticides and herbicides. He said he understands the public's concerns, however, and agrees there “definitely needs to be a middle ground.” Both men agreed that the government needs to support genetic and other research and unfortunately the government is cutting back on this – something Jerry called “a growing crisis.” Mark said that other countries (Brazil, China, etc.) may well steal away our geneticists if we don't support them.

We chuckled at Mark's use of the phrase “crop protectants” for pesticides, saying that if people follow the label instructions, they're safe. But a big problem he's found is that people don't believe the EPA and the FDA when they say a product is safe.

Mark also said that “huge corporations” and “factory farms” are put-down phrases but they aren't necessarily bad. “We just have to stop trying to get the cheapest possible food,” and he agreed that unless farmers are required to use socially-responsible methods, the profit motive will rule.

We then turned our attention to Jerry who talked more about the food hub. When asked who his stakeholders are, he said “everyone.” He also listed many partners, particularly educational and environmental non-profits. He said the Farm Bill needs to do a better job of supporting regional food but he agreed that to feed the world, we need both industrial and regional agriculture. That said, regional is particularly good for the Northeast and we'd “benefit nationally from a stronger interconnected web of regional markets.” He pointed out that only 1% of the food market is local so there's a lot of room for growth, but getting local food into the wholesale market “is really tough.”

Mark said that Adams has a lot of trouble buying local - too many phone calls, prices too high, unreliable suppliers, etc. He said that chefs at mainstream restaurants tell him the same thing. They work hard just keep the restaurant going and need food buying to be simple. Adams also needs a lot of any one kind of produce, something local farmers can't always supply. Also, the Adams buyer has figured out that customers are not usually willing to pay more than 15% more for local food. Jerry said that the food hub will be trying to address these issues.

Both men agreed that the cost of labor is the toughest issue in farming because our food is too cheap – immigration reform is sorely needed. Of course we pointed out that the League agrees! Mark also pointed out that the introduction of interstates and refrigerated trucks are another reason that regional markets don't work well. Get rid of those, and your business will really take off, he jokingly advised Jerry.

Jerry pointed out that in looking at agricultural issues it's best not to think first of “what” but to start with “why” and then move to “how.” He praised the League for having a conversation such as we were having – most people don't take the time to think the whole topic through.

He also said that climate change is a huge issue for farmers, and a threat to insurance-based solutions to farm problems, and it's not really being addressed at all by the government. Fortunately we're luckier here than many parts of the U.S. but even in more threatened places like California, the efforts to address this are minimal.

We asked Jerry if there are any efforts to address the growth of super-sized farms through anti-trust legislation and he said no. But “the government may need to be more vigilant if it's not going to break up the big businesses.” He mentioned revenue insurance as something that smaller, diversified farms need the most. Unless you have a single crop, it's really hard to make most crop insurance programs work.

At this point we had been talking for almost three hours and we thanked both men enthusiastically and released them to their good work!

Study Committee members present: Sherret Chase, Vic Melville, Anne Needham, Margaret Sellers, Dare Thompson, Dorothy Winrow

**Materials
Management
Committee
(Solid Waste)**

The Materials Management/Solid Waste Committee met on March 11th. We are drafting a letter to new Ulster County legislators to give them some background information on the 2013 Flow Control legislation and to let them know our committee is a resource for them. We were pleased to have one of the new legislators (and one of our committee members), Manna Jo Greene, meet with us and offer advice.

We are working with CRREO at SUNY New Paltz on scheduling another informational session on waste reduction and zero waste in late September or early October.

The Committee is continuing the work to encourage other county governments to support paint stewardship legislation at the state level. We hope to meet with Dutchess County legislators soon.

Our next meeting is scheduled for May 13th, 5:30 pm, at the Gateway Diner, Rt. 9W in Highland. We welcome anyone who would like to join us!

Respectfully submitted, Cindy Lanzetta, Chairperson

ULSTER COUNTY OBSERVER CORP

Audio recordings, addenda and minutes of Legislative Committee meetings can be found at <http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/legislature/committeesinfo/index.html>

BECOME A MEMBER OF OUR OBSERVER CORPS

Get to know your local government in a personal way! Strengthen local democracy by adding "sunlight" to the legislative process and publishing what you observe in our Commentator! While county meetings are our priority, you may observe your town or city board meetings if you prefer. *We will guide you, so you do not need to be an expert to get started.*

Call Margaret Sellers at 339-3180 with your questions.

**Laws and Rules,
Governmental
Services
Committee**

March 17, 2014, 6:02 – 6:43 PM, Karen L. Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building

Committee Members:

Richard A. Parete, Chairman, Kevin A. Roberts, Deputy Chairman, Kenneth J. Ronk, David B. Donaldson, Lynn Archer; Other legislator: Tracey Bartels

Meeting called to order by the Chairman Parete, and approval of January 29, 2014 and February 18, 2014 minutes.

Resolutions for March 18, 2014

Resolution No. 54.1 – First Reading – Amending The Rules of Order to Require Participation on Standing Committees. Provisions of this resolution were discussed and debated at the committee's Special Meeting on March 4, 2014. Following a discussion, at this regular meeting, on legislative policy, practice and process the resolution failed by vote to advance.

Resolution No. 81 – Denying Use Of The County Seal Or Any Other Ulster County Identification With Regard To The New York Safe Act. Following a discussion of the provisions of this resolution and related documents action on the resolution is postponed pending further clarifying information of its intent and meaning.

Resolution No. 84 – Confirming Appointment Of Member To The Ulster County Board Of Ethics. Approved.

Resolution No. 90 – Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute A Contract With The New York State Board Of Elections For Reimbursement Of Funds Expended For Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Compliance – Board Of Elections. Approved.

Resolution No. 113 (LATE) – Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute An Agreement With The Social Security Administration, Or Other Designated Federal Entity, To Provide Office Space To The Social Security Administration For The Continuation Of Services. Approved.

New Business: Legislator Donaldson discussed dealing with charter changes and he is to send a list of possible changes, and Legislator Lynn Archer has a list of items sent to her by Vickie Fabella.

LWV Observer: Vic Melville, 3/21/14

**Economic
Development,
Tourism, Housing,
Planning & Transit
Committee**

March 4, 2014, 6:38 – 7:30 (approx.) PM, Karen L. Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building
Committee Members: Thomas J. Briggs, Chairman, James F. Maloney, Deputy Chairman, Chris Allen, Lynn Archer, Herbert Litts, III, Mary Beth Maio, Hector S. Rodriguez
Meeting called to order by Chairman Briggs, and approval of February 4, 2014 meeting minutes.

Resolutions for March 18, 2014:

Resolution No. 10 - Opposing The Granting Of A PILOT Agreement By The Ulster County Industrial Development Agency For The Park Point New Paltz Application. Postponed following a discussion of some of the issues and pending a public hearing.

Resolution No. 96, Resolution No. 99, Resolution No. 106, Resolution No. 107, Resolution No. 109, Resolution No. 110, Resolution No. 111. All approved following brief comments.

Resolution No. 108 - Designating The Ulster County Department of Tourism as The Official Tourism Promotion Agency Of Ulster County – Department of Tourism. Rick Remsnyder, Director, discussed the recent Travel Guide award and status of tourism (up 22%) and current advertizing activities. Mr. Briggs asked about higher revenues. Approved.

New Business: Mr. Steve Rice, Rail Trail Advisory Committee, gave a brief update and short discussion of the Walkway connection (in response to a comment of Legislator Rodriguez), in anticipation of a presentation to the committee in April.

LWV Observer, Vic Melville, 3-21-14

**Energy and
Environment
Committee**

March 17, 2014, 6:50 – 8:50 PM , Karen L. Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building
Committee Members:
Tracey A. Bartels, Chairman, Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr., Deputy Chairman, Manna Jo Greene, Richard A. Parete, Mary Wawro

Meeting called to order by Chairman Bartles, approval of February 11, 2014 meeting minutes.

RRA Report: Tim Rose, Executive Director, Resource Recovery Agency. Mr. Rose briefly discussed recent finances, volumes and rates. There was a brief discussion of the status of the county's solid waste management plan (SWMP) review where the county is next in line by the DEC. Mr. Rose also briefly discussed items on the agenda of the next RRA board meeting.

Kate Hudson, Watershed Program Director, and Dan Shapley, Membership and events Manager, Riverkeeper. Ms. Hudson led a presentation of Crude Oil "Virtual Pipeline" in Ulster County. They discussed with committee the barge and rail transportation system, the risks in the Hudson River and Ulster County, and actions the Federal and State are taking, and actions Ulster County and the legislature are encouraged to take. They also discussed the role of Riverkeeper.

Resolutions for March 18, 2014:

Motion: Resolution No. 99 - Authorizing The Chairman Of The Ulster County Legislature To Execute A Cooperative Agreement With The New York State Department Of Conservation For The Implementation Of Environmental Benefit Projects On The Lower Esopus As Provided For In The DEC Order On Consent - Amending The 2014-2019 Capital Program - Establishing Capital Project No. 407 - Lower Esopus Environmental Benefits Project – Department Of Planning. Approved following a discussion of the role of the DEC.

Old Business:

RRA Bonding Resolution – Update

Appointments (Status): Climate Smart Committee. Discussion of a resolution and prospective members. Energy Improvement Corporation. Discussion of the status of this subject following the discussion of the previous committee meeting.

LWV Observer: Vic Melville, 3/21/14

**Legislative
Programs,
Education and
Community
Services
Committee**

March 5, 2014 5:30 – 6:15 (approx.) PM, Howard C. St. John Business Seminar Room (Room 118), Clinton Building

Committee Members:

David B. Donaldson, Chairman, Mary Wawro, Deputy Chairman, Lynn Archer, Donald J. Gregorius, Craig V. Lopez; Other Attendees: Kenneth Crannell, UC Deputy County Executive; Donald C. Katt, President, UCCC; Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration; Lee Reidy, Executive Director Cornell Cooperative Extension; Eve Madalengoitia, Director Arts Mid-Hudson; Richard Heyl De Ortiz, Executive Director CASA; R. Michael Lamoree, Executive Director Community Action Committee; Michael Berg, Exec. Director Family Of Woodstock, Inc.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Donaldson, and approval of Minutes of February 12, 2014.

- Arts Mid-Hudson – Eve Madalengoitia, Director of Programs

UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors

- Ulster County Community Action – Michael Lamoree, Exec. Director
- CASA – Richard Heyl de Ortiz, Exec. Director
- Ulster County Library Association – James Cosgrove, President & Margie Menard, Treasurer
- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County – Lee Reidy, Exec. Director
- Ulster County Community College – Donald C. Katt President, Mark Komdat, Dean of Administration

Brief discussions by the representatives of the above organizations.

All proposed resolutions approved.

The April committee meeting will be held at the Ulster County Community Action location.

LWV Observer, Vic Melville, 3-21-14

The March 18, 2014 meeting of the UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors was convened at 8:35 by President, Carl Chipman, Supervisor, Town of Rochester.

Eleven of the towns were represented. Additionally, Legislator Maloney, Chief of Staff Reiter, and Terrence Ward of the Shawangunk Journal were present.

While Tim Rose of the RRA had commenced his talk, he agreed to delay it to enable County Executive Michael Hein to begin his (he had been originally scheduled to lead off).

Mr. Hein noted that there were three plans involving property tax: the governor's, the senate's, and the assembly's. There seemed to be a concern that this must be carefully handled or it could tie the ability of the county levels to work together to reach a desired agreeable goal.

He then suggested to the group that he was not there just to talk, but also to listen to any ideas or concerns that the members might have and wish to bring up.

Shared services (some of the towns already engage in this process), broadband coverage via Time-Warner, tax cap and its effect on towns to perform various functions were some of the areas referenced.

Mr. Hein indicated there needs to be a plan, there needs to be a meeting to come up with what will be good for everyone. Those who made suggestions appeared to agree with him.

He also urged the group members to talk with their state representatives about these matters.

Mr. Rose then began his talk referencing that there had had been a contract for 20 years, and then some extensions of this document. At this point he is apparently looking to the towns to advise what they want going forward with a new contract. He said he is willing to meet with them as a group or individually in order to reach an agreement. Some of the supervisors raised some questions particularly about costs which he answered.

However, it was necessary for this writer to leave at this point.

Note: Prior to the commencement of the meeting a notice was distributed: Power Grid Issues in the Hudson Valley: Part II: UC Legislative Chambers, 244 Fair Street, Kingston, Monday, March 24, 7-9 PM, Moderator: Carl Chipman, Rochester Town Supervisor.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Addenda to the article on March article of Women's History Month-2014

Note that while Major General Michelle Johnson was appointed by the president to the position of Superintendent of the US Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colorado, her appointment had yet to be confirmed by the US Senate. At the same time that she was later confirmed, she became Lieutenant-General, which was a requirement for being superintendent. She assumed the duties in that position with her promotion as of August 12, 2013.

With regards to the material on Mary Barra, the first female CEO of General Motors and the compensation she was to receive, an article appeared in the Christian Science Monitor 2-11-14 which addressed this point.

Apparently, she is to receive \$14.4 million, which is 58% more than her predecessor, Dan Akerson, received (\$9 million). It was broken down as follows: annual salary \$1.6 million; short term incentive compensation \$2.8 million; and long term compensation of \$10 million. The latter item had apparently not been included in the filing, as required, with the Security & Exchange Commission in January, 2014.

Lee Cane

ANNUAL MEETING	Thursday, May 22, 2014, 4:00-7:00 pm, Reformed Church of New Paltz, 92 Huguenot St, New Paltz, NY 12561	
Nominating Committee Report: Election of Directors, Officers & Nominating Committee	Directors	Officers
	Cindy Lanzetta (14-16) Esther Stickley (14-16) Margaret Sellers (14-16)	Co-presidents: Dare Thompson and Jolanda Jansen (14-16) Secretary: Irene McInnis (14-16)
	Continuing: Shirley Kobran (13-15) Lee Ridgway (13-15) Soyal Smalls (13-15)	Continuing: Vice-President: Anne Needham to fill-out term of Jolanda Jansen (14-15) Treasurer: Dorothy Winrow (13-15)
	Nominating Committee	
	Jean McGarry	Jim McGarry
Programs	Program Proposals	
	1. Continuing: Shared Services and Studies of Materials Management (Solid Waste)	
	2. New: none	

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2014-2015

Fiscal Year is June 1 - May 31

	Actual Totals 6/1/2012 to 05/31/13	Actual Totals 6/1/13 to 03/11/14	Adopted Budget 6/1/2013 to 05/31/14	Proposed Budget 6/1/2014 to 05/31/15
Income				
Individual Dues	3125	1550.00	3150	3150
Household Dues	1225	875.00	1200	1200
Interest	38.71	29.08	50	40
Contributions: Gen Fund	1575.38	1506.66	900	1300
Contributions: Ed Fund	1275	1000.00	1800	1300
Fundraising	4545	200.00	4500	3650
Ads/Sponsorships	0	0.00	500	0
Voter Service	345	65.00	300	300
TOTAL	12129.09	5225.74	12400	10940
Expenses				
Operations, phone,web	941.76	364.00	1200	1200
Organizational Activities	1173.01	0.00	650	650
Educational Activities	652.24	549.00	1210	1200
Public Programs	29.71	125.80	400	400
Delegates	549.52	64.00	800	800
Comm Printing	587.86	254.52	600	400
Comm. Mailing	338.7	138.80	350	200
LWVNYS	1539	1485.00	1539	1440
LWVUS	2650.35	2557.50	2651	2450
Fundraising	1689.59	33.26	3000	2200
TOTAL	10151.74	5571.88	12400	10940
SURPLUS	1977.35		0	0

WHAT SHOULD BE THE LWVUS POSITION ON AGRICULTURE?

6:30 – 9 pm, Tuesday, April 8

Town of Esopus Library, 128 Canal Street (just off 9W), Port Ewen (845-338-5580 for directions)

Join us at 6:30 for a light supper and a discussion on farming, with the goal of reaching consensus on how to update our LWVUS Agriculture position. So many technological, economic, and other changes have happened since League members reached consensus on the current position in 1988 (think huge single-product farms, population growth, GMOs, climate change, “the “slow food” movement, and so much more), and we hope to address these.

In brief, the 1988 position states that we believe “that federal agriculture policies should promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers, farms that are economically viable, farm practices that are environmentally sound, and increased reliance on the free market to determine prices.” To see the full Agriculture position and related LWVUS positions on the environment, go to <http://www.lwv.org/content/agriculture-policy> and <http://www.lwv.org/content/other-related-lwvus-positions>. If you want to learn more about the topics we’ll be discussing, go to <http://www.lwv.org/member-resources/agriculture-update>.

HOW WE’LL PROCEED: After the Agriculture Update study committee shares information with the attendees, we will all try to answer the following questions. While the general public is welcome to attend the meeting, only members (including brand new ones) can participate in the consensus discussion itself. Our responses will be sent to LWVUS where they will be analyzed along with those from other leagues around the U.S. LWVUS will then revise the Agriculture position to reflect this member input.

Unless otherwise indicated, all answers are “yes,” “no,” or “no consensus.” We can add brief comments with these responses if we choose.

ECONOMIC HEALTH OF THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR (Members should answer from the perspective of their state and local agricultural region.)

1. Should government financial support for agriculture be directed to:

- Subsidized agricultural credit (loans)
- Disaster assistance
- Crop insurance
- Farms that supply local and regional markets
- Subsidized implementation of best management practices
- Commodity crop programs, e.g., corn, soybeans, sugar, cotton, wheat
- Commodity livestock program
- Commodity dairy program
- Specialty crops, e.g. fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc.
- Other production methods, e.g. organic, hydroponic, urban, etc. farms

2. What changes should government make regarding direct payment programs to farm operators? Note: Farm operators can be anything between family farms to huge corporations.

- Eliminate direct payments to farm operators
- Update the rules for direct payments to farm operators to support sustainability
- Broaden the types of farms that are eligible
- Broaden the types of crops that are eligible
- Effectively enforce existing rules

3. What changes to current crop insurance programs should government make?

- Extend to more types of crops
- Link to the use of conservation practices
- Limit insurance for the cultivation of marginal and environmentally sensitive land
- Cap amount of premium subsidy to a single farm operator (*see note in question 2*)

4. Should government act on any of the following?

- Revise anti-trust legislation to ensure competitive agricultural markets
- Enforce anti-trust laws as they relate to agriculture
- Promote alternative marketing systems, including regional hub markets, farmer cooperatives, farm markets, etc.

ANIMAL MANAGEMENT**5. Which of the following approaches to animal management should government achieve?**

- A. Transparently collect and disclose data about regulated animal feeding operations (AFOs) or aquaculture operations and about the health of animals in such regulated operations.
- B. Apply and enforce existing clean air and clean water regulations to animal or seafood management facilities.

6. Which of the following approaches to animal waste management should government require or bring about?

- A. Treat animal waste with environmentally sound technologies for all regulated AFOs
- B. Prioritize federal funds to mitigate existing environmental challenges (such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program, cost share, loans, etc.) rather than construction of new facilities.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Research and development (R&D) uses science and engineering to gain a basic understanding of processes and structures of organisms, to create new products or processes for agriculture, to determine health and safety of a product, to determine the environmental impact of a product or process, to develop conservation methods, and to improve efficiency, among other things. R&D utilizes scientific methods and statistical testing to achieve valid repeatable results.

Private corporations, universities, consulting organizations and laboratories, and government agencies perform agricultural R&D. Agricultural research by public universities began in 1862 when the Morrill Act established land grant universities across the United States; much of the basic research on agriculture was developed through these universities. Private R&D is generally more applied than basic and is motivated by the desire to produce a profitable product. Government agencies review this private research when regulatory approval for a product or process is required. And many government agencies conduct their own research.

7. Which of the following approaches to research and development (R&D) should government fund or accomplish?

Note: For the purpose of these questions and some questions below, “developed using any new technology” or “new technologies” refer to any of many scientific processes for developing new crops or animals with genetic engineering, nanotechnology or other new techniques, which are not the traditional breeding or hybridization techniques.

- A. Basic research
- B. Independent third-party (such as an academic institution) risk assessment of products developed using any new technology
- C. Research to assess the impacts of new technologies on human health and the environment, prior to their widespread adoption
- D. Research that advances the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems
- E. Seed banking, research, and other means that promote and preserve genetic diversity
- F. Both transparency in the reporting of research studies related to approval of new products and respect for intellectual property rights of private enterprises engaged in research
- G. Research on long-term effects of new crops, products and processes
- H. Development of new practices and technologies to promote conservation for all types of farms

FOOD SAFETY

8. Which of the following approaches to food safety should government perform or fund?

- A. Clarify and enforce pre-market testing requirements for new foods and food additives developed using any new technology (see note below question 7)
- B. Require developers to monitor all food products developed using any new technology after releasing to the market
- C. Withdraw marketing approval if products are shown to be unsafe
- D. Require post-market monitoring of approved pharmaceutical applications in animal production for human health and environmental impacts
- E. Require developers of new products to provide data and other materials to independent third-parties (such as academic institutions) for pre- and post-market safety assessment as appropriate
- F. Limit use of antibiotics in animal production to treat and control disease
- G. Fund independent third-party (such as academic institutions) risk assessment of long-term and multiple exposures from foods on human health and the environment
- H. Promote crop management practices that decrease dependency on added chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers)
- I. Fund, train and add personnel for assessment and compliance functions of regulatory agencies

FOOD LABELING

9. How sufficient are the following regarding current food labeling?

- A. Nutrition Facts on food labels (Insufficient, Sufficient, Too much, No Consensus)
- B. Nutrition Facts on food labels as a means of consumer education (Insufficient, Sufficient, Too much, No Consensus)
- C. Common allergen labeling (Insufficient, Sufficient, Too much, No Consensus)
- D. Health and ingredient claims that consumers can understand (Insufficient, Sufficient, Too much, No Consensus)

10. Which of the following should government achieve regarding marketing and ingredient claims on food labels?

- A. Define (and approve for use) health and safety marketing terms (e.g. immunity support, humane, pasture-raised, natural, etc.)
- B. Regulate the use of images or other sensory advertising
- C. Require that ingredient marketing claims accurately represent what is in the required ingredient list

11. Recognizing that each food developed using any new technology can be unique, and assuming that required food labeling should be useful to consumers, should the following generalized information relating to how products or components are developed be presented on food labels? *See note below question 7. All these questions also assume some percentage threshold of new technology ingredients, such as the 0.9% used in the European Union.*

- A. Contains ingredients developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved (Not Recommended, Voluntary, Mandatory, No consensus)
- B. Does not contain ingredients developed using any new technology (Not Recommended, Voluntary, Mandatory, No consensus)
- C. If meat, fish, eggs, or dairy products are from animals that have consumed feed developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved (Not Recommended, Voluntary, Mandatory, No consensus)