



Commentator

AUGUST 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
AUGUST		
5	Tues. 7:15 PM	LWV MHR Board Meeting , home of Shirley Kobran, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine, 845-382-6989
12	Tues. 10 AM	Resource Development Committee meeting, home of Anne Needham, 86 Downs St., Kingston. Call 845-853-8474 for directions.
12	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
16	Sat. 9 - noon	REPAIR CAFÉ begins in Poughkeepsie. First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mill and Catherine Streets, Poughkeepsie. Bring your broken item for free help or just come as a volunteer helper or coach. The promotional flyer is at the end of this issue.
18	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. State Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk is usually on during the half hour before us.
SEPTEMBER		
2	Tues. 7:15 PM	LWV MHR Board Meeting , home of Shirley Kobran, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine, 845-382-6989
9	Tues. 5:30 PM	Salad Supper with our LWNYS expert on financing public education, Marian Bott at the Town of Esopus Library. Kick off the fall season with us and bring friends! All welcome. Ingredients for our salad and other potluck items appreciated.
15	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. We will have Tim Rose, Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency Executive Director, as our guest on this date.
19	Fri. 10 AM	Shared Services Study Committee , home of Suzi Stoller, 27 Brentwood Dr., Poughkeepsie. Call 845-462-6798 for directions. A current hot topic is high cost of fire and EMS services in Dutchess!

PREZ SEZ...

Now that the LWVMHR has co-presidents, I, Jolanda Jansen, will be writing the Prez Sez part of the commentator every other month.

Business first, our next salad supper will be September 9 at the Town of Esopus Library. Our speaker will be Marian Bott, the National League's Education Financing Specialist. Please join us as we return from summer, enjoy fresh food from our gardens and refocus our minds on the many political issues still to be "improved."

Now to a little history. August 26 is "Women's Equality Day" celebrating the day in 1920 when the 19th amendment granting women the right to vote was signed into law. This was after 72 years of hard work since the Seneca Falls Woman's Rights Convention in 1848.

As an immigrant, these dates are not part of my education. Going to school in New Zealand I learned that I was living in the first country in the world to give women the right to vote in 1893. Funny how I was taught to feel proud of that, even though I had nothing to do with it. Also, strictly speaking I was an immigrant there too, and the Netherlands, where I was born, granted women the right to vote at about the same time as the United States.

However, once I arrived in the United States, I became a citizen so that I could vote in School Board Elections and vote for School budgets, which brings us back to Education Financing.

I look forward to serving you all, and working together with Dare Thompson as we create our Co-Presidency.

Jolanda Jansen

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

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

On June 6, Jean McGarry and Jacki Moriarty congratulated 23 individuals on becoming United States citizens while distributing the League publication, *First Vote*, and voter registration forms. It's a proud moment for these new Americans and it's a proud moment for the League of Women Voters. Look in the Fall Commentator for the next Naturalization Ceremony and mark your calendar to be part of this very rewarding event.

ACTION AND ADVOCACY**2014 Local Report to LWNYS**

On June 6, local league members Jean McGarry, Jacki Moriarty, and Lee Ridgway interviewed Assemblyman Kevin Cahill. Below is a summary of the topics discussed and the responses of Mr. Cahill:

Election Reform:

On revising the paper ballot for usability- Requested that we leave information on this proposal since he needed to study it more in depth.

On early voting in New York- Supports but feels the process does not change the results but more importantly, increases participation.

On **The Women's Equality Agenda**- Supported

On the **Moratorium on Shale Gas Extraction and Labeling Hazardous Waste**- Is a co-sponsor.

We also asked our assemblyman his thoughts on the constitutional amendment concerning redistricting that will be voted on in November. In response, Mr. Cahill posed the question of who should be selected, adding that there is no such thing as "independent" when it comes to redistricting. What is key is "oversight." Asked about Campaign Finance Reform as passed as part of the budget process, Assemblyman Cahill replied that while he voted for it, he felt it was not good enough and that it needs to be more comprehensive.

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.

**Observer Corps -
Ulster County
Legislature Standing
Committee Items**

Vic Melville gave a presentation to the League Board Annual Planning Meeting on July 2, 2014. He highlighted current topics of energy and environment, economic development, legislative programs, and laws and rules of the respective Legislature standing committees.

Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (UCRRA)

Issues include the board appointment process, negotiating contracts with haulers and negotiating contracts with Towns. Since UCRRA is an independent authority, the board's relationship to the Legislature is awkward, which can get in the way of making progress. Many see a need to look at flow control for recyclables, single-stream, compostables, landfills (Manna Jo Greene speaks in favor of a local landfill to reduce travel), and regionalization of materials management.

UCRRA's solid waste management plan (SWMP) for the next two decades will soon be sent back from the NY Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for public review.

Tim Rose, UCRRA Executive Director, encourages the League have attendees at the UCRRA Board meetings.

SUNY Ulster

Issues include tuition increases and county contribution, NYS share, charge back to other counties.

Economic Development

Committee discussion about economic policy is coming up in late summer or early fall. Other issues include the Catskill Mountain Railroad and trail issues, and the Railroad Advisory Committee.

Charter Changes

Legislator David Donaldson advocates considering Charter changes. Minority Leader Ken Ronk is proposing changes to the Charter including Legislative term length (change from 2 year to 4 year, with a limit of terms), appointment of legislators to committees.

NOTE: Audio recordings of the committee meetings are available on the County Legislature website. The Daily Freeman and Kingston Times have reported on several of these topics and issues.

Vic Melville, Observer, 7-25-14

**UC Legislative Public
Health and Social
Services Committee**

The June 2, 2014 meeting of the Legislative Public Health and Social Services Committee was convened by Chairman, Legislator Lopez at 6:00 PM and adjourned at 7:30.

Present: Lopez, Belfiglio, Litts, Allen; Absent: Provenzano; Others: Deputy County Executive Crannell (left before the end of the meeting), Erica Guerin, Legislative Counsel, Nettie Tomshaw, Clerk to the Committee

Following the call to order, the chairman called for a vote on the March 31, 2014 minutes: passed.

There were three speakers who made presentations to the committee:

First: Kayse Diamond representing ProAct Inc. She is the communications Coordinator for this company. Her brief report noted the following:

the program the company offers was begun in St. Lawrence county and now has 51 counties in NYS which offer the prescription discount;

\$170 million dollars has been saved in NYS; \$2.5 million saved in Ulster County;

63,000 prescriptions handled.

She indicated that ProAct will send notices whenever Ulster County meets its milestones;
Pharmacy Benefit Management Company provides a discount card which can be used by those who have to pay full cash price;
There are no yearly fees;
The program is funded through the pharmacy providing the discount card, the funds come out of the pharmacy's profits.

The second speaker was the presentation of the Pride of Ulster County award to Justin Sparks:

Justin is an eleven year old boy who is from Walker Valley. While he and a classmate were having lunch at school, the friend began choking on his lunch; drinking water did not help;

Justin said that he told his friend to stand up, pull up his shirt; Justin put his arms around him and used the Heimlich method that saved his friend's life.

Chairman Lopez commented on how positive this event was; so much more important better than many of the other situations that are reported on like bullying.

Justin was then presented with the Pride of Ulster County Award.

The third presenter was Linda Rozzi representing the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA).

This was a lengthy presentation. Apparently, the primary concern of this group is that New York State and Connecticut are the only two states of 50 which do not recognize this professional group in the way the other 48 do. The presenter gave as a reason that NYS tends to be much more heavily/strictly regulated. A further point was that the AAMA feels it cannot move the group it represents forward as easily in NYS as in other states.

Ms. Rozzi did indicate that there are certified medical assistants in NYS who do secretarial work, EKGs, take lab specimens, draw blood, but can't administer prescriptions, remove sutures or perform allergy training (apparently all such items are performed in other states by CMAs).

CMAs take training, must pass a certification exam (apparently sufficiently difficult and demanding that many participants do not pass it the first time).

Legislator Lopez asked the presenter what the group was looking for as far as the legislative committee was concerned. From what was said, it appeared the presenter was trying to find out what would be their next step. It was suggested by Chairman Lopez that the group write a summary letter to Chairman of the County Legislature John Parete. Since there was a bill that had been presented in the last two years to the state legislature, the bill number should also be noted in that summary.

Further discussion among the committee members resulted in a very strong recommendation that the AAMA be sure to contact its local and state legislators state wide to explain the group's position and seek their support.

Following the presentations the committee then addressed the five resolutions:

Approved the execution of a contract over \$50,000 to provide PINS: case management service for those in need of case management services; county to provide 29% of costs: passed.

Approval of appointment of Ann Cardinale to a seat on the UC Board of Health: passed

Amended the county budget on behalf of the UCDSS to receive over \$200,000 from the state to use as a primary resource for the DSS in meeting child care subsidy needs of low-income families: passed

To accept additional funding from NYS Office of Mental Health for the operation of 8 additional supported housing beds: passed

To authorize Chairman of UC Legislature to enter into a lease agreement with Family Services, Inc. to lease space in the Trudy Resnick Farber Center for an annual cost of \$1,080: passed

Under New Business Legislator Belfiglio spoke about the North East Center for Special Care located in Lake Katrine. Over time it has recently received 3 accolades. Legislator Belfiglio suggested that perhaps it might be a good idea to recognize not only the North East Center but all the care facilities in Ulster County and possibly take a tour. The committee seemed to find this a positive approach. No final procedure was voted on.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

On June 30th the July meeting of the Legislative Public Health and Social Services Committee was convened by Chairman, Legislator Lopez at 6:02 and adjourned at 6:32. The next meeting will be Monday, August 4, 2014 at 6 PM.

Present: Lopez, Belfiglio, Litts, Allen (arrived after meeting started); Absent: Provenzano; Others: Ken Carannell, Deputy County Executive, Erica Guerin, Legislative Counsel, Nettie Tomshaw, Clerk to the Committee

Following the call to order, Chairman Lopez called for a vote on the minutes for the June 2, 2014 meeting. Passed.

There were three resolutions:

#256: To account for unused grant funds from 2013 the dollars were rolled over to 2014 which allows for use then in 2014. No county dollars are involved. Passed

#257: Dollars paid to Gateway Community Industries for training programs which it sponsors under the Food Stamp & Training Programs for the DSS. Passed

#258: To authorize a contract with the Jewish Board of Family and Children Services involving the placement of children in foster care being handled by this organization for DSS. The total sum is \$300,000 of which the county is responsible for 35% of that sum over a period of 30 months, and will involve two children.

The services also involve medical services. Children are placed in such facility that will meet the needs that the children have.

The contract involved is reviewed annually for compliance for verification of performance by the Jewish Board of Family and Children Services. This performance is reviewed by the group involved and the County Executive's staff. Passed

It was noted that Ida Gage, Senior Advocate, who was scheduled to attend and talk to the committee did not attend.

Under new business there was discussion on whether to invite the head of the brain trauma hospital located in Lake Katrine to talk with the committee; but no final decision appeared to be made as to when such an invitation would be made.

Mr. Crannell attended the Golden Hill anniversary occasion, found that it appeared to be doing quite well; very good comments generally; cosmetic improvements, technology (electronic record keeping has helped considerably); resident council president had positive comments; residents generally noted that the food was much better; short term rehab had been expanded, many are Medicare recipients; Health Alliance and Golden Hill have paired up on several areas.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

UC Board of Health

The June 9, 2014 meeting of the board was convened by Chairman, Dr. Marc Tack at 6:30 and adjourned at 7:23. The next meeting is July 14, 2014.

Present: Tack, Hilderbrandt, Graham, Kelly

Absent: Delma, Woodley

Other: Commissioner Dr. Smith, Medical Examiner Dr. Heller, Amy McCracken Deputy Commissioner of Mental Health, Katrina Kouhout, Secretary to Commissioner Smith and Clerk to the Board.

Following the approval of the March, 2014 and April, 2014 minutes the first order of business dealt with the Executive Order # 1-2010 Regarding Employment of Relatives. The Board members were instructed by Dr. Tack to read/review and then complete the final page and sign and return to the Commissioner's office.

The next order of business dealt with a request made to the Board to obtain copies of letters dealing with "Smart Meter" which apparently had been previously sent to the NYSDOH and the FCC. Per the discussion that followed it was suggested that there was a need to have a tag # supplied by the state and that a copy of the certification document that was acquired showing that the UC Board of Health had sent these letters to the NYSDOH be sent to the person making the request.

It was announced that Anne Cardinale had been appointed to the UC Board of Health by the County Executive Michael Hein. Her term of office begins July 1, 2014.

The following items were covered under Commissioner Smith's report:

-an extensive report of the mass gathering scheduled to occur at Winston Farm in Saugerties July 10,

2014-July 14, 2014 was provided. The permit to do this was granted to the Hudson Project, LLC the operator of Hudson Project Music and Arts Festival.

UC and its various departments have worked together and with NYS and the promoter very hard to make this event as safe and successful as possible for all who attend. There have been regular meetings involving the promoters, NYS Police, UC Sheriff's Department, County Planning, Emergency Coordination, County Executive, County Attorney and the UC Department of Health to accomplish this.

Maximum capacity is 23,000. Tickets are \$200. To ensure the capacity number, there is a ticket audit being done.. It was suggested that the high ticket price might cause there to be gate crashers; NYS Policy and UC Sheriff's Department are actively involved and fencing of the property is being done.

It was noted that violation of the permit by the promoter could lead to the permit being pulled by the Commissioner. Further, it was also noted that it is in the promoter's best interests to see that the event goes well and is successful so that future events could be more likely to be considered.

-DSRIP Program (Delivery System Reform Incentive Payment): This program refers to an effort to ensure that people do not go into hospitals when they do not need to: refers to the Medicaid program. Apparently the point is to reduce hospital admissions by 25% as such applies to those which are in fact avoidable. In return NYS will receive various sums of money from an \$8 billion grant, but only depending upon how well NYS performs. There is a DSRIP website which it was suggested is available for more details:

http://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/docs/mrtpinale report

-the Communicable Disease Supervisor has retired and a new supervisor has been appointed. The latter is presently receiving considerable assistance and training in developing greater skills.

-The Flu Mask requirement that had been in place during the flu season earlier in the year has been lifted by NYS Acting Commissioner of Health Dr. Zucker. He declared that influenza is no longer prevalent in HYS.

Dr. Heller, UC Medical Examiner provided the following report for the month of May, 2014:

136 calls received; 17 site visits made; 40 autopsies performed; 6 suicides; 2 motor vehicle incidents and 1 homicide.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors

The June 17, 2014 meeting of the UC Association of the Town Supervisors and Mayors was convened by President, T/Supervisor Carl Chipman at 8:35 and adjourned at 10:37.

Following the call to order, as the county representatives were not in attendance, the first order of business was a report from Mr. Tim Rose, the Executive Director of the UC Resource recovery Agency (RRA).

The meeting was devoted for the most part to his report and the discussion that followed and a general Q & A session.

Apparently, Mr. Rose had recently sent a letter to the town supervisors detailing what the RRA's present status was from a variety of points. He provided a very detailed commentary on the letter he had sent to the supervisors. He stated several times during his commentary that he was very willing to listen to whatever the supervisors came up with, to discuss such as well. Apparently, again based on comments made during the discussion, the problems date back 20 years. Further, it was suggested that the morning discussion had been held before. At this point he did emphasize that there was a need not just to figure out what to do, but specific suggestions on how to arrange to correct, improve, change matters in a positive way.

Based on the comments made during the discussion the income and costs for the RRA and the towns are dependent upon a variety of considerations: the laws governing trash, solid waste, etc; separating the loads of waste received; the market with respect to demands, and the economy.

Among the points that were made during the presentation and the discussion:

-the RRA had a recent insurance audit. The latter's representative indicated that the RRA was doing quite well. However, the suggestion was made that the boxes into which what is picked up should not be packed so tightly;

-the 20 year contracts/agreements between the RRA and the towns expired 2-3 years ago, there have been extensions granted;

-the situation is now such that there is a "need to figure out what to do now;"

-apparently the principal costs are the "t & D to the landfill" and debt service;

It appears there is a \$20 million debt which is expected to be paid of over the next 10 years; the county contract will expire in 10 years; thus if as one way of handling the matter the RRA could be dissolved, but when such a suggestion was made as a possible option to the board of directors of the RRA, Mr. Rose stated the 5 member board of directors was opposed to such; he also noted that the county can't dissolve the RRA, the state legislature has to do it;

-another option he made to the board of directors to help reduce losing money was to reduce staff, stream line the operation...this option was also met with a no vote by the board;

-various items of cost were noted, i.e., the boxes \$5,000-\$6,000 each; trucks to haul \$175,000; tipping fees, full charges;

-that the RRA continues to lose money, and it can't continue to do so;

-Ulster County is one of three counties statewide that is an authority;

-some suggestions/comments made during discussion and general Q & A:

-could the RRA use the present financial situation to "nurse out" one more year to allow the towns to discuss and determine what alternatives the towns would be able to consider;

-repair what equipment can be repaired;

-need a phased in approach going forward;

-the debt that was mentioned was apparently viewed by some as "inherited" from 20 years ago and was not the fault of the current administration at RRA.

It was noted that a bus trip to Delaware County's agency has been arranged; supervisors were invited to attend; board will be going. It is located in Walton, Delaware County where the landfill is located.

The next meeting of the town supervisors will be at the UCRRA on July 17.

The supervisors generally appeared to favor an extension of the present contract for one more year. Mr. Rose indicated that he would present this point to the Board meeting at its June 23 meeting.

With respects to the Shared/Consolidation of Services topic which referenced a meeting held June 2: there is apparently a financial problem with respect the 1% tax situation which is causing the towns to experience various financial problems. Apparently it has been suggested to the towns that they consider applying for grants to cover such costs which are effected, at least in part. It was suggested that some of the towns are already hiring part timers/cutting staff, etc. It was also noted that the town expenses continue to rise.

The minutes of the May meeting were approved. The treasurer's report indicated that the group has \$6,727.08 in its treasury.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

The July 15, 2014 meeting of the UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors was convened by President, T/Supervisor Carl Chipman at 8:37 and adjourned at 10:46. The next meeting is August 19, at the Olympic Diner at 8:30 AM.

Note: This meeting was held at the UC Resource Recovery Agency (RRA) on Rte 9W in the T/Ulster. Following the meeting there was a tour of the facilities.

Initially Mr. Chipman introduced UC County Executive Michael Hein. Mr. Hein referenced the following:

-he spoke about the importance of developing a long term solid waste plan, which he is in favor of;

-he did not consider having the county assume the costs related to elections to be fiscally responsible given the other concerns of the county;

-noted he had favored taking over Safety Net program over a 3 year period. Spent \$12 million in the process;

-at the same time the county lost \$5 million in sales tax revenue during the same period of time;

-it was pointed out that the county was not a source of limitless dollars. A major concern is the repaid work needed on the infra-structure in Ulster County. While considerable dollars had been spent decades ago to construct the bridges (there are 155 in UC) and roads throughout the county, the appropriate maintenance of these structures had not be continually done. The county must now make the necessary maintenance repairs;

-he was positive about the relationship he has had with the T/Supervisors' Association;

-he would like to see the Association come up with a resolution that would support the idea that the state should take over the mandates it has imposed on the towns; and

-he noted the great, positive results of the recent festival that was held in Saugerties during the previous weekend.

There was no report from the UC Legislature.

The next item on the agenda dealt with Community Choice Aggregation (CCA). This is an organization which has been in operation for about 20 years. There are 6 states involved, Massachusetts being the closest to NYS.

Its basic point is that CCA is looking to lower energy costs for the consumer. It was suggested by the presenter that this could be arrived at "by one or more than one municipality forming a CCA to aggregate the energy loads of rate payers within their geographic areas and negotiate contracts with energy suppliers on their behalf."

Apparently, the above consideration came about as a result of the decision made by the Public Service Commission (PSC) to approve the sale of Central Hudson to Fortis.

There will be a forum for municipal officials in late September to further provide information to such representatives.

The presenter, Jen Matzger, noted that there are different models of CCA in the states where it is located. Further, large businesses and other large users already benefit from CCA.

The second presenter was Patricia Strong representing NYSERDA (NYS Economic Development Council). She spoke about costs re solar power installation. She noted that the costs related to such have been addressed by the Cleaner Greener Program. This group wants municipalities to make permitting for customers easier. Apparently the deadline for this is September 30, 2014.

Supervisor Quigley noted that the solar permit should include noting that there is a 2nd source of power in the structure so that if there is a fire, the fire department which upon arrival at the fire scene will cut the power that is electric, needs to know if there is a second source of power, cut that, or the fire men will be possibly injured.

The third item on the agenda dealt with a discussion by the group on whether to support the take-over by the county of those costs associated with elections. Following a lengthy discussion that included comments regarding costs, where the money comes from, how the county administers the program, how such effects town budgets, the involvement of the Board of Elections, Supervisor Chipman proposed a motion under which these costs would be assumed by the county in increments of 1/3 for a year over 3 years (similar in the way costs for Safety Net were handled). This motion passed.

Next on the agenda was a discussion on the contract extension (June 30, 2015) granted to the municipalities by the UC Resource, Recovery Agency.

There was a very lengthy discussion dealing with the costs, changes, how the RRA arrives at what to bill the towns, etc. A general Q & A by the members and answered by Tim Rose, the Executive Director for UCRRA was also held.

Mr. Chipman offered a motion to create a sub-committee to work on the contract, to evaluate what private contractors will charge, perhaps consider creating a quasi-corporation. He also noted that the contract that UCRRA would like the towns to sign is for 10 years, which given the investment costs and costs to purchase new container boxes covers what is needed.

Mr. Chipman suggested the following be considered for the sub-committee: Supervisors Chipman, Zatz, Warren, and Quigley, Saugerties coordinator Maria Post, Laura Petit, Manna Jo Greene. Tim Rose and 2 UCRRA board members would be asked to serve as advisors. The motion was passed.

Minutes of the June meeting were approved. The treasury has \$6,792.95.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp



HEY - what's this?

Join the Poughkeepsie Repair Café!

August 16, 9a.m. - noon

What do you do with a chair when the leg has come loose? With a toaster that no longer works? Or a woolen sweater with moth holes? Toss it? No way! You can repair it at the Repair Café

Repair Cafés are free meeting places and they're all about repairing things (together). In the place where a Repair Café is located, you'll find tools and materials to help you make any repairs you need. On clothes, furniture, electrical appliances, bicycles, crockery, appliances, toys, et cetera. You will also find repair specialists/coaches such as electricians, seamstresses, carpenters and bicycle mechanics. **Visitors bring their broken items from home.** Together with the specialists they start making their repairs in the Repair Café. It's an ongoing learning process. If you have nothing to repair, you can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee. Or you can lend a hand with someone else's repair job. You can also get inspired at the reading table – by leafing through books on repairs and DIY.

Why a Repair Café? We throw away vast amounts of stuff. Even things with almost nothing wrong, and which could get a new lease on life after a simple repair. The trouble is, lots of people have forgotten that they can repair things themselves or they no longer know how. Knowing how to make repairs is a skill quickly lost. Society doesn't always show much appreciation for the people who still have this practical knowledge, and against their will they are often left standing on the sidelines. Their experience is never used, or hardly ever. **The Repair Café changes all that!** People who might otherwise be sidelined are getting involved again. Valuable practical knowledge is getting passed on. Things are being used for longer and don't have to be thrown away. This reduces the volume of raw materials and energy needed to make new products. It cuts CO2 emissions, for example, because manufacturing new products and recycling old ones causes CO2 to be released. **The Repair Café teaches people** to see possessions in a new light. And, once again, to appreciate their value. The Repair Café helps change people's mindset. This is essential to kindle people's enthusiasm for a sustainable society. **But most of all, the Repair Café** just wants to show how much fun repairing things can be, and how easy it often is. Why don't you give it a go?

Not competing with professional repair specialists - The Repair Café Foundation sometimes gets asked whether access to free repair get-togethers is competing with professional repair specialists. The answer is; quite the opposite. Organizers want to use Repair Cafés across the whole country to focus attention on the possibility of getting things repaired. Visitors are frequently advised to go to the few professionals still around. Furthermore, people who visit Repair Cafés are not usually customers of repair specialists. They say that they normally throw away broken items because paying to have them repaired is, in general, too expensive. At the Repair Café they learn that you don't have to throw things away; there are alternatives. **Who thought up the idea?** The Repair Café was initiated by Martine Postma. Since 2007, she has been striving for sustainability on local level in many ways. Martine organised the very first Repair Café in Amsterdam, on October 18, 2009. It was a great success. This prompted Martine to start the Repair Café Foundation. On March 2, 2010, this Dutch non-profit organisation was officially set up. Since 2011, the foundation has provided professional support to local groups in the Netherlands and other countries wishing to start their own Repair Café.

Poughkeepsie Repair Café starts August 16, 2014

**@ First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mill and Catherine Streets
volunteer to be a planner, recruiter or "repair coach" now: rvr214@juno.com**