



Commentator

MAY 2015

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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Need a ride? Want to car-pool?

Contact:
 Dare Thompson:
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WE WELCOME THE GENERAL PUBLIC AT ALL EVENTS!		
2015		
MAY		
6	Wed. 7:15 PM	Board Meeting at home of Shirley Kobran, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine. Call 845-340-2003 to confirm. All welcome.
11	Mon. 1:30 PM	Shared Services Committee, home of Ellie Charwat, 7 Creek Bend, POK. echarwat@yahoo.com for directions
12	Tues. 5:30 PM	Materials Management Committee, Gateway Diner, 379 Rt. 9W, Highland (just north of Mid-Hudson Bridge, across from Burger King).
16	Sat. 10:15 AM	A discussion on America's income inequality with Joel Diemond, professor emeritus of government at Dutchess Community College. <i>Why is this such a hard topic to nail down and why's it even harder to address?</i> Poughkeepsie Friends Meeting, 249 Hooker Ave. (just west of Grand), POK. 845-340-2003 for directions
17 - 20	Sun.- Wed.	Kingston HS junior, Phoebe Clark of Port Ewen, joins 61 other high schoolers at LWVNYS's Students Inside Albany program. Have a great time, Phoebe!
19	Tues. 1:45 PM	Book Discussion of Malcolm Gladwell's <i>Outliers: The Story of Success</i> . Enzo's Ristorante & Pizza, 207 Boices Lane, Kingston. Call Enzo's at 845-383-3696 for directions.
27	Wed. 5:30 to 8:30 PM	LWV-MHR ANNUAL MEETING. Deyo Hall 6 Broadhead, just off Rt 32 in the Historic Huguenot District. 5:30 Supper, 6:30 business meeting, program at 7
30		LWVNYS Concurrence due on selection of delegates to Constitutional Convention
JUNE 5- 7		LWVNYS Convention , Albany

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PREZ SEZ...

Prez Sez

I write this as my cat walks over my arms typing at the keyboard. Your Board members are getting ready for our Annual Meeting. We have created a budget for next year, found people willing to be on the Board of Directors and on next year's nominating committee, and everyone is writing their reports to share with you on Wednesday, May 27 at Deyo Hall in Historic Huguenot Street.

Our long time president, Dare Thompson, is leaving the Board of the Mid Hudson League to become president of the New York State league. She is leaving with a bang. After organizing many informative and educational events over the years, she has organized local media leaders Stuart Shinske of the Poughkeepsie Journal and Geddy Sveikauskas of Ulster Publishing to discuss with us at the Annual Meeting how we can improve voter and candidate participation during the upcoming elections.

Besides the traditional methods of newspaper coverage, public debates and the League's own Vote411.org, Facebook is becoming increasingly important. If you are not a member already, join Facebook. Find the Facebook pages of the candidates. Then like and share the pages of the candidates you support. Invite your friends to like their pages. Facebook has become one of the main methods by which people learn about candidates. If all of this sounds unfamiliar to you, get ready. We will arrange an opportunity for you to learn about Facebook as a marketing tool in the near future.

Jolanda

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

Media Star Soyol Smalls

Our own league secretary, **Soyol Smalls** appearing on WKNY. To listen, go to www.mykcr.org/kcr/ Show Archive: 2015 April Monday 20th.

**PROGRAMS****Income Inequality**

America used to be the Land of Opportunity, but unless you've already "got yours," forget it! The American Dream is a thing of the past for the vast majority of Americans. In just the last decade, the income of the top 1% has risen by 18% while those in the middle have actually seen their incomes fall. We are now the advanced country with both the highest level of inequality and the lowest level of equality of opportunity. And these trends are continuing!

The consequences are not just economic and social. The growing gap between the haves and the have-nots (and the have-nots are increasingly most of us) has huge consequences for the health of our democratic system.

What can we do about it? Joel Diamond, professor emeritus of government at Dutchess Community College, will help us not only see the problem more clearly but will help us discuss what we can do to address it.

The Poughkeepsie Friends Meeting is co-sponsoring this event on

Saturday, May 16, at 10:15 AM at their Meeting House at 249 Hooker Avenue (across from Krieger Elementary School). Join us!

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.

Voter Registration and Organ Donor Registration

The LWVNYS has recently announced an innovative partnership with the New York Alliance for Donation (NYAD). NYAD's mission is to increase organ, eye and tissue donation in New York State to insure a transplant for every New Yorker in need. In 2009, NYS became the first state to include an organ and tissue donor enrollment section on voter registration forms. Since inception, over 160,00 individuals have enrolled in the donor registry via voter registration forms but this still only accounts for 15% of all enrollees. With this partnership, the hope is that we can increase both voter registrations and organ and tissue donor registrations together.

The LWVMHR will be participating in this program. Stipends will be given to local Leagues (approximately \$100-200), training will be provided for free, Voter Guides will be available for free or reduced cost, and other brochures and public relations materials will be available. Jean McGarry will be heading this endeavor with our local league. Please contact her at jfmcg@hvc.rr.com if you are interested in being a part of this campaign.

(For the full article on the Organ Donation with Voter Registration, see LWVNYS State Board Updates: February 2015)

Naturalization

On March 6, League members Daisy Tyler and Jean McGarry welcomed and congratulated 50 new citizens. As we handed out voter registration information, imagine our surprise when one woman dropped to her knees and symbolically kissed the land of her new country. What a powerful reminder to all of us who take our voting rights for granted. Come and join us in June.

STUDY AND ADVOCACY**LWVNYS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION Position - help us refine it!**

We want to know if you are comfortable with a proposed change in our state LWV position on how delegates should be selected to a Constitutional Convention.

In 2017 we voters will be asked if we want to hold a Constitutional Convention. The last time we were asked this, the League position was NO, in large part because we didn't like the way delegates to the Convention would be chosen.

You need to go to

http://www.lwvny.org/LLresources/SBR_StateNews/2015/January/Final-Materials-to-Bd-on-Con_0115.pdf

to see a 3-page explanation of the change and why the state League considers it an improvement. But here is the proposed language.

"The League supports the following reforms as positive factors in deciding on support for a constitutional convention. Delegates should be elected by a fair nonpartisan process that complies with federal voting rights provisions and eases ballot access to encourage participation by racial and other minorities. Public financing should be provided for candidates and their positions on issues and convention goals should be widely publicized to enable voters to cast informed votes at their election. Statewide office holders, state or federal legislators, and state judges should not serve as delegates."

If after reading the explanation you decide that this new language is acceptable (or if you have further questions), please write to info@lwvmidhudson.org or call the LWV-MHR phone - 845-340-2003. Your opinion will be included with that of other LWV-MHR members. DO NOT send your response directly to the state LWV. We will also talk about this briefly at the Annual Meeting and let you respond then. The final deadline for responding is May 30.

Materials Management Report

The LWV Materials Management Committee met on April 14th. We discussed a number of items but most of our meeting centered on Ulster County's Solid Waste Management/Disposal Improvement Commission.

We will be proposing Jolanda Jansen to be the League's Alternate Member to the Commission, to work in tandem with Kathie Beinkafner. The Commission is doing a series of visits to various solid waste facilities throughout the State. We look forward to their reports back to our committee!

Perhaps the most exciting news for us was to hear that LWV member, Sarah Womer's project on Kickstarter to begin compost collection in Beacon was funded. Click on the link to view a great video of her proposal. We wish good pedaling to Sarah and her crew:

<https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/1053064049/beacon-compost-project?ref=discovery>

The next meeting of the Materials Management Committee will be on May 12th, 5:30pm, at the Gateway Diner in Highland. Everyone is welcome to attend. (Bring a reusable container for your leftovers!)

Cindy Lanzetta, Chairperson

Compost and Compost Bins are available!

Grow Ulster GreenCompost is \$30.00 per ton with a minimum load fee of \$20.00 and is available at our Ulster site. Grow Ulster Green Compost is a blend of compost made from locally sourced food waste and yard waste. This compost product is screened to 3/8 inch minus and certified by the US Composting Council's Seal of Testing Assurance Program.

Compost Facility Hours of Operation:

Monday thru Saturday from 8 am to 1:00 pm.

***One ton of compost is approximately equivalent to 2 cubic yards.

Backyard Compost Bins are \$55.00 and are available for pick-up ONLY at the Agency's main office located at 999 Flatbush Road in Kingston during office hours: Monday-Friday from 7:30am to 3:30pm.

Shared Services

Committee Meeting, April 20, 2015

Present: Ellie Charwat, Jolanda Jansen, Gina Klein, Marianna Martin, Suzi Stoller, Merrill Sunderland

Marianna announced she'd be leaving the committee; she has other community obligations, but will help us identify organizations we can speak to.

The group suggested Ellie write County Executive Molinaro about the recent workshop on government efficiency to which we were NOT invited and to ask to be on the mailing list for such events.

Ellie reported that she had sent an update Bus Transportation Fact Sheet to Poughkeepsie City Councilman Tracy Hermann at his request.

We discussed our PowerPoint presentations to the public. Merrill agreed to coordinate the calendar for these presentations. Gina and Jolanda will work out technical details of what equipment is needed (wi-fi connection?) and will train all of us on using the equipment that Jolanda has. Ellie will draft a letter and a flyer to send to interest organizations in the topic.

Firm dates so far:

Thursday, June 18 noon-1:15 Poughkeepsie-Arlington Rotary Club, Christo's Restaurant, Wilbur Blvd, Poughkeepsie. Contact: Ellie

Tuesday, June 23 – 7 pm – Town of Poughkeepsie Democrats – Pizzeria Uno. Contact: Ellie

Committee members are following up with several organizations to schedule further presentations:

Next Meeting: Monday, May 11th, 1:30 pm, Ellie Charwat's home

Ellie Charwat, 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>

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Energy and Environment Committee**Energy and Environment Committee**

Karen L. Binder Library, 6th Floor, County Office Building

Apr. 9, 2015, 7:13 – 7:48 PM

Committee Members:

Peter Loughran, Chairman, Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr., Deputy Chairman, Richard A. Parete, Hector Rodriguez, Mary Wawro

Other legislators: Manna Jo Greene and Tracey Bartels.

Meeting called to order by Peter Loughran, Chairman.

Minutes from the Mar. 4, 2015 and Mar. 26, 2015 (Special Meeting) meetings were approved, followed by continued discussion and crafting of the Green Fleet Policy. Various sections were discussed, including a long discussion about alternative fuels, and revised. Again there was a discussion and some debate about whether this should be a local law or a policy.

A Green Fleet Review Committee is being formed. The Deputy County Executive, Ken Crannell, and county legal and departmental staff are involved in reviewing the relevant sections of the policy.

Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency Report: Tim Rose, Executive Director, and Charlie Landi, UCRRA board member, discussed the Apr. 8 meeting held with town supervisors regarding transfer station issues and options. Two UCRRA board members, Dave Gordon and Mr. Landi, will work with Carl Chipman, president of the UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors, on the issues.

A UCRRA budget is due to county in August. Many items regarding the budget and capital plan were discussed, including the length of contracts, roll-off replacement plans, and the possibility of raising tipping fees (comment by Mr. Landi).

Resolutions for April 21, 2015:

1. Motion: Resolution No. 109 - Setting A Public Hearing On Proposed Local Law No. 3 of 2015 (A Local Law Establishing A Sustainable Green Fleet Policy) To Be Held On Wednesday, May 13, 2015 At 6:00 PM . No action.

2. Motion: Resolution No. 132 - Adopting The Ulster County Green Fleet Policy. No action.

New Business: Ken Ronk, Deputy Chairman, commented on the membership of the Solid Waste Management Improvement Committee and the Special Meeting to be held on Apr. 21.

Old Business:

1. Climate Smart Committee – Update by Legislator Manna Jo Greene that focused on the recent conference on street lighting, well attended by 50 people, and on an energy audit involving Public Works.

2. Solid Waste Disposal Improvement Commission – Update. Trips are planned to other county facilities.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer, 4-24-15

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

Apr. 7, 2015, 6:03 – 6:55 PM

Committee Members: Thomas J. Briggs, Chairman, James F. Maloney, Deputy Chairman, Chris Allen (absent), Lynn Archer, Tracey Bartels, Herbert Litts, III (absent), Mary Beth Maio

Meeting called to order by Chairman Thomas Briggs, and approval of Mar. 11, 2015 meeting minutes, as amended.

Resolutions for April 21, 2015 Session:

[WITHDRAWN BY SPONSOR] Resolution No. 96 - Dissolving The Ulster County Railroad Advisory Committee And Creating The Ulster & Delaware Railroad Corridor Advisory Committee – Ulster County Legislature.

Resolution No. 118 - Approving The Execution Of A Contract In Excess Of \$50,000.00 Entered Into By The County – Ulster County Economic Development Alliance – Department Of Planning: Approved following a discussion of the purpose of the effort and the consultants involved, and comments on the Ulster Tomorrow and other efforts on strategy, and concerns about avoiding piecemeal strategic planning (some efforts have not gotten a good return).

Resolution No. 136 - Supporting The Placement Of Video Lottery Terminals At The Nevele Grande Hotel And Country Club In The Town Of Wawarsing: Withdrawn following a discussion of some concerns.

Resolution No. 139 - Establishing Capital Project No. 451 To Provide For design and Right-of-Way Incidental Work for the “Hudson Valley Rail Trail West: Phase 4” Project And Amending the 2015 – 2020 Capital Program – Department of Planning: Approved following a discussion by Chris White, Deputy Director, Planning, on the connector aspect.

Resolution No. 141 - Authorizing The Implementation And Funding In The First Instance 100% Of The Federal-Aid Eligible Costs Of A Transportation Federal-Aid Project (Hudson Valley Rail Trail West: Phase 4), And Appropriating Funds Therefore - Department of Planning: Approved.

Resolution No. 142 - Authorizing The Continuation Of Agricultural District No. 2 – Wallkill River – Towns Of Esopus, Gardiner, New Paltz, Plattekill, Rosendale, Shawangunk and the Village of New Paltz – Department Of Planning: Approved, following comments by Dennis Doyle, Director, Planning, on the active and effective Farmland Protection Board.

Resolution No. 155 - Creating The Ulster & Delaware Corridor Advisory Committee - Ulster County Legislature: Approved.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer, 4-24-15

ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE

Wed., May 27, 2014, Deyo Hall, 6 Broadhead Ave, off Rt 32,
Historic Huguenot Street complex, New Paltz, NY 12561
5:30 Supper, 6:30 business meeting, 7 pm program

**Nominating
Committee Report:
Election of
Directors, Officers
& Nominating
Committee**

Directors

Cynthia Bell (2015-17)
Jean McGarry (2015-17)
Irene McInnis (2015-17)
Jacki Moriarty (2015-17)
Doug Thompson (2015-17)
Daisy Tyler (2015-17)

Continuing:

Esther Stickley (2014-16)
Margaret Sellers (2014-16)

Officers

Vice-President: Anne Needham (2015-17)
Treasurer: Dorothy Winrow (2015-17)

Continuing:

President: Jolanda Jansen (2014-16)
Secretary: Soyal Smalls (2014-16)

Local Program**Nominating Committee (2015-16)**

Lee Ridgway

Jim McGarry

Dare Thompson

Local Program Proposals (2015-16)**Continuing:**

Shared Services in Dutchess County

Materials Management (Solid Waste) in both counties

New: Study of any proposed changes to the Ulster County Charter on an as-needed basis

Dear LWV-MHR Members:

This is your official notification of the items that we will discuss during the business meeting portion of our Annual Meeting. Please review these and be prepared to vote.

Because we did not have a membership party this year we are turning the supper portion into a no-charge wine and cheese and potluck party to celebrate you, our members, and any guests you'd like to bring. We welcome contributions of special items for the food table if you'd like to bring something, but it's not required.

WE NEED TO KNOW IF YOU (and any guests) ARE COMING! Please REPLY to 845-340-2003 or info@lwvmidhudson.org by May 22.

The 7 pm program promises to be especially interesting. Stuart Shinske, executive editor of the Poughkeepsie Journal, and Geddy Sveikauskas, publisher of Ulster Publishing, will be sharing their efforts to get candidates and voters engaged with one another, and we'll be looking for ways we can maximize their efforts and ours by working more intentionally together. *The ONLY solution to the grid-locked pay-to-play government we have is for voters to rise up and demand better.*

PROPOSED BUDGET
For Fiscal Year June 1, 2015 to May 31, 2016

	Actual Totals 6/1/2013 to 05/31/14	Actual Totals to 04/14/15	Adopted Budget 6/1/2014 to 05/31/15	Proposed Budget 6/1/2015 to 05/31/16
Income				
Individual & Student Dues	2725	1675.00	3150	3000
Household Dues	1350	750.00	1200	1200
Interest	39.51	28.87	40	40
Contributions: Gen Fund	2031.66	401.52	1300	1600
Contributions: Ed Fund	1725	936.48	1300	1300
Fundraising	200	0.00	3650	1410
Ads/Sponsorships	0	500.00	0	1100
Voter Service	215	160.00	300	300
From Reserves, CD	0	1000.00	0	0
TOTAL	8286.17	5451.87	10940	9950
Expenses				
Operations, phone,web	676.19	414.81	1200	800
Organizational Activities	823.9	97.00	650	650
Educational Activities	692.4	1194.74	1210	1200
Public Programs	100.8	100.00	400	400
Delegates	1064	-700.00	800	1000
Comm Printing	313.66	192.29	400	400
Comm. Mailing	174.5	126.46	200	200
LWVNYS	1485	1422.00	1440	1670
LWVUS	2557.5	2449.00	2450	2530
Fundraising	33.26	0.00	2200	1100
Donation to LWVNY from CD	0	1000.00	0	0
TOTAL	7921.21	6296.30	10950	9950
SURPLUS	414.96		0	0

* \$1075 of total assets is reserved to the Elizabeth Askue Fund

Assets as of May 31	2014	2015
MHVFCU Primary Savings	\$5,666.09	
MHVFCU Checking	\$1,671.45	
MHVFCU 3 Monthe CD	\$16,509.23	
LWVNYS Education Foundation	\$791.98	
Total May 31, Current year	\$24,518.75	
Total May 31, Last Year	\$24,453.97	

Annual Audit

The financial records and books of the LWVMHR were reviewed by a committee of three members on 3/17/15 and were found to be an accurate reflection of the financial condition of the LWVMHR as of May 31, 2014, are the results of its operation and cash flows for the fiscal year then ended.