



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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Commentator

SEPTEMBER 2013

CALENDAR		
2013		
SEPTEMBER		
10	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 Come early to order food, socialize – many of us have to leave by 6:40.
10	Tues. 7:15 PM	LWV MHR Board Meeting, home of Shirley Kobran, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine, 845-382-6989
17	Tues. 6 PM	SALAD SUPPER, potluck, and presentation by Patricia Pomeroy, Executive Director of the Hudson Valley Regional Council, on the Mid- Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan Town of Esopus Public Library, 128 Canal St., Port Ewen. Supper from 6 – 7 pm. Program at 7 pm.
20	Fri. 11:20 AM	NATURALIZATION CEREMONY to welcome new citizens and to distribute voter information. See <i>VOTER SERVICE</i> below.
20	Fri. 2 PM	LWV Members' meeting with Assemblman Kevin Cahill at his office at 1 Albany Ave, Governor Clinton Building, Suite G-4, Kingston. Space is very limited. Reserve by 9/18 with LWV Pres. Dare Thompson, 236-3074.
20	Fri. 3:30 – 5:30	Voter Guide Party, home of Shirley Kobran, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine, 845-382-6989 Help us stamp and bundle Voter Guides for distribution across our region.
24	Tues. 9 AM – 5PM	National VOTER REGISTRATION DAY Wal-Mart's, Kingston and Kingston Plaza, near Hannaford. The actual hours will be determined by the number of volunteers available to cover 2-hour shifts. See <i>VOTER SERVICE</i> below.
25	Wed. 7 PM	Interested in Joining Our Observer Corps? Learn all about it at the home of Margaret Sellers & Vic Melville, 80 Ringtop Road, Kingston. For info and to confirm: 845-339-3180 or mcsellers@aol.com . 27
OCTOBER		
1	Tues. 7:15 PM	LWV MHR Board Meeting, home of Shirley Kobran, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine, 845-382-6989
4	Fri. 9:30 AM	Shared Services Study Committee, home of Ellie Charwat, 7 Creek Bend Road, Poughkeepsie, 845-462-7061, echarwat@yahoo.com
5	Sat. 9 AM – 5PM	VOTER REGISTRATION at Wal-Mart's, Kingston. The actual hours will be determined by the number of volunteers available to cover 2-hour shifts. See <i>VOTER SERVICE</i> below.
8	TUES.	League Day at the United Nations – all welcome! Reserve by 9/25. Tour, lunch, 1:30 –4 pm briefing on the campaign to end violence against women (http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/index.shtml). Buy each separately or buy a package. See reservation on the www.lwvny.org homepage.
8	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
21	Mon. 3:30 PM	LWV Members' meeting with Congressman Chris Gibson at his office at 721 Broadway, main floor conference room, Kingston. Space is very limited. Reserve by 10/18 with LWV Pres. Dare Thompson, 236-3074.
NOTE:		Our Clearwater sail has been postponed until 2014 due to scheduling challenges at Clearwater during this year of major restoration work. We are hoping for May 31, June 5 or a September– October Saturday.

PREZ SEZ...**PREZ SEZ**

No time is busier and more exciting for a League than the fall, and I hope you'll review the calendar at the beginning of this Commentator and see where YOU might fit in. Be assured that new faces are always warmly welcomed at any League gathering, so don't be shy.

Some tasks, like dropping off Voter Guides at several public locations in your county or sitting at a voter registration booth, or helping at a candidate forum are quick and easy ways to help ("one-offs," as we call them). Probably the easiest (and pleasantest?) "one-off" of all is being a greeter at a League event – just smile, direct people to the sign-in area, make them feel noticed and welcome. It's nice if we know in advance that you'll do this, but you can also just ask any time you attend an event, "How can I help?" Make our day!

Studies are more cerebral and take some extra commitment, but they don't lock you in for life either, and they'll give you a chance to get to know some great fellow League members and learn a lot too. You'll see a long list of studies you can join elsewhere in this Commentator. Many don't appear on the calendar because they haven't started yet, but let me know you're interested and I'll put you in touch with the key people.

Of course you don't have to volunteer in these or other ways to be a good League member. Just show up at events when you can and enjoy them! We especially encourage you to attend the salad supper on September 17 to learn a lot more about what we're doing and what issues we care about. And there's even good food and wine from 6 – 7.

So check our calendar and then mark yours. See you soon!

Dare (845-236-3074, darethompson@gmail.com)

PROGRAM NEWS**Fall Kick-Off Salad Supper and Program**

September 17,
Supper from 6-7,
Program at 7
Town of Esopus
Public Library
128 Canal St.,
Port Ewen

NOTE: *SAIL on the CLEARWATER* has been postponed. Watch for details in 2014.

We kick off our busy season of voter service and advocacy work with our annual salad supper. **If you'd like, bring an item to share**, possibly something to toss into salad greens. Chatting and dining will go on from 6 – 7.

Before hearing from our guest speaker, we'll make sure you know **who's who and what's happening in the LWV** so it's easy to see how you might participate.

Then we'll hear **Patricia Pomeroy**, Executive Director of the **Hudson Valley Regional Council (HVRC)**, who will discuss the recently produced **Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan**, which includes waste and water quality management, energy, transportation, land use, climate change adaptation, and agriculture - **all topics of interest to the LWV.**

HVRC was established in 1977 as an organization of county governments - specifically Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster and Westchester.

HELP WANTED

Bring refreshments to a meeting

Register voters on September 24 - or any time!

Train to be a candidate forum moderator or timekeeper

Help set up for an LWV event

Be a friendly greeter at the door

Help get candidates to respond to our voters guide questions

Get involved in one of our study committees (shared services, materials management agriculture, and more to come)

....and the list goes on. We can always use your help!

Pomeroy has been executive director since 2012. It provides a regional platform for issues of interest and importance in the 7-county region. "The council has a strong track record with environmental issues" said Ms. Pomeroy. She noted that it convenes quarterly meetings on Solid Waste/Materials Management and partners with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation on water quality management planning. Education and outreach on green infrastructure, a sustainable water management system, is also an important part of its mission.

HVRC also develops an annual Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy and provides assistance for federal funding of regional projects through the Economic Development Administration in the US Department of Commerce.

You'll leave knowing more about how HVRC works with other non-profit, academic, and state regional efforts and what we can honestly expect to happen next with the ambitious sustainability plan. As advocates of good regional planning, we want to help it succeed!

As always, the supper and talk are open to all. Bring family and friends!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

New Member

Brook Nam, who lives in Highland, was born and raised in Korea and came here at age 27. She received a graduate degree in social work from Adelphi University and works for the Veterans Administration - Hudson Valley at Castle Point in Beacon. She has been married to Steve Greenwell, a doctor at the VA, since 1991, and they have a daughter, Saige, who is just heading off to college in Boston. Brook says she enjoys attending meetings of political bodies and LWV study committees, meeting interesting and dedicated people, and learning new things.

Nominating Committee

On July 23, 2013 the Committee met at Lee Cane's home. This was a transition meeting. A new chairman, Cindy Bell, was elected from the non-board members as required by the League By-Laws. Other members of the committee are: Shirley Kobran and Jean McGarry, representing the Board; and Renee Sachs and Cynthia Lowe who make up the three members who are not on the Board.

The committee will serve for the 2013-2014 year.

Resource Development

Meeting Notes for August 19th are available at: http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/Resource_Development_Meeting_Notes.pdf

VOTER SERVICE

What's Next

Busy Times! Volunteers needed! Please contact Jean McGarry at jfmcg@hvc.rr.com or 336-6622 if you can spare any time for the events below:

September 20, 11:20 at the Ulster County Court House, 285 Wall St., Kingston- Volunteers are needed for the **Naturalization Ceremony** to welcome new citizens and to distribute voter information. The ceremony begins at noon but volunteers are asked to assemble at the courthouse at 11:20. Voter registrations forms, voter guides and league pamphlets will be provided.

September 20, 3:30 at Shirley Kobran's, 53 Schuler Lane, Lake Katrine- Volunteers are needed to **organize the distribution of LWWNYS voter guides** that explains to the public the pros and cons of the six ballot issues New York State residents will vote on in

November.

September 24, 9am – 5pm, Wal-Mart's, Kingston, and Kingston Plaza, near Hannaford-Volunteers are needed for **National Voter Registration Day**. The actual hours will be determined by the number of volunteers available to cover 2-hour shifts. All materials, tables, chairs and a voter instruction guide as well as FAQ's will be provided to all volunteers. (Thank you to Shirley Kobran and Irene McInnis who have already volunteered.)

Post Primary Day (September 10)- Volunteers will be needed to **contact candidates who do not respond** to our written request to provide information requested on our local, electronic voter guide (**VOTE411**.)

October 5, Wal-Mart's, Kingston. Volunteers are needed for **Voter Registration**. (See *September 24 above for additional details*)

Quite often, league members are asked, "What exactly does the League of Women Voters do?" The above is it in a nutshell. This is what we truly are all about. Hope to hear from you.

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.

ADVOCACY & STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Studies

STUDIES, STUDIES – WE'VE GOT STUDIES!

HELP US REACH CONSENSUS ON TWO STATE ISSUES, ONE STATE UPDATE

At the 2013 State Convention, the state League adopted two new studies (term limits and ballot access) and one update (constitutional convention procedures). More information on all three follows. The state League encourages all local Leagues to organize study groups on the two studies. If you are interested in participating in any of these, please contact Dare Thompson (236-3074, darethompson@gmail.com) or any LWV-MHR board member. ***Our League positions should truly reflect what our members think, so your input is important!***

Term Limits

This is a study on term limits for the New York State legislature and statewide elected officials.

The 1992 LWVUS Convention authorized state and local Leagues to use national positions and principles to take action against term limits for state or local office holders. The language adopted by the convention is permissive only; that is, it allows state and local Leagues to apply the national position in opposition to term limits at other levels, but it does not require opposition to term limits at other levels. It does not supersede positions arrived at by study and consensus at the state or local League level that may support term limits for state or local office.

In 1996 the LWVNY Board decided it was time for the state to take a position on term limits as several local leagues had already done so. Although the state board had the authority to adopt such a position without referring this matter to the membership, delegates to Council 1996 voted to concur with opposition to term limits for state legislators and statewide office. At the urging of several local Leagues, LWVNY is again considering the issue of term limits via this study.

Ballot Access

This **study** will broadly examine how candidates get onto the ballot in the general election. It will potentially encompass the primary system, fusion voting, Wilson-Pakula, run-off voting, and other aspects of election law.

Constitutional Convention

This **update** will examine the League's position on New York's constitutional convention with an emphasis on the method of delegate selection. Our current position was adopted in 1993. The issue of a constitutional convention will come up again in 2017, when the mandatory every 20 year referendum on the subject appears on the ballot. One of the conditions stated in the position for League support involve specific changes in the current constitutionally mandated way that delegates are selected. It is very unlikely that all these changes will happen because they would have to pass the Legislature initially. There has been some interest expressed both inside and outside the League in supporting a constitutional convention as a way of fixing Albany. Under our current position, in all likelihood we would never be able to support a constitutional convention. This update would be very limited in scope, looking only at the delegate selection portion of the League's position.

HELP US UPDATE THE NATIONAL LWV POSITION ON AGRICULTURE

Our national position on agriculture was adopted in 1988, and while most of it is still valid, new developments in agriculture need to be considered. The **Agriculture Update** will focus narrowly on:

- 1) **current technology issues** in agriculture including genetically modified organisms (GMOs), herbicides, pesticides, agriculture water pollution, aquifer depletion, antibiotics in livestock, and accurate food labeling; and
- 2) **current agriculture finance issues** including consolidation in agriculture industries, crop subsidies and the federal agricultural regulatory process.

Senator Gillibrand and Congressmen Gibson and Maloney all serve on their respective Agriculture Committees. We need to know more as we talk with them. A resource list is available from LWVUS at <http://www.lwv.org/content/agriculture-update-suggested-summer-readings> and the consensus questions will be posted soon. **Join us!**

HELP US STUDY BOTH COUNTIES' BUDGET

Diane Jablonski in Dutchess and **Margaret Sellers** in Ulster will guide us as we compare the two counties' budgets when they come out this fall. If you would like to join in the discussion, please let us know. We expect our work to lead to some questions and comments at meetings of the counties' legislatures and in letters to the editor but we don't expect this to be a full-blown study, so your time commitment would be fairly limited but your impact might be considerable!

Rarely are the two county budgets looked at together and we expect some surprises!

AND DON'T FORGET OUR ONGOING STUDIES

The **Materials Management** (Solid Waste) Committee next meets on September 10 and the Dutchess **Shared Services** Committee meets on September 27. Check the calendar for details and don't hesitate to attend meetings of either one. They're always interesting!

Resource Development

Meeting Notes for August 19th are available at: http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/Resource_Development_Meeting_Notes.pdf

**Dutchess
County Shared
Services Study**

Jail Fact Sheet Version 4-1	Highway Departments in Ulster County
Fire Districts in Dutchess County	Purchasing in Dutchess County Municipalities
Justice Courts in Ulster County	Bus Transportation

You can find links to these materials at http://lwvmidhudson.org/Action_Study.html#s02

ULSTER COUNTY OBSERVER CORP

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!

We especially need observers for both the Ulster and Dutchess County legislatures. Observers go to meetings on subjects that interest them, often get to know the legislators, and report objectively to the Commentator monthly. 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.*

A tentative meeting to discuss the opportunities available and how to observe has been set up at the home of Margaret Sellers and Vic Melville on **Wednesday, September 25 at 7:00 PM**. All are welcome. This is a great opportunity to learn more about your county government and the League. We hope to see you there. Call 339-3180 with your questions and/or to RSVP.

Margaret Sellers and Vic Melville

**Ulster County
Legislature: Laws
and Rules,
Governmental
Services
Committee**

Date: Aug. 19, 2013

Start Time: 6:30 p.m.

Adjourn Time: 7:17 p.m.

[audio recording]

Chairman Kevin Roberts called the meeting to order and the July 22, 2013 meeting minutes were approved.

Three proposed resolutions regarding amending the new Rules of Order were considered:

Resolution No. #187 pertains to set a procedure for memorializing resolutions. After discussion, this resolution is to be discussed in caucus and moved to next month's meeting.

Resolution No. #232 to eliminate discharge of a resolution after 120 days was discussed and not moved. Legislator Tracey Bartels commented about a bad process following compromises to establish the new rules.

Resolution No. 233 pertaining to the number of required signatures on a petition to discharge was discussed and not moved. Legislator Peter Loughran advocated a strong caucus. Other legislators favor that one or more individual legislators could (more easily) move a resolution forward to a committee and the legislature.

LATE Resolution No. 234 regarding authorizing Ulster County to continue the 1% tax rates was moved following discussions, led by Deputy Chairman Robert Parete of the process about the lack of timely dialogue and by Majority Leader Ken Ronk of the events leading to the current situation.

LATE Resolution No. 235 authorizing participation in Operation IMPACT X was approved.

**UC Legislative
Health and
Personnel
Committee**

Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corp, 8/30/13

The Committee was convened on 7-22-13 at 5:39 by Chairman, Legislator Robert Aiello and adjourned at 5:53. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 5 at 5:30.

Present: Aiello, Ronk, Parete; Absent: Provenzano, Belfiglio; Others: DCE Ken Crannell, Fawn Tantillo, Deputy Clerk, Erica Guerin, Attorney

The minutes from the June 3, 2013 meeting were not approved at this meeting as there were only two from that meeting present 7-22-13, thus there was no majority present to vote on such. The minutes of the joint meeting with the social services group that took place following the regular scheduled June 3 meeting were also not voted on for the same reason.

The monthly personnel report was distributed to the committee members present.

There were two resolutions:

Resolution #183 dealt with adopting the proposed local law No.1 of 2013, a local law establishing the UC School Based Mental Health and Safety Act of 2013. Per the discussion following the negative vote, it appeared that regardless, the resolution will "go to the floor" for the county legislature to vote on. However, comment was noted by Attorney Guerin that there needed to be a discussion with Mr. Chapman, Legislative Counsel, as to what bearing would the rules have on bringing this resolution to the floor.

Resolution #216 dealt with the establishing and reporting the standard work day for elected and appointed officials. Apparently this was brought up again as the original occasion that the resolution was discussed and passed on led to questions from the state comptroller's office. It appears that whatever mathematical results reached by the county resulted in a requirement by the state for the county to clarify whatever it needed as well as how it expected to clear up the former's concern. The concern included being able to determine the contribution to be made to the state pension fund. The number of days and hours worked by an individual is basic information needed in determining the contribution to be made to the pension system.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp