

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BROOKHAVEN

OCTOBER 2017

lww-suffolk.org/html.brookhaven

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

SEPTEMBER 26, 2017

See plans, page 2

SUFFRAGIST MARCH AND RALLY

RONKONKOMA AMERICAN LEGION HALL

SEPTEMBER 10

See page 4

SAVE THE DATE—OCTOBER 4

CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Read about it, page 3

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PRESIDENTS' PAGE—September 26 is National Voter Registration Day, and our league, like others all over the country, is dedicating September to encourage registration at a number of sites around the town. Look at the listing below and see if there is one where you would like to help for all or part of the time.

The dates in boldface need another volunteer or two.

St. Joseph's College—9/26—12—2

Sachem Library —9/26—10—12

YMCA in Patchogue—9/26—9-12, **2-4**

Stony Brook University—9/26—morning

Also part of the NVRD, but on different days, we will be at:

St. Joseph's College —September 7, 1—2

Brookhaven Town Fair—September 9, 10-4

Suffolk Community College—September 19, 10-12

If you have a library near you, or another site where people gather, you can set up a table there to be part of this national effort to register voters and answer their questions. For more information, call Nancy Marr at 631 730-6556 or Judi Bird at 631 286-3810:

BROOKHAVEN TOWN FAIR

The town will be holding its fair at the Longwood Estate again this year, on September 9, after a few years without it. We have always had a table there for voter registration and information, and are able to give out our Directories of Public Officials and meet residents. Other events at the fair include information tables by town departments, food and craft tables, and sometimes re-enactments of historical events. The fair is held on Longwood Road on the corner of Smith Road. If you can volunteer for a few hours during the day, it will be appreciated and you will enjoy it. Call Judi at 631 286-3810.

NEXT BOOK GROUP MEETING

Next meeting will be Thursday, November 16 at Betsy Gaidry's. The book will be *Warnings: Finding Cassandras to Stop Catastrophes*, by Richard A. Clarke. It tells why we should heed the warnings of qualified experts and how the failure to do so in the past has led to avoidable disasters.

CON-CON INFORMATION EVENT

OCTOBER 4, 7 PM, AT PATCHOGUE THEATRE (MAIN STREET, PATCHOGUE)

This November, New York State citizens are being asked to vote on whether or not a Constitutional Convention (Con-Con) should be held to amend the existing state constitution. There are strong arguments for and against the Con-Con.

Do New Yorkers have the information needed to make an informed decision?
Do we understand the process, the issues, and who might represent our concerns?

The Brookhaven League of Women Voters welcomes Suffolk Community College Professors Neil Buffett and Nicholas Giordano who will explain in a non-partisan way the history, the process, the costs and the benefits of this important vote.

Neil Buffett is an Assistant Professor of History at Suffolk County Community College. He holds a PhD in history from Stony Brook University and a Masters Degree in Political Science and History from the College of Saint Rose in Albany. His research interests include urban and suburban studies, twentieth century social movements, race, and the environment. His publications include local reviews and articles published in the Long Island Journal of History.

Nicholas Giordano is a Professor for Political Science at Suffolk County Community College, holds a M.S. in Homeland Security Management and a M.A. in Political Science. He is the Political Science Assessment Chair and teaches courses on American Government, International Relations, World Politics, and the Political Problems of the Middle East. Mr. Giordano also serves as a commentator/guest host on Long Island News Radio 103.9, a JVC Broadcasting station.

Patchogue Theatre for the Performing Arts is a not-for-profit, volunteer driven organization and the largest theatre in Suffolk County. Their mission is “to serve as a cultural center for Long Island by showcasing a broad variety of performing arts for a wide-ranging audience at affordable prices.”

The New York State LWV website (www.lwvnys) has articles on the convention that consider many of the questions that you may have. When you get to the home page, go to Programs and Services, then to Constitutional Convention. The articles are at the end of the Briefing article and cover many subjects, including the issue of pensions. Also on the website is the position adopted by the state league endorsing the convention.

PLEASE VISIT OUR ADVERTISERS

We appreciate the help we receive from our advertisers. Their donations pay for the VOTER and express support for our goals. Find their ads on pages 8 and 9.



SUFFRAGISTS PARADE AND RALLY

The Ronkonkoma Heritage Association, together with the Town of Brookhaven, has organized an event to recall the rallies in 1917 when women were trying to get the right to vote. It will start with a short parade at 11 am on Sunday, September 10, which will begin at Carlson Road and Hawkins Avenue in Lake Ronkonkoma, and end at the American Legion Memorial Grounds, 11 Church Street, Lake Ronkonkoma, for a program with history, song, speeches, displays and historical information from all over Long Island. Our League will recognize the importance of the suffragists by doing voter registration from our table, and will answer any questions about voting. [If you wish to march in the parade, park your car at the American Legion grounds by 10 am and there will be transportation to the parade start.] For more information, call Ellen Okvist, Lake Ronkonkoma Heritage Association, 631-831-1670.

REPORT ON ANNUAL MEETING AND PLANS FOR THE YEAR

We held our annual meeting on June 15 at the Brookhaven Free Library with a full house, with members from all parts of the town, which was great. We elected the new board, including Jean Baker as our new Vice-President/Membership chair. Robbie Fishman will remain on the Board and will continue to work on the events we plan through the year. (She has returned home after many weeks in the hospital, and we wish her well.) We also accepted the Treasurer's report and the local program.

The Board met to make plans for the year at Judi Bird's on August 16, and we were pleased that Frances McGuire joined us as a non-Board member. The calendar that accompanies this Voter shows the plans we made, leaving open dates at the end of the year for new ideas. In September, we did not plan a general meeting, but will use the time for voter registration as part of the National Voter Registration Day. October will begin with a full discussion of the NYS Constitutional Convention vote in an amazing new venue—the Patchogue Theatre of Performing Arts. Under new direction, they are interesting in reaching the community with programs like ours, and we hope that we will be able to plan more in the future. They will help with publicity, and we hope that our League members will attend and bring their friends. We are making plans for the UN dinner/lunch at the end of October, and are considering the options of a catered lunch or the potluck that we have done in the past. We are interested in your opinion. Please let us know what you think. The book group will continue, with the next meeting on November 16 with the book *Warnings*, by Richard A. Clarke. In November, also, we will continue our look at the suffragist movement, with the author of the book *Suffragents*, Brooke Kroger, on November 20. Hope to see many of you at our upcoming events.

STATE UPDATE AND CONCURRENCE

At the 2017 State Convention, delegates approved two program items:

1. An update on the Charter School position adopted in 2006 to delete the following sentence. "In lieu of amendment of the Charter School Act to increase the total number of charters that could be granted, it supports retention of the current total (100) with amendment of the Charter School Act so that a charter could be reissued if a charter school ceased to function for any reason." The 100 charter school cap has been exceeded over the years and is no longer a relevant number.
2. A concurrence with a LWV of Utah's position on Death with Dignity.

Materials for each of these will be mailed and emailed to all local Leagues in September.

Our League will study the materials in time to meet the consensus deadline of February 15. Concurring with another league's study means that we would study their findings and conclusions, and make up our minds based on that. We could also do our own study of Death with Dignity and then decide if we concur. If you think you would be interested in studying the subject in more depth than just a concurrence, we can form a study committee and present the results at a meeting on January 29, or will schedule a speaker on that subject.

BUILDING BRIDGES IN BROOKHAVEN

presents UNITY FEST

**Saturday, Sept. 16, 2 to 7, at Hobbs Community Farm in Centereach –
178 Oxhead Road**

—Live Music, Poetry and Storytelling, Farm tours and Organic produce, Craft vendors, Food trucks, and more!!!

Donation—\$10/adults, \$5/students, free for kids 12 and under

All proceeds to benefit the farm

Building Bridges is a grassroots coalition to create alliances and friendships among the diverse communities in Brookhaven and support unity

For information, call 631.320.8575 or email buildingbridgesbrookhaven@gmail.com

This is the first of regular monthly articles by the LWVSC that will be printed in the Three Village Herald Times. At the beginning of October, the article will be about primaries.

The League of Women Voters of Suffolk County

The League is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy

Observing Your Government in Action: how to get started

The League of Women Voters has a strong commitment to open government and civic engagement.

Protecting our right to know is integral to the health of our democracy. One important way to ensure that decisions are made with public input and oversight is for citizens to observe government meetings.

“Sunshine” or government transparency regulations in communities guarantee that the voices of all citizens are heard.

To start, go to a meeting as an observer so that you become familiar with the procedures and rules, and the issues. Acquaint yourself with the protocols for public comment, so that you can speak to these issues when appropriate.

In order to encourage every Suffolk County resident to become familiar with their elected officials, the League (LWV) compiles and prints a 28-page booklet annually called the ***Directory of Public Officials (DPO)*** a guide to elected federal, state, county, town and local officials. You’ll know how to contact them- addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses and web-sites. You’ll see salaries, terms of office, whether there are term-limits and whether they are up for election each year.

The *DPO* includes a section with a breakdown and details of the Suffolk County budget, as well as a color map of Suffolk County legislative districts and a list of Suffolk County legislative committees with members, meeting days and times. Phone contacts for key Suffolk County departments and agencies are included too.

State, county, town, village, library and school district websites are good sources for general, committee and board meeting schedules, as well as agendas for upcoming meetings and minutes of those which have already occurred.

Local media (newspapers and community websites) report on a great many issues and government meetings. However, many of our citizens may have concerns about issues that are not covered by local media. **Be an informed, engaged citizen and participate.**

Democracy is not a spectator sport.

The Directory of Public Officials can be viewed on the LWV of Suffolk County website:

http://www.lwv-suffolkcounty.org/files/DPO2017_2.pdf

Print copies are available- call 631 862-6860 or email league@lwv-suffolkcounty.org

EPA SUED OVER DUMPING IN LONG ISLAND SOUND

New York State is suing the Environmental Protection Agency for dumping dredged materials in Long Island Sound. Gov. Andrew Cuomo and Attorney General Eric Schneiderman announced Thursday that the State of New York would be taking legal action against the EPA after it said in 2016 it would dump dredged materials into the eastern Sound. Two of the dumping sites are due north of the North Fork. Dredged materials from Connecticut have been disposed of in the Long Island for at least 10 years now.

“We’re very encouraged by the lawsuit,” said Aaron Virgin, vice president of Group for the East End. “We think it’s a travesty that they would take dredged material that could have potentially hazardous material in it and dump it off our shore.” Environmentalists have spoken out against this because the dredged materials from Connecticut could be toxic and the effects on the environment are unknown and potentially dangerous. The two North Fork sites are Cornfield Shoals, just north of Greenport, and another near New London, Conn., west of Fishers Island. “It’s an environmental catastrophe waiting to happen,” Mr. Virgin said. “Once you start spreading that stuff around, there’s no telling where it’s going to end up.”

Kevin McAllister said he has been involved in efforts to stop the EPA from dumping in the Sound for about ten years now. He is president of Defend H2O, a Sag Harbor-based not-for-profit formed in June 2014 to protect Long Island beaches, groundwater, wetlands and surface waters. “I’ve always felt that they’ve fit the science to basically justify the dumping,” Mr. McAllister said. “It’s not common sense to know that it’s a bad idea.” He added: “The point I kept making is that where they are dredging from, like the river mouths, are generally sinks for high contaminants. I think it’s a very positive pushback on a bad decision.”

Congressman Lee Zeldin (R-Shirley), who represents eastern Long Island, said that the Long Island Sound dumping sites were explicitly for “short-term, limited use.” “All of this we owe to the improvement of this critical ecosystem, so it is critical that the EPA and Army Corps do not impede this progress,” Mr. Zeldin said in an email. “The Long Island Sound shouldn’t be a dumping ground, especially when there are many viable alternatives to open water dumping, including recycling and safe disposal on land. “We need a much more aggressive path to phasing out open water dumping at these sites in the Long Island Sound,” he added.

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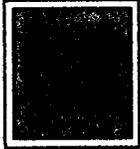
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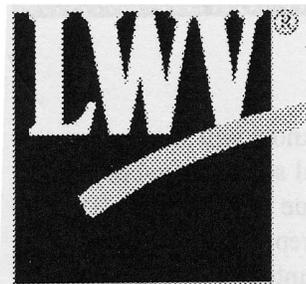
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SEPTEMBER

- Sat Sept 9 Brookhaven Longwood Town Fair at Longwood Estate, Ridge, 9—5, \$5*
- Sun Sept 10 Suffragist Parade and Rally at American Legion Hall, Lake Ronkonkoma*
- Tues Sept 26 National Voter Registration Day, at various sites*

OCTOBER

- Tues Oct 3 Brookhaven LWV Board Meeting, 10 am, Carol Manel's*
- Wed Oct 4 Con-Con Information Event, 7 pm, Patchogue Theatre of Performing Arts*
- Fri Oct 27 UN Lunch/Dinner—place and date to be decided*