



THE VOTER

The Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons

Founded in 1977

Volume XXXIV, No. 3

April 2011

Planning Meeting Draws Members' Ideas for Future League Projects

Every March, LWVH members meet to hear others' ideas for future projects and suggest their own. This year, Judi Roth served as moderator. Leading off with great passion and copious research was Mireille Lister. Mireille's focus is on what our League and the national League can do to sway Congress to enact the "Fair Elections Now" legislation. This legislation would enact campaign finance reform to counteract the Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United. Suggestions for our role in this range from letter writing and calling to having a forum on the topic—perhaps with a speaker from the Brennan Center or Common Cause. (Although it was pointed out that all members of our Congressional delegation support this bill and it is very difficult for non-constituents to influence elected officials from other states.) This was the only national level project proposed.

The next step is for the Board to discuss how to implement the ideas voted most favored in an informal show of hands. The highest level of support was consolidation of Town government services and women's issues. Fair Elections Now was also endorsed. The Board will now discuss what actions might be used to further our ideas. Often, member meetings open to the public present an individual or panel to educate ourselves on the pros and cons of the idea.

On The State Level

There was a call for support of ethics reform, a critical and time-honored State League position. Copies of the League's "Fix New York State Now!" legislative agenda were distributed, and it was suggested that our local League could lobby on this issue to our state legislators and write letters. The state League's position on Ethics Reform is:

- Put in place a new independent ethics oversight agency and tougher enforcement.
- Make the legislature more open and accountable through continued rules reform.

Many Suggestions For Local Level Projects

Quite deliberately, the majority of ideas were for forums, research or action on local issues. Six issues were proposed for study.

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SAVE THE DATE!

League of Women Voters of the Hamptons Annual Meeting

May 7, 2011

2 PM

Southampton Cultural Center

ALL ARE WELCOME

Full details in the next issue

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons

Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Diversity Policy

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, in both its values and practices, is committed to diversity and pluralism. This means that there shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of economic position, gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability. The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons subscribes to the belief that diversity and pluralism are fundamental to the values it upholds and that inclusiveness enhances the organization's ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs. The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons affirms its commitment to reflecting the diversity of the East End.

Membership

Any person who supports the mission of the League may become a member.

The Voter Newsletter

The newsletter of the Hamptons League, *The Voter*, is dedicated to bringing useful information, background, perspective and commentary on public policy issues confronting League members and other community citizens in Southampton and East Hampton, Suffolk County and the State of New York. It explores the work of the League to promote positive solutions, and it empowers people to make a difference in their communities.

The Voter is published eight times a year (January/February, March, April, May/June, July/August, September, October, and November/December) by the League of Women Voters of the Hamptons, P. O. Box 2253, East Hampton, NY 11937.

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Printed on recycled paper.

President's Message

*Coming together is a beginning.
Keeping together is progress.
Working together is success.*

- Henry Ford

Next month, I will be relinquishing my position as president of the Hamptons League to a terrific two-person team who will, I am sure, be incredibly successful in leading us to great and wonderful things. But more about that next month. For this, my penultimate president's message, I would like to talk about the work of the Board of Directors, a group of the smartest, cleverest, hardest working and most dedicated women I have ever met.

At the last national convention, I wandered into a workshop which had been advertised as a primer on new ways to run a local. With interest, I took my seat, only to discover that the real focus of the meeting was to help local presidents with only three or four other active members learn how to run their organizations with such minimal help. I was clearly in the wrong place. We are blessed with an 18 member board, each of whom is unstinting in her generosity to this organization. They give of their time, their ideas, their commitment, their money and their energy to the League. It is, however, their ability to work together that results in the success of the Hamptons league as a whole. So I salute their teamwork, cooperation and flexibility, and, at the same time, would like to share with the members their individual talents and accomplishments.

Glorian Berk, who has already taken the reins of the natural resources committee, is poised to take on greater leadership duties in the future. Her management skills, fiscal savvy and insightful mind help us function at a professional and efficient level.

Mary Blake brings many assets to our board, including great writing skills, new and interesting ideas, a wonderful ability to manage people, infectious enthusiasm and the warmest smile. A newer member, her contributions in all these areas have made a distinct imprint on the Board.

Joy Cordery's skills emanate from her tenacious spirit. Whether it be in fund raising, implementing our social services project or getting ads for *The Voter*, she works hard, produces fantastic results, and never, ever, quits.

Emoke Forman keeps our books and, at board meetings, helps keep our sanity. Her long experience with the League, coupled with her practical instincts, helps us see the big picture when we bog down in the details.

Sally James has taken over the production of *The Voter* with dexterity. Her vision is becoming more apparent with each issue, and

it is clear that the professional appearance and content of our newsletter will continue and improve.

Barbara Jordan combines her experience as past president of our local with a great dedication to community activism which helps our league stay visible in the community and active in issues, such as housing, that are important parts of our mission.

Arlene Hinkemeyer is indefatigable. No matter what she undertakes, it is done with the ultimate degree of thoroughness and efficiency. Since she has been in charge of our publicity, our image has been burnished, and our visibility has increased to the degree that a member noted "The League is everywhere." It is Arlene who has put us there.

Maura Lester guided *The Voter* for many years and to great acclaim, earning for us many state awards for best newsletter. As "editor emeritus" she is still giving her time, talent and energy to help *The Voter* transition and to maintain its quality. At the same time, her insight and humor help the Board over some of the rougher spots.

Terri Levin-Davgin has driven the Hot Topic Lunches, a new and so far quite successful project of the League. She combines a sense of joy and play with her hard work, a combination which is infectious and inspires all of those who work with her.

Joy Lupoletti is a fount of wisdom, experience and pragmatism, which qualities are in addition to her quick laugh and warm manner. I have depended on Joy as one of the rocks of the Board, and have turned to her innumerable times to help over the humps.

Ursula Lynch's quiet manner tends to veil her achievements, which include work on the Rummage Sale, Fall luncheon, county board, Running and Winning, arrangements for the Drug Court forum and (upcoming) Immigrant Voter Registration.

Arlene Makl's friendliness and gracious charm make her a natural for membership chair. Who wouldn't want to be a member of her organization? Less visible, but nonetheless important, are her organizational skills, which have kept the incredible amount of paperwork attendant on the work of the membership committee accurate and under control.

Anne Marshall has guided our Voter Services

Committee through the transition to new machines with an outstanding education project. Under her tutelage, our reputation for fair and unbiased handling of election matters has resulted in standing-room only audiences at our debates, requests to have us monitor debates for hotly challenged elections, and a request to supervise an emotionally charged library vote.

Gladys Remler brings her unique style and persona to her work on the fundraising committee and with the Board. Her projects, which include the Rummage Sale and the Fall Luncheon, have been greatly successful on many levels: they have made money, been well attended, have increased visibility and have attracted members.

Judi Roth's contributions to the league are many and varied. From the Running and Winning program to the upcoming Planning Board forum, she undertakes each project with gusto and the energy to bring them to successful fruition. She has been, and will continue to be, an integral element to the success of the League.

Judy Samuelson has taken on many duties as webmaster, Voter editor, head of the Health Committee and participant in many other activities. In addition, her sardonic humor and great wit have helped lighten the mood of many of our meetings.

Ann Sandford has, for umpteens years, been Secretary of the Board. As such, she has skillfully turned our disjointed cacophony into minutes which reflect smooth, mature and reasoned discussion. In addition, she has contributed much of that maturity and reason to our discussions.

Sue Wilson's skills as special events chair have helped bring the image of the League to new and varied audiences as well as helping us raise money. From the time she begins a project to the end, she works tirelessly and doggedly to see the project to fruition. The result is always elegant, professional and flawless, all of which is the result of her effort and all of which reflect so well on the League.

Thank you, each and every one of you, for the privilege of working with you and support you have given me. The League's success is the result of the contributions of you all and the members owe you a huge thank you for the work you do!

Carol Mellor, President

LWVH Board Meeting Summary

Held March 2, 2011

INFORMATION ITEMS

- Carol reported that applications for NYS League awards were submitted.
- The Blahs Luncheon on Feb. 16 drew 26 attendees, including four non-members. Bravo!

DISCUSSION ITEMS

- NYS Convention, May 20-22: LWVH can have four delegates. Mary Blake, Arlene Hinkemeyer (who has been nominated to the state board), and Sue Wilson, in her state role, will attend. Our League will donate a Hamptons Basket for the raffle. Donors of Hampton-type items should get them to Carol's basement by May 10 to allow Sue time to assemble the basket.
- Member Program Calendar :
 - March 14, at 7 p.m. will be Program Planning; Judi Roth will chair.
 - April 11 will cover Planning and Zoning, featuring a panel of four speakers.
- Annual Meeting, Southampton Cultural Center, Saturday, May 7: Arlene H. reviewed her list of suggested speakers. After much discussion, speakers in priority order are: Lawrence Levy, the Head of Hofstra's Suburban Studies group, to speak on the new state administration and aspects of consolidation initiatives; Sarah Lansdale, Sustainable Long Island; Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota. Arlene will contact them regarding an appearance. Refreshments will be provided by the board. Judy Samuelson volunteered to coordinate the food.

Bylaws: the board agreed that the current bylaws did not need revision. A motion was carried accepting the report of the Nominating Committee.

Proposed budget, 2011-12: Carol reported the work of the budget committee and distributed a proposed budget. Highlights included: dues at \$8,000, a reduction of \$500 in acknowledgement of the loss of ten national members due to administrative changes; the fundraising goal is \$6500 (with expenses at \$1250).

A lively discussion followed. Glorian suggested that events be used to bring in new members and that lunches, e.g., could raise funds by adding \$5 to our prices. All agreed that raffles help. Sue commented that the public tends to see the League as not needing money for its activities. Carol believes that we need about three

fundraising events per year with each having a goal to raise \$2,000. Sue will present her committee's ideas at the next meeting. The budget was accepted.

In closing, Carol noted that the annual meeting packet for the membership must be ready by April 6.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Natural Resources: Glorian Berk reported that her committee continues to gather ideas on energy efficiency and submit them to *The Voter*. The panel for the June meeting is coming together.
- Voter Services: Anne reported that she attended the meeting of the County League, where members of the Board of Elections addressed the League's concerns. Relative to the issue of an inaccurate count in the congressional race, Election Board members are reviewing new ways to report results. In regard to the quality and quantity of poll workers, they are considering expanding their hiring pool.
- Publicity: Arlene circulated copies of an array of recent publicity.
- Website: Judy noted that Feb. counted over 4,000 requests, the highest number ever.
- *The Voter*: Judy for Sally noted that *The Voter* has been printed.

**Next Board Meeting:
April 6 - 7 PM - Bridgehampton Bank**

Submitted by Ann Sandford
Edited by Judy Samuelson

WELCOME

The League of Women Voters of the Hamptons welcomes Lisa Votino-Tarant. Look for her profile in the May issue of *The Voter*.

The Voter's Production Schedule

During 2011, *The Voter* will be published as follows: January/February, March, April, May/June, July/August, September, October, November/December. More timely information can always be found at our website: www.lwvhamptons.org.

The production team for *The Voter* consists of Sally James, Joy Cordery, Judy Samuelson and Ann Sandford.

'BEAT THE WINTER BLAHS' LUNCHEON

February 16 - Southampton Inn



All smiles, Julia Kayser, standing center, headed and promoted the League's successful 'Beat the Winter Blahs' luncheon on February 16, which took place this year at OSO restaurant at the Southampton Inn. League members and friends at her table included, left to right, Nora Hajko, Dr. Jeannette Lofas, Marilyn Montgomery, Anne O'Neill, Julia Kayser, Pat Arceri and Doris Wray. Photo and caption by Arlene Hinkemeyer



Also attending the luncheon were Suffolk County LWV co-president Lisa Scott, Beth Barth with husband Bob Wilson, Anne Marshall, Jacqui Lofaro and Susan Wilson. Photo and caption by Arlene Hinkemeyer

Health Committee Report

The Ed and Phyllis Davis Wellness Center

On March 15, I represented the LWFH Health Committee at the Ed and Phyllis Davis Wellness Institute of Southampton Hospital. I interviewed key staffers Jessica Swiatocha, RN, NP-C, MSN- Supervisor, Cardiac Rehabilitation; Dr. Alex Aponte MD, Program Medical Director, Board-Certified in Family Medicine; and Craig Homis, MS, PT – Director of Rehabilitation Services. The Wellness Institute is located on the hospital's third floor in space designed by a Feng Shui consultant. Ed and Phyllis Davis are a local family who supported this effort. It began as a group of health providers who offered mind/body integrative care in different parts of the hospital. By 2007, there was a need to create a special space, where coming to the hospital could be viewed as a positive experience for individuals coping with chronic illness and those wanting to lead a healthy lifestyle and maintain well-being.

Their location within a hospital distinguishes this institution from others, as does their embrace of the philosophy of “clinical excellence and a holistic approach to wellness” through integration of functional medicine with complementary therapies. It provides integrative services based on the philosophy of Harvard Medical School Benson Henry Institute for Mind/Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital.

The staff is selected by the leadership of the Wellness Institute. Staff qualifications are reviewed by the Wellness Institute and providers become staff of the hospital. Staff members are certified in Mind/Body medicine, or are licensed and qualified professional providers within their field of service.

Broad Range of Services

These services include:

- an eight-week mind/body program for those with chronic health issues
- cognitive screening
- EEG biofeedback
- acupuncture
- hypnotherapy
- weight loss and nutrition counseling
- massage (available in Westhampton and East Hampton locations)
- smoking cessation
- art therapy
- Yoga and Pilates classes

Some classes are held on a regular weekly and monthly

schedule. More recent additions are “Lunch To Learn,” “Girls Night Out,” and “Movie Night.” Most recently, the Wellness Institute has been developing “portable” programs to provide services within schools, business workplaces and community locations.

No Waiting List For Most Services

There are no residency, address or specific health conditions required. Older children and adolescents are welcome with parental consent, depending on the services requested. There are no waiting lists for most services, and an appointment for a medical evaluation is usually obtained within a month.

The focus of the Institute is to serve the community as well as visitors to the area. Individuals may be referred by a physician, other health care provider, or self-referred. Information on all of the Wellness Institute services, and a virtual tour are available at their website: wellness@southamptonhospital.org. You can call 631-726-8800 or visit in person to pick up their brochures and request a price listing for the services. Translators for non-English speakers can be arranged.

Submitted by Valerie King

Quick Facts On Health Care Costs

- Total health spending in the U.S. reached \$2.1 trillion in 2007 – or \$7,026 per capita.
- By 2016, total health spending is projected to rise to \$4.2 trillion.
- Between 2005-2006, total health spending increased 6.7 percent, more than double the rate of the 2.9 percent increase in overall economic growth.
- Total health spending remained relatively constant at about 16 percent of gross domestic product from 2003-2006, but is projected to increase to 19.5 percent by 2017.
- Spending for home health care increased at a faster pace from 2005 – 2006 (9.9 percent) than any other category of health spending; however, its impact is limited because it accounts overall for only 2.5 percent of total health spending.
- Yearly prescription drug spending growth accelerated in 2006 to 8.5 percent from a low of 5.8 percent in 2005, in part due to full implementation of Medicare Part D.
- Between 2006 and 2007, premiums for health coverage offered by employers increased 6.1 percent, the fourth straight year of declines in the rate of premium growth, from a peak of 13.9 percent in 2003. Even so, this was

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A Post-Election Meeting with Board of Elections

On February 16, two representatives of the Suffolk County Board of Elections (BOE) met in Riverhead with the Board of the League of Women Voters of Suffolk County (LWVSC). Traditionally, LWVSC meets with the BOE commissioners and/or their designees after each even-numbered-year election to review the processes of the election. The goal is to reinforce what went well, raise issues of concern and make suggestions for improvements.

This was a particularly significant meeting because of two obvious issues: use of the new voting machines and the month-long Bishop/Altschuler ballot counting saga. Prior to the meeting, Judie Gorenstein, LWVSC Voter Services chair, had submitted a list of questions to the representatives.

New Voting Process Deemed Success

In regard to the new voting machines, there seemed to be agreement that the process went fairly smoothly. One concern was that the print on the ballot itself was far too small and that due to the requirement of a full-face ballot, two of the gubernatorial candidates' names appeared side-by-side, instead of in a vertical position, causing confusion. Additionally, at a fair number of precincts, the poll workers either did not follow protocol or were unsure of the process. Also, at multiple locations the privacy sleeve was either not available or was not offered initially.

Inaccurate Reporting Caused Confusion

The biggest error occurred on election night when an inaccurate set of numbers were relayed by telephone, giving Bishop a lead that turned out to be wrong. The BOE representatives attributed the mistake to human voice error and said that in future elections the results will be relayed via a microchip that will be read either at secure local locations or at the BOE.

One positive result of this close election was the need to conduct an audit of the machine totals, using a state regulation process. The results showed that the voting machine totals were 100 percent accurate, thereby negating the need for a hand recount of all ballots. We also learned at this meeting that a bill was passed unanimously in the state legislature in mid- February concerning machines to be used in village elections.

This excerpt from the blog of Barbara Bartoletti, Legislative Director, LWVNYS, succinctly explains the decision:

“On the election law front, Bill Number A.3093B, effective immediately would allow villages to use lever machines for their elections in March. The League along with our good government colleagues opposed this legislation with a joint memo because it does not allow for disabled voters to vote independently and privately and it also flies in the face of standardization and uniformity in the use of voting technologies in all elections at all levels, one of the premises of HAVA. The “B” version allows for a sunset of December 2012, after which time, all elections will be carried out with electronic machines. The BOE members said they were pleased with that decision because renting the electronic machines would be very expensive for villages.

“Moreover, since those elections were not carried out by the BOE, village poll workers would have to be trained and there simply was not the time to do so.”

Another side issue arises from a reading of a section of the bill itself:

“Nothing in this section shall be construed to require the board of elections to maintain the care, custody or control of lever voting machines.”

That seems to put the burden on the individual villages and perhaps school districts, to have major responsibility for the lever machines over the next two years.

One other issue worth mentioning was concern about the extremely long hours poll workers must put in on election day, coupled with the fact that many of them are of retirement age. This requirement seems to have limited the number of applicants for such an arduous assignment. To our surprise we learned that the state BOE had just allowed poll workers to serve split shifts, but that the Suffolk County BOE had decided against this option. They voiced concern that errors might ensue without continuity and that workers scheduled for a later shift might not show up. A suggestion was made that they consider running a pilot program to test their concerns. If the surprised reaction from the LWVSC members present is any indication, that issue will certainly merit further discussion. The Suffolk County League of Women Voters includes Brookhaven, The Hamptons, Huntington, Shelter Island and Smithtown.

Submitted by Anne Marshall



Suffolk County Voter

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Wed. April 20 LWVSC Board Meeting, SCCC, Main St. Riverhead 10am - 12noon

April 2011

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The Future of the John J. Foley Nursing Home

The status of the John J Foley Skilled Nursing Facility has been in question for more than a year; but as of January 2011 it has been in crisis mode. When the Legislature did not support County Executive Levy's plan to sell the facility, he vetoed any money in this year's budget to support the continuing operation of the home by the county. The County Legislature failed to override his veto by one vote. Since funding would expire March 31, 2011, Levy announced he would close the nursing home.

Towards the end of January NY State approved Levy's plan for closing the facility, shoring up the County Executive's case. At about the same time one employee and three residents of the home filed a lawsuit asking for a ruling to block the sale on the grounds that it could not be closed until the Legislature voted for closure. On February 1st the County Legislature voted by 11 to 5 to join the lawsuit. The month of February then saw court decisions: first allowing the closure, then blocking it. On February 16th, a Suffolk State Supreme justice refused a request for a temporary injunction to stop the sale by the County Executive. Levy immediately started laying off workers at the home (16 were told they were terminated), and simultaneously Levy's aides said new nursing home admissions were stopped. In addition letters were sent to residents' families telling them closure of the home was being phased in.

On February 21st however, the State Supreme Court Appellate Division issued a temporary order forbidding the County Executive to close the home. Levy then reversed himself, calling a special meeting of the Legislature for Thursday, March 3rd, to reconsider the deal of last fall to sell the home to a private operator. The County still has the deposit for that sale. The meeting on the 3rd was a very contentious one between the County Executive's representatives and the Legislature, ending finally after midnight with the Legislature voting 12 to 4 to approve the sale. The court still must approve the sale and there are still other issues to iron out, such as whether the sale will be effective this spring or at the end of the year, raising the question of who will fund it until the sale. The resolution included provision for a four million dollar fund that will make up loss of income for staff who are transferred to other positions, and for care for patients who need special care during the transition. Opponents of the sale asked if the County can afford four million dollars for transitional costs, could they not continue to fund the facility's operation? Another issue is whether the twelfth vote was cast illegally, since Legislator D' Amaro's wife is the County Attorney. Opponents suggest he should have abstained from voting.

It is obvious at this point there are still many issues to be resolved and the LWV continues to keep track of how the sale is progressing and the content of the final contract.

Marilyn McKeown

CPEP and Stony Brook Medical Center

It is not news to anyone that there are severe budgetary concerns afloat in New York State and in Suffolk County. Stony Brook University has, for the past three years, made very difficult, highly strategic decisions to accommodate these challenges and has cut back the operating budget while protecting the core academic mission of the institution.

Dr. Steven Strongwater, the Medical Center's chief executive, said that if the Governor's proposed budget goes through, it will result in the loss of up to 700 jobs. Key programs will have to be closed. The Medical Center is the region's safety net hospital, providing services that are unavailable elsewhere in the area. It is a major teaching hospital, the only Level 1 trauma center in Suffolk County, and the biggest provider of care for the underserved and uninsured in the area. Gov. Cuomo's budget proposal also severely cuts services to veterans, along with cuts which will seriously impact on the quality of the educational enterprise of the University.

Stony Brook has the only emergency room program for people with mental illness (Comprehensive Psychiatric Emergency Program: CPEP) in Suffolk County, a program to which the League has had a long-term commitment.

CPEP is in the process of a major renovation, designed to overcome the severe limitations of its facilities on its mission to fulfill its responsibilities to the County's mentally ill. Within the past two years, the County Legislature voted for a million dollar bond to assist this renovation (with County Executive Steve Levy's approval), but to date that financial support has not materialized.

The League strongly advocates for the County's support for CPEP's renovations, and for the actual delivery of its already-approved \$1 million bond to support those renovations.

Katherine Hoak

April 2011

Note: Meeting dates and times are published several weeks in advance and are subject to change. Please contact the Chairs or visit our website at www.lwvhamptons.org for updates. If you don't see a meeting for a committee of interest, contact the Chair of that committee. Contact information is listed on last inside page of The Voter and on the website, www.lwvhamptons.org.

April 6 - 7:00 PM Wednesday	Board of Directors Meeting	Bridgehampton National Bank, Montauk Highway, Bridgehampton. Members and guests welcome.
April 11 - 7:00 PM Monday	General Membership Meeting	Government Planning & Zoning. Hampton Library, Bridgehampton.
April 13 - Wednesday	"Running and Winning"	Southampton Cultural Center
LOOKING AHEAD		
May 7 - 2:00 PM	Annual Meeting	Southampton Cultural Center, Southampton
May 20 - May 22	NY State Convention	Albany NY
TOWN BOARD MEETINGS		
April 5 - 10:00 AM	East Hampton Town Board Work Session	Town Hall Courtroom, 159 Pantigo Rd., East Hampton
April 7 - 7:00 PM	East Hampton Town Board Meeting	Town Hall Meeting Room, 159 Pantigo Rd., East Hampton
April 12 - 1:00 PM	Southampton Town Board Meeting	Town Hall Board Room, Southampton Town Hall, 116 Hampton Rd., Southampton
April 19 - 10:00 AM	East Hampton Town Board Work Session	Town Hall Courtroom, 159 Pantigo Rd., East Hampton
April 21 - 7:00 PM	East Hampton Town Board Meeting	Town Hall Courtroom, 159 Pantigo Rd., East Hampton
April 26 - 6:00 PM	Southampton Town Board Meeting	Town Hall Board Room, Southampton Town Hall, 116 Hampton Rd., Southampton
April 1, 8, 15 and 29 9:30 AM	Southampton Town Board Work Sessions	Town Hall Board Room, Southampton Town Hall, 116 Hampton Rd., Southampton

Committee Reports

Summary of Planning Meeting

Continued from page 1

1. Consolidation of services by our town government agencies. This would be a follow-up to our exploration of the Council/Manager model of government and would involve research into what areas seem appropriate for consolidation/cost savings. Could our non-partisan status be helpful to the towns in this manner? Would we be given access? This topic is very hot at the State level as Governor Cuomo is eager to look at state agencies/ duplicate town and city services.
2. Shared services by school districts. While we agreed this is a worthwhile topic, we do not believe it is something the League should work on.
3. Women's Issues—including protection of health programs ranging from WIC to pre-natal care to pro-choice services to domestic violence. Are services being cut? What can we do to influence this? There is always interest in this matter but it is a diffuse issue. However, we can break it down and work on some pieces.
4. Public Transportation. Expressing chagrin at the failure of the Suffolk County Legislature to override Steve Levy's veto of Sunday bus service, members expressed interest in finding out where the Towns stand after all the money spent on the Volpe study (the Five Town Transportation study completed last year). Mention was made of an innovative approach on the national level called the Infrastructure Bank which would be a public/private partnership to repair our nation's aging infrastructure.
5. Natural Resources—always a popular, multifaceted topic, adopted again.
6. Sponsor a luncheon to get council members from both Towns together. Although this was a light-hearted comment, we agreed it should get serious consideration from the Hot Topics Committee.

Support of Marriage Equality

Lisa Votino-Tarant, our newest (and one of our youngest!) members, gave a very interesting presentation on the Marriage Equality Act now before the state legislature. She spoke about the grass roots organizing effort being launched to flood the State Senate with letters from people in all walks of life in support of this legislation. She provided sample letters which can be sent to Senator LaValle. If you would like a copy of such a letter please contact Lisa at directly at 631 383 1066, or LMVotino@optonline.net. She is also interested in appearing before local civic groups to increase outreach, so if you are aware of any groups to whom she could

speak about the Marriage Equality act, please get in touch with her.

Submitted by Judi Roth

Health Committee Report

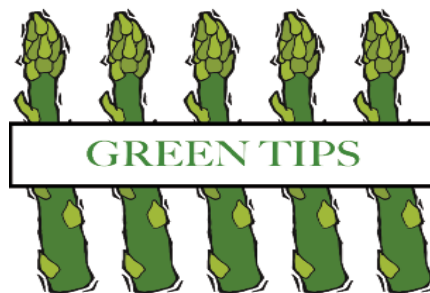
Continued from page 6

more than twice the rate of growth in the Consumer Price Index.

- Of every dollar spent on health services in the U.S. in 2006, 46 cents came directly from government sources.
- Costs for program administration and the net cost of private health insurance were about 7 percent of total health spending in the U.S. in 2006 and grew 8.8 percent, a marked increase over the 3.6 percent rise in 2005. This list (without the original endnotes) is from "A Reporter's Toolkit: Health Care Costs" (an Alliance for Health Reform Toolkit produced with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation) and is reproduced here courtesy of the Alliance for Health Care. The entire toolkit can be found at

http://www.allhealth.org/Publications/Cost_of_health_care/health_care_costs_toolkit.asp#keyfacts.

Resource provided by the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force, 2009.



NOW THAT SPRING HAS ARRIVED, HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR AN ENVIRONMENTALLY HEALTHY LAWN:

- Mow high: set mower blades 3-5"; avoid cutting off more than 1/3 of the grass blade.
- Water infrequently but deeply every 7-10 days if there has been no good rain. This may take 2-4 hours depending on your sprinklers.
- Test your soil for pH balance. Cornell Cooperative Extension can do this for you (631-727-7850).
 - Seed with tall fescue blend.

For further tips go to www.longislandnn.org
Submitted by Glorian Berk

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WE WANT YOU... TO JOIN THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Do you like to meet new people and greet friends? Joining the Membership Committee gives you that opportunity, along with brainstorming new and creative ways to increase our membership.

The Membership Committee provides a presence at general meetings, debates and community and special events. We're also responsible for spreading the word about what the League stands for. This is a great committee filled with lively, outgoing people.

To join us, contact Arlene Makl (631) 324.8662 or
membership@lwvhamptons.org. Do it today!

The Voter

League of Women Voters of the Hamptons

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Phone: 631-324-4637

<http://hamptons.ny.lwvnet.org>

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