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The American Association of University Women Buffalo Branch

presents

The Eighth Annual International Women's Day Celebration & Discussion
Co-Sponsored by the League of Women Voters Buffalo/Niagara.

We will Celebrate Women Refugees Living in Buffalo

with

A Gala Champagne Brunch

at

Samuel's Grande Manor
8750 Main Street
Clarence, New York

Sunday, March 8, 2009, 11:00 a.m.

The meeting is open to the public and we encourage you to bring guests and friends.

Cost for the Champagne Brunch : \$20/person

Write checks payable to AAUW/EF

Reservations and payment need to be made by March 1, 2009.

Contact us before that date at events@lwvbn.org or lwvbn@lwvbn.org
for mailing directions.

General Meeting for Recommendations for the 2009-2011 LWVNYS Program

Saturday, February 28, 2009, 1:30 p.m.

at the League Office,
1292 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo

Members may submit program recommendations in writing to the League
Office or e-mail them to:

lwvbn@lwvbn.org

President's Message

We've been really busy since the new year started. We will be doing many great things in 2009.

I attended the Climate Change Café on January 31. We had a great time while we were learning much about our carbon footprint and how we can reduce it. We will be holding smaller "team" meetings during the next few weeks to track our progress. It's not too late to join us. Call the League office for more information about joining one of the teams. Many thanks to Sandy Chelnov and the Natural Resources Committee members for arranging this fun and informative event, Also thanks to Mike Kelly who illustrated our discussions through cartoons. I think you will see his cartoons in the near future.

The State League web site is being redesigned. They are looking for photos. If you have taken some great pictures at League events send them to Kristin Allen, so she can forward them to LWVNYS.

It's time to think about the LWVNYS Convention in Syracuse. It's not a long trip this year so maybe you would be interested in attending. Give it some thought and let me know by e-mail : events@lwvbn.org or call the League office at 884-3550.

With all this activity – spring can't be that far off

Margaret Brunson, Co-president,
Administration

Watch that ice – it's treacherous out there!!!

We wish a speedy recovery to Therese Warden who broke her ankle following the February board meeting.

Board Highlights

- The budget committee will meet later this month. Laura McDade was appointed budget chair.
- Mike Egan has accepted the position of Annual Meeting Chair.
- The nominating committee has begun its work.
- Legislative interviews will be scheduled during March.
- Membership – we have a net increase of 4 members this year
- Cereal and canned goods were collected for the food pantry at 1272 Delaware this month. Donations are always welcome.
- LWVB/N will be sending two and possibly three LeaderSpark graduates to participate in Students Inside Albany in April..

Legislative Breakfast to meet with New York State elected representatives from WNY

Friday, March 6, 2009, 9:00-10:30 a.m.

WNED Boardroom
One Horizons Plaza, Buffalo

The League of Woman Voters of New York
Legislative Agenda will be presented and
discussed.

Please call the League office by
Thursday, March 4, if you plan to attend.

Janet Goodsell

Great Decisions: On March 5, 2009, we will resume our first Thursday of the month meeting at 1272 Delaware from 10 AM - noon with our 2nd topic, Afghanistan and Pakistan, to be led by Joan Mondul. "Newfound hopes for stability in Iraq have shifted the U. S. military focus back to Afghanistan and Pakistan, one of the most volatile border regions in the world. What impact will this renewed interest have on the two states as well as on U. S. defense strategy?" I hope to see you all as we discuss one of the hottest world topics of 2009. Also thanks to Marlene Katzel for being willing to host our January meeting in her beautiful home complete with beverage and goodies.

Bernice Baeumler

Contributors to LWVBN Member Fund Drive

**We sincerely thank all who have contributed to the LWVB/N Member Fund Drive.
As of the end of January 2009 contributions have been received from these League members:**

Kristin Allen	Allene Falk	Kathleen O'Connor-Mullen
Robert & Agnes Annis	Marion S. Fay	Bedros Odian
Phyllis Banas	Gladys Gifford & Al Schuster	Terri Parks
Abbey Bernardis	Janet Goodsell	Karen Penfold
Hallie Block	Ruth Haines	Joan Photiadis
Cathleen Bowen	Joel & Anne E. Huberman	Ellen E. Pine
Belmore Bridgford	Marie Jansen	Clarine Radt
Dan & Margaret Brunson	Helen L. Johnson	Nancy E. Ryther
Rosemarie Cardoso	Luella Johnson	Marge Samuelson
Martha Cary	Joelle Logue	Terri Schelter
Fredricka Cheek	Maria Martens	Janet P. Sciolino
Chet & Elizabeth Dann	Janet Massaro	Diane Showalter
Susan M. Davis	Kathleen McCarthy	Clare H. Stahl
Marian Deutschman	Laura McDade	Lenore Tetkowski
Judy Donovan	JoAnn Mecca	Phil & Lyle Toohey
Joan Kerr Dosch	Jim & Judith Metzger	Marjorie Tritto
Dr. Nuala M. Drescher	Kirsten Milbrath	Agnes Tufariello
Margaret Dunn	Arlene Miles & John Segman	Jean Wholahan
Dorinne Ebel	Ellen Neumaier	Maire Zakrzewski

It's not too late to add your name to this list! The League really needs your financial help in order to carry out its work. To date we have raised \$2,270 from member contributions, but we had hoped to raise over \$3,000. If you have not already contributed, we'll appreciate whatever amount you can give. Thank you also to everyone who helped with the fund drive mailing.

Margaret Brunson, Co-President & Fund Drive Chair

LWV Mission:

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



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Gideon Day Lobbying in Albany

Register now for Gideon Day, March 18, 2009, a statewide lobbying day at the Legislative Office Building in Albany, New York, to support creation of an Independent Public Defense Commission.

On the 46th anniversary of the landmark right-to-counsel Supreme Court decision in *Gideon v. Wainwright*, the Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission will host an annual lobby day in Albany. Supporters are needed to represent every region of the state -- from Long Island and Buffalo, from the North Country and the Southern Tier, and from the City.

Together New Yorkers will tell State officials: **justice matters statewide!** We need an Independent Public Defense Commission heading a statewide, fully and adequately state-funded public defense system! The **League of Women Voters of New York State** supports this Campaign and we NEED you to attend Gideon Day.

The event sponsor, the Campaign for an Independent Public Defense Commission, a project of The New York State Defenders Justice Fund, is inviting public defenders, legal aid lawyers, assigned counsel attorneys, members of the Campaign, the client community and all other supporters to participate.

To register, visit www.newyorkjusticefund.org/gideon.htm.

For more information about the event and the Campaign, please visit www.newyorkjusticefund.org/campaign.htm or contact:

Katie Blackburn, Upstate Community Organizer at (518) 465-0519, kblackburn@newyorkjusticefund.org

Keith Kinch, Downstate Community Organizer at (917) 604-1396, kkinch@newyorkjusticefund.org

Laura Ladd Bierman, Executive Director League of Women Voters of New York State

We need to know who is coming and your address, so we can provide busses.

Please contact me- Lenore Banks, Off-board Judicial Specialist, by phone 716-836-5240 or -email lenorebanks@gmail.com, subject "Gideon Day"

Lenore Banks

School Boards Association's 31st Annual Legislative Breakfast

For several years the League of Women Voters has partnered with the Erie County Association of School Boards to organize their Annual Legislative Breakfast. This year on February 7, Janet Goodsell acted as timekeeper for the event. JoAnn Mecca and Lee Tetkowski also attended.

The following elected officials participated: Senator Stachowski, Senator Volker, Senator Ranzenhofer, an aide for Senator Thompson, and Assemblymen Quinn, Gabryszak and Hoyt and Assemblywoman Corwin.

Presentations and discussions focused on Pension Reform and Health Benefit Costs, costs of Mandates and Special Education. General deep concern was expressed throughout on the current economic crisis, and unquestionable need for difficult cuts in the near future. The congenial mood emphasized everyone's common goal to do the best possible for our children's education. The legislators stated the importance of input from all of us in the form of e-mails, letters and visits.

Lee Tetkowski

Voter Services

First of all, many thanks to Judy Weidemann volunteering to talk on January 23rd at an Open House at Enterprise Charter School. On January 8, JoAnn Mecca represented the League at the Naturalization Ceremony. JoAnn Mecca and Judy Hubert will do the Naturalization Services on February 5th, Joyce Bol and Judy Casassa on February 19th.

Joyce H. Bol Voter Services Chair

A New Diet for Everyone

Losing up to 5000 pounds became the goal of every participant present at the Climate Change Cafe on January 31, 2009, at the Harlem Road Community Center, an event sponsored by the League of Women Voters Buffalo/Niagara Natural Resources Committee and attended by members and friends from the LWVBN area. Sandy Chelnov, also a member of the Western New York Climate Action Coalition, chaired the event. Mike Kelly, a graphic recorder, cleverly captured ideas expressed by participants with quick cartoons on butcher paper. Those ideas ended in a resolve to go on a 'diet.'

Using David Gershon's program, Low Carbon Diet, a 30 Day Program to Lose 5000 Pounds, as a guide, members were asked to share their fears for the future if global warming continues unchallenged. Most frequently, those fears concerned the impact on children and grandchildren, who will be subject to new diseases, food shortages, a disruption of natural systems, nature as we know it and a disrupted economy. They also feared the influence of naysayers and those who simply become immobilized or sink into denial as the tipping point approaches.

But not all was gloom and doom. "Hope is the energy to act," Sandy Chelnov asserted. Particular optimism was placed in young people who have become activists and who can communicate through the Internet. There was also confidence that the new Washington leadership will take action including more emphasis on science and research. Innovative ideas among business owners, not to mention 'the nerve to conserve,' were also cited.

Individual awareness of the urgency to reduce one's carbon footprint is spreading, and the League wants to accelerate that trend in neighborhoods and communities by urging people to commit to everything from less driving to shorter showers, replacing plastic bags with reusable bags, eating less meat, turning down the heat, cutting back on air conditioning and other such restraints until they've lost those pounds of pollutants.

It can be fun going on a 'diet' if you don't do it alone, was the consensus, especially if you become part of an eco-team. So far, League members in East Aurora, Grand Island, Amherst, Buffalo and the board have formed teams which will be meeting during the next six weeks, competing against each other and committing to shed at least 5,000 pounds of CO2 a year.

For more information or to join or create a team, contact Ellen Neumaier or Sandy Chelnov at events@lwvbn.org.

Ellie Becher, Natural Resource Committee Member

The League of Women Voters is Officially Launched

It was ninety years ago that the idea of the League of Women Voters was put forth. At the Golden Jubilee Convention of the National American Woman Suffrage Association, March 24, 1919, in St. Louis, Missouri, President Carrie Chapman Catt called for an "Organization of a League of Women Voters to finish the fight for woman suffrage.."

The League was to be "Non partisan, non militant and not sectarian." The object of the organization was to "secure protection in their right to vote to the women citizens of the United States...and to increase the effectiveness of the women's votes in effecting better government." The idea was debated and the convention ultimately adopted the name League of Women Voters.

The convention and the proposal for this new organization were covered extensively in the New York Times during March 1919.

Marie Hanrahan, Historian

Ed. Note: The idea for the organization is ninety years old, and the League celebrates its 89th birthday this year. It didn't take those ladies long at all to organize!