



Westport Voter

January 2006

Visit our website: www.lwwestportct.org

Pie and Politics - Back by popular demand!

What could be better than warm pie and heated political discussions on a cold winter night? Come with your questions for our state legislators, and we'll provide coffee and desserts.

Thursday, January 26, 7:00 p.m.
Fellowship Room of the Saugatuck Congregational Church
245 Post Road East



WINTER WARM-UP

Sunday, February 12 5:00 PM
At the home of Marlene Siff, 15 Broadview Road
RSVP Athena Bradley 227-8966



The purpose of this dinner is to introduce new and prospective members to the work of the Westport League. You are invited to attend, if you bring along a prospective member who may be interested in joining the League.

School Start Time - Catherine Kempson



Photo courtesy of WestportNow.com

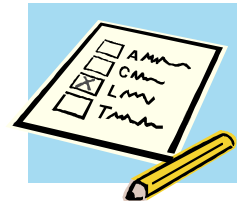
National Program Planning Meeting

Monday, February 6, 12-2

Brown bag lunch in the Seminar Room at the Library.

Every two years, state and local Leagues participate in the LWVUS Program Planning process by making recommendations concerning program issues; this is how we remain a grassroots organization. According to the LWVUS publication, "Program is the League's reason for being, the basis of both education and action efforts." National Program Planning includes a systematic review of all LWVUS positions. Members may select one LWVUS position for consideration for review/update each biennium.

Members can prepare for participation in National Program Planning by looking at the 2004-2006 Impact on Issues, available on the LWVUS website www.lwv.org (search "Impact on Issues").



The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, community-based political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. It was founded in 1920 as an outgrowth of the 72 year struggle to win voting rights for women.

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LWV WEBSITES

www.lwvwestportct.org

www.lwvct.org (Connecticut)

www.lwv.org (US)

Dear Members,

DUES ARE GOING UP! OR ARE THEY? We hope we have your attention because after we welcome you back from what we hope was a peaceful and harmonious holiday, we need to discuss a serious subject, one the League has been quietly grappling with for a couple of years, it's time to make a decision on setting the dues level for our next fiscal year. We'd like your help and welcome your input and advice.

While we haven't raised dues for seven years, we realize that some people believe that they are already too high. Here are the issues. Our expenses are rising: postal rates, printing costs, phone bills. However, the biggest expense is the \$40 per member we must pay to the State and National LWV organizations. As we continue to be more and more active, our activities (candidates forums, the school programs, publications, studies and public forums) put a strain on our funds. Our fundraising efforts have been very successful in recent years, but put pressure on our human resources (or what we like to call woman-power) and are dependent on the commitment of future volunteers. In other words, the choice boils down to increased fund-raising or increased dues. We have some funds in savings, but should we spend them down, and if so, by how much?

Different Leagues have taken different approaches to this dilemma, and the underlying philosophical questions are complex. We have recently activated the Budget Committee, whose charge is to develop a budget, including the dues level, for approval by the general membership at the Annual General Meeting. If you would like to participate, or if you just have something to say about the dues, please contact Lisa or Laura and let us know what's on your mind.

Looking forward to the next several weeks, the League seems to be busier than ever. We have all of our ongoing activities to look forward to as well as some once a year events. First, rather than just conducting a day time Legislative Interview, as we have in recent years, we are bringing back *Pie and Politics*. Next comes *National Program Planning* with the *Winter Warm-up* close on its heels. Please look for more details elsewhere in this Voter. And still to come are the concurrence meeting on the *State Death Penalty* position and *Local Program Planning* in April. And, of course, it's never too early to start thinking about our Tag/Plant sale in May.

Many thanks for your membership in this great organization, and best wishes for a happy, healthy new year.

Laura and Lisa

School Start Time Concurrence Meeting A Great Success

49 people attended the School Start Time Concurrence meeting at the Westport Library on Monday, January 9th. There were members of the Westport Board of Education and the RTM present, as well as several journalists. Most of the attendees were LWV members, either when they arrived at the meeting, or by the time they left. School Start Time Concurrence Steering Committee members Catherine Kempson and Carol Kleinfeld educated us about the effects of sleep deprivation on adolescents' health, safety, personal behavior, substance abuse. Lisa Bogan, a steering committee member and also a Wilton Board of Education member, discussed the process of changing the school start times in Wilton, which required thinking out of the box and coming up with a solution that was cost-neutral. This change is now in its third year, and is reported to be a success.

The panel reported that the research they were quoting is supported by several reputable medical associations and that it shows that children do actually get more sleep when school starts later. Additional information and resources are available on the website www.wiltonlwv.org (under recent studies).

LWV members, after some discussion, were asked to vote on the 5 statements presented. If you were not able to make the meeting, rest assured that you may vote, and are encouraged to do so by completing the form found on the above-mentioned website, or the form that will be included in your March Voter.



New Members

Susan Alintoff
8 Clifford Lane
222-3802

Anne and Elizabeth Vance
43 Sniffen Road
221-8470

BOOK GROUP NEWS

Book Group has finally settled on a regular schedule for its discussions: the fourth Monday of the month at 1:30 pm. Continuing the Communist theme, February's selection is *Witness*, by Whitaker Chambers. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. wrote: "Whittaker Chambers has written one of the really significant American autobiographies...penetrating and terrible insights into America in the early twentieth century." From Amazon's review: "This poetic autobiography recounts the famous [Alger Hiss] case, but also reveals much more." Meeting is February 27, at Yvonne Senturia's house, 17 Blue Ribbon Drive. Future titles: Philip Roth's *The Plot Against America*, March 27; Ian McEwen's *Saturday*, April 24. If you would like to join the group, email or call Helene Crawford: 227 2572.

TIME TO THINK TAG SALE...

With the cold weather outside, now is the perfect time to walk through your house and eliminate clutter or, before it gets too steamy, clean out the attic. We need donations of all kinds: furniture, china, decorative items, toys, games, jewelry. All would be most welcome. We have room for storing contributions and will be glad to pick-up donations. So please don't delay, start looking in those old boxes now.



Tag Sale Location ????

We are still looking for a location for the Tag Sale. If you have the perfect site, please contact Jackie Gordon 803-3725.

Remember, all donations are tax deductible



Death Penalty Concurrence Study Presentation

March 21, 2006

12:00 – 1.30 Mc Manus Room, Westport Public Library

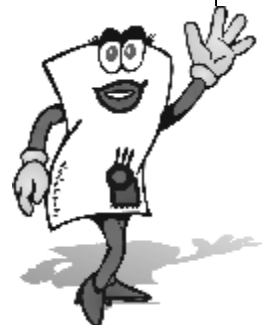
There will be an evening meeting the same week at the Fairfield Public Library for those who can't make it to the noon meeting. Look for further details in the February Voter.

Last Spring, the State LWV Convention approved a one year concurrence study for a statewide position based on New Jersey's study favoring elimination of the death penalty. Ellen McBride, Jane Eyes and Rene Corcoran participated in the statewide study group and are eager to meet with Westport and Fairfield LWV members who would like to participate in presenting the study on March 21. The group will meet three times in late February and early March to familiarize themselves with the study and plan the presentation. If you are interested in being a part of the planning committee, please contact Ellen McBride at 292- 3399. .



Green Tip of the Month: SAY "BYE" TO JUNK MAIL

How many credit card and insurance offers do you receive each week? It turns out that most companies offering pre-approved credit cards and insurance offers use lists from the major credit bureaus. To have your name removed from mailing lists used for unsolicited credit card and insurance offers all you need to do is call 888-567-8688. This single automated phone line takes you off the lists of all major credit bureaus. You can also do this online at: <http://www.optoutprescreen.com>.



JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Individual Dues: \$50 Household (limited to 2): \$75

Membership year: July 1 through June 30

Send check made payable to:

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WESTPORT

P.O. Box 285

Westport, CT 06881- 0285

Contributions to LWV Education Fund are tax deductible; LWV dues are not.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Jan 19 **OBSERVER CORP** — 9 AM
ACTION COMMITTEE - 11 AM
Library Seminar Room (note new location)
- 26 **PIE AND POLITICS** - 7 PM
Saugatuck Congregational Church
- Feb 1 **BOARD MEETING** - 9 AM
Laura Gallagher's - 7 Sandhopper Trail
- 6 **NATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING** - Noon
Room 201 Town Hall
- 10 **BUDGET STUDY** - 10.30 AM
Ann Gill's, 53 High Point Road
- 12 **WINTER WARM - UP** - 5 PM
Marlene Siff's, 15 Braodview Road
- 16 **OBSERVER CORP** — 9 AM
ACTION COMMITTEE - 11 AM
Library Seminar Room
- 27 **BOOK GROUP** - 1:30 PM
Yvonne Senturia's, 17 Blue Ribbon Drive
- Mar 21 **DEATH PENALTY CONCURRENCE** - Noon
McManus Room, Westport Library

All League meetings are open to all members.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF WESTPORT

Westport Voter

P.O. Box 285

Westport, CT

06881-0285

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Pie and Politics
January 26

