



Westport Voter

February 2007

Visit our website: www.lwvwestportct.org

STATE PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING
Discussion of LWVCT Positions
Tuesday, February 27th, 2007 - Westport Town Hall, Room 201
10:00am – 12:00
Join Us and Make Your Voice Heard!

This meeting is our opportunity to influence the State League's work plan for the 2007-2009 biennium. We will focus initially on the **Water Resources** position below, a 10-year position that must be re-affirmed, restudied or dropped. The League is also asked to identify one or two State positions as legislative priority to be will be afforded additional resources for advocacy. The current biennium priorities have been Election Laws & Transportation.

In addition, LWVCT adopted a number of LWVUS positions, and these positions will be open to review should this League have suggestions to better reflect Connecticut's needs:

<i>Air Quality</i>	<i>Child Care and Children At Risk</i>
<i>Energy</i>	<i>Gun Control</i>
<i>Housing</i>	<i>Reapportionment</i>
<i>Reproductive Rights</i>	<i>Waste Management</i>

To review these positions go to LWVCT Impact on Issues, www.lwvct.org. Look at lower right side of home page for the link.

WATER RESOURCES (1967, affirmed 2005)

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut supports state policies and programs which promote comprehensive long-range planning for conservation and development of land and water resources. Such planning should consider the interaction of our natural resources with each other as well as their relation to the needs of our growing population. Specific measures which the League supports include:

- enforcement of regulations to improve water quality;
- provision for an adequate staff to implement programs;
- acquisition and preservation of open space land, including inland wetlands and tidal marshes;
- a regional approach to planning;
- adequate and equitable financing of state programs;
- establishment of clear lines of authority and coordination of policy among state agencies.

Background and Action on Water Resources

The LWVCT has been a member of the Clean Water Coalition since 1987.

The coalition has had success in passage of the revised Inland Wetlands Act, the Integrated Pesticide Management bill and the Aquifer Protection legislation. The LWVCT has lobbied for legislation to improve Connecticut's waterways and maintain primacy (control) over monitoring water quality for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The LWVCT has supported the clean-up of Long Island Sound with active participation on the Citizen's Advisory Committee of the Long Island Sound Study to encourage adequate funding to correct problems caused by inadequate sewage treatment, combined sanitary and storm sewers, contaminated runoff, and toxic pollution; to recommend cooperation among Sound communities; and to support utilizing regulatory entities which are already in place to improve Long Island Sound.

In 2001, the anticipated comprehensive legislation to speed up the clean-up of the Sound and eliminate the nitrogen runoff did not materialize. During the 2002 session, the LWVCT strongly supported a bill prohibiting the use of alternative sewage disposal systems in drinking water supply watersheds (except for municipal uses in communities where the majority of the land is in drinking water supply watershed). The bill passed. Three bills were introduced during the 2003 session: the LWVCT supported a bill mandating a comprehensive look at the state of the watershed when reviewing applications for discharge permits (the bill died), opposed a bill requiring the DEP to evaluate and permit alternative sewage systems (would undermine legislation passed last year) which unfortunately passed, and lobbied extensively on behalf of a bill proposing to safeguard state's reservoirs and surrounding lands. After several amendments, the bill failed.

During the 2004 and 2005 sessions, several clean water initiatives were proposed and debated. These included various Long Island Sound initiatives, extension of the Clean Water Fund grants to local municipalities, (the bill passed), Water Diversions Act, Marine Sanctuaries in 2004. In 2005, a bill to mandate a Minimum Stream Flow Regulation and a bill authorizing the formation of a Bi-State Long Island Sound Committee passed. Much of the LWVCT action was concentrated in the area of drinking water and drinking watershed preservation.

The LWVCT has no Water Resources Specialist at this time.



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)

Greetings Everyone:

Our two year study of Westport's budget process is reaching its culmination this spring, starting with two **Budget Study Consensus** meetings scheduled for **March 20th (evening)** and **March 21st (morning)**. Please see page 3 of the Voter for locations and times. At the meetings, the Budget Study Committee will present its findings on its study of the town's budget process and pose consensus questions to you, our members, for discussion. It will be up to you, aided by a moderator, to discuss the questions and reach a consensus on the issues. The results of these discussions will become the basis for a new position that will be proposed at Annual Meeting for membership approval. Our end result will only be as successful as the amount of input and discussion that is provided by our members. So please mark your calendars and join us for one of the meetings.

This year we will be reviewing and prioritizing LWVCT Programs at the **State Program Planning meeting on February 27th**. Please see page one in this Voter for details about the meeting and the website link to the State Program summaries which you can review prior to the meeting so that you come prepared to discuss your priorities.

Finally, mark your calendars for **March 5 for the Westport Library's Community Conversation "Spotlight on Bridgeport Schools: Why Should We Care?"**, co-sponsored by the League. Three Bridgeport education supporters, including the Superintendent of Bridgeport Schools, will discuss the educational disparity in Bridgeport and how individuals can advocate for change. As a follow up, the LWV of Westport will sponsor a **Bridgeport Volunteer Fair on Sunday April 1st**. These two events are exciting opportunities to find out how you can get involved and be part of a large group of dedicated Westporters who volunteer to make a difference in our neighboring city! Details on page 3.

We can't emphasize enough how all of these programs represent important issues to us as League members. We hope to see many of you at all of these events, as a great deal of time and effort has gone into preparing them. They will only be successful with your input.

Eileen and Laura

Book Group News

The group will meet to discuss *The Places in Between* by Rory Stewart on February 26 at 1:30 PM at the home of Rene Corcoran, 73 Turkey Hill South.

Please contact Rene (254 - 6409) to let her know you will attend the discussion.

March 26 - *River of Doubt* by Candace Mallard
 April 23 - *Digging to America* by Anne Tyler

Multiple copies of the group's selections are available at the Westport Public Library. If you have questions about joining the group, email or call

Helene Crawford at
helenekc@optonline.net



Think Spring Think Tag Sale

We need donations of all kinds: furniture, china, decorative items, toys, games, jewelry. We have volunteers willing to store your contributions and we will be glad to pick-up donations. Contact Athena Ploumis Bradley.

Tag Sale Location ????



We are still looking for a location for the Tag Sale. If you have the perfect site, a large garage, lawn space and relatively plentiful parking, please contact Athena Ploumis Bradley at 227 - 8966 or athenathe1@gmail.com.



Westport LWV Needs You!!!!

Looking Forward: LWVUS Immigration Study

The national league has launched a study aimed at helping communities understand the implications of immigration at the local, state and federal level. League members will explore reasons for immigration, current federal immigration policy, and the impact of immigration on American society.

A Leader's Guide and consensus questions will be distributed to local leagues in August 2007. For current and ongoing background information and papers, click on the Immigration link at the home page of www.lwv.org.

Interested in helping to lead the local participation in this important study? Contact Alison Rivard (254-2079) or Pippa Bell Ader (221-1555).

SPOTLIGHT ON BRIDGEPORT SCHOOLS: Why Should We Care?

Monday, March 5 7:30 - 9 PM
McManus Room, Westport Library

A panel discussion with Dr. John Ramos, Superintendent of Bridgeport Schools and Peter Hurst, President of Commerce Bank in Bridgeport, and Marilyn Ondrasik, Executive Director of the Bridgeport Child Advocacy Coalition. They will discuss educational disparity in Bridgeport and how individuals can advocate for change. Sponsored by The Smilow Family in conjunction with The Greater Area Bridgeport Foundation, The Fairfield County Community Foundation, and The League of Women Voters of Westport.

As a follow up to this program, LWV Westport will sponsor a "Bridgeport Volunteer Fair" on Sunday, April 1st at 4 pm at the Center for Senior Activities. This will be an opportunity for people to find out where help is most needed and how they can personally get involved.



Find LWV Events on Celebrate Westport Community Calendar!

Celebrate Westport has created an online Community Calendar at www.celebratwestport.com, where local non-profit organizations can post programs and activities that are open to the public. The League will begin posting our public events on this calendar. Of course they will continue to be posted on our own website as well. Please keep an eye on Community Calendar for upcoming Westport events, and tell your friends about the calendar!

38th SYMPOSIUM ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Connecticut Education Fund, in cooperation with the Albert Schweitzer Institute at Quinnipiac University and the MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale University

THE GEOPOLITICS OF OIL:

Conflict or Cooperation

Chapter III: Building a Culture of Peace

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The Grand Courtroom

Quinnipiac University School of Law

275 Mount Carmel Avenue, Hamden, CT

LWV Westport members who have attended this event in the past have found it to be very informative. Call Winnie Balboni (227- 9093) for more information or to arrange a carpool.

CONSENSUS CONSENSUS CONSENSUS

Dear Members,

As many of you are aware, the Budget Study Committee is finishing up its two-year research on the budget process in Westport, and has scheduled its consensus meetings. The committee has worked hard to look at the many factors involved in the budget process, on both the Town and the Education sides, and has some interesting background material to share with you.

We have scheduled two consensus meetings for the general membership, and urge you to come to one of them, hear about the research we've done, and voice your opinion on the consensus questions. Please plan to attend, as a good turnout assures our ability to come to consensus and develop a position!

The meetings are:

Tuesday evening, March 20 from 7 - 9 PM

At the home of Ann Gill, 53 High Point Road

Wednesday morning, March 21 from 10 AM to noon

In the Malloy Room at Earthplace, 10 Woodside Lane
See you there.

Environment Committee

The Environment Committee met in January and identified areas of concern regarding polluted water runoff, such as septic system failures and the use of pesticides and fertilizers. The committee will continue to gather information about our town practices and the practices of other towns and will seek opportunities to educate the public about best environmental practices.

The March meeting will be held at Earthplace, on Monday, March 12th, at 10:00AM. Dick Harris, Director of Harbor Watch/River Watch and staff scientist at Earthplace will discuss **water quality issues in Fairfield County**. Please consider attending the meeting, which promises to be very informative.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- FEB** 15 **Observer Corps** - 9 AM
Action Committee - 11 AM
Library Seminar Room
- 26 **Book Group** - 1:30 PM
At home of Rene Corcoran, 73 Turkey Hill South
- 27 **State Planning Meeting** - 10 AM - Noon
Westport Town Hall, Room 201
- 28 **Budget Study** - 10 AM
At home of Ann Gill, 53 High point Road
- MAR** 5 **Bridgeport - Community Conversation** 7:30 PM
McManus Room, Westport Library
- 6 **Budget Study** - 10 AM
At home of Ann Gill, 53 High point Road
- 7 **Board Meeting** - 9 AM
At home of Eileen Flug, 5 Gault Avenue
- 12 **Environment Committee** - 10 AM
Earthplace, 10 Woodside Lane
- 14 **SIR- Geopolitics of Oil** - 8 AM
Quinnipiac College of Law
- 15 **Observer Corps** - 9 AM
Action Committee - 11 AM
Library Seminar Room
- 20 **Budget Consensus Meeting** - 7 PM
At home of Ann Gill, 53 Highpoint Road
- 21 **Budget Consensus Meeting** - 10AM
Earthplace, 10 Woodside Lane.

JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Name _____

Address _____

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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.

All League meetings are open to all members.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF WESTPORT

Westport Voter
P.O. Box 285
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