



# Westport Voter

January 2009

Visit our website: [www.lwvwestportct.org](http://www.lwvwestportct.org)

## STATE PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING



### Discussion of LWVCT Positions & A Brief Introduction to the National Popular Vote Compact



**Wednesday, February 25th, 10:00 -11:30AM  
Westport Town Hall, Room 201**

**Join Us and Make Your Voice Heard!**

Members of the National Popular Vote Compact study group will give a short presentation on the National Popular Vote compact in preparation for the consensus meeting later this spring.

This meeting is our opportunity to influence the State League's work plan for the 2009-2011 biennium. We will focus initially on the Teen Pregnancy position, 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 priorities. 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.

To review these positions go to LWVCT Impact on Issues, [www.lwvct.org](http://www.lwvct.org). Look at lower right side of the home page for the link.

## WINTER WARM UP



**SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 5 - 8PM**

**AT THE HOME OF SHEILA AND JOHN CREATURA IN OWENOKE PARK**

Join the Board in welcoming new and prospective members.

A warm supper, varied libations, yummy desserts and friendship will be served.

For current members, the 'price of admission' is to bring a prospective member, so search high and low for a friend or neighbor interested in joining the League and then come for a great time.

RSVP to Sheila Creatura at 227-0127

**Due to extremely limited parking, please, please, please car-pool.**



The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, community-based political organization that encourages the informed and active participation 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)

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**From the Presidents**

*Greetings to All,*

*While our snowy winter continues, League members have been keeping warm with meetings and discussion on an amazing variety of topics. During January alone, members joined together over coffee to share individual research updates on immigration enforcement and global migration; our book group met over dessert to discuss responses to President Obama's memoir "Dreams From My Father;" and we began our participation in the LWVUS National Popular Vote Compact Study by exploring the shortcomings of the Electoral College voting system. We had a candid Pie & Politics with state legislators at the end of the month, focused on the budgetary questions facing Connecticut. It's not too late - you are welcome to join in our ongoing national popular vote study or to become part of the immigration study follow-up.*

*This month, Katy' Goldschmidt's LETS committee (Local Election Turnout Study) will begin to assess the considerable data amassed on Westport voting patterns. More volunteers are welcome to join this valuable project aimed at improving participation, registration and voting in local elections.*

*The needs of youth will receive attention as part of our state program planning meeting, when we are asked to review the 10-year LWVCT Position on Teen Pregnancy. (See [www.lwvct.org](http://www.lwvct.org), under Impact on Issues.) Meanwhile, local League Environment Committee members are busy working on a new 2<sup>nd</sup> grade water quality presentation.*

*So brave the cold and join us for great eats and conversation! And keep your feelers out for prospective new members who might like to learn more about the League at our annual Winter Warm-up dinner on Sunday, March 15.*

*Pippa and Alison*

**Volunteer Opportunities Around the League****Tag Sale**

THINK SPRING, THINK TAG SALE. Yes, spring will eventually come, and with it our biggest fundraiser of the year. Besides donations, we need HELP. This event still doesn't have a chairwoman. If you are interested in taking on this very important League project, please call Pat Porio at 226-4149.

**LETS: The Local Election Turnout Study Committee**

now has lots of data to analyze to see who is registered to vote but doesn't bother to in local elections. If you are interested in helping with this task, or have ideas of how to motivate such voters, please come to the next meeting, on **Friday, March 6** at 1:30 PM at Katy Goldschmidt's house, 27 Woods Grove Road. Or contact Katy Goldschmidt at 227-0003

**Second Grade Water Quality Presentations**

A subset of the Environment Committee has been hard at work developing a water quality program for second graders in town. This program is intended to replace the first grade recycling presentations, which is retiring after a 15 year run. If you are interested in being trained to be a presenter for the new second grade program, please call Eileen Flug 227-8474.

**HIGH SCHOOL CIVICS PRESENTATIONS**

Every year we visit the American Government classes at Staples High School to deliver our civics program known as The Power of One. This is a great opportunity to bring the message of the importance of voting to our newest voters. Would you like to be a presenter? We will set up the schedule soon, so please contact Lisa Shufro at 221-1350 to volunteer.



### Book Group News

All meetings are at 1:30PM unless otherwise noted. The group is open to all League members. Please join us! RSVP to hostess. If you have questions contact Elaine Weinstein, 226-4561.



**February 23** - *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid. "An intelligent and absorbing 9/11 novel."- At Yvonne Senturia's, 17 Blue Ribbon Drive.

**March 23** - *With their Backs to the World: Portraits of Serbia* by Asne Seierstad. This book is "fascinating reading for anyone wishing to uncover the stark humanity hiding beneath one of the world's most troubled and confused regions." Location TBA

**April 27** - *Mukiwa* by Peter Godwin. "With humor, portent and melancholy, Godwin recreates his 1960s youth in white Rhodesia." Location TBA.

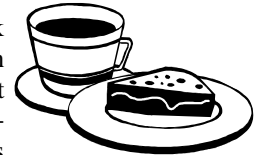
### Board Report

At the February board meeting, Wendy Lecher, a lawyer and child advocate, presented a brief overview of the state of education in CT. She discussed the inequities in educational funding across the state and the relationship between poor test performance and poverty. Ms. Lecher pointed out that those features of society and schools that have proved to increase the graduation and literacy rates include small class size, well trained teachers, up to date educational materials for all children, as well as good health care, nutrition, and housing. Testing children does not improve educational outcomes but costs considerable money and distracts our politicians from making the financial and structural changes necessary to achieve good educational outcomes for all children.

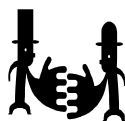


### Pie and Politics Report

24 members of LWV Westport braved the cold on Thursday, January 29 to hear our State Representatives talk about current issues at the State Capitol and items of interest on the LWV agenda. Alison Rivard gave an overview of the current budget crisis and the need for restructuring the budget. Joe Mioli addressed budget issues and the difficulties involved in finding new ways to generate income. He suggested that keeping corporate taxes low encourages corporations to stay in Connecticut, generating new jobs and increasing funds through the income tax. They are working on legislation that would require corporations to have a real presence in Connecticut. The State could also generate additional funds by raising the sales tax and sin taxes. At this time legislators are waiting to respond to Governor Rell's budget proposals.



Audience members asked about the incarceration rate in Connecticut and associated expenses. They also asked about Green Energy initiatives and Green job training at the technical schools. Toni Bucher responded that technical schools in Connecticut have difficulty attracting students. She gave an overview of her responsibilities in the Senate and elaborated on the problems with the State's income stream.



### National Popular Vote Compact and Early Voting in Connecticut

A group of interested members met in early January to begin studying the NPV Compact and the possibility for no excuse absentee voting in Connecticut. After a brief introduction to the basic principals of the Compact and its pros and cons, the group agreed that each member would study the issue in preparation for the next meeting.

Interested members are encouraged to go to the LWV website which lists a variety of resources on the issue. Go to [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) and then to the members section.

Next Meeting - **Tuesday, February 10** at 9:30 AM at the home of Claudia Saunders 8 Tiffany Lane.

Contact: Jane Eyes at 227-0782 or Claudia Saunders at 292- 6325 for more information.



### Immigration Study Group

Several LWV Westport members have been meeting to discuss immigration issues. Members of the group have agreed to research the following areas of concern: Detention centers and their impact on families, the civil rights of those in detention, the effects of the economic downturn, efforts to remediate the backlog in processing paperwork, state and local immigration issues, global trends in immigration and the introduction of new legislation and policies to address immigration issues.

The group will meet again on **Tuesday, April 7** at 10:30 to continue the discussion. Anyone interested is welcome to join the group. Call Jane Eyes, 227-0782.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF WESTPORT

Westport Voter  
P.O. Box 285  
Westport, CT 06881-0285



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STATE PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING  
and  
A Brief Introduction to the National Popular Vote Compact  
February 25

**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**

- FEB 10 National Vote Compact and Early Voting In Connecticut Committee meeting - 9:30 AM.** At Claudia Saunders' house, 8 Tiffany Lane.
- 19 Observer Corps/Action Committee - 9:00 AM**  
At the Westport Public Library, Seminar Room
- 23 Book Group - 1:30 PM.** At Yvonne Senturia's House, 17 Blue Ribbon Drive.
- 25 State Program Planning and Introduction to the National Popular Vote Compact - 10:00 AM.** Town Hall, Room 201
- March 4 Board Meeting - 8:30 AM - Location TBA**
- 6 LETS Meeting - 1:30 PM.** At Katy Goldschmidt's house, 27 Woods Grove Road.
- 15 Winter Warm Up - 5 - 8 PM.** At Sheila Creatura's house.
- 19 Observer Corps/Action Committee - 9:00 AM.**  
At the Westport Public Library, Seminar Room
- 23 Book Group - 1:30 PM.** Location TBA

**All League meetings are open to all members.**