



# Westport Voter

February 2011

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

CELEBRATING (62) YEARS IN WESTPORT

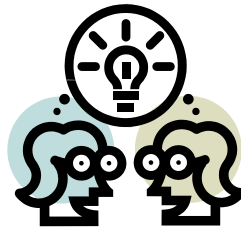


**Please Join Us for a Valentine's Day Tea  
for  
Our State and Local Program Planning Meeting  
Monday, February 14 at 1:30 p.m.  
At the Home of  
Liz-Ann Koos, 114 Greens Farms Road, Westport**

The LWV is a grassroots organization which needs input from members on our priorities. We do this through the program planning process, this year for both the state and the local level. Join us for this important role in keeping the LWV responsive.

- **State Program Planning:** We familiarize ourselves with current LWVCT Positions (see *Impact on Issues 2009-2111* at [www.lwvct.org/issues/resources/impact09](http://www.lwvct.org/issues/resources/impact09)); we solicit member feedback on which Positions should be priorities for advocacy in Hartford; and we may propose, or evaluate the proposals made by other leagues, for new state studies. This year, a 10-year review for relevance and updating is needed for the LWVCT Position on Quality Integrated Education.
- **Local Program Planning:** Current local issues include senior housing for the Baron's South property and a plan for maintenance of our town parks. Come discuss the League's role and priorities over the next year.

**Please RSVP to Liz-Ann Koos, (203) 227-2024 .**  
If inclement weather, please carpool due to limited parking.



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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www.lwvwestportct.org

www.lwvct.org (Connecticut)

www.lwv.org (U.S.)

**Book Group News**

All meetings are at 1:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted. The group is open to all League members. Please join us!

February 28: **Let the Great World Spin** by Colum McCann. *McCann's sweeping new novel hinges on Philippe Petit's 1974 high-wire walk between the twin towers.* At the home of Yvonne Senturia, 17 Blue Ribbon Drive.

March 28: **Things I've Been Silent About** by Azar Nafisi. *Nafisi shares her memories of living in thrall to a powerful and complex mother against the backdrop of a country's political revolution.* At the home of Athena Bradley, 7 Northgate.



*From the Co-Presidents*



February 2011

Greetings to all,

The cold reality of recession is having a significant fiscal impact on our state and towns. This was brought even closer to home during the January 10 Pie & Politics meeting with Westport's state legislators.

All three legislators—State Senator Toni Boucher and State Representatives Kim Fawcett and Jonathan Steinberg—focused on Connecticut's current budget deficit and spoke about ways they will be addressing this critical issue this year. They each stressed that the theme of the upcoming legislative session will be "greater efficiency and emphasis on cost-cutting."

Jonathan stressed that the legislature will need to cut programs and services that they would never have dreamed of de-funding in prior years. He noted how important volunteers will be in filling these gaps in our local agencies and organizations—noting that the League can play an important role in supporting our local agencies and organizations.

Our Westport League is imbued with the spirit of volunteerism—it's almost part of our DNA. Along with the endless hours dedicated to League programs and activities, many of us are also engaged in mentoring new citizens, driving for Meals On Wheels, visiting the homebound, working to preserve our parks—and this is just a sampling of the community work that we do.

To learn more about how you can play a major part in our state, we invite you to join us at our Sunday, March 13 Winter Warm Up Celebration to hear from Cheryl Dunson, President of the LWVCT, as she speaks about how the League makes a difference in the state and how local Leagues can be involved.

We hope you're cheerfully coping with the non-stop snow, and look forward to seeing you on Monday, February 14 for the Valentine's Day Tea for State & Local Program Planning, and at the Winter Warm Up.

Doris & Yvonne



Please make the following correction to the LWV Handbook:

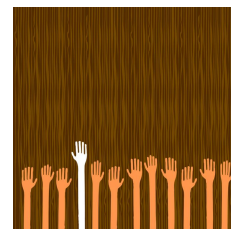
Cathy Walsh  
cawalsh6@optonline.net

We welcome Sarah Menchaca to the Board of Directors

**Do you know someone who is interested in joining the Westport League of Women Voters?**

If so, let Luisa Francoeur know by phone at 227-5593 .

Please include name, address, phone number and e-mail if possible. She will be happy to send out information.



## PIE & POLITICS

Over 30 hearty League members gathered at the Greens Farms Congregational Church on the wintry evening of January 10 for a discussion with Westport's State Legislators, Senator Toni Boucher and Representatives Kim Fawcett and Jonathan Steinberg.

These annual meetings are hosted by local Leagues on behalf of LWVCT in order to provide a forum for the informal exchange of views between constituents and their legislators. Kudos to Moderator Liz-Ann Koos and Timer JoAnn Davidson for organizing a scintillating program. Many thanks to Alison Rivard, Ellie Lowenstein, Pat Porio and the pie contributors as well!

After an initial social mingling over delicious pies, the legislators responded to League questions concerning four areas where our State League has positions: State Budget, Voting Technology, Department of Environmental Protection Funding, and Affordable Housing. An opportunity was then provided to each legislator to explain his or her particular legislative priorities and that portion was followed by 45 minutes of members' questions.

Given the current budget deficit and generally poor economic environment, much of the discussion centered on ways to meet the extreme shortfall and to create jobs and incentives for retaining and attracting employers to Connecticut. To reach the \$4 billion in cuts necessary, legislators will be looking at a range of proposals, among which will be asking state employees to contribute more to their health plans; or adopting Results-Based Accountability in all departments to continue those programs and services most successful in meeting needs while cutting those that are not working. The legislators emphasized that everything is on the table, including all types of taxes which may need to be adjusted to solve the huge deficit. Clearly, the budget deficit will again dominate matters during the current legislative session.



Photo by Phyllis Groner  
Toni Boucher, Kim Fawcett and Jonathan Steinberg

## SAVE THE DATE



### Winter Warm Up Celebration

Come celebrate our 62<sup>nd</sup> birthday with good friends,  
wine & delectables.

**DATE:** Sunday, March 13, 2011  
**TIME:** 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Home of Yvonne Senturia  
17 Blue Ribbon Drive, Westport  
**R.S.V.P:** Doris Skutch, (203) 227-6114 or

**GUEST SPEAKER:** Cheryl Dunson, President  
LWV of Connecticut  
**Don't forget, this is a perfect opportunity to bring a  
prospective member!**

## JOIN THE TAG SALE TEAM

Yes, it will happen! The snow will go, the spring will arrive, and we'll be on to our Tag Sale, the League's biggest fundraiser of the year. We need donations and we need volunteers. This is a great opportunity for creative and energetic League members to join the 2011 Tag Sale Team. If you are interested in being part of this important League project, call Team Leader Karen Curtis at 203/259-1880



## The League and the Bridgeport Ballot Recount

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut was in the forefront for the recent Bridgeport Ballot Recount. In early December, LWVCT President Cheryl Dunson partnered with Luther Weeks, President of CT VotersCount, to lead 56 citizen volunteers from the Connecticut Citizen Audit Coalition in the recount of the City of Bridgeport ballots for the gubernatorial race. Since the LWVCT is a part of the Coalition, many of the volunteers were League members, including our own Co-President Yvonne Senturia.

The recount was prompted by the *Connecticut Post's* successful filing of a Freedom of Information request to perform a recount of the Governor's race due to the Election Day troubles in Bridgeport. A ballot shortage reported in many of the districts necessitated the City providing photocopied ballots and holding some of the polling places open until 10 p.m. At the end of the night, the election officials had to hand count all the photocopied ballots, after having already worked 12-14 hours at the polls.

From November 27 through December 6, the Coalition volunteers, with full cooperation of the two Bridgeport registrars, recounted every absentee ballot, machine counted ballot and all of the hand counted ballots from the City's 25 districts. At its outcome meeting held on December 8 by the Coalition leaders and the *Connecticut Post* with City attorneys and registrars, all agreed that the machine counted ballot process was accurate; the problem came with the hand counted ballots, with approximately 1,500 inaccurately counted.

The Coalition presented three key recommendations from its recount experience: more ballots, more time, and more consistency/organization, and will share its observations and recommendations with state officials. If you would like more information, contact [lwvct@lwvct.org](mailto:lwvct@lwvct.org).



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF WESTPORT

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

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
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**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** 14 **State and Local Program Planning Meeting** - 1:30 p.m. At the home of Liz-Ann Koos, 114 Greens Farms Road.
- 17 **Observer Corps/Action Committee** - 9:00 a.m. At the home of Ann Gill, 53 High Point Road
- 28 **Book Group** - 1:30 p.m. At the home of Yvonne Senturia, 17 Blue Ribbon Drive
- Mar** 2 **Board Meeting** - 8:30 a.m. At the home of Yvonne Senturia, 17 Blue Ribbon Drive
- 13 **Winter Warm-Up** - 4:00 p.m. At the home of Yvonne Senturia, 17 Blue Ribbon Drive
- 17 **Observer Corps/Action Committee** - 9:00 a.m. At the home of Ann Gill, 53 High Point Road
- 28 **Book Group** - 1:30 p.m. At the home of Athena Bradley, 7 Northgate

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