



The Leaguer

Winter 2014

OUR AGENDA

Snapshot

The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of Geneva (LWV-G) is pleased to publish this issue of our semi-annual newsletter. Membership in our local League is not limited to Geneva residents, nor is it limited to women. All are welcome to join. We are an affiliate of the League of Women Voters of NY as well as the League of Women Voters of the U.S. Joining our local League confers membership at the State and National levels as well. Along with our parent organizations, we are a unique, multi-issue, non-partisan, political organization. We encourage the informed and active participation in government and influence public policy through advocacy and education.

Our current projects include:

- VOTER SERVICES
- COURT WATCH
- CANDIDATES FORUM
- LUNCH WITH THE LEAGUE
- STUDENTS INSIDE ALBANY
- THE AGNES SLOSSON LEWIS AWARD
- STUDY OF LEGISLATIVE TERM LIMITS

As a local League, part of our mission is to act in accordance with positions developed by the League of Women Voters of New York State (LWVNY) and the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) after all local Leagues have had the opportunity to study an issue and weigh in on the development of a position. In that vein we are embarking on the following study.

Term Limits Study:

Local Leagues, such as ours, gather members, experts and “gatekeepers” to study and discuss identified issues. We invite you to join us in the study of the pros and cons of **NY Legislative Term limits**. The LWVUS has a position is against federal term limits, but the LWVNY has called for local studies. Given the political corruption we have seen in the State Legislature, are citizens better represented by the status quo or fresh, yet less experienced representatives? Many questions and viewpoints will be raised, until the LWVG study group reaches a consensus opinion, which we will write up and report to the State League.

League members and informed persons should contact: Chris at choffmanlmt@rochester.rr.com if you are interested in joining the discussion.

COURT WATCHING PROJECT

Court Watch is a project of the LWV-G. The program operates in various courts throughout Ontario County. The purpose of the Court Watch program is to uphold the high ideals which have been advanced through NY laws which support the presumption that (most) judicial proceedings shall be open to the public and that various societal benefits accrue when judicial proceedings are open to the public.

The League prides itself on non-partisanship; and the Court Watch program relies on lay citizen-observer objectivity. Within the design of this program, the identities of the particular judges and attorneys observed by court watchers are not available to the public.

Each person observed is assigned a personal identification number (PIN). Observations later printed in the *Eye On the Courts* newsletter associate observations with the PIN of the observed Judge or lawyer.

The program strives to influence the self-improvement of the judicial system and those being observed while protecting their anonymity. Therefore, we request that the Judges and lawyers NOT disclose their identity in association with Court Watch observers' comments.

The League, as a non-partisan organization, has certain duties to insure that the information gathered is not used in the self-interest of the observed

parties, including but not limited to political campaigns and business advertising.

For these reasons the LWV-G and the Court Watch program request that the information contained in *Eye on the Courts*, the Court Watch newsletter, not be quoted, referenced, summarized nor reproduced in any manner without the advance written permission of the *Court Watch* Committee.

2014 Legislative Agenda League of Women Voters of NYS

- **Women's Equality Agenda – Support equality for women & their families by helping survivors of violence, ensuring reproductive health care, & fair treatment at work.**
- **Election Reform – Improve election processes including paperless and Election Day registration, early voting, better ballot design, improved polling place management/ poll worker training, a single June primary & measures to ensure the integrity of all ballots.**
- **Natural Resources - Support protection & management of NY's natural resources in the public interest, including energy conservation & energy options for renewable sources.**
- **Campaign Finance Reform – Support lower contribution limits, increased disclosure and a system of small donor matching funds. In particular support stronger & effective campaign finance enforcement with increased penalties for violations.**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Lunch With the League

Brown bag lunch programs are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Presbyterian Church, 24 Park Place, Geneva, during the months February through April and October through December and are open to the public. Find us on Facebook: League of Women Voters of Geneva, for details.

Celebrate Spring with Wine and Chocolate

March 20, 2014 6 PM – 8 PM

Please join us at Billsboro Winery to enjoy wine, chocolate tastings, musical entertainment and the company of our very astute male and female members for a light-hearted fund-raising event for our League chapter. You'll also have the opportunity to celebrate Sunshine Week, a national initiative to promote a dialogue about the importance of open government and freedom of information. Information about the Freedom of Information Act and New York State Open Meetings law will be available.

The cost for the event is \$20 per person. Reservations should be made to Dawn Kelley, at (315)729-0249 or dawndc01@hotmail.com by March 15, 2014.

LWV-G Annual Meeting

April 23

Our annual meeting will feature guest speaker, George Gotschik, from *Community Business Advantage* and

will be held at the Geneva Neighborhood Resource Center, 430 Exchanges St. Geneva at 7:00 p.m.

Call for Board Nominations

We are accepting nominations for Board membership, and offices of President, Vice President and Treasurer. Interested persons please contact James at jamersemeryelkin@gmail.com.

Students Inside Albany

Each year our League sponsors one or two high school students to attend the LWV New York's Students Inside Albany Conference. This Conference is an intensive four day training experience held in the spring and is designed to immerse students in the process by which public policy is proposed, enacted and changed in New York State and educate them as to how they can influence and affect this process. Albany insiders discuss the operations of New York State government including how policy is shaped and enacted. Students develop knowledge of the disparate forces that influence policy development. Additionally, students are afforded the opportunity to observe Assembly and Senate sessions and to shadow both their Assembly members and Senators.

This year Geneva High School student Madeline Ess will be attending the Students Inside Albany conference May 18 -21, 2014.

Congratulations Madeline!

The Agnes Slosson Lewis Award Nomination

The Agnes Slosson Lewis award is given in honor of one of the founders of both the League of Women Voters of Geneva and the League of Women Voters of New York State. First given in 1960, the award recognizes women with leadership ability who inspire others, as well as having a broad interest in the community and in good government over a period of time. Both volunteer and paid work experience are considered.

Any citizen may nominate a woman who lives or serves within the area comprising the League of Women Voters of Geneva. Please include the following information with the nomination:

- Name and address of nominee
- Name(s), address(es), phone number(s), email address(es) of nominator(s)

In support of your nomination please provide as much information as possible for the committee, using the following. Attach a separate page with the following information.

- Contributions to civic affairs (attach news clippings, if any)
- Demonstrated leadership ability
- Interest in good government
- Volunteer activities (list and describe, include years of service if possible)
- Professional activities
- Additional comments

Please send nominations to Kim Reisch by May 1, 2014 ([kreisch@rochester.rr.com](mailto:kreich@rochester.rr.com) or 57 High Street, Geneva)



Ever think of joining the Geneva League of Women Voters?

We'd love to have

you! The local League chapter has a history of civic involvement that includes sponsoring the Court Watch program, candidates debates, research projects and luncheons, where we are able to hear from local and regional leaders on issues that matter. Make joining us your first step in becoming a participating member of your community.

Call: **Beth Reiners at (315)789-3761 or e-mail breiners@rochester.rr.com**, for more information, or send her the information below at **719 White Springs Drive, Geneva, 14456.**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

