



# THE CHESHIRE-WALLINGFORD VOTER

Volume V – Issue 7

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League of Women Voters of Cheshire-Wallingford

P.O. Box 394

Cheshire, CT 06410

## *Our Mission*

*The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education.*

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## Presidents' Message

It is hard to believe the summer is almost over. With the cool wet days throughout June and July, and now the hot sweltering days of August, Mother Nature has the final say once again. By the time you read this, September will be a few days away, and we will once again be sending the children back to school. Wow, how summer flies by!

First, we would like to welcome all members back to the League and thank each of you for your support of the League. Your membership keeps our League alive and your service and efforts maintain the vital commitment you have made to our community. We are excited about becoming part of the leadership for our League. It is not news that we are facing some changes and challenging times over the next year. We look forward to assisting the League in conquering the challenges we face as a community. Change is inevitable, but how we face and address these changes is the way we become a stronger group. With this said, we encourage each of us to consider one other person who may be interested in what the League has to offer and strongly encourage that individual to come to a meeting.

A great opportunity for this new member invitation exists in September with a very exciting opportunity to meet two of our School Superintendents. Cheshire Superintendent, Dr. Greg Florio, and Wallingford's newly appointed Superintendent, Dr. Salvatore Menzo, will speak at our first yearly meeting. On the table for discussion will be the current school budgets, civics, and open dialogue with our school leaders. This seems timely considering the economic challenges we are facing within our school communities, as well as society. Our school superintendents are faced with the responsibility of developing fiscally responsible budgets while maintaining the quality of our public school programs. Please be sure to join us for our first annual meeting and please strongly consider bringing a friend to this exciting event!

Looking ahead to our agenda this year, we realize how essential it is to continue our work on "going green." Over the past year we have shown how the League can make a difference and how the choices we make as individuals positively impact others in our communities! Let's put our thoughts together for new ideas, activities, and events. Please feel free to call us with your ideas and thoughts.

Kathy and Donna

## SEPTEMBER MEMBERSHIP MEETING



*Dr. Salvatore Menzo [left], Wallingford's new Superintendent of Schools and Dr. Greg Florio [right], Cheshire's Superintendent of Schools, will be the featured speakers at the League's fall membership meeting.*



### **Our Schools**

We will begin our 2009 Fall Program by focusing on ***Our Schools*** at our first meeting.

Members have expressed a keen interest in hearing from our academic leaders about the problems and concerns they will be addressing in the upcoming school year. Superintendents from both the Wallingford Schools and the Cheshire Schools have graciously accepted our invitation to speak to us on Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Community Room off Nelson Hall at Elim Park.

Dr. Salvatore Menzo has just stepped into his new role as Superintendent for the Wallingford Schools and we are lucky to be among the first to welcome him to this area at the beginning of this new school year. Dr. Greg Florio who is well known to most of you will share the podium and later field questions with Dr. Menzo in an open question/answer session at the conclusion of the night's program.

We will begin the evening with a social hour centered around a pot luck dinner. Just bring a covered dish, drinks, or desert and join us. The pot luck will begin at 6 p.m. and allow members to mingle and share news from their summer adventures. We will begin seating everyone after 7 p.m. with our guest lectures starting at 7:15 p.m. The formal portion of the meeting featuring our guest speakers will be open to the public, so invite family and friends to join us at 7 p.m.

Elim Park is located at 150 Cook Hill Road, Cheshire. You enter through the Village Green. Please be sure to park in the Visitors' Lot so as not to inconvenience residents.

**Welcome our new member:**

Kim Turret, 356 Wallingford Road, Cheshire – 272-8408

**JOIN THE LEAGUE OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP, it's easy...**

Just forward your check for \$55 to the LWV of Cheshire-Wallingford to Elaine Lau, Treasurer, 239 Jinny Hill Road, Cheshire, CT 06410. Local League membership dues pay for membership in the local, state and national Leagues.

CHESHIRE-WALLINGFORD LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
CALENDAR 2009-2010

**September, 2009**

- 12. Cheshire Fall Festival and Voter Registration
- 23. Kick-off Membership meeting, Nelson Hall Community Room at Elim Park 6:00 p.m.
- 24. Board meeting, SCOW building Wallingford, 7:15 pm

**October**

- 8. Cheshire High School Voter Registration Session
- 21. Cheshire Candidate Forum
- 21. & 22. Wallingford Candidate Forum
- 28. Board Meeting, Cheshire Town Hall 7:15 pm

**November**

- 3. Election Day
- 19. or 21 General Membership meeting, Health Care Insurance
- 26. Happy Thanksgiving

**December**

- 2. Board Meeting
- HAPPY HOLIDAYS

**January, 2009**

- 23. Board meeting and General Membership meeting, Lasagna Dinner

**February**

- 24. Board Meeting, Cheshire Town Hall 7:15 pm

**March**

- 24. Women in History Program,  
7:00 pm , place to be determined
- 31. Board meeting, SCOW building, Wallingford, 7:15 pm

**April**

- 21. General Membership Meeting
- ?? SIR, Quinnipiac University, date to be determined
- 28. Board Meeting, Cheshire Town Hall, 7:15 pm

**May**

- 1. Wine Tasting Fundraiser
- 26. Board Meeting, 7:15 pm

**June**

- 2. Annual Meeting
- Fall Festival - Voter Registration

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The Registrars of Voters will be conducting a voter registration session at the Fall Festival on Saturday Sept 12<sup>th</sup> from 10 – 4 and they need our help. It's a fun day and always a great day when we can help register new Voters! Please contact the Registrar's Office at 271-6680 to volunteer.**

Cheshire Community Theater's fall musical, *Little Women* will be performed September 18 and 19 at 8 p.m. and September 20 (Sunday matinee) at 1 p.m. Call Aleta Looker, 272-6821, for more information.

At the annual meeting, our League presented its scholarship award to Maura Esposito. Ms. Esposito was one of 9 applicants from Cheshire whose application was reviewed and selected by Donna Brown and Nancy Bussman. Ms. Esposito is returning to Southern Connecticut State University for a Master's Degree in Public Health and will continue her career in public health. She has been a stay-at-home mother who has been active in the community as both Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Cheshire Water Pollution Control Authority, in the Cheshire Democratic Women's Club, the PTA, and the Connecticut Environmental Health Association.

The LWVCT will be offering two different moderator training sessions this fall. The first will be a session for beginning and middle moderators, and will be held at the League's Hamden office at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 9. There will be no charge to attend. The second will be "The Debate From Hell," a session for middle and advanced moderators, featuring some examples of things that can go wrong during a debate (and, hopefully, how to cope); this session will be one of the three workshops immediately following the Leadership Dinner on Thursday, September 17th, at the Marriott Courtyard in Shelton. The charge to attend the dinner is \$35.

To sign up for the 9/9 session in Hamden, please e-mail Jean Rabinow ([lwwct@lwwct.org](mailto:lwwct@lwwct.org)) at the League office. To sign up for the 9/17 session in Shelton, please return your check and reservation slip.

The League of Women Voters of Connecticut's Action Team has had a very busy summer working through the budget impasse and special sessions. A recent message is printed below. To learn more about the League's legislative lobbying, visit [www.lwwct.org/action.htm](http://www.lwwct.org/action.htm).

### Email Message sent August 29, 2009

Dear Senator Williams, Senator Looney, Representative Donovan and Representative Merrill:

As you know, the League of Women Voters of Connecticut was an outspoken advocate of the campaign finance reforms which passed in 2005 with your leadership and support. We believe that public financing of campaigns in Connecticut has been an outstanding success in leveling the playing field, reducing the appearance of corruption, encouraging participation in government and restoring citizens' confidence in our elections.

Despite Judge Stefan Underhill's recent decision enjoining the operation of the Citizens' Election Program, the League remains deeply committed to public financing of campaigns and to the program itself. In these tough economic times, we need a governor and a legislature that listens to the people, not the industries and special interests that contribute the most money. ***Please do not use Judge Underhill's decision as an excuse to make further cuts in the funding of the Citizens' Election Program.*** The League stands willing and able to work with you to develop any changes in eligibility requirements necessary to ensure the continuation of the program.

It is imperative that we continue to provide adequate funding for the Citizens' Election Program. ***Please say NO to any budget proposal that fails to preserve the program.*** In 2005, your support was critical to the passage of Connecticut's historic campaign finance reform law. We trust that the League, the SEEC and the people of Connecticut can continue to count on your support for this vital program in the days ahead. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Christine S. Horrigan  
LWVCT Government Director



Please join the LWVCT for its  
**2009 League Leadership Dinner**  
 Thursday, September 17, 2009  
 6:30 p.m.  
 Courtyard by Marriott, 780 Bridgeport Avenue, Shelton, CT  
 \$35 each

Please join your fellow local League leaders and state Board members for an informal evening of discussion, networking and exchange of information. The new versions of our Local League Reference Series will be available.

**6:30 – dinner and networking**

*Dinner choices:*

Almond-Crusted Tilapia or Roasted Pork Loin with Apple Chutney

*Served with:*

Salad of mixed baby greens, tomatoes, cukes and carrots, with balsamic vinaigrette

Chef's vegetable choice

Rosemary roasted potatoes

Brownies and Blondies

Lemonade, hot coffee (regular or decaf), Bigelow teas

**7:00 – welcome from LWVCT President Jara Burnett and choice of workshop:**

**Tips For Running a Successful League**, led by Jara Burnett

**Successful Studies**, leader TBA

**The Debate from Hell**, led by Jean Rabinow

**not a moment later than 9:30 – adjourn**

Driving directions will be sent to attendees by e-mail.

For additional information, please call (203) 288-7996.

Please detach this slip and return it, with your \$35 check, to **LWVCTEF**, 1890 Dixwell Avenue, Suite 203, Hamden, CT 06514-3183, by September 11 (or by Sept. 15 if you have reserved by phone or e-mail). Your check is your reservation.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ League \_\_\_\_\_

Entree choice: \_\_\_ tilapia \_\_\_ pork loin

Workshop choice: \_\_\_ presidents' tips \_\_\_ studies \_\_\_ debates

## 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

The LWVCT is planning to celebrate the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of our organization's founding with a series of events beginning in January 2010, the year of the founding of the national organization, and continuing thru the early part of 2011, the founding the CT League.

An anniversary committee chaired by LWVCT VP Cheryl Dunson is already at work developing an array of ideas and programs to appeal to many tastes and pocketbooks. We will also be sharing revenues from some selected events with local Leagues for their participation.

Keep a lookout for more details on the events in the months ahead but here is a sneak preview:

Jan 2010 – online auction of items, from restaurant gift certificates and specialty chocolates to spa services.

Jan 2010 – display of LWV history and memorabilia in the concourse of the Legislative Office Building. Does your League have historical photos in your files? If so, please let us know.

We're probably going to need them for the display.

May 2010 – a one-woman show on the life of Susan B. Anthony, combined with a celebratory tea, to be held at the historic Keeler Tavern in Ridgefield.

Also under consideration are author events, comedy performances and film nights. Stay tuned!

If you like party planning and want to join the planning committee, or if you want to help with a discreet piece such soliciting an item for the auction, please contact Jean Rabinow.

Committee members: Cheryl Dunson, Chair

Jara Burnett, Donna Conway, Christine Lodewick, Elisa McCarthy,  
Carole Mulready, Jean Rabinow, Lynn Taborsak, Elona Vaisnys

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The League of Women Voters of the United States issued the following press release on August 19, 2009.

### PUBLIC OPTION IS ESSENTIAL TO HEALTH REFORM *League Urges Congress and President to Continue Support for Public Option*

**Washington, DC** – "The public option in health care reform may not be essential to bureaucrats or insurance companies but it absolutely is essential to the almost 47 million uninsured Americans who live day to day without health care coverage," said League of Women Voters National President Mary G. Wilson. Calling on Congress and the President not to succumb to the bullying tactics being used by special interest groups, Wilson urged Congress and the President not to waver in their support of the public option included in H.R. 3200, America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009, recently passed by three House committees.

America is facing a health care crisis caused by a combination of skyrocketing costs and an insurance system that leaves millions of Americans without any coverage. "The current health care system is endangering our economy, our health, and our national security," Wilson said. "Last fall, voters elected a Congress and President that promised to reform our health care system. Voters made it clear that they want a change in our health care system, a change that puts the brakes on the excesses created by a system dominated by large insurance companies," she continued.

"It is universal coverage that will determine the humanity of our system and a public option will make that possible for Americans who cannot obtain coverage through the traditional employer-sponsored plans," noted Wil-

son. "We believe that health care reform legislation must guarantee access to comprehensive and essential benefits to all U.S. residents."

"But the possibility of universal coverage is not the only advantage of the public option," warned Wilson. "We must control costs and the public option is the best chance to bring costs into line with reality. As a nation, we are spending \$1 out of every \$6 we earn on health care. Over the last three decades, increases in the amount we spend on health care have consistently risen faster than wages and inflation. Health care reform must provide effective cost controls, equitable distribution of services and allow for efficient and economical delivery of care. Offering everyone the choice of a government administered health insurance plan like Medicare that would compete with private health insurance plans is key to lowering costs."

"The public option is critical to health care reform," Wilson concluded. "Now is not the time for politicians to get cold feet just because a handful of special-interest-backed protesters spread lies and make noise at public forums. Congress and the President need to demonstrate real leadership and move forward with true health care reform."

### **ACTION ALERT: Urge Your Senators to Support CEDAW**

The Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is the most comprehensive international treaty promoting the advancement of women worldwide. It establishes a legal framework to which all governments must adhere, to ensure the equality of women in various areas of life including politics, law, employment, education, health care, commerce and domestic relations. The United States remains the only democracy in the world that has not ratified the CEDAW Treaty, putting our country in the dishonorable company of states such as Iran, Somalia and Sudan.

Call your Senators at 202-224-3121 or enter your zip code above. Urge them to support ratification of the CEDAW Treaty for the Rights of Women today!

The CEDAW Treaty provides a universal standard for women's human rights. It provides a fundamental framework for ending international violence against women, ensuring girls access to education, and promoting economic opportunity and political participation for women. The United States should strive to be a leader and set an example for the rest of world in its commitment to women and expanding women's rights by ratifying CEDAW.

### **TAKE ACTION**

1. Call the Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask for your Senators' offices. Urge your Senators to support ratification of CEDAW.
2. Enter your zip code above to urge your Senators to support ratification of CEDAW.
3. Send this alert to other concerned citizens - your grassroots network, your friends and coworkers. Encourage them to contact their Senators today!

### **BACKGROUND**

Sign up to receive Action Alerts directly by email. Don't miss an opportunity to take action!

It's easy to sign up and the League will never share your email with others: <http://takeaction.lwv.org/lwv/mlm/signup/>.

For additional information, please contact LWVUS Grassroots Lobbyist Christina Vamvas at [lobbying@lwv.org](mailto:lobbying@lwv.org).

**League of Women Voters of Cheshire-Wallingford**

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www.lwwct.org/lwvcw



# First Suffrage Bill Introduced



In 1868, the first Women's suffrage bill was introduced in Congress. This came in the aftermath of a stinging defeat for the Women's suffrage movement with the passage of the 14th and 15th amendments granting Blacks the right to vote and attempting to assure them equality. The Women's movements leaders had always considered Black suffrage and women's suffrage as parallel movements. Thus, when suffrage was granted to Blacks, while the rights of women were ignored, women felt a strong sense of betrayal.

Source: <http://www.historycentral.com/>