

# LEAGUE UPDATE

## PRINCETON AREA LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

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April 2009



### *BROWN BAG LUNCH*

*Please join us on Tuesday, April 28-Noon  
Stonebridge*

Our speaker for this meeting will be our own League member **Linda Sippelle** who will be speaking about her experiences in the Foreign Service. Linda was born in Bucharest, where her father was posted as a diplomat with the U.S. Department of State. She attended schools in Latin America, returned to the U.S. for high school at the Sanford School in Delaware, spent a year traveling in India before getting a B.A. at University of Redlands and a Teaching Fellowship at UCLA. She has had posts in Rome, Mexico City, and Vienna before retiring to Princeton. Her travels did not end with retirement as she continues to travel with husband Dudley. Linda also keeps active in many local organizations. Recently she ran for public office in Princeton Borough.

Stonebridge is located in Montgomery on Montgomery Road a left turn off 206, a short distance north of the Shop-rite Shopping Center. For more complete directions and to **RSVP**, please call Rita Ludlum.

### *❖ 50 Year Members*

If you or anyone else you know in the Local Princeton League is a 50 year member and you were not acknowledged in a previous Update, please contact Frieda Gilvarg or Rita Ludlum. We are planning a celebration in the fall to honor these members.

#### **UPCOMING DATES:**

- April 27 – Public Meeting on consolidation at Princeton Township Hall -7 PM
- May 2 - 2009 League of Women Voters New Jersey State Convention, Hyatt Regency Hotel, New Brunswick
- May 11- LWV-Lawrenceville, Lawrenceville Public Library 7 PM  
Bill Wakefield speaks on general immigration issues and his experiences with the Elizabeth Detention Center
- June TBA- Annual Meeting – Watch for future information.

#### **2008-09 COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Co-Chairs:	Frieda Gilvarg and Rita Ludlum
Treasurer:	Ellen Kemp
Voter Services:	Chrystal Schivell
Update Editor:	Beverly Kestenis
Members at Large:	Carole Krauthammer, Edith Neimark, Ruth Ann Mitchell, Anne Zeman

## Consolidation Meeting, February 18

A meeting planned to support the idea of consolidation of Princeton Borough and Township was attended by about twenty-five people concerned with Princeton development and supportive of consolidation.. Another meeting arranged by the PCDO was to study the issue from a neutral position.

An excellent presentation was made of the history of the three attempts at consolidation and of the current situation. There was some dispute about how much consolidation would really lower taxes. New legislation since the last attempt at Princeton consolidation would allow municipalities to continue with their tax system for a time to ease disparities. The point was made that the municipal tax is only 25% of the total with school and county taxes contributing to the whole. On the other hand, various officials pointed to the time consumed and the waste involved in dealing with issues shared by the two communities.

There is to be a joint Borough Council/Township Committee meeting on April 27 to discuss action for consolidation. The Princeton Area League has a long-standing position in support of consolidation of the two Princetons and we urge members to attend this meeting at Princeton Township Hall on April 27 at 7PM. Mark Pfeiffer of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs will make a presentation.

Letitia Ufford and Rita Ludlum

## *Suggestions and Requests*



You have recently received a **2009 Directory**. Please check your entry to assure it is correct. If there are any changes or corrections please contact Ellen Kemp [ellen@princeton.edu](mailto:ellen@princeton.edu).

If you meet someone who seems interested in the Princeton League, please send their names to me: Beverly Kestenis [beverlykv@verizon.net](mailto:beverlykv@verizon.net). I will then send any **prospective member** a copy of the Update.

The Lawrenceville League has contacted us about a possible **political film/book club** to be held at Barnes and Noble at Market Fair. They are reaching out to other local leagues for members. If you are interested please contact Meta Cahill at [mettacnm1@aol.com](mailto:mettacnm1@aol.com).

**Volunteers needed** for help with the Update- If you would like to write an article, make suggestions for articles, or prepare the Update for mailing please call Beverly Kestenis.

Did you know that when you shop through Amazon a percentage of your purchase price will be donated to the League of women Voters of New Jersey at no additional cost to you? If interested, go to [www.lwvnj.org](http://www.lwvnj.org). Click on the Amazon box in order for Amazon to credit the League. The button is on the top left-hand side of the page. Just click and start shopping.

(The following article was originally published in the newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Monroe Township. Co-President Ruth Banks is its author and has given us permission to use it.)

## **Doing Away with the Electoral College –Is It Finally Time?**

Thirty-nine years ago the League of Women Voters of the U.S. declared that the Electoral College should be abolished. In 1970, a national League study concluded that direct election of the President by popular vote was an essential element of representative government. In 2002 it voted to expand and update the position and in 2004 it enlarged the position to take into account the entire presidential selection process.. At the 2008 convention delegates voted to adopt a new study, ‘The Advisability of Using the National Popular Vote compact among the States as a Method for Electing the President’.

We’re nothing if not persistent, so finally it looks as if we’re making headway. The national Popular Vote Compact (NPV Compact) is a way to change the way the President is elected without having to amend the constitution.

### WHAT THE NPV COMPACT PROPOSES

It offers a method of achieving the result of election of the President by popular vote without amending the Constitution to eliminate the Electoral College. Instead, this method uses the mechanism of the Electoral College to ensure that the candidate who receives the most popular votes is elected President. Under the proposed legislation, all of the state’s electoral votes would be awarded to the presidential candidate who receives the most popular votes in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The bill would take effect only when enacted in identical form by states possessing a majority of the electoral votes – that is enough electoral votes to elect a president (270 of 538).

Under the state legislation proposed to establish the NPV, the popular vote counts from all 50 states and D.C. would be added together to obtain a national grand total for each candidate. Then state elections officials in all states participating in the plan would award their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the largest number of popular votes. It would take effect only when it has been enacted by states collectively possessing a majority of the electoral votes. As of September 1, 2008, the legislation necessary to activate the compact has been signed into law in four states: Maryland, New Jersey, Hawaii, and Illinois. NPV Compact bills have been introduced in more than 15 other states and according to an article in Fortune Magazine (July 21, 2008) 18 state legislative chambers have passed it.

The brainchild of John Koza, a professor of biomedical informatics at Stanford, holder of 25 patents in fields such as genetics and videogames, and a venture capitalist, the NPV Compact has lit a fire under those who despaired of ever changing the system.

### CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

The Constitution gives the state legislatures the power to determine how a state’s electors are chosen. Constitutionally political compacts are permitted between states, but this differs somewhat from those that concern boundaries for economic issues, for example. Such a compact might require congressional approval.

### MECHANICAL ISSUES AND POSSIBLE FLAWS

Methods for enforcing the compact if it were broken are unclear. It does not seem to address the issue of electing a president with less than majority support. Other issues are recounts, election fraud/voter suppression, winning levels (majority, plurality) uniform standards, and circumventing the Constitution.

- ❖ For the comprehensive report of the League’s position visit [www.LWV.org](http://www.LWV.org)