

LEAGUE UPDATE

PRINCETON AREA LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

Volume 24, Issue 3

May, 2010

78th Annual Meeting

The League of Women Voters of the Princeton Area

Tuesday, June 8, 2010
12 Noon-2:30 PM

at Windrows, 2000 Windrows Rd., Princeton

Featured Speaker:
James W. Hughes, Dean,
Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers

Buffet Lunch: Soup, Salad, Pasta Bar, Dessert
\$20 per person
Guests are welcome

RSVP with check by May 28 and send to:

Beverly Kestenis, 178 Terhune Road, Princeton, NJ 08540
609 924-9703

Please join us for the annual business meeting, thoughtful speaker, and good friends at the LWV annual meeting. Please remember to renew your membership for the coming year which may be done at this meeting.

Directions:

Windrows is off Route One at the Forrestal Exit

From the President's Desk

Several weekends ago I was in pursuit of an article that had been published back in 1973 by the Harvard Business Review. I thought the weekend would be the perfect time to locate the article and continue my research. Unable to retrieve a full copy of the article from the “free” Internet, I called the Mercer County Library System and spoke with a reference librarian who helped me locate a full pdf version of the article. While waiting for it to download to be certain it was indeed the complete article, I was talking about the state budget situation, and asked what I could do to help regarding the funding cuts to the library system. To me it is inconceivable in a time of economic downturn such as we are experiencing, high unemployment, and cuts to education that libraries will be losing key resources that people need. I learned that these precious databases that cover many different topics will be lost – valuable educational tools that serve many different people. Students use these resources, jobseekers to research potential companies to apply to for work, adults, such as myself, for ongoing research and learning. The League of Women Voters has a strong educational component stated in our mission statement – “encourages informed and active participation in government.” The access to information is critical for an informed citizenry. **Please** take a moment to look over some of the information below, and please **make your voice heard** in helping to preserve access to information. Also, for more information please visit www.ilovenjlibraries.org.



- Access to electronic databases such as RefUSA and EBSCO will cease;
- Statewide interlibrary loan and delivery of library materials will cease;
- Libraries will lose 50% of state aid at a time when demand for services is increasing dramatically;
- More than half of public libraries will lose access to the Internet;
- Many libraries will lose e-mail service;
- Many libraries will lose their Web sites or access to them;
- The Talking Book and Braille Center (known as the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped) will close;
- Group contracts which bring down the cost of other electronic resources purchased by libraries will cease.

Ruth Ann Mitchell

VOTER SERVICES REPORT

from Chrystal Schivell,
chair of Voter Services

This spring, the LWV of the Princeton Area, in collaboration with The Princeton Packet, published the responses of candidates for boards of education in those municipalities in which the election was contested, namely Princeton Township, Plainsboro, and West Windsor. The questions and responses were also posted on the LWVPA Web site.

At Communiversity, on April 24, visitors to the LWV-Princeton Area table will have, along with information about the League, the opportunity to register, change registration, and pick up vote-by-mail applications.

I again urge all League members to keep in mind that the quality of our voters' guides depends on the questions we ask. I alone cannot keep up with the issues in the many municipalities encompassed by our League. Nor are the local papers I must read necessarily keeping up with those issues. In an e-mail sent well before the school board elections, I asked League members for ideas for questions; however, only two members responded to that email. I need the input of many more members in order to create legitimate, relevant questions for each municipality.

Please, whenever you have a conversation with anyone about an issue in your municipality, remember voter services. Ask yourself whether something in the conversation could become a question for a candidate, jot that question down, and e-mail it to me at once. My goal is to have a bank of questions that pertain to Princeton Borough, Princeton Township, Montgomery, Plainsboro, West Windsor, and South Brunswick by September for the November election. I cannot do this without your help. Thank you.



We need **YOU** to participate in the following

Voter Service
Public Relations
Membership
Brown Bag Lunches
Short-term Projects
Discussion Leader
Serving on the board

Contact a Board Member. Become Involved!

PRINCETON LEAGUE MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

One of the Princeton Area League's special interests has been in the area of affordable housing. Our member Sheila Berkelhammer has been very active in this area. As an example of what is currently being done, she has given us the following copy from the Princeton Community Housing, Inc. sent to the Senate committee in March, 2010.

Statement of Princeton Community Housing, Inc. to Senate Committee on Economic Growth Regarding S1

Princeton Community Housing, a private, non-profit corporation, and its affiliate corporate entities ("PCH") provides, manages and advocates for affordable housing in Princeton Borough and Township. A coalition of community groups, including faith-based organizations, civic organizations and educational institutions created PCH in 1967. Today our Board of Directors is comprised of representatives of 18 of these sponsoring organizations and seven At Large members. All of these elements of the Princeton community have worked together in the belief that housing is a basic right which must be available to everyone, and that every community should offer housing accessible to those of all income levels. PCH now owns and manages 463 low and moderate income rental units, more than half of the affordable units in Princeton today. Overall, 9% of the housing units in Princeton qualify as affordable units.

Despite this, we know that there continues to be a significant need for additional affordable housing within our community. Waiting lists at Princeton Community Village ("PCV"), a 238-unit moderate and low income multi-family development opened by PCH in 1975, range from 12-18 months for a three bedroom unit to three years for a one bedroom unit. Similar wait times exist at our 70 multi-family units within Griggs Farm and the 155 senior and handicapped units at Elm Court and Harriet Bryan House. The majority of Griggs Farm and PCV residents are employed in the Princeton area, demonstrating that the availability of affordable housing within the Princeton community is of benefit not only to the residents of the housing but also to the institutions and businesses within the community who employ them. Because we believe that every community should provide a range of housing opportunities for those who work in the region, we supported the 2008 legislation eliminating Regional Contribution Agreements, and oppose the current effort to restore them. We believe that workers in our community should have an opportunity to live in the community, and their families should be able to benefit from the schools and other resources available in the community because of their labor.

During the past year, PCH has been working to develop an additional forty units of multi-family housing at Princeton Community Village. The Township has included these units in the third round plan it has submitted to COAH, and we have been awaiting COAH's certification of the plan so that we may move forward. Therefore, we have followed closely the recent legislative and gubernatorial activity proposing to abolish COAH. While we concur that the administrative process administered by COAH has become unnecessarily complicated and time consuming, we are concerned that its precipitous abolishment will lead to even longer delays. Putting together a project to develop affordable housing is a painstaking process that involves many elements. Once a site is identified, the developer must obtain all necessary approvals from local and state regulatory agencies and must secure financing before any work can actually begin. This process takes time and has many moving parts, often requiring the developer to revise and modify its plans as it goes forward. We support any reform that clarifies and simplifies the review process, but we know through long experience that uncertainty with respect to any of these elements can delay a project for years, if not kill it outright.

Therefore, we urge you not to rush through a bill just to satisfy those who have been frustrated by COAH, but to take the time to develop a reasoned approach that will enable us to continue to provide safe, affordable housing to all our citizens. We are members of the Housing and Community Development Network of New Jersey, and we support the Network's effort to propose a simple, fair and predictable strategy that improves on the current system while allowing projects currently in process to continue to completion. We hope you will take a step back, and that the Legislature and the Governor will work with the Network, the municipalities, and with all of the other parties who have testified before the Committee to put together a bill that everyone can support.

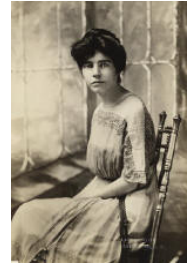


Princeton ***Community*** Housing
*provides, manages and advocates
for affordable housing!*

POSSIBLE DAYTRIPS

Frieda Gilvarg would like to hear from anyone interested in visiting Paulsdale in Mr. Laurel or in visiting the Legislature and our State League Historical Building in Trenton.

Paulsdale was the home of Alice Paul who was active in the women's suffragette movement and the eventual passage of the nineteenth amendment. Paulsdale is on the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places, and in 1991 it was designated a national historic landmark.



If you will go back to the September *Update*, you will find the Princeton League President's reaction to her visit there. Also, if anyone has not seen the film, "Iron Jawed Angels" based on Alice Paul's life, you may borrow a copy of it from our local League.

Please contact Frieda Gilvarg at 924-7018 or fgilvarg@aol.com if you or your friends are interested. If enough people respond, a bus trip to Paulsdale is a possibility.

When a *Newsweek* interviewer asked Paul why she dedicated the whole of her life to women's equality, she credited her farm upbringing by quoting an adage she learned from her mother:

*When you put your hand to the plow, you can't
put it down until you get to the end of the row.*

A NEW MEMBER SAYS HELLO

Hello everyone. My name is Mabel Duran-Sanchez and I am an international student from Venezuela. I have spent the better part of the last ten years in the United States and I consider both Venezuela and the United States to be my home.

I am currently attending The College of New Jersey and I am majoring in both International Studies and History. I believe that having to interact with two completely opposing cultures and societies from a very early age is what influenced my decision to study International Studies and specifically Diplomacy. Furthermore, history has always been a passion of mine.

I am very excited about working with the League of Women Voters of New Jersey. This opportunity allows me to learn more about the American political system and to promote active civic engagement. This internship gives me the chance to better understand and work on state legislation and policy issues, knowledge that will serve me well in my future as a diplomat.

Thank you and I look forward to working with all of you and making a contribution to New Jersey voters!

2010-2011 Membership Renewal

Please renew your dues (July 2010-2011).
Return this form with your check made payable to the
LWV of the Princeton Area to
Ellen Kemp, 18 Inverness Drive, Kendall Park, NJ 08824
Dues: \$50 – Individual \$75 – Household \$22 - Student

Annual dues include local, state, and national League membership and mailings.
(Distribution of your dues: LWV-U.S. \$28; LWV-N.J. \$23;
LWV- Princeton Area deficit \$1)

Name _____
Address _____

Home Phone _____
Work Phone _____
E-mail _____

Dues (2010-11) \$ _____
Contribution \$ _____
Total \$ _____

Looking Backward

Our Bulletin for December 1939 carried a full page article against the Foran Bill which had been introduced in the New Jersey legislature. This bill provided that aliens must carry a registration card at all times and “exhibit it to competent authorities.” Penalties could include a twenty-four hour detention which could be extended to thirty days. A \$500 bail was mandated. The League declared, “There is no emergency to justify such risks.”

GO GREEN! SAVE A TREE

Want to help save the League on postage and copying costs as well as receive your newsletter quickly?

Consider signing up for an electronic version next September. Let me know if you are interested. Contact Beverly Kestenis beverlykv@verizon.net
A mailed version will still be available for your choice.