



Green Mountain
CITIZEN

Spring 2010

2010 Quad States Conference: The League in a Changing World

Plans are in progress for the Fourth Annual Quad States Leadership Conference, to be held in Wells, ME on Saturday and Sunday, May 22 and 23.

Here are some of the questions we will address at this year's conference: How can the League best disseminate voter and candidate information to 21st century voters? How can Facebook and Twitter add to the League's outreach? What alternatives exist to traditional candidate forums? Why has civil discourse lost some of its civility lately? What are alternative voting systems and how could they increase voter involvement and provide a more accurate picture of voters' preferences?

There will again be three workshops, each offered twice, so attendees who are there both days can attend them all. As we go to press, the program is as follows. Check the Calendar of Events on our website (www.lwvofvt.org) for the updates.

Keynote Speaker: Jim Melchior, UME Farmington, on political civility in the U.S.

Workshops:

Alternative Voting Systems, Terry Bouricius, LWV Champlain Valley, VT and FairVote (tentative).

Get Out the Vote/Voter Service (nontraditional outreach, Vote411), Judy Davis, LWVUS Board Liaison, and TBA.

Social Networking (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube), Nancy Lynch, LWV Central Vermont and Executive Director, Peace and Justice Center, VT.

The registration fee for the conference remains at \$20. Attendees will be responsible for lodging and Saturday's dinner. There will be restaurant recommendations with a variety of styles and prices for a "dine around" on Saturday. The Hampton Inn in Wells has reserved a block of rooms at the group rate of \$89 plus tax. Breakfast is included with the room. Please make your own room reservation. The registration form and information about the hotel is on p. 7.

Last year, one attendee had this to say about the conference, "*The conference was most rewarding and one of the most active and educationally fulfilling I have attended. Congratulations to all you engaged women who made my weekend very valuable. I am honored to be a part of this association. I have remarked to many since returning home just how well-planned and focused it was.*" We hope you will come and have the same assessment this year.

President's Message

Spring 2010

Spring is creeping up on us, even though we didn't seem to have much winter – not much, just somehow long. But the red-winged black-birds are back.



Although the earth is on the cusp of burgeoning, our membership at every level is not. Only those Leagues which have been trained in and used the techniques of the LWVUS's Membership Recruitment Initiative have shone a significant increase in membership. Overall, we continue to lose numbers.

I know that there are those who believe that League “process,” our perceived lack of “nimbleness” in this age of instant communication and reaction has made us less attractive to young people. I am among those who strongly believe that it is exactly our process, our studies and nonpartisanship, that give the League its credibility.

I brought up this subject with our LWVUS board liaison, Judy Davis. She responded, “Philosophically, I believe that the League has survived so long because we are not a single issue organization. Because we are not a single issue organization, we come at solutions with a broader perspective. We have been working on many issues in the community, region, county, whatever so we understand the tax structure that may underlie the issue; perhaps there are environmental issues that should be considered; maybe there is a housing component that we see because we studied that several years ago, etc. You see where I am going with this. My point with the foregoing, is that often single issue groups fail to look at the bigger picture but we are steeped in the bigger picture because that has always been our work -- the entire canvas of the area where we are working.”

In terms of gaining members, Judy goes on to say, “Educating people about an issue that directly affects them and teaching them the effective ways to make their voices heard is an incredibly empower-

ing experience. Even as apathetic and jaded as we seem sometimes to be in this country, that is still a powerful experience. We normally address the issues that most affect people but perhaps we don't make the extra intensive face-to-face effort to educate people about how the issue directly affects their lives so that they will want to make their voices heard. If we can accomplish that, then we can take the next step and teach them how to make their voices heard. Somewhere in this process I know we attract members because that is how I came into the League.”

In a Dec. 31, 2000 column in the New York times, Robert D. Putnam, author of *Bowling Alone* was cited. He argued that the League should not try to change its fundamental nature. Organizations like the League were founded in the early 20th century as a replacement for rural gatherings like barn raisings and quilting bees. It is personal participation that has made these organizations so integral to preserving both society's fabric and individual health. Newer advocacy groups may be popular, but do not fill the void.

On February 16, the resolution on p. 6 was read in the VT House of Representatives. When League members there were introduced, we received a standing ovation. I think there's some life in the old girl yet.

Kate

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Kate Rader, President
Kate Rader, Editor *pro tem*

Membership in the League includes a subscription.
If you would like to join the League, e-mail, write,
or call:

League of Women Voters of Vermont
P.O. Box 94, Cabot, VT 05647
802-734-9709
e-mail: League@lwvofvt.org

The following is from the Essex 2010 Town Report

DEDICATION

This Annual Report is dedicated to

June Miles Carmichael

April 19, 1938 – March 27, 2009

June Carmichael was born in Montreal, Quebec and lived, worked, loved, and managed Vermont in her involvement with the Town of Essex. As a person, June was loyal, honest, caring and brave. Whatever the situation or political issue, June acted in the best interest of the majority of her constituents. She was an intelligent and compassionate leader who represented individuals or groups in the Town with integrity whether serving Essex, the League of Women Voters or the League of Cities and Towns. June did not miss meetings; she was thoroughly prepared yet observed and listened much more than she spoke. However, when some issue needed her comments, she was clear and concise with her message.

As a Selectman, June was the embodiment of an empathetic political leader. June voted with her heart, conscience and mind and in so doing, guaranteed that the citizens came first. She equally represented all citizens of Essex yet was devoted to the concept of the greatest good for the greatest number. Her detail orientation translated into precise meeting minutes for all meetings at which she attended, error free annual reports, memos and public documents. She was the grammarian's grammarian.

June served on the Town of Essex Planning Commission from 1975 through 1986; the Economic Development Commission from 1986-1987 and the Town of Essex Selectboard from 1987-1999. June was an active member of the Vermont League of Cities and Towns as a League Director and in 1985 was recognized as the Vermont Municipal Person of the Year. She was a member and longstanding treasurer for the Vermont League of Women Voters from 1972 through 2009. She wrote and edited "The Vermont Citizens Guide to Government in Vermont" in 1993 and 2004, a document widely used by libraries, schools, attorneys and others.

Although June is physically absent, her voice, legacy of compassion and clear understanding of her role in a representative democracy, lives on in all of us who knew her. She lead by example, spoke when necessary, and with each vote, placed others first. She avoided the spotlight even when she deserved to be its focus. Her humility was legend; her accomplishments were shared with everyone. She was generous with her praise and kind with her corrective suggestions of change. She will be missed.

LWVVT Proposed Budget, FY11

	<u>FY09 Actual</u>	<u>FY10 Actual</u>	<u>FY11 Proposed</u>
	<u>Jul '08 - Jun 09</u>	<u>Jul '09 - Mar 10</u>	<u>Jul '10 - Jun 11</u>
Income			
Fundraising*	2,384.51	903.20	1,900.00
Interest	0.53	0.00	0.00
Local League Support**	1,248.00	1,543.80	1,625.10
MAL Dues	1,484.00	1,000.00	850.00
Voter Services	75.00	0.00	0.00
Total Income	<u>5,192.04</u>	<u>3,447.00</u>	<u>4,375.10</u>
Expense			
Board & Administration	2,265.66	1,522.01	1,375.00
Delegates & Travel	1,146.51	300.00	1,100.00
Ed Fund Donations	60.00	0.00	0.00
Educational Activities	78.39	353.10	500.00
Green Mountain Citizen	651.13	145.88	200.00
Legislature	0.00	55.00	0.00
Membership Dues	1,554.00	948.80	950.00
Miscellaneous	269.02	0.00	0.00
Total Expense	<u>6,024.71</u>	<u>3,324.79</u>	<u>4,125.00</u>
Net Income	<u>-832.67</u>	<u>122.21</u>	<u>250.10</u>

* Fundraising includes member and nonmember contributions and miscellaneous.

**Local League Support is based on a \$3.00 increase in state PMPs to \$15. As you can see from net income, our expenses have exceeded our income for at least the past two years (expenses shown for FY10 are for only months, and do not include costs for the March and June GMC or for this Council. As long as our membership continues to decline, this fiscal picture will continue. PMPs have not been increased for at least 10 years, and thus have not been adjusted for inflation.

Local League Activities

Champlain Valley

The Champlain Valley League, and Leaguer Keri Toksu in particular, played a leadership role in the campaign to defend IRV and majority elections. Local opponents of repeal formed a PAC, "Fifty Percent Matters," and tried to respond to the attacks on IRV. Others strongly opposing repeal of IRV included VPIRG, Common Cause, and a host of political leaders, including Sen. Bernie Sanders, Gov. Howard Dean and nearly every state legislator from the city.

Despite support for IRV and the overwhelming defeat of the IRV repeal measure in five of the city's seven wards, the use of instant runoff voting (IRV) for mayor was repealed by 52% to 48% in Burlington. This was due to the relatively high voter turnout in the two Republican-leaning wards that favored repeal by a wide margin. The defeat for IRV appeared to be tied to the fact that the only candidate ever to win with IRV in Burlington is current mayor Bob Kiss. With controversies in the Kiss administration in the past year, especially around the Burlington Telecom financing issue, the IRV vote was widely viewed as a referendum on the mayor.

Many partisans seemed to measure the value of a reform by who wins under the new rules. However, losing Democratic mayoral candidate Andy Montroll was a statesman and came out against the repeal of IRV, arguing that majority rule with IRV needed to be protected.

Supporters of IRV are currently considering whether to come back with a new IRV charter amendment for the November ballot, when voter turnout will be much higher.

Southeast Unit

In honor of the 90th anniversary of the League of Women Voters and the 19th Amendment, Francine Vallario organized a display at the Brooks Memorial Library in Brattleboro. The display was up for two weeks – February 12-26.

A special selection of 40 to 50 books was chosen by Vallario and reference librarian Jeanne Walsh, which included children's, young adult and adult books by or about Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Jane Adams, Mary Lincoln, Sarah Palin, Cokie Roberts and many more. The books were displayed along with a table holding League-related handouts, and a League banner.

The handouts included: Five things you need to know on election day/ three ways to make voting a breeze; VOTE: a step by step guide to voting; and a LVW brochure, Facts about the League; and an article written by Meg Mott, which ran in the Brattleboro Reformer on February 16th and was copied for distribution.

This display was the first thing seen upon entering the library.

Central Vermont

As part of their movie series, and in observation of the League's 90th anniversary, on March 3 the LWVCEN showed Iron-Jawed Angels at Black Sheep Books in Montpelier.

On April 12, they are partnering with the Kellogg-Hubbard Library in Montpelier and the Central Vermont Branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) with a showing of *Nuclear Tipping Point* at the library.

Nuclear Tipping Point is a conversation with four men intimately involved in American diplomacy and national security over the last four decades. Former Secretary of State George Shultz, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, former Secretary of Defense Bill Perry and former Senator Sam Nunn share the personal experiences that led them to write two *Wall Street Journal* op-eds, in support of a world free of nuclear weapons and the steps needed to get there. Their efforts have reframed the global debate on nuclear issues and, according to the *New York Times*, "sent waves through the global policy establishment."

The film will be followed by a facilitated discussion.

Montpelier, Vermont
Concurrent House Resolution
H.C. R. 245

House concurrent resolution congratulating the League of Women Voters on its 90th anniversary

Offered by: All Members of the House

Offered by: All Members of the Senate

Whereas, in 1920, Carrie Chapman Catt, a leader in the hard-fought and ultimately successful campaign for women's suffrage, which culminated in the adoption of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, founded the League of Women Voters to educate newly enfranchised women on the vital importance of their participating in civic affairs, including studying major policy issues and voting in elections for public office and

Whereas, the mission of the League of Women Voters states that it is “a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy,” and

Whereas, the League of Women Voters does not endorse candidates for public office and believes in representative government by working for good government through the enactment of sound campaign finance, voting, and election laws, and

Whereas, forums that bring together elected leaders and the public for civil discourse on major topics, such as land use and education funding, are an important vehicle fo the League to engender the public's respect for and trust in government, and

Whereas, the League of Women Voters is constantly reviewing and studying the issues of the day to keep its advocacy relevant and informed, and

Whereas, in its advocacy role, the League of Women Voters supports: the protection of our environment through strict standards for air and water; fairness in financing public education; universal access to health care; the use of renewable energy sources; and civics education in our nation's schools, and

Whereas, in 2010, the League of Women Voters, along with its 900 state and local leagues nationwide, is celebrating the 90th anniversary of its establishment, making an important occasion in the history of women's official acceptance into the American political process, and the birthday of a leading national civics education organization, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly congratulates the League of Women Voters on its 90th anniversary, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Catherine Rader, President of the League of Women Voters of Vermont, and to the League's national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

(Signed)

Shapleigh Smith, Jr.
Speaker of the House

Attested to:

State

Seal

(Signed)

Brian E. Dubie
President of the Senate

(Signed)

Donald G. Milne
Clerk, House of Representatives

**Call to LWVVT Council, 2010
 Saturday, May 1
 The Wood Room
 T.W. Wood Gallery
 Montpelier**

10:00-10:30	Registration
10:30-11:45	Business Session
11:45	Break
12:00-1:00	Luncheon
1:00	Keynote Speaker: TBA

REGISTRATION for the meeting is \$15, payable to the LWV of VT. Return form and check to Tara Rogerson, P.O. Box 94, Cabot, VT 05647. DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION is Monday, April 23, 2010.

Name _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Register for Quad State Leadership Conference:

-Fill out the registration form below and return with a check for \$20, payable to LWVNH - Quad State. Please send your check by May 10, to LWV c/o Liz Tentarelli, 27 Bowles Rd., Newbury NH 03255

-Make your own hotel reservation at Hampton Inn & Suites, 900 Post Road, Wells, Maine 04090 (1-207-646-0555). Be sure to say you are with the League of Women Voters and the room rate will be \$95.23 (incl. tax). Find a roommate to share and the cost will be \$47.60 per person. Our block of rooms will be held until April 18th, but the rate will be in effect until the event. Breakfast is included in the room rate. We will have dinner in are restaurants on Saturday.

This training is made possible by a grant from the League of Women Voters of Vermont Education Fund.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

- _____ I plan to attend just the Saturday workshops.
- _____ I plan to stay at the hotel Saturday night and attend workshops on Saturday and Sunday.
- _____ I plan to stay at the hotel Friday and Saturday nights and attend workshops Sat. and Sunday.
- _____ If staying overnight, I have already booked my room at the Hampton Inn.

GREEN MOUNTAIN

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League of Women Voters of Vermont

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