

# THE CHAMPLAIN VALLEY VOTER

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Champlain Valley

**June 2010**

CVLWV Board, 2010 - 2011

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Director	Jean Hopkins (Voter editor)	863-5359
Director	Marcia Mason	863-5784
Director	Laura Middleton	879-3515
Director	Louise Ransom	985-8706

## Calendar of Events

*We sponsor meetings and events for the public and League members.*

### Local, Statewide, Regional Meetings

Date	Time	Place	Description
<b>Aug. 20</b>	10:00am	State House Montpelier	<b>Naturalization Ceremony for new citizens.</b> The League provides a voter registration opportunity afterwards.
<b>Aug. 21</b>	9:30am	Burlington City Police Department to Battery Park	<b>Parade</b> - after making banners about voting at the police department the parade begins at Battery Park
<b>Aug. 24</b>	7:00pm	State House Montpelier	Celebrate with Lucy Stone - Women's right to vote
<b>Sept. 1</b>	10:30am	8 Windridge Rd. Essex Junction	Champlain Valley Board Meeting
<b>Sept. 13</b>	4:30pm	Kellogg-Hubbard Library, Montpelier	State Board Meeting

### President's Message

From your president, trying to come out of summer – a hot, sticky one, and get busy with the new fall and what will be happening. You have had a forewarning with the vote on 8/24, our primary. We all know there is more to come. My hope is that this League will get to work to make this a banner year for us. There will be many League issues coming, such as

green energy bills, voting bills, financing education changes? Maybe? Re-districting bills. One thing Leaguers can do is get to know the people who will be representing them so that individually and as a group we can push our positions forward.

With a new study about redistricting about to start I hope some of you will participate. That's what we're all about.

This is really a year to get interested in government at any of the three levels and nothing better than the local level. Try it! Sit in on some meetings, not to join in but to observe and see just how the folks are working. Might be very interesting.

Any thoughts or questions, call me. I am actually in the phone book now.  
Vee Gordon

### **Voting - Chittenden Senate Redistricting** - by Terry Bouricius

#### Volunteers Needed for Study of Chittenden Senate Districting

At the Champlain Valley League's annual meeting, a proposal to study the way the Chittenden County Senate is districted was approved. Outgoing President, Marge Gaskins, appointed Terry Bouricius to chair the study. We need volunteers to serve on this study committee.

Concerns about the magnitude of the Chittenden Senate District (six seats, with one more seat from Colchester/Grand Isle), and questions about the partisan and geographic balance of the delegation have swirled for decades. Some have suggested breaking the County district into smaller districts. Others have proposed alternative voting methods to improve the balance of representation.

The Vermont State League's position on redistricting will shape the study as well. This position, adopted in 2008, reads as follows:

#### "Position on Redistricting and Voting Methods

The emphasis on geographic representation in legislative bodies in the U.S. may be anachronistic. It is more important that voters be represented by elected officials who reflect their political views, than happen to live nearby. Single-seat winner-take-all elections, regardless of method of redistricting, elevate the representation of geography above political philosophy, and other priority voter self-identities.

It is impossible to redistrict single-seat districts in such a way as to promote BOTH competitive elections AND a highly representative delegation (as these two priorities are in inherent conflict in single-seat districts). Therefore,

The League of Women Voters of Vermont supports the principle of legislative districts using alternative voting methods, such as proportional representation in multi-seat districts, as a way of achieving both competitive elections and fair representation of both majorities and minorities within a district."

Anyone interested in serving on this study committee should contact the new Champlain Valley President, Vee Gordon [vernagordon@comcast.net](mailto:vernagordon@comcast.net) and the study chair, Terry Bouricius [terryb@burlingtontelecom.net](mailto:terryb@burlingtontelecom.net)

## Voter Education Projects

### CHITTENDEN COUNTY VOTES

The Champlain Valley League of Women Voters expects to activate its new Voters Service program shortly after the Primary election on August 24. The goal of the program, culminating in the November 2010 election, is to reduce the gap between the number of registered voters and the number who actually vote. In some election districts the percentage is pretty low, in the 50% percentile, especially in Burlington.

The program will be administered by a non-partisan volunteer corps of concerned voters in each election district. We are currently recruiting these volunteers. The Table of Operations (TO) is as follows:

(1) One volunteer Coordinator in each district has already been recruited, or will be.

(2) The Coordinator recruits three core volunteers, one for each of the three areas vital to sound voting practices, Registration, Voter Education, Get-Out-The-Vote.

(3) The three core volunteers have already been recruited, or will recruit as many more volunteers as needed to work in one of the three vital areas in their own election district. In this manner, we

believe a lot of people doing small jobs for two short months will be most effective.

For more info and/or to volunteer: 985-8706,  
louise.b.ransom@gmail.com

Note - League members including Louise and Jean Hopkins will be working with the Neighborhood Planning Assemblies of the 7 city wards in 'Get Out To Vote' projects. Louise Ransom has already appeared at the Ward 6 meeting and has been interviewed by Nick Carter on Channel 17. We hope to see more League members at the following event on August 21<sup>st</sup>.

### **Burlington Gets out the Vote with Parade August 21<sup>st</sup>**

#### **CELEBRATE DEMOCRACY BANNER-MAKING AND PARADE AUGUST 21**

Young and old alike are invited to celebrate our right to vote by joining a sidewalk parade to City Hall on August 21. The event will start at 9:30am, in the community room at the Burlington Police Dept, with the chance for everyone to create your own banner and sign to carry in the parade. The group will display these works of art during a celebratory parade to City Hall that will leave Battery Park at 10:30am. There will be refreshments awaiting the group at City Hall. All you need to bring is a music-maker (kazoos, drums, symbols - anything you are able to carry during the parade) and your enthusiasm for our right to vote! Parents: what a fun way to teach your kids about the election and democracy.

This event is sponsored by the city's Neighborhood Planning Assemblies and CEDO's Center for Community and Neighborhoods. For more info: 865-7172, jdavis@ci.burlington.vt.us.

Please note that the City's Clerk-Treasurer's office is offering additional hours on August 21 from 9am - noon for any Burlington resident who wants to come and vote early for August 24 primary election.

**VOTE411** If you haven't voted in the state primary (Aug. 24<sup>th</sup> deadline) and you're not sure who's on the ballot, go to [www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org)

One of our new Board Members, Laura Middleton is spreading the word about Vote411 at gathering places such as the Burlington Farmer's Market and the Essex Fair Grounds. She has pamphlets to hand out and if you would like to help Laura, you can email her at [nan49ed52@comcast.net](mailto:nan49ed52@comcast.net)

### Celebrate the 90th Anniversary of Suffrage! -

"Meet Lucy Stone" Performed by nationally-known storyteller, Judith Black  
Tuesday, August 24th, 7:00 pm Vermont State House Chambers  
Free and open to the public - All ages welcome!

One hundred and fifty years ago, during a time in our national history when married women had no legal rights to the money they earned or the children they bore, Lucy Stone dedicated her life to speaking out for the democracy that this nation had promised its inhabitants.

Join storyteller and actress, Judith Black, for an inspiring, entertaining, and eye-opening performance as she brings to life the wit, intelligence and passionate commitment of Ms. Stone - often referred to as "the shining star" of the women's rights and anti-slavery movements.

This performance is made possible by the Vermont Humanities Council, in partnership with The Vermont Women's Fund and the League of Women Voters of Vermont. For more information about the event, please contact Joanne MacIsaac at The Vermont Women's Fund: (802) 398-2300 x2 or [joanne@vermontwomensfund.org](mailto:joanne@vermontwomensfund.org)

## More Information on VOTE411

Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) in October of 2006, VOTE411.org is a "one-stop-shop" for election related information. It provides nonpartisan information to the public with both general and state-specific information on the following aspects of the election process:

- \* Absentee ballot information
- \* Ballot measure information (where applicable)
- \* Early voting options (where applicable)
- \* Election dates
- \* Factual data on candidates in various federal, state and local races
- \* General information on such topics as how to watch debates with a critical eye
- \* ID requirements
- \* Polling place locations
- \* Registration deadlines
- \* Voter qualifications
- \* Voter registration forms
- \* Voting machines

An important component of VOTE411.org is the polling place locator, which enables users to type in their address and retrieve the poll location for the voting precinct in which that address is located. The League has found that this is among the most sought after information in the immediate days leading up to, and on, Election Day.

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, has fought since 1920 to improve U.S. systems of government and impact public policies through education and advocacy. The League's enduring vitality and resonance comes from its grassroots nature, with members operating at the national, state, and local levels working towards the goal of "making democracy work." There are Leagues in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Hong Kong, in addition to the hundreds of local Leagues nationwide.

The League of Women Voters is strictly nonpartisan; it neither supports nor opposes candidates for office at any level of government. The League makes a difference at every level of government because of the energy and passion of thousands of members around the country who work together to safeguard our democracy.

Election Day Problems?

Call one of these hotlines:

1-866-MYVOTE1 (866-698-6831)

1-866-OUR-VOTE 866-687-8683)

1-888-VE-Y-VOTA (en Español)

Sign up for the LeagueVoice, the electronic newsletter published by the League of Women Voters of the United States. This monthly newsletter includes timely action items, program updates and upcoming events.

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