PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HAPPY NEW YEAR! I hope you all had an enjoyable holiday season.

The 2013 Legislative Agenda has been set. Fourteen local Leagues sent in their recommendations for the Agenda. Based on their input, State League members established the agenda, which focuses on campaign finance reform, election reform, other government positions, natural resources and health care.

As always our League is on target with the Agenda in the programs we have planned for the 2013. We start in January with two presentations that fall under two of the agenda’s focus: other government positions and healthcare. We look forward to our programs on Court Simplification and Health Care: What’s Up in Albany. We have excellent speakers for both programs. I hope you plan to attend both of them. Then in February we have a program on renewable energy strategies planned by our Natural Resources Committee.

Based on your input, our League supported the Great Lakes Concurrence. Our region, bordering on Lake Erie and Ontario Lake, is directly affected by this issue. Thank you for sharing your opinion on this important position.

We gained several new members in 2012, which brings our total membership to 100. We remain
A healthy League. In my capacity as a State League Board member, I hear about many Leagues that are struggling with members and leadership. Many of these Leagues have disbanded due to these problems. I've tried to invite new members to participate on the Board. I'd like to introduce one new member who has been appointed by the Board as Director at Large, Clare Nicholetti. Welcome Clare.

The Students Inside Albany program is in the process of gathering applications from students in the Tompkins County School District. The Ithaca Journal has been very supportive of this project, placing many articles on this program over the past month. We hope to send two students as we did last year. Students always come back with greater awareness of how the State Government functions and, of course, they love working with Barbara Bartoletti, our State Legislative Director. Who wouldn’t, she’s such a wealth of information and so passionate about her work.

Our Nominating Committee has started the process of filling vacancies in the Board for 2013-2014. This Committee is composed of four members and a Chairperson Ann Kanter. Two members are from the Board; they are Debbie Levin our VP for Membership and Lucia Sciore who is our Director of Voter Service. I hope when one of the Committee members call you, you will seriously consider serving the League as a Board member.

The Natural Resource Committee and Chairperson Kay Wagner have been working on writing our League’s response to the DEC regulations on hydrofracking. One of the many issues involved is the fact that the health report on consequences of fracking has not been completed before regulations are being considered. I want to especially thank Kay Wagner for the many hours of work she has spent on this letter. She worked tirelessly with Sally Robinson, President of the New York State Board, to get her approval. This is a necessary step in our League being able to make a public statement of our position.

As always, I am proud of the work that our League does that leads us to be recognized by New York State League as one of the healthiest in the State.

Kay Sharp

STUDENTS INSIDE ALBANY: 2013

Youth Program Coordinators Kathleen Yen and Susan Henninger are planning for the Students Inside Albany Conference to be held April 14-17, 2013.

The Tompkins County student representative(s), chosen by a panel of local judges, will join high school students from across the state to learn about New York State government and how citizens can participate in the policy making arena. Students will tour the New York State Capitol, shadow their Assembly person and State Senator, and attend lectures by guest speakers, along with participating in other government-related activities.

League of Women Voters sponsorship includes the cost of the conference, room and board, and round-trip reimbursement for car/bus transportation to Albany.

League members who know of any high school juniors or seniors in Tompkins County with a genuine interest in government and a sense of adventure should encourage them to apply for this exciting opportunity.

Applications, nomination forms, and a conference brochure are available to be downloaded at www.lwvtompkins.org/youth.html

Contact Kathleen Yen at 257-8199 or kyen@twcny.rr.com or Susan Henninger at sue@fingerlakeswriter.com or 387-7544 for further information.

Sue Henninger
PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The Tompkins County League will be presenting two programs in January. The first is our program on New York State court reform, originally planned for November, which had to be rescheduled for January. Professor Glenn Galbreath of Cornell Law School will describe how the New York State court system has developed over time and has become one of the most complex, confusing and costly court systems in the country. He will also present his ideas for reform in a talk entitled *Simplification of the New York State Court System: Necessary? Possible?* The program, open to the public and jointly sponsored by Kendal at Ithaca, will be held Monday, January 14th, 7:15 to 9:00 pm, in the auditorium at Kendal at Ithaca, 2230 N. Triphammer Rd. Take the entrance road, turn left at the stop sign and look for signs for visitor parking near the entrance.

The second program, developed by the Health Care Committee, is *Health Care: What’s Up in Albany* to be held on Monday, January 28th from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Borg-Warner Room at the Tompkins County Public Library. See the Health Care Committee report on page 5 for more details. We welcome the co-sponsorship of this program by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and the New York State Wide Senior Action Counsel. This meeting, open to the public, will be of interest to anyone concerned about the future of health care in New York State, so encourage your friends to attend.

Finally, mark your calendars and save the evening of Monday, February 25, to attend a program with implications for a sustainable future for our local community, *Renewable Energy: Global and Local*, organized by the Natural Resources Committee. It is scheduled for 7:00 pm in the Parlor of the Unitarian Church.

Florence Smith
NATURAL RESOURCES

The Natural Resources Committee has continued its work on two fronts: hydraulic fracturing for natural gas and the potential development and use of renewable energy resources.

The Department of Environmental Conservation, without yet completing its Supplemental Generic Environmental Impact Statement (SGEIS) and its accompanying health study, has released its proposed regulations for hydrofracking. The rules were released in early December and the public was given 30 days, beginning December 12, to respond. This is not only a very short period of time, it is also the holiday period when individuals and municipalities find it difficult to address seriously the adequacy of the regulations.

The LWVTC has written a response to the DEC expressing our deep concerns about the timing, process and content of the regulations. We are also concerned that the statement of its policy within the regulations emphasizes its role as promoter of the extraction of natural gas rather than its role as regulator. A copy of our response will be on our website.

The LWVNY Committee on Energy, Agriculture and the Environment has also written a response to the regulations. Beth Radow, chair of the committee, did a tremendous amount of work on this document and made extensive use of her expertise in real estate law to analyze some of the issues. Kay Wagner and other members of that committee worked with her to produce what they hope is a strong and detailed document.

The Natural Resources Committee has been discussing the potential for development of renewable energy resources as well as the reduction in the use of energy. In November Leslie Schill, from the Tompkins County Planning Department, met with our committee to tell us about the Cleaner Greener Southern Tier Plan. It was a very interesting meeting and we were impressed with the extensive amount of work they have done. A number of the projects they proposed coincide with projects proposed for the Regional Economic Development Council. We will remain in contact with the group working on this plan and hope to assist them in their efforts to educate the public about possible projects and funding that may be available.

The committee is also planning our February 25 program, to be called Renewable Energy: Global and Local. We will have three speakers: Francis Vanek, Senior Lecturer in the Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Cornell; Guillermo Metz, from Cornell Cooperative Extension; and Jonathan Comstock, Co-chair of Energy-Independent Caroline and Chair of Solarized Tompkins. Our speakers will discuss global, regional, and local responses to today’s energy issues. The program will be held at 7p.m. in the Unitarian Church Parlor at Buffalo and Aurora. Save the date.

Kay Wagner

2013 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA: STEPS TO A BETTER NEW YORK

Campaign Finance Reform
Support lower contribution limits, increased disclosure and a system of small donor matching funds. In particular, support stronger and effective campaign finance enforcement with increased penalties for violations.

Election Reform
Improve election processes to extend, encourage and protect voting, including paperless and Election Day registration, early voting, better ballot design, improved polling place management/ poll worker training, a single June primary, and measures to ensure the integrity of all ballots.

Other Government Positions
Promote effective ethics enforcement and open and transparent government processes; protect individual liberties and reproductive choices; monitor impact of the property tax levy cap on localities and schools.

(continued)
Natural Resources
Support protection and management of New York's natural resources in the public interest, including energy conservation and energy options from renewable sources.

Health Care
Support affordable and effective health care for all New Yorkers.

Other League Positions
The League also has positions on the Judiciary, State Finances, and Social Policy, including transportation policy, under which we can and do take action.

New York State Voter

IRON JAWED ANGELS

Last March the LWV-TC presented a screening of the HBO original 2004 movie, Iron Jawed Angels. The film dramatizes the story of activists Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, who took the Women's Suffrage Movement by storm, risking their lives, marriages and friendships in support of the 19th Amendment. It received rave reviews from those who attended the March screening and from other groups who have borrowed the DVD from us. If you know of a group that might like to view the film, contact Florence Smith at 273-6147.

HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE

We hope you will join us on Monday, January 28 for a program on prospective changes in health care: Health Care: What's Up in Albany? The program, open to the public, will be held in the Borg-Warner Room of the Tompkins County Public Library from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. We hope you will join us.

Nate Shinagawa, Member of the Tompkins County Legislature and Administrator for the Robert Packer Hospital; and Linda Smith, Legislative Aide to New York Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton, will present information on the Affordable Care Act including Health Insurance Exchanges and state specific concerns about the New York Medicaid Redesign Team recommendations. Sarah Jane Blake, Outreach Counselor for Statewide Senior Action Council, will facilitate the subsequent discussion. Take this opportunity to ask them questions about each topic. What is the New York State Medicaid Re-design Team? What is the role of the Health Insurance Exchange in the Affordable Care Act? And more importantly, how does each affect me personally as a resident in Tompkins County? Please join us for this very timely panel discussion about Health Care. We look forward to seeing you.

Sarah Jane Blake

LWV-TC CALENDAR—2012-2013
(Items in italics are tentative)

Jan 14 Mon 7:15 pm COURT SIMPLIFICATION — Glenn Galbreath, Cornell Law School Kendal at Ithaca, Auditorium
Jan 28 Mon 7:00 pm HEALTHCARE—WHAT’S UP IN ALBANY — Nate Shinagawa, Robert Packer Hospital; Linda Smith, Aid to Barbara Lifton TCPLibrary Jail
Feb 4 Mon 6:00 pm Board Meeting
Feb 25 Mon 7:00 pm RENEWABLE ENERGY: GLOBAL AND LOCAL — Francis Vanek, Civil & Env. Eng., Cornell; Guillermo Metz, Cornell Coop. Ext.; Jonathan Comstock, Co-chair of Energy-Independent Caroline Unitarian Church Jail
Mar 4 Mon 6:00 pm Board Meeting
Mar 16 Sat 12:30 pm SOUP AND BREAD LUNCH
Apr 1 Mon 6:00 pm Board Meeting
May 6 Mon 7:00 pm ANNUAL DINNER AND MEETING and Board Meeting Salvation Army Flo Smith
### YOUR REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS

#### SENATORS:

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