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GREENWICH VOTER

SEPTEMBER 2017

Congratulations to Alma Rutgers who became a life member of the League of Women Voters this year!



Alma Rutgers has served on both the local and the state League boards. She has worked on many League studies over the years and was the affordable housing specialist for the Connecticut League of Women Voters from 1984 through 1994, lobbying at the state Capitol for 10 years on affordable housing issues. She was a recipient of the Greenwich League's Mary Award in 2012.

Alma has served in Greenwich Town government for over 30 years, including service on the Board of Health, the Housing Authority, and as an elected member of the Board and Estimate and Taxation for 12 years. She has been a member of several selectmen's advisory committees, currently serving on the first selectman's advisory committee on community diversity. She chaired the town's Community Development Advisory Committee for 4 years.

In addition, Alma has also served on the Boards of many Greenwich non-profit organizations, including Neighbor-to-Neighbor, Call-A-Ride, Greenwich League of Women Voters, Greenwich Hadassah, Greenwich Kiwanis Club, and Jewish Family Services. She currently serves on the board of the Friends of Nathaniel Witherell. In addition, she is a hospice volunteer and also volunteers once a month at New Covenant House of Hospitality soup kitchen in Stamford.

Long active in politics, Alma chaired the Greenwich Democratic Town Committee for 4 years.

A resident of Greenwich since 1947, Alma is a graduate of Greenwich Academy and Barnard College. She also holds an M. Phil. Degree from Columbia University in sociology and in May 2009 received an M.A.W. Degree in writing from Manhattanville College.

She writes a weekly Sunday column for the *Greenwich Time* that focuses on local issues.

Alma is married to Don Snyder. She has one son and two adult grandchildren.

Cocktails and Conversation with Dr. Gildea October 11 – Venue to be announced soon

Come and meet our new Superintendent of Schools.

On the job since July 1, 2017, Dr. Jill Gildea will share with us her impressions and plans.

FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Happy Fall to All!

There is much to relate. In this edition of *Greenwich Voter*, you will find reviews and photos from recent events, announcement of a new board position, notices of upcoming events, and more.

Over the summer, LWVG programming took its usual breather, but your Steering Committee and Board kept brainstorming. On our minds more than ever is how to keep the League vibrant, effective, and inviting to new members. It seems that new members often join with great enthusiasm, but may experience their first months in the League as less exciting than they imagined. While we encourage members who want to get involved to reach out—see the Interest Survey on our website lwvg.org, for example—we are also looking to develop opportunities that involve a wider swath of members. And, in a different but related area, we have been considering how best to present the LWVG to the broader community as a relevant, vital organization. We welcome your suggestions.

Looking forward, we are happy to announce a number of exciting events, described elsewhere in this *Voter*. These include **Debates** in September and October; a **Cocktails and Conversation** in October, and an especially thrilling November program with **Harvard professor David Moss**, based on his recent book, *Democracy, A Case Study*. More will be added so watch your mailboxes or check the lwvg.org calendar for details. Much work and effort goes into planning these events, and we sincerely welcome you to attend as many as you can. As always, questions and comments may be directed to Steering Committee and Board members; our phone numbers are listed on page two and on the website.

Finally, we would like to remind you that the end of our fiscal year is June 30th, and encourage you to check your membership status to ensure you are current on your dues. Please see page five for easy ways to pay up. We are a member-supported organization, and your dues are needed for us to operate. Many thanks.

Jara Burnett, Claudia Carthaus, Liz van Caloen

League of Women Voters of Greenwich 2017-2018 Board of Officers and Directors

OFFICERS

STEERING COMMITTEE

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Liz van Caloen	203-570-3549
Claudia Carthaus	203-644-3804

VP ADVOCACY

Claudia Carthaus	203-644-3804
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Joanne Stavrou	203-637-7050

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Barbara O'Shea	203-869-4489

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Michele Kinner	203-629-3528
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YOUTH OUTREACH

Anne-Marie Hesser	917-687-4025
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NOMINATING

Nancy Duffy	203-869-2297
Deirdre Kamlani	203-862-4055

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Lynn Garelick	203-625-8375
Louisa Greene	203-550-2697
Deirdre Kamlani	203-862-4055

ELECTION SEASON EVENTS

The League of Women Voters of Greenwich is planning a series of activities preceding the local election on November 7.

DEBATES:

► BET REPUBLICAN PRIMARY:

September 5, Town Hall Cone Room, 7 - 8:30 pm

Moderator: Kay Maxwell, Stamford League

Cumulative time format, written questions from the floor

Candidates: Bill Drake, Debra Hess, Michael Mason, Nancy Weissler, Karen Fassuliotis, Andy Duus (all endorsed candidates), Leslie Tarkington, petitioner

► TAX COLLECTOR:

October 5, Town Hall Cone Room, 7:30 - 8:30 pm

Moderator: Jean Rabinow, Bridgeport Area League

Timed response format, written questions from the floor

Candidates: Tod Laudonia, R, incumbent and Howard Richman, D challenger

► BOARD OF SELECTMEN:

October 17, Round Hill Community House, 7 - 8:30 pm

Cosponsored with the Round Hill Association

Moderator: Jara Burnett, Greenwich League

Timed response format, written questions from the floor

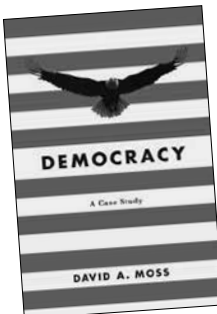
Candidates: Selectmen: John F. Toner, R, incumbent and Drew Marzullo, D, incumbent. **First Selectman:** Peter J. Tesei, R incumbent and Sanford Litvack, D, challenger

We will cosponsor a **Board of Education candidate forum** with the Greenwich PTA Council. Tentative date is mid October. A **Meet and Greet for RTM candidates** is also being organized. Time, date and place will be announced soon.

Kath Burgweger and Marla Laney will once again help us publish a *Voter's Guide* to appear in the *Greenwich Time* and on various websites.

Interested in helping with these activities? Please call Jara Burnett at 203 637-9244 or email at cdb299@aol.com.

Harvard Professor and Author, David A. Moss Monday, November 13



Renowned Harvard Business School professor, David Moss, will join us for a unique program that will take us back to a constitutional debate pivotal to our nation's founding: how much power – and what type of power – should be vested in the federal government versus the states? Building on the success of his acclaimed new book, *Democracy: A Case Study*, Professor Moss will replicate his popular class at Harvard for League members and the wider community. This will be an exceptional opportunity to engage in a discussion about a foundational issue that remains relevant to our politics today. Event details will follow."

LWVG ANNUAL MEETING & DINNER



Over 50 members attended the Annual Meeting.

The LWVG Annual Meeting and Dinner was held on Wednesday, June 7 at the Riverside Yacht Club. The meeting was chaired by Jara Burnett. Caroline Adkins was secretary, JoAnn Messina, parliamentarian, and Michele Kinner, credentials. In the course of the meeting, we approved rewording of the Affordable Housing Position, affirmed the slate of new directors as proposed by the Nominating Committee, and approved the budget as submitted. Over 50 people attended, well exceeding the needed quorum.



Following the meeting, members adjourned to the deck of the Yacht Club for cocktails, enjoying the harbor view and pleasant weather. Dinner began at 6:30 when incoming Steering Committee member Claudia Carthaus extended an introductory welcome. Midway through the meal, Jara Burnett presented outgoing Steering Committee member Caroline Adkins with the Mary Award, noting her gentle hand at organizing people in that role, as well as her long service to the League and other groups. With family members and friends looking on, Caroline spoke about her love for the League and its mission, citing in particular her pride that the League had maintained its balanced stance through the recent turbulent election season.



Mary Award Honoree,
Caroline Adkins.



Keynote speaker,
Dr. Julie Varughese

At 7:30, Steering Committee member Liz van Caloen introduced the evening's speaker, Dr. Julie Varughese, Medical Officer of AmeriCares. The Stamford-based charity AmeriCares provides healthcare, medical supplies and disaster relief around the world and at home. Dr. Varughese shared some facts about the severe need for medical care in many parts of the world, citing her experiences not only in Nepal and Haiti, but also at AmeriCares Free Clinics in Stamford and Norwalk. When asked during Q&A what her one wish would be, she simply replied "Healthcare for everyone. Everyone should have access to the healthcare they need."

The LWVG extends its thanks to Dr. Varughese for speaking, and also to Riverside Yacht Club for beautifully hosting our event. Finally, please note that in 2018, the Annual Meeting and Dinner will be held on May 16th, rather than in June, when many other events are held. Please mark your calendars.

2017-2018 LWVG Board – Left to right, top row: Jara Burnett, Rita Baker, Marla Laney, Liz van Caloen, Elise Hingson; middle row: Michele Kinner, Pamela Toper, Barbara O'Shea, Joanne Stavrou; bottom row: Caroline Adkins, Claudia Carthaus, Louisa Greene, Lynn Garelick, Nancy Duffy

LWVG LEGISLATIVE PICNIC

Our Annual Legislative Picnic was held this year on Wednesday July, 12th at the Riverside home of members Nancy and Andy Duus. Our thanks to them again for their graciousness and generosity.

State Representatives Mike Bocchino, Fred Camillo and Livvy Floren were there to speak about their accomplishments and misses in the last Legislative Session. State Senator Scott Frantz was unable to attend but sent a strong written message on his disappointment that the legislative session ended without a budget.

The Legislative Session coming to an end without a budget led to questions related to taxes, infrastructure and how to improve the state's economic climate to entice businesses and people to come to Connecticut. It was one of our more interesting picnics since our state's problems affect everyone. Both Democratic and Republican points of view were well represented.



State Representative Mike Bocchino

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CT CONVENTION JUNE 17, 2017



The LWVCT Convention 2017 was attended by LWVG members Caroline Adkins, Kath Burweger, Claudia Carthaus and Linda Hodge. It was held on the stunning Quinnipiac University Health Services Campus in North Haven.

Activities began with a coffee and then the business meeting. Along with news that the state of the organization is solid, we heard from the president, Carol Reimers, who shared her vision for the state league by showing a terrific PowerPoint presentation regarding the National LWV strategy for transformation. The Communications Director from the Westport LWV shared her newly designed Web App for voter services that can not only distribute the *Voter's Guide*, but can also provide voters access to registration information and polling information.



Finally, during the luncheon and wrap-up, we picked up Alma Rutgers 50-year member certificate, and heard from the newly formed Eastern Connecticut chapter about how thankful they were to Jara Burnett for her guidance and support in getting them up and running.

Pictured at left, top: Caroline Adkins, with Carol Reimers, speaking to attendees at lunch; bottom: Kath Burgweger (back) and Enid Oresman listen to a workshop presentation.



The League of Women Voters, 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. It was founded in 1920 as an outgrowth of the 72 year struggle to win voting rights for women.

RTM Advocacy Update

The results of the RTM members survey were sent to the Legislative and Rules Committee. You may access these on our website. The Committee has scheduled a discussion at their September meeting.

COMINGS AND GOINGS ON THE LWVG BOARD



The Board of the LWVG announces with great excitement the appointment of new Board member Anne-Marie Hesser, MS Ed, to serve as Youth

Outreach Chair. The position is a new one, created this year in response to a recent LWVUS rule change allowing teenagers 16 and older to join the League. Anne-Marie will spearhead LWVG's efforts to involve young members as well as to support local schools in preparing students for civic involvement. Her background makes her particularly well-suited to launch this important initiative.

Anne-Marie received her Master's Degree in Education from the University of Pennsylvania, where she also began her career in educational and documentary television. She was honored to work on many award winning programs, including one that earned her an Emmy Award. Anne-Marie's interest in Art History eventually led her to the Metropolitan Museum of Art where she volunteers as a docent in the American Art department. Anne-Marie now works as a Educational Consulting Associate at Greenwich Education Group supporting students and their families as they navigate their educational choices and goals. She is also a member of the Youth Ministry Formation Committee at Christ

Church Greenwich. Anne-Marie lives in Greenwich with her husband, Van, and their three children who attend Brunswick School, Greenwich Academy, and The School of American Ballet in NYC.

Welcome Anne-Marie!

At their August meeting, the Board of Directors of the Greenwich League accepted, with deep regret, two Director resignations. Jill Oberlander stepped down from the Program Committee and Sheila Mehta relinquished the Director-at-Large position. Both will be missed as they take on other responsibilities; both remain League members. We thank them for their many contributions.

Did You Renew Your Membership?

If you have not yet renewed, please do so at your earliest convenience by filling out and mailing the form below with your check, or you can easily renew via PayPal on the League website, www.lwvg.org. Can't remember whether you are paid up? Contact Jara Burnett at cdb299@aol.com.



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREENWICH MEMBERSHIP FORM

The League membership year is from July 1 - June 30.

INDIVIDUAL

- Regular \$60
- Senior (62+) \$50
- Patron \$100

TWO IN COMMON HOUSEHOLD

- Household \$90
- Senior Household \$75
- Patron Household \$150

I'd like to add a donation!

\$_____ Non-Deductible to LWVG*

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Total Dues: \$ _____

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Total Enclosed \$ _____

***Donations to LWVG are NOT deductible. Please make dues/non-deductible donation checks payable to "LWVG."**

****To make a tax-deductible donation, please make a separate check payable to "LWVG Educational Fund."**

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