



Steve Levy
County Executive

Deanna Marshall, Director
Office of Women's Services

Between Us Women

"empowering women through awareness and education"

JUNE/JULY 2008

Special points of interest:

On the New York State Senate's finance committee, Suffolk County is represented by:

*Owen Johnson (chair)
Kenneth P. LaValle
Carl Marcellino
Caesar Trunzo*

Johnson, LaValle and Trunzo also serve on the rules committee.

State Legislator Urges Passage of Healthy Teens Act

For four straight years, Assemblywoman Patricia Eddington (D.-Patchogue) has helped pass a sex education bill called the Healthy Teens Act in the state assembly. And for four straight years, the companion bill in the state senate has died in committee.

Meanwhile, according to Eddington, New York's cervical cancer prevention efforts were downgraded from "very good" to "good" in Women In Government's annual rankings. That report specifically cites the state's lack of movement on this public-health issue as a contributing factor in New York's demotion.

Eddington drew attention to the Healthy Teens Act at a recent press conference co-hosted with Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic at the nonprofit's Patchogue medical center. The bill—numbered S.1342 in the state senate—would establish a competitive grant program for age-appropriate sex education programs in school districts, BOCES, school-based health centers and community-based organizations.

According to Eddington, S.1342 needs to be passed out of the finance committee, then the rules committee, reach the senate floor and be voted on before June 23 in order to become law. She and Reina Schiffrin, president and CEO of PPHP, held the media event to draw attention to the legislative

impasse in hopes of shaking the bill loose and bringing it to the senate floor.



From the left: Reina Schiffrin, CEO Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic Inc.; Assemblywoman Patricia Eddington; Erica Chase, Health and Welfare Council; Deanna Marshall, Suffolk County Director of Women's Services; Gina D'Andrea Weatherup, Community Affairs and Advocacy Manager of PPHP; Nancy Keating, Resource Advisor, SC Women's Services

Under the Healthy Teens Act, the funding stream would support comprehensive, medically accurate sexuality education, which would include discussions relating to abstinence, contraceptives, and healthy relationships. Teens would be encouraged to communicate with their families on these topics as well. [\(to page 2\)](#)

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Bright Lights, Breast Cancer

In a far-from-tranquil world, here's something else to worry about: circadian disruption.

In lay terms, circadian rhythm refers to an animal's innate response to light and darkness by waking and sleeping.

And modern civilization has it in for us, what with the increasing use of electric

power to light the night and provide a sun-free environment during the day inside buildings.

A University of Connecticut Health Center study, conducted by Richard G. Stevens in 2006, looked at the high rates of breast cancer in the industrialized world—which is more than five times higher than the

risk in the least-industrialized nations. Stevens' report was basically a round-up of prior studies from around the world and touched on studies following both people and animals.*

The report states, "There is increasing support for the idea that circadian disruption from [\(to Page 2\)](#)

Low-income, uninsured or under-served women have access to annual breast and cervical screening exams and follow-up services through the

Suffolk Healthy Woman Partnership.

To learn about program eligibility, call (631)548-6320.

Breast Cancer Myths Debunked #5

Myth: Wearing a bra or using antiperspirants and deodorants increases your risk of breast cancer.

Truth: These are two Internet rumors that never seem to quit. It's not true that wearing a bra, especially under wire bras, traps toxins by limiting lymph and bloodflow in your breasts, increasing risk. There's also no proof for the claims that antiperspirants and deodorants cause cancer by keeping the body from sweating out the cancer causing substances that build up in the breasts, or because they contain harmful chemicals that are absorbed through the skin

**Source: "10 Breast Cancer Myths Debunked" by Marisa Weiss, M.D. with Barbara Loecher. Breast Cancer Help newsletter, Spring 2008 Issue.*



Banish the TV, nightlights, and street lamp glare from the bedroom

State Legislator Urges Passage of Healthy Teens Act (continued)

Part and parcel of this effort would be information about sexually-transmitted infections such as human papilloma virus (HPV). It is estimated that by age 50 at least 80 percent of women have been exposed to the virus.

In most cases, the body's immune system will clear an HPV infection, and such an infection has no symptoms, so a woman often won't know she has it.

But 70 percent of cervical cancer cases are caused by two strains of human papilloma virus (HPV).

When detected early through a Pap test in a gynecologist's office, cervical cancer is highly treatable. And, today, HPV

itself is preventable in 9- to 26-year-old women; a vaccine brand-named Gardasil (made by Merck) immunizes recipients against four strains of the virus.

Assuming, of course, that young women know all this, Eddington pointed out. "Women in their teen years are learning how to take care of themselves physically, emotionally, mentally."

While the death rate for cervical cancer has dropped 70 percent since the Pap test was perfected, the disease still is the sixth leading killer of women in America. Also, "as it stands now, Hispanic and black women are twice as likely to get cervical cancer," Schiffrin said, probably

because of less access to medical care.

One in four teen girls 14-19 has had a sexually-transmitted disease. Six out of 10 high-schoolers become sexually active before they graduate. Interestingly, research shows that students who receive effective sex education delay the start of their sexual activity by about a year, use protection more often, and have fewer partners.

Planned Parenthood Hudson Peconic is one place to go for the vaccine, as well as for other health, education and counseling services for women of all ages.

Bright Lights, Breast Cancer (continued)

aspects of modern life, especially electric lighting, is a factor in the population burden of breast cancer. Studies of shift workers ... have reported elevated risk ... and studies in blind women ... have reported reduced risk. The studies in blind women were conducted under the belief that blind women, as opposed to sighted women, do not have the opportunity for nocturnal melatonin suppression by exposure to light during the night."

As *Between Us Women* reported last month, melatonin is considered to be an anti-carcinogenic hormone created by the

human body during darkness. In a brighter environment, the body produces less melatonin.

Other factors that will disrupt circadian rhythm include timing of meals, and alcohol consumption. (This according to several studies, including one that Stevens published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.) It appears that lower melatonin levels lead to higher estrogen levels—and there is an association between estrogen and breast cancer—but more study is needed.

Solutions and approaches to take: don't drink too much,

don't eat right before bedtime, and banish the TV, nightlights, and street lamp glare from the bedroom; use a sleep-mask if you have to. It seems that bright days and dark nights will go far to keep those circadian rhythms in sync.

*Source: Stevens, "Artificial Lighting in the Industrialized World: Circadian Disruption and Breast Cancer," in *Cancer Causes Control*, 2006.

“Stand Up for the Homeless”

Suffolk County Executive Steve Levy is wasting no time implementing steps to make good on a State of the County vow to end homelessness within 10 years.

His latest initiative, “Stand Up for the Homeless,” will take place on Friday, June 27 and is designed to bring the homeless population in touch with over 35 nonprofit and government agencies providing free services.

The event will reach out to all homeless individuals and families, whether in public shelters or not, to encourage them to take advantage of the many services available to them.

“In Suffolk County, we’re serious about our mission to end homelessness,” Levy

said. “That’s why we’ve pulled out all of the stops for Stand Up. We want to provide every possible service imaginable to these individuals so that they have all of the opportunities they need to return to permanent housing.”

This event is the first major undertaking by Levy’s 10-year plan committee, commissioned in April.

Round trip transportation will be provided for those homeless individuals who need it at several designated pickup points around Suffolk County.

Some services include health and dental screenings through Suffolk County’s Department of Health Services and the Tzu Chi Foundation, information on em-

ployment opportunities, housing and shelter placement, free haircuts, and public assistance counseling.

Information is not the only thing these individuals will be leaving with. Each individual who attends the event will be given a free lunch, along with extra clothing provided by the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Vouchers for business apparel will also be provided by Dress For Success to anyone who makes an appointment with Suffolk County’s Employment Center. Toys and books will also be provided to those with young children.

Anyone interested in volunteering at the event is encouraged to call (631) 854-9748 for more information.



Stand Up for the Homeless will take place from 9:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. on June 27 at Saints Cyril and Methodius R.C. Church in Deer Park.

Looking to re-enter the workplace? Not sure where to start?

Start here. Suffolk County Department of Labor’s Displaced Homemaker Resource center is holding a month long course, “Career Readiness Training Program,” daily from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. from Monday, July 7 through Thursday, July 31.

They’ll cover topics ranging from assertiveness and self-esteem to resume writing and interview skills.



Classes will be held at the

Henrietta Acampora Recreation Center, 39 Montauk Highway, Blue Point.

In-person registration is a must:

- July 1 in Hauppauge or
- July 2 in Blue Point.

For details call 853-6540. You’ll be glad you did.



Get Out There

Year-round, and free (two great words), you can book a walking tour of Froehlich Organic Farm, West Rogues Path in Huntington between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. Friends of Huntington Farmlands, Inc., is steward of this nature preserve, which was acquired to preserve our open space and drinking water. Tours are hosted by Friends of Froehlich Farms in cooperation with the Huntington Breast Cancer Action Coalition. For reservations and directions, call Jane Goebel at (631)470-4272 or visit www.hbcac.org.



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suffolkcountyny.gov

Around and About

Saturday and Sunday, June 7-8 – Long Island 2 Day Breast Cancer Walk, a 35-mile route from Smith Point County Park, Shirley to Cathedral Pines County Park, Yaphank. The fifth annual event kicks off Saturday with an 8 a.m. opening ceremony. Walkers are on the route from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., with dinner served 5:30 -7:30 p.m. Sunday walking time is 7-11 a.m., a bridge procession at noon, and closing ceremony 12:30-1:30 p.m. All monies raised stay local. To walk, donate or get details, call (631)839-2329 or visit www.li2daywalk.org.

Saturday, June 7, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. – Free skin cancer screening (cosponsored by the American Cancer Society and the American Academy of Dermatology) at Long Island Skin Cancer & Dermatologic Surgery, 994 W. Jericho Turnpike, Suite 103, Smithtown. To make an appointment, call (631)864-6647.

Saturday, June 7, 6-9 p.m. – Opening reception, "Breaking

the Walls of Bias: Art by Survivors," Galerie BelAge, 8 Moniebogue Lane, Westhampton Beach, free and open. Exhibit continues through July 1.

Wednesday, June 11, 6 p.m. – Victims Information Bureau (VIBS) annual spring benefit, Cold Spring Country Club, Huntington. Cocktails and buffet. Honorees: Ellen Volpe, Winifred B. Mack, and Jane E. Conway, Esq. Tickets \$175. To reserve, call (631)360-3730 or email: development@vibs.org.

Wednesday, June 11, 7:30 p.m. – "Turning Memories into Memoirs," a demonstration by Lonnie Mathis from Herstory Writers Workshop, at Brookhaven Town Hall Auditorium, One Independence Hill, Farmingville. Fee, \$1 (really).

Thursday, June 12, 10 a.m.-12 noon – SPARC consortium meeting at the Middle Country Public Library, 575 Middle Country Road, Selden. SPARC project coordinator Katelin Thomas will speak on

What is Women's Services?

The Suffolk County Executive's Office of Women's Services is a county agency that serves women in all walks of life, at all times and passages in their lives. This is done through a number of services; most are free, and all are available to everyone.

Women constitute over 51 percent of the population of Suffolk County. They are the majority population in every age group over 30. Many of these women are "heads of households." Any and all programs or services designed to empower the women of Suffolk County have a direct impact, not only on the woman, but also on the entire family, particularly the children.

The Women's Helpline is available from 9:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Helpline offers information, referrals to resources for further help and emotional support. The Helpline is bilingual. Calls can be anonymous and confidentiality is respected.

Helpline: (631) 853-8222

Health Literacy and how a lack of health literacy can affect a person's health. "SPARC" stands for the Suffolk Project for AIDS Resource Coordination. HIV infected/affected women and youth are particularly invited to participate. To register (required), call Katelin at (631)369-8696.

Saturday, June 14, 6-9 p.m. – Poetry reading by members of the North Sea Poetry Scene, in connection with art exhibit "Breaking the Walls of Bias: Art by Survivors," Galerie BelAge, 8 Moniebogue Lane, Westhampton Beach. Free and open.

Saturday, June 14, 6-8 p.m. – Preview party for The Retreat women's shelter's annual "Artists Against Abuse" fundraiser auction, at the Hampton Road Gallery, 36 Hampton Road, Southampton. Call (631)329-4398, extension 311 to RSVP.

Monday, June 16, 7 p.m. – "The Newest Trends in Breast Cancer Treatment," hosted by Shari Einhorn (News 12).

Speakers: Dr. Ron Israeli, Dr. Juliana Shapira, Dr. Freya Schnabel. Adelphi University Center ballroom, Garden City. Call (516)877-4325 to register (required).

Thursday, June 19, 2-4:30 p.m. – Fourth Annual High Tea to benefit the Suffolk County Coalition Against Domestic Violence, at the Thatched Cottage, Route 25A, Centerport. Moderator: News 12 anchor Colleen McVey. Tickets \$65. RSVP by June 6 to Karin at (631)666-7181, ext. 323 or email: k.a.romans@ssadv.org.

Saturday, June 21, 6-11 p.m. – Artists Against Abuse 13th annual gala to benefit The Retreat, at the Ross School, Goodfriend Drive, East Hampton. Cocktails, dinner, dancing, silent and live auction, entertainment. Tickets \$500. RSVP by June 11 to (631)329-4398, extension 311.