



The Chicago Voter

League of Women Voters of Chicago
Website - www.LWVChicago.org

April 2010
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Dates To Remember

All meetings are held in the Conference Room Unless otherwise specified

Monday April 5th
Social Policy Committee
10:00 am – noon
and
Executive Committee
Call of the president

Wednesday April 7th
Lunch with the League
Topic
School Security and
Safety Strategy
12:15 to 1 PM

Monday, April 12th
Board Meeting
5:30 pm

**Saturday, April 17th
Briefing Session
Social Policy
Housing Committee
Where Has the
Stimulus Money Gone?
10:00 am – noon**

Development Committee
Chair – Clara Fleming

Education Committee
Chair – Winnie Slusser

Membership Committee
Chair – Bernice Fortini

For information
Call the ChicagoLWV
312-939-5935 - Ex. 28

President's Column

Dear League Members:

I deeply appreciate your quick response to our appeal for donations to our Operating Fund. Of course you all know that this is the money that pays our bills. The cost of rent, phone and supplies has increased and the number of full dues paying members has decreased.

Another way of supporting the Chicago League is by taking part in our activities. We have two Saturday briefings coming up, and committees related to the Board and Board positions will be meeting. There are also Unit meetings, "Lunch With the League" and the Annual Meeting in June.

ON THE SUBJECT OF UNITS: These are very important elements of our League. They are the grassroots of the whole organization. Of course you can get information on the issues that we are studying or advocating from the internet and other sources, but a face-to-face discussion can help explain the details. And when we need to have a vote or reach a consensus or concurrence on the issue that result can **ONLY** come from a group session. You can attend any unit you wish. We have two that meet in our downtown office and four in the neighborhoods, but we can create others if we have at least five members who want to meet together. Think about doing this.

This is an election year, and there will be activity in relation to registration, pollwatching and a major need for election judges. The General Election will be on November 2, 2010, and on February 22, 2011, there will be the Municipal General Election with the runoff (if needed) on April 5th. We may be asked to plan a campaign forum for some of the candidates. If there is one in your area, we will be looking for your help.

Thank you so much for your gifts to our Operating Fund. You are a wonderful League.

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**Consider being a Board Member
There are nine or ten Board meetings
and you will be asked to participate in
Committee and Briefing Sessions
One or two meetings per month
We need new Board Members!**

LIVE FROM CHICAGO! It's the City Council

"Transparency is the key," City Clerk Miguel del Valle said, as he announced that City Council meetings will be aired live and on demand through a new archive video page on the City Clerk's website.

At a press conference held on March 15th, City Clerk del Valle said the video archive is the first of its kind in city government and allows residents to better track legislation and their elected representatives.

The city is also working to have meetings aired on Cable Television, but that depends on Mayor Richard M. Daley and the Council.

"The capacity exists at City Hall, but has been blocked by the aldermen. It's not a technical problem, but one of political will," explained Dick Simpson of the University of Illinois at Chicago and a former alderman.

Andy Shaw of the Better Government Association added, "Enough is enough. Put it on television." He discussed tax increment financing, an example of deals done behind closed doors. "Argue in front of the people," he urged. "It's easy to understand where the tax dollars are going."

Both men cited transparency of city government as most important. "Government is still by the people," Simpson declared.

Other groups involved in the Freedom of Information effort and their representatives included: Bill Barnett of the IVI-IPO; Brian Glastein, Jewish Council on Urban Affairs; David Kohn, The Union League Club; Esta Kallen, Bernice Fortini and Norma Braude, League of Women Voters of Chicago.

Norma Braude

The Aldermen Project

"50 Aldermen/50 Artists" opened to a full house on March 19 at Johalla Projects Gallery, 1561 North Milwaukee Avenue. The show has received a great deal of publicity including coverage by the *New York Times*. It will close with a reception on Friday, April 2 from 7 to 11 PM. The project organizers have

asked the artists to donate a portion of their sales to LWV Chicago.

Violence in our Schools

Wednesday, April 7th, "Lunch with the League" will feature a powerpoint presentation on "Safety and Security Strategy" in the Chicago Public Schools.

There have been NO shootings within school buildings and 80% of shootings of Chicago Public School students occur after or before school hours. Schools can still make a difference in the treatment of those children involved in violence.

The presentation shows the relationship between academic performance of students and their likelihood of being involved in violence; the academic performance of schools as well as their type (regular, magnet, charter, etc.) and their treatment of offenders; and the staffing and program patterns of schools which are under-performing and out-performing.

Some of the newer initiatives involving community and parental groups will also be discussed.

Please join us for a stimulating presentation at 12:15 PM on April 7th.

Voter Service

Of all the activities of the League of Women Voters, that of Voter Service, is of prime importance. You can be a deputy registrar, applying through the LWVChicago through Terry Williams, by calling 312-939-5935, ext. 28. She will register you for one of their training sessions conducted at the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners at 69 W. Washington, 5th floor conference room. Registration for the Wednesday afternoon sessions closes at 3:00 pm the day before. Registration for the Saturday morning and Wednesday or Thursday evening sessions closes two days before at 3:00 pm. Give Terry time to get you signed up. Help register voters for the November election.

April Training Sessions

Wednesday, April 7 th	3:00 pm
Saturday, April 17 th	9:30 am
Wednesday, April 28 th	6:00 pm

SHOW ME THE MONEY!
SHOW ME THE JOBS!
Where is the Stimulus Money
Going?

We know fifty-five million dollars in Stimulus Money came to Chicago from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), but who is getting it and what good is it doing? In Chicago, the jobless rate is over ten percent — twenty plus percent for African-Americans. If you drive down the street in some areas of the city you will see block after block of boarded up homes. Is anybody doing anything about this?

On April 17th at 10:00 a.m., the Social Policy/Housing Committee has invited *Carrie Thomas*, Associate Director of the Chicago Jobs Council, *Kevin Jackson*, Executive Director of the Chicago Rehab Network, and *Katie Ludwig*, Assistant Commissioner of Policy and Legislative Affairs of the Department of Community Development of the City of Chicago to "Show Us the Money and the Jobs."

The question is: Are positive things actually happening as the result of the money in Chicago's hands? Neighborhood Stabilization is very important. If one or two houses on a block are boarded up, that lowers the property value of every other house on the block. If I live on that block and want to sell my house, I will get less for it because the block value is down and my mortgage may be twice as much as the value of the house. What shall I do?

With more and more people losing their homes through failed mortgages, the demand is greater for rental property which puts a squeeze on the already scarce number of rental properties, especially those for low income people. Where can they go?

Is anyone helping the unemployed find jobs? Chicago Jobs Council is working on "Green Jobs." Come on Saturday, April 17 and find some answers to our questions.

As this is a Saturday meeting you will have to send your name in for building security by Thursday, April 15th. Call the League Office,

312-939-5935 X28 to be sure your name is on the list.

See you there!

Lois Snyder
Social Policy/Housing Chair

GLLWV
Great Lakes LWV

The Lake Michigan League publishes a newsletter *The Great Lakes News*. It is available directly <http://www.great-lakes.net/news/> or through LMLWV's website.

The Great Lakes News editorial last month was on the Asian carp's threat to the Great Lakes, while an article within the paper noted that genetic testing already shows them being present. Other information on the Great Lakes is also available from this source.

Unit Meetings - April 2010

Unit 1/5 – Downtown - Evening
Monday, April 19th - 5:30 pm
League Conference Room
Contact – Margaret Herring

Unit 9/11 - West Side – Central
Sunday, April 25th – 2:00 pm
Third Unitarian Church
Contact – Joan Morton

Unit 21/35
Day/Evening Unit
Contact: Carol Westerlund

Unit 22 – Downtown – Daytime
Thursday April 22nd – 10:00 am
League Conference Room
Contact – Bernice Fortini

Unit 41/42 – Southwest Side
Day/Evening Unit
Contact – the office

Unit 66/74 – South Side – Day Unit
Thursday April 15th – 1:00 pm
Montgomery Place
Contact – Dorothy Scheff

LWVUS

We did it! Health Care passed and is signed into law. It may not meet all of our expectations but it is a step in the right direction. There is a new Health Care Education Task Force paper available online – “Health Care Information Technology: A Key to Quality and Cost Issues” by Task Force member Olin Bray (NM).

LWVUS has urged the House to update campaign finance laws, with particular attention to requirements governing corporate and union spending.

LWVUS along with the Campaign Legal Center (CLC) have released a final report and summary of the 2009 conference, *Developing an Action Agenda for Redistricting in 2011*. Support was received from the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation, the Joyce Foundation and the Ford Foundation. This report is available from LWVUS.

LWVIL

The deadline to obtain signatures for the Fair Map Amendment is April 15th. Please support LWVIL in its work to achieve this ballot initiative for the November Election.

April 1st is the date that the Census Information is to be collected. LWVIL is a lead organization in this effort. This is important to Illinois as an inadequate count may cause the state to lose a seat in the House of Representatives. The census data are the basis on which Federal money is dispensed for various projects. If the count is off, Illinois residents will be faced with inadequate funding for governmental services.

Please keep up the pressure for passage of legislation providing for an improvement in the taxation system of the state. HB174 is the main vehicle for this action providing for an income tax increase and property tax relief.

SAVE THE DATE!
Celebrating 90 Years of League
State of the State Luncheon
Wednesday, June 2, 2010
Union League Club of Chicago
Guest Speaker: Patrick Collins
SAVE THE DATE!

LWVCC

On Wednesday, April 14th, the Juvenile Justice Interest Group will be touring the Illinois Youth Center-Chicago from 10:00 am to 12:30 pm. In addition there will be a presentation about pilot programs unique to this facility. Sign up with Millie by April 5th millie@juskevice.com. Priority will be given to members of the Juvenile Justice Interest Group. If there is a demand, she will try to schedule additional visits.

LWVCC has four Interest Groups which are meeting: Cook County Budget and Structure: to become involved please contact - Stephanie Polito – spolito178@gmail.com; Juvenile Justice contact Millie Juskevice – millie@juskevice.com; Forest Preserve District contact – Henrietta Saunders - hankandboys@comcast.net or Health and Hospital systems - contact Nancy Staunton – nstaunton1@comcast.net.

LWVChicago

If you have not already signed up, we need you to observe various city governmental units and agencies. Call the office 312-939-5935, ext. 28 and join the cadre of Chicago League Observers. The commitment is normally a once a month meeting (many do not meet during the summer) for a partial or whole day. A few of the agencies meet during the evening on occasion.

Don't forget your Unit meetings, briefing sessions and other Chicago League activities. Be an active member.

The Chicago Voter

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