



# The Chicago Voter

League of Women Voters of Chicago  
Website - [www.LWVChicago.org](http://www.LWVChicago.org)

March 2010  
Vol. 60 No. 6



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Dear League Members:

I really appreciated the great turnout Saturday morning, February 20<sup>th</sup>, at the LWV office. Our briefing on TIF's by Bill Vaselopulos of Cook County Clerk David Orr's office and a presentation on the city budget by Alderman Joe Moore (49<sup>th</sup> Ward) was well received. In true League manner, many well thought-out questions were asked by the members and guests and answers from our speakers were informative. A detailed article on this briefing will be in the April *Voter*.

In this *Voter* you will find information about applying for the Board of directors on page 7 and the form on page 8. I know that there are members who would be an asset to our organization if they would just be willing to participate as a leader. The Board meets ten or eleven times a year. You do not have to choose an issue, but should support all issues that the Board selects to study or support. Of course, any topic that fits the LWV positions may become a project at some time and we all help one another. Please give this serious thought.

The LWVUS convention will be June 11-13 in Atlanta, Georgia. The Annual Meeting of LWV Chicago will be held Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>.

We have some interesting programs planned for March. The "Lunch with the League" on March 3<sup>rd</sup> will be on the topic of the invasion of the Asian Carp into local waters. Our speaker is from the metropolitan Water district "Water, water, everywhere..." continuing this topic is our Saturday briefing. The purpose of this program is to provide information on water use and distribution. In addition how can pollution due to pesticides, pharmaceutical, petroleum products and general debris be controlled? We are hoping for a speaker from the City Departments of Water or Sewage. Our natural resources are important elements effecting or being effected by climate change.

I don't recall if the groundhog saw his shadow or not. However, living in Chicago, we know we will have more winter. Bundle up, don't slip. There will be Spring.

*fsta*

**Consider being a Chicago LWV Board Member  
Fill out the form for your candidate  
or for yourself**

### DATES TO REMEMBER

**ALL MEETINGS ARE HELD IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED**

Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup>  
Social Policy  
Lois Snyder - chair  
10:00 am – noon

Executive Committee  
Call of the President

**Wednesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Lunch with the League  
12:00 noon  
Water – Asian Carp**

Monday, March 8<sup>th</sup>  
Board meeting  
5:30 pm

Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup>  
Development Committee  
12:00 noon  
Clara Fleming - chair

**Saturday, March 20<sup>th</sup>  
Briefing on  
Water Resources and  
Climate Change  
10:00 am – noon  
Make reservations by  
Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>**

Education Committee  
Contact Winnie Slusser

For information  
Call the Chicago LWV  
312-939-5935 - Ex. 28

## WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR THE CHICAGO LEAGUE?

- GO TO A UNIT MEETING
- FORM A NEW UNIT
- ATTEND MEETINGS ON SPECIFIC SUBJECTS
- ATTEND BRIEFINGS ALONG WITH THE UNIT PRESENTERS
- COME TO COMMITTEE MEETINGS
- BE A LWVCHICAGO OBSERVER
- CHOOSE TO BE ON THE BOARD
- VOLUNTEER IN THE OFFICE
- DONATE TO THE OPERATING FUND FOR ANY REASON WHATEVER
- BE A DEPUTY REGISTRAR

## TRIBUTE FUND AND OTHER DONATIONS

In memoriam: Bettina Schwartz - Jan Flapan, Winnie Slusser, Terry Williams and anonymous.

Other Donations: Carol Hirsch in memory of Flore Flapan.

As you know, donations to the Operating Fund are NOT tax deductible. But it is this Fund which pays the office rent and mailing costs of the **Voter** along with some program work. At present this is our area of greatest need. Please consider this an opportunity to help LWVChicago fulfill its responsibilities.

## ILLINOIS FAIR MAP AMENDMENT

LWVIL is asking YOU to help obtain signatures on the petition for a constitutional amendment to reform Illinois redistricting.

Without your help in achieving such a ballot initiative, we will be stuck with yet another gerrymandered map for Illinois. Please consider gathering signatures for the League. Call the office 312-939-5935 ext 39 to obtain a copy of the petition if you cannot download it.

A set of Questions and Answers about the amendment is on page 5.

## ASIAN CARP – ITS IMPACT WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS? WHAT SHOULD BE DONE? ARE YOU CURIOUS?

Every day there have been articles in the newspapers and on TV and radio about the perils of the Asian Carp. If you have questions or need more information, come to the “Lunch With the League” on Wednesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 12:15 PM, at the League Office. Mr. Ed Staudacher, a representative from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, is the guest speaker. He will discuss the impact of the Asian Carp on the Chicago Waterways. The informal program will be approximately 45 minutes. Bring your lunch along with your questions. Coffee and dessert will be provided.

## 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 all of which are conducted at the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners at 69 W. Washington, 5<sup>th</sup> 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.

<b>March</b>	
Wednesday, March 10 <sup>th</sup>	3:00 pm
Thursday, March 18 <sup>th</sup>	6:00 pm
Saturday, March 27 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 am
<b>April</b>	
Wednesday, April 7 <sup>th</sup>	3:00 pm
Saturday, April 17 <sup>th</sup>	9:30 am
Wednesday, April 28 <sup>th</sup>	6:00 pm

## NATURAL RESOURCES BRIEFING OUR WATER WORLD

Saturday, March 20 at 10 am  
League Conference Room

The 21<sup>st</sup> century will be the century of water. Parts of the U.S. are already short of water. Ninety percent of the surface freshwater in the United States and 20 percent of the world's surface freshwater is in the Great Lakes basin. Chicago draws its water from Lake Michigan.

We read and hear many concerns about water. Is our drinking water safe? Should pharmaceutical residue be removed from the water distributed to our homes? How can we conserve water? Will we run out of potable water? What will the Asian carp, zebra mussel and other invasive species do to our water supply? Will water be diverted from the Great Lakes basin to other areas of the country? Many questions; these and more occur to LWV members.

The National League has extensive positions on water and water quality that apply to our local, and regional, issues. The Natural Resources position in brief: LWVUS believes that natural resources should be managed as interrelated parts of life supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure future availability. Pollution of these resources should be controlled in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect the public health.

If we, as a League, are to advocate, we must inform ourselves about existing conditions. That is the purpose of this briefing; we will begin to inform ourselves about Chicago's water system. The information in this article is drawn from information that the Department of Water Management has posted on its web site:

[www.cityofchicago.org](http://www.cityofchicago.org), then to City Departments under Local Government and scroll down to Water Management.

### Some History

In 1842, Chicago located a water intake 150 feet into Lake Michigan. Today's intake cribs are two miles offshore, minimizing the effects of shore-

line contamination. In 1889 the Sanitary District began construction of the Sanitary and Ship Canal that would divert human and industrial waste away from Lake Michigan, the city's source of drinking water. In 1900 the Sanitary District completed its construction which reversed the flow of the Chicago River so that it emptied into the DesPlaines River and flowed west into the Mississippi River system.

This diversion of Great Lakes water was not welcomed by neighboring states and Canada. The diversion was litigated and reached the Supreme Court of the United States. In 1930 the Supreme Court issued a ruling limiting the amount of water that can be diverted into the Ship and Sanitary Canal and in 1967 a ruling limiting the amount of water that Illinois communities can withdraw from Lake Michigan. In effect, for Illinois, water is a zero sum game: additional Lake Michigan water to one municipality results in a diminution to other communities.

Total elimination of contaminants is not possible even two miles from shore; wet weather flows

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### UNIT MEETINGS - MARCH 2010

1/5 – Downtown - Evening  
Third Monday  
March 15<sup>th</sup> - 5:30 pm  
League Conference Room

Unit 9/11 - West Side – Central  
Contact: Joan Morton

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

Unit 22 – Downtown - Daytime  
March 25<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 am  
League Conference Room

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

Unit 66/74 - South Side – Hyde Park  
Day Unit, Third Thursday  
Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup> - 1:00 pm  
Montgomery Place

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and river reversals (due to storm water run-off) may contaminate the surface water. Illinois mandates all surface water supplies be treated.

### **The Treatment Process**

1. Water from Lake Michigan enters the intake crib at depths of 20 to 30 feet.
2. Water enters the purification plant's intake basin through a tunnel beneath the lake bed.
3. Water is filtered through eight traveling screens to catch debris.
4. Water is pumped by low lift pumps up to 25 feet for the first chemical treatment.
5. Water flows through the chemical application channels.
6. Water flows through mixing basins to begin the flocculation process.
7. Flocculated water passes into settling basins to sit for hours allowing floccule\* to settle.
8. Water is filtered through precisely graded sand and gravel performing a "natural polishing".
9. Filtered water flows into clear wells for its final chemical application.
10. From finished water reservoirs water flows to the distribution system.

\*Floccule: Any small, loosely held mass or aggregate of fine particles suspended in or precipitated from a solution.

Water is a solvent and it may contain many biological and chemical materials. The treatment process removes impurities. The chemicals that the Water Management Department uses in its purification and treatment processes include: chlorine to disinfect the water; aluminum sulfate or alum and polymer for coagulation to settle out impurities; blended polyphosphate to coat pipes and prevent lead leaching; activated charcoal to remove unpleasant tastes and odors; and fluoride to prevent tooth decay. The ratio of chemicals to water is small; about a teaspoon of chemicals to 100 gallons of water. That is 15 parts chemicals to 1 million parts water.

### **Water Quality**

There are other sources of pollution to water in addition to human and industrial waste discharged directly into Lake Michigan, the Chicago and Calumet Rivers and wetlands. These include mercury and chemicals released by coal burning plants and trash incinerators. The sources of

these pollutants may be many miles distant from the City's boundaries. Diesel engines in trucks are a source of particulate that affect air quality. As a major transportation hub, Chicago's air quality is affected, which, in turn, affects water quality. Addressing airborne pollutants is primarily a responsibility of the federal government.

### **Sewers**

The Department of Water Management operates a combined sewer system that moves wastewater and stormwater toward treatment plants. The system handles wastewater with ease, but stormwater may exceed the system's capacity. When rain falls or snow melts, water may percolate into the soil. As a built-up environment with hard surfaces, such as roads and roofs, much of the precipitation that falls into Chicago is routed into the sewers. When sewers cannot handle the inflow, water backs up on streets and into basements. If the treatment plants cannot process the inflow, polluted water may be discharged into rivers and Lake Michigan.

The Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (Deep Tunnel) operated by the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District is designed to collect and hold storm run-off and slowly send it to treatment plants for processing before discharge into public waterways.

### **Conservation**

In 2003 the City of Chicago adopted a Water Agenda that aims to keep water safe, clean and plentiful and to improve the infrastructure that delivers water to homes and businesses and that handles the treatment of used water.

### **Questions**

We have asked the Chicago Department of Water Management to address these questions:

- 1) The amount of water that Chicago uses and limits to municipal use.
- 2) The state of facilities: infrastructure repair and replacement including sewers
- 3) The budgeting process: Does the Chicago department of Water Management have its own capital budget? How does it work?

***Margaret Herring - chair***



### **What is the Fair Map Amendment?**

The Fair Map Amendment to the Illinois Constitution would change the state's process for creating legislative districts. Its intent is to make the redistricting process less political and more transparent.

### **What is the problem? Illinois' Legislative Mapping Process is Flawed & Political**

- Under the existing system, legislative leaders name eight people to a Redistricting Commission. Two members must be sitting legislators.
- For the last three decades, the tie breaking process has involved drawing a name from a hat to determine whether the Republicans or the Democrats win full power to create the district map.
- Districts are currently drawn to protect incumbents –with the existing mapping process, incumbents have won their elections at a 95% success rate.
- The current system gives too much power to the General Assembly

### **What are advantages of the proposed amendment for a fair mapping process?**

- The amendment is based on a bipartisan Citizens' Commission Proposal (Illinois Reform Commission).
- An Independent Commission, rather than legislators, would draw maps. The Commission's members
  - Could not have worked as a lobbyist or for the state for 4 years before being appointed
  - Could not be elected to the General Assembly for 10 years after their service.
- Maps would be drawn in an open and transparent process, with public input.
- Specific, neutral criteria must be used to draw maps to protect minority voting rights and aim to eliminate partisan advantage
- Map drawers may not unduly favor any political party. Maps would be drawn for people, not politicians.

- Approval would require a 2/3 vote of the General Assembly; the Governor is removed from the approval process.
- Currently a tie is broken by drawing from a hat to see which party controls the redistricting process. With the amendment, if the legislature fails to approve a map after two have been submitted, the Independent Commission will make the final decision.

### **Why should we handle this through an amendment to the Constitution?**

- There are two ways to change the system – through the legislature, or through the citizens.
  - The legislature did not change the system in 2009.
  - It is unlikely they will change the system since it currently serves their best interests.
- To place the amendment on the November ballot, 500,000 signatures of registered voters are needed by end of April. Voters must sign a petition specific to their election authority (e.g. City of Chicago). If the people vote for the new IL Fair Map Amendment in November, it will become law and Illinois will have a redistricting process that is transparent and fair.

### **Who supports the Fair Map Amendment?**

- League of Women Voters of Illinois
- Better Government Association
- Illinois Campaign for Political Reform
- Common Cause - Illinois
- Illinois Chamber of Commerce
- Americans for Prosperity
- Illinois Alliance for Growth
- United Power for Action and Justice

**When does redistricting occur?** Every 10 years, following a Census.

### **What does my signature on the petition mean?**

It means you are helping to place the amendment on the November ballot.

### **If this proposal is approved when will this new process be put into effect?**

The first map using this new process must be provided to each Chamber by the third Monday in May 2011. The process must be completed by Sept. 30, 2011, at which time the redrawn districts will be in effect.

**Where can I find more information about the Fair Map Amendment?** <http://www.ilfairmap.com/>

## LWVUS

Mary G. Wilson, President LWVUS, testified before the Committee on House Administration regarding the recent Supreme Court Decision in Citizens United v. FEC. She spoke of the implications of the Court's decision, which according to a recent ABC News/Washington Post poll, 80% of American oppose. Waiting until after the 2010 elections is simply not a viable option. Enhancing disclosure is the most basic step needed to protect the role of the voter in making these decisions. It is not acceptable for corporations to secretly provide funds that another corporation uses to intervene in an election. LWVUS supports strong disclosure requirements for both those who receive funds and those who provide same.

LWVUS requests that we continue to press our congressmen to finish the health care reform. We know that no one has received everything they wanted, but we must start somewhere.

## LWVIL

The deadline for signatures for the Fair Map Amendment is April 1<sup>st</sup>. Please support LWVIL in its work to achieve this ballot initiative for the November Election.

That is also 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. This is the basis on which Federal Money is dispensed for various projects. If the count is off, Illinois people will be faced with yet another area of inadequate funding for social 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.

## LWVCC

Earl Dunlap, Transition Administrator for the Juvenile Temporary Detention Center, is the speaker for the March 24 Lunch & Learn with

the League of Women Voters of Cook County. This fundraising luncheon will be held at DePaul University Center, 1 E. Jackson (11<sup>th</sup> floor). Cost, including a box lunch, is \$30.00 per person.

LWVCC has four Interest Groups which are meeting. To become involved contact the members listed: Cook County Budget and Structure: contact Stephanie Polito – [spolito178@gmail.com](mailto:spolito178@gmail.com); Juvenile Justice contact Millie Juskevics – [millie@juskevics.com](mailto:millie@juskevics.com); Forest Preserve District contact Henrietta Saunders – [hankandboys@comcast.net](mailto:hankandboys@comcast.net) and Health and Hospital systems contact Nancy Staunton – [nstaunton1@comcast.net](mailto: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.

Margaret O'Hara has been observing the Domestic Violence Court noting that training sessions are offered to help individuals perform this task. The goal is to have someone in each courtroom each session each day. Funding is an issue. It costs to obtain staff and consolidate and interpret data coming from the project.

She reports that Chief Judge Timothy Evans has appointed Judge Dicker as permanent head of the Domestic Violence Court.

### **The Chicago Voter**

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Norma Braude	Secretary
Rochelle Riffer	Treasurer
Winnie Slusser	Voter Editor pro-tem

# Board Elections are Coming

## March Call for Nominations

At the Annual Meeting in June, members of the Chicago League will elect Officers, members of the Board of Directors and the chair and two members of the Nominating Committee. The Offices that are to be filled are the president (two-year term), and at least two vice presidents (each for a two-year term), at least four and no more than six board members for two-year terms, plus it is possible to elect up to two one-year term board members. The chair and two members of the Nominating Committee are elected for a one-year term. Following this article is the Application Form for recommendations for any and all of these positions. You may nominate as many people as you wish, but please give the Nominating Committee all of the pertinent information on each. Also, please have the consent of the nominee before you send in such a request.

The president presides at all meeting of the membership and the Board of Directors. The president is *ex-officio* a member of all committees except the nominating committee. She oversees the administration and activities of the Chicago League.

The vice-presidents carry out duties as assigned by the president and/or the board of directors. In the absence of the president, a vice-president chairs meetings. The vice-presidents are members of the executive committee together with the president, secretary and treasurer.

Members of the Board of Directors represent the Chicago League in coalitions. The whole Board plans programs and action. Board members carry out administrative responsibilities and make certain that all League Issues are kept up-to-date, so that League members can act upon them when requested.

The Nominating Committee chair and members do not serve on the Board and are not required to attend meetings.

This is a working board. Board members are expected to attend the Annual Meeting and Board meetings in person (although contact by phone is permitted for board and executive

committee meetings), members are asked to participate in Board and League activities, committees, briefings and special projects or events. Members who accumulate three unexcused absences from Board meetings will be considered to have resigned from the Board and will be dropped. If a member is to be absent, (s)he must contact the president, secretary or the office to note her excused absence prior to the meeting which will be missed.

Areas of activity include Membership, Development/Fundraising, Communication Committee (including the **Voter**), Website and media contacts, Voter Service. and Unit Leader Chair. All Board members are expected to involve themselves with these activities. Individuals follow League issues: Health Care, Education, Fiscal Policy, Housing, International Relations, etc. to keep the membership informed. Also, our Board needs observers at City Council, the Board of Education and other city agencies. It is not necessary to be a Board member to be an observer of one of the governmental bodies or to be responsible for a League Issue.

This is your notification from the Nominating Committee of openings for offices and the board positions. A person may be nominated for a one-year term if they so desire. A slate of nominees is presented to all members thirty days prior to the Annual Meeting. Members may nominate candidates from the floor at that meeting, the consent of the nominee having been obtained.

LWVChicago Board meetings are open to members of the LWVChicago. If you want to see what we do, just call Esta, our president, at 312-939-5935 X28 and let her know that you are coming. The Board welcomes you.

Officers and members of the Board of Directors, whose terms expire at the annual meeting in 2010 include: Esta Kallen, President; Helene Gabelnick and Pamela Stauffer, Vice-presidents; and Margaret Herring, Winnie Slusser, Lois Snyder and Carol Westerlund, members of the Board. They are all eligible for re-nomination at this time.

The Nominating Committee

Ann Logue & Joan Morton – members  
Winnie Slusser & Pam Stauffer – Board members

## Application for the LWVChicago Board or Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee of the League of Women Voters of Chicago is in the process of identifying Members for the Board and Nominating Committee positions.

This is a working board. Board members are expected to attend the Annual Meeting and all Board meetings in person, asked to participate in Board and League activities, committees, briefings and special projects or events. Members who accumulate three unexcused absences to Board meetings will be considered to have resigned from the Board and will be dropped.

If you would like to make a nomination to the Board or the Nominating Committee, please complete the form below, notify the person whom you have nominated and ask for his/her acceptance of the nomination. If this is of interest to you, nominate yourself!

For President there is one (1) vacancy for a two (2) year term.

For Vice President there are at least two (2) vacancies for a two (2) year term.

For Board members there are four (4) to six (6) vacancies with two (2) years terms.

For Board members there are up to two (2) vacancies for one (1) year term.

For the Nominating Committee three (3) positions for a one (1) year term.

The President may appoint members to the Board of Directors with the approval of the Board.

Please use the form below and attach information for each name.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

- What special background/experience will the applicant bring to the Board or Nominating Committee?
- Why will the applicant make an effective Board or Nominating Committee Member?
- How will the applicant's leadership style contribute to the management of the Chicago League's activities?
- What areas of special interest on the Board would the applicant choose?

ALL BOARD MEMBERS are expected to be involved in

- Membership
- Development/fundraising (State of the City® Luncheon, other)
- Voter Service

Board members may select to be involved in at least one of the below:

- League Issues (Health Care, Education, Fiscal Policy, Housing, etc.)
- Observers at City Council, Board of Education and other city agencies.
- Communications Community Outreach (the **Voter**, website, media contacts)

Person completing form \_\_\_\_\_ contact information \_\_\_\_\_