



The Chicago Voter

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

November 2010
Vol. 61, No. 4



Dates To Remember

Meetings held at the League Office
Unless otherwise Noted

Monday, November 1
Executive committee
Call of the Co-presidents

Saturday, November 6
Cook County League
Health Care Briefing
10:00 a.m.-noon

Monday, November 8
Board meeting
5:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 10
Lunch with the League
Food Safety
12:15 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 13
Briefing
Privatization
10:00 a.m. – noon

Monday, November 15
LWVCC
Lunch and Learn
DePaul Club
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 1
LWVCC
Visit the Cook County
Board of Commissioners
9:45 a.m. , 5th floor
County Building

Call the League
312-939-5935 x 28

CO-PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

If you have not voted yet, please don't forget to do so on November 2. The ballot includes a page for the Recall of the Governor Amendment to the Illinois Constitution. The Illinois League of Women Voters has no position on it nor does the Chicago League – we have not studied the issue. In addition to voting for national, state, county and municipal positions, there is the Judicial Retention Ballot. Although it is long, it is *very important*. The various bar associations post their rating for these judges. Look for the HQ – highly qualified and Q – qualified names in the newspapers. You may take these articles of recommendations into the voting booth with you.

In keeping with government related topics, the Chicago LWV will present a "Lunch with the League" program on Wednesday, November 10 at 12:15 p.m. on Food Safety. The Saturday, November 13 Briefing will be on Privatization of Governmental Services. This is certainly something close to the hearts of Chicagoans.

For the Municipal Election in February, the names of those approved to be on the ballot will be made public by early December. So far, we have plans for a campaign forum in the 46th ward in early February and are working on the possibility of co-sponsoring a mayoral debate with ABC on Channel 7. Calls for other campaign programs will come and we need your help in attending and preparations.

Keep informed by going to these websites. Our own League site is: www.vote411.org, plus www.chicagoelections.com, www.voteforjudges.org, and www.votesmart.org.

Esta Hallen

Contents of this Voter

- page 1 – Dates & Co-president's column
- page 2 – Things you can do for the League of Women Voters of Chicago
- page 3 – Unit Meeting background material
- pages 4 & 5 – Consensus Questions plus end of background material
- page 6 – Report of the lake Michigan League and other articles
- page 7 – More about the League and things you can do
- page 8 – LWVUS, LWVIL, LWVCC and LWVChicago

HOT TOPICS! COOL LUNCHES!

LWV Chicago presents **Lunch with the League** on Wednesday, November 10, at 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m. in the League conference room, 332 S. Michigan, Suite 1150. The topic will be "The Challenges Facing the Food and Drug Administration in Protecting the Nation's Food Supply." The guest speaker is Lisa Misevicz, who is with the FDA. She will speak about food safety.

Senator Richard Durbin has introduced the FDA Food safety Modernization Act, a bipartisan bill that gives the FDA new authorities and resources it needs to stop food safety problems before they start. You can go to Senator Durbin's official website for more information on the act.

Bring your lunch; coffee and dessert will be provided, no charge.

Bernice Fortini

CHICAGO LEAGUE BOOK CLUB

The next meeting of the Book Club will be Tuesday, November 16th at 12 noon at the League office. The book to be reviewed is ***The Fair Women*** by Jeanne Madeline Weimann, a story of the Woman's Building at the World's Columbian Exposition in 1893.

The Book Club of LWV Chicago is free and open to the public. Bring your friends, bring your lunch, and bring your suggestions for future books to be reviewed. Coffee and tea will be provided.

Pat Graunke

CLIMATE CHANGE

Here are some simple and easy lifestyle tips we can use to help our planet.

- Reduce: Buy a canvas bag and stop using plastic bags for shopping. We use 380 billion plastic bags per year in America. Buy a good water bottle and carry that instead of buying plastic bottles of water.
- Reuse: save money and resources by reusing paper, jars and containers. Buy secondhand. Give stuff away (and let others reuse).

- Recycle: It requires a lot of energy, but it's better than sending things to a landfill. And it creates jobs.

John Kennedy said, "One person can make a difference and every person should try." If you haven't seen it, check out thestoryofstuff.com by Annie Leonard.

Pat Graunke

BE A VOTER REGISTRAR

Sign up through the Chicago League to be a Deputy Registrar so that we can get out the vote in February. Call the office: 312-939-5935 x28 and let Terry Williams know the dates you would be willing to attend. The Chicago Board of Election Commissioners at 69 W. Washington, 5th floor conference room is the site of this activity. They are held usually on Wednesday afternoon, registration for which closes at 3:00 pm the day before. Saturday morning and Thursday evening session registration closes two days before at 3:00 pm. Give Terry time to get you enrolled as sessions may be cancelled.

At the time this **Voter** goes to print the November Schedule is not available. It probably will not be out until after the November election.

Terry Williams

TRIBUTE FUND

Donations in memory of Clara Fleming have been made by

The Board of Directors – Chicago LWV
Ozzie Badel
Daphne Daume
Dorothy Scheff

Money donated to the Tribute Fund are put in the Operating Fund – we rely on the State of the City® luncheon for our Education Fund..

BE MORE ACTIVE!

Consider

- Unit Meetings
- Committee meetings
- Lunch with the League
- The Book Club
- Volunteering

EDUCATION BRIEFING

This month we will do the Consensus for updating our position on School Governance in **Where We Stand** for the Annual Meeting in June. There will be additional questions on City Colleges – as we need to have a firm stand on the issues in question.

The Education Briefing was held on October 23 at the League Office. Please come to your unit meeting or set up one with three to five people who wish to have input into this important position. The chair will arrange to provide resource support for any and all who wish it.

The present position: **“SCHOOL GOVERNANCE:**

The League supports a legally constituted local school council with some authority at each local school. The council should include parents, teachers, community representatives and the principal. The council should have final authority for the expenditure of discretionary funds and the student code of conduct and should have advisory roles only in the hiring and firing of the principal and teachers, preparation of the lump sum budget and textbook selection.”

This position was adopted at a time when the emphasis was on “local control” and decentralization of decision making. It was not concerned with test scores, NCLB (No Child Left Behind – the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) requirements or any of the issues which are now the focus. It is necessary for us to reflect the law which mandated Local School Councils in 1990 so that we may lobby for suggested changes to better educate our children.

All non-contract, non-charter schools have Local School Councils (LSCs) which are the same size and are made up of six parents and two community members elected by the parents and community of the school, two teachers selected by the school plus the principal – all voting members. They are almost mini boards of education. When a school is on probation (not meeting NCLB requirements), the LSC is restricted in its decision making. The Board may even replace the principal without the LSC’s approval.

Contract and Charter Schools have Boards of Directors set by the organization with the contract with the Chicago Board of Education (CBoE Ed.). Local School Councils (LSC) and District Education Councils (DEC) were started by the

Chicago Board of Education in the late 60s and early 70s. Principal Selection Committees were created in the ‘70s and were challenged in court. Schools won the right for local schools to select three names to be sent to the CBoE for its selection. Eventually the State Legislature decided to create Local School Improvement Councils (LSIC) and DECs. Our position preceded the latest change, providing for election of the Local School Council, which went into affect in 1990 (DECs were lost).

We ask you to bring pages 3-5 with you to the Unit meeting that you will attend. Copies of relevant materials were given out at the Briefing Session including *Visions, Beliefs and Intentions*, along with some notes that pertain to each of the questions asked. All elected LSC members are required to take a six-hour training program providing them with information to

(Continued on page 5)

Unit Meetings

Unit 1/ 5

Downtown

Monday, November 15 – 5:30 p.m.

Leader – Margaret Herring

Unit 9/11

West Side

Sunday, November 7, 1:30 p.m.

4921 N. Monitor Ave.

Leader – Joan Morton

Unit 21/35

Tuesday, November 16, 7:00 p.m.

1616 W. Jarvis

Leader – Carol Westerlund

Unit 22

Thursday, November 4

10:00 a.m. - noon

Conference Room LWV

Leader - Bernice Fortini

Unit 41/42

Call the Office

Unit 66/74

Daytime - Montgomery Place

Thursday, October 21 - 1:00 p.m.

Leader – Dorothy Scheff

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS ON EDUCATION

1. Do we support the continued existence of Local School Councils?

- Yes
- No

2. Should Local School Councils (within Board rules/guidelines) have control or be advisory only of:

	Control	Advisory Only
Principal Selection		
Principal Evaluation		
School Improvement Plan		
Budget		
Transfer of Funds		
Discretionary funds		
Textbook Selection		
Student Code of Conduct		
Teacher/Staff Selection		
Teacher/Staff Evaluation		

(With a note that test scores are not the sole criteria of an effective teacher)

3. Regardless of the size of a council, should it maintain at least 51% parent members?

- Yes
- No

4. Should the Principal be a voting member of the council?

- Yes
- No

5. Should all councils be the same size and be identical in composition

	Same	Vary
Depending on size of school		
Depending on nature of school		
Magnet School – vast boundaries		
Magnet Program school		
Neighborhood		

6. If you favor variance in the size of councils – should there be additional teacher representation, especially in the high schools?

- Yes
- No

CONSENSUS QUESTIONS ON EDUCATION (CONT.)

7. Should there be a position available to a parent who is also a CBoFE employee?
Yes
No
8. Should Students be included in High Schools? Middle Schools
Yes Yes
No No
9. At elections – Parents and Community
Should parents be allowed only to vote for parents? Or both?
Should community members be allowed only to vote for community members? Or both?
10. Should there be some mandates on Charter and Contract Schools, those whose governing boards are those of the organizations which receive the charter or contract?
Yes
No
11. Should there be some requirement for parent/community involvement?
Yes
No
12. Should Chicago's Community Colleges continue to offer remedial courses?
Yes
No
13. If NO – what should be done for those who are not “ready for college” but may be “late bloomers”?

Notes regarding the questions:

(Continued from page 3)

enable them read and understand the budget; to follow the procedures the CBoFE gives for principal selection (its list) and evaluation (its form), the limitations of the Approved Textbook List and other rules and regulations of the CBoFE.

In addition, we have asked for a position on the question of remedial education at the City Colleges of Chicago. Many jobs formerly open to high school graduates require an Associate's Degree (two years of colleges) today. Gary Chico notes that the money spent on remediation is a large percentage of the City College budget and that that such remediation should not be the job of the City Colleges. Student should leave high school prepared for further education. This leaves us with the problem of those students who are not “ready for college” but may be “late bloomers” whose incentives to gain an adequate high school education were not enough to give them the tools needed to go on to further education. What should our position be on this issue?

REPORT - LAKE MICHIGAN LWV ANNUAL MEETING

On October 9 – 10, the Lake Michigan League of Women Voters (LMLWV) held its annual meeting in Manitowoc, Wisconsin. LMLWV is an inter-league organization of the four states that border Lake Michigan and the forty-two local units whose boundaries reach the shores of Lake Michigan. Positions relating to environmental issues affecting the Lake Michigan basin and the states in that basin rely on LWVUS Natural Resources positions.

Officers elected for the 2010-2011 year: Judy Johnston, president; Cheryl Chapman, vice-president; Mary Lee Orr, secretary; and Henrietta Sanders, treasurer. The 2010-2011 budget and program were also adopted.

This program includes:

- Educate the public and the Lake Michigan Leagues on the problems of Lake Michigan and the Great Lakes,
- Encourage public participation in planning for the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes,
- Support Great Lakes scientific research, and
- Encourage shoreline management, planning and implementation.

Areas of emphasis include:

- Working to implement Great Lakes Restoration bills,
- Restoration of water quality,
- Prevention/control of invasive species,
- Cleaning up toxic pollution; and
- Mitigating the impact of global warming.

LMLWV will advocate for conservation and monitor implementation of legislation and agreements governing the use of Great Lake waters. The full program can be accessed at www.lmlwv.org.

Representatives of each state reported on activities and concerns that their Leagues had addressed during the year. Members reported on the meetings of the coalitions to which LMLWV belongs. Specifically, Healing Our Waters, which addressed concerns of all five Great Lakes, will work with local groups to address environmental and economic concerns in ways that will maximize the restoration efforts now underway.

Philip B. Moy, Ph. D., is vice-chair of the Great Lakes Aquatic Nuisance Species panel and a fisheries and non-indigenous species specialist for the University of Wisconsin Sea Grant Institute. Speaking about the Asian carp, Moy described the design of the current electric barriers and the upgrades now under construction that are intended to prevent the carp entering Lake Michigan from the Chicago Sanitary Canal. He discussed the e-DNA test that has identified carp DNA above the barrier and the fish kills that were designed to find carp in those areas. No Asian carp were found among the fish that were identified and counted after the kills.

Jason Nickels, Mayor of Manitowoc, spoke about the efforts to develop security for the City of Manitowoc and for the infrastructure around the Great Lakes.

Jim Knickellbine, the executive director of Woodland Dunes, described the 1,200 acre dunes area and the efforts to restore and maintain this inland dunes area. One of the available Saturday trips was to this facility. The other Saturday trip was to the Manitowoc maritime Museum.

The Friday trip, organized by the Manitowoc County League, was to the Point Beach Energy Center to hear a presentation on the Point Beach nuclear plant operation.

Illinois will host the next Annual meeting in October 2011. This will be an opportunity for Chicago League members to learn more about Lake Michigan conservation and restoration.

Margaret Herring

OPPORTUNITIES

As a Leaguer you can be involved at the many levels of League – local (your unit), city (LWV Chicago), county (LWVCC), state (ILWVIL) directly and even national (LWVUS). Many meetings are held in the League Conference Room or at locations accessible to Chicagoans. You can be as engaged with the League as you want, but the organization needs your support in whatever way you can contribute to its well-being and its mission. Be as active as you can!

SPEAKING OF ELECTIONS

From time to time, organizations contact the League to speak about elections or other topics in which we are involved. Naturally, the November general election and the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote were of interest.

Esta Kallen, co-president, and Norma Braude, secretary, spoke to the Shaare Tikvah/Bnai Zion synagogue sisterhood on October 4. The discussion covered not only the election itself, the Recall Amendment to the Illinois Constitution, but also immigration, the judicial ballot, health care, and how to decide for whom to vote.

On Saturday, October 16, Esta spoke to a group of teachers of Delta Kappa Gamma society on the election, the Recall Amendment and the judicial ballot. The organization gives an award to legislators who have supported legislation to help education.

Esta and Patricia Graunke, one of our vice-presidents, attended a brunch sponsored by the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women on Sunday, October 17. The theme of the program was "Celebrating 90 Years: Women's Right to Vote." After non-political speeches by Lisa Madigan and Anita Alvarez, Esta discussed the November ballot and narrated a Power Point video about the history of the struggle to win the vote. The emphasis on the Judicial Ballot was greatly appreciated.

Even without an election, there is always a League supported issue that is of interest to the public. An organization of which you are a member could arrange a meeting with one of us as a speaker.

Esta Kallen

THE FIVE PERCENT RECOUNT FIELD TRIP LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF COOK COUNTY

LWVCC Voters Service Committee is planning a trip to observe the Five Percent Recount of the ballots. We plan on going as a group on Thursday, November 4 from 10:00 a.m. until noon. This is at the Hawthorne Distribution Center 4545 W. Cermak in Chicago. Please respond to

Sue Kravis at suekravis@comcast.net if you plan to attend.

There are other opportunities to observe the process. Consult the Cook County Clerk website; select the Elections tab and then Public Viewing Schedule on the right side of the elections page. It might be a good idea to call ahead to be sure the information is up-to-date.

EDUCATION AGAIN – STILL AND ALWAYS

Once upon a time we had the neighborhood school. Children went to the school building closest to home, except in the South where there were segregated schools for Whites and Blacks. Still they were 'neighborhood' schools even if they weren't the nearest one. The Federal Government got into the act because of this segregation and also became active in providing for Vocational and Technical Education. In addition, because of the disparity and needs of the poverty population, ESEA (the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) became a law of the land. It is this act whose latest form is *No Child Left Behind*. Later the federal government got into the Special Education field.

When we had the neighborhood school, there were a few options available. Within the public school sector there were: Technical/Vocational/Career high schools, and Special Education Children were segregated in Special Education Schools, such as Spaulding. Today, the Special Education Student is educated with his non-handicapped peer group as much as possible and parents have a myriad of choices as to what school their student will attend. We have, within the public school sector: neighborhood schools; neighborhood schools with magnet programs; magnet schools (chosen by lottery) and selective schools (requiring test score competence to enter). In addition there are Charter and Contract schools, which are under the aegis of the Chicago Board of Education. Plus, as has always been true, there is the parochial school system and the private school system which are considerably more expensive. One option that is being used by more parents than before is that of Home Schooling. You hear of those who have achieved well, but you do not hear of the other children who haven't.

To be continued.

Winnie Slusser

LWVUS

As the President of LWVUS has traveled the country she has emphasized empowerment of voters throughout the nation. She hopes that you have used the website VOTE411, which contains information for the election at all levels.

LWVUS has issued a statement calling for TV and radio to refuse political advertising funded with secret money and for political candidates to repudiate campaign ads coming from front groups and organizations that fail to disclose their big donors.

LWVIL

The election remains a primary focus at all levels of League. As you know, our core advocacy issues include:

- Fiscal Policy and Tax Reform
- Climate change
- Campaign Finance and Ethics Reform

These, along with our project on Judicial Performance Evaluation, are the focus of our efforts. There are more Advocacy Issues that may be found on lwvil.org website in the areas of Government, Social Policy and Natural Resources.

A Leadership Rap session is scheduled for December 4. Mark your calendars. This will be held in the conference room at the league Office, 332 S. Michigan, Suite 1150. This is your chance to gain the tools to become a League Leader at the Unit, City, County State or even National level.

LWVCC

The next Lunch and Learn meeting has been planned for Monday, November 15, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the DePaul Club Room, 11th floor, DePaul University Center, 1 E. Jackson Blvd. Walk through the bookstore to reach the elevators. Judge Abishi C. Cunningham, Jr., Cook County Public Defender, will speak on "How Does the Public Defender's Office Serve the People of Cook County." The cost of the session is \$30.00, which includes a box lunch. The form, due November 11, is available on the website.

Also, LWVCC has invited Chicago league members to the Wednesday, December 1 meeting of the Cook County Board of Commissioners. This will be the first meeting

with the new President and newly elected commissioners. Pris Mims will meet us at 9:45 on the 5th floor of the County Building (Clark and Randolph) at the doors of the board room. Contact Karin Hribar (khribar@comcast.com or 847-818-0206) by November 24 if you plan to attend.

LWVCHICAGO

If you haven't visited our website, do so. We will be setting up a Facebook page shortly. If you are not receiving our weekly newsletter please make sure we have your email. It costs considerably less to email than to snail mail anything today and this comes out of our Operating Fund. We would appreciate cutting mailing costs as much as possible.

The State of the City® luncheon will be Friday, March 18, 2011. This is the main source of revenue for our Education Fund, which may be used for educating the public but not for lobbying legislators, aldermen or other governmental agencies. For mailing and any issues action the Operating Fund must be used. Our outreach last year helped the Operating Fund enabling us to provide more services to you as members.

The office has someone coming in on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for a few hours, but Tuesday and Thursday are not covered. While we can retrieve messages from the telephone, snail mail must be dealt with in the office itself. Information on governmental bodies' meetings and committee meetings still come by snail mail, and in order to keep up, we need more volunteer coverage. If you have a few hours to spare weekly, we would appreciate your giving them to LWVChicago.

The Chicago Voter

League of Women Voters of Chicago
332 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1150
Chicago, IL 60604
312-939-5935, Ext 28
Email – league@lwvchicago.org

Esta Kallen & Margaret Herring	Co-Presidents
Helene Gabelnick	Vice President
Pat Graunke	Vice President
Norma Braude	Secretary
Rochelle Riffer	Treasurer
Winnie Slusser	Voter Editor pro-tem