

The Chicago Voter

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

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President's Column

A couple of weeks ago I took the course to become a deputy registrar for the Chicago Board of Elections. I spend a half-hour and it was very easy. I'm asking you as League members to do this, too. I know that the trip downtown is very tedious, but you can use the time before or afterwards to shop and look around. The schedule for November and December is in this issue. We hope to have some candidates forums for the upcoming elections as well.

Even if you are not a deputy registrar, we ask you to be involved in the Cook County League's Pollwatching Project. Come to the Voter Service meeting on Saturday, November 10th. I expect at least one representative from each unit at this meeting along with interested Leaguers. These activities give us visibility in the community.

Related to the November election is the question of holding another Constitutional Convention. This will be on the ballot asking for a "yes" or "no" vote. You can find out more about this important topic by being a part of the study with the Illinois League. See the DATES box and contact me if you are interested.

Thanks to those who attended and supported the theatre party a few weeks ago. It was a pleasant afternoon. We are considering another one for next spring.

Plan on attending a unit meeting on the Immigration Study. A consensus is to be taken and good participation is needed. If you aren't in a unit, contact Carol Westerlund for your nearest unit, or form your own group, and if you cannot attend any meeting contact Helen Gabelnick.

The State of the City committee is being formed, call Clara Fleming for information on this important activity for the Chicago League.

If you haven't paid your dues year, please do so now. Members who have not renewed by the end of December will be dropped from the mailing list. We cannot make our payments to national, state and county if many of our members are unpaid. If you have financial problems please contact your unit leader, Bernice Fortini or me.

We are saddened by the passing away of Barbara Page Fiske. She was a very interesting person and 50-year+ League member.

You have notice the chill in the air and the usual cold mid-western winter weather will be coming up quickly. I wish you warmth with friends and family for Thanksgiving and the holiday season.

Estia

Deputy Registrar Dates

Place: 69 W. Washington, 8th Floor.
Call Terry Williams to reserve a date.

November 2007

Saturday the 3rd – 9:30 am
Thursday the 8th – 3:00 pm
Tuesday the 13th – 6:00 pm
Saturday the 17th – 9:30 am
Tuesday the 27th – 6:00 pm

December 2007

Tuesday the 4th – 3:00 pm
Tuesday the 11th – 6:00 pm
Saturday the 15th – 9:30 am
Thursday the 27th – 6:00 pm
Saturday the 29th – 9:30 am

The Training sessions may be cancelled if the response for that day is poor.

Voter registration by Volunteer Deputy Registrars will end on January 8, 2008 for the February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary Election.

Pollwatching: What do you Do?

Anyone can be a pollwatcher, and that means you. It only will require that you spend at least part of election day at the polls (at the beginning and at the end of the day through the vote count) and attend one training session. Indeed, since the League of Women Voters of Chicago will be working on the Cook County League's Project, we will give you the material for the survey at this session.

You should always try to be as polite and helpful as you can and not be confrontational unless absolutely necessary. During the day, one pollwatcher in the room is worth infinitely more than three on the street. To be treated with respect, dress-up rather than sloppily. You may not handle any official documents, so stand with your hands behind your back or gripping a clipboard.

There may be more than one precinct in one building or even in one room. If directional signs are not available, you may help direct a voter, particularly if a judge does not find the voter on the lists – the voter may be in the

other precinct. Watch that the voter places the ballot in the proper ballot counter.

Split precincts means that the precinct has been split because of dividing lines for the various offices (national representatives district/state senate-representative). Different ballots are provided.

Outside the polling place electioneering may not be within 100 feet of the entrance.

When you arrive, be sure that everything is in place – including wheelchair accessibility and other amenities for the physically challenged. No pollwatcher or judge is entitled to examine the voter's ballot, only signature upon entry. If voters do not have the proper identification, they may still vote on a provisional ballot.

Legally the judge is not supposed to handle a ballot, the voter puts the ballot into the ballot counter. If it is rejected, the judge should say whether the voter over-voted or under-voted. If fewer votes were cast than needed, the voter may go back and add his/her choices, if over-voted, a new ballot is needed. The voter (no the judge) may choose to let his under-voted ballot go as is, this is his/her prerogative.

At the end of the day all people in line to vote must be given the opportunity to do so, even if it runs over time and goes beyond closing time.

Absentee ballots are handled centrally. Provisional ballots are kept separately in a bag. The voter must provide credentials in order for it to be counted later centrally.

The ballots are then counted and totals printed. The counter is shut down and closed to be returned to the receiving station. The ballot box is then opened and the ballots removed. Observe that none are tampered with. All are sealed and placed in the transfer case with a numbered padlock.

If you are the only pollwatcher at closing, get as much information as possible and record it so that chances of fraud will be minimized.

You may offer to help break down and pack up the voting stations, but you must not handle any official election materials. GOOD NIGHT.

Pollwatching Project

The Chicago League Plans on being involved again in the League of Women Voters of Cook County's **Poll Reporting Project for the February 8, 2008 Primary Election** in Cook County. We ask you to be reporters.

As a reporter, you will be given the instructions and a one page, two-sided survey with credentials for your polling place. We ask you to be at the polls all day if possible, but at least for the closing of the polls and staying after if possible so that enough information can be placed on the survey. It is up to you to determine how you will do this task.

The Chicago League will tabulate the results for the County League and they in turn will complete the process.

Committee Meeting

On Thursday, November 8th, at 10:00 am the Employment and Social Policy Committee will meet at the League Office, 332 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1150. Herb Ziegeldorf will speak at 11:00 about low-income housing in Chicago. Herb works for HUD handling citizen's complaints about being treated unfairly.

Contact Lois Snyder for information.

Come Join Us

We are planning the State of the City Luncheon, the League of Women voters of Chicago's major fund raiser. We need your help as we expect to hold this event at the Union League Club on April 8th. There is a great deal of work to be done in order to have a successful affair. We need people to help in many ways, from finding prospective sponsors/contributors, planning seating arrangements; contacting the various individuals who will be involved, etc. The next meeting of the Development Committee is before the Board meeting on the 12th of November beginning about 2:00 pm. Call Clara Fleming if you wish to be involved.

News from other leagues

League of Women Voters of Cook County

The Winnetka-Northfield-Kenilworth League is sponsoring a Lake Michigan Water Quality Forum: Friday, November 9th. 9:30 am at the Winnetka Community House, 620 Lincoln Avenue, Winnetka. For further information contact Nancy Marcus..

League of Women Voters of Illinois – Constitutional Convention Committee meetings are scheduled for November 8th and 29th at 2:00 pm in the League Office. If you are interested please contact Esta Kallen.

LWVIL continues to monitor the General Assembly as it works on legislation involving mass transit and the Budget Improvement Bill. Without the latter – funds for schools are not being dispensed at their proper level, short-changing education again.

League of Women Voters of the United States

The National League is continuing the fight for children's health following the presidential veto of SCHIP and the subsequent inability to override the veto. We are continuing to monitor compromise proposals pending in Congress.

LWVUS's President, Mary Wilson spoke out this month following an announcement that Arizona's Secretary of State would sue the U. S. Election Assistance Commission to force an ID requirement as part of the federal mail voter registration application form. *"We had hoped that using states' rights as a way to disenfranchise American voters was a thing of the past,"* Wilson said in a statement. *"We all understand that an ID requirement will undermine voter participation, especially by older women, minorities and persons with disabilities."*

LWVUS and American Express have joined forces to Help America Vote, with a major grant to support voter education in sixteen key communities.

**Don't forget the Immigration Consensus!
Attend your local unit.**

Barbara Page Fiske

The League of Women Voters of Chicago has been saddened by the death of Barbara Page Fiske, one of our 50-year members. She was the epitome of a dedicated Leaguer as she worked tirelessly on the issues/activities of the Chicago League. Working with Citizens Information Service (which was an outgrowth of the LWVChicago), she was involved in producing the *Key to Local Government*, which provided information used by Chicago's public schools as well as every- one in general. Serving as chair or co-chair of Unit 66/74, she arranged for monthly/bimonthly meetings of that unit on governmental issues throughout the school year. She worked for the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, not only in Chicago, but nationally. There was no issue for which any Leaguer could not go to Barbara for information. She will be sorely missed.

Unit 66/74 is planning on devoting its regular Thursday, November 15th meeting to a Tribute

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to Barbara. It will be held at 1:30 pm at Montgomery Place, 5550 South Shore Drive in Chicago. This is open to any Leaguer (or friend) who wishes to attend.

A Memorial Service is planned for Saturday, December 8th Montgomery Place.

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