



The Chicago Voter

League of Women Voters of Chicago

Summer/September 2009

Website - www.LWVChicago.org

Vol. 60. No. 1



DATES TO REMEMBER

MEETINGS HELD AT THE LEAGUE OFFICE UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Saturday September 12th
CRUISE at 11:00 am

Monday September 14th
Board of Directors
5:45 pm

Saturday September 19th
LWVCC Committee
Juvenile Justice
1:00 - 3:00 pm

Monday, September 21st
Social Policy Committee
10:00 am – noon

Saturday September 26th
All-Member Meeting
Briefing
Census & Redistricting
Mary Shaafsma
Presenter
10:00 am - noon

Monday, October 19th
Health Care Forum
1:00 – 3:00 pm

Saturday, November 7th
All-Member Meeting
Briefing
Structure of Cook
County Government
10:00 am – noon

Saturday, December 5th
Briefing
Voter Service
10:00 am - noon

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The seasons follow from one to another and so do the items on the League's calendar. There has been much activity in the media about various government plans at all levels. Locally, neighborhood meetings have taken place on the subjects of the Olympics and Health Care. These events evolved into discussions on taxes, housing, schools and other issues. Have you ever attended any meetings in your neighborhood sponsored by your alderman or other official or civic group? They are an important part of democracy in action and the League's philosophy of grass-roots involvement.

Of a political nature, the first four Chicago League briefings fall into this category: The Census and Re-districting on Saturday, September 26th, Health Care, Monday, October 19th, the Structure of Cook County Government on Saturday, November 7th and Voting-related activities on Saturday, December 5th. The Census and Cook County Structure are briefings for all members. Come downtown and meet others. It's good for you and the League. The Health Care Forum will be a public meeting. Let's have a good turnout. Please attend them all and bring a friend.

We can always use your help. Besides coming to a meeting, you can volunteer to spend a few hours in the office or serve as an observer for one of the city's boards or committees. There is still time to sign up for training to be a deputy registrar. Look for the list of times in this issue.

I hope to see you at one or more of these programs.

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ARE YOU INTERESTED IN:

- The Census and Redistricting – Contact Helene Gabelnick
- Development (Fund Raising) – Contact Clara Fleming
- Health Care – Contact Clara Fleming
- Membership – Contact Bernice Fortini
- Education – Contact Winnie Slusser
- Social Policy – Contact Lois Snyder
- Voter Service – Contact Terry Williams

Any other issues – contact the office
312-939-5935 Ext. 28

**WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CITY HALL?
BOARD OF EDUCATION? PARK
DISTRICT?**

Are you wondering what goes on at a City Council Meeting? a Board of Education meeting? a Park District meeting? or committee meetings of these groups?

Would you like to know who the Chicago officials mentioned in the news are?

How about taking a trip downtown?

If this describes you, please consider becoming an "official" LWV Chicago observer. The time commitment is perhaps once a month. We'll give you the tools and information you need to get started. You'll be one of the people in the know. We would like you to write you observations for ***The Chicago Voter***.

Please contact Helene Gabelnick or Esta Kallen at the office: 312-939-5935, ext. 28. Or you can email Helene at helene@umich.edu and Esta at tkandek@aol.com. We can answer your questions and get you started. If you are leaving a message, indicate your interest. Two persons attending is a good idea so that someone is available for each time a board/committee meets.

We'd appreciate your being an observer.

**WHAT ABOUT BEING A DEPUTY
REGISTRAR?**

Be able to register people to vote! The Chicago League of Women Voters is one of the submitting organizations for this activity. If you are interested, contact Terry Williams in the Chicago office 312-939-5935-ext. 28 and she will help register you for one of their training sessions. All Chicago Board of Election Commissioner training will be conducted at 69 W. Washington, 8th floor conference room. Registration for the afternoon sessions (3:00 pm) close at 3:00 pm the day before. Registration for the morning sessions (9:00 am) and evening sessions (6:00 pm) close two days before at 3:00 pm.

Sign up with Terry and do a "leaguary" thing. You can register people anywhere, all you need to do is take the training.

September 2009

Wednesday, September 16th – 3:00 pm
Wednesday, September 23rd – 6:00 pm
Saturday, September 26th – 9:30 am

October 2009

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

November 2009

Wednesday, November 4th – 3:00 pm
Saturday, November 14th – 9:30 am
Wednesday, November 18th – 6:00 pm

December 2009

Wednesday, December 2nd – 3:00 pm
Saturday, December 12th – 9:30 am
Wednesday, December 16th – 6:00 pm

DO YOU HAVE EMAIL?

If you are receiving ***The Chicago Voter*** by email, we have your address. If by snail mail, will you be so kind as to give us your email – for two reasons, one: it saves money in printing and mailing the ***Voter*** (email is cheaper) and two: you will then receive the Chicago League Weekly which lists far more meetings than will be found in the ***Voter***. This service includes all dates in the ***Voter*** plus others in which you may be interested. Send your email address to PresLWVChicago@gmail.com

**Become a more
active
Member of the
League of Women
Voters of
Chicago**

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT STUDY

by Helene Gabelnick

LWV Chicago Results:

Thirty-nine members from 5 units participated in the local consensus meetings on the National Popular Vote (NPV) compact. Consensus was not reached for any of the first 6 questions. There was consensus to agree with both statements (a and b) of Question 7.

7. Which statements reflect the views of the group?

a) The NPV Compact will have problems being passed because of the need for congressional consideration and the need for action by so many states

b) A constitutional amendment to establish the direct popular election of the President and the abolition of the Electoral College will continue to have problems being passed.

LWVUS Results:

Three hundred ninety of 766 local Leagues (51%) and approximately 6,500 LWV members participated in the consensus process. No consensus was reached and the LWVUS Board issued the following statement:

"The LWVUS affirms its support of the direct election of the president and abolition of the Electoral College, but the LWVUS has no position on the National Popular Vote Compact as studied in 2008-2009."

ALL MEMBER MEETINGS

THE CENSUS

Once every ten years the United States counts every person living in the fifty states, Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Territories. This is mandated by the U.S. Constitution. The first census was undertaken in 1720 when four million were counted. Now seventy-five times more will be the total. The data collected tells us about our diversity and helps the government plan how to allocate the funds in the annual budget for local and state services and programs. Also, it helps apportion the 435 members of the House of Representatives, the Electoral College and how the boundaries of the

state and local legislative districts might be drawn. The League of Women Voters of Illinois has begun a public education campaign – True Count: Everybody Counts, the purpose of which is to ensure that Illinois achieves a complete count of its residents (including the homeless). The Chicago League is holding its briefing on Saturday, September 26th, at 10:00 am in the League Conference Room. This is an all member meeting and we would like to have as many of you as possible attend. Units may or may not hold separate meetings on this issue. The presenter is Mary Shaafsma, who is working for the Illinois League on this project. The material in this article is from the League of Women Voters of Illinois. Go to the LWVIL website for more information.

HEALTH CARE

A forum on Health Care is scheduled for Monday October 19th from 1 to 3 pm. Details on the location will be forthcoming. This is an issue which is of national importance. LWVUS has been lobbying, as you should be, for the best possible Health Care laws providing insurance coverage for all at an affordable rate, barring none from acquiring Health Care insurance, and ensuring that the Federal budget is not strained.

Unit Meetings

1/5 – Downtown - Evening
Fourth Monday
September 28th - 5:30 pm - League Office

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

Unit 21/35
Day/Evening Unit
Contact: Carol Westerlund or
Bettina Schwartz

Unit 22 – Downtown - Daytime
Normally the Third Thursday
10:00 am - League Office

Unit 41/42 – Southwest side
Day/evening Unit
Contact the Chicago League office

Unit 66/74 - South Side – Hyde Park
Unit at
Montgomery Place - Third Thursday
September 19th at 1:30 pm

LWVUS News

LWVUS has created a flyer on "A relentless, partisan assault on voting rights." It notes that 25 states have adopted politically motivated voter identification or proof of citizenship requirements that make it difficult for the elderly, minorities, the disabled and low income Americans to register and vote. Some states have threatened steep fines and administrative hurdles to discourage the League and other organizations from conducting voter registration drives. In addition the mix of political pressures and bureaucratic errors voters are being purged from registration roles and turned away at the polls.

LWVUS has various activities and publications including Voters' Guides Best Practices; Fair Judiciary: The Quest for a More Diverse Judiciary and Fair Judiciary: Youth Citizenship and Civic Engagement.

LWVIL News

LWVIL is updating its website on Education, and will be holding meetings to advocate for the passage of SB174 (a relative of the old HB/SB750). Adequate funding for schools is an absolute MUST on the LWVIL agenda.

LWVCC

Tour the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office. Let LWVCC know whether you prefer Wednesday, September 30th or Tuesday, October 13th. There is a limit of 20 for this tour. Find out more at www.cookcounty.il.lwvnet.org and following the links to the Cook County Organizational Chart under Where does Cook County spend our Money. Send your reservation and preference date to cook@lwv.org or leave a message on the voice mail at 312-939-5935 x27. (Please leave a phone number if calling.)

The LWVCC Juvenile Justice Committee is planning on meeting on September 18th. Contact Millie Juskevics for further information.

LWVChicago

Since Helene Gabelnick was absent from the 2009 Annual Meeting in June, she accepted her Greensfelder-Elam Award at the Summer Board Meeting. Helene returned to active participation in League activities after her retirement. She has represented the League of Women Voters of Chicago on the state and national immigration studies, the national Popular Vote project and is presently involved with the census projects. Her comments:

I would like to thank the Greensfelder-Elam Award Committee for selecting me as the 2009 award recipient. I am honored to have been chosen for this award.

When I joined LWV Chicago in 1974 I was able to meet and work with both Olive Greensfelder and Elinor Elam. They represented all in LWV Chicago that earns us respect in the wider community.

Olive was a staunch public schools and juvenile justice supporter and resource. Elinor should have been an honorary alderman, if not Chicago mayor! Her knowledge of the functioning of the city of Chicago, its committees and budget was unsurpassed and her efforts relating to open governmental activity was the epitome of League principles.

I am also pleased to join the many other Greensfelder-Elam awardees who continue to keep the traditions which these two LWV Chicago members inspired.

The Chicago Voter

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