



# THE VOTER

Glen Ellyn League of Women Voters

October, 2009

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Nothing else ever does-Margaret Mead*

Last time, I wrote about the hearts and hands of League members and how we use these to bring about positive change in our community, our state and our nation. We also use our **ears** and our **minds** to listen to concerns and make decisions about what we can do to further the mission of the LWV and improve our world. And many, many Glen Ellyn members-96 so far in 09-10-contribute in vital ways, small and large, to make it all happen.

We are grateful for the contributions of our Membership Chair Dorothy Hess, who spent numerous hours compiling this year's Membership Book. It contains a lot of valuable information including Glen Ellyn League's Positions-ideas which have been published after careful study and consensus among our members. These books were produced with the generous donation of printing from new member Christyne Strutynsky.

On September 10th we held our Kick-Off Meeting, where our portfolio chairs took the time to educate those in attendance about their plans for the year. Thank you to Carrie Burrows, Kristin Malone, Gina Myers, Tina Chivardi, and Julie Nolan for getting this meeting planned and publicized. We heard the concerns of Leaguers and delivered a meeting to answer questions about "What We're Up To." And you responded with your attendance! Thank you!

Coming up on October 8th, we'll learn about the issues that drive Illinois politics and landed our last two governors in the hot seat: Campaign Finance and Ethics. LWWIL past president Paul Lawson, will talk to us about what happened last summer, and what's next for Campaign Finance & Ethics Reform in Springfield. It is sure to be an enlightening evening, so please come and join us.

On November 12th, the local government portfolio committee is planning a meeting to educate us about the village's plans for the revival of our downtown area and what that will mean for residents: Are we to endure train station construction? Street direction changes? What's in "store" for downtown Glen Ellyn? Come and find out. Better yet, contact Christyne Strutynski and help plan the meeting!

There are plenty of ways for you to use your ears, mind, hearts and hands with the LWVGE. From candidate forums, mock elections in schools, issue studies, planning meetings, observing government boards in action, to making calls to legislators and much more. But no guilt, if you can't volunteer your time: Your membership is a tremendous value that enable those who *can* get active to make a difference in our democracy, our government, and our country. Thanks for all you do for League!

Respectfully, Ginger Wheeler

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### CALENDAR

- Oct 8th- Unit Mtg. Campaign Finance and Ethics Reform, Civic Center 7:30 p.m.
- Oct 24th- Bookclub Michelle Peterson's, 9:00 a.m.
- Oct 29th- Great Decisions, The Arctic Age, Diana Nichol's, 7:30 p.m.
- Nov 12th- Unit Mtg. Review of Downtown Plan for GE, Civic Center, 7:30 p.m.
- Dec 3rd-Holiday Fundraiser, Ten Thousand Villages, 5-8 p.m.

## REPORT ON THE FALL KICK OFF MEETING

About 40 League members and guest joined together at the LWVGE's Fall Kick-Off Meeting on September 10th to learn how members and the public can get involved and help the LWVGE make a difference in our community, our county, our state, our country and the nation! A brief summary:

- Sign up with Peggy McGrath to be a board observer: a great way to learn how boards operate in case you might be thinking about running yourself, or just to keep informed about what they are doing.
- Join Diana Nichol as Leaguers and others think about Great Decisions that affect the world! A great discussion, lots of thoughtful reading, and making meaningful friendships in the process.
- LWVGE has a bookclub: We're not reading Oprah books here, but books about issues that affect us, everything from the environment to our history. Our next meeting will be Saturday, October 24th at 9:00 a.m. at Michelle Peterson's house where we will be discussing Omnivore's Dilemma by Michael Pollan. All are welcome.
- Healthcare: Mary Lou Lowry is working with her committee to organize a fantastic meeting this spring on the delivery of mental healthcare in DuPage County-a most interesting and much needed service.
- Fundraising: A few fun and easy things to do include selling ads to businesses you frequent or joining the phonathon team to solicit donations in the spring. We were also encouraged to support the LWVGE's Mary Luginbill scholarship.

We learned about all this and more at our meeting. We had lots of social time and laughs in the process. For more about all LWVGE has to offer, visit our website: [www.lwvge.org](http://www.lwvge.org), fan us on facebook: League of Women Voters of Glen Ellyn or follow us on Twitter: @GELeaguer.

## REPORT ON THE SUMMER WINE & CHEESE

Leaguers and our guests were honored to have State Representative Sandra Pihos as our guest speaker at our Summer Wine & Cheese Event on August 10th. Sandy covered a wide range of topics including:

- Identity protection and privacy for those whose social security numbers are on file somewhere in Springfield (that's just about every taxpayer, business owner, social service recipient, etc.)
- An Amber Alert for missing seniors
- Healthcare issues, including the EPA's work to make sure hospitals properly dispose of medical waste
- The impeachment of Governor Blagojevich and subsequently working with Governor Quinn and the leadership in Springfield
- The dismal Illinois budget deficit and how Illinois plans to continue to meet its obligations (later)
- U of I's clout admissions scandal.

What can Leaguers do? As usual, the answer is study and understand the issues, contact legislative leaders and push for our positions, advocate for better rules so that four people in Springfield don't wield so much power, and help educate the community about the issues.

Thanks to everyone who made this evening such a success. Special thanks to Carrie Burrows, Kristin Malone, Gina Myers, Tina Chivardi, Ginger Wheeler, Julie Nolan, Dorothy Hess and our hostess, Christyne Strutynsky.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

It has been a busy summer for membership. As of September 24, we have 96 paid members in our League. If you have not yet paid your 2009-2010 dues, you are certainly not too late. Membership is open year round and we would love to have you join us. Just send your check in with the form below. Please welcome our newest members: Jayne Boeckelman, Sally Goggins, Bonnie and Jeffrey Gahris, Julia Nephew, and Patti Landry.

More than 60 members returned the membership surveys which were sent out in early August. Your interests have been noted, and you will be contacted by the appropriate portfolio or committee chairs as help is needed. Or feel free to contact any of the board members listed in the directory to get involved.

Your 2009-2010 Membership Directory should have been delivered to you by October 1st. If you have not received it by then, please contact me and I will make sure you receive one. Thank you to Diana Nichol, Judy Kinn, Chris Kinsey, Margaret DeLaRosa, and Dori Warner for help in delivering the directories.

Please make the following additions and corrections to the membership list at the back of your book:

Suzanne Armstrong's address should be 621 Euclid Avenue, Glen Ellyn

Jayne Boeckelman's email should be jboeckelman@gmail.com

Barbara Newsom's address should be 515 N. Main St., Glen Ellyn

Add Gayle Froman 454 Anthony GE (630) 942-0512 hale454@aol.com

Add Karen Gorz 450 Fairview GE (630) 858-1096 karengorz@aol.com

Add Mary Loch 678 Fairview GE (630) 674-1749 maryloch@aol.com

Please check your membership information on the list and let me know if a correction or update is needed.

Dorothy Hess, Membership Chair

If you have not yet paid your 2009-2010 dues, please return this form with your dues. Single membership dues are \$60 and an additional member at the same address is \$30.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: Dorothy Hess 629 Pleasant Avenue, Glen Ellyn 60137

## NEWS FROM LWVUS

(For more information visit the website at [www.lwvus.org](http://www.lwvus.org))

### **League Urges Senate To Enact Quality Health Care Reform**

America is facing a health care crisis caused by a combination of skyrocketing costs and an insurance system that leaves 47 million of us without any coverage. League is encouraging Congress to take action to pass strong health care reform legislation that guarantees quality, safe and affordable health care to all U. S. residents including the choice of a public insurance plan.

### **League Opposes Amendment Intended to Block Carbon Pollution Regulation**

League and its coalition partners sent Senators a letter urging them to oppose Sen. Murkowski's revised amendment to the Interior Appropriations bill on the grounds that it would not only block the EPA from curbing carbon dioxide pollution, but also block the EPA from implementing the Supreme Court's landmark decision in *Massachusetts V. EPA*.

### **League Thanks Senators for Supporting JUSTICE Act**

The League and coalition partners sent a letter to select Senators thanking them for supporting the JUSTICE (Judiciously Using Surveillance Tools In Counterterrorism Efforts) Act.

### **LWV of Indiana Helps Overturn Voter ID Law**

In September, the Indiana Court of Appeals struck down the state's voter ID law citing violations of the state Constitution. The Indiana League has been working on this issue for several years. Congratulations to LWVIN on this victory!

### **League Submits Amicus Brief in "Citizens United v. the FEC"**

The League and the Constitutional Accountability Center submitted an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in the case *Citizens United v. the FEC*. A decision in this case could have an enormous impact on regulation of corporate and union spending in candidate elections.

### **Student Voting Rights Victory in Virginia**

During 2008, college students' right to vote in the cities where they live and go to school were systematically challenged in jurisdictions nationwide based on residency requirements. Often, misinformation was used to confuse students in an effort to suppress their votes. In Virginia, the legislature created a task-force after the elections to address this issue and LWVVA President Olga Hernandez was appointed. The LWVVA worked with the other members to forge new criteria that represent a huge win for student voting rights. The new rules state, in part, that the duration of time a person intends to live in a specific place cannot be used against that person when establishing residency. These rules are now uniform across the state, and students will have a clear understanding of their rights in upcoming elections.

### **Members Can Update Their Own Information**

Any member can update his/her own contact information by selecting any webpage from the "For Members" menu on our national website and then selecting the "Update Your Information" menu item. After you login with your personal email address and password, you will be taken to your "My League" (Your Profile) webpage where you can change any of your personal contact information. Select the "Submit Changes" button when you are finished. Using the menu on the left-hand side of the page, you can also subscribe or unsubscribe to any League sponsored list and/or indicate the issue areas that are of interest to you.

## NEWS FROM LWVIL

(For more information visit the website at [www.lwvil.org](http://www.lwvil.org))

### **LWVIL Opposes New Video Gaming Tax**

On July 13, 2009 the State of Illinois enacted the Video Gaming Act legalizing the use of video gaming terminals in specific locations in order to provide money for the state to fund its capital plan. The LWVIL opposes the use of gaming as a solution to Illinois' fiscal problems. Read the reasons for our opposition and an abbreviated version of LWVIL policy at [Gambling: No Cure for State's Fiscal Ills](#). For more information, email Kim Reed, Issues VP, at [issues@lwvil.org](mailto:issues@lwvil.org).

### **Challenges and Consequences of the 2010 Census**

*True Census Counts: Everybody Counts*, LWVIL's census and redistricting project, is off to a great start. Its goal is to make sure that Illinois is fully counted during Census 2010 so that we enjoy our fair share of federal funding and don't risk losing more than one seat in Congress. LWVIL wants to make sure that the redistricting process which follows in 2011 is an open and transparent one. Read [What You Can Do for Census 2010](#). For more information contact Mary Schaafsma Project manager at [marys@lwvil.org](mailto:marys@lwvil.org).

### **LWVIL Joins Responsible Budget Coalition**

The LWVIL has joined the newly created coalition, the Responsible Budget Coalition (RBC) which brings together many diverse organizations that represent and serve millions of Illinois residents, and because it believes that Illinois has a moral and legal obligation to protect public safety, safeguard public health, strengthen our economy, and ensure that every individual has the opportunity to thrive. Coalition members are committed to building the support needed to solve the Illinois' budget crisis, prevent harmful cuts to essential public services, save jobs, eliminate the state's long term structural deficit, and provide Illinoisans with relief from regressive taxation.

## REPORT OF HEALTH CARE PORTFOLIO

One of League's highest priorities is health care reform and the time for action is now. The LWVUS believes that a basic level of quality health care at an affordable cost should be available to all U.S. residents. Other U.S. health care policy goals include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable total national expenditure level for care. League does support the public option and if a single payer plan were on the table League would support that.

All wealthy nations except the U.S. have some form of universal health care. Currently, 16% of the U.S. population has no health care coverage. The second highest uninsured rate is in Holland which has a 1.5% rate. The U.S. system is cumbersome and creates large administrative cost. League has an outstanding position on health care and all League members need to make their voices heard so that we finally do have health reform. On October 13th, I will be meeting with Representative Peter Roskam to discuss the League's position and encourage him to support health care reform. If you are interested in joining me, please contact me.

MaryLou Lowry, Health Care Portfolio Chair