



THE VOTER

Glen Ellyn League of Women Voters

Volume 1, Issue 3
January, 2008

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENTS

Dear Members:

Happy New Year! We hope you had a restful holiday. The year 2007 ended with our US Immigration consensus meeting on a Saturday morning. Serving caffeine sure increases the volume. Being alert led to several energetic debates on this difficult topic. Look for some Saturday meetings on next year's calendar.

Now that the holidays are over, 2008 brings many exciting events for League. On January 23 we have partnered with Wheaton League to host a candidate's forum featuring candidates for state congressional, county board and judicial positions. Please plan on coming and hearing where the candidates stand on important issues affecting our county and state.

With January comes Program Planning. This is everyone's chance to weigh in on which topics you would like to have our League address next year. This year we will be participating in the national program planning along with our local programs. We will also be developing our 08-09 calendar. Please join us on January 26th at the Meadows.

After many months of persistent phone calls, Tammy Duckworth will be speaking to us on Friday, March 7th. As director of the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs she can provide insight about what happens after the vets come home – or maybe you have a question about Rod. Details are still being worked out, but we are very excited to have Tammy speak to our group.

If Oprah can do it so can we. Please join us for a book discussion of Babara Kingsolver's latest book Animal, Vegetable, Miracle. This will prepare us for our unit meeting in April on eating locally. As you can see 2008 brings many exciting events for our League. Please join us for as many events as you can, and remember to vote on February 5th!

Shawn and Michelle

PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend our upcoming program planning meeting on January 23rd at The Meadows from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Every two years, state and local Leagues and ILOs participate in the LWWUS program planning process by making recommendations concerning program issues. The program planning process is an important League tool for identifying issues for study and maintaining our grassroots tradition. Waiting until the Convention to gather support for issues often results in limited discussion and incomplete information. Furthermore, raising issues at Convention instead of through the program planning process dilutes the voices of Leagues that do participate in the process. Included in this issue of the Voter are the current public policy positions. Please review them before the meeting and bring suggestions for changes or additions. In addition to the national positions we will review our local program positions. We look forward to seeing you on the 23rd!

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CALENDAR

- Jan 23– Candidates Forum. Wheaton Community Center, 7-9:30 p.m.
- Jan 26– Program Planning. The Meadows, 8:30 a.m. to noon.
- Feb 5– Illinois Primary Election
- Mar 7– Tammy Duckworth Program Time TBA
- Mar 8– Book Discussion at Michelle Peterson's 9:30 a.m.

CANDIDATES' FORUM

The League of Women Voters of both Wheaton and Glen Ellyn are sponsoring a Candidates' Forum on Wednesday, January 23rd at the Wheaton Park District Community Center located at 1777 S. Blanchard Road in Room 222. The evening will begin at 6:30 p.m. with coffee and refreshments, followed by the forum at 7:00 p.m. This forum provides an excellent opportunity for the public to meet those candidates running in uncontested races, hear in a forum format from those in contested races and become more informed for the February 5th Primary Election. Candidates who have committed to attending the forum are:

State Senator 23rd District— Carole Pankau (R)

6th Congressional District— Stan Jagla (D) and Jill Morgenthaler (D)

13th Congressional District— Sean O'Kane (R)

45th Congressional District— Franco Coladipietro (R)

55th Congressional District— Randy Ramey (R)

DuPage County State's Attorney— Joe Birkett (R)

County Board District 4— William Edgar (Green Party); Grant Eckoff (R) and Mary Dickson (R)

County Board District 6— Robert Larsen (R); Jim Zay (R); and Pamela Joy Fenner (R)

18th Circuit Court Judge— Rick Stock (R); John Demling (R); Dorothy French (R); and John Kinsella (R)

ILLINOIS PRIMARY IS FEBRUARY 5TH

The Illinois Primary election date is Tuesday, February 5, 2008. Here are some key dates to remember:

Last day to apply for absentee ballot: Thursday, January 31, 2008

Early voting period: Monday, January 14 to Thursday, January 31, 2008

Early voting sites in DuPage County are:

Stratford Mall (Lower Level Next to Carson Pirie Scott) 10-7 M-F; 10-3 Sat; and 11-3 Sun

Addison Township Office (Gym) 8:30-4 MWF; 8:30-7 TuTh and 9-1 Sat

DuPage County Election Commission (Office Foyer) 8-4:30 M-F; 9-1 Sat; and 9-1 Sun

Yorktown Mall (West Entrance 2 Next to USPS) 10-7 M-F; 10-3 Sat; and 11-3 Sun

Naperville Municipal Center (Meeting Room A) 8:30-4:30 M-F and 9-Noon Sat

Downers Grove Village Hall (Committee Room) 8-4:30 MWThF; 8-7 Tu; and 8-1 Sat

These locations are 100% compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

NOTES FROM THE LWVUS IMMIGRATION STUDY

The League of Women Voters held its consensus meeting for the National Immigration Study on December 8th at the Glen Ellyn Library. The meeting was well attended and the attendees were well fed. Discussion of a broad range of topics raised plenty of questions, dilemmas, and ire. Healthy discussion is the heart of League and the heart of democracy. This study followed a State Immigration study completed last year, which was equally engaging. Both studies heightened awareness of the many facets of an often simplified issue. Both meetings were conducted in order to develop League lobbying positions which truly represent the thoughts of members, and both made us feel like an important part of the grassroots lobbying process so important to League and to our political system.

On the negative side, we were somewhat stymied by the limited response format required by the national league. In an attempt to distill very complex issues into easily processed answers, all flexibility was removed from the response format. In several cases, this contributed to a lack of consensus. In particular, space for comment was not question specific; rather, it was left to the end (and we do so like to comment). Nonetheless, those of us who participated feel that this was a worthwhile and enlightening process. Thank you to the committee for making this a great study, and to all who attended, for making this a great meeting! *Diana Hoke*

NOTES FROM THE EMERGENCY RESPONDERS IN DUPAGE COUNTY UNIT MEETING

For our October Unit meeting on Emergency Responders, Carrie Burrows put together an enjoyable and informative meeting. The two speakers were Phil Norton (Glen Ellyn Chief of Police) and Tom Mefferd (Director of Homeland Security and Emergency Management in DuPage County).

Phil Norton, whose second career should be stand-up comedy, shared the following:

- Call 911 for anything that requires a police presence, even if it is not an emergency.
- There is a press book available to everyone at the police station. In the press book are all the events that occurred where a police report was written.
- During the August storm the Glen Ellyn and Wheaton sirens did not go off due to human error and an inefficient procedure. The protocol has improved to decrease the chance of this happening in the future.
- Ambulance service is charged when used which is unique to Glen Ellyn. This is because we have a volunteer fire department which does not receive tax revenue from our real estate taxes.

Tom Mefferd gave a brief power point presentation concerning homeland security stressing that everyone should make the pledge that "homeland security is my responsibility." He shared the following:

- There is an EMT for every 180 people in DuPage County. This is why it is important for everyone to have a family disaster plan.
- A fire doubles in size every 30 seconds.
- News radio WDCB at the College of DuPage 90.9 is our local emergency notification center.

NEWS FROM LWWUS

(For more information visit the website at www.lwwus.org)

Presidential Candidate Voters' Guide

Thanks to the collaboration between members of the Maryland, National Capitol Area, and Virginia Leagues and the LWWUS/EF, the 2008 Presidential Primary Voters' Guide is now available. We have responses from: Biden, Clinton, Edwards, Obama, and Richardson on the Democratic side and Giuliani, McCain, Paul, Tancredo, and Thompson on the Republican side. Only Dodd and Romney were invited to participate and chose not to. We ended up with an 83 percent response rate, which is a testament to the League. You can download a complete pdf of the Voters' Guide from www.VOTE411.org.

LWW Tackles Voter Disenfranchisement in the States

Information on Phase II of the League's Public Advocacy for Voter Protection project (PAVP) is available online. This project has been created to help bolster the League's capacity for continuing and expanding its critical state-based advocacy to prevent the disenfranchisement of eligible citizens, particularly underserved populations.

League Marks 217th Anniversary of Bill of Rights

The League marked this year's Bill of Rights Day, December 15, with a call from President Mary G. Wilson to protect civil liberties in our own country and promote democratic participation and respect for civil liberties in the world.

League Objects to New Ethics Rule Allowing Loopholes in Recently Enacted Legislation

The League and coalition partners strongly object to the guidance recently issued by the House Ethics Committee to implement the new ethics rule to restrict House members from participating in parties that take place at the national nominating convention to "honor" those members. This guidance opens gaping loopholes in the new ethics rule just enacted a few months ago that prevents lobbyists and lobbying organizations from gaining favor and influence with Representatives by paying for lavish parties to "honor" those members.

League Urges Senators to Oppose Bill that Would Unnecessarily Limit Civil Liberties

The League and others urged senators to oppose the FISA Amendments Act of 2007 which would unreasonably and unnecessarily authorize broad surveillance of American's international communication without meaningful Fourth Amendment protections including: no individualized warrant issued by a court, no determination of probable cause of wrongdoing, and no specification of the location or means of the surveillance.

Leagues File Amicus Brief in Indiana Voter ID Case

The LWW's of Indiana and Indianapolis and the LWWUS filed a joint *amicus* brief in the Supreme Court case that will determine the constitutionality of an Indiana law requiring voters to present photo ID at polling places. The brief details experiences of a number of Indiana voters whose votes were not counted or whose rights were denied, and points out that each and every individual has a fundamental right to vote.

League Urges FEC to Reform Campaign Contribution Requirements

The League and other groups recently submitted commentary to the Federal Election Commission, urging the agency to reform the campaign contribution system and shed light on the "bundling" practices of lobbyists.

PUBLIC POLICY POSITIONS

League of Women Voters of the United States

REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

Promote an open governmental system that is representative, accountable and responsive.

Voting Rights

Citizen's Right to Vote. Protect the right of all citizens to vote; encourage all citizens to vote.

DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation.

Secure for the citizens of the District of Columbia the rights of self-government and full voting representation in both houses of Congress.

Election Process

Apportionment. Support apportionment of congressional districts and elected legislative bodies at all levels of government based substantially on population.

Campaign Finance. Improve methods of financing political campaigns in order to ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and promote citizen participation in the political process.

Selection of the President. Promote the election of the President and Vice-President by direct-popular vote and work to abolish the Electoral College.

Support uniform national voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. Support efforts to provide voters with sufficient information about candidates.

Citizen Rights

Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation. Protect the citizen's right to know and facilitate citizen participation in government decision making.

Individual Liberties. Oppose major threats to basic constitutional rights.

Public Policy on Reproductive Choices. Protect the constitutional right of privacy of the individual to make reproductive choices.

Congress and the Presidency

Congress. Support responsive legislative processes characterized by accountability, representativeness, decision-making capability and effective performance.

The Presidency. Promote a dynamic balance of power between the executive and legislative branches within the framework set by the Constitution.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Promote peace in an interdependent world by working cooperatively with other nations and strengthening international organizations.

United Nations

Support a strong, effective United Nations to promote international peace and security and to address the social, economic and humanitarian needs of all people.

Trade

Support U.S. trade policies that reduce trade barriers, expand international trade and advance the achievement of humanitarian, environmental and social goals.

U.S. Relations with Developing Countries

Promote U.S. policies that meet long-term social and economic needs of developing countries.

Arms Control

Reduce the risk of war through support of arms control measures.

Military Policy and Defense Spending

Work to limit reliance on military force. Examine defense spending in the context of total national needs.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Promote an environment beneficial to life through the protection and wise management of natural resources in the public interest.

Natural Resources

Promote the management of natural resources as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems.

Resource Management

Promote resource conservation, stewardship and long-range planning, with the responsibility for managing natural resources shared by all levels of government.

Environmental Protection and Pollution Control

Preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the ecosystem, with maximum protection of public health and the environment.

Air Quality. Promote measures to reduce pollution from mobile and stationary sources.

Energy. Support environmentally sound policies that reduce energy growth rates, emphasize energy conservation and encourage the use of renewable resources.

Land Use. Promote policies that manage land as a finite resource and that incorporate principles of stewardship.

Water Resources. Support measures to reduce pollution in order to protect surface water, groundwater and drinking water.

Waste Management. Promote policies to reduce the generation and promote the reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes.

Nuclear Issues. Promote the maximum protection of public health and safety and the environment.

Public Participation

Promote public understanding and participation in decision making as essential elements of responsible and responsive management of our natural resources.

Agriculture Policy

Promote adequate supplies of food and fiber at reasonable prices to consumers and support economically viable farms, environmentally sound farm practices and increased reliance on the free market.

SOCIAL POLICY

Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans.

Equality of Opportunity

Equal Rights. Support ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and efforts to bring laws into compliance with the goals of the ERA.

Education, Employment and Housing. Support equal access to education, employment and housing.

Fiscal Policy

Tax Policy. Support adequate and flexible funding of federal government programs through an equitable tax system that is progressive overall and that relies primarily on a broad-based income tax.

Federal Deficit. Promote responsible deficit policies.

Funding of Entitlements. Support a federal role in providing mandatory, universal, old-age, survivors, disability and health insurance.

Health Care

Promote a health care system for the United States that provides access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S. residents and controls health care costs.

Meeting Basic Human Needs

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

Income Assistance. Support income assistance programs,

based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.

Support Services. Provide for essential support services.

Housing Supply. Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

Child Care

Support programs and policies to expand the supply of affordable, quality child care for all who need it.

Early Intervention for Children at Risk

Support policies and programs that promote the wellbeing,

development and safety of all children.

Violence Prevention

Support violence prevention programs in communities.

Gun Control

Protect the health and safety of citizens through limiting the accessibility and regulating the ownership of handguns and semi-automatic weapons. Support regulation of firearms for consumer safety.

Urban Policy

Promote the economic health of cities and improve the quality of urban life.

Death Penalty

The LWVUS supports the abolition of the death penalty.

Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement and well defined channels for citizen input and review.

NEWS FROM ILLINOIS STATE LEAGUE

You are invited to attend our State of the State Luncheon on January 24th at the Union League Club of Chicago. This year's theme is the State of the State's Environment. Our keynote speaker is Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, who will talk about the role government can play in protecting our environment. We will also honor the Attorney General for her tireless and creative leadership on environmental issues. In addition, Art Gibson of Baxter Healthcare Corporation will receive the Corporate Citizen Award for Environmental Sustainability and Robert Graham of Jenner and Block will receive the Citizen of Action Award. To register please call the office at 312-939-5935.

The Illinois League of Women Voters invites all members to attend the issues briefing on Saturday February 23 at Loyola University Campus Water Tower. This year's workshops include: educational funding, immigration, global warming and the pros and cons of having a constitutional convention. For more information, go to the state website at www.lwvill.org.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CLEO BURTIS!

Congratulations to our very own Cleo Burtis for being honored at the recent Person of Character reception held at the Glen Ellyn Civic Center. The Glen Ellyn Character Coalition is a citizens group that honors one resident a month. Chosen from nominees from the community, the Person of Character winners are found to exhibit the six pillars of character - trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship. Cleo is a longtime volunteer for several organizations, including League, and was described as "dedicated and kindhearted - never seeking the limelight." We could not agree more. Congratulations Cleo on this well deserved award!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Thanks to the many League members who attended our holiday fundraiser at Ten Thousand Villages. This year Ten Thousand Villages let us serve refreshments as we browsed in the store. It was a fun and relaxing way to start the holiday shopping season. Thanks to Kristin Malone for organizing this event. We are happy to report that we raised \$300 for our League!

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

In anticipation of our April 10th unit meeting on locally grown foods, we will be discussing Barbara Kingsolver's newest book, Animal, Vegetable, Miracle - A Year of Food Life on Saturday, March 8th at Michelle Peterson's home at 9:30 a.m. Barbara Kingsolver's well paced, often good humored journal chronicles the year her family ate only locally produced food. Please join us for a fun and informative discussion and feel free to bring a friend. Please RSVP Michelle at Peteriford@aol.com.



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Women Voters**

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**CHECK OUT
OUR WEBSITE
www.lwvge.org**

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization that does not support or oppose any political party or candidate but whose purpose is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

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BUSINESS SUPPORTERS

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES FOR SUPPORTING THE GLEN ELLYN LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS! WE ENCOURAGE ALL OF OUR MEMBERS TO SUPPORT THESE LOCAL BUSINESSES.

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