



**ENJOY YOURSELF! SUPPORT OUR LEAGUE'S  
EDUCATION PROGRAM! BRING YOUR FRIENDS!**

On **Saturday, April 25**, at 6 p.m., we will be honored to host our annual LWVE Education Fund Benefit, featuring renowned journalist, author, and speaker Clarence Page. Mr. Page has received 2 Pulitzer Prizes (for Journalism and Commentary) and is the author of *Showing My Color: Impolite Essays on Race and Identity* (1996) and *A Bridge to the New Media Century* (2000)

**Time:** 6 p.m.

**Location:** Evanston Golf Club  
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**Invitation:** Will arrive in your mailbox.  
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**For Fun:** Silent and live auctions to thrill and delight!

**Cost:** \$125 per person (or more, as you see fit)



**LOCAL ELECTIONS ARE UPON US!**

Here's a great opportunity to help your neighbors become better-informed voters. Bring friends and family to the LWVE candidate forums during the first week of March. All of our forums are open to the public.

The forums for Mayor and Assessor will be held on Sunday, **March 1**, at 3:00 p.m., at Northwestern University's Norris Center (1999 Campus Drive) in the McCormick Auditorium. Both forums will be moderated by Mary-Lou Aagaard, member of the LWV of Glenview and Election Laws Issues Specialist for the League of Women Voters of Illinois.

City Clerk Rodney Greene, uncontested candidate in the April 7 election, will be present to meet with the public in the auditorium lobby from 2:30-3:00. Free parking is available in the parking structure just south of Pick-Staiger Concert Hall.

Six separate Aldermanic forums will be on held Saturday, **March 7**, at the Evanston Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue:

10:00 -11:00 a.m.: Wards 1, 4, 5

11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Wards 6, 7, 9.

Our moderators will be Robin LaBedz, LWV of Arlington Heights; Hollis Burgess, LWV of Glencoe; and Diane Onixt, LWV of Chicago.

Candidates for the three uncontested races (Wards 2, 3, and 8) also will be in attendance to meet with constituents from 10:00-11:00 a.m.

**Any questions?**

**Contact Judy Hoffman at judhof@aol.com, 847.491.6275.**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

*Please refer to articles for detailed information.*

**LWVE Candidate Forums**

Sun., March 1, :2:30-4:30 p.m.; NU's Norris Center  
Sat., March 7, 10 a.m.-noon, Evanston Civic Center

**LWVE Program Planning Meeting**

Thurs., March 5, 6:30 p.m., home of Carol Hirsch

**LWVE Voter Registration**

Sat. and Sun., March 7 and 8, 1-4 p.m.  
Evanston Public Library (main library)

**Voter Registration at City Clerk's Office**

Sat., March 7, 9 a.m.-noon  
First Floor, Evanston Civic Center

**North Shore LWVs'**

**"Women's History Month" Luncheon**

Sunday, March 8, 2009; 11:45 a.m.  
Highland Park Country Club

**Last Day to Register for April Election**

Tues., March 10

**"Where Does Cook County Spend Our Money?"**

Sat., March 14, 9:30 a.m.  
Palos Heights Library

**LWVE Education Fund Benefit**

Sat., April 25, 6 p.m.  
Evanston Golf Club

**Next LWVE Board Meeting**

Thurs., March 12, 7-9 p. m.  
King Home, 1555 Oak Ave., Evanston  
All members are welcome.

**COMBINED NORTH SHORE LWVs'  
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH LUNCHEON**



*Please bring non-perishable food to help stock  
the shelves of local food pantries.*

**Speaker:** Nicole Mitchell, flutist, composer, and band-leader will talk on "Women in Jazz – Their Struggles and Successes"

**Date:** Sunday, March 8, 2009

**Time:** Reception at 11:45 a.m.; lunch at 12:15; speaker at 1

**Location:** Highland Park Country Club,  
1202 Park Avenue West, Highland Pk.

**Cost:** \$35

**RSVP:** By March 1. Send a check payable to "LWVIL Ed Fund" to Hollis Burgess,  
945 Valley Road, Glencoe, IL 60022

**Questions?** Call 847-604-1207, Glencoe extension

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Evanston residents are about to elect high-level officials for city and state government. As was the case in last fall's national elections, the incumbent executive officer is not running for re-election, and the newly elected government will face daunting economic times and hard choices. The new Evanston government will make decisions having a tremendous impact on all of us. Yet when I speak to many co-workers, neighbors, and others in the community, I don't sense the same level of urgency that we felt in November.

As current president of the League of Women Voters of Evanston, I am increasingly aware of the critical role the League plays in local government – and of how few people understand that. Many residents are aware that the LWV hosts candidate forums and registers voters at election time. Most League members and government officials are aware of the League's rich history and its contributions; *but more people need to know.*

Nancy Bashook, a member of our Board of Directors, oversees the LWVE's Observer Corps, members who observe City Council meetings and ancillary committee meetings; document the content and process of the meetings; and post their reports on the LWVE Website. Our League often gives feedback to the City of Evanston, with suggestions for improving practices and structure. Simply put, the League offers an efficient means of monitoring the working of local government.

Judy Hoffman, also a Board member, is our Voter Service chair. Her efforts in coordinating candidate forums and voter registration have been outstanding. And, behind the scenes, numerous other League members are working to formulate questions, arrange logistics, and attempt to present forums that best inform citizens. League forums – unlike many others – never focus on single issues, but take a comprehensive look at policy.

Betty Hayford, another LWVE Board member, also serves on the Board of the Cook County League. For over a year, Betty has participated on a committee studying employment practices in Cook County. Recently, she and other LWVCC activists met with County Board president Todd Stroger and Cook County Chief Financial Officer Donna Dunning, to discuss ways to improve Cook County government. The Cook County League also worked with local Leagues on poll-reporting during the fall elections, identifying inconsistencies and problems and reporting them to County Clerk David Orr. LWVE Board member Melissa Leasia was our local poll-reporting organizer.

Why am I preaching to the choir?

*Because we must do a better job at promoting ourselves.* Each of us has a responsibility to appreciate how much our fellow League members accomplish and contribute. We have a responsibility to support them by attending forums and meetings, reading Observer reports and studies, and encouraging others to do the same. We share the responsibility of participating in our government actively, both as citizens and as League members. As we choose a new administration for our city, let's be as engaged as we were in choosing a new administration for our country.

Best to all,

**Karen**



### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF EVANSTON

2100 Ridge Avenue  
Evanston, Illinois 60201

847-866-7844

Office E-Mail: lwvevanston@att.net

Web Site: www.lwve.org

#### ELECTED OFFICERS

President	Karen Hunt
VP-Monthly Programs	Toni Gilpin
VP-Local Program	Gloria Callaci
Planning	
Treasurer	Barbara Fowler
Secretary	Betty Hayford

#### ELECTED DIRECTORS

Action Alerts	Sonia Evenstad
Local Government / Observer Corps	Nancy Bashook
Member-Interests Database	Susan Black
Membership	Kathy Tate-Bradish
Newsletter ( <i>Intercom</i> )	Karen Telser
Voter Service	Judy Hoffman
Members-At-Large	Jessica Feldman Mimi Gilpin Melissa Leasia

#### NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Valerie Krejcie and Jeanie Ramsey

#### OFF-BOARD DIRECTORS

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Holiday Book-Wrapping: Diana Durkes, Sonia Evenstad  
Membership Database: Janet Kittlaus  
Membership Directory: Diane Korling  
*Intercom* Mailings: Karina Wang, Diane Miller  
LWVIL Phonathon: Yvonne Vanden Avenue  
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Webmaster: Susan Black

#### THE INTERCOM

March, 2009 Vol. 88, No. 7

**THE INTERCOM** is the newsletter of the  
League of Women Voters® of Evanston.  
*Ten issues are published each year.*

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through citizen education and advocacy.

*The LWVE welcomes men as well as women and encourages all residents of our diverse community to participate.*



**FROM SOUP TO NUTS!**

To see the League at its very best, join LWVE friends at the home of Carol Hirsch for an evening of brain-storming about what we want our League to focus on next year, as well as how we'd like the Illinois League to spend its time and money over the next *two* years.

Have you ever wondered why we haven't addressed some specific issue recently? It's because it wasn't voted into our "local program" for the year. Are you burning to have our League turn its attention to a topic that's near and dear to your heart? Bring it up at this planning meeting.

- Date:** Tuesday, March 5, 2009
- Time:** 6:30 p.m.
- Location:** The home of the always-gracious Carol Hirsch, 2800 Lakeside Court (car-pooling is advised and available)
- RSVP:** carol2800@comcast.net
- Food:** Light dinner of soup, bread, and dessert
- Cost:** Nothing!



Aunt Carrie wants YOU to take part in this!

**The 2009-2010 LWVE Membership Directory Is in the Works!**

We want to be sure that the information is correct, and that all current members are included.

If you –

- Wish to make a change to your entry, let Janet Kittlaus know ASAP.
- Know of someone who is about to join, give that person a nudge so her/his name will be in the new directory.
- Have a spouse/partner/other family member who hasn't yet joined our League, remember that each additional household member can join for \$30!

**CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF MARJORIE FISHER**

By Jan Otwell

*The death of Marjorie Fisher, a long-time League member, occurred just as the last issue of the Intercom was going to press. While we included a brief tribute in that issue, there is so much more to Marjorie's life, that we wanted to offer a longer story here.*

Marjorie Fisher, a 40-year resident of Evanston and a long-time League member, died January 16 following a second stroke. She was a dedicated environmentalist and nutritionist and, in particular, was an activist against pesticides and toxic chemicals.

Born in Vancouver, British Columbia, Marjorie did graduate work at UC-Berkeley, where she met her husband, Walter, an economics professor. They married in 1948 and then moved to Manhattan, Kansas, where they lived for 15 years before moving to Evanston.

For several years, Marjorie was President of the Lake Michigan Inter-League Group (LMILG), a coalition of the state Leagues of Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, and Illinois, dedicated to the health of the Lake and its shoreline. Marjorie's work on pesticides is reflected in a position adopted by LWVIL in 1991, based on a 1990 LMILG position which reads in part: *LWVIL supports the reduction of exposure to all pesticides and urges the use of non-toxic alternatives.* In 2003 she received the "Lifetime Achievement Award" from Beyond Pesticides, a national organization.

Marjorie was an active member of the Unitarian Church of Evanston, and the original chair of its Green Sanctuary

Committee. She worked in Evanston's sustainability movement and in 2008 received the "Leadership in Sustainability Award" from the Network for Evanston's Future.

She taught statistics for six years at the University of Chicago, founded the Nutrition for Optional Health Association, fought for the Equal Rights Amendment and other women's rights issues, traveled, attended concerts and plays, and participated in many sports.

Marjorie is survived by her three children, Andrew, Carol, and Dorothy, and by five grandchildren. A memorial service will be held May 9 at 10 a.m. at the Unitarian Church of Evanston. Memorials may be sent to the Unitarian Church, 1330 Ridge Ave., Evanston 60201; or to Beyond Pesticides, 701 E St., SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.





**LWVCC REPORT ON SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY POLL-REPORTING EFFORT**

The day of the November 4, 2008, General Election saw many LWV poll-reporters talking with election judges and other election workers throughout suburban Cook County. Reporters asked just a few questions about staffing, training, the voting process, the voting equipment, supplies, support provided, and the physical sites. Below are a few of the comments in the LWVCC's final report to Suburban Cook County Clerk David Orr.

- LWV volunteers covered 407 precincts. The consensus is that the voting process has improved steadily since the first poll-reporting effort in 2006.
- 78% of the precincts had 5 or more judges, as opposed to only 50% for the 2006 primary. Where precincts had fewer than 5 judges, there were problems; in some precincts reporters stated that more than 5 judges were needed.
- The number-one equipment-related comment was a desire for more touch-screen machines.
- The number-one comment for improving the process related to the large number of early and absentee voters. There was insufficient time to stamp the Applications for Ballot for those voters prior to the opening of the polls.
- 85% of the polling sites reported on were deemed adequate.
- Several commented that the County Clerk's call center staff were helpful and very courteous, and that calls were answered promptly (for the most part) – an improvement over past years.

Between the League's effectiveness at poll-reporting and the seriousness with which Mr. Orr takes our information, the election process is certain to become more efficient, better staffed, and smoother with every passing year.

**A Few More Chances to Register for the April Election**

The LWVE will be registering voters at the Evanston Public Library (main location) on Sat., March 7, and Sun., March 8, from 1:00-4:00 p.m. Organizer Jessie Feldman will rush over to open after finishing up her work on the aldermanic candidate forums on Saturday. Jessie, we can't thank you enough!

The City Clerk's office will be open for voter registration on Sat., March 7, from 9 a.m. to noon. The last day a resident will be able to register for the April election is March 10.

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**ANOTHER GREAT ISSUES BRIEFING FROM THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ILLINOIS (LWVIL)**

**By Janet Kittlaus**

The 2009 LWVIL Annual Issues Briefing was a packed day. House Majority Leader Barbara Flynn Currie addressed “The Challenges Facing Illinois State Government.” Based on current revenue estimates and spending obligations through 6/30/09, Illinois faces a \$3 billion deficit. The federal stimulus will help but not solve this situation; further, “shovel-ready” projects require matching money that currently does not exist. Significant cuts in spending are not likely, but raising revenue is equally problematic – a frustrating situation.

Elissa Johnson from the U.S. Census Bureau emphasized the importance of an accurate count in 2010, since census numbers determine redistricting and the level of federal grants received by states and local communities. The 1980 and 1990 censuses counted less than 50% of certain populations; but the 2000 census was the Chicago region’s most successful ever, because of a strong public-outreach partnership of government with the media, business, and various community-based groups. The LWVIL has received a grant for a two-year project (involving local Leagues) aimed at ensuring a true count of Illinois residents.

David Morrison, Deputy Director of Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, thinks this is an opportune time to press for campaign finance reform, since Illinois has a new Governor and a new Senate leader. He suggested two goals: limit campaign contributions and require public financing. Currently most contributions come from less than 5% of the population! Those contributors naturally expect a return for their “investment.” Acknowledging that public financing is costly, Morrison suggested that the current system also is costly, when jobs and contracts are improperly obtained and inevitably overpriced.

After lunch were workshops on Election Law, Environment/Climate Change, and Judicial Performance Evaluation. I attended the Environment/Climate Change Workshop, which dealt in great detail with current legislation, water issues, energy issues, and emissions.

The Annual Issues Briefing is an opportunity to hear well-versed speakers provide insights into the critical issues of our times. And it’s always energizing to meet and interact with members of other local Leagues, as we inform ourselves so we can better carry out our mission to educate our communities.



Four LWVE members who attended the LWVIL’s 2009 Issues Briefing are (left to right) Judy Hoffman, Janet Kittlaus, Karen Hunt, and Gloria Callaci.

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**cassona**



Spring ahead!

**REFORM IN COOK COUNTY: SIGNS OF SPRING****By Betty Hayford**

The League of Women Voters of Cook County (LWVCC), a vital and impressive group, has for several years been studying different aspects of Cook County government. On Saturday, March 14, the LWVCC will host a meeting at the Palos Heights Library, starting at 9:30 a.m., to release some of its findings and to urge Cook County residents to press their County Commissioners to make reforms to improve the efficiency and reduce the costs of our massive County government.

At the March 14 meeting, the LWVCC will present the findings of their recent study titled, "Where Does Cook County Spend Our Money?" as well as highlighting new resources for ongoing reforms. "Where Does Cook County Spend Our Money?" was distributed in November to elected officials in Cook County and the media, and it is being posted on the LWVCC Web site. It examines employment practices in Cook County government, particularly the departments under the Cook County Board president, which comprise the majority of employees and budgets. It demonstrates the difficulty of analyzing the budget: the lack of transparency and information in public documents handicaps citizens who want to press their Commissioners to work toward a more responsible budget. Since the study, the Bureau of Health and Hospital Services has been put under an independent board that pledges to become more transparent and accountable.

The League is urging that the Cook County Board president and commissioners adopt a policy of greater transparency, which would include a comprehensive organization chart of elected officials and their governmental functions, along with a list of top management positions under each official. These organization charts should be posted to the County government web site. In addition, all employee positions in Cook County should have a current job description, cross-referenced to the applicable department on the organization chart. The study demonstrated that these basic employment essentials currently are not available.

Fortunately, informed citizens working for reform now have two powerful allies. In 2006, the judge overseeing the Shakman Decree appointed Judge Julie Nowicki as Compliance Administrator for the decree, with authority to investigate past violations of the ban on political hiring and employment, and to oversee revision of employment policies and practices. The next year, the Board of Commissioners created a restructured position of Independent Inspector

*(Continued on the next page)*

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## WE WELCOME THESE NEW MEMBERS!

Anne Berkeley (joined through the LWVUS)  
1204 Crain Street, Evanston, IL 60202  
berkeley8@aolcom

Jay Lytle  
2215 Central Park Avenue, Evanston, IL 60201  
847-733-7400; jaylytle@comcast.net

Paula Danoff  
182 Fuller Lane, Winnetka, IL 60093  
847-910-0246; paula.danoff@gmail.com

Andrea Rosen  
8214 Keystone Avenue, Skokie, IL 60076  
847-675-6215; andirosen@hotmail.com

Cynthia Early  
1516 Cleveland Street, Evanston, IL 60202-2028  
847-830-6276; Cynthia\_early@hotmail.com

Jody Wilson  
1201 Hull Terrace 60202  
847-644-2978; jodywilson@comcast.net

Martin Goldblatt (spouse of Gail Lovinger Goldblatt)  
2225 Simpson Street, Evanston, IL 60201  
847-328-1728

REFORM IN COOK COUNTY (*continued*)

General, and Patrick Blanchard, an experienced State's Attorney, was appointed to the position in fall of 2008. The IIG Office has the mandate to detect, deter, and prevent corruption, fraud, waste, mismanagement and unlawful political discrimination in Cook County government, and the power to investigate and prosecute.

These issues are important to all of us who live in Cook County. You can learn more at the meeting on March 14; by looking at the LWVCC web site, [www.cookcounty.il.lwvnet.org](http://www.cookcounty.il.lwvnet.org); or by contacting Karen Hunt or Betty Hayford, who have been working on the study. They can also provide directions to the meeting.

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**IN THIS ISSUE:**

- Calendar of events
- Candidate forums soon!
- North Shore Leagues' Women's History Month luncheon
- Poll-reporting report from the LWV of Cook County
- April 25 Ed. Fund dinner with Clarence Page
- Brain-storming for our "Local Program" (next year's focus)
- "Where Does Cook County Spend Our Money?"
- A fond farewell to Marjorie Fisher
- Recap of the 2009 LWVIL Issues Briefing



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*I know real estate.*  
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