



PLEASE MAIL YOUR RESPONSE CARD AND CHECK ASAP!

We hope you can all attend the April 25th Education Fund benefit with journalist, author, and commentator Clarence Page. If for some reason you did not receive your invitation in the mail, or if you have any questions, please leave a message at the LWVE office, 847-866-7844.

It's not too late to reserve a seat for yourself and your guests.

Topic: *An Unprecedented Presidency: The First 90 Days of the Obama Administration*

Time: 6 p.m.

Location: Evanston Golf Club,
4401 Dempster, Skokie

For Fun: Meaningful and exciting silent- and live-auction items for anyone who is interested in the democratic process.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Please refer to articles for more information.

PROGRAM ON JUDICIAL REFORM

Lunch with attorney and LWV activist
Michelle Jordan
Thurs., April 16, 11:45 a.m.
Gio, 1631 Chicago Ave., Evanston



EDUCATION FUND BENEFIT

Sat., April 25, 6-9 p.m.
Evanston Golf Club
4401 Dempster, Skokie

Questions: Call 847-866-7844

**NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE COMPACT
CONSENSUS MEETING**

Thurs., April 30, 7-9:30 p. m.
New Trier HS, Northfield campus
7 Happ Rd., Room C-234

"GREEN" HOUSE TOUR

Sun, May 3, 3-5 p. m.
2815 Lakeside Court, Evanston

LWVCC ANNUAL MEETING

Mon., May 18, 9 a.m. - 2 p. m.
Brookfield Zoo, Discovery Center
Cook County State's Attorney Anita Alvarez
will speak at 11 a.m.

LWVE ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER

Tues., May 19, 5:30 p. m.
King Home, 1555 Oak Ave., Evanston
Program: "Everything You Always Wanted to
Know about **Evanston Government***
*But Didn't Know to Ask"

**WHOSE BEAUTIFUL, YET
"GREEN" HOUSE IS THIS?**

The house pictured at the right is the home of Eleanor Revelle. It was designed and constructed according to environmentally thoughtful, sustainable practices.



To take an informative tour of Eleanor's home while learning how you can better reduce your own "carbon footprint" on Mother Earth, join LWVE friends on Sunday, May 3, from 3 to 5 p.m., at the Revelles' home, 2815 Lakeside Court, Evanston.

Please RSVP to the LWVE office, 847-866-7844.



2009 LWVE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY



We welcome new members Coleen Burrus and Kathy Lefco. Please look for their contact information in the new LWVE Membership Directory, which should arrive in your mailbox no later than May 1.

**COME TO LUNCH, LEARN ABOUT
JUDICIAL REFORM**

LWVE members are invited to gather on Thursday, April 16, for lunch and a very informative presentation on judicial reform. The speaker will be Michelle Jordan, attorney for the Illinois Campaign to Prevent Handgun Violence, VP of Development on the LWVIL Board, and past LWVE president.

Date: Thursday, April 16, 2009
Time: 11:45 a.m.
Location: Gio, 1631 Chicago Avenue, Evanston
RSVP: Call the LWVE office (847-866-7844) by Monday, April 15, and leave a message.
Cost: \$20, payable at the door

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



I'm as busy as a spider spinning daydreams, I'm as giddy as a baby on a swing. I haven't seen a crocus or a rosebud, or a robin on the wing...but I feel so gay, in a melancholy way, that it might as well be spring...It might as well be spring...

Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein II

I just received an e-mail from my college roommate, now retired after a career in teaching, celebrating the beauty of spring. We went to undergraduate school about twenty miles from the Canadian border in upstate New York and shared the joy of spring for several seasons. She now lives near Asheville, North Carolina, and I reside in Evanston. It would appear she learned more about escaping upstate New York winters than I did. But, technically, spring *is* here in Evanston; and soon we will also be enjoying the beauty of the season. Throughout the year, the League has remained busy and engaged, and spring is no different.

We just finished the mayoral and aldermanic forums, which were informative, well attended, and professionally choreographed by our wonderful Voter Service chair, Judy Hoffman. My thanks to Judy, our forum moderators, the Local Government Committee, and the numerous volunteers who helped make the forums a resounding success.

We have many important and exciting events coming up in April and May, which I hope you will all support and attend. On April 16th at Gio, 1631 Chicago Avenue, our own Michelle Jordan, will present a luncheon program on judicial reform. Currently a member of the LWVIL board, Michelle has been actively involved with this issue for some time.

On April 25th, the LWVE will hold its Education Fund benefit at the Evanston Golf Club, with Clarence Page as our speaker. Mr. Page will share his thoughts on the first ninety days of President Obama's administration. Proceeds from the fundraiser will be deposited into our education fund, a separate a 501(C)3 organization, which supports our many educational efforts. This year, with event sponsorship lagging in general, the attendance of members and guests is critical.

On Sunday, May 3rd, Eleanor Revelle will open her very special house to us for a "green house" tour from 3-5 PM. Please come to tour Eleanor's beautiful home, and participate in a discussion on how each of us can reduce our carbon imprint by becoming "greener" in our daily lives.

The League of Women Voters of Evanston's Annual Meeting will be held on the evening of Tuesday, May 19th, at the King Home. Prior to the business portion of the meeting, our dedicated and highly informed Local Government Committee will explain many facets of Evanston's government. If you've long been harboring a list of questions about how Evanston government functions, but you didn't know what or where to ask, this is your big chance. After our highly informative and interesting program, we will have a chance to vote on next year's Board, budget, and program. Please do come to this important meeting, and invite guests (members and non-members) to attend the program and learn about our city's government. With our local elections just completed, there will be much to discuss.

As always, I look forward to seeing you at the coming League events. And remember, even if it doesn't feel like spring...it might as well be!

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 Telsler |
| Voter Service | Judy Hoffman |
| Members-At-Large | Jessica Feldman Mimi Gilpin Melissa Leasia |

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Valerie Krejcie and Jeanie Ramsey

OFF-BOARD DIRECTORS

Newsletter: Helen Gagel, Connie Goddard
Directory of Elected Officials: Jackie McGuire
Office Volunteers: Katy Compere Pendleton
Fourth of July Parade: Voula Moragiannis
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 Avenne
Publicity: Patrick Keenan-Devlin
Webmaster: Susan Black

THE INTERCOM

April, 2009 Vol. 88, No. 8

*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.



LWVIL STATE OF THE STATE PROGRAM: “SOAKED IN CORRUPTION”

By Betty Hayford

Puns aside, steady rain did not deter nearly 300 enthusiastic members of many local Illinois Leagues from attending the League of Women Voters of Illinois’ annual “State of the State” luncheon on February 26 at the Union League Club of Chicago. An attentive group gathered to support the LWV’s mission of encouraging informed and active participation in government; to recognize two awardees; and to help replenish the LWVIL Education Fund coffers.

The LWVIL presented Carol Marin, political columnist for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, political editor of NBC5 News, and regular interviewer on WTTW’s “Chicago Tonight” the 2009 Award for Outstanding Political Reporting. As the keynote speaker for the event, she addressed the issue, “Is Illinois Finally Ready for Reform?” Unfortunately, she reported that the evidence suggests that commitment to reform is still weak in Illinois, and that our state government is “soaked in corruption.”

Ms. Marin briefly summarized numerous examples of political corruption at all levels of government in Illinois, and in both major parties. Her view was intensified by the sentencing of former Chicago alderman Edward Vyrdolyak to probation – coincidentally on the day of the luncheon – despite his plea of “Guilty.” She contended that corrupt politicians must be punishable by the courts and the voters before reforms can

take root. She expressed hope, however, that grass-roots pressure from voters on specific issues would have an impact.

During the program, Jan Czarnik, Executive Director of the LWVIL, presented an award for Civic Participation to Paul Boulis, President of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois, for encouraging employees to volunteer in their communities, with a strong focus on the League. In the past year, BCBS employees were key volunteers in the League project to register voters and oversee mock elections in the Chicago public high schools; and they also worked with the League to register hundreds of voters across the state.

It was announced that over the coming year the Illinois League, with the support of the Joyce Foundation, will be embarking on a “True Census Count” project to help ensure that Illinois achieves the most accurate count feasible of all of its residents for the 2010 Census. Census data influence decisions on how more than \$300 billion in annual federal dollars are allocated and spent, the number of Representatives each state elects to the House of Representatives, and the delineation of boundaries for state and local legislative districts. This project may involve the Evanston League, as well.



Left to right are Diane Korling, Katy Pendleton, Jessica Feldman, and Karen Hunt



Dynamic Duo: Judy Elsass (right) with Barb Marsh, president of the LWV of Glenview



Another Dynamic Duo: Michelle and Dan Jordan



Chicago 4th Ward alderwoman Toni Preckwinkle, speaker Carol Marin, and Cynthia Canary, Exec. Dir. of the non-partisan organization Illinois Campaign for Political Reform.

COMING TO THE LWVE IN MAY: ONLINE PAYMENT

By Susan Black

In the November *Intercom* we reported that the LWVE Board had approved enabling members to make online payments – such as for membership and special events – through our Website, using PayPal, a secured service based in San Jose, California. Using PayPal, anyone who visits our Website will be able to make payments using her/his Visa, MasterCard, Discover, or American Express credit card.

We anticipate going live with this in May. Watch for more information about it in the next *Intercom* and on our Website, www.lwve.org!



KUDOS AND THANKS TO OUR VOTER SERVICE VOLUNTEERS!

By Judy Hoffman

The LWVE kept busy this election season, producing two days of candidate forums and an extensive “Voter’s Guide.”

My heartfelt thanks to the many enthusiastic volunteers who contributed so expertly to our work, with special recognition to the forum committee: Sue Calder, Jessie Feldman, Voula Moragiannis, and Eleonora DiLiscia.

Sue Calder, Sue Brady, and the Local Government Committee took on the project of developing the questions for the “Voter’s Guide” for publication in the *Evanston Review*. We have had tremendous feedback on the “Voter’s Guide” questions. It provided a top-notch Civics lesson for Evanston voters. The “Guide” can be accessed on the “Voting in Evanston” page on the LWVE Website, www.lwve.org.

All 22 assessor, mayoral, and aldermanic candidates participated in our forums. The March 1 assessor and mayoral forums were held at Northwestern University’s Norris Center. The March 7 aldermanic forums were held at the Evanston Civic Center. We are grateful to our colleagues who contributed their valuable time to serve as moderators – they all moderated two separate forums! Thanks to Mary-Lou Agaard, Glenview; Hollis Burgess, Glencoe; Robin LaBedz, Arlington Heights/Mount Prospect/Buffalo Grove; and Diane Onixt, Chicago.

All of the LWVE forums were expertly filmed by the Evanston Community Media Center (ECMC). This was a huge commitment on their part, with a multi-camera setup at all forums. ECMC Executive Director Steve Bartlebaugh and the ECMC crew went out of their way to help us with the overall forum production. Telecasts of the forums were aired repeatedly in March and were part of the planned ECMC forum marathon the first week of April.



Fifth Ward candidates Adrian Dortch and Delores Holmes (standing, l-r) speak with constituents after their forum

LWVE forum volunteer Trink Newman speaks with 4th Ward candidate Donald Wilson after the March 7 forum



Retiring 9th Ward Alderwoman Anjana Hansen and 9th Ward aldermanic candidate Coleen Burrus, following the March 7 forum



A few of the expert volunteers for the March 7 aldermanic forums: (l-r) LWVE members Trink Newman, Dorrie Lloyd-Still, Jessie Feldman, and guest moderator, Robin LaBedz, LWV of Arlington Heights/ Mount Prospect/ Buffalo Grove

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PRIORITY ISSUES FOR THE LWVE IN THE 2009-2010 LEAGUE YEAR

By Betty Hayford

On March 5th several League of Women Voters of Evanston members met to consider what we want to be our “Local Program” – priorities for action and for speaker programs – next year. The meeting was hosted by Carol Hirsch, who graciously provided a rich vegetable soup and hearty rye bread to fuel the discussion.

A wide range of issues and concerns was discussed, foreshadowing some lively meetings next year, and suggesting that we will be in a position to contribute to community dialogue on some important issues. LWVE president Karen Hunt reminded the group that local Leagues cannot take any action that contradicts state or national positions; and she encouraged all League members to familiarize themselves with current state and national positions, which are posted on the LWVIL and LWVUS Web sites.

By the end of the evening we had narrowed our focus to two issues of current concern in Evanston. One is that of homeless students attending Evanston schools. The League will seek to determine the scope of the problem and our school districts’ current response to it. There will be speakers, presentations, and possibly recommendations for more effective solutions.

The other issue is the role of TIFs – Tax Increment Financing districts – in Evanston. We will review locations, extents, original purposes, and actual implementations of TIFs, and then try to determine if closer oversight and clearer accountability are needed.

If, at our May Annual Meeting, these topics are adopted as next year’s Local Program, working groups will be formed to educate our membership and the larger community about them. Presentations could be developed, and proposals to Evanston agencies could be made.

A number of additional issues were raised for possible action in 2009-2010, including working with the LWVIL project to ensure an accurate census in 2010 and exploring the role that the League could play in monitoring the management and impact of federal stimulus funds in Evanston. There is continuing interest in many other relevant LWVE positions, such as merit selection of judges, environmental issues, educational quality, and criminal justice.

There will be opportunities at the Annual Meeting and at late-summer meetings for interested members to come together to develop a strategy to address these issues, refine the questions, identify knowledgeable resource persons, and shape programs. Our Local Program topics will also be listed in the “Interests” section of next year’s Membership Renewal form.

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LWVE AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE EVANSTON WOMEN'S HISTORY PROJECT

BY BETTY HAYFORD

An energetic group of LWVE members gathered for lunch at Gio on March 26, to hear Lori Osborne explain the goals and focus of the Evanston Women's History Project. Ms. Osborne, Archivist of the Evanston History Center, described two goals of the three-year project: to bring Evanston women's history to life, and to make Evanston a destination for women's history for tourists and scholars. These goals will be met by the –

- Creation of a database of notable Evanston women.
- Designation of a national thematic history district in Evanston, centered on Evanston women.
- Production of educational and tourism materials to illustrate project findings.

The project was begun in 2007 with support and coordination from the Evanston Community Foundation. As well as outlining the project overall, Ms. Osborne presented some photos and documents from the collection, including the early history of the League of Women Voters. The Evanston League was founded in 1922, shortly after the creation of the national League (1920), and for more than 80 years has focused on engaging citizens in the political and governmental process and promoting examination of important issues.

All those who heard the rich presentation left with an interest in following developments of the Evanston Women's History Project and in continuing to carry out the mission of the League.

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE "NATIONAL POPULAR VOTE" STUDY CONSENSUS MEETING

Delegates at the 2008 LWVUS Convention voted to study the advisability of using the "National Popular Vote Compact" (NPV) as a method for electing the U.S. President. A national study requires input from local Leagues.

The NPV would obviate the need for a Constitutional Amendment to abolish the Electoral College, and it would assure that the candidate who received the most votes would become President.

A joint meeting will be held by the Evanston, Wilmette, and Winnetka-Northfield-Kenilworth LWVs on Thursday, April 30, 7:00-9:30 p.m., at New Trier High School's Northfield campus, 7 Happ Road, Room C-234. We will explore the pros and cons, and determine whether there is a consensus on the questions presented.

Background materials can be found on the Web at <http://www.lwv.org/npv>. An information packet will be available at the Evanston Public Library, at the 3rd-floor Reference Desk.

If you have any questions, contact Judy Hoffman, at jhoffman@nsls.info or 847-491-6275.

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"WHERE DOES COOK COUNTY SPEND OUR MONEY?"

That was the question shaping a study by a committee of the League of Women Voters of Cook County, who presented their work to a crowd of more than 70 on March 14th at the Palos Heights Public Library.

The study focused on the departments under the supervision of the County Board president, including Health and Hospital Services, which was put under the control of an independent Board in summer, 2008. Because the president prepares the budget and manages a large proportion of County employees, transparency regarding these departments is particularly important.

The LWVCC committee found that the budget and other published documents contain numerous inconsistencies and contradictions and are not clear as to where employees are placed or who supervises them. One recommendation was that a clear, accurate organization chart of County government be created, to enable citizens to see who is spending their tax money, and on what.

New elements are working to improve accountability and end political hiring: the fall, 2008, establishment of an independent Inspector General, providing continuing oversight of hiring practices and government efficiency; the appointment of a Director of Human Resources from outside of Cook County; and an active Compliance Administrator to enforce the Shakman Decree, which bars political hiring.

Several key officials in County government attended the meeting and contributed their perspectives, including Patrick Blanchard, the independent Inspector General; Joseph Sova, the Director of the Bureau of Human Resources; Donna Dunnings, Chief Finance Officer; and Takashi Reinhold, Budget Director.

LWVCC OBSERVER REPORTS HAVE MOVED TO A NEW SITE

The LWV of Cook County has a long tradition of monitoring the Cook County Board and related governmental bodies through its Observer Corps. Currently, observers are focusing on the Cook County Board, the Health and Hospital System Board, and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. They soon will add the Advisory Board of the Juvenile Temporary Detention Center to the list. An archive of Observer reports is available at the LWVCC Website, cookcounty.il.lwvnet.org.

Since January of this year, Observer reports are posted on the LWVCC's new blog, accessible through a link on their Website, or directly at www.cookcountyobserver.blogspot.com.

You may subscribe to the blog if you use an RSS Feed Reader, by clicking on the "Subscribe to Posts" button on the lower right of the blog site. Please also consider bookmarking the LWVCC Website as well as the blog site, as this will increase Google's priority rankings for both.


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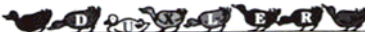
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In this issue:

- April 25th fund-raiser with speaker Clarence Page. Come one, come all, bring friends!
- Luncheon program on judicial reform
- Consensus meeting: learn about the National Popular Vote Compact
- Enjoy, and learn from, a tour of a truly “green” house
- Next year’s proposed “Local Program”
- Recap of LWVIL “State of the State” program
- Applause, applause for our Voter Service chairwoman and volunteers!
- The Evanston Women’s History project
- Our May Annual Meeting: Everything you always wanted to know about Evanston government*
* but didn’t know to ask.
- LWVCC Annual Meeting



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