



Highland Park League of Women Voters Bulletin

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*Democracy is Not
a Spectator Sport*

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NEW WEBSITE:

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TOWN HALL MEETING

7:00 pm Tuesday, October 30, 2007
Highland Park Country Club

As part of the *Climate Matters* project, our League is hosting a Town Hall Meeting with the City of Highland Park. Bring your friends and join City officials and other experts to learn:

- What the City is doing now
- What it plans to do
- **What we all can do to make a Greener City**

OUR CLIMATE MATTERS

A Four Day Symposium on Global Warming
October 18-21, 2007
The Glen in Glenview

Some of the topics to be presented include:

Friday Cool Jazz

Saturday

Chicago: Setting the Tone for the Region

Global Warming Here at Home: How Lake Michigan is Faring

Energy Sources

Green Architecture

Films will run throughout the day on Saturday

Sunday

Making Your State Green

State Town Hall Meetings

Environmental Law and Policy

Making Your Town Green

Federal Town Hall Meeting

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

September 1, 2007

How exciting! Our League starts its eightieth year, having been founded just eight years after the League of Women Voters of the United States.

There have been forty-three Presidents or Co-Presidents in Highland Park, while the League has maintained its mission and purposes despite the many changes in the world. Two interesting differences: our members are no longer referred to by their husbands' first names (see the Handbook and Membership Directory), and we are requesting your e-mail address. You have our assurance that your e-mail will not be divulged to anyone other than the League, and you will not be deluged with myriad extraneous info. As you know, the League takes action on governmental policies and measures that are in the public interest and that conform to our principles. Having your e-mail allows us to send you action input in a very timely manner. Since printing is costly, using e-mail may also allow us to reduce spending. If we do not have your e-mail address as yet, please forward it to Membership Chair Nancy Blatt.

The Highland Park League of Women Voters represents an effective, influential, and highly respected voice in the Leagues of Lake County, Illinois and the United States. You write only one check to receive a wealth of issue-oriented material from all these sources. Be on the lookout for Membership materials, since renewal time is imminent. Along with your check, please complete the **Member Response** form regarding your availability. We hope you will join us in long or short-term enterprises.

We are energized, raring to go and available to present to you upcoming activities as they materialize! Here are some current ones: our League has joined with other local Leagues to be a part of the events of **Our Climate Matters**, which take place Thursday, October 18, through Sunday, October 21. Contact Margie Ettlinger at 433-9414 for further information.

Watch for a possible **Tenth District Candidates Forum** the week of January 14 or January 21, 2008 if there is a contest for the Democratic candidate for U.S. Representative. Be prepared for an upcoming **National League Consensus on Immigration**, which is due in February. We expect to give you the background information and cited questions as soon as we receive everything. We need you to work on this heady, relevant consensus.

At our annual meeting, the membership directed considerations of two important local issues: the reconfiguration of the lakefront shoreline and the Karger facilities. How about contributing to one or both of these committees that are in the process of forming? Let us know.

At several venues and at last month's **Apple Tree Benefit**, (which was a great success, owing to Chairman Sue Wieseneck and her League volunteers), many of you told us about your appreciation of the League and made suggestions. If you would like to initiate a dialogue about the League, please e-mail, phone or catch us in the many local places we frequent. You can even be our guests for our ubiquitous coffee discussions, as we talk about the League, assisting us in this complex, issue-oriented world. We look forward to hearing from you.

Elaine and Rose

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LOCAL & REGIONAL NEWS

OUR CLIMATE MATTERS - A Global Warming Project **October 18-21, 2007**

IS IT JUST ME OR IS IT WARM OUT HERE?

Georgia Gebhardt, VP, Wilmette LWV

Though the issue of global warming and climate change has been around for a good many years, it is only in the past months that it has appeared regularly in the media and in conversation. As with many "hot" topics, there is a significant gap between what citizens believe and what the science tells us. In the summer of 2006 the Wilmette League made a commitment to develop a project which would help to inform North Shore citizens about global warming. What is it? How is it being addressed at the different levels of government? What can concerned citizens do in their own neighborhoods and homes?

The goal of ***Our Climate Matters-A Global Warming Project*** is to educate citizens to the issues and to address them at multiple levels: individual, community, state, federal and international.

The committee has planned a series of coordinated programs, each focusing on a different aspect of this problem, with most taking place over a four-day period at ***The Glen*** in Glenview. Some of the offerings will include prominent speakers, panels and workshops at which scientists, policy makers, business people, and citizens will discuss and share information and consider possible solutions. Some topics of interest: economic ramifications of action and no-action, environmental law and policy, green architecture, the health of Lake Michigan, ***Ways to Make your Town Green***, what is happening in governmental policy at the national, state and local level, and a ***Green*** film festival.

In addition, there will be various activities throughout the northern suburbs, depending upon local interest and needs. Libraries will be encouraged to host discussions of the ***One Book-Everybody Reads, Field Notes from a Catastrophe***, by Elizabeth Kolbert. Other possibilities include ***Green*** teas in neighborhoods and ***Cool Jazz and Warm Poetry***. Also, Town Hall meetings will be held to bring citizens and Village leaders together to share current practices and future plans to conserve energy.

On the face of it, it may seem overly ambitious to attack this issue on a local level. After all, global warming is so-well, global. Still, we have all been brought up on stories of small actions growing into significant movements. As a teacher, we often used a technique called, *Each one, teach one*. It's empowering to the individual, and you know what they always say about . . . *from tiny acorns . . .*

So do spread the word, form carpools, fire up that hybrid, or grab a bicycle. We'll see you at ***The Glen*** in October!

APPLETREE THEATER BENEFIT

Sue Wieseneck, Finance Chairman

Our benefit at **AppleTree Theater** on July 13th was a huge success. The play, ***Criminal Hearts*** was an offbeat comedy and audience response was positive. Everyone enjoyed the sumptuous desserts that were brought by the members. Special thanks are due to **Sunset Foods** for donating the fruit platter.

LOCAL & REGIONAL NEWS

NEW WEBSITE – TAKE A LOOK

We are delighted to announce that we have a brand new website –

"<http://www.lwvhp.org>"

Our previous website that was hosted by an Internet service via the Highland Park Public Library is no longer available. So we now have a new League-connected website, a new direct and simple name for the site as stated above and a totally new look. Take a moment and see for yourself. Right now, the site is operational, but only basic in content. We are in the process of adding the type of information one expects to see: government/election-related, League event-related, and Bulletin content-related.

In fact, our goal is to have Bulletin distribution via email and website access. This will result in considerable savings in printing and postage. Therefore, if you haven't already done so, please let us know an email address for you. We will use it strictly and only for HP League disseminated information.

Please send your name and an email address to:

email: info@lwvhp.org
snailmail: LWVHP, PO Box 396, HP, 60035.

LAKE MICHIGAN INTERLEAGUE ORGANIZATION Annual Meeting - October 5 and 6 Illinois Beach State Park

We have planned a varied schedule of events that we hope will pique your interest, beginning on Friday afternoon with a tour of the North Shore Sanitary District (NSSD) sludge burner in Zion. You may remember all of the controversy when NSSD replaced its traditional means of sludge disposal via landfilling with an innovative disposal process that combines the sludge drying and melting processes.

A tour of the *Des Plaines River Wetlands Demonstration Project*, a living laboratory designed to provide scientists the research opportunities necessary to study the function of wetlands, will follow. You will also have a guided *dunes walk*, as well as hear Highland Park leaguer Joyce O'Keefe among other interesting speakers.

Add your voice to our program for 2008 and beyond. In addition to the serious business of League, we always learn much of interest about the area in which we meet. We enjoy seeing old friends and making new ones, and most important of all --- we have fun!

Registration information coming soon, but save the date for all or part of this event.

**For further information,
call Marjie Ettlinger, 433-9414.**

HIGHLAND PARK LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

PO Box 396 Highland Park, IL 60035

Our new officers and their contact information.

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NEW WEBSITE

"<http://www.lwvhp.org>"

STATE CONVENTION NEWS

2007 BI-ANNUAL

ILLINOIS STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION

The *53rd State Convention of the League of Women Voters of Illinois* was held June 22-24, 2007, in Matteson, Illinois. Delegates from 34 local Illinois Leagues attended. Representing our Highland Park League were Judy Johnston, Lila Trotsky, Rose Feder and Faye Grossman, who also is a State Board Director.

At the session on Saturday, we were presented with the new budget, the newly-arrived at Immigration Consensus and program and action items for the next two years. Since voting on these items would not take place until Sunday, we had that evening and early the next morning to attend caucus sessions to help us make informed decisions. The main issues of contention were the wording of two points of the *State Immigration Consensus* and the consideration of a proposed action on *Judicial Evaluation* that was not included in the recommended program. The caucus sessions for these issues drew a lot of interest and led to well-reasoned resolutions.

The *State Immigration Consensus* that was approved was right in line with our Highland Park consensus. Please see **page 6** for the full wording.

The action item under discussion was proposed by the McLean County League. It calls for the creation of an *Illinois Judicial Evaluation Commission* for purposes of evaluating judicial candidates and disseminating the results to the public to provide voters with unbiased information. The action would be based on the existing State government position, *Citizens Right to Know*, and on the current action item, *Making Democracy Work*. The McLean County League has a core group of about a dozen people committed to working on this item and already had obtained a grant of \$4999 from the *US League*. In light of these considerations and the need for such information, the action item received strong support and was adopted. Please see **page 6** for the full wording.

Besides our Highland Park League delegation, our hometown was represented by comedian, political humorist, and Highland Park resident, Aaron Freeman, who cleverly honed in on League-related humor as part of the Saturday night banquet entertainment.

2007 BI-ANNUAL

ILLINOIS STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION, CON'T.

Suffice to say we delegates left the convention having enjoyed and appreciated another League opportunity to network with members of other Leagues and to reinforce our value of the existence of the *League of Women Voters*.

DEMOCRACY PROJECT FAYE GROSSMAN

Every law passed in Illinois starts with the words, *Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois . . .* Are **WE** really the people? If so, then why don't **WE** see bills before they become laws?

Did you know that our legislators often do not have sufficient time to adequately review the most important bills before they become law?

THE TIME FOR CHANGE IS NOW.

Join the *Democracy Project*. Pass petitions to put the *Show Us* amendment on the ballot. See the bills before they become laws. Give legislators the time to learn what the bills contain.

Sign up to circulate the *Show Us* amendment petition.
**To sign up, contact www.lwvil.org
 or call Faye Grossman at 847-926-0105**

CON CON FAYE GROSSMAN

Does the Illinois Constitution still work effectively or does it need to be revised?

Issues such as redistricting, fiscal policy, school funding, home rule, county government and income taxes are constitutional issues.

Every 20 years the Constitution provides that citizens shall vote on whether to hold a *Constitutional Convention*. The last vote was in 1988. The issue is due to be put to the voters in 2008. Should the League study the issue in 2007-2009 biennium?

What do you think? Call the **LWVIL at 312-939-5935
 or Faye Grossman at 847-926-0105.**

STATE CONVENTION NEWS

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ILLINOIS ~ POSITION STATEMENT ON IMMIGRATION ~

The *League of Women Voters of Illinois* believes that the State of Illinois should promote local community efforts to provide orientation and counseling services for immigrants regardless of documentation status. The State of Illinois should support funding efforts for these services by encouraging federal funding and by the use of funds from the state and local governments as well as from the private sector.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois believes the State of Illinois should promote and fund educational programs and materials that seek to inform all workers, including documented and undocumented immigrants, of their rights in the workplace.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois believes the State of Illinois should provide "driving certificates" or some other form of proof of driving validation to undocumented drivers, allowing those drivers to drive legally and ensuring that they would have passed a state driving test. The LWVIL also believes the State of Illinois should permit and encourage auto insurance providers to issue insurance coverage to holders of such driving certificates.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois opposes the deputization of state and local police to enforce immigration laws in Illinois.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois opposes legislation or ordinances at the state and local level that would penalize landlords for renting to undocumented immigrants.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois opposes legislation or ordinances at the state and local level that would prohibit the issuance of business permits to undocumented immigrants.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois does not support extending the right to vote to undocumented immigrants.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ILLINOIS ~ ACTION ITEM: JUDICIAL EVALUATION COMMISSION ~

There is a huge hole in Illinois' electoral process. Although we are one of 39 states that elect nearly all our judges, Illinois provides almost no way for the public to get reliable, nonpartisan information on the judges for whom we vote. As a result, the public votes less often for judges than for other candidates, and when the public does vote, they often base their choices on characteristics that have nothing to do with a candidate's quality.

Many states have Judicial Evaluation Commissions which issue Judicial Performance Evaluations. While the evaluation procedures vary from state to state, they generally share certain things in common. First, they survey many different groups who interact and work with judges, including attorneys, jurors, litigants, witnesses, staff, and special groups who appear in front of judges. Second, while some evaluations consist only of surveys, others include court observation, interviews with the judges, public hearings, reviews of opinions for Appellate judges, and other relevant factors such as caseload statistics.

While 21 states, Washington, DC and Puerto Rico, already have such evaluation commissions, some, such as Illinois, conduct them *entirely confidentially*, utilizing them only for purposes of judges' self-improvement. Illinois' Supreme Court explicitly prohibits the sharing of results of the evaluations with the public.

Without such evaluations, the public looks at any information available. Voters are more vulnerable to biased, sensational media reports and partisan attacks on judges - some of whom have been voted out of office on the basis of unfair, partisan attacks - because there was no contradictory information available to the public.

The above was taken from a *Background Paper on Judicial Evaluation Commission* provided to Convention delegates by the League of Women Voters of McLean County.



PO Box 396, Highland Park, Illinois, 60035

LEAGUE CALENDAR

September

Tues. 11 7 p.m. Board meeting - Nancie Blatt - **Note new day**

October

Fri./Sat. 5/6 Lake Michigan Inter-League meeting - Illinois Beach State Park, Zion

Wed. 10 7 p.m. Board meeting - Beverly Rosenstein

Thurs. - Sun. 18-21 ***Climate Matters*** programs - See schedule on cover.

Tues. 30 7 pm Town Hall meeting - Highland Park Country Club

November

Tues. 6 Voter Registration - TBD

Wed. 14 7 p.m. Board meeting - Ginny Schulte

Members are always welcome to attend Board meetings