



Highland Park League of Women Voters Bulletin

LWVHP BULLETIN Vol. 90, #2

December/January 2009-10

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NEW on FACEBOOK

*Democracy is Not
a Spectator Sport*

Co-Presidents

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Margie Weiss

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FESTIVE HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

For League Members, Friends and Family

DELICIOUS DESSERTS, HOLIDAY CHEER, AND A SPECIAL TREAT

A Conversation with MAYOR MIKE BELSKY

WHERE

Margie Weiss
260 Whistler Road, Apt. 2A

WHEN

Wednesday, December 16th
7:15 p.m.

R.S.V.P

Margie Weiss 847-432-9432
Rose Feder 847-432-4732

Co-Presidents' Message

The busy season is upon us, but we hope you and your friends take a needed break from holiday preparations and join us for a Holiday Open House the evening of Wednesday, December 16th. Along with delicious desserts and holiday cheer will be an informal discussion with Mayor Mike Belsky. Please see the front page for the time and location and watch for your invitation in the mail.

Also on the horizon is a candidates' forum prior to the February 2nd Primary Election. Both Democratic and Republican candidates for U.S. Representative of the 10th District will be represented. The forum is being held in conjunction with the other North Shore Leagues within the 10th District and will take place the evening of January 7, 2010, at New Trier West High School. For more detailed information, please see the article on page 5.

If you have not yet sent in your dues for the 2009-2010 year, please take a moment now to do so. Individual dues are \$65 payable to LWVHP and sent to LWVHP, P.O. Box 396, HP, or payable online at www.lwvhp.org.

Once again, we offer for your consideration the possibility of participation in a League activity such as voter service and voter registration, program planning, observing a government body for League issue alerts, and newsletter or website involvement. Feel free to just explore. We'll be pleased to be your guide.

Have a happy and healthy holiday season!

Ginny, Margie and Rose

2009-2010 Board of Directors

Co-Presidents:	Rose Feder	Ginny Schulte	Margie Weiss
Vice-Presidents:	Nancie Blatt	Faye Grossman	
Treasurer:	Ginger Seff		
Secretary:	Open		
Directors:	Elaine Adler	Peggy Malecki	
	Judy Johnston	Beverly Rosenstein	
	Joyce Juron	Lila Trotsky	
	Carolan Klapper	Sue Wieseneck	

Local News

WE THANK OUR SPONSORS

Without whom this Bulletin would not be possible. Please support them!

Bett's	First Bank of Highland Park	Silk Thumb
Braeside	Ken's Quick Print	Viva
Café Central	La Casa De Isaac	Werhane
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Eye Magic	Menoni & Mecogni	

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Marcia and Jerry Burke, Highwood
Betty Ashman, Highland Park

You Can Make a Difference as a League Observer!

You can make a difference when you become part of our League Observer network. Spend stimulating evenings and get to know more about the workings of our City. You can choose to attend meetings of, for example, the City Council, the Plan Commission, the Park District or School District 113.

The observer experience is worthwhile to give you more knowledge of the City and to transmit to our Board what is progressing at the meeting. Often our League has had an impact on City considerations, because of the information brought to us by our Observers.

You can devote as much or as little of your time as you are able. We show you how easy it is to be a League observer, and we provide the guidelines for your engagement.

Call Elaine Adler at (847) 432-4557 or email elainebadler@yahoo.com if you would like to be a part of this important experience that enhances our awareness of our City and allows us to stay on top of local issues.

Voter Registration

We will again register voters at the Highland Park library on January 3, from 3:00 to 5:00 pm; January 4 and 5, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm. Contact Gail Brown if you will be able to help <mailto:g.f.brown@comcast.net>

Park District

Peggy Malecki attended the Beach and Boating Committee, reporting that HP will meet with other Lakefront communities and the EPA to review issues related to Lake bottom sediment, water sampling and dredging permits. It is now seeking stimulus money, state and federal funds and grants to help in lakefront restoration and facility repair/upgrade. They have submitted a \$200,000 grant application to complete some basic work at Park Avenue, particularly for the launch area and possibly the bluff.

UPCOMING EVENTS

PUBLIC MEETING

Highland Park has initiated a process to establish a community-wide sustainability strategic plan that will evaluate current methods and review best practices in other communities. The City has hired a company to help develop a plan and provide recommendations on how to achieve greater sustainability. Baseline data has been collected concerning the environmental impacts and conditions of various assets. The City wants your input regarding environmental sustainability and green principles.

Come hear an overview and provide your opinions on Thursday, December 10 at 7:00 pm in City Hall. Also, see the online survey on the City's webpage, www.cityhpil.com beginning December 1, and answer the questions regarding sustainable living.

10th Congressional District Candidates' Forum

We are co-hosting this forum in cooperation with the other district Leagues on

Thursday, January 7, 2010

New Trier West High School, 7 Happ Road in Northfield

7:00 pm in room 234.

Currently, nine candidates are running to represent us in the U S Congress. They are:

Republicans - Robert Dold, William Cadigan, Elizabeth Coulson, Arie Friedman, Dick Green and Paul Hamann.

Democrats - Julie Hamos, Elliott Richardson and Daniel Seals

SAVE THE DATE

Save the date for the Women's History Month luncheon on Saturday, March 6, 2010. The featured speaker will be Elizabeth Brackett, well-known PBS news correspondent. Time and place will be announced soon.

FAIR MAP AMENDMENT

The LWVIL Board voted unanimously to support a Citizen Initiative on Redistricting. This proposed Constitutional amendment would create an independent commission to draw up a map with compact and sensible boundaries and submit it to the legislature for a vote. This new system would also allow for public input and make transparency a top priority.

Local Leagues are being asked to collect signatures on petitions (500,000 are needed by April 1) to get the proposed amendment on the November 2010 ballot and educate our communities on why it is important to support this initiative. Additional information will be provided soon.

State and National

TRUE CENSUS

Committees are being formed in each municipality in the United States beginning this fall to help local communities realize a true count of everyone living there. Census forms will be sent out in March and must be returned at the end of the month.

In past years, many people in Illinois have not been counted and thus Congressional seats have been lost in each of the last four counts. Besides restricting, census figures decide what monies we in Illinois receive from the federal government for schools and other programs.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois encourages our members to become involved on one of the following committees: education, faith based, media, business and housing.

If you are interested in serving either Highland Park or Highwood, please contact Faye Grossman at fayegro@comcast.net

LEAGUE DELEGATION TO ATTEND UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

“Caps on Emissions of 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020,” says LWVUS president Mary Wilson. She announced that a delegation of eight League leaders will travel to Copenhagen, Denmark as official non-governmental organization delegates to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 15). The delegation will attend general and special conference sessions and reinforce the League’s efforts and positions on curbing global climate change.

“The League believes that global climate change is one of the most serious threats to the environment, health and economy of our nation and our world and is calling on U.S. and world political leaders to cap emissions at 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2020. We hope that the United States will move beyond its current negotiating position and work for an international agreement that will truly address this critical issue,” she said.

“The 192 countries of the world need to produce an effective international agreement based on the best available science. In addition, it is critically important for our nation to agree to provide substantial assistance to needy nations in adapting to climate change,” according to Carole Conors, who is heading the League’s delegation.

“Our delegation will move the League’s agenda forward while at COP15, focusing on:

- 1) achieving a broad international agreement with commitments, implementation and oversight,
- 2) cutting emissions to safe levels,
- 3) providing critical adaptation and associated assistance to countries most in need. Here at home, our members will continue their work reminding elected leaders that they need to make the responsible and tough choices that will curb global warming and speed the transition to clean energy alternatives.”

HEALTH CARE - LWVUS Position, Local Action and "What Can you Do?"

If you monitor your e-mail, you've read: "The League believes that quality affordable health care should be available to all U.S. residents. Other U.S. health care policy goals should include the equitable distribution of services, efficient and economical delivery of care, advancement of medical research and technology, and a reasonable national expenditure level for health care. Furthermore, the League believes that all Americans should have access to a basic level of care that includes the prevention of disease, health promotion and education, primary care (including prenatal and reproductive health), acute care, long-term care and mental health care."

In view of the "health care crisis caused by a combination of skyrocketing costs and an insurance system that leaves 47 million of us without coverage, endangering both our economy and our health" we believe that the Public Option is vital for health care reform. (from *LWVUS Take Action*, dated Oct. 23, 2009)

Local Activity

You were invited to the LWV Lake County and Lake Forest/Lake Bluff's October 5 program featuring an excellent film on health care and speakers representing *The Campaign for Better Health Care* and AARP Illinois. You also received an e-mail telling you about the several Friday noon local Comcast telecasts of the October 5 meeting and you were invited to join Highland Park members to watch the November 20 telecast to be up-dated on the legislation, and to discuss the issues and status after the House bill passed in November.

If you responded to the e-mails you received through us, you communicated your support for strong and effective reform legislation to Congressman Kirk and to Senators Burris and Durbin. On November 20, you were informed that Congressman Kirk voted against the House bill and that Senators Burris and Durbin would support the Senate bill public option. Members at our November 20 meeting were also asked to extend their efforts by asking friends and family in other states to contact their senators in support of Public Option comprehensive health care legislation.

What Can We Do Now

On November 21 the Senate, by a very close vote, chose to begin debate on their proposed health care reform bill. Debate on the Senate bill will begin during the week of November 30 and there are important areas of disagreement between the House and Senate Bills and among members on both sides of the aisle. While it was hoped to have this important legislation completed by the end of the year, it may well take much longer.

Key Differences between House and Senate Bills (from Chicago Tribune November 22, 2009):

Abortion Language: Both bills attempt to prevent federal funds from being used to pay for abortions. The House bill prohibits insurance plans from offering abortion coverage to anyone who receives federal subsidies, even if the customer would be willing to pay for the coverage out of her own pocket. It also prohibits a "public option" insurer from offering abortion coverage. The Senate Bill requires insurers, whether public or private, to segregate money from premium revenues in separate accounts to be sure that only private funds are used to cover abortions.

Government-run "public option": House bill creates a government insurance plan to compete with private insurers. Senate bill does the same but allows states to opt out.

Major Funding Sources: House bill taxes people with yearly incomes over \$500,000 and couples with incomes over \$1 million. Senate bill taxes industry and increases Medicare and payroll tax for the wealthy.

Requirements for Individuals: House Bill requires individuals to carry insurance or pay 2.5 percent of income. Senate Bill requires individuals to carry insurance or pay a fee of up to \$750

(HEALTH CARE CONT'D)

Requirements for businesses: House Bill requires employers to provide health insurance to employees or pay a fee. Senate Bill does not explicitly require businesses to provide health insurance, but imposes penalties if employees receive government subsidies to provide coverage

These and other differences will have to be resolved before meaningful health care reform can become a reality. As League members, keep reading and respond quickly to the action requests you receive. Remember that even when the elected official agrees with your position, it's important to keep reminding them how much you care and to keep in contact and to keep trying to influence the voice and vote of elected officials with whom you do not agree.

Ed note: Many thanks to Beverly Rosenstein for hosting the Nov. 20 telecast and for consolidating reams and reams of information into an understandable form.

HELP US TO INCREASE OUR COMMUNITY EXPOSURE

Introducing our new League of Women Voters of Highland Park Facebook Fan Page!

Did you know that LWV National and Illinois have Facebook Fan Pages? Did you know that we have one for Highland Park? It's the League of Women Voters of Highland Park Illinois.

<http://www.facebook.com/>

Why did we create a Facebook Fan Page?

- We want to reach out to more potential members in Highland Park.
- We want to communicate important events, like candidate forums to more than our members.
- Facebook can help our organization create organic growth ... get increased membership and/or event attendance by sharing important information to its fans who can then share it with their Facebook friends.

How can you help?

- If you are already on Facebook, find the page and become a fan.
- If you are not on Facebook, join Facebook so that you can help to broaden our organization's audience. You can keep it simple and use Facebook in a very minimal way. All you need to start is your name, email and a password. The rest can be ignored. Please give it a try. It can be fun, and, help to increase our local League's community outreach. <http://www.facebook.com/>

How can you post information to our Facebook page?

Contact Nancy Goldberg <mailto:jamn148@gmail.com>. All information will be reviewed by one of the co-presidents, or Judy Johnston before being posted.



Dated material
Please deliver immediately

LEAGUE CALENDAR

Call 847-432-4732 or email info@lwhvp.org to carpool to any of these events.

Members are always welcome to attend Board meetings

December	16	7:15 pm	Holiday party – Margie Weiss
January	7	7:00	10th Congressional District Candidates' Forum New Trier West HS
	27	7:00	Board Meeting
FEBRUARY	2		Primary Election
	3-5		Voter Registration – HP library
	6	9:00 am	Illinois Issues Briefing -
	6		Winter Doldrums Party – Location TBD
	18	7:00	Local Program Planning – Location TBD
	24	7:00	Board Meeting & National Program Planning - TBD