



League of Women Voters of Highland Park/Highwood *BULLETIN*

LWVHP BULLETIN

SUMMER 2011

*Democracy is Not
a Spectator Sport*

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Co-Presidents

Rose Feder

Margie Weiss

Bulletin Editor

Nancy Goldberg

847-432-4249

LWV Highland Park

PO Box 396

Highland Park, IL

60035

Email:

info@lwvhp.org

Website:

<http://www.lwvhp.org>



PRESIDENTS' LETTER SUMMER 2011

As the 2011-2012 League year begins we want to take a moment to reflect on the year just past and give kudos to our Board members for a great League year.

With our major focus being voter service, once the November elections were over, we were free to concentrate on the Municipal elections in April. Because five separate taxing bodies were in highly contested elections, the challenge facing us was to schedule a meaningful candidates forum which would attract the most community members and to provide a voters guide that would reach the most people. This had to be accomplished in a short period of time and ideally prior to the start of early voting.

As you know, we held a marathon forum on a Sunday afternoon at the Highland Park Country Club and invited the community to come spend the day with us. It is estimated that over 500 people attended and 27 of the 28 candidates participated. In addition, a video of the forum was shown on the public access cable channel four times during the two weeks prior to the election.

We are very proud to note that for the first time our voters guide was available on our web site which received over 7000 hits thus saving an untold number of trees and thousands of dollars.

Also of note, we co-sponsored two environmental films with the League of Women Voters of Glencoe at the Highland Park Library, enjoyed a play at the Citadel Theatre while fund raising for our League, sent five delegates and three volunteers to State Convention, were well represented at the LWV of Lake County Annual Meeting, participated in the women's history month luncheon, and held our annual local program planning in preparation for the Annual Meeting in May as well as state program planning getting ready for State Convention in June.

We're looking forward to an equally interesting and productive 2011-2012. The Board is meeting during the summer on the fourth Wednesdays of July and August to do calendar and program planning. We hope you'll join us in person or give us your thoughts via email or telephone so that the planning will reflect the kinds of things you're interested in. We hope to see you soon and often!

Margie and Rose

HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD LEAGUE

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2011-2012

Co-Presidents: Rose Feder and Margie Weiss
Vice Presidents: Nancie Blatt and Faye Grossman
Treasurer: Ginger Seff
Secretary: Barbara Kronish
Directors: Elaine Adler
Judy Johnston
Carolann Klapper
Sharon Narrod
Rhoda Pierce
Beverly Rosenstein
Sue Wieseneck

NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 2010-2011

Chair: Gail Feiger Brown, Chair
Members: Andrea Amend
Lila Trostky
PLUS 2 appointed by board



Lila is Retiring! Long time Board member, Lila Trostky, has decided to retire from the Board. Lila is a past co-president of our League and has held numerous Board positions before and after serving as co-president. Most recently Lila organized our past two annual meetings, inviting the guest speakers for the luncheons, planning the menus, and sending the invitations. We'll miss you on the Board, Lila, but we plan on calling you for advice and expertise. Don't change your phone number!

Margie and Rose



Life Member Award Recipients

Congratulations to the following members on their becoming LWV Life Members upon their 50th year of membership.

Marjie Ettlenger, Sue Ettlenger, Natalie Caplin, and Hilde Orloff

ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

Our 2011 Annual Meeting that was held on May 14, was as always a worthwhile day of accomplishing **League business, gaining insight to a speaker's revelations and catching-up** with other members. Bella Via restaurant proved to be a very comfortable and accommodating venue. To enlighten those of you who were unable to attend and to refresh the memories of those who did, the following voting decisions were made by the required number of members.

The budget that was approved reflects the goal of increasing our membership by 10%.

The major activity of the Annual Meeting is to set the Local Program agenda for the coming League year. Of the board recommended Local Program items that were presented, the following were adopted.

- Retain all current positions.
- Continue the study to develop budgeting criteria to evaluate and prioritize community needs with emphasis on methods of financing the implementation of these projects.

The members voted not to adopt a new study related to school consolidation with regard to the high school district and its feeder districts.

The following board recommended Local Action Priorities were voted to be continued.

- Ft. Sheridan/Schools: Continue to monitor ongoing school issues with particular regard to impact aid status and use by the school districts.
- Continue to support and monitor implementation of the Highland Park Green Initiatives Alliance (HPGIA).
-

The members decided unanimously to change the name of the League to be the League of Women Voters of Highland Park/Highwood (LWVHP/HWD).

The proposed slate of officers and directors was elected (see page 2).



2011 STUDY of FEDERAL ROLE in EDUCATION

The Birth, Growth, and Maturation of a League Study

The 2011 National Study of the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education

The Birth:

Back in June 2010, a study entitled the “Role of the Federal Government in Public Education” was proposed and passed at the biennial League of Women Voters Convention in Atlanta, GA. This put the following actions in motion:

The committee and scope were approved by the LWVUS Board of Directors.

Study materials, a leaders’ guide, consensus questions, resources and a timeline were developed. Accomplishing this required a great deal of effort by the study committee.

Consensus questions were approved by the LWVUS Board of Directors.

The Growth:

The scope of the study, as adopted by the LWVUS Board, states:

The Education Study scope is broad and includes the following areas under the role of the federal government in public education (preK through grade 12): the history, funding and equity issues which are addressed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the common core standards/assessments which are required for many federal grant programs but are national, not federal. The culminating position will address only those issues delineated in the scope.

Although the study focuses on the federal government, the original intent of the study included **the Common Core Standards. These were written and funded by the National Governors’ Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO).** Historically we have always had national standards written by the teaching organizations such as the National Council of Teachers of Math and the National Council of Teachers of English. However, the discussion here will focus upon how these new standards called Common Core State Standards will be used by the federal government.

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Another Record Voter Registration at Highland Park High School



Our **League’s Voter Registrars** registered **114 students at Highland Park High School on Senior Day, May 5.** All “hands on deck” were needed as reported by the Voter Registration chair, Gail Feiger Brown. Many thanks go to Debby Zirin, Faye Grossman, Rheta Pickard, Linda Kellough, and Stoney Freeman.

2011 STUDY of FEDERAL ROLE in EDUCATION

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In summary, the consensus questions include the following concepts:

What should be the role of the federal government in public education?

Should Common Core Standards be mandated in order to receive federal funding?

What role should the national assessment consortia play in student evaluation?

How should federal funds be distributed?

What role should mandates play?

What is equity with regard to federal funding considering need and education level?

The Birth, Growth, and Maturation of a League Study

The Maturation:

Now Local Leagues will study the “Role of the Federal Government in Public Education”. Informational material will be made available and presented to members and a meeting will be held in order to come to consensus.

Local League results are due to the National League by November 30.

Then the National Committee will analyze the data from consensus and write the position paper **for the “Role of the Federal Government in Public Education.”**

The LWVUS Board of Directors will review the consensus results for comment and then finally **approve the position for the “Role of the Federal Government in Public Education”.**

We are partnering with other North Shore Leagues in presenting and conducting the consensus meetings. Sharing the effort of informing members and joining in discussion among members should make this a more efficient and interesting undertaking. Detailed information and dates will be forthcoming.

Interested in participating in our League’s Study Committee?

Call Margie or Rose and let us know what would work for you.

Legislative Interview with 10th District Congressman Robert Dold

Each year the LWVIL encourages local Leagues to meet with their U.S. Congressional Representatives. The effort is encouraged to be coordinated with other local Leagues that share the same congressional district. The State League makes available interview questions and an interview guide.

Thus, on Thursday, April 28, 2011, fifteen representatives of the 10th District Local Leagues met with U.S. Rep. Robert Dold. The meeting was chaired by Joan Kaltsas of the Lake County League. Joan explained that the League of Women Voters is a large organization, is in all 50 states, Puerto Rico and Hong Kong and that there are 44 Leagues in Illinois. She said that we are non-partisan, and advocate positions on issues but do not support specific candidates. The League members then introduced themselves.

Introduction and Priorities:

Congressman Dold described himself as an owner of a family business in pest management who grew up in this district. He has been a scoutmaster for 11 years and is an Eagle Scout himself. Congressman Dold's priorities are Great Lakes protection, human rights, jobs and the economy, and reducing federal spending. Along with Democratic Rep. Lipinski, he introduced the Great Lakes Water Protection Act. It was referred to the Transportation Infrastructure Committee. It is also supported by U.S. Senators Kirk and Durbin.

Human Rights, the Economy, Spending Reduction:

On human rights, he introduced bills supporting the Bahais in Iran and recognizing the Armenian genocide. On jobs and the economy, he supports pro-growth strategies for the private sector, not government. He works with the nine Democratic freshmen on this, as well as the 86 other Republican freshmen. He wants only smart regulation of business, not constraining regulations such as the 1099 requirement for small business. He supported repeal of this requirement. On spending reduction, Dold believes the Republican interests, e.g. in defense and agricultural subsidies, should be cut first, to show good faith to the Democrats. Every federal department should be cut except aid to Israel since it is our "only ally" in the Middle East. Dold believes overspending must be stopped by both parties "if the American dream is to come true for our children and grandchildren."

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Legislative Interview with 10th District Congressman Robert Dold

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Clean Air Act, Voting Rights and Transparency in Government

On the Clean Air Act, Dold said the EPA "fills a role" and that the carbon footprint must be reduced, but only in ways that don't put companies out of business. Some regulation is needed but it must pay off for business. He favors extension of the renewable energy tax credits due to expire in 2012. On voting rights, Dold favors making it easier to vote. A signature, not a picture, should be required to identify voters. On transparency, due to the Citizens United decision, he fears that shell corporations are cropping up to enable rich individuals to influence elections.

Civility in Discourse

On civility, i.e. partisan bickering, he seemed proud of working with Illinois Democrats (e.g. Gutierrez, Lipinski, etc.), the nine freshmen Democrats, and the "blue dog" Democrats on legislation. He said moderates like himself in Congress are rare due to redistricting that protects safe districts for both parties. He also said that independent voters determine elections, and they will swing to the other party if incumbents don't produce. When asked about dissension within the Republican party, he said that across-the-board cuts are needed but again, not in aid to Israel. This aid also must be audited to ensure that it doesn't go to terrorists (Hamas). He believes both parties are angry that the Administration didn't consult Congress before entering the conflict in Libya. He supported ending the Joint Strike Force Fighter program.

Affordable Health Care Act

On the Affordable Health Care Act, he criticized the process by which it was written without Republican input more than the content. He said we need health care reform, citing that cost for health care in his company has risen 44% in a short period. He would replace/reform provisions rather than repeal it. He favors the pre-existing conditions provision but wants malpractice reform and competition across state lines so that employers can purchase plans anywhere in the country.

Joan thanked Dold and told him that the League wants him to succeed. She promised many future requests to meet with him.

Report compiled by Liz Bradner, Lake Forest/Lake Bluff League

LWVHP/HWD was represented at the meeting with Congressman Dold by Margie Weiss, Elaine Adler and Judy Johnston.

STATE CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Fifty-Fifth Biennium State League Convention - June 10-12, 2011

Mapping the Future was the theme of the LWVIL convention. Filled with informative workshops and caucuses, convention is where representatives of the Leagues approve the LWVIL programs for the next two years and elect state board officers. It was attended by twenty-eight State leagues and ninety-two delegates, including those from LWVHP—Rose Feder, Margie Weiss, Elaine Adler, Judy Johnston and Beverly Rosenstein.

The Convention generated a great deal of excitement on the part of nearby Leagues, since it was held in our region of Illinois, (the Holiday Inn in Skokie) and the keynote speaker was LWVUS President Elizabeth McNamara.

Our Highland Park League was actively engaged in the Convention by participating in arrangements: helping to organize the post-Convention tour of the Holocaust Museum; submitting a **basket of Carol's Cookies to the Silent Auction; and volunteering at the Plenary Session, by Faye Grossman, Carolan Klapper and Lila Trotsky.** Eleven Highland Park Leaguers enjoyed the Saturday evening dinner with entertainment by the Chicago Bar Association.

On Friday evening our League was proudly recognized for two of its accomplishments: the successful, well attended pre-election Marathon Candidates Forum held on March 6 and the innovative on-line Voters Guide.

After the lively discussions at the pro and con microphones at the Plenary Session, delegates voted **in the State Board's 2011-2013** recommendation for re-adoption of current positions. Also voted in was the implementation of a study of the Illinois Pension System, i.e., pension problems and proposals for pension reform. Contact us if you are interested in participating in this important, timely study. The Action Focus for 2011-2013 will be on Fiscal Policy and Tax Reform, Campaign Finance and Ethics Reform, Redistricting Reform, Immigration and Climate Change. You can glean further information from the website LWVIL.ORG.

The Convention provided a forum for delegates to join together, share ideas and plan strategies. By all accounts it was successful. In the historic tradition of Highland Park, Elaine Adler was **elected to the State Board of LWVIL, augmenting our League's historic presence there. Our active** League continues to represent our members and to foster public advocacy and education.



LEAGUE CALENDAR

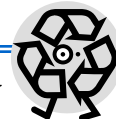
JUNE	10-12		LWVIL 2011 Convention
JULY	27	7:00pm	Board Meeting Home of Rose Feder

2011-2012 LEAGUE YEAR CALENDAR PLANNING IN PROGRESS

Non-board members are always welcome to attend board meetings. Check website, www.lwvhp.org, or call 847-432-4732 for locations.

GREEN NOTES:

It's a good time to take stock of what energy you are actually using. Many modern appliances use standby power and would be better "unplugged" when you do not actually intend to use them. Among steps suggested to analyze and reduce your energy drains:



1. Use a worksheet to inventory your electrical appliances.
2. Only plug in appliances that need to remain on 24/7.
3. Consider use of by e bye standby or smart strips.