

## LWV-LFLB Board Report 2011-2012

The League of Women Voters of Lake Forest Lake Bluff Area had a very busy and productive year. Kudos to all who were involved in one way or another. We received numerous unsolicited positive comments from our community. Our varied activities have reached a growing audience.

This past year League activities included parades, voter registration, candidate forums, social activities, national studies, programs with speakers, state legislative update, and conferences with LWVIL. We collaborated with other organizations and local Leagues to expand our impact.

With our year beginning in July, our first activity started off the year with a bang, by our participation in the very popular Lake Bluff parade. Our 'float' received lots of cheers. Ann Grant and Mary Mathews had a great time practicing their 'queenly' waves. In August, we had a spectacular parade entry in the Lake Forest Days parade. With a three vehicle entourage, Liz Bradner, Jean Brown, Carol Gilbert, Jane Partridge, Nicki Snoblin and others honored past League leaders.

In September, our membership soiree was enjoyed by many. Tracy Burns and Mary Ritter planned a lovely evening with wine and refreshments. Kitty Cole graciously hosted the event in her home. Dr. Ghada Talhami from Lake Forest College educated members and guests with her presentation "Arab Spring Through the Eyes of Women."

In October, State Senator Susan Garrett and State Representative Karen May provided us with one last legislative update before their retirements. They covered a broad range of subjects and answered everyone's questions, as we have come to expect.

"What is the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education?" That was the premise of a study conducted by LWVUS. Our League joined with LWV-Highland Park/Highwood and LWV-Deerfield in hosting a panel discussion with Ralph Martire, Kathy Ryg, and Dr. Sue Hebson. A week later, Cindy Morehead convened a consensus meeting at her home with Melanie Rummel acting as facilitator. Cindy was grateful for the help from committee members Liz Bradner, Lisa Dietrich, Stacy Vermylen, and Roycealee Wood in organizing our part of the study.

A couple of months later, Happie Datt organized another study program. Her committee of Liz Bradner, Betty-Ann Moore, Diane Sanderson, and Marilyn Shineflug, tackled a wide open question "Is Privatization the Answer?" Drew Irvin, Lake Bluff village administrator, along with Ann Hamlin and Liz Bradner talked about their experiences. Happie hosted the consensus meeting while Betty-Ann Moore facilitated it. Our efforts will help LWVUS derive their new positions.

Our yearly Holiday Luncheon was a wonderful success. Megan Wells performed "Winter Around the World: Myths and Folktales for the Season." Everyone appreciated all the details that Linda Bartmes and Liz Bradner coordinated. Once again Ann Grant and Phyllis Albrecht handled the invitations, while Lisa Dietrich hauled in and sold some of the bestsellers of the season. The League is grateful for Lake Forest Book Store's continued financial donation, and Linda's floral donations.

For the first time in a number of years, we sent a fundraising letter to a small number of community members. We enjoyed a very good return.

Again, Jan Schnobrich skillfully managed voter registration drives. Deputy registrars Liz Bradner, Kitty Cole, Ann Grant, Joan Kaltsas, Tina O-Conner, Mary Ritter, and Alice Sievert volunteered their time to support this important League function.

Cindy Morehead, Jane Partridge, Liz Bradner, Ann Grant, Tom Meskel, and Mary Mathews attended one or both of the conferences that LWVIL offered. The Leadership Rap and Issues Briefing are yearly opportunities that educate members about State activities. The League's success is due in part to its multi-level structure. With grassroots at the local level, and lobbying and organizing at the state and national level, League members do make a difference.

Nationally and statewide, an issue that has received considerable attention this year was women's reproductive health. Cindy spearheaded an evening with wine and appetizers while Lisa Dietrich worked with Kitty Lansing to secure Pam Sutherland, V.P. Planned Parenthood, as our speaker. Planned Parenthood is a long time coalition partner with the League. Prue and Frank Beidler's hospitality softened Pam's presentation "Challenges to Reproductive Health".

Cindy, Lisa, Happie, and Midge Heurich presented another important program - "Our Water in Peril". To acknowledge World Water Day, the committee worked with two other local organizations, AAUW and Lake Forest Open Lands, to educate our communities about serious water issues. Speakers were Mike Adam, Lake County Health Dept., Judy Beck, USEPA, and John Sentell, Lake Forest Open Lands. Melanie Rummel, representing both LFOLA and LWV, facilitated the program. As with most of our programs, "Our Water in Peril" was video recorded and shown on Lake Forest cable access channels 17 and 19. For the first time, Lake County TV agreed to schedule the program also.

February and March were very busy months. Ann Grant organized three Candidate Forums spanning 3 weeks. The logistics were amazing: three different locations, 11 different races, and 29 candidates. M.J. Brady and Ann Hamlin assisted expertly with the planning and implementing. Countless members helped on the day of each event. Ann G. coordinated with other Leagues for two of the Forums. Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Patch co-sponsored twice. This worked very well and garnered a lot of publicity and visibility. The editor Jim Powers blogged live from the events. The Lake Forest - Lake Bluff Senior Center co-sponsored the last forum.

To add a bit of fun to business, once again Abbie Fassnacht welcomed us to her home to celebrate Valentine's Day and discuss program planning for the following year. Fortified by tea and goodies, members considered both national and local positions along with actions we may want to focus on for next year.

So much work went on behind the scenes. Liz Bradner has kept track of our income and expenses admirably. Mary Ritter and Tracy Burns, after following up on membership dues, were able to quickly get the directory published in time for the Holiday Luncheon. Linda Bartmes continued as the liaison to LWV-Lake County, and Midge Heurich was the liaison to the Lake Michigan LWV. Carol Gilbert sent creative e-alerts to remind us of important events. Diane Sanderson compiled and edited articles for the newsletter. Nicki Snoblin always kept our web site up to date with excellent information. Our quarterly newsletter went online and interactive. Very 21<sup>st</sup> Century! She again designed the community signs to advertise the candidate forums along with an ad on LFTV. Jo-An Sabonjian worked her printing magic and supplied new name tag inserts and legible candidate forum tent cards. Joan Kaltsas and Diane Sanderson spent hours updating our bylaws. Recently Tracy Burns opened up a Facebook account for the League. Be sure to watch for timely updates.

We continued to video record most of our programs and candidate forums. These could be viewed on LFTV, and are permanently available on our website [www.LWV-LFLB.ORG](http://www.LWV-LFLB.ORG) and on You Tube.

The Lake Forester has been publishing our letters-to-the-editor monthly, along with announcements of our activities. Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Patch and the Gazebo News have been very dependable in posting information. Articles spoke out about contraception services, Citizens United, civic participation, civil discourse, clean air standards, Women's Equality Day and others. These can be found under the 'Library' tab on our website. Many other outlets such as TribLocal, Forest & Bluff magazine, What's Happening community newspaper, Chamber of Commerce website, Lake County Journal, Tenth Dems website, Lake County Republican Federation website also have posted our calendar items. Twice LWVUS noticed and commented on our League's published articles. Not just our serious articles get published; our Holiday Luncheon pictures were in the printed edition of the Lake Forester.

Jane completed writing Eighty-five Years and Counting - The Making of the Leagues of Women Voters of Lake Forest and Lake Bluff. With the editing assistance of Amelia Snoblin and publishing efforts from Nicki Snoblin, the booklet was available for sale at the Holiday Luncheon. The project started as the League's participation in the Lake Forest Legacy Project marking the 150<sup>th</sup> birthday of the City of Lake Forest.

Jane Partridge in concert with other supporters continued advocacy efforts for affordable housing with the Housing Trust Fund Board. She hosted an interest group meeting to determine what the League's ongoing efforts should be. Jane hosted another meeting for those interested in water. Their input formed the basis for the water program.

There are too many other tasks and endeavors that members performed to list. Their help has been 'priceless'. This has been a great year, and we thank all the donors and volunteers who helped.

Respectfully submitted, Jane Partridge and Mary Mathews