



LEAGUE LINES

FALL 2013

League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area

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Culture and Politics Reception Annual Fall Kick-off Event

The Culture and Politics Reception on Sat. Sept 28 was LWV-LF/LB's official kick-off event for the 2013-2014 year. Our five newly elected legislators were invited to meet members and guests at the re-invent art gallery on Wisconsin Ave. in Lake Forest from 4 to 6 P.M. Stunning paintings by Voy Madeyski provided a beautiful backdrop.



State Senator Julie Morrison, County Board member Sandy Hart, and County Board



Sandy, Julie and Mike

member Mike Rummel chatted with guests. After brief introductory remarks, they initiated a panel discussion and answered questions from an engaged audience. They also explained that although they were in different parties and elected positions, they worked well together for their constituents.

Unfortunately, the federal budget and government shutdown prevented Congressman Schneider from leaving Washington DC over the weekend and attending. And State Rep. Drury had a last minute family matter that needed his attention. Although disappointed about the missing legislators, members enjoyed not only the opportunity to interact with the three elected officials, but also the attractive venue and the tasty refreshments. The reception was a successful start to a busy year!



Holiday Luncheon

The popular Holiday Luncheon has been scheduled for Friday, Dec. 6th at The Grille on Laurel. Jenny Riddle's dramatic presentation *First Ladies* was such a big hit last year that we asked her to return. She has appeared at book clubs and libraries for years, but word-of-mouth is spreading her name among League chapters, which resulted in her performance at LWVIL's convention this past June. Jenny's performance this year for us will be about the best-selling author Cheryl Strayed and her book *Wild*.

Watch for your invitation and make your reservation quickly. There will be a discount for paying early. Invite your friends to attend also. There will be plenty of time for socializing over good food. As usual, book selections

from the Lake Forest Book Store will be suggested and available.



Jenny and Jane



Letter from the Co-Presidents

Dear Ladies and Gentleman,

The U.S. Federal Government is shut down at the time of this writing, but our League in Lake Forest/Lake Bluff is in action and ready to go for a full year of work and fun.

Our opening event with wine and hors d'oeuvres on September 28th at the Re-invent Gallery introduced some of our newly elected representatives. State Senator Julie Morrison, Sandy Hart and Mike Rummel on the Lake County Board made helpful presentations, and Roycealee Wood joined the panel to answer education questions.

Per the "Program" adopted at the Annual Meeting, we have a number of public educational activities planned. First, on Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7:00 P.M. at Gorton, a panel will focus on recent



gun legislation. Our Lake Forest Chief of Police James Held, State Rep. Scott

Drury, and Nicole Chen from "Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America" will address many of the questions surrounding recent gun legislation. If you did not follow the two City Council meetings on July 1 and 15, refer to Liz Bradner's article on "Gun Sense" in the summer newsletter. As a Home Rule town Lake Forest had options for an ordinance regarding assault weapons. Numerous League members and colleagues testified at both city

council meetings urging a ban on assault weapons and large magazines, but to no avail. We also spoke for transparency and the democratic process. An assault weapon ordinance was not scheduled for the July 15th meeting. However, Mayor Schoenheider did put public comment back on the agenda July 15th at our request so that we and many other Lake Forest residents had a chance to speak, and we thank him for that.

Our next public program will be in November about the Affordable Care Act (ACA). Because so many are uninformed or misinformed about the ACA (or Obamacare as it is commonly known) and the insurance exchanges, our LWV will offer a chance to answer all of your questions on Nov. 7 at the First Presbyterian Church of Lake Forest at 7:00 P.M. Why the law? How to sign up for the insurance exchanges? Who benefits from the law and who does not? Our panel will consist of John Shustitzky, Chief Executive Officer for The Alliance for Human Services and Tony Beltran, Head of the Lake County Health Department and others who will explain the exchanges.



Come, bring friends and relatives to be factually informed about the law.



In December, we once again will enjoy a wonderful social event with the Holiday Luncheon. Mark your calendars now for Friday, December 6, at The Grille on Laurel. Jenny Riddle will make a return appearance.

Although we were planning to have a Campaign Finance Reform program in the fall, we have had to postpone it until after the new year. We are lining up some excellent speakers including our member Corinne Wood. If you want to get a taste

of what the campaign finance interest group has been discussing, please watch Trevor Potter on YouTube youtube.com/watch?v=H8hE3b-djW0 The League is closely watching the case *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Commission* before the Supreme Court.



In the spring, we will take up the LWVUS

Agriculture Study update, to be followed by an environmental program. Much more is planned for 2014.

Keep tuned in. You can be a member of the non-partisan LWV and still pursue your own political agenda under your own name. Let's work to keep (or recapture) our democracy. We hope to see you soon and often!

— Jane and Mary

Lake Forest Day Parade 2013



Who doesn't love parades! The League again had an entry in the Lake Forest Day parade in August. Although unforeseen circumstances prevented using Stephanie Victor's spiffy blue XKE Corvette, she provided another vehicle decorated for the occasion. Liz Bradner and Cindy Morehead joined her in enthusiastically waving flags and enjoying the beautiful day. They not only had a good time but also did a great job in promot-

ing democracy in a visible and pleasant fashion.

Your DUES are DUE!
 We want YOU in the Membership Directory!
 Mail your dues or use PayPal on our website NOW!
 'Nuff said? Thanks!

Gun Laws Affecting You?



Dep. Chief Walldorf, Rep. Drury, Ms. Chen

Walldorf, Lake Forest Deputy Chief of Police; and Nicole Chen, a volunteer from Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense.

Recent legislation regarding guns was discussed with an emphasis on the new concealed carry laws. Other topics included assault weapons, universal background checks, etc. Questions included where exactly do things stand in Lake Forest and Lake Bluff? Are businesses comfortable with the new

laws? Do residents feel they and their children are safe? What are the requirements for training and permits? What is allowed where? Are there shortcomings, and is more legislation needed? What are the ramifications of the new laws and the loss of our local control?

The League of Women Voters has spent decades lobbying at the federal, state, and local level for sensible gun legislation. Specifically, the League has urged adoption of legislation that will close gun show loopholes, increase penalties

for straw purchases of guns, ban assault weapons, place limits on high capacity ammunition magazine size, and fund research and reporting on gun violence in America. We believe that curbing gun violence is a critical matter of public safety, public health, and public confidence. The struggle is not over.

Go to our website www.lwv-lflb.org to watch the program. Or catch it on LFTV channel 17 and 19, or watch it on YouTube.



What, exactly, IS a “well regulated” militia?

League Wins Coastal Grant

The Leagues of Women Voters of Illinois (LWVIL) and Lake Michigan (LMLWV) were officially recognized as the recipient of a grant from the Illinois Coastal Grants Program by Illinois

Governor Pat Quinn at a press event on Saturday, October 12th at Chicago’s Shedd Aquarium.

The League project, “Stormwater: From the Ground Up,” was announced as one of 12 funded projects under this first-ever initiative administered nationally by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration and locally by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The Coastal Grant Program is supporting local environmental education projects along



Illinois’s 63-mile stretch of Lake Michigan shoreline.

Our sister League, LWV-Lake County will be participating in the program funded by the grant. If you would like to learn more about this project, please email contact@lwv-lflb.org.

Funded Projects

- Aquatic Invasive Species Outreach to Coastal Communities
- ▲ Coastal Ambassadors Program
- Millennial Reserve Regional Atlas
- ▲ Calumet is My Back Yard
- The Ripple Effect: Building a Community that Cares about our Great Lake
- ▲ Expanding Youth Conservation Action in the Millennium Reserve
- Stormwater: From the Ground Up
- ▲ Experience Calumet Water Trails Community Workshops
- Think Beyond the Banks: Education and Outreach
- ▲ Lake Forest Ravine Education and Outreach Program
- William Tillman Maritime Education Program
- ▲ Youth Outdoor Ambassadors

Voter Registration at Newcomer's Club



Newcomers' Club of Lake Bluff and Lake Forest again invited the League to

register voters at its annual opening luncheon in September. Liz Bradner and

Tina O'Connor enjoyed a productive couple of hours at the Exmoor County Club as they registered some new voters and answered many questions.

This may have been our last opportunity for coordination with Newcomers and other local institutions. With implementation of the new law in January allowing online voter registration, there will be limited demand for deputy registrars from LWV-LF/LB. But as long as people register and vote, we will be satisfied.



LWVIL 55th BIENNIUM REPORT: 2011-2013

Delegates to the 2011 LWVIL Convention reaffirmed our commitment to strengthening the democratic process by educating members and the public on issues, promoting civic participation, and encouraging public policy outcomes consistent with its positions on issues.

In 2011, these delegates adopted a program that included a study of the Illinois Pension System and the following six Action Foci: Fiscal Policy and Tax Reform, Campaign Finance Reform, Redistricting Reform, Immigration, Climate Change and Large-Scale Livestock Facilities.

The above words constitute the preamble to a comprehensive (and fascinating) report on the LWVIL website (www.lwvil.org) which evaluates progress made by the State League and the LWVIL Education Fund.

It begins with a statement of issues relating to the pension system and a describes how they were researched and debated. No position has been taken;

the League remains neutral with respect to the various methods of resolving the problem.

The report next describes the action focus on fiscal policy and tax reform. Following an analysis of current and projected needs, it concludes that a constitutional amendment introducing the graduated income tax (GRIT) would provide a workable solution. (An article on GRIT issues and benefits can be found on the next page of this newsletter.)

Campaign Finance and Election Reform were hot topics in 2011 and haven't cooled down. The League has made a strong effort to educate the public about the issues. A related issue is that of redistricting. The 2010 Fair Map Amendment citizen initiative was ineffective as demonstrated by the 2012 election results. The League continues to work with various groups to insure that fair districting maps are drawn.

Immigration reform was the focus of a study concluded in 2007. The report reaffirms the position taken at that time. Recently, the League supported successful legislation to provide those undocumented with temporary driver's licenses. The path to citizenship is currently arduous. The League is awaiting Federal action.

Climate change is a very broad issue, including air quality and energy production and consumption, water quality and supply equity, and large-scale livestock facilities. Such an obviously broad issue requires much input and discussion, and occasionally courage in the face of opposition.

This brief introduction hardly does the report justice. The report is 22 pages long and full of interesting detail about many issues not reported here which are of current interest. It should be required reading for all League members!

GRIT!

Illinois Needs a Fair and Graduated Income Tax

FACT: Illinois has an unfair, inefficient and inadequate income tax:

- The current revenue system is unfair as it does not account for a person’s ability to pay which results in an undue burden on middle and low income families to fund the basic necessities of our state;
 - o Under our “flat tax system” the wealthiest have an overall tax responsibility which is 2-3 times less than the poorest Illinoisans;

Income Group	Top 20%						
	Lowest 20%	Second 20%	Middle 20%	Fourth 20%	Next 15%	Next 4%	Top 1%
Income	Less than \$18,000	\$18,000 – \$36,000	\$36,000 – \$58,000	\$58,000 – \$95,000	\$95,000 – \$196,000	\$196,000– \$500,000	\$500,000 or more
Average Income in Group	\$10,100	\$26,600	\$47,000	\$74,700	\$128,900	\$300,700	\$2,084,700
Sales & Excise Taxes	6.9%	5.5%	4.4%	3.6%	2.7%	1.7%	0.8%
Property Taxes	4.8%	3.6%	3.7%	3.7%	3.9%	3.1%	1.5%
Income Taxes	2.0%	3.2%	3.9%	4.0%	4.1%	4.1%	4.2%
TOTAL TAXES	13.7%	12.3%	12.0%	11.4%	10.7%	8.9%	6.5%
Federal Deduction Offset	-0.0%	-0.1%	-0.4%	-0.7%	-1.1%	-0.8%	-1.2%
TOTAL AFTER OFFSET	13.7%	12.2%	11.6%	10.7%	9.5%	8.0%	5.3%

Source: Institute on Taxation & Economic Policy, *Who Pays? A Distributional Analysis of Tax Systems in All 50 States*, p. 42, Third Edition, November 2009. Note: This table shows 2007 data updated to reflect permanent changes in Illinois tax law enacted through January, 2012.

- Our current flat income tax is inefficient and broken because it is compounding our structural budget deficit; or simply put, the state simply cannot raise the revenue it needs under its current tax system to meet the most basic and core services, education, public safety, health care, and human services. Even after all the cuts, we will continue to see yearly deficits.
- We have cut school programs, laid off firefighters, cut funding for human services and we are slashing healthcare for low-income seniors and children.

FACT: A fair and graduated tax accounts for a person’s ability to pay while helping restore stability to our state’s budget:

- Establishing a graduated income tax in Illinois means we can provide services we need, reduce the state’s debt and grow our economy;
- 34 out of the 41 states with an income tax have a graduated rate income tax;
- The graduated tax could raise \$2.4 billion in new revenue while cutting taxes for up to 94% of Illinois.

FACT: Illinois voters strongly support tax fairness:

According to a statewide poll in the fall of 2011, conducted by Harstad Strategic Research:

- 73% of Illinois voters prefer the graduated tax concept versus only 18% who would prefer more cuts;

Enacting a fair tax is a two-step process:

1. By May of 2014, three-fifths of lawmakers must vote to allow a ballot question in November of 2014.
2. The citizens of Illinois will then vote to approve the question and enact a fair and graduated tax.

But first we must **EDUCATE, ENERGIZE and MOBILIZE!** For more information or to take action contact: The League of Women Voters of Illinois at issues@lwvil.org or visit our website at www.lwvil.org.

A fair tax is an important policy solution to fix Illinois' broken budget. The first step is getting rid of our flat income tax system and enacting a graduated state income tax.

LWVUS Highlights <http://www.lwv.org>

LWVUS is so busy that it is hard to keep up. The work this year is focused on four important topics: Protecting and Engaging Voters, Reforming Money in Politics, Defending the Environment, and Gun Safety. You may realize that most of those subjects are the same ones that concern us locally.

1) The League teamed up with hundreds of organizations all across the county on Sept. 24 to hold the second National Voter Registration Day. The event was very successful with over 24,000 registered new voters in one day. In addition, LWVUS continues to lobby for the restoration of the Voting Rights Act.

2) The League is watching closely the *McCutcheon v. Federal Election Board* case before the Supreme Court concerning money in politics and the possibility of corruption. LWVUS joined AARP, Common Cause, Progressives United and others in filing an amicus brief with Trevor Potter as the Counsel of Record.

3) The Administration's strong stand against climate change is fully endorsed by the League. LWVUS pledged their support along with the League of Conservation Voters, Natural Resources Defense Council, the Sierra Club and others in favor of the EPA's proposal to limit carbon pollution from new power plants. The League will be testifying at

an EPA hearing in November.

4) Gun legislation is on the minds of many concerned citizens. LWVUS sent letter to the US House in support of common sense gun legislation. Our Lobby Corps also discusses the subject when they meet individually with legislators.

TAKE ACTION



Urge Congress to restore the Voting Rights Act and ensure our elections are free, fair and accessible for all citizens.

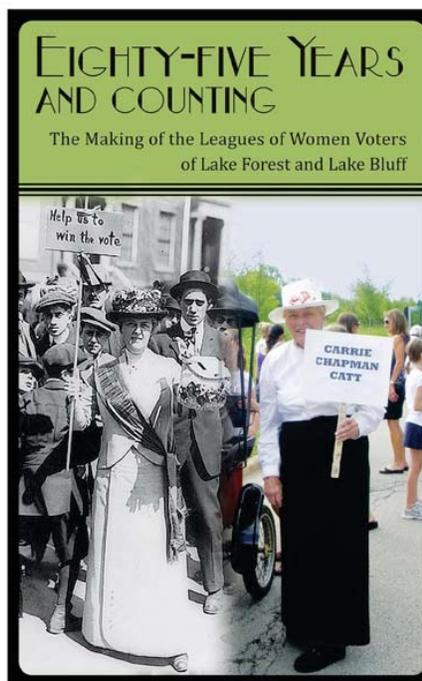
Eighty-Five Years and Counting

Reminder: copies of *Eighty-Five Years and Counting* by Jane Partridge are available for \$3.00. Jane researched and wrote this 24 page booklet. In it she describes with a humorous touch the history of the Leagues of Women Voters of Lake Forest and Lake Bluff.

She ties in League activities with the national background. It makes for great reading and will bring a smile to your face as you reminisce. Please call Mary at 847-295-1494 if you would like a copy.

In hopes of preserving additional historical material, we are collating and archiving our League papers. Were you on the LWV Board at some point and have boxes of old documents that you don't want anymore? We would be happy to take them off your hands! Call Jane (847-234-1247) or Mary, and

thanks for your donation!



Welcome New Members!

It seems fitting that we should use this space to welcome new members. The title of Jane's booklet points out that our League not only has history, but also looks to the future. That's why new members are so important and so very much appreciated.

And so we say, with deep sincerity, **welcome to new members: Carol Gayle, Beth Martin, and Sophie Twichell.**



LWVIL Highlights <http://www.lwvil.org>



From top left to bottom right: Bonnie Cox, Mary Cay Murray, Jean Pierce, Kathi Graffam, Sharon Alter, Gigi Moore, Roberta Borrino, Nancy Clark, Mary Kubasak, Erin Roeper, Irene Pritzker. Not pictured: Mary Klonowski, Ann Yoshida

As many of you know, LWVIL held its biennial convention in June. The new board is set to work.

One of their first accomplishments was a wonderful State of the State Luncheon at the Union League Club. A number of LWV-LFLB members attended and reported that the speakers were excellent. The panel of four women in government (Senate Republican Leader Christine Radogno, Attorney General Lisa Madigan, Lieutenant Governor Sheila Simon, and State Representative Patricia Bellock along with the moderator Mary Schmich from the *Chicago Tribune*) helped celebrate the 100th anniversary of women voting in Illinois.

LWVIL is working on two issues for placement on the 2014 ballot and is requesting help from local leagues. The first is the Graduated Rate Income Tax. The League has long felt a graduated



(L to R) Sen. Repub. Ldr. Christine Radogno, Att. Gen. Lisa Madigan, Lt. Gov. Sheila Simon, IL Rep Patricia Bellock at State of State event

tax is more equitable. With the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, LWVIL is spearheading the effort for a Constitutional Amendment on the 2014 ballot. Page 5 of this newsletter has more information about this important topic.

The second issue is redistricting. Federal, state, and county districts were gerrymandered by both parties in Illinois. This works for the party in power but against the best interest of the voter. LWVIL has signed on with the "Yes For Independent Maps" coalition in an effort to place the Independent Redistricting Amendment on the November 2014 ballot. Both these efforts are very important and are going to require a lot of work. If you are interested, please call the state office: 312-939-5935.

Do you really "like" us?

Facebook - please be sure to "like" us!

<https://www.facebook.com/LeagueOfWomenVotersLakeForestLakeBluff>

If you already have "liked" us, ARE YOU SEEING OUR POSTS IN YOUR NEWS FEED? Facebook limits how many posts you see from the pages you like. Add us to your interest lists so our posts will show up more often in your newsfeed. Thanks!

League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area

P.O. Box 645
Lake Forest, IL 60045

www.LWV-LFLB.org
... check it often!



Calendar

Saturday, Sept. 28, 4-6 P.M.
Culture and Politics Reception
annual kick-off event

Wednesday, Oct. 16, 7 P.M.
"Gun Laws Affecting You?"
Gorton Community Center, Lake Forest

Thursday, Nov. 7, 7 P.M.
"Obamacare, Just the Facts - Part Two"
First Presbyterian Church, Lake Forest

Friday, Dec. 6, 10:45 A.M.
Holiday Luncheon at The Grille on Laurel

"The League of Women Voters of the United States supports equal rights for all under state and federal law. The LWVUS supports legislation to equalize the legal rights, obligations, and benefits available to same-gender couples with those available to heterosexual couples. LWVUS supports legislation to permit same-gender couples to marry under civil law. The League believes that the civil status of marriage is already clearly distinguished from the religious institution of marriage and that religious rights will be preserved."

League of Women Voters of the Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area Board of Directors

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