



LEAGUE LINES

WINTER 2014

League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area

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Phyllis Albrecht Receives Carrie Chapman Catt Local Leadership Award

On behalf of the LWV-LF/LB Board of Directors and members, Jane Partridge presented Phyllis Albrecht with the Carrie Chapman Catt Local Leadership Award. Phyllis is the first recipient and accepted the award at the Holiday Luncheon on Dec. 6. She was recognized for her many years of service to the League.

The Board of Directors recently established the Carrie Chapman Catt Local Leadership Award to recognize outstanding leadership and considerable action in promoting the League's mission.

Phyllis' contributions are too numerous to list, but some of the highlights include president of League of Women Voters of Lake Bluff and then decades later as president of the combined League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area. A few of her other leadership roles were Director - Local Program, Nonpartisan Policy Committee, and Vice President - Voter's Service. Even after all these decades of service to the League, she continues to be involved and promotes the League's mission. She was named one of the "Women Who Have Made A Difference" at the 1995 Lake Forest and Lake Bluff celebration of the 75th anniversary of women's suffrage. Most recently she worked on the

upcoming Campaign Finance Reform program.

She hasn't just served the League but is well known throughout the community for her service. She was the first woman president of the Lake Bluff Village Board of Trustees, and the Lake Bluff History Museum owes much of its success to her efforts.



Phyllis and Jane

After receiving the award, Phyllis said "Please share with the board and the membership my sincerest appreciation for the honor bestowed upon me as the first recipient

of the Carrie Chapman Catt award. The League has always been at the top of my list of organizations and causes that I have espoused over my 49 years in Lake Bluff. We are a very special organization and play a pivotal role in cultivating an informed electorate. We hold a unique reputation for trustworthiness. I am so delighted that the current board has done such an admirable job of 'staying the course' and continuing to be such a viable and productive organization at this time when so many organizations are struggling for lack of participation. You are all the best!"

Phyllis, you are the best. Thank you.



***Please contact the Nominating Committee to volunteer or recommend someone for the Board!**

**see Linda Bartmes or Carol Russ*

Grassroots and Goodies, Again

Get out of the cold and appreciate the warm atmosphere at Trude Roselle's home on Thurs. Feb. 13, at 1:30 for our Grassroots and Goodies Tea Party.

Once again, we are calling all members to celebrate the League's birthday and Valentine's Day while taking care of important business. We will enjoy some delicious refreshments, with time to socialize, followed by discussion of a "Program" for next year.



February is "Program Planning" time. Program, a three-part

process that is a core component of the League's mission, is composed of program planning, study and consensus, and advocacy.

As you know, unlike many organizations, the League is not a one issue group. Yearly we must decide what our priorities are. What issues concern us? Is there widespread member interest? Is this a timely issue? Is government action the most effective way to address the problem? Do we have the resources? Do we need to start a study, or update, or is there already a position? We

cannot do it all; so, we will need to focus our attention.

Please call Mary if you can attend 847-295-1494. We will look at our own positions along with national's. Prepare by reviewing LWV-LF/LB Area's positions at www.lwv-lflb.org under the "Issues and Action Tab." To review the national positions, go to www.lwv.org and click on the "Our Work" tab, then scroll down to "Impact on Issues" on the right-hand side.

Trude's house is a white ranch, one block east of Sheridan Rd. and one block south of Westleigh Rd. in Lake Forest. Parking is only allowed on the west side of the street.

Letter from the Co-Presidents

Dear League Members,
We hope you enjoyed the holidays and are ready for 2014!

Members voted at last June's Annual Meeting for an extensive "Program" focusing on a wide-range of issues: gun violence, healthcare, fiscal policy, campaign finance, and an environmental priority. Members also voted to participate in the LWVUS Agriculture Study Update, as the League's position was outdated.

We addressed two of these issues last fall. Our public programs "Gun Laws Affecting You?" and "Obamacare, Just the Facts, Part II" were well received. If you weren't able to attend, videos of the programs are on our website - www.lwv-lflb.org or copies of the DVDs are available.

Members often express concern about the state's fiscal policy. The League has supported a graduated rate income tax (G.R.I.T.) for years. There was a fact sheet published in our last newsletter. On Tues. Jan. 28, a meeting was held at Lake Forest Bank with a presentation about G.R.I.T. by representatives from

LWVIL.

In February, we will have our annual combined celebration of Valentine's Day and the League's Birthday (Feb. 14, 1920). Using the two dates as an excuse for a party, we justify our frivolities by initiating the "Program" planning process. Some may call it a party with a purpose. After being fortified with tea and goodies, we will discuss what issues our League should address next year. Trude Roselle has offered her house as the location this year. The tea will be on Thurs. Feb. 13 at 1:30 p.m. Watch for your invitation.

Over the next few months, we will hold public programs on Campaign Finance Reform, Stormwater, and the Agriculture Study Update.

Campaign finance reform keeps escalating in importance. The Citizens United decision exacerbated the growing problem. With another case (McCutcheon v.

F.E.C.) before the Supreme Court, good government organizations, political parties, and candidates are all paying close attention. Money in politics is one of the biggest problems facing our democracy. The League has been a leader on this issue for many years.



As reported in our last newsletter, LWVIL, along with LWV-Lake Michigan Area, was awarded a grant from Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources for their joint project "Stormwater: From the Ground Up". A speaker from the project will present general

facts. Local professionals will supplement the presentation with specific details. With Lake Forest and Lake Bluff located in three different watersheds, drainage problems and flooding can be puzzling.

The Agricultural Study Update will have two parts. First, we will have a public meeting with expert speakers. A few

(continued on page 3)

Kathy Ryg and Susan Garrett Team Up on Campaign Finance Reform

Campaign Finance Reform has been a League focus issue at the national, state, and local levels for decades. Many LWV-LF/LB members expressed concern and attended interest group meetings. These meetings generated a desire to provide a wider public educational program. Two of our retired elected officials, Susan Garrett and Kathy Ryg, have taken the lead in planning a program for this spring. Both currently are leaders in organizations dedicated to improving campaign finance.

Former State Senator Susan Garrett is Chair of the Board of Directors of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform. "ICPR has long been a place where fair-minded people can debate public policy relating to elections and government ethics," said Susan.

The Illinois Campaign for Political Reform is a non-profit, non-partisan public interest organization that conducts research and advocates reforms to promote public participation in government; addresses the role of money in politics; and encourages integrity, accountability and transparency in government.

The late U.S. Sen. Paul Simon and former Lt. Gov. Bob Kustra founded ICPR in 1997. ICPR's website, ilcampaign.org, is home to the Sunshine Database, a complete and voter-friendly resource for campaign finance, economic interest, and other election-related in-

formation. LWV-LF/LB Area member Stephanie Victor also has joined the Board.



Former State Representative Kathy Ryg is Secretary of the Board of CHANGE Illinois! CHANGE Illinois! is a coalition leading systemic political and government reform. CHANGE (the Coalition for Honest and New Government Ethics) includes a diverse group of civic, business, labor, professional, non-profit and philanthropic organizations that represent more than two million members.

The coalition addresses issues that currently undercut the viability of democracy, including ballot access, competitive elections, increased citizen participation, government transparency, unethical lobbying and redistricting. The organization researches and educates on two areas of focus: redistricting and campaign finance. The League is a co-

alition partner of CHANGE Illinois! and has a representative on the Board.

Susan and Kathy have contacted speakers who will give an historical perspective, the impacts on Illinois government, and options for change. A date for the program hinges on the schedules of three very busy people. One is League member and past Lt. Governor Corinne Wood. Both she and Peter Bensinger are members of the Board of CHANGE Illinois! Peter Bensinger is a resident of Lake Forest and past Administrator of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency. The third presenter is Cindi Canary, a well-known reformer who used to head the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform.

We are looking forward to hearing from these three prominent experts soon after the primary elections. This will be a very timely program!

In the meantime, watch a panel discussion from the 2012 LWVUS convention. Panelists: Eleanor Clift, Newsweek Political Reporter and The McLaughlin Group Panelist; Mickey Edwards, Director of the Aspen Institute-Rodel Fellowships in Public Leadership and former Congressman (R-OK); Trevor Potter, President and General Counsel of the Campaign Legal Center and former Chair of the Federal Election Commission. See more at <http://library.lwv.org/content/how-do-we-unite-and-conquer>

President's Letter, continued from Page 2

days later, we will have a member meeting to discuss the issues and arrive at consensus regarding some of the issues. As the federal farm bill still has not been passed, this is a very timely subject.

Watch for your invitations to these meetings. Also, watch for emails from contact@lwv-lflb.org. Carol Russ sends out the monthly e-alerts about a week before an event. These act as reminders.

To stay up-to-date, go to our website <http://www.lwv-lflb.org> where you can click on the link to our very active and informative Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/LeagueOfWomenVotersLakeForestLakeBluff> for information about what the League and affiliated organizations are doing. If you don't have a Facebook page, you can still read ours by going to our website. Check it out! If you do have a Facebook

page, please "like" us, and share one or more of our postings with your friends. We hope to see you soon and often!

Questions? Call or email us.

- Jane and Mary



Obamacare, Just the Facts! Part II

In light of last spring's successful program, "Obamacare, Just the Facts!" presented by Julie Hamos, Director of Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services, and League member Dr. Steven Potsic, the LWV-LF/LB Board reasoned the public would appreciate more information after enrollment had begun.

The follow-up program "Obamacare, Just the Facts! Part II", was held November 7, 2013. LWV-LF/LB Area teamed up with the First Presbyterian Church of Lake Forest to host three local experts in the health-care insurance enrollment process. John

Shustitzky, C.E.O. of The Alliance for Human Services, and Tony Beltran, Ex-



Tony, Anne and John

ecutive Director of the Lake County Health Department, discussed how and why to sign up.

They were followed by Anne Bassi.

Anne is the past president of LWV-Highland Park and currently is the Moline Township Supervisor. But more importantly, she has taken the extensive training as a Marketplace Navigator for the Affordable Care Act. Anne was able to answer specific questions about the enrollment process and what information people would need to enroll. The audience was very grateful for the opportunity to learn more about the process and what steps they could take next.

Melanie Rummel moderated the program and skillfully fielded the many questions from the audience. If you were not able to attend, both programs were videotaped and can be seen on our website www.lwv-lflb.org and on YouTube. We were very fortunate to have such knowledgeable speakers at both programs.

Women's History Month Luncheon

On Saturday, March 8, 11:30 a number of our sister Leagues are celebrating Women's History Month with a luncheon at the Wilmette Golf Course, 3900 Fairway Dr. Wilmette. The cost is \$25.00. Reservations are required by March 3 to Ann Yoshida, email at amyoshida@aol.com

Following the meal, a speaker from the Northwestern University Law School's Center on Wrongful Convictions-Women's Project will address the audience. Attorney Karen Daniel will talk about the work of this group.

Some of you may remember hearing Karen Daniel speak here in Lake Forest last spring. Members from LWV-Glenview were so impressed by the program LWV-Lake County hosted with Lake Forest College that they wanted to have a program in Cook County about women wrongfully convicted.

LWV-Lake County with its ongoing focus on criminal justice has sponsored with Lake Forest College two public

programs about wrongful convictions. The first panel discussion "False Confessions: Do They Happen? How? Why?" was on April 15, 2012. The featured speakers were Jed Stone, Criminal Defense Attorney; Rob Warden, Ex. Dir. Center of Wrongful Convictions;

and Juan Rivera, who was wrongfully convicted and later exonerated after 19 years. Juan Rivera was one of the most sensational cases in Lake County.

This was followed last year on April 28, 2013 with

"Opening Doors: Wrongful Convictions of Women." The speakers were Karen Daniel, Judy Royal, and Erin Topp, three

attorneys from The Women's Project at the Center for Wrongful Convictions.

Women fighting wrongful convictions face special challenges. Natural or accidental deaths can be mistaken for murder. According to the National Registry of Exonerations, one half of female exonerees were convicted for what turned out to be no crime at all. The Chicago Tribune published a long story about a woman wrongfully convicted in the January 19, 2014 edition.

LWV-Lake County will host another program this year. It will be at the College of Lake County on Sunday, April 13. One of the speakers will be a women exoneree. She will have quite a disturbing story to tell.

We are pleased to report that both Lake County State's Attorney Mike Nerheim and State Representative Scott Drury are very concerned about wrongful convictions and are taking steps to prevent them in the future.



No More Wrongful Convictions!

Holiday Luncheon

On December 6th we enjoyed a wonderful holiday luncheon at the Grille on Laurel. The food and service were great as usual.

Jenny Riddle entertained us by bringing to life two books, *Wild* by Cheryl Strayed and *Let's Pretend This Never Happened* by Jenny Larson. Unique and beautiful jewelry by Stacy Vermylen was available for sale as well as a selection of books for holiday giving from the Lake



Forest Book Store.

Also, for the first time the Carrie Chapman Catt Leadership Award was presented: as reported on page one, Phyllis Albrecht was the honoree.

What more could we ask for-----good food and good entertainment, while in good company! What a delightful way to kick off the holiday season!

-Linda Bartmes

Above pictures: top, inside the Grille; left, Bev Nelson, Pat and George Rounsaville, Steve and Helen Potsic; right, Trude Roselle, Barbara Monsor, Phyllis Albrecht, Ann Grant (seated)

March 18 Primary Election Candidate Forum Update

Be sure to vote March 18th in the Primary Election!

of the candidates in the two contested races (Lake County Sheriff and Lake County Treasurer) will not be available.

tend a forum for one county race to justify the expense.

-Elizabeth Bradner

We will not hold a candidate forum before the March 18 primary because one

It is doubtful enough people would at-

Welcome New Members!



Welcome to new members: from Lake Forest - **Marilyn Turchi, Elizabeth Joy Guscott-Mueller, David Mueller**; from

Libertyville, **Jill Shepherd**.

We appreciate your presence with us and look forward to your active participation in our meetings, educational activities and social events.

Be sure to let us know how we can help you meet your expectations of us. We are good listeners!

-Your fellow members

LWV Lake Michigan Conference

A “State of the Lake” conference in Sheboygan this fall addressed concerns with water quality, beach health, and sustainable communities – and not just sustainable human communities. I am not a scientist, but on the working theory that a little knowledge can indeed be a dangerous thing, I will provide some talking points for you. So go out there and be fierce...

WATERSHED: What’s yours? Most of us are in the Great Lakes or Des Plaines watershed. As an illustration, imagine a drop of water along our local sub-continental divide; this highpoint is generally along the Green Bay Trail. That drop of water would either go downhill to the lake or downhill to the Skokie River, which is also part of the Great Lakes basin. Farther west on the high point near Route 43 that same drop of water might go to the Des Plaines River so that would be the Des Plaines watershed.

FUN FACTS: First, the Chicago River, which includes our local Skokie ditch, really should be in the Lake Michigan watershed, but when the Chicago/Skokie River was diverted away from Lake Michigan toward the Mississippi River in 1900 this changed. Second fun fact: Lake Michigan only replenishes itself once every 100 years; so, this big diversion of fresh water will remain controversial. The calls to keep watersheds hydrologically separate increases as exotic invaders, like quagga mussels and Asian carp increase their range.

QUAGGA who? Quagga mussels have now supplanted their cousins the zebra mussel on the hit list. Their combined



appetites are stripping Lake Michigan’s waters of zooplankton and photoplankton, triggering massive food alterations for the bigger fish species. The mussels’ waste also fuels cladophora, the smelly algae that washes onto the beach. Quaggas and zebras are thought to have come into the Great Lakes watershed in cargo ships’ ballast waters. Ironically, the two mussels’ food choice also gives us clearer water.

GLRI: Great Lakes Restoration Initiative is a consortium of 13 federal agencies formed in 2010 to concentrate action. Locally GRLI has funded a just-completed ravine restoration in Lake Bluff to improve the nearshore health of the lake. Two GLRI projects at Fort Sheridan were in partnership with the Army Corps to restore damaged habitat. This group also targets AOC’s – “areas of concern” - which include the Waukegan Harbor superfund site. The harbor will likely be “delisted” soon.

GULLHERDER: You’ve heard of shepherds, the dogs and people who herd sheep. A couple Chicago beaches are now using border collies to chase gulls with very successful results. The gulls are fleeing to calmer perches, and the dogs are exuberantly-joyously-ecstatic about their working conditions. The seagulls’ fecal deposits on the beach are reduced and the beach closings caused by E. coli bacteria have dropped. So don’t ever feed the gulls, and feel free to chase a few yourself.

The Lake Michigan League of Women Voters is pleased to be one of ten inaugural winners of the Illinois Coastal Grant program. The League will facilitate educational forums on “Stormwater from the Ground Up” along coastal communities next spring and summer.

-Carol Russ (Gilbert)

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LWVUS and LWVIL Updates

When a person joins the League of Women Voters-Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area, the dues is not just for our local League. Membership includes LWV of the United States, LWV of Illinois, LWV-Lake County and LWV-Lake Michigan. (LWV-LM just changed their name from Lake Michigan League of Women Voters, in order to comply with national standards.)

We may be members in different states or communities, but are all members of the League of Women Voters. What follows is an outline of what our state and national leagues are doing. You can (and should!) go to their websites www.lwvil.org and www.lwv.org to find current information. Also you should be receiving emails from them.

LWVUS

As this past year brought about more voter restrictions than in recent history, Voting Rights has been a top priority for the League. The Supreme Court's decision on *Shelby v. Holder* compelled the League to escalate its fight to protect voters' rights. LWVUS is working with many state leagues to repeal voter suppression laws.

Leaguers have testified before legislators and other officials. The League is

supporting common sense federal legislation that was just introduced by a bipartisan group of legislators. This bill would repair and restore the Voting Rights Act.

The League also is working for election administration reform. Five priorities include:

- Permanent and Portable Statewide Voter Registration
- Improved Polling Place Management
- Expanded Early Voting
- Secure Online Voter Registration
- Electronic Streamlining of Election Practices

The League is actively addressing climate change. It has worked for legislation to reduce carbon pollution from power plants and supports EPA regulations to control carbon pollution from new power plants.

Gun Control is another focus issue. The League has urged both chambers of Congress to pass new legislation addressing the gun violence plaguing our nation. The League sent a letter to the House to pass common sense solutions and provided a statement to the Senate for their hearing on Gun Safety Proposals.

Additionally, League members support-

ed proposed gun safety solutions, including closing gun show background check loopholes, increasing penalties for straw purchases of guns, banning assault weapons, and placing limits on high capacity ammunition magazines.

LWVIL

The last details for the Issues Briefing on Saturday, Feb. 1 are being hammered out. It again will be held at University City, 525 S. State St. Chicago. This is the best way to learn what the state League is doing about a variety of issues. It makes for a full day, including a light breakfast and lunch. Go to their website for more information www.lwvil.org.

The state League will be hosting two candidate debates for the governor's race. They will be in Peoria on Jan. 23 and in Chicago on Feb. 27. Be sure to watch on Channel 7 (WLS).

LWVIL continues its support of the grassroots campaign "Yes for Independent Maps." Redistricting in Illinois (as well as in many other states) is used to political advantage by carving out districts which give incumbents an almost unbeatable advantage in elections.

Unfair redistricting also marginalizes the voice of minority voters, whether of race or party. "Yes for Independent Maps" is working to place an amendment on the November ballot.

The League also is working for another constitutional amendment on the November ballot. This involves letting Illinois voters decide if they want the graduated rate income tax. The Fall 2013 *League Lines* included a fact sheet on the graduated rate income tax, (GRIT) on page 5. More information is available on the LWVIL website.



*Spring is like a perhaps hand (which comes carefully out of Nowhere)...
-e e cummings*

wait for it, it will come!

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

Sat. Feb. 1, 8:30 a.m., Chicago
I WVIL Issues Briefing

Tue. Feb. 4, 1:00 p.m., Lake Forest Bank
Board Meeting

Thu. Feb. 13, 1:30 p.m. (see article, p. 2)
Grassroots and Goodies Tea

Thu. Feb. 27, Channel 7
LWVIL Candidate for Governor Debate

Tue. Mar. 4, 1:00 p.m., Lake Forest Bank
Board Meeting

Sat. Mar. 8, 11:30 a.m., Wilmette Golf Course
Women's History Month Luncheon

Tue. Mar. 18
Election Day

"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 Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area Board of Directors

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