



# LEAGUE LINES

SPRING 2015

League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area

## 2015-2016 Program Planning

### Inside this issue:

- Program Planning Annual Meeting 1
- Co-Presidents' Letter Water Program Report 2
- Legislative Interviews Fiscal Forum State Convention 3
- Issues Briefing 4
- Campaign Finance Women's History Month 5
- New Members Laurel-West. Update 6
- Gun Program Climate Action Toolkit 7
- Calendar 8

Fortified with cake, coffee and tea at Wyn Cain's house on March 11, we set about planning our program for 2015-16. At the state level, members wanted to study term limits,



**Liz, Joy & Linda**

believing too much power is concentrated in the leadership in the Illinois legislature. The state board Issues Committee then wrote to ask if members in our League would participate in or chair a study committee. Are you interested?



**David & Steve**



**Ann & Ann**

We recommend, to the annual meeting, participation in the LWVUS studies of Money in Politics and the Convention process to amend the US constitution. At the local level, we want to drop the land use position and update

the conservation position.

As this year, our action foci should be climate change/clean air, gun violence prevention, health care defense, fiscal policy and tax reform. We will be covering campaign finance reform with the LWVUS study.



**Marilyn & Wyn**



*in just-spring when the world is mud-luscious the little lame balloonman whistles far and wee and eddieandbill come running from marbles and piracies and it's spring ... e.e. cummings (excerpt)*

### Annual Meeting



Can you believe the League year is almost over? We'll be summing up and charting next year on June 16th at Cindy Morehead's, 14 Forest Hills Road, Lake Bluff. Come at 5 P.M. for a delicious catered dinner. Then we need your input to adopt a local program

of study and action, adopt the budget, elect officers, directors and members of the Nominating Committee, and review the bylaws and nonpartisan policy. This organization depends on you to guide it. See you there!

## Co-Presidents' Letter

Dear Leaguers,

It's been a busy last few months as you will read in this newsletter. Liz and I were happy to see so many of you at our League events. We continue to be impressed with the interest and participation that is shown at these gatherings.

Many of you ask thoughtful questions that show a real concern for the issues presented. We encourage you to continue to voice your opinions and share with the board your interests.

The League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area makes a difference because of your willingness

to learn about issues and share a nonpartisan view.

We look forward to seeing many of you at our Annual Meeting Tuesday, June 16.

-WynCain and Liz Bradner

## Water: What Are We Drinking?

League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area presented an afternoon program on Sunday, February



**Betsy Warren & Carol Shook**

22, 2015 at Hotchkiss Hall at Lake Forest College. Members of the League, college students and community members learned details about where we get our water, how it is treated, problems that affect our water and what we can do about it.

Beth Kosson, Education Director of Ecomyths Alliance whose mission is to inspire people to make eco-friendly choices. gave the presentation. Beth has a double major in environmental science and geography from DePaul University.



**Beth Kosson**

The presentation began with learning about where our water comes from. Of particular in-

terest was learning that our water which is purchased from the Central Lake County Joint Action Water Agency (JAWA), which is a state-of-the-art treatment agency. It treats our water for more compounds than are required by the EPA.

Also of interest was knowing the harm caused by pesticides and fertilizers that are added to our lawns. Water that comes from the surface or the ground collects pesticides and fertilizers that present problems to us and plant and animal life.

Fertilizers and pesticides are found in 80% of fish and 33% of the aquifers in the ground. Safe solutions to replace these fertilizers and pesticides follow: make your own homegrown pesticide solutions; use row covers to control weeds; add nitrogen to lawns by leaving grass clippings and leaves; keep grass three inches tall; buy phosphorus-free fertilizer.

Another topic concerned levels of mercury in water. Visual presentations showed how important it is to have a low level of mercury in Lake Michigan and other

bodies of water. Small fish with dangerously high mercury levels are then consumed by larger fish. This results in a process called bioaccumulation. When the larger fish are consumed by humans, the high level of mercury can be problematic.

Climate change also has a direct effect on water. The impact of rising temperatures of our oceans and lakes is especially important.

Rising temperatures impact aquatic ecosystems, the water cycle, drought, floods, and rising sea levels. A 2012 study on freshwater fisheries projected that cold-water habitat could shrink by as much as 50% by the end of this century because of rising temperatures.

Finally, atmospheric pollution is absorbed by the lake water and affects its chemistry and purity.

This program can be viewed online by using this link: "Water: Just What are we Drinking?"

<http://youtu.be/W8D6s0moEek>

## Legislative Interviews

"Very interesting" was the reaction of Leaguers to interviews of Senator Julie Morrison on March 6 and Representative Scott Drury on March 13. We met them in their offices and posed questions from the state League to be directed to all state senators and legislators by their League constituents.



**Sen. Julie Morrison**

We teamed up with the Highland Park/Highwood and Deerfield Leagues.

Sen. Morrison supports the millionaire's tax and a sales tax on services, but not on professional services, based on feedback from her

constituents.

On school funding, Rep. Drury sees strong support in his district for special

education. He stressed that parent support determines school success as well as per pupil spending. Human services is Sen. Morrison's biggest interest and her goal is to keep funding from decreasing; increasing is unrealistic.

Criminal justice is Rep. Drury's specialty, as a former prosecutor. He favors treatment rather than incarceration of mentally ill inmates, and he thinks both parties and "big Pharma" agree. He realizes that if a released inmate commits a violent crime, it could defeat the program.

Redistricting that does not favor political parties would receive the support of both legislators, but they see it as unrealistic. Both would vote for an independent commission to draw the districts.

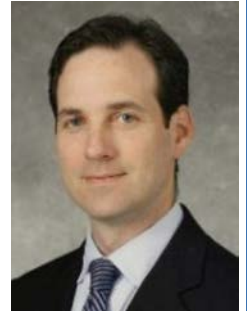
Election laws: Sen. Morrison wants to make it as easy and fast to vote as possible. Rep. Drury predicts that eventually people will vote from home.

Both support the Clean Power Plan for Illinois and the moratorium on fracking. Rep. Drury notes that because oil prices fell, no one is fracking in Illinois.

Both would vote for limiting an individual's access to firearms when there are indications that that person is at risk for violence.

Moving Medicaid patients into managed care would receive support from Sen. Morrison but Rep. Drury is not yet convinced.

Moving Illinois to a state health care exchange is not supported unless federal subsidies would be provided because Illinois is broke.



**Rep. Scott Drury**

## Fiscal Forum

Representative Scott Drury gave an outstanding run-down of the state's fiscal prospects at a discussion on February 11 at the First Presbyterian Church. Over a hundred people heard him answer questions from the League and attendees. Melanie Rummel ably moderated the event. The LWVHP/HW and LWV



**Rep. Drury, Melanie Rummel, Liz Bradner**

Deerfield co-sponsored. Lake Forest TV videotaped it for broadcast on cable.

Rep. Drury acknowledged that projected revenue falls far short of expenses at

current levels. He did not favor taxing retirement income, the millionaire's tax, or a tax on all services. He voted against the graduated income tax last year because the proposal was revenue neutral, and therefore wouldn't have solved the fiscal problem.

He said the state Supreme Court would determine the future of pension reform. He believes spending on incarceration could be cut if minor offenders were not put in jail.

## State Convention

Liz and Wyn are looking forward to the LWVIL biennial convention in Naperville June 5-7, to meet Leaguers from all over the state and hear what they are doing. Jane Partridge will also attend. State League Conventions



present a wonderful opportunity to meet creative Leaguers from all over the state who are eager to share their ideas. Let us know if you would like to go as well. The experience will be well worth your time!

## LWVIL Issues Briefing



The annual Issues Briefing was very enlightening for Wyn, Liz and Jane Partidge. Held by the LWVIL at the University Center in Chicago, it was a day of two plenary sessions and a choice of six workshops. The first plenary on Fiscal Issues Confronting Illinois reprised our own Climbing Out of Debt forum on Feb. 11. Ralph Martire, Executive Director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, gave figures on the state's fiscal plight. He pointed out that nine states with the highest graduated income tax grew their economies more than those with no income tax during the period 2000-2012. Adjusted for inflation and population growth, our state spends 28% less on services than it did in FY2000. Finally, the governor's budget for 2016 only reduces the annual deficit from \$6.8 billion to \$6.5 billion despite drastic cuts in human services and higher education. The League believes something must be done to increase revenue.

At a workshop on Criminalization of Mental Illness, Dr. Nneka Jones Tapia of the Cook County Department of Corrections described the prevalence of mental illness in inmates in Cook County Jail. When drugs to stabilize mental illness became available in the 1970's, and because state mental hospitals had become so problematic and costly, mentally ill patients were released to the streets. Unable to work, they committed crimes of survival including retail theft, destruction of property, and trespassing. Now there are 1.3 million people incarcerated with mental illness. At Cook County jail, they receive 150-300 new incarcerations each day and 20-

30% of them have mental illness. They release 20-30 inmates mentally ill persons per day, most with no reentry plans. We need better crisis intervention for law enforcement, legislation to deal with treatment non-compliance, and more community reentry planning, such as housing and employment, or these patients will soon be back in jail.

Effective advocacy was addressed by State Representative Robin Gabel. She stated that proposed bills, including the actual language, often come from constituents, as well as special interests, and legislative staff. It's worthwhile to promote your ideas! It's important to get to know your legislator and see what you can do for them as well as ask support for them. When you've scheduled a meeting with them, be prepared with supporting materials and answers to counter-arguments. Be prepared to negotiate and compromise with departments, legislators, and the Governor's office. Telephone calls are quick and effective. Personal letters and emails are most effective. Media hits should have a "hook" such as a story about a citizen affected by your issue. For Letters to the Editor, put your most important message in the first paragraph. Keep the letter to 100-400 words. Be assured that legislators want to pass good bills. They are influenced by media.

Wyn attended the afternoon workshop entitled, "How Human Services Are Affected By State Cutbacks" The state provides human services through three agencies: Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and Department of Aging. Continuing to cut funds to these agencies will lead to future social and health problems of the growing low-income pop-

ulation in Chicago and the suburbs.

Also important is the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACE) that affect generations. Adverse childhood experiences include abuse, neglect and household dysfunction. Some social consequences of ACES are juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, depression, teen pregnancy, suicide attempts, educational failure and violence.

Since funds have declined since 2005, the safety net that provides vulnerable persons with needed services has diminished. In addition to children, adults with developmental disabilities, homebound seniors and individuals with substance abuse and mental illness continue to lose services because of additional cutbacks.

The question is asked, What can be done about curbing these cutbacks just when the need becomes greater? Becoming educated about the needs facing human services and then advocating for federal, state and local support is a start. Helping to increase local charitable giving is also important, especially in the suburbs, since Chicago receives the bulk of donated funds.

Other resources of help include: encouraging business to provide more supports for low-wage workers; encourage grassroots support, and improve philanthropic funding.



**Lyn, Wyn, Jane**

# Campaign Finance



**Carol Gayle, Sen. Morrison, Jane Partridge**

It was a back-and-forth discussion on money in politics April 8 with State Senator Julie Morrison at Gorton Center. We questioned whether donations make

donors expect legislative influence. Julie said no; they didn't ask for quid pro quo. She does believe legislators, particularly state representatives, have to spend an undue amount of time raising money for the next election, since their terms are two years.

She thinks 100% public financing of state elections would be fine. Disclosure of Super Pac donations to state legislative

elections would also be a plus. If Illinois passed a resolution to call for a U. S. constitutional convention to overturn Citizens United, Sen. Morrison would vote for it.



**Sen. Morrison, Terry Desmond**

# Women's History Month Panel

Women's History Month sparked a panel discussion by elected women from Highland Park and Lake Forest: Anne Bassi, West Deerfield Township Supervisor; Lauren Beth Gash, former 58th District Representative; Alyssa Knobel, Highland Park City Council; Susan Garrett, former 29th District Senator; and Margie Weiss, former Mayor of Highland Park. All had waged successful efforts to improve their communit-



ies and then, as leaders, were asked to run for office.

Some efforts required a thick skin to resist opposition. All found that when campaigning door-to-door, they found almost all voters to be appreciative and receptive. On campaign finance, they usually accepted contributions only from people they knew and did not feel pressure to vote a certain way, but they suspect this is not possible in statewide and federal elections. All find public service to be an enriching, positive experience. Who among us wants to be next?



## Welcome New Members!

We are always happy to announce new and returning Leaguers. Welcome to Pat Brennan and Char Kreuz, both of Lake Forest Place, and Liz Platt of Lake Bluff.

Char recently returned to the area and rejoined the League. Pat and Liz are both new League members. We hope to get them involved quickly and look forward to their input and suggestions.



## Laurel-Western Redevelopment Update



Interest remains high in the development of the former Municipal Services property. The Planning Commission reviewed a slightly altered plan from Focus Development on March 11, to a packed City Council chambers.

The plan has 172 dwelling units, of which 118 are rental. It has one four-

story building 64 feet high topped by a pitched roof. It has one road, north from Laurel with no access from it to Franklin or Western. There are entrances to underground parking from Western.

Many neighbors support development of the property but oppose the current density, elevation, and traffic pattern. Petitions were circulated and submitted at the April 15 Planning Commission meeting.

The Commission will consider the

height of the 4-story building, whether the road should go through to Franklin, and other proposals at its next meeting on May 13.



## LWV-LC Update

Two of our members won their elections: Kathleen Condon Wasik for the Grayslake High School Board District 127 and Tom Meskel for the Grayslake Elementary School Board District 46. Both were endorsed by the Daily Herald.

We are following any developments regarding the Equal Rights Amendment at the state level. Representative Lou Lang brings up a joint resolution yearly. He has not introduced it yet this year as he is trying to get 71 votes. He only has about 50 right now because there are many new representatives.

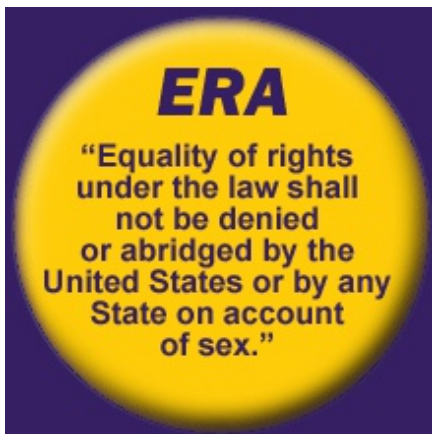
Lake County coalition. CPLC held a public program April 8 with Sen. Julie Morrison at the Most Blessed Trinity Academy. She discussed the Clean Jobs legislation that can make Illinois a leader in clean energy by boosting energy efficiency, renewable energy, and a cap and invest program. Also this will create an estimated 32,000 jobs per year here in Illinois. Issues specialists at LWVIL are watching this bill and probably will support it.

Our Annual Meeting will be June 25, at a place to be determined. LWV-LF/LB can send three voting delegates, in addition to the members on the LWV-LC board. We will vote on bylaws, budget and nominations. We will not vote on Program this year as that was determined last year on our two-year schedule.

We held two candidate debates, one in Hainesville for village trustees and one in Waukegan for school board. Both were well-attended. We had to cancel the Grayslake debate as lead voter service chair Diane Sanderson was hospitalized. She is better now!

A number of members conducted legislative interviews with legislators in Waukegan, Grayslake, and Round Lake.

LWVLC is part of the Clean Power



## Goodbye to Leaguers

We are sorry to report the passing of Mary Beattie and Phyllis Albrecht. They had both given long and valuable

service to the League. Phyllis served as our president from 1990-94 and was the recipient of our first Carrie Chapman

Catt award in 2013. She had recently moved to Maryland. We offer our sympathy to their families.

## Our Growing Threat From Guns in the 21st Century

"Every three hours a real bullet hits a real child."

"Teddy bears have more federal manufacturing regulations than real guns."

These are just two of the unsettling banner headlines on the Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence (ICHV) website. We are pleased to announce an upcoming program on the topic of gun-related violence. Our presenters will be Mr. Mark Walsh, Campaign Director for

the ICHV, and Mr. Robert E. Spiel, who retired from the FBI after 20 years specializing in art-related cases. Mr. Spiel has since worked as an art-security consultant.

The program is scheduled for Thursday, May 21 at 7:00 P.M., at the Church of the Holy Spirit, 400 E. Westminster, Lake Forest. Following the presentation, a moderator will present written questions submitted from the audience.

Please mark your calendars for this timely and important program!



*Among 23 populous, high-income countries, 80% of all firearm deaths occurred in the United States*

## Climate Change Comes Home

A recent Daily Herald letter to the editor from a Lake Bluff resident about climate change has generated over 108 comments. Considering the



LWV's strong and consistent positions on this and related topics, a review of the League's resources seems timely.

LWV.org has a very helpful collection of articles, facts and suggestions for action appropriately called the "Toolkit for Climate Action." You can find it by using the search window on the lwv.org website. The basic premise follows.

"Global climate change is one of the most serious threats facing our nation and our planet today. Increasingly severe



**LWV** LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
**TOOLKIT FOR CLIMATE ACTION**  
 Help **Protect** the Planet

consequences are projected for more people and more regions of the world unless we act now -- as individuals, as communities, and as a nation. For its part, the League is calling for prompt action to cut this country's GHG emissions, set limits on carbon pollution from new and existing power plants, invest in a clean energy economy, and help the world's poorest countries tackle the challenges of climate change."

The League has been actively seeking to protect the environment since the 1960s. It has worked tirelessly to promote enactment of laws to ensure clean air and water, and has lobbied in favor of the Environmental Protection Agency's regulatory powers.

The toolkit includes a guide to its effective use, beginning with "Choosing a Role for You League." Next is a list of "grassroots"

actions which can be easily done at the local League level.

Part III provides a brief but comprehensive set of resources, including scientific evidence,

causes and impacts of climate change. The remaining parts provide suggestions about involving the public both individually and through promoting public policy.

Finally, the Resources section provides a wealth of evidence-backed material supporting all levels of the topic. There is even a selection of "Resources for Younger Children." But, think about it... protecting our climate is all for the sake of our younger children, and their children, and so on!



## League of Women Voters of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff Area



### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of Lake Forest-Lake Bluff Area

*Still Going Strong Since 1926!*



contact@LWV-LFLB.org  
www.LWV-LFLB.org

## Calendar

- May 13: Board Meeting, LF Bank
  - May 21: Program: Threat from Guns in the 21st Century
  - May 22: Annual Meeting Packets sent
  - May 25: Memorial Day
  - June 5-7: LWVIL Convention; call if interested in attending
  - June 16: Annual Meeting, Cindy Morehead's
  - June 25: Annual Meeting of LWV-Lake County
  - July 4: Lake Bluff 4th of July parade
  - August 5: Lake Forest Day, LWV marchers needed
- Please Check the web site for times and locations!*

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

#### OFFICERS

Liz Bradner	Co-President
Wyn Cain	Co-President
Marilyn Turchi	Membership
Jean Brown	Co-V.P. Programs
Carol Gayle	Co-V.P. Programs
Terry Desmond	V.P. Voter Service
Steve Potsic	Treasurer
Joy Guscott-Mueller	Secretary

#### DIRECTORS

Linda Bartmes	Hospitality
Judy Grisamore	Communications, Publicity
Kathleen Conlon-Wasik	LWV-LC Board Liaison
Ann Grant	Director-at-Large
Jane Partridge	Director-at-Large
Cindy Morehead	Director-at-Large

#### OFF-BOARD POSITIONS

Carol Russ	E-Alerts, LWV-LMR Liaison
Stephanie Victor	Voter Registration
Nicki Snoblin	Webmaster
Diane Sanderson	Newsletter Editor
Stan Sanderson	Newsletter Publisher

“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.”