



The Naperville

VOTER

February 2009

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Calendar

February

21 – Program Planning meeting, 9 am – 1 pm at Community United Methodist Church

26 – LWVIL State of the State Luncheon, Chicago

March

3 – School District 204 Candidate Forum, 7:00 pm, Waubonsie Valley HS Auditorium

10 – Last day to register to vote in Consolidated Election

16 – Park Board Candidate Forum, 7:00 pm, Meilly Swallow Theatre, North Central College

16 – **4/2** – Early Voting for Consolidated Election

18 – School District 203 Candidate Forum, 7 pm, NCHS Cafeteria

22 – City Council Candidate Meet and Greet, 2-4 pm, 95th Street Library, Rooms A & B

April

7 – **ELECTION DAY!**

May

27 – LWVN Annual Meeting

Note: Additional candidate forums are listed on page 6.

President's Letter

Hello, Everyone! Winter's hold is loosening! That means that spring elections and Annual Meeting aren't far behind!

Annette Smith has been incredibly productive in arranging **candidates events for March** in the four major races: School Boards 203 and 204, Park District Board, and City Council. It's up to the rest of us to support her efforts. Come and ask questions. Or volunteer to be a "card-walla" or help with other housekeeping tasks. Forums are a core activity of the League and the visibility of our members strengthens our credibility in Naperville. Please try to participate!

If you would like to be a **voter registrar**, it's not too late to be recommended and certified. Contact Annette for details. Past registrars should have received a letter from the Board of Elections describing how to renew their status.

Our **Program Planning potluck lunch on February 21** offers a great opportunity for assessing what we've accomplished and where we'd like to go both at the local level and, this year, statewide. It's also a great "meet and greet" for members, and occasionally a gourmet experience! Treat yourself and assert your right to influence policy in your League at the same time. It's as good as a spa day! Well, close, anyway.

Karin Snodgrass is revving up for nominations for the **Rosemary Martin Democracy in Action Award**, to be presented this year at our Annual Meeting in May. This award is unique in Naperville, and it is a great opportunity to inspire people to think about what makes democracy work. Please spread the word and consider making a nomination yourself. Deadline is April 10.

Come out of your winter cave and get a fresh taste of springtime and politics!

Jane Barnes



Program Planning For State and Local Action
Saturday, February 21
9 am to 1 pm
Community United Methodist Church

Please bring a casserole, salad or dessert to share. Oven and refrigerator are available. In the interest of recycling and our environment, consider bringing your own table service and coffee, tea or water cup. Other resources will be available.

Last month, we focused on reviewing state and local position statements and the possible choices (retain, drop, restudy, new study) for recommended action.

Now, Part 2: What You Should Do This Week to Prepare:

1. If you have not yet had a chance to review local (Naperville) and state program positions, here's another window of opportunity.
www.lwvil.org: "Issues and Action" - "Where We Stand"
www.naperville.il.lwv.org: "About LWV" - "Action and Advocacy"
2. Review the summary of State League biennium actions and the action taken in Naperville so far in relation to our adopted 2008-2009 Action Focus published elsewhere in this Voter.
3. Think about your own prioritization of issues for action or study.
4. Consider where YOU would put resources and come to the meeting ready to make some hard choices. The current economy of money, time, and personnel applies!

We want to expedite the recommendation process in this complex task, so the more informed we are coming in, the more productive our conversation will be! Taking our model from Washingtonian CHANGE, expect a NEW format for enhancing discussion!

Where We Stood: Summary Of LWVIL Action 2007-2008

Criminal Justice:

Action Alerts and Testimony provided for enhanced employment opportunities for persons with criminal records. Supported expanded Mental Health courts, access to Medicaid benefits upon release, reduced length of parole sentences for offenders completing a GED, expansion of School drug diversion programs (yet to be funded).

Death Penalty:

Actively monitors court decisions and concern demonstrated over the increasing number of death penalty sentences being overturned; continued effort to achieve abolition.

Election Laws: reflecting both state and national positions

The Election Administration Reform Committee 2005-2007 achieved legislation allowing detainees to vote by absentee ballot and permitting civic organizations to work as poll watchers. [Committee was dissolved in 2007.] Tracking of election laws is made more difficult because they are not codified. Issues foreseen in the near future: government-issued photo ids at polls; registration drive restrictions; election day registration; Internet voting; certification of voting equipment; changes in petition requirements

Gun Violence Prevention:

Support for bills seeking to ban sales of large capacity ammunition devices and requiring background checks on private gun transfers; works in coalitions for a state-wide assault weapon ban and other legislation facilitating the tracking of weapons when sold, lost, or used.

Schools:

Identified school funding as a priority action focus through 2009, promoting legislation that provides stable and adequate revenues without disproportionate tax burden on poor and middle-income households; testimony by a number of local Leagues at legislative hearings; Education Advocacy Toolkit and email discussion group provided by LWVIL; coalition membership on reform of the school finance system.

State Fiscal Policy:

Supported HB 750 and SB2288 to address tax system issues, not yet acted upon.

State Redistricting:

No recent action, but the 2010 Census, triggering another redistricting in 2011, raises the position to possible review and may suggest the need for a constitutional amendment.

Land Use:

Provides the basis for local League action on issues including landfill siting, orderly growth, low-income housing, and preservation of open space.

Pesticides:

Member of Healthy Schools Campaign; supported re-enactment of the Structural Pest Control Act in August, 2008.

Large-Scale Livestock Facilities:

Supported groups opposing the construction of the largest confinement farm operation ever proposed in Illinois, near Apple River Canyon State Park.

State Program Summary continued on p. 4

State Program Summary, continued

Children's Services:

Monitored Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice and DCFS; supported budget requests for mental health activities, amendments to the Sex Offender Registration Act, eligibility for DCFS services, and the Interstate Compact for Juveniles regulating movement of juvenile offenders across state lines.

Income Assistance: (reflecting both state and national positions)

Promoted legislation to increase low- and moderate- income housing opportunities, rental subsidies, and protection of voucher holders, seniors, and the disabled; member of Regional Affordable Housing Roundtable.

Mental Health:

Member of coalition to plan and implement education for legislators and the public; member of the Mental Health Summit; supported mental health insurance parity legislation repealing the sunset provision and amending the Illinois Insurance Code to extend coverage, as well as supporting measures to preserve money in the mental health system when state hospitals are closed or downsized.

Campaign Finance Reform:

Worked with Illinois Campaign for Political Reform (ICPR) to pass Pay to Play legislation, including override of veto.; supported the Show Us Amendment for the Nov. 2008 ballot requiring a 21-day waiting period before a final vote on a pending bill. This campaign was suspended in early 2008 for lack of signatures;

Where We Have Stood So Far: Naperville 2008-2009

Based on Local Action Focuses adopted at the 2008 Annual Meeting and ongoing League Mission Activities:

Voter Service:

Held numerous voter registration drives; sponsored candidate forums for state legislative district and local elections, alone and with partners; expanded website to include more voter information

Making Democracy Work:

Sponsor of Rosemary Martin Democracy in Action Award; supported Naperville North High School's involvement in Illinois Student Vote Project

Lead Clean-up at Sportsman's Park:

Met with Park Board president and two staff members to review the Park District Master Plan within the Caroline Martin Mitchell property discussion; wrote letters to the editor of Naperville Sun and Daily Herald noting the lack of discussion about lead's presence. Posted lengthy statement on website.

Open Government Issues: Wrote letters to editor urging timely public input on Caroline Martin-Mitchell property decision

City Efforts to assess climate change: No action taken so far

State Funding of Education: No action taken so far

DuPage County Election Commission policies and procedures:

Sponsored public meeting with Robert Saar about voting and record-keeping procedures

Did You Know?

The Illinois League has Experts!

A group of knowledgeable women – LWVIL Issues Specialists - monitor the following issues at the state level and create a foundation of information and expertise that local Leagues can draw on. By working with coalition partners, they keep us on top of issues to provide guidance for organization and individual lobbying, and enrich our Grassroots. This is a facet of League activity we can be proud of!

Campaign Finance Reform: Michelle Jordan, Paula Lawson (LWVIL President)
CEDAW (UN Anti-Discrimination Convention): Joan Fragan, Faye Grossman
Criminal Justice/Children's Services: Eileen Subak, Karen Wilson
Death Penalty: Janet Kittlaus
Election Laws: Mary-Lou Aagaard
Equal Rights Amendment: Lori Miller
Fiscal Policy/School Funding: Claire McIntyre
Immigration: Kim Reed
Gun Violence Prevention: Barbara Marsh
Health Care: Janet Craft
Lake Michigan Inter-League Organization: Marilyn Thompson
Mental Health: Darlene Bakk
Natural Resources: Rosemary Ashworth
"Show Us" Amendment: Chris Slowik
Social Policy: Jan Kay
Climate Change: Judy Johnston, Laura Kratz
Judicial Performance Evaluation: Michelle Jordam, Laurie Bergner
Fiscal Policy: Kathryn Nesburg

Want To Be Up To Date On Current State Legislative Activity? **Join the Grassroots Advocacy Network!**

You can sign up on line to receive timely notification by email when there is new information on an issue you care about, or an alert for effective action. This is a **member benefit** you can claim by going to the LWVIL website, linked on our web page, and choosing "Action Agenda" in the drop-down menu under **Issues & Action.**

And while we're on the subject.....

Checking out the state and national Leagues' websites gives you some idea of what we are doing at those other levels to advance the League's mission of good government and an informed citizenry.

Expand your awareness of the power of the League beyond local borders!

Plan to Attend Candidate Forums in March

Naperville City Council Candidates

- 3/22/09 2-4 pm Candidate Meet and Greet sponsored by the LWV at the 95th Street Library
3/30/09 7 pm Candidate Forum sponsored by the Homeowners Confederation, City Council Chambers

District 204 School Board Candidates:

- 3/3/09 7 pm Candidate Forum co-sponsored by the LWV and the Indian Prairie Parents Council
Waubonsie Valley High School Auditorium
3/11/09 7 pm Candidate Forum sponsored by the Homeowners Confederation, City Council Chambers
3/16/09 7 pm Candidate Meet and Greet (an informal opportunity to speak directly to the candidates)
Sponsored by the May Watts Elementary Parents Council, May Watts Elementary School

District 203 School Board Candidates

- 3/18/09 7 pm Candidate forum followed by the opportunity to meet the candidates during a Meet and Greet session. Co-sponsored by the D203 Home & School Association and the LWV of Naperville, NCHS Cafeteria
3/23/09 7 pm Candidate forum sponsored by the Homeowners Association, City Council Chambers

Naperville Park Board

- 3/16/09 7 pm Candidate Forum sponsored by the LWV, NCC, and NCTV-17, Meilly Swallow Theatre
3/25/09 7 pm Candidate Forum sponsored by the Homeowners Association, City Council Chambers

Democracy in Action Award

Send in your nomination today!

Do you know of an organization or individual who actively promotes democracy? A group that has encouraged involvement and input by citizens? Someone who has encouraged discussion or has created a forum for gathering information about a local public matter? Please nominate that organization or individual for the Rosemary Martin Democracy in Action Award. You can find the nomination form, as well as more information, on our website. Click on "what's new." Questions? contact Karin Snodgrass at k.snodgrass@att.net or (630)393-0067

Visit Our Website: <http://www.naperville.il.lwv.org/>

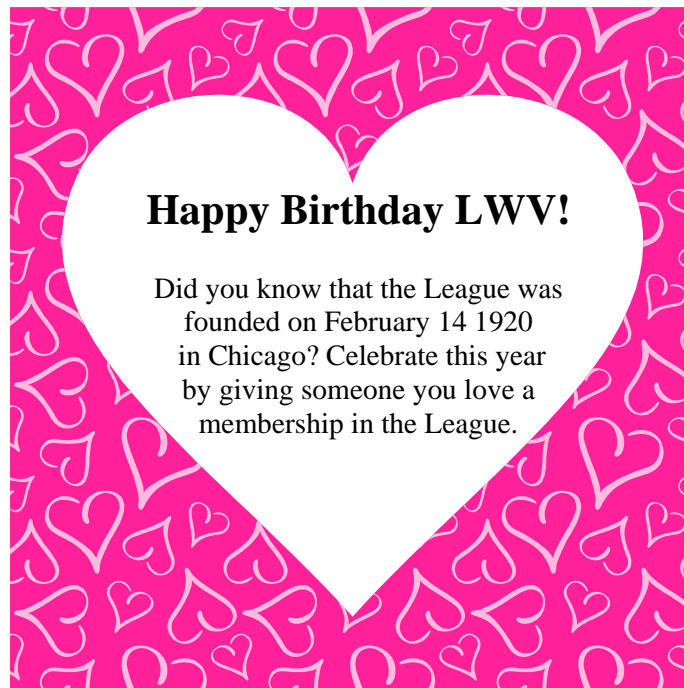
LWVUS Study Opportunity: National Popular Vote

The League has for some time had a position in support of abolishing the Electoral College. At the 2008 national convention, delegates voted to study the possibility of moving toward popular vote of the president without having to amend the U.S. Constitution. The result is the **National Popular Vote Compact study**. Consensus questions have been formulated and the deadline for local response is May 1. If you are interested in joining a group to review materials regarding this intriguing proposal, please contact Jane (630 820-0255). Information about the study can be found on the LWVUS website: www.lwv.org - under "For Members"

In Memory of Great Women

Many of you saw notice of the passing of Patricia Taecker early in February. Pat was a long-time League member, perhaps even a founding member from the 1950s, whose commitment to good government and citizen involvement was channeled into many civic activities. At the visitation before her memorial service, Elaine Scarborough mentioned that another founding member, Jean Steunenber, had died last November. These women laid a foundation in Naperville for work we current members try to further. We should hold them in honor and gratitude, and look to their energy, dedication, and vision for inspiration. The challenges are the same, though the methods and contexts - Websites, email chats, electronic voting, Blackberries...- may change.

Maureen Nolan told a funny story that could point us to renewed energy. She said that when she and John first moved to their neighborhood, Pat showed up on their doorstep with food as a welcome. She told Maureen she was having some people over for brunch the next day, and invited Maureen to come over. Turns out the brunch was a meeting of a League of Women Voters committee on mental health, and before Maureen left, she had been signed up! Here's to all our founding mothers who knew how to have fun and get things done! May we tap in to their secret, for the benefit of us all!





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Inside:

Program Planning - Page 2

Candidate Forums - Page 6