



The Naperville

VOTER

August 2008

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Calendar

August

11- Board meeting at Jane Barnes home, 1520 Aberdeen Ct. 7:00 pm.

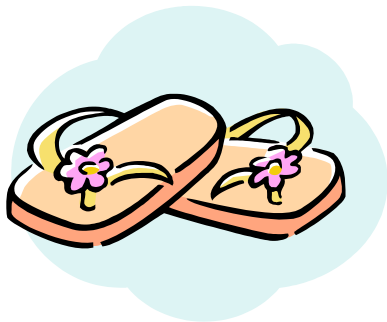
TBA – Open Space Meeting, see p. 2.

August 29-September 1 – Last Fling. Volunteer and earn money for the League!

September

17 – Reconnect with the League 7:00 pm, Community United Methodist Church, 20 North Center Street

24 – Forum for candidates for Illinois House District 96. 7 p.m. in Meilley-Swallow Hall's new Thrust Theater, 31 S. Ellsworth.



President's Letter

It's a new year for the League, following our local Annual Meeting and the National Convention of Leagues across the country. I am looking forward to serving as your president for the next two years, stepping into some the very big shoes (speaking metaphorically!) of Judy Brodhead, who has been at the helm for the past four years. I'll be looking to her for past-presidential wisdom!

Your board of directors has met to begin planning, based on the adopted action focuses. (See the LWVUS Convention reports elsewhere in this VOTER.) Each person on the board brings expertise and commitment to the League that we can all be grateful for. It's my hope that many more of you will join them in some big or small way during the year.

There are certainly many issues that call for attention in the Naperville area! The clean-up of lead at Sportsman's Park tops our list, but concerns about open and responsive government also require us to speak up. Our letter to the Park District about the Open Meetings Act is posted on our website. Naperville's responsibility to address global climate change is underway through a recently adopted audit of city "green" practices. The ongoing needs of our schools in both District 203 and 204 raise the perennial concern about how education is funded in Illinois. And there are always new questions: What effect would the sale of the EJ and J Railroad have on Naperville's traffic grid? How will you vote in November? Will your vote be tallied? What other issues at the local, state, or national level make your heart beat faster?

Bring a little (or a lot) of that passion to join with your fellow League members in the upcoming months. As part of a long line of women and men who support each other in the great experiment of democracy, come play an active part this year! You'll feel great about it! Citizens of Naperville will be better informed. And your board will throw you a party! That's a promise!

Jane Barnes

Announcements:

League-Park District Information Meeting

Arrangements are being made for League members to meet with Eric Shutes, director of planning for the Naperville Park District and Suzanne Hart, new president of the Park Board to discuss the Open Space Master Plan which was adopted on July 10. You can view the entire plan at the Park District website: www.napervilleparks.org

We will be especially interested in the implications for land use in the Caroline Martin Mitchell property and possible plans for dealing with lead at Sportsman's Park. We hope to have a strong showing of member interest in this long-standing League position. Unfortunately at the time of this Voter, an August date could not yet be confirmed with Mr. Shutes and Ms Hart. You can check on the finalized date, time, and place by calling Jane Barnes at 630 820 0255.

September Meeting – Reconnect With The League!

Date: Tuesday, September 17

Time: 7 p.m.

Place: Community United Methodist Church, 20 North Center Street

Let's get together to discover and rediscover this great organization in its historic and modern qualities! Invite a friend for information, conversation, and inspiration as we highlight the benefits of being a member and discover some new ways to engage productively in the democratic process. Come for dessert. *Stay for the feeling of power!*

League and North Central College Co-sponsor Candidate Forum

North Central College, NCTV, and the League of Women Voters of Naperville will co-sponsor a forum for the 96th Representative District candidates on Wednesday, September 24, at 7 p.m. in Meilley-Swallow Hall's new Thrust Theater, 31 S. Ellsworth. Democrat Dianne McGuire and Republican Darlene Senger have agreed to face off in a forum moderated and organized by the LWV. Green Party candidate Jennifer Witt has been invited to participate. NCTV will provide live television coverage and rebroadcast the forum in the weeks leading up to the general election on Tuesday, November 4.

Fun and Fundraiser

The Last Fling needs volunteers and you can earn some money for the League by volunteering to work a shift over Labor Day Weekend. For information, check out the Fling's website: www.lastfling.org and then call Jane (630 820-0255) if you can volunteer.

Possible 13th Congressional District Forum

The Naperville League is joining forces with other Leagues and AAUW chapters in the area to sponsor a debate between incumbent Judy Biggert and challenger Scott Harper. The candidates have been offered two dates in October, both Sunday afternoons. The Downers Grove League has taken the lead in contacting the candidates and hopes to have a confirmation soon.

2008 National Convention Report

by Judith Brodhead

To find detailed information about Convention 2008, access the LWVUS website, www.lwv.org, where you can find Daily Action Reports (accounts of what happened on the floor each day), Plenary Reports (the Treasurer's Report, Bylaws Committee Reports, President Mary G. Wilson's Report to Convention, Reports from Convention, and the Resolutions Committee Report, in addition to many other features.) For a shorter summary, check the LWV Illinois website, www.lwvil.org.

Budget: The Convention voted to accept the recommended increases in PMPs (per member payments) for 2008-2009 to \$28 and for 2009-2010 to \$29.20; this is what we must pay to the National League each year for each member. It may be surprising to members to learn that only 23% of the operating income for LWV (a combination of LWVUS and LWV Education Fund) comes from PMPs. Twenty-eight percent of LWVUS's income is from foundation and government grants to the Education Fund. Donations to the Education Fund are tax-deductible, unlike donations to the LWVUS. The same thing is true of donations to your local league's education fund, which is tax deductible, as opposed to a donation purely to LWV Naperville. According to the Treasurer's Report, "The LWVUS cannot use foundation or government grants to underwrite lobbying or member recruitment activities." Another fact that may be surprising is that "40% of combined income is provided by contributions from direct marketing." According to the LWVIL site, "[D]elegates also approved a resolution directing the LWVUS to "redesign its fundraising requests so they cannot be misconstrued as membership recruitment or dues notices."

Speeches: We heard from two former governors of Oregon with longtime connections to the LWV: Barbara Roberts, who was the first woman governor of Oregon (1991-1995) and John Kitzhaber (1995-2003). In her speech, "Women as Political Leaders: Our History and Experiences," she argued that the failure of the Equal Rights Amendment, rather than being a setback for women's rights, stimulated thousands of women, angered by the rejection of Congress, to become politically and socially active. The second former governor was John Kitzhaber, who is also a medical doctor. His speech was entitled "The Unfinished Business of the Baby Boom Generation: Health Care for the 21st Century," in which he explored ideas about health care reform and the organization he works with, the Archimedes Movement.

Caucuses and Workshops: I attended two caucuses, "Getting Serious about Climate Change," and "Election Integrity," and a workshop run by LWVUS staff, "Growing Membership," since all of those covered concerns expressed by our League members. The **Climate Change** caucus members were successful in promoting Motion 200 (see below). The **Election Integrity** caucus members were among those supporting Motions 367 and Motion 251 (see below), which were defeated. The Election Integrity caucus drew together Leaguers interested in specific kinds of reform, including paper ballots and "non-proprietary voting system software and hardware." One of the LWV staff members conducting the **Membership Workshop** was Kathleen Stratman, daughter-in-law of one of our former members, Anne Stratman. (Now that I am a former president and just a board member, I will focus on Membership during the next two years). One idea that was stressed over and over during our large and small sessions was the need to grow membership.

Motions: I have excerpted below some of the most important motions that came before the delegates from the LWVUS website. When the vote count does not appear after the motion, that means a voice or standing vote clearly established a majority. When a majority was not clear, the delegates voted using red or green cards, which were then counted. As noted on the LWVIL webpage, no new program items were adopted and the LWVUS Board was directed, by resolution, to come up with a "resolution procedure" before the 2010 Convention.

Motion to adopt the LWVUS Board recommended Program to adopt a Health Care program to educate members and communities in order to be better prepared to do health care advocacy as needed.

Motion #1609, LWVUS Board. Motion APPROVED.

Motion to adopt "a Multi-Level Education and Advocacy Campaign to promote solutions to global climate change" as an amendment to the proposed program.

Motion #200, LWV of Deerfield/Lincolnshire, IL. Motion APPROVED.

Continued on p. 4

National Convention, continued

Motion to move adoption of the non-recommended study item entitled: "The advisability of using the National Popular Vote compact among the states as a method for electing the President."

Motion #412, LWV of Saratoga County, NY. Motion APPROVED by Card Vote: Total Votes 643, Yes 363, No 273.

Motion to move for adoption, Be it resolved that: LWVUS will use the following criteria for advocacy: support durable, privacy protecting paper ballots that are easy to audit and recount; support statistically valid, random audits after every election. Further resolve that LWVUS establish a list-serve on election systems.

Motion #367, LWV of the Monterey Peninsula, CA. Motion #367 DEFEATED

Motion to move an amendment to motion #367. Add, under "be it resolved": advocate non-proprietary voting system software and hardware; and advocate a transparent voting technology certification process that makes public all results of testing and certification.

Motion #251, LWV of Downeast Maine (representing Brunswick Area), ME. Motion DEFEATED.

I'd like to thank the LWV of Naperville for its generosity in sending me to this year's National Convention, the third I have attended. I greatly appreciate the honor of representing our League. Feel free to call or email me if you would like to hear more about the National Convention at jabrodhead@noctrl.edu or 630 637 5276.

Membership Growth – Just ASK!

Increasing our membership is something every member can help with: the "ask" is very important. Do you have a friend or colleague or neighbor whom you think is a good candidate? ASK if she or he would like to join! Jeff Knezovich prepared some wonderful materials for us in the past two years to help us reach new members, and LWVUS also has brochures that we can use. It's important to note that it is no longer a League policy that public meetings and activities (including voter registration) exclude soliciting membership: in fact, President Mary Wilson emphasized that every League activity, from voter registration to forums to fundraisers, should also be used to encourage membership and distribute membership materials. My email and phone number are at the end of this article – feel free to forward any potential members to me if you wish and I promise I will follow up! To help, call me or email me at jabrodhead@noctrl.edu or 630 637 5276

Judy Brodhead, Membership co-chair

Thanks And Welcome

It's good to have *Adelaide Coyle* back in good health! Although Adelaide is leaving the Board, she will continue to work on Membership. Thanks, Adelaide!

Caroline Lewis also leaves the Board after a long and much appreciated stint as secretary. Enjoy your new-found time, Caroline! Thanks for all your work!

Pamela Eldridge, new League member, has jumped right in, taking on the position of secretary. Good to have you aboard, Pam! We welcome your fresh perspective!

Reflections on the National Convention Experience:
What a Difference Four Score and Seven Years Makes
by Judith Brodhead

As readers of my last President's letter know, I've been doing a lot of reading about Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt, both of whom had such long and fascinating careers connected to government and social and political causes. In 1921, Eleanor Roosevelt led the Dutchess County delegation at the New York League of Women Voters convention in Albany. The LWV invited the state's governor, Nathan Miller, to address the delegates. He shocked and angered his audience, including Eleanor Roosevelt, by denouncing their activities from his podium. According to historian Kristi Anderson, author of *After Suffrage: Women in Partisan and Electoral Politics Before the New Deal*, Governor Miller proclaimed to the startled delegates that their non-partisan organization could be construed as "a menace to our free institutions and to representative government."

Apparently Miller left the convention right after his speech in order to avoid listening to any counterargument. Carrie Chapman Catt, founder of the LWVUS, responded immediately in person, and later in writing. In her essay "A Teapot in a Tempest," she countered, "The cause of dislike is not that they [political parties] think it a menace to American institutions, nor that it has supported legislation they do not approve....[t]he real source of hostility seems to be the fear that women may develop the habit of thinking things through; and that in consequence they might continue to act in a manner inconvenient to party managers. Therefore the new philosophy is being preached rather strenuously that voters should get inside one or the other dominant party and practice obedience" (Catt, *The Woman Citizen*, 5 May 1921).

The League's 2008 National Convention did not generate quite the same controversy, although I'm sure there are still those in government who are not clear about what a non-partisan organization does. Two former Oregon governors spoke to the delegates, both of whom had long attachments to the League: former Governor Barbara Roberts has long been an LWV member, and former Governor John Kitzhaber's mother, who died in 2005, was president of the Oregon LWV in the 1970s, an announcement that earned him an appreciate "Awww..." from the audience, to which he responded, "Gotta love the League!" Anyone reading the principles the LWVUS put forth in the 1920s will note that many of the progressive causes promoted by the League, considered radical then, have become laws taken for granted for generations now, including minimum wage and maximum hour legislation.

Representatives from 49 states attended this year's convention, and the ballroom was filled during plenary sessions with nearly 700 delegates and almost another 300 workers and volunteers.

Held in beautiful Portland, Oregon, the setting was an example of top-notch urban planning. For instance, the journey from the airport to the hotel was an easy and inexpensive (\$2.05, or \$0.85 for seniors) light rail ride. We learned our way around Portland, which was developed on a short-block grid, using the buses, trams and light rail, which are free within the "Fareless Square" area downtown. Additional Oregon touches included pets and bicycles on public transportation (and in hotel elevators!)

The streets of downtown Portland were actually quiet, even during commuting hours; I only heard car horns a few times during my five-day stay. Portland melds the best of urban (an easy-walking grid pattern and blended residential, commercial, and retail uses) and suburban (low-rise stores and apartments, lots of landscaping and trees) design. Within view of the famous snow-capped Cascade peak of Mount Hood, Portland was the perfect setting for a Convention in a year when climate change was a hot issue.

***Voter Service* HELP WANTED!**

Do you have a couple of hours to give to your community? Do you want to make a difference? Volunteering to register voters or helping with a candidates' forum does make a difference. And voter service activities take only an occasional 2-3 hours.

If you are interested in becoming a registrar and live in DuPage County, the training takes place at the Board of Elections in Wheaton and takes only about 20 minutes. If you live in Will County, the training takes place at the Will County Clerk's Office in Joliet. Just before each election we register voters at the Naperville libraries and frequently register voters at for some of the area's larger companies and senior citizen residences.

If you want to help with a candidate forum, there are many ways to help. Just before the forums we need help with contacting the candidates, developing the format, and researching and writing the questions. During the forums we need people to hand out and collect cards for audience questions, people to screen the questions for duplicates, to time the candidate responses, and many other small tasks that keep the forums running smoothly.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Annette Smith at prspt@aol.com or call (630) 420-2764.

2008 General Election Calendar	
September 25	Last day to register poll watchers with the election authority.
September 25	First day to request an absentee ballot.
October 7	Last day to register by deputy registrars.
October 8	Grace Period registration begins at office of election authority or place designated by election authority.
October 8	First day for Grace Period voting at the election authority's office or pace designated by election authority.
October 14	Early voting begins at office of election authority or sites designated by election authority.
October 21	Grace Period registration ends.
October 21	Grace Period voting ends.
October 21	Last day to receive poll watcher credentials.
October 30	Early voting ends.
November 4	General Election.
November 6	Registration reopens.

LWVIL Announces New Position on Con Con

Note: *The ballot question of whether a Constitutional Convention should be called will be voted upon at the November 4, 2008, General Election. Below is the official wording of the new position.*

The League of Women Voters of Illinois opposes holding a constitutional convention at this time. We believe the present constitution is serving the citizens of Illinois and may be changed using the amendatory process where necessary.

A constitutional convention opens the entire constitution to revision with the risk of losing many of the important gains achieved in 1970. It is estimated that the convention would cost at least \$78 million, and this money could be put to better use at a time when state resources are limited.

The serious lack of preparation and public information by Illinois government officials on a constitutional convention means that there is insufficient time to educate the public adequately on the complexities of the issues.

Watch our website and the Voter for more about what you can do to help the campaign. There is much more information about this issue on our website, so don't hesitate to send friends and colleagues there when they want to know more about Con Con. For the next few weeks, Illinois voters may be distracted by the Olympics and the political conventions, but we expect much more interest in Con Con this fall. If you or your friends belong to groups that are looking for speakers between now and November, please let Mary Ellen Barry or Annette Smith know. We'll be happy to provide a speaker on the "con Con Con" side. (Since we now have a position, the League will not be presenting both sides of this issue).

Mary Ellen Barry, mebarry@wideopenwest.com, 630-420-8794
Annette Smith, prspt@aol.com, 630-420-2764

Welcome Aboard!

With gratitude for their hard work, all members welcome our new board of directors, elected unanimously at our annual meeting in June:

President	Jane Barnes	Directors	Judith Brodhead, Membership
Treasurer	Bonnie Olson		Jeff Knezovich, Membership
Secretary	Pamela Eldridge		Annette Smith, Voter Service
			Karin Snodgrass
			Jill Versace, Public Relations



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