



Calendar

October

2 – Vice Presidential Debate

7 – Presidential Debate; Last day to register to vote with deputy registrar

14 – Start of early voting

15 - Presidential Debate

21 – Meeting on “Voting in a Technological Age,” 7:00 pm, 95th St. Library

30 – End of early voting.

November

4 – Election Day!

President’s Letter

Hello, Everyone!

What a busy time for people of the political persuasion! And let’s be honest, it is good to see this campaigning stage coming to an end, to be followed by many more, but slightly different, opportunities to be immersed in democracy.

I’ve been thinking about how the League has given me insights into the political process that I could never have received from other involvements. My association with the sharp, questioning, and concerned women and men I’ve met over the years has deeply enriched my life. And the thing is, no one started out by being an expert. So much expertise was developed in their taking one step after another toward getting answers to their questions and making their voices heard. What kept them going, so often, was the sense that they were not alone.

I hope you’ve renewed your membership in the League in the past week or so, but if you haven’t yet taken that step, or if for you it has just become a place to allot financial support, I hope you’ll take a moment to consider some small League activity you could be involved in. Some ideas exist elsewhere in this *Voter*. Don’t get me wrong! We need and appreciate your financial support! But we need you, personally, too. You set the bar for how far you wish to be involved, but even your smallest presence can have a big impact for the League in Naperville.

Hoping to see you soon,

Jane Barnes



Voting in a Technological Age

You have questions? Get some answers!

Tuesday, October 21, 2008

7 p.m.

The Naperville 95th Street Library, Room C

3015 Cedar Glade Drive

(1 block east of Route 59)

As we approach Election Day, Robert Saar, Executive Director of the DuPage County Election Commission, joins Naperville area citizens and the League of Women Voters for a discussion of the benefits of streamlined, high-tech voting methods and the concerns about security and reliability of voting hardware and software, the procedures in use for maintaining accurate voter rolls, the impact of early voting, and other hot topics that surround this most fundamental act of democracy. Below is our state position:

Position of the League of Women Voters of Illinois on Election Systems Criteria (Adopted in 2002):

The League believes that a good election system must meet the following two criteria:

1. An election system should provide stability and continuity of governance by assuring smooth transitions following elections and should produce a legislature that addresses the problems of society effectively and in a timely manner.
2. An election system should also be resistant to both outright fraud and forms of political manipulation, such as those involving nominating processes and procedures, gerrymandering, or financing of campaigns.

The League believes these additional criteria should also be considered when judging an election system. A system should:

1. Encourage close links between legislators and their constituents so as to promote citizen participation in government and help to assure accountability.
2. Be easy to use and to administer. Citizens should be able to cast their votes with ease and to understand the election results without difficulty. Complicated voting procedures that discourage voter participation and create confusion over voting results should be avoided.
3. Consideration should be given to the administrative costs of conducting elections.
4. Produce a legislature that fairly and accurately reflects the views found among the public, enabling voters to be confident that their voices will be heard.
5. Encourage high-quality political campaigns by instituting procedures that promote discussion of issues and discourage mudslinging and dirty tricks.
6. Encourage high voter turnout, recognizing that while administrative matters, such as barriers to registration, can affect turnout, the election system itself can also influence it.

Con Con in Court

As of this writing, proponents of holding a constitutional convention have gone to court to protest the wording of the issue on election ballots and the judge has ruled that the language is biased against holding a Con Con. The judge later ruled that Illinois voters must receive a new, neutral version of the question when they vote. This means that everyone who votes, whether on election day or early voting starting October 13, will be handed a revised version of the ballot question. The revised question also will be sent to absentee and military voters. Neither the League nor the Alliance to Protect the Constitution is involved in this suit at this time. The new language will explain that abstaining from voting on the question does NOT constitute a “no” vote. Language indicating that 75% of voters voted against a constitutional convention in 1988 when the same question was put to Illinois voters will be removed from the new version.

While these questions are being resolved, listen for radio ads, television ads and a continued presence in the media by the League and other coalition partners including former Illinois governor Jim Edgar.

Be sure to vote “NO” on November 4 (or earlier, if you take advantage of early voting).

No Forum for Biggert And Harper

The coalition of fifteen Leagues and other civic groups worked hard to set up a debate between the Democratic and Republican candidates for the 13th Congressional District. Scott Harper had agreed to appear and the location was reserved. But no response was received from incumbent Judy Biggert. In keeping with policy against “empty chair” debates, the event had to be cancelled. Downers Grove League member, Mary Ellen Mathies, one of the coordinators for the debate, expressed disappointment and concern that voters would not be able to question both candidates in the kind of format the League sees as most productive for citizen involvement. You may see letters to the editor expressing that concern in various publications in the next weeks.

Voter Service Report

It has been a very busy fall for our voter registrars. By the close of registration on Oct. 7, we will have conducted 14 voter registration events as well as registering voters in their homes, residential centers and churches. We participated again this year in the LWVIL’s statewide registration event for Blue/Blue Shield by registering voters in both the Naperville and Aurora offices. We provided registrars for registration events at three different BP office locations in Warrenville and Naperville and registered voters at the Crate and Barrel Distribution Center in Naperville. We held four registration events at the Naperville libraries, two of which included all three libraries. Many **thanks** to our busy registrars: Rita Ibrahim, Jane Barnes, Ann Worden, Patsy Davis, Judy Brodhead, Gary Smith, and Karin Snodgrass.

In addition to registering voters, we held a forum for the candidates running for state representative from Legislative District 96. The forum was well attended and was shown live on NCTV. In case you missed it, it will be rebroadcast on NCTV during the weeks leading up to the November election. Check their website <http://www.nctv17.com/programmingschedule.html> for information about dates and times when the debate will be aired. There is also a link on our website. The forum received excellent news coverage and generated a lot of publicity for the League. Thanks to everyone who helped with the forum! Judy Brodhead did the bulk of the planning and all of the coordination with the two other sponsors, North Central College and NCTV. Also helping were Jane Barnes, Rita Ibrahim, Gary Smith, Jill Versace, Jean McCollum, Leslie Hayward, and new member Meghan Thorpe-Kavanaugh. An “inside peek” at forum preparations and the questions submitted to candidates ahead of time start on the next page of this *Voter*.

Annette Smith, Voter Service Chair

Behind the Scenes at the 96th Legislative District Forum

Submitted by Judith Brodhead

In a first for both the League and Naperville Community Television, the LWV of Naperville hosted a live television event on Wednesday, September 24, a forum for 96th Legislative District candidates (Democrat Dianne McGuire and Republican Darlene Senger) held at the Thrust Theatre in Meiley-Swallow Hall on the North Central College campus. It was viewed by an on-site audience of about 175, and, in addition to being shown live, will be rebroadcast on NCTV (their website is linked to ours). The LWV, NCTV, and North Central co-sponsored the event.

Early on Wednesday the NCC Maintenance staff delivered three podiums, each from a different building on campus, for the moderator and candidates. A dozen NCTV crew members led by director Liz Spencer arrived about 3 p.m. to prepare for the debate, transporting loads of equipment to Meiley-Swallow in order to transform the Thrust Theatre into a temporary studio for live television transmission, setting up cameras, cables, microphones, and projecting red, white, and blue lights on the backdrop. At 5 p.m. the last of three podium banners created by the NCC graphic design department and print shop were delivered to my office, and I power walked over to Meiley-Swallow, rolled banners in hand, catching up with moderator Lori Miller and my organizing partner Annette Smith.

LWV volunteers and candidates began arriving at 6 p.m. NCTV set up a microphone and camera at the Van Buren entrance to interview early arrivals. Audience members began to appear not long after and remained in the lobby until NCTV finished their preparations at about 6:45. By that time the transformation was complete and the audience listened for director Liz Spencer's cue for the debate to begin.

At 7 p.m., LWV President Jane Barnes welcomed the crowd and introduced moderator Lori Miller of the LWV of Wheaton. Before the debate began, the candidates tossed a coin that allowed the winner to choose to have the first or last word. They began with two-minute opening statements, followed by five questions sent to them two weeks earlier. The candidates made their way through the questions quickly, allowing time for about 30 questions from the audience read by the moderator.

Audience members were able to submit questions on index cards provided by the League, collected and sorted by volunteers. Although one point of the cards is to ensure that a variety of subjects is covered and to preserve a dignified and civil atmosphere, NCTV's Liz Spencer notes, "When audience members write their questions on cards, many people who are too shy to speak out loud in a large crowd still get to participate and get answers." The debate finished with closing statements from both candidates and thanks to sponsors, participants, and the audience from the moderator.

The 96th Legislative District covers much of Naperville (roughly bounded by Diehl Rd. on the north, the EJ& E tracks on the west, and Washington Street on the east). For the first time, three women are on the ballot for the seat. In addition to Senger and McGuire, Green Party candidate Jennifer Witt is also on the ballot. Witt was asked to participate in the forum but did not respond to numerous invitations.

The LWV was gratified to note that a number of reporters and photographers attended, and that the Naperville Sun featured a full-page photo of the candidates (prominently featuring the LWV logo) on the front page of the Thursday, September 25, edition. If you missed the forum the first time, watch for the rebroadcast!



Questions for Candidates for the 96th Legislative District

The following questions were submitted to the candidates prior to the forum:

1. Each of you sent out mailings to voters in early September. Ms. Senger, one of your ads invited the public to join you in your “efforts to stop further train traffic in our community,” and Ms. McGuire, you chose to advocate for “tougher laws for sexual predators.” Would each of you explain why you chose that particular issue for your mailing?
2. Illinois boasts some significant energy resources, including its supply of coal, corn for ethanol production, wind farms, and nuclear power plants. But Illinoisans are concerned about both rising fuel costs and climate change. How can Illinois both protect the environment and meet the energy requirements of its citizens?
3. Considering the budget shortfalls that the state faces, what can the state do to supply sufficient revenue so that adequate services can be provided for schools, social services, and pension funds, other than adding fees or adding additional gaming opportunities?
4. Do you support the state Constitutional Convention that is on the November ballot? Why or why not?
5. According to a 2008 report from the University of Illinois Institute of Governmental Affairs, (and I quote), “in recent years Illinois has increased funding and attention to elementary and secondary education by over 46.8%, while funding for higher education has dropped by 17.9% for public universities and 13.1% for community colleges.” Do you think that Illinois public colleges and universities are underfunded, and, if so, what measures would you propose to meet these growing costs?

Got A Couple Of Hours For Some Minutes?

Pam Eldridge has had to step down from the LWV Board because of a provision in her employment that does not allow her to have a board position. Pam tried to resolve this stipulation so that she could remain, but was unsuccessful. Fortunately for us, she will remain involved with other League activities, but that means we need to find a new secretary for board meetings, Program Planning, and the Annual Meeting. Volunteers would be greeted with a tickertape parade. OR someone may be calling you to ask if you could manage this very important but not overwhelmingly time consuming job.



Dues Are Due!

If you've already sent in your dues, thanks! If you haven't, please do!

Single Membership is \$60.00

Household Membership is \$90.00

“Grandfathered” Senior Membership Rate” - \$30.00

(Note: Senior membership available only to those who paid half price dues prior to 2006-07.)

The above amounts include PMP (per member payment) assessed by the state and national organizations of LWV.

Contact Your Board! We're Here To Serve You!

Jane Barnes:	630 820-0255	jbarnes114@sbcglobal.net
Bonnie Olson:	630 355-4417	bdolson@ntsource.com
Judy Brodhead:	630 328-2811	jabrodhead@noctrl.edu
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Karin Snodgrass	630 393-0067	k.snodgrass@att.net
Annette Smith	630 420-2764	prsp@aol.com
Jill Versace	630-416-7624	jillversace@comcast.net

Off Board membership: Adelaide Coyle 630 978-0575 adelaidecoyle@sbcglobal.net



Help Wanted

Got a little time? Got a special skill?

Want to try something new? There's a way for everyone to play a part in this grassroots group!

Volunteer or call Jane for more info: 630 820-0255.

Throughout the Year:

- Program site scheduling
- Hospitality for events:
Arrange for refreshments, name tags, equipment and set up if needed
- News Watch:
Scan local papers for news on issues of concern to League; clip for board.
- Archivist:
Clip or copy articles about League
- Observers
Choose a public body to follow for matters of interest to the League
Write occasional reports.
City Council
School Boards
Park Board
Other

Concentrated Time Events

- State of the Community Dinner
(December-March)
Oversight chair
Program development and contacts
Facilities arrangements
Invitations and mailings
Set-up and greeting on the night
- Rosemary Martin Democracy in Action Award
(November-February)
Help solicit nominees and prepare materials
- Budget Committee
(February-March)
Help to develop next year's budget proposal.

Focused Interest

- Strategy Committee on
Sportsman's Park/Mitchell property
- Voter Service
Become a registrar.
Help with candidates' forums, voters' guides
- Help to develop a public program
on an issue of interest to you.
Climate change
School funding
Sunshine Laws
Civil Liberties
How Local Government Works
Something Else?

As Able

- Publicity
Help develop and distribute press releases
Cultivate new outlets.
- Membership Outreach
Call members occasionally to keep in touch.
Help to plan a membership campaign.
- Fund Raising
Develop revenue sources
Write grant proposals.
Make personal contacts

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



League of Women Voters of Naperville
c/o Mary Ellen Barry, Editor
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