



Calendar

September

8 – Board Meeting, 7 pm

16 – Fall Roundtable Meeting, 7 pm,
Community United Methodist Church
Fellowship Hall, 20 North Center Street

October

7 - DuPage County-wide Kick-Off Rally:
Countdown to the 2010 Census,
7 p.m. West Commons Room of
Building K; College of DuPage

President’s Letter

Hello, Everyone!

September is in a way our New Year’s month, isn’t it? Time to gear up for work and intellectual pursuits, action and a return to productive routine! I hope you have **September 16** on your calendar for a night of stimulating discussion with League friends old and new. The roundtable discussion format allows us quick access to new and intriguing information and new points of view as we move through three topics of current local interest and relevance. See the details on page two of this Voter.

Dessert sweetens the conversation! Invite a neighbor, family member, friend, or colleague to join us. The bigger the group, the wider the range of thought! And consider taking this opportunity to reaffirm your membership by paying dues, which come due in September, too. Your membership creates the League here in Naperville. Your Board of Directors exists to serve the interests of members; that’s how a grassroots organization works. Come to think of it, that’s the way DEMOCRACY works, isn’t it?

Membership in the League gives you a number of tools for informing yourself and taking effective action. But you have to take up the tools! Come be a part of this historic, dynamic, supportive network. You’ll be glad you did!

Jane Barnes



September Roundtable: What's On Your Mind?

Wednesday, September 16

7-9 p.m.

Community United Methodist Fellowship Hall

20 N. Center Street

New and renewing members and guests welcome!

Tired of the same old news?

Give yourself and a friend, neighbor, colleague, local mover-and-shaker, and/or potential politically activated citizen the treat of 3 - yes, 3 - stimulating discussions that offer you new information, thoughtful opinion, and the camaraderie of other people who care about public affairs. We'll begin with dessert and a brief social time and then move round-robin-style to talk about

The 2010 Census: Why should we care?

Naperville's City Council Form: An Update on our local study's progress

Ethics in Government: Where we need to go and how we might get there

You can pay your 2009-2010 dues and save a stamp, too!

September Is the Time for Renewing Your League Membership

In the next few days, you will be receiving a reminder that dues are due. We hope you'll be able to send in your check, and that you'll consider an additional gift, as described in the letter. This year, we are hoping to build up our Education Fund, which supports our voter service projects, which we would like to expand in the upcoming months. Contributions to the Naperville LWV Education Fund are tax-deductible. We still need administrative and advocacy support, which comes primarily through our dues and fundraising.

Remember that your membership extends beyond the local level to the League in Illinois and in the United States. Past Voters have included material about actions taken by LWVUS and LWVIL. Check out their websites – Links are available on our local webpage – for information about what your grassroots organization is doing. It's an organization you can be proud to belong to!

When you send in your dues check, take some time to let your board know what you're thinking: What interests you? What would you like to see the League do here in Naperville? What initiatives would you like to suggest and participate in? Here, too, *DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT!*

Our Local Government Survey is Online *NOW*

Participate in the local government representation survey from the study committee and encourage your neighbors to respond!

The Naperville League of Women Voters is in the process of studying how City Council members are elected to represent Naperville citizens. This study considers the current form of at-large representation and alternate forms in other communities such as district/ward representation or a mix of district and at-large representatives.

When the League does a study, it attempts to gather factual information and relevant opinion to present to its members in a process of reaching consensus (or not) on the study's issue. As part of our information gathering, we are seeking input from Naperville residents by means of the survey below. You can take the survey right on our website www.naperville.il.lwv.org, or print a hard copy and bring it to our September 16 meeting.

Survey on Local Government Representation

1. Does your subdivision have a need or concern unique to your area of the City? If yes, what is it?

Name of Subdivision: _____

2. Have you directly contacted a City Council member about any issue?

If **yes**, what issue? _____

If **no**, Why not? Check all that apply.

- No issue required it.
- I did not know how to make contact.
- I did not have time.
- I did not think it would make a difference.
- other _____

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how strongly do you feel that your interests as a Naperville resident are understood by local elected officials:

1 (not at all).....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10 (thoroughly understood)

4 Did you vote in the last City Council election?

5 How long have you lived in Naperville?

6. Would you like to comment further on the issue of district and at-large representation?

What is Driving the Rapid Rise in U.S. Health Care Costs?

By Rhondda Tewes

Health care spending in the United States reached \$2.4 trillion in 2007, or \$7,900 per capita. It's projected to reach \$3.1 trillion in 2012 and \$4.3 trillion in 2017 (20% of gross domestic product [GDP])¹. A variety of factors are contributing to this escalation of cost, including:

- **Health Insurance Premiums:** In 2008, employer health insurance premiums increased by 5% or twice the rate of inflation, with an annual premium averaging nearly \$12,700 for an employer health plan covering a family of four.²
- **Administrative Costs:** Administrative overhead can cause health care insurance premiums to balloon: compare Medicare at 3% with an average of commercial carriers at 20%, and investor-owned Blue Cross/Blue Shield at 27%.³
- **Percentage of Total Health Care Costs:** The typical American family of four spent \$15,600 on total health care costs in 2008, or 25% of the combined family income of \$60,000. In 2003, a comparison of health care costs in the U.S. and Canada found that administration accounted for 31.0 percent of health care expenditures in the United States and 16.7 percent of health care expenditures in Canada.⁴
- **Highly Fragmented System:** A fragmented system is hard for employers and patients to navigate, and leads to inefficient care delivery. Confusing paperwork and rules for multiple insurance programs allow patients to fall through safety nets. Medically, patients are often subjected to duplicate testing and suffer negative drug interactions due to multiple providers and no central medical records system.
- **Bricks and Mortar:** Capital spending drives operating costs and determines the geographic distribution of resources. When operating and capital payments are combined, as they are currently, prosperous hospitals can expand and modernize while impoverished ones cannot, regardless of need or quality.⁵
- **Emphasis on Treatment:** Advancements in clinical treatments, pharmaceuticals, and medical devices are accompanied by increasing costs, including costs of research and development, and advertising directly to patients as well as to providers. *The decision to allow advertising directly to patients has greatly increased the demand for new products and services.*⁶
- **The Uninsured:** Health care for individuals who are uninsured raises the costs for all Americans because providers (physicians, clinics, hospitals) make up the losses by shifting the cost to paying consumers.⁷
- **Impact of Other Insurance:** Often overlooked, the medical expense portions of liability, workers compensation and auto insurance for homes, cars, and businesses also contribute to the cost of health care.⁸

Despite high expenditures for multiple private, state and federal health insurance programs, a Families USA 2009 report, *Americans At Risk*,⁹ found that 86.7 million people—one out of every three Americans under the age of 65—were uninsured for some period of time during 2007 and 2008. These Americans either pay for medical care out of their own pockets or delay needed care altogether. Another 16 million Americans are considered underinsured.¹⁰ This figure puts the 50 percent of consumer bankruptcies in the United States that stem from medical bills into perspective.¹

Continued on p. 5

- 1 <http://www.nchc.org/facts/cost.shtml>
- 2 <http://www.nchc.org/documents/Costs-Workers-2009.pdf>
- 3 <http://www.milliman.com/expertise/healthcare/products-tools/mmi>
- 4 <http://content.nejm.org/cgi/content/short/349/8/768>
- 5 <http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/290/6/798> (see “Capital Spending, Health Planning and Profit)
- 6 <http://download.journals.elsevierhealth.com/pdfs/journals/0002-9343/PIIS0002934306012654.pdf>
- 7 <http://familiesusa.org/issues/uninsured/>
- 8 http://www.pnhp.org/news/2007/september/about_singlepayer_i.php
- 9 <http://www.familiesusa.org/assets/pdfs/americans-at-risk.pdf>
- 10 <http://www.annals.org/cgi/content/full/148/1/55>

Rhondda Tewes (LWVMA) is a member of the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force

Produced by the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force, 2009

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Rosemary Martin Democracy in Action Award

Are you looking for a way to get involved in our League without a big time commitment? Join the Rosemary Martin Democracy in Action Award review committee!

The League presents the Rosemary Martin Democracy in Action Award each year to recognize a group or individual for actively promoting democracy. Groups or individuals may be recognized for an activity such as

- Creating a forum for information-gathering on a public issue of significance to the Naperville area community
- Facilitating and encouraging civic participation through voter registration or some other initiative
- Providing balanced education opportunities to further informed decision-making
- Instituting processes that welcome citizens’ involvement and input
- Creating an inclusive climate that encourages civil discourse on public matters

A review committee is being formed. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please call Karin Snodgrass, (630)393-0067, or e-mail k.snodgrass@att.net. Your commitment could be as little as one meeting of a couple of hours in the spring!

Please be on the lookout for an individual or group that fits into one or more of the categories listed above. Information on the nomination process will be forthcoming in the near future.

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

LWVIL Applauds Governor's Veto of Flawed Campaign Finance Reform Legislation

Governor Quinn vetoed HB7 at a press conference yesterday attended by legislative leaders and members of good government groups including the League. The Governor and legislative leaders committed to working together along with our coalition partners to come up with a stronger bill in the October veto session.

The League and our coalition partners contended that this legislation fell short of real reform. Some of the issues making the bill inadequate were allowing contribution limits that were so high as to be ineffective; establishing limits on an annual basis as opposed to an election cycle; and allowing an elected public official to organize a political committee that can be used to defray costs related to constituent services and office upkeep in addition to the currently permitted political committee to promote his/her candidacy.

The Governor vetoed this bill in part due to pressure from the public. If you would like to thank Governor Quinn for his action in vetoing HB7, please feel free to send him a letter to that effect. His address in Chicago: James R. Thompson Center, 100 West Randolph Street, Suite 16-100, Chicago 60601 and in Springfield: 207 Statehouse, Springfield 62706.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO TOOK ACTION ON THIS LEGISLATION. *YOU* MADE A DIFFERENCE!

Countdown to the 2010 Census-Everybody Counts

WHAT: "*Countdown to the 2010 Census-Everybody Counts*" is a county-wide meeting to begin planning for the 2010 Census. It is sponsored by **Du Page Counts**, a collaborative effort by the Leagues of Women Voters of Downers Grove/Lisle/Woodridge, Elmhurst, Glen Ellyn, Naperville, Wheaton, and Illinois, along with the Citizen Advocacy Center, College of DuPage and DuPage County.

WHERE: West Commons Room of Building K; College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn. Enter Parking Lot A from Fawell (22nd St), west of Lambert Rd.

WHEN: Wednesday, October 7th;

7:00 PM West Commons Room opens.

7:15 PM PROGRAM STARTS PROMPTLY

7:15 - 7:45 Speaker: Representative from the Regional Office of the Census Bureau

7:45 – 8:15 A distinguished panel representing government, education, human services, businesses, & faith-based organizations will speak and field audience questions

8:15 – 8:45 Networking: Connect with other members of the DuPage community; facilitate your Census planning

RSVP BY OCTOBER 1st: Maryam Judar, Citizen Advocacy Center,
630-833-4080 or mjudar@citizenadvocacycenter.org

LWVUS Convenes Redistricting Conference

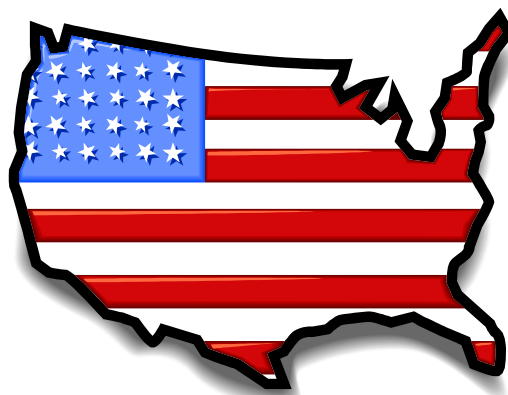
The League of Women Voters has issued a “Statement of Essential Principles on Redistricting” supported by a diverse set of reform community leaders and activists, many of whom gathered at the Pocantico Redistricting Conference late last month. The League, in partnership with the Campaign Legal Center, convened this meeting to explore ways that the public can best participate in the redistricting process in 2011 and beyond.

The diverse coalition of groups and individuals who have long been interested in and concerned about redistricting, have signed in support of essential principles. According to League President Mary Wilson, "Too often those in charge have simply gathered in back rooms, away from public view, to carry out this extremely important process in our democracy. Members of the public must be able to see and participate in this process. Redistricting should foster the democratic principle of allowing voters to choose their elected officials rather than be a process in which we allow our elected officials to ‘choose their constituents.’”

The principles are:

1. An accurate and complete count in Census 2010 is an essential building block for all redistricting efforts;
2. The process used for redistricting must be transparent to the public;
3. The redistricting process, at all levels of government, must provide data, tools and opportunities for the public to have direct input into the specific plans under consideration by the redistricting body; and
4. In order to achieve representative democracy, redistricting plans must be drawn in a manner that allows elected bodies to reflect the diversity of the populace, especially racial and ethnic diversity.

In Illinois, where redistricting usually involves the toss of coin, these issues, starting with an accurate census count of every resident, are critical. ***Make sure to attend our September Roundtable meeting to learn more about what the League is doing to promote an accurate census in Illinois.***



New on Our Website

The Illinois Voter Registration System (IVRS) has now been updated with information from all local election authorities in Illinois. There is a public access component allowing you to check your own voter registration. A link on our website takes you to the Illinois State Board of Elections website where you can click on “Am I Registered to Vote in Illinois” under the "What's New" heading on the left side of the page.



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