



BULLETIN

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WILMETTE

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League of Women Voters
of Wilmette

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November 2011

DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT

Federal Role in Education Consensus Meeting

**Wilmette Public Library
November 14th 10am to 2 pm
Lunch will be served**

Please mark your calendars for this important meeting!

An E-Vite (electronic invitation) will be coming to you soon, so be sure to check your email inbox. Please remember to RSVP via the E-Vite as we plan to serve lunch and need to know how many people will be there.

League members will present information useful to our consensus discussion. If you would like to learn more before the meeting, go to: www.lwvil.org/2011EducationStudy.asp. Under "Resources for the Study" are three "Issues Briefs," which are a great place to start if you have limited time.

We hope you will join us on the 14th to discuss this important topic.

What is Consensus?

Consensus is not a vote. It is a mutual agreement of League members who have arrived at the agreement through discussion. During discussion, everyone has an opportunity to voice their viewpoints, and the issue is examined from all sides. Consensus questions provide structure for the meeting. Members discuss the pros and cons until it becomes clear that consensus has or has not been reached on each question.

Each local League will have a discussion leader to help keep the group focused on the task at hand. When consensus is reached it must be approved by the local board before being posted on the LWVUS website.

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Last month the Glenview League's newsletter included a quote about the League of Women Voters that is so apt that I am shamelessly borrowing it to share with our membership.

In 1954, an article in the *Saturday Evening Post* emphasized that a singular strength of the League is its approach to the study of issues:

"Probably one of the most compelling reasons for its strengths is its determination to squeeze any issue dry of its pros and cons, and to examine these as intelligently and unemotionally as it can. This method makes for unbiased judgment insofar as any political issue can be definitely judged. The members of the league know what they are talking about and what they are voting about."

It is precisely this strength that has been on display this fall. Throughout the nation each local League's membership will (or has) convene to examine, in an intelligent and unemotional manner, a set of questions regarding the role of the federal government in education, and then, following active discussion, determine if there is consensus in a response to each question. At the end of this lengthy and deliberative consensus process, the LWV will have a national position on public education that can be advocated.

On November 14, our membership will gather for its consensus meeting. (Details of the meeting and the consensus process are included elsewhere in this newsletter.) I urge each of you to attend. **This is the heart of what we do.**

On a lighter note, our annual Holiday Party has been scheduled for Sunday, December 11, from 4:00- 6:00. Mari Terman has graciously offered her home for this special event. More details will follow but you can mark your calendars and save the date.

Congratulations to Lali Watt, Saima Abbasi, Trudy Gibbs and all of the many others who produced an **outstanding** League of Student and Government program this past month. Rave reviews from students, parents and faculty keep coming in!

In closing, I want to sadly acknowledge the loss of a long standing member – Dolly Skobel. Dolly was a dynamo, both in personality and in pursuit of the many causes dear to her. She was a role model to many and an inspiration to all. She will be missed.

As always, if you have questions/suggestions, contact either Georgia or me. We'd love to hear from you!

Libby Bankoff: libankoff@sbcglobal.net, 847-256-7509

Georgia Gebhardt: gtgebhardt@comcast.net, 847-853-8225

See you on Monday, November 14!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WILMETTE BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011-2012

Co-Presidents	Libby Bankoff Georgia Gebhardt	Elected Directors at Large	Joyce Pollack Toni Stapel Mari Terman Susan Witz
Vice President Treasurer	Therese Steinken Susan Morrison	Appointed Directors at Large	Cinda Axley Nancy Canafax Jae Choi Kim Judy Mandel Gail Thomason Dale Cohodes
Secretary	Dorothy Speidel		
Vice President/Events	Andrea Ventrell		
Vice President/Voter Services	Trudy Gibbs		
Vice President/Web Master	Beth Nyhan	E-Mail Manager	Deena Mitchell
Vice President/Membership Publicity	Jan Peterson Trish Nealon	<u>2012-2013 NOMINATING COMMITTEE</u> Deena Mitchell, Chairperson; Saima Abbasi; Dorothy Speidel; Leslie Weyhrich	
League of Student and Government Leaders Co-Chairs	Lali Watt, Saima Abbasi		

THE YEAR OF THE STUDY

Studies have always been a major part of what the League does, but the current year is especially rich in opportunities to research and learn, for we are examining three topics: the Federal Role in Education, a Study of Privatization in the Federal Government, and State Pension Reform.

A good deal has already been written about our **education study**, but less so about the other two.

THE SCOPE OF THE PRIVATIZATION STUDY: (From LWVUS website)

The purpose is to identify those parameters and policy issues to be considered in proposals to transfer federal, state or local government services, asset and/or functions to the private sector. It will review the stated goals and the community impact of such transfers, and identify strategies to ensure transparency, accountability and preservation of the common good.

November, 2011-May 2012: Leagues are encouraged to participate in the study on Privatization of Government.

As soon as information is provided to the Wilmette League, members will be invited to join the study committee and later, the consensus meeting.

LWVIL STUDY OF PENSION REFORM:

The State League committee has been formed and is currently working on gathering materials and information for the use of local leagues. The State committee's work will extend through the first half of 2012, with local leagues beginning their study and consensus meetings in the fall of 2012. This is, of course, a general timeline and may change a bit as the process gets underway.

Susan Morrison and Georgia Gebhardt are serving on this State committee, along with other members from all over the State of Illinois. Wilmette League members will be notified when study committees are ready to be formed.

Lake Michigan League-Annual Meeting Report **By Chris McCooey (Glenview LWV)**

After two rainy days, we were grateful for good weather. Saturday afternoon we had an informative trolley car tour of the Lake Calumet area, led by a member of the Southeast Environmental Task Force. Lake Calumet is one of the treasures of this area and an important stopover for migratory birds. It also supports a variety of other wildlife. Given a chance, nature is resilient. This Task Force has active community support.

Our evening speaker, Todd Main, is Deputy Director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. He updated efforts to control Asian carp. It is being sold to Asian markets and made into pet food. So far, the electric barriers have prevented its entrance into Lake Michigan.

On Saturday, Debra Shore, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, described the history and separation of the locks and its unintended consequences. Judy Beck of the Glenview LWV reported encouraging progress on the state of Lake Michigan, e.g. the removal of phosphates. However, much work needs to be done to improve the quality of the lake. We need to stay involved and cooperate with other agencies and organizations.

The day ended with a tour of Beaubien Woods. The entire experience was enjoyable and informative!

Note: Those Wilmette Leaguers who have a particular interest in the environment may wish to investigate the Lake Michigan League's program. Their annual meetings seem to have a good mix of field trips, knowledgeable speakers, and opportunities to learn the latest about efforts to save our Great Lake.

Help Register Voters Play a Vital Role in the Democratic Process

The Wilmette League registers voters several times throughout the year – at our local high schools (New Trier, Regina, Loyola) and the Wilmette Public Library. To register voters, you must take a one-hour class through the Cook County Clerk's office and be sworn in as an official deputy registrar. Classes are scheduled in convenient locations. One is offered on **November 10, 7 pm**, at the **Skokie Public Library**—Book Discussion Room, 5215 Oakton Street, in Skokie, IL. To register for the class, contact Jonathan Williams ([312 603 0987](tel:3126030987)). More information is available at: <http://www.cookcountyclerk.com/elections/registertovote/Pages/DeputyRegistrar.aspx>

Our service as deputy registrars goes beyond registering voters, we are a resource for information about polling places, early voting, absentee voting and much more. If you are not already a deputy registrar, please consider helping with this important public service.

Trudy Gibbs
Voters Service



RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP NOW!

While most of our members have renewed, we're still hoping that those of you who haven't replied are still intending to renew. The Program Committee is busy working on a full schedule of events and we want you to have the opportunity to participate in all the events, not just those open to the public. As with last month, a membership form is included with this bulletin. Please send it, along with your check for \$65 (\$55 if renewing senior), to LWV Wilmette, PO Box 432, Wilmette, IL 60091. If you have any questions about your membership, please feel free to call Membership Director, Jan Peterson, at 847-256-5692.

WILMETTE LWV CALENDAR

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| November 14 | Consensus Meeting: Role of the Federal Government in Education,
10:00 – 2:00 at Wilmette Public Library auditorium. Box lunches will be provided. |
| December 11 | Annual Holiday Party, 4:00 – 6:00 pm, at the home of Mari Terman, 941 Sheridan Road. Spouses are invited. |



Branching Out Into New Media

Last month, board members announced that, to facilitate communication about studies and other activities, we have joined Facebook. Here is an active link to our page: <https://www.facebook.com/LWV.Wilmette>

Some of us enjoy new media, or social networking. Some are curious enough to try it, while others are tolerant. Some of us just aren't going to participate any time soon. Rest assured that Facebook and other new media will remain only one of several ways we will continue to communicate. *You will continue to receive all important information and news from the League as normal—via email or your mailbox—whether or not you join Facebook.*

If you *are* a Facebook user, we would LOVE to hear from you on our page. Any member with a Facebook account can post photos, links, and small news items. If you are not inclined to post personally, however, you can send content to Trish Nealon, our page administrator, and she'll review it and post as appropriate. Trish will help you over the learning curve for a limited time only!

Also, we have found a Facebook group called the League of Women Voters New Media:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/114269905330219/> . Just ask to join this closed group; they'll approve you.

Participants in this group share information on making the most of social networking tools for their local Leagues. Discussions encompass the technical as well as policy. For example, there was thought given to whether some local leagues use Facebook beyond news items—in other words, what was policy for sharing information? Would a local League be seen to endorse a position by posting certain content? These and similar questions may be worth considering as we move forward.

We welcome your ideas and feedback on LWV Wilmette's communication needs and platforms. Trish can be reached at 847-853-8143, or trishanealon@me.com.

Membership

We're delighted to announce that the LWV of Wilmette has welcomed several new members since the membership directory was published last February. In a supplement to this Bulletin, please find contact information for: Saima Abbasi, Kate Gjaja, Pat Harada, Trish Nealon, Joyce Pollack, Mimi Rodman, Gail Thomason, Toni Stapel, Andrea Ventrell, Susan Witz, and Julie Wolf.

We're glad that all of you have joined the Wilmette League and we look forward to getting to know you and working with you!

THE LATEST NEWS AND ACTIONS OF LWVUS

[League Asks Senators to Promise to Protect Public Health](#)

League President, Elisabeth MacNamara, sent a letter urging Senators to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution.

[League Submits Comments to UN Committees](#)

The League submitted comments to the United Nation's Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on CEDAW and the Right to Vote and Hold Office.

[League urges Committee Leaders to Post Submissions to Deficit Committee](#)

The League sent a letter to the Chairs and Ranking Members of all House and Senate Standing Committees urging them to post their submissions to the Deficit Committee online as soon as possible, for public review in order to fully embrace transparency in the Super-Committee's process.

[League Urges Senators to Oppose Voiding of Life-Saving Rule](#)

The League and coalition partners sent a letter to Senators urging them to oppose the Congressional Review Act resolution sponsored by Senator Rand Paul which would void the life-saving Cross-State Air Pollution Rule (CSAPR).

[National Poll Shows Strong Disapproval for President Obama's Smog Rule Delay, Unfavorable Ratings for Congress' Assault on Clean Air Act](#)

[League Urges President to Deny Permit for Keystone XL Pipeline](#)

League President Elisabeth MacNamara sent a letter to President Obama expressing opposition to the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline and urging him to deny the permit for the pipeline's construction.

[League Thanks Representatives Who Voted to Protect Public Health](#)

The League and coalition partners sent a letter to members of the House of Representatives who voted to oppose the TRAIN Act which could block two long overdue standards that would reduce the pollution that can put public health at risk.

[League Urges House to Oppose Cantor Agenda Bills](#)

League and coalition partners sent a letter to the House of Representatives urging them to oppose the suite of bill contained in Majority Leader Cantor's legislative agenda including two that are expected to be considered this week.

[League Submits Comments On Proposed Rule to Establish Exchanges and Qualified Health Plans](#)

The League of Women Voters of Tennessee and the League of Women Voters of the United States submitted comments to the Department of Health and Human Services on the Proposed Rule on the Affordable Care Act to establish exchanges and qualified health plans.