



Highland Park League of Women Voters Bulletin

LWVHP BULLETIN Vol. 80, #5

NOV./DEC. 2008

Democracy is Not a Spectator Sport

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*The Board of Directors wishes you and yours
the Happiest of Holiday Seasons*

*An especially warm welcome
to our newest members:*

*Nessia Frank
Rebecca Grill
Alyssa Knobel
Sugar Shankman
Alice Silverman*

YEA AND THE HIGHLAND PARK COMMUNITY FOUNDATION 2008 GRANT AWARDS DINNER

On September 25, 2008, co-presidents, Elaine Adler and Lila Trotsky, were honored to accept the *Grant Award* for the Highland Park League of Women Voters. The award will help us as we continue our important *Voters Service*. We were able to host a forum on upcoming referenda, candidates forums for the 58th District and for the 10th District. In addition, we will host a forum for next year's local election, when every household will receive a **Voters Guide**. High school registration and the **Illinois Student Vote** drive strengthen voter education.

We were honored to be among the many recipients who share a commitment to preserve and enhance the resources of our diverse community. We were very proud of the wonderful reception we received as we accepted the award for the League, and appreciate the encouragement and support of the **Highland Park Community Foundation**.

Special recognition and thanks to **Bryna Gamson**, without whom we would not have been in consideration for, nor received, this grant. Bryna encouraged us to apply and when the Board enthusiastically approved the idea, wrote the proposal and submitted it. Our feedback was that it was one of the best they had ever received!

Elaine and Lila

CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 2008

As we enter our ninth decade, look around the community and notice our visibility! We are still in the forefront of community service, thanks to our very dedicated members, who *"encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government and work to increase understanding of major public policy issues."* We know you have received your membership request and will be pleased to make it a quick renewal when you think about all the League activities with which we are involved.

Look at the Kudos list on page 5. You will notice we have so many ardent Leaguers, we have devoted an entire column to mentioning their contributions. Thanks to the expertise of Bryna Gamson, we were given, a grant award from the **Highland Park Community Foundation** to further our work in **Voters Service**, as we pursue our **Voters Guide and a Candidates Forum** for our spring local election. We are pleased that HPCF considers us one of the worthy local agencies and an enhancement to the community.

The **Community Open Meeting** organized by Beverly Rosenstein was very successful, attracting more than one hundred attendees. The two **Candidates Forums** (the 58th District and the 10th District) were very popular. Vice-President Faye Grossman worked closely with Glencoe Leaguer Rhonda Diamond and Glenview Leaguer Barb Marsh, and the three spearheaded the complex process of having a successful Forum. As usual at these events, people were given the opportunity to pose questions, and they did so with gusto. We received many accolades for hosting these Forums. Gail Brown's organization of the local mock election in our schools, as part of the **State League's Illinois Student Vote**, was a complex labor of love, which she organized beautifully. All of the above-and more-have helped us to increase the visibility of our League.

New members invigorate the League, by infusing it with new ideas. We are continuing to attract new members, and some long-time Leaguers are participating in events that interest them, as newly found time permits. Contact us to see in which area you might like to participate. Under the leadership of Sue Wieseneck, with assistance from Nancie Blatt and Margie Weiss, the League organized an evening **Membership Open House** with stimulating conversation and a discussion of elements of the League. Please attend our Board meetings. (See the Bulletin Calendar.) We enjoy spending time with you and welcome your input.

Vice-President Nancie Blatt, Membership Chair, also communicates to you important issues and events. Our new on-line Bulletin, under the aegis of Judy Johnston and Rose Feder, is one example of our ability to be relevant and current. Your support and your dues help our devoted, grassroots Leaguers to be creative and hardworking on local, state and national issues.

Please join us for upcoming events. Check your neighbors. Perhaps someone is waiting for an invitation to join or re-join League. Our Board will continue to focus on spreading the ideas of League and increasing our membership.

Happy Holidays to all!

ELAINE AND LILA

LOCAL NEWS

OPENING MEETING

Beverly Rosenstein

Over 100 League members and others from Highland Park and Highwood attended our September 9 opening meeting at Highland Park Country Club to hear presentations on the three referenda of local interest on the November ballot.

State League President Paula Lawson presented a short and convincing statement on why we opposed holding a **State Constitutional Convention** at this time. The county forest preserve plan would roll over soon to be paid up bonds, but would require no additional new funding for land acquisition and development. The Park District of Highland Park discussed its plan for the lakefront, but after our meeting and after it was too late to withdraw the referendum from the ballot, the Park District voted to suspend their efforts.

Thanks to excellent presentations, excellent question and answer fielding by our very skilled moderator, Highland Park League member Linda Spring, and a knowledgeable and enthusiastic public, attendees left well versed on the issues. We can be quite proud of how well this program addressed the League mission to inform and educate and to get voters to the polls.

KUDOS

Lila Trotsky

After celebrating our 81st year, the League is still going strong, thanks to the ongoing support of our very active members. Special thanks to the following members for their contributions in the past months:

Gail Brown for successfully orchestrating the *Illinois Student Vote Project* and for organizing and overseeing voter registration.

Bryna Gamson for her work on the grant application to the **Highland Park Community Foundation**, which enabled us to get a generous sum for *Voter Services*.

Faye Grossman for her supervision of the regional leagues' *Candidate's Forums* on Sept. 5th and Oct. 19th.

Judy Johnston for editing and **Rose Feder** and **Mary Green** for managing and maintaining the creation of our new cool, green on-line *Bulletin*.

Beverly Rosenstein for organizing and **Linda Spring** for facilitating the discussion at our very successful opening meeting on September 9th.

ILLINOIS STUDENT VOTE

Gail Brown

Once again, LWVHP helped facilitate **Illinois Student Vote** in Highland Park. Illinois Student Vote is part of a national program designed to increase students' political awareness and to encourage parents to vote and ISV is administered by the **League of Women Voters of Illinois**. Our committee worked successfully to get all 11 schools in Northshore School District 112 and St. James School in Highwood registered with the program. The schools received on-line materials once they registered, but we wanted to do more.

Both Highland Park and Highwood City Councils proclaimed October as ISV month in Highland Park. Lake County Clerk Willard Helander donated used voting booths for each school. We provided registration cards unique to each school, "I Registered" stickers, ballots for both elementary and middle schools, and "I Voted" stickers. That's 5000 ballots and 10,000 stickers!

Many thanks to LWVHP for funding this project. We had a great committee: Marcia Bogolub, Ruth Buhai, Susan Dorn, Rose Feder and Debby Zirin, who were truly dedicated to the project, and to its core concept of nurturing a generation of informed and active voters.

THE "E" WORD

Dare we mention elections again? The League keeps moving on. It's time to start planning for the next round – the local elections in April, 2009. We will be publishing a *Voters' Guide* as we have done in the past. As soon as candidates have filed, we begin gathering information for the guide starting in January.

Much planning goes into the preparation of the Guide, such as candidate contact, assembly of responses and formatting of information for publication. Here's your chance if you've always wanted to know what it's like to be on the editing side. Computer publishing skills are especially welcome. If this one time activity is of interest to you, please contact me.

Rose Feder, 847-432-4732,

or email to: rose.feder@comcast.net

LOCAL NEWS

TWO HONORED FOR HOUSING WORK

A number of Highland Park *Leaguers* have been involved along the way, from providing important input into the community goals for the City's revised *Comprehensive Master Plan*, to laying the groundwork for and bringing to fruition the *Affordable Housing Plan*. Two have recently been recognized for their efforts.

Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs honored **Betsy Lassar** with the *Rayna and Marvin Miller Housing Justice Award*, which "recognizes the achievements of a creative and courageous individual to bring about diverse, inclusive, and integrated housing". Betsy was honored for her leadership and organizing that led to the successful passage of Highland Park's *Affordable Housing Plan*.

She served as a Highland Park Housing Commissioner from 1994 until the successful passage of the *Highland Park Affordable Housing Plan* in January 2001. Betsy is a founder and currently vice-president of the *Highland Park Illinois Community Land Trust* and also serves as a commissioner of the Lake County Affordable Housing Commission and as a director of the Lake County Affordable Housing Corporation.

Janet Swartz has a bench with her name on a plaque in the courtyard of the new housing complex at 500 Hyacinth Place, in recognition of her long service during the development of the *Affordable Housing Plan*. She served as chair of the Plan Commission during the development of the Plan and is currently vice-chair of the Housing Commission.

Janet is pleased to have had the opportunity to be involved with the project from its inception, through its long evolution to completion with families actually moving in. She says she owes a lot of this to the league. Isn't it amazing how many successful leaguers say that!

VOTER REGISTRATION

Gail Brown

This was a great season for voter registration. The Highland Park Public Library hosted us in the front lobby for most Thursday evenings and Sunday afternoons in September, through the close of voter registration in early October. We registered 92 voters! Many people stopped by to thank the League for the work we do in our community. Registrants were grateful to be able to register off hours, and their enthusiasm was contagious.

Many thanks to Pam Siegel and the staff at the Highland Park Public Library, and to the following registrars: Elaine Adler, Debbie Brown, Rose Feder, Faye Grossman, Linda Kellough, Judy Johnston, Betsy Lassar, Carol Mendelsohn, Carol Miller, Rheta Pickard, Ruth Spero, Janet Swartz, Lila Trotsky, Barbara Tuch, and Debby Zirin.

If anyone is interested in becoming a voter registrar, I need to submit your name and address to the Lake County Clerk's office, and you need to be trained at their Waukegan office. **You can email me at, g.f.brown@comcast.net**, with your info. Our next big registration event will be at Highland Park High School in May. Last May we registered 150 students!

MANY THANKS to our sponsors, without whom this Bulletin would not be possible.

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REGIONAL NEWS

LMILO AT 41

The **Lake Michigan Inter-League Organization (LMILO)** held its 41st Annual Meeting in October at the Hilton Garden Inn in Chesterton, Indiana. LMILO represents fifty-nine League of Women Voter chapters from the four states that surround Lake Michigan and is committed to the preservation and protection of Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes.

On Friday, delegates toured the Port of Indiana facilities, a real treat, considering today's security regulations. That evening, panelists representing government, environmental groups, and business discussed how those entities worked together to promote the passage of the *Great Lakes Compact*, enacted into law this year insuring the Great Lakes waters will remain in the basin.

Judy Johnston, LWVHP, and Jeanette Neagu, Michigan City, were re-elected as co-presidents at the business meeting Saturday morning. Delegates also voted to change the organization's name to *Lake Michigan League of Women Voters*, to better reflect our LWV affiliation. We await final approval from LWVUS for the change to become official.

Kim E. Ferraro, Attorney with the Legal Environmental Aid Foundation (LEAF) spoke at lunch on, "*Toxic Pollution Impacting the Great Lakes : What You Need To Know.*" She presented a dismal statistical portrait of Indiana's standing environmentally. It is ranked 48th out of 50 states in protection of its waters from pollution. She emphasized that citizens must be vigilantly aware of what is approved by city plan and zoning commissions, as their decisions can adversely impact a community. She noted that under certain conditions those decisions can be successfully challenged legally.

Jeanette Neagu gave a Power Point presentation on the threats to the Great Lakes. Her goal is to share that information with organizations in all four of the States surrounding Lake Michigan.

Contact Jeanette at 219-879-0431 or Judy at 847-433-9375 to learn more.

MORE LOCAL NEWS

MEMBERSHIP OPEN HOUSE

Sue Wieseneck, Chair

I don't know what was a bigger draw to the Open House, the up-coming election or Margie Weiss' beautiful home in Ft. Sheridan. New faces and familiar faces returning were welcomed. Board members spoke briefly about the League's goals being issue-focused and non-partisan; they also identified League accomplishments.

However, this was indeed a social evening, not an evening of study nor a fund-raising event. It was, in short, a very good time.

CANDIDATES FORUM

Faye Grossman

On October 5, 2008, our League joined with Glencoe, Deerfield and Lake Forest to host a debate between candidates for the 58th District of Illinois. **Karen May** and **Tim Stratton** provided a lively discussion of the issues that confront the Illinois legislature. The forum took place at the **Patty Turner Senior Center** in Deerfield. It was a rainy afternoon, but about 60 hearty souls were there to show their interest in Illinois government.

On October 19, our League and seven others worked together to have the only debate this election season between **Mark Kirk and Dan Seals**. The candidates for the **Tenth Congressional District** debated questions from the audience of more than 900 in the Deerfield High School auditorium for 90 minutes. Many people stopped by to thank the League for hosting this debate.

Paula Lawson, Illinois League President, introduced Cindy Canary, our moderator. Film was provided to three Comcast stations for viewing before the election. The Union League Club of Chicago, Childcare Coalition of Lake County, YWCA of Lake County, North Suburban Leadership Committee co-sponsored the event.

Many thanks to everyone who participated to make this event successful.



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LEAGUE CALENDAR

December	6	10 - 1	Leadership RAP – LWVIL offices
	13	10 - 2	Lake Michigan Interleague – LWVIL offices
January	14	7:00 pm	Board Meeting - Gail Brown
	31	8:30 am	LWVIL Issues Briefing - Loyola Water Tower
February	5		Local Program Planning - venue TBA
	26	Noon	LWVIL State-of-the State Luncheon with Carol Marin
March			Phonathon - Date TBA
			Luncheon-Women's History Month - Date TBA
	11	7:00 pm	Board Meeting and State Program Planning - Lila Trotsky
April	8	7:00 pm	Board Meeting - Rose Feder
May	2	9:00 am	Annual Meeting - Birchwood Club

Call 847-432-4732 or email info@lwhvp.org to carpool to any of these events.
If you would like more information about the LMILO or LWVLC meetings, call Judy Johnston at 847-433-9375.

MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO ATTEND BOARD MEETINGS