



League Links

LWV AH-MP-BG Area

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of the Arlington Heights-Mount Prospect-Buffalo Grove Area
Including Wheeling, Prospect Heights, and Elk Grove Village, Illinois

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November 2016

Volume 62, Issue 4


Serving our communities since 1955

Our Mission Statement/Purpose: The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



ACTIVITY CALENDAR



Date	Time	Event
Mon, Nov 7		Last day of EARLY VOTING
Tue, Nov 8 Election Day!	6-10pm	Election Watch Party The Continental Restaurant, 788 S. Buffalo Grove Road, Buffalo Grove See the next page for a flier!
Thu, Nov 24		Happy Thanksgiving!
Tue, Dec 6	6:30-8:30pm	Board Meeting - Members, you are welcome to join us at Connie's house.
Mon, Jan 16	Doors open at 6:30pm	Movie screening at Metropolis (Suffragette)
Tue, Jan 24	6:30-8:30pm	Board Meeting - Members, you are welcome to join us at Connie's house.

LWV AH-MP-BG BOARD MEMBERS 2016-2017

<u>Position/Portfolio</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
President	VACANT		
Vice-President	VACANT		
Secretary	Lynne Kelley		
Treasurer/League Geek	Connie Weissman		
Program	VACANT		
Director	Cathy Duoba		
Dir/Frontier Days/Gift Cards	Rosemary Krizan		
Director	Pat Lind		
Dir/Social Media/Membership	Heidi Graham		
Director	Mary Mason		
Director/Publicity	Shannon Silverman		

League of Women Voters
Serving Arlington Heights – Mt Prospect – Buffalo Grove Area
Including Wheeling, Prospect Heights, and Elk Grove Village, Illinois

ELECTION PARTY



November
8

6:00 - 10:00 pm
at The Continental Restaurant
788 S. Buffalo Grove Rd.
Buffalo Grove

Come celebrate our election process with friends, old and new, as we watch election returns.

Like Us On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheLeagueOfWomenVotersArlingtonHeights>

Watch how democracy works and witness history.

We are online at www.lwv.org

Cash bar and menu items

Parking available

Serving our communities since 1955
The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

*FREE PROGRAM

*EVERYONE WELCOME



NEWS FROM LWV AH-MP-BG Area including



VILLAGE OF
WHEELING
ILLINOIS



Local League by Heidi Graham

League has been incredibly busy this election season. Volunteers Mary Beth Canty, Mary Anne O'Toole, Pat Lindner, Pat Lind, Mary Mason, Shannon Silverman, Lynne Kelley, and I have spent over 50 hours registering voters at local schools and the train station. Additionally, several area schools have hosted their own mock elections with the aid of our League. Finally, our membership committee has doubled our membership in the last year. We are excited to welcome all of our new members. Make sure you introduce yourself at our next gathering.

October also saw two exciting events. First, we welcomed Norman Cane and Mario Perez from District 214's "Newcomer Center" to an informal event at Peggy Kinnane's. Members were able to relax over a cocktail and learn something about the immigrants in our community. Some highlights from the night include:

The "Newcomer Center" is the only center of its kind in the state of Illinois. Students spend one year in the center, learning both content and language, prior to moving to one of the four schools with English Language Learner (ELL) services. They explained that since many immigrants are actually learning English as a second, third, or fourth language, the term "English as a Second Language" (ESL) has generally been replaced by the term ELL.

There are three types of students in the program:

- 1---regular to high level in their home language
- 2---interrupted learners (have missed a significant amount of education in their home language)
- 3---students with special needs.

The center has three full time teachers who are certified in their content area and ELL. Language is introduced in a visual way and within the content. The program strives to "aculturate" students, an additive approach, rather than "assimilate" students, which implies loss of one's cultural identity. Today, immigrants are losing their language at a faster rate than ever before, yet in today's economic climate, being multi-lingual is an advantage. What the students lose in personal baggage they gain in emotional baggage. Teachers are faced with teaching content, a new language, and assisting students be mentally healthy. A monumental task, but one the program does with a great amount of success. Their work helps ensure students are productive members of society.

For further reading, the recommended *The Distance Between Us*, by Renya Grande which chronicles the life of an immigrant. We will have a limited number of copies available for check out at the November 8 election watch party, and we will plan an informal book discussion at a date to be determined.

Also, children's author and women's advocate, Mary Parry came to Metropolis for a "different kind of political rally." Children were treated to a reading of the author's new book *Sadie McGrady Runs for President*, as well as fun election themed activities, and parents were offered information regarding the upcoming election. Girl Scout Troop 41718 was instrumental in making the event a success. We are also grateful to the many members (Kim Kusiciel and her daughters, Pat Lind, Pat Lindner, Mary Mason, Lynne Kelly, Shannon Silverman, Connie Weissman, Susan Fuller, and others I'm certainly forgetting) and non-members (Kathy Pollard and MariBeth O'Dell, my own daughter and her boyfriend) who answered our call.

for donations and physical help. If you missed the event, you can still order a signed book for a holiday gift. Contact Heidi Graham for more information. We will post the video of Mary Parry reading her book on our YouTube channel. Stay tuned.

Mark your calendars for November 8. Obviously, it's time to vote. One of our newest members, Mary Beth Canty, has offered to drive anyone needing assistance to their polling place. Let a board member know if you need a ride or are willing to give rides as well. We love when our members have worthwhile ideas to support our core mission. We are also planning to gather on election night between 6-10 pm at Continental Restaurant in Buffalo Grove for an election watch party. Regardless of your political affiliation, let's celebrate the democratic process we work so hard to protect.

Finally, we highlight the work of our sister Leagues in these pages. Cook County and Illinois Leagues have members who attend various meetings and report to members. In years past, and when we had a more robust membership and smaller coverage area, we had members attend local board meetings and reported back to members. We would love to bring back this program. Contact a board member if you want to be a part of our "Eyewitness Team."

Get Your Signs to Support League and our mission. Only \$15 and available at Heidi Graham's home at 1219 East Woodford Place. They can be used election after election and make a great gift!



Meet the League: Heidi Graham: Randomly Skilled or just Random?

As the daughter of an Air Force Fighter and Test Pilot and a Virginia farm girl and teacher, I cannot easily answer the question "Where are you From?" I was born in California, but moved to Washington, D.C. when I was a few months old. I have lived in the Philippines, Alabama, Georgia, New Mexico, Texas, California again, and have lived in the Chicago suburbs for nearly twenty-five years. At last count, I have had twenty-seven addresses in my life. Because my parents and sister have settled in Texas, many people think I'm from Texas. Because I graduated both high school and college in California (California State University, Long Beach), many people think I'm from California. But if pressed, I claim I'm a die-hard Chicagoan.

I met my husband at CSULB when we were nineteen. After we graduated, he asked me to marry him, and then floated the idea of moving to Chicago so he could open a business. My response? "What did we have to lose? My Sears stereo?" Since we literally had nothing to lose and everything to gain, we packed up a U-Haul and moved to Chicago. I worked seven days a week, at three jobs while my husband got his business off the ground. After several career changes, and five years of marriage, we were in a position to start a family. As soon as our baby girl was born, I left the work force to dedicate my time and energy to our family. That was almost eighteen years ago.

My friends joke that I am randomly skilled. Though I have not had a "regular job" in almost eighteen years, I have been paid as a makeup artist, public school Drama and English teacher, sales person, DJ, fitness instructor, and personal trainer. I've led a Girl Scout Troop, coached almost every sport, managed kids' book and writing clubs, and even helped my son with a video game club. I've directed neighborhood kids in plays for fifteen summers, raised money for Scouts and school selling theatre tickets, and planned more outings than I can count. My kids, a daughter who is a senior in high school, and a son, an eighth grader, are my life. I am blessed beyond measure with a loving and supportive husband. My life, to use a cliché, is full.

So why League? Several years ago I was teaching an aqua aerobics class, and one of the participants was Pat Lindner. She invited me to a program League was hosting on the Common Core. As a parent of school aged children, I felt compelled to attend. I was incredibly impressed with the thoroughness and balance of the information provided. I became a member, but kept myself at arm's length. I was knee deep in kid's activities, and my priorities didn't allow for much more volunteerism. But when I was able to attend a meeting, I always walked away feeling smarter, better informed. When my kids started needing less of me, I dove into volunteering for League.

I pitch League like this: If you are tired of being told how to think, League is for you. League gives you the information you need to make up your own mind.

League, and its core mission, are important to me. I may be random, but League is not. I am forever grateful to Pat for showing me the League Light.



NEWS FROM LWV Cook County

Editor's Note: the observer reports are much more detailed and are easy to read. I have merely highlighted a few items of note from each report.

Observer Karin Hribar's reported on the Commissioners' Board meeting:

- The board passed an ordinance to raise the minimum wage in Cook County from \$8.25 per hour to \$13 per hour by 2020.
- Pension underfunding (55%), lower than expected investment returns, low ratio of employee contributors compared to retirees getting pensions—1.3 employees to 1 retiree—are among factors causing a \$400 million shortfall. \$727 million in pensions paid out annually. At this rate the pension fund will go insolvent by 2041.
- The state of Illinois owes Cook County 34 million this year.

Observer Jan Goldberg reported on the Cook County budget hearings:

- The Public Defender of Cook County, Amy Campanelli, gave compelling testimony on the need of a larger budget (2 million more than the President's recommendation). Each attorney currently has a caseload of 350 felonies and 857 misdemeanors per attorney, but the ABA guidelines are 150 felonies and 400 misdemeanors per attorney. Additionally, there is only one Spanish interpreter for all cases.
- The Clerk of the Circuit Court of Cook County cited increases in personnel costs as the main reason for the need of an increased budget.

Observer Diane Edmundson reported on Treasurer, Maria Pappas', report:

- Perhaps of greatest interest and concern to the Commissioners is the state legislated system for sale of delinquent taxes. If the current law stands, taxes delinquent by 4 months after the August due date can be sold. The home owner has another several months to pay the taxes but the amount due can end up being 2-3 times more than the original tax because of interest, penalties, and court costs - plus – the tax buyer receives the income from the redemption – not the County. Treasurer Pappas is strongly against the state law and blames a power lobby for creating it. The County is currently working on a compromise plan [6 months before being sold]. The constituent group most affected by this is Senior Citizens.

Observer Laura Davis reported on Cook County Board Finance Committee:

- David Orr, Cook County Clerk reported a reduction in budget and staff; this was done through strategic planning. David Orr supports the consolidation of the Clerk’s office and the Recorder of Deeds. Additionally, he assured the commissioners the election was protected against fraud.
- The Chicago Board of Elections also reiterated the election process was sound, citing “solid” voting equipment and web server, in addition to a “paper trail.”

Observer Amy Little reported on the Departmental Budget Meetings:

- CFO Samstein addressed the Capital Budget. Financing of capital projects must now match the life of the asset and there is a central “bank” for managing the assets.
- The Cook County Building and Zoning department and the Board of Appeals office have a goal of improving unincorporated blighted areas to encourage local municipalities to annex those areas.
- The Land Bank Authority is charged with reducing vacant land and returning buildings back to the tax rolls.
- Bureau of Asset Management manages 19 million feet of square feet of space in Cook County and the next year will be focused on re-developing the old Cook County Hospital.

Linda Christianson reported on the Cook County Health and Hospital Systems Board Meeting

- Cook County Health and Hospitals System (CCHHS) Board Member Dr. Wayne Lerner submitted his resignation, with many commendations for his service by board members and by CEO Dr. Jay Shannon. As chair of the CCHHS Managed Care committee, Dr. Lerner stressed the importance of CountyCare’s focus on (1) quality care; (2) risk management; (3) improving health status; and (4) a distribution of membership between healthy and less healthy to even out cost of care.
- With the resignations of Lewis Collens, Dr. Erika Marsh, and now Dr. Wayne Lerner, the CCHHS Board has lost expertise that has guided the board through the formative years of CountyCare and a challenging strategic planning process yielding a 3-year plan for the organization. Can the new board members master the complicated workings of CCHHS and move the organization forward to achieve the aggressive goals laid out in the Strategic Plan?

To read the full report from the Observers, go to <http://www.lwvcookcounty.org/cook-county-board-eyewitness>



NEWS FROM LWV Lake Michigan Region (LMR)

The “Healing Our Waters—Great Lakes Coalition” invited both major party Presidential candidates to speak at the annual meeting. Representatives from both campaigns attended, gave statements, and answered questions. Both candidates have pledged to continue support for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), if elected. The presentations can be seen in full at <http://www.lwvlmr.org/news>.

The 2016 annual meeting took place on October 15 & 16. Though we did not have a local representative at the meetings, an overview is provided on their website. Here are a few highlights:

- Keynote Speaker Natalie Johnson, of the Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Federal Partnership provided an update on threats to Lake Michigan, specifically algae blooms, failing septic systems, sewage overflows, climate change, and human factors.
- Cathy Martin, Program Manager for Save the Dunes, and Gia Wagner, Natural Resources Branch Chief at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore addressed the need for partnerships in order to make progress in local restoration projects.



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See you November 8!

In this issue:

Page 1

Activity Calendar
Your Local Board

Page 2

Election Watch Party

Page 3

Our Local League

Page 4

Meet the League: Heidi Graham

Page 5

News from LWVCC

Page 6

News from LMR

Page 7

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