



Shop Talk

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Opportunities for your participation in League activities and goals

Donna Blue, 1st Vice President

1. Participate in League Phonathon scheduled for Monday, March 8, at Jeanne Davik's home. We will make calls between 7:00 and 9:00 p.m.

The annual Phonathon is an important fundraiser for our Illinois State League, and our Elmhurst League will get a 15% share of any funds we raise that evening.

We will have a suggested script, lists of people to call, and refreshments! It really is fun, and you get to talk to lots of wonderful League members.

Call or e-mail Donna Blue to volunteer. She will arrange car pools.

2. Get 10 signatures on a Fair Map Petition (included with this *Shop Talk*). Take it with you to any gathering of friends. Tell them how important it is to place a Constitutional Amendment on the ballot this fall to change the redistricting process in Illinois.

Bring your petition(s) to Dorothy McGuire's home on March 22nd to be notarized. (See story in column 2.)

3. Promote the Fair Map Petition Drive at the St. Patrick's Day Parade on Saturday, March 13.

Our League will be setting up a tent at the parade to educate the public on the proposed amendment and to gather signatures for the petition.

Volunteers are needed to staff the booth. Please contact Jan Vanek to participate in this important effort to get rid of gerrymandering in our state!

How to Run for Public Office

Thursday, March 11 — 7 p.m.

Elmhurst Public Library, 125 S. Prospect, Elmhurst

Format: Panel discussion featuring **Susan Rose**, Alderman, Elmhurst City Council; **Colette Kubiesa**, President, Park Board; and **Peggy Ostojic**, President, District 205 School Board.

Looking Ahead: In April 2011, the Elmhurst voters will elect 7 aldermen, 4 School Board members and 2 Park Board commissioners. Now is the time to think about running (and finding out how to run) for local public office.

Shared Experience: The panel members are all local elected officials who can provide guidance on how to run, describe the challenges in campaigning, and explain what local officials do.

Membership Event: Pastries and Conversation

Thursday, March 18 — 9 a.m.

Café Amano. 105 S. York Street, Elmhurst

If you want to be an informed citizen . . . join the League of Women Voters for pastries and conversation.

Join us at Cafe Amano on March 18 from 9-11 am. Do you know of a friend or neighbor who might be interested in the League? Invite that person for a fun and informative morning. R.S.V.P. to membership@lwvelmhurst.org.

Party! Petitions* and Cake**

Monday, March 22 — 7 p.m.

Dorothy McGuire's home

*Petitions = Fair Map Petitions, which will be notarized for you.

**Cake = Birthday Cake to Celebrate the LWV 90th Birthday!

Please join us on Monday, March 22, at 7:00 pm at the home of our secretary, Dorothy McGuire for a fun evening of celebration. Members of Dorothy's family will be on hand to notarize your Illinois Fair Map petitions. The petitions will then be collected and sent to the State League. (They're due to the Fair Map coalition by April 1st.)

We will also take this opportunity to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the League of Women Voters of the United States! Refreshments will be provided. Just bring your signed petitions and favorite League stories to share.

City Council Prayer: Why the Fuss?

Laura Kratz, President

As League members, we are proud of our reputation as a reliable source of nonpartisan voter information via our voter service activities. But our interest does not end on Election Day. Through our issues programming, advocacy work, and our outstanding Observers Corps, we stay well informed about what our elected officials do after they take office.

Elmhurst Mayor DiCianni's decision to open City Council meetings with public prayer last month drew comment from many quarters, including the League. Despite criticism from people in favor of public prayer, I stand by the statements I made in opposition to it (with unanimous prior approval of the board) because the issue at stake is not a religious question; it is a question of whether or not our local elected officials know their responsibilities of office and whether or not they will uphold standards of good government.

Despite assertions to the contrary, there are limitations on religious activity conducted by our tax-supported institutions. Legal challenges to that activity are ongoing and the courts are constantly fine-tuning the rules.

Even though the mayor and city attorney scrambled to fill in details to assure us the invocations would be fair, it is clear that unintended consequences -- from community resentment to potential lawsuits and related costs -- were never fully considered.

The mayor's decision to move forward with an invocation at the February 2nd meeting -- without any input from the rest of the Council or formal guidelines in place -- did nothing to inspire confidence in his respect for his fellow Council members or the citizens of Elmhurst. Nor did he demonstrate a sound understanding of his role as mayor.

Fortunately, seven aldermen signed on to a referral to send the question to the Finance, Council Affairs and Administrative Services Committee for consideration. The City Council passed the referral unanimously at the February 2nd meeting. This is a first step in the right direction.

Good intentions are not the same as good government. We expect our elected officials to know what jobs they were elected to do and what rules govern their actions in office. We have yet to see if good government practices will prevail going forward.

Remembering Lorraine Bartnik

Evelyn Zerfoss, *Great Decisions* Discussion Leader

League member Lorraine Bartnik died January 30, after losing her fight with cancer. She is survived by her daughters, Carolyn and Paulina, and two grandchildren.

Lorraine was a long time participant in League's *Great Decisions* discussion group, and a regular attendee at *Common Ground*, Elmhurst.

She was known for her directness, honesty, and her unique observations and perspectives.

A memorial service was held for her February 6 at the Downers Grove Quaker Meeting House, where she had been a member for 8 years.

She will be missed.

GREAT DECISIONS

Barbara Swords, Coordinator

The *Great Decisions* group will meet on Tuesday, March 9 at 1 p.m. at the home of Barbara Swords.

We will plan the meetings and discussions for 2010 and discuss chapter 1, "Special Envoys." (We are sorry that the snowstorm forced cancellation of our February 9 meeting.)

If you have not yet picked up your copy of our new book, please call Barbara to arrange. Cost of the book is \$18.

Green Tip:

Jan Dorner, Editor, *Observer Reports*

Save your printer cartridges for us! We can turn in printer cartridges at Office Depot where we will receive a discount on our printing. If you would like to drop them off there, our *worklife rewards* number is under my home phone number or you can drop them off to me. Thanks!

Smart Home-Green and Wired

** Tour with Bus Transportation **

The Museum of Science and Industry
April 19, 8:15 am - 6:00 pm
Bus leaves from the Abbey Parking Lot
Fee: \$69 residents, \$74 non-residents.

Chicago's Greenest Home is back! Newly redesigned for 2010. Smart Home Green & Wired, powered by ComED is back to showcase the way, big and small, you can make eco-friendly living a part of your life.

Take a guided tour of this real, three-story modular and sustainable 'green' home in the Museum's own backyard. You'll view and hear about the latest innovations in reusable resources, smart energy consumption, clean, healthy-living environments and easy ways to go green. Trip includes motorcoach transportation, entrance fee to museum, and ticket to smart home and a premium box lunch. Please go to EPD.org to register or call the Park District with registration questions at 630-941-1428.

The members of Cool Cities would like to thank the Elmhurst Park District for putting this trip together.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Sue Williams, Membership Chair

Welcome to our newest members Dr. Robert Tracy and Kirsten Powers and welcome back to Mary Kies! Please add their names to your directory.

Go Green & \$ave Green

Sue Williams

Make small changes and pay less in energy costs.

- **Shut down and unplug electronics:** Shut down your computer when you're not using it. Plug your cell phone and other electronics into a power strip so you can turn off several devices with one switch.
- **When washing clothes use less water and use cooler water.** According to the U.S. Department of Energy, approximately 90% of the energy used for washing clothes in a conventional top-load washer is for heating the water. Unless you're dealing with oily stains, the warm or cold water setting on your machine will generally do a good job of cleaning your clothes.
- **Replace your old washer with a new ENERGY STAR qualified washer.** If purchased April 16-25, 2010, you can receive an Illinois point of purchase rebate. Be sure to check that your purchase qualifies. (Other appliances also have rebates.) The government's energy star website—www.energystar.gov—allows you to search your area for additional special offers and rebates.
- **Use less energy for heating and cooling your home.** As much as half of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling. Follow these tips to save money and the environment:
 - **Change your air filter regularly.** Check it every month. If the filter looks dirty after a month, change it.
 1. Change the filter at least every 3 months.
 2. Tune up your HVAC equipment yearly. It can improve both efficiency and comfort.
 3. Install a programmable thermostat. It's ideal for people who are away from home during set periods of time as well as to raise/lower your night time temperatures.

Q & A About the Fair Map Constitutional Amendment

What is the Fair Map Amendment?

The Fair Map Amendment to the Illinois constitution would change the state's process for creating legislative districts. Its intent is to make the redistricting process less political and more transparent.

What is the problem? Illinois' Legislative Mapping Process is Flawed & Political

- Under the existing system, legislator's leaders name 8 people to a Redistricting Commission. Two members must be sitting legislators.
- For the last 3 decades, the tie breaking process has involved drawing a name from a hat to determine whether the Republicans or the Democrats win full power to create the district map.
- Districts are currently drawn to protect incumbents –with the existing mapping process, incumbents have won their elections at a 95% success rate

The current system gives too much power to the General Assembly.

What are advantages of the proposed amendment for a fair mapping process?

- The amendment is based on a bipartisan Citizens' Commission Proposal (Illinois Reform Commission).
- An Independent Commission, rather than legislators, would draw maps. The Commission's members
 - Could not have worked as a lobbyist or for the state for 4 years before being appointed
 - Could not be elected to the General Assembly for 10 years after their service.
- Maps would be drawn in an open and transparent process, with public input.
- Specific, neutral criteria must be used to draw maps to protect minority voting rights and aim to eliminate partisan advantage
- Map drawers may not unduly favor any political party. Maps would be drawn for people, not politicians.
- Approval would require a 2/3 vote of the General Assembly; the Governor is removed from the approval process
- Currently a tie is broken by drawing from a hat to see which party controls the redistricting process. With the amendment, if the legislature fails to approve a map after two have been submitted, the Independent Commission will make the final decision.

Why should we handle this through an amendment to the Constitution?

- There are two ways to change the system – through the legislature, or through the citizens.
 - The legislature did not change the system in 2009.
 - It is unlikely they will change the system since it currently serves their best interests.
- To place the amendment on the November ballot, 500,000 signatures of registered voters are needed by end of April. Voters must sign a petition specific to their election authority (e.g. Kane County). If the people vote for the new IL Fair Map Amendment in November, it will become law and Illinois will have a redistricting process that is transparent and fair.

Who supports the Fair Map Amendment?

- Illinois League of Women Voters
- Better Government Association
- IL Campaign for Political Reform
- Common Cause - Illinois
- Illinois Chamber of Commerce
- Americans for Prosperity
- Illinois Alliance for Growth
- United Power for Action and Justice

When does redistricting occur? Every 10 years, following a Census.

What does my signature on the petition mean?

It means you are helping to place the amendment on the November ballot.

If this proposal is approved when will this new process be put into effect?

The first map using this new process must be provided to each Chamber by the third Monday in May 2011. The process must be completed by Sept. 30, 2011, at which time the redrawn districts will be in effect.

Where can I find more information about the Fair Map Amendment? <http://www.ilfairmap.com/>

CLICK [HERE](#) FOR A COPY OF THE *FAIR MAP* PETITION FOR DUPAGE COUNTY.

Happy 90th Birthday Kay Maxwell, President, LWVUS 2004-2007



From the spirit of the suffrage movement and the shock of the First World War came a great idea: That a nonpartisan civic organization could provide the education and experience the public needed to assure the success of democracy. The League of Women Voters was founded on that idea and, on February 14, 1920, just six months before the 29th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified, the League was formally organized in Chicago as the National League of Women Voters.

While the League's programs, priorities and procedures have changed over the years to meet changing times, League still continues to aim towards its three basic purposes:

- ❖ **To foster education in citizenship**
- ❖ **To promote forums and public discussion of civic reforms**
- ❖ **To support needed legislation.**

As a direct result of that commitment, the League of Women Voters has evolved from what it was in 1920, a mighty political experiment designed to help 20 million enfranchised women carry out their new responsibilities, to what it is today: a unique, non partisan organization that is a recognized force in molding political leaders, shaping public policy and promoting informed citizen participation at all levels of government.

Getting Ready for Annual MeetingAnd Next Year Laura Kratz, Elmhurst LWV President

Spring is just around the corner (really!) and this is the time we start preparing for the end of this League year and setting things in place for the year to come.

All League members have a voice in what we do:

- ❖ The Nominating Committee, chaired by Negar Barmaki, will be looking at the positions on the Board that are opening up and asking members to help fill the slate
- ❖ The Budget Committee, under the direction of our Treasurer Connie Zillig, will work on fiscal planning for 2010-2011
- ❖ At our Program Planning meeting last month, our local Issues, Action, and Study Items were reviewed. Although no changes were suggested, any League member may propose a new Study or a change in those items at Annual Meeting.
- ❖ Dues are collected for the coming year. If you paid before January 1, 2010, you will need to renew your membership this year.
- ❖ As we get everything in place, *Shop Talk* editor Jeanne Davik will send out the Call to Annual Meeting, a special edition with all the backup material you will need for full participation.

Annual Meeting is one of the highlights of the League year so mark your calendars and plan to attend on Thursday, May 20th.



Upcoming League Events:

March 8, 7 pm: League Phonathon. Home of Jeanne Davik.

March 9, 1 pm: Great Decisions. Home of Barbara Swords.

March 11, 7 pm: LWV Elmhurst Monthly Meeting, Elmhurst Public Library
Topic: *How to Run for Public Office*. Panel discussion.

March 13: Fair Map Petition promotion at St. Patrick's Day Parade.

March 18, 9 am: Membership Event. Pastries and Conversation. Café Amano.

March 20, 9 am: Board Meeting. Home of Myrrha Guzman.

March 22, 7 pm: Combination Birthday Party / Petition Party. Home of Dorothy McGuire.
Celebrate the IL League's 90th Birthday.
Get your Fair Map Amendment petitions notarized.

July 31, Third Annual Green Fest



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www.lwvelmhurst.org