



DATES & DATA

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

WINNETKA-NORTHFIELD-KENILWORTH

Phone: 847-604-1207 Website: <http://www.lwv-wnk.org>

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2012

Presidents' Letter

Dear Leaguers,

The skies are gray and the wind is blowing. There is snow on the ground and it is just plain miserable outside. Do you feel the winter doldrums coming on? League has the perfect solution for the blues. During the month of February we have two great programs and a Voter Service Activity to brighten your day.

Join us each Monday 1:00 p.m. at the Winnetka Public Library during the month of February until March 5 for Great Decisions. There is room for you to join in the conversation on important issues.

Speaking of *Conversations*, our new monthly "Lunch and Learn" program is off and running. Please refer to the article in Dates & Data. All that attended enjoyed a delicious lunch and a wonderful discussion lead by Dr. Linda Yonke, Superintendent of New Trier Township High School. There is still time for you to join in the fun. Our next *Conversations* will be held on Wednesday, February 12, 2012 at Little Ricky's in Winnetka. Our speaker will be Jennifer Bishop Jenkins and the topic will be *Victims Rights*. Your invitation is included in this month's *Dates & Data*. Please respond and say yes. You will not be sorry.

We need your help! Are you a Voter Registrar and free on Monday, February 13th or Tuesday, February 14th from 7:45 to 9:00 a.m? If yes to both questions, please help us register New Trier High School Students. This is not only rewarding but fun, and the students are so excited to be able to vote. Contact Jane Goldenberg at ja9e@sbcglobal.net. This is a reminder you need to be a Deputy Registrar to register voters.

Looking forward to March. There will be additional election activities and more *Conversations*. We are pleased to announce that Cynthia Canary, former Executive Director of Illinois Campaign for Political Reform (ICPR), former Executive Director of LWVIL and currently appointed by Mayor Rahm Emanuel as Chair of the City Ethics Task Force. Cindi will be our speaker in March. She will be speaking about Campaign Finance Reform.

Stay warm and hope to see you soon.

Jane, Joan, Nancy and Charlene

FEBRUARY 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3	4
5	GREAT DECISIONS 1:00 PM Winn. Library	6	7	8	9	10
12	GREAT DECISIONS 1:00 PM Winn. Library	13	14	CONVERSATIONS 11:45 AM Little Ricky's	16	17
19	GREAT DECISIONS 1:00 PM Winn. Library	20	21	22	23	24
26	GREAT DECISIONS 1:00 First Day for Early Voting	27	28	29		

MARCH 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				PENSION STUDY MEETING at N. Marcus' 1 pm	2	3
4	GREAT DECISIONS 1:00 LWV-WNK Board Meeting 9-15 AM	5	6	7	8	9
11		LWV Evanston Eleanor Roosevelt: The White House Years 12 Noon	13	14	Last Day for Early Voting	16
18		19	20	CONVERSATIONS 11:45 AM	22	23
25		26	27	28	29	30
					31	

A Call for Photographers!

"A picture is worth a thousand words," so it is said. There are many instances when our League would like to act on that adage like the Holiday Tea, registering New Trier High School students, and speakers at forums.

It is our hope that someone in our membership has a camera and can click photos that capture special moments. The photos will appear in print either in a local newspaper or Dates & Data.

You don't need to be Annie Leibovitz. Just someone whose hobby is photography and her camera is always with her. If that's you, call or e-mail Jane Goldenberg, 847-441-0150 or ja9e@sbcglobal.net.

Lend Us Your Abilities!!

It's only the end of January and already, we are thinking about preparation for the League Annual Meeting in May. That's because we need lots of help!!!

First, we need people to help Diane Onix to organize and coordinate that meeting: publicize, arrange food, and informal speaker.

Then, we need members to serve on the committees that must report to the Annual Meeting: nominating committee, budget committee, and by-laws committee.

With such an early start, and a need for minimal meetings, it should be easy to work around trips out of town and other commitments. Hopefully, many of you will offer to help with any of these short-term, but essential League responsibilities. Our by-laws require both board and non-board members on all these committees.

Please volunteer by contacting Joan Fragen Joanfragen@gmail.com or 847 446-0184. We really need your input and appreciate your help!!



League Of Women Voters Winnetka-Northfield-Kenilworth Invites You To Attend

Conversations

Conversations is a monthly gathering of League members and their friends who enjoy a mid-day meal followed by stimulating conversation on a variety of important and evolving issues led by experts in the field.

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2012, 11:45 A.M. TO 2 P.M.
LITTLE RICKY'S, 540 LINCOLN AVENUE, WINNETKA
COST \$15 PER PERSON, PAY AT THE DOOR**

Leader: Jennifer Bishop Jenkins, Director, Marsy's Law for Illinois

Issue: Victims Rights

*"Criminals have rights, but what about the victims of crimes?
Why is Illinois the only state in the nation that limits victims rights' enforcement?"*

r.s.v.p. by February 8 to Nancy Marcus ngmarcus614@gmail.com or 847-446-3546

More information to follow about our March 21, (Cynthia Canary speaker) and April 18 and May 16 Conversations, leaders to be announced

Be Sure to “Check the Box”

When you sign your federal income tax papers be sure to “check the box.” Checking the box will not increase the taxes you pay or reduce your refund. It simply puts three dollars of the tax you’ve already paid into the Presidential Election Fund. The size of the Fund and the strength of our democracy depends entirely on the number of people who choose to check the box.

The League believes democracy is better served if every candidate is on the level playing field provided by the Presidential Election Fund. The national organization has worked in recent years to fix the presidential public financing system. In addition to asking candidates to commit to using the presidential public financing system for the general election, the League and other national groups recently urged lawmakers to co-sponsor or publicly endorse legislation to reform the system.



Please note change of contact information for Pat Taylor.

Her address, phone number and email are: 2400 Colfax St., #102, Evanston, IL 60201, (847) 492-1055, patt272@mac.com



New League Study: The Privatization Of Government Services

Privatization may not sound exciting, but if you are listening and/or reading the newspaper, you must have noticed the increase in proposals from cash-starved federal, state and local governments to sell assets or to transfer the provision of government services to the private sector. The consequences of “privatizing” a government service or function may enhance the service and save money or the private entity may significantly reduce the quality of the service and fail to produce the dollar savings expected by the government. Some examples might include parking meters, the Calumet Skyway, prisons, etc.

The problem arises from the absence of any requirement for the private entity to provide the public with information regarding the provision of “outsourced” services. Transparency laws currently apply exclusively to public bodies and not to private entities.

The purpose of this study is to identify policies and parameters that should be considered when any governmental entity is planning to privatize a function or service. The degree to which such transfers should require transparency, accountability and consideration of long-term benefit to the public will be discussed.

Our first meeting will be at 1 p.m., Thursday, March 1st at the home of Nancy Marcus, 1212 Ash St. in Winnetka. We have tentatively scheduled follow-up meetings on Thursday afternoons, March 15 and 29.

Come join us, have fun and learn so much you will be “the life of the party”!
If you have any questions, please call Joan Levy (753-9666).

LWVWNK Makes a Recommendation to LWVUS

Every two years state and local Leagues participate in the LWVUS Program Planning process by making recommendations concerning program issues. This is one of the ways League remains a grassroots organization. The Program Planning process is an important League tool for identifying issues for study, review and update or concurrence.

At a meeting attended by four Winnetka-Northfield-Kenilworth League members our League's recommendation is "In view of the nuclear disaster in Japan, we should update our position on nuclear power facilities and their impact on the environment and human health."



Global Study Stimulates Curiosity and Learning

The League of Women Voters Winnetka-Northfield-Kenilworth conducted its first Great Decisions meeting with twelve women in attendance at the Winnetka Public Library. The topic was "Middle East Realignment" and the discussion covered the changing climate in the Arab world.

Great Decisions is an eight-week course that meets on Mondays at 1 p.m.. and was developed by the Foreign Policy Association for the purpose of developing ways of stimulating learning about our ever-changing world. With the purchase of the Great Decisions briefing book (\$18.50), attendees begin with a background on eight subjects. Each week the leader for that week's topic contributes additional information and guides a discussion.

"Middle East Realignment" covered Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Syria, and the Arab states of the Persian Gulf. Attendees walked away from that meeting with a better understanding of the complexities of that region and the United States' involvement.

What do you know about the Muslim Brotherhood? Where are secular parties reemerging? What country has the best chance for a democratic transformation? These and many more questions were addressed.

You can attend Great Decisions to share your knowledge, to make your views known or just to listen and learn.

Future meetings are Feb. 6 Cybersecurity; Feb. 13 Exit from Afghanistan & Iraq; Feb. 20 State of the Oceans; Feb. 27 Indonesia; and Mar. 5 Energy Geopolitics.

For questions and to purchase the Briefing Book, call Arline Doblin, 847-446-4525

Annual Holiday Tea a Success!

By Jane Goldenberg

We had another successful Holiday Tea on December 15 at the Winnetka Club.

About 35 people attended our annual holiday gathering, where they shared delicious treats made by our members. The Winnetka Club provided a festive setting with its cozy living room festooned with holiday decorations.

The main event occurred in the theater, where village managers highlighted the villages' top issues. They included Brad Burke, of Kenilworth, Stacy Sigman, of Northfield, and Robert Bahan, of Winnetka. In a twist from previous years, we invited the village presidents, who came up to the stage to participate in the Q & A.

Not surprisingly, pensions are still occupying the minds of our elected officials. Several urged members of the audience to contact their state legislators about pension reform. Northfield reported that all its retail space is fully occupied, and Winnetka is hard at work on plans to solve flooding issues that plagued the village last year.

Hope to see you all again next year!



A Conversation with Dr. Linda Yonke

League is doing something different this year. On the third Wednesday of the months January through May all local residents are invited to *Conversations*.

The first meeting was on January 18 when thirteen people gathered at Capriccios restaurant for lunch and engaged in an informative conversation with Dr. Linda Yonke, superintendent of New Trier Township High School.

This is Dr. Yonke's sixth year at the helm of New Trier and her 36th year in the field of education. Her impressive resume includes a wide range of educational experiences including dedicated high school teacher, active teacher union officer, doctoral graduate and college instructor.

Yonke feels New Trier High School showcases the ability of a secondary school to prepare students for success in meeting the challenges of higher education. She noted the school's emphasis on developing students' communication skills, critical analysis ability, and writing proficiency and commented on the advantages of the broad academic curriculum and extra-curricular activities offered. Close attention is also focused on developing students' interpersonal skills, strong values, resilience following disappointment and commitment to community service.

Also discussed were the District's high expectations for teacher performance including a mentoring system for new teachers and an evaluation process that critiques each teacher's effectiveness in the classroom.

A question was asked concerning a freshman Chinese class size of 30 students. Dr. Yonke explained the freshman enrollment is above average this year, causing increased class size. The problem is cyclical and next year a smaller freshman enrollment is anticipated, allowing a return to smaller classes.

Another question asked was about the difference between North Side College Preparatory High School in Chicago and New Trier. Dr Yonke pointed out that North Side Prep was a school where students are screened and chosen to attend. New Trier is open to all students in the district regardless of past performance or ability.

Dr. Yonke attributes New Trier's outstanding success to highly motivated students, dedicated teachers and positive parent and community involvement

The next *Conversations* is Wednesday, February 15, at Little Ricky's in Winnetka with Jennifer Bishop -Jenkins addressing "Victims Rights."

What Happened at the LWVIL Issues Briefing on January 28?

At the LWVIL Issues Briefing on Saturday, January 28, the four WNK members who attended learned about new voter registration limitations in some parts of our country, food safety issues and agencies for public protection, running LWV candidate forums, the Illinois smart grid to save energy, and background for the LWVUS privatization study, and LWVIL pension study.

Diana Kasdan of the Brennan Center's Democracy Program, described new laws to limit voter registration opportunities that were introduced in many states and passed in some, during 2011. At least 34 states introduced legislation requiring photo IDs in order to vote, which became law in 8 states despite the fact that many Americans, especially African Americans, senior citizens, and immigrants frequently do not have a photo ID; student IDs became unacceptable as well. Illinois was among states restricting voter registration drives. Requiring proof of citizenship to register or vote, reducing the number of early and absentee voting days and making it difficult for those with past felony convictions to restore their voting rights were among other proposals.

Robert E. Brackett, PhD Director of the Institute of Food Safety and Health, talked about food safety's emergence as a public health and political issue as problems continue to arise from the huge increase in food-borne illness, globalization and the increase in imported foods from countries with other standards, and chemicals used at all levels of food production. State public health safety agencies, the federal Food and Drug Administration and US Department of Agriculture are all working to improve food safety. The new FDA Food Safety Modernization Act tries to be preventive rather than reactive by requiring international inspections, mandatory safety certification for high-risk foods, expanded records access and mandatory recalls when necessary. The obstacle to success is inadequate funding.

Glenview Village Manager, Todd Hileman, described multiple savings he achieved by transferring services to private entities. Rising pension and health care costs, lack of expertise within the staff and the expanding gap between the village's revenues and expenses were the catalysts for exploring the benefits of outsourcing local functions. Savings achieved by transferring services to private firms included information technology expertise, street sweeping, water system management, high level financial services, a police and social worker program, etc. Celeste Meiffren, the Field Director of the Illinois PIRG (Public Interest Research Group) described Chicago's sale of the Chicago Skyway, four downtown parking garages and 36,000 parking meters for \$1.1 billion with a 75 year contract, as the most egregious example of privatization abuse in the United States. The preparatory work for the sale of the parking meters took place behind closed doors, the lead consultant received a no-bid contract, the City Council was given two days to review and approve the 500-page contract.

Ralph Martire, Director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, explained Illinois' "worst fiscal crisis since the Great Depression."

Amanda Kass, Pension Specialist, described the unfunded liability of the five Illinois State Pension Systems; the new law that reduces benefits and increases the retirement age to 67 for employees hired after December 31, 2010; and current legislation that attempts to address the State's unfunded pension liability for employees hired before the end of 2010, given opposing legal interpretations of the State Constitution's "protection" of current Illinois public employees' benefits.

*The League of Women Voters of Evanston
cordially invites you
to a
celebration of Women's History Month*

Tuesday, March 13, 2012, 12:00 pm

North Shore Retirement Hotel, 1611 Chicago Avenue, Evanston

Professor Elizabeth Kelly, DePaul University

Eleanor Roosevelt: The White House Years

Hear a very special perspective on one of the most powerful and remarkable women in history presented by a women's history scholar who tells Eleanor's story in a fascinating way that will have you enthralled and engaged. (Professor Kelly spoke at one of our meetings last year and so many positive comments were generated including "we could have gone on for several hours with the discussion".)

Cost \$20.00

RSVP no later than Friday, March 9 at 847-866-7844.