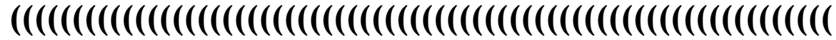


# SHOP TALK

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of ELMHURST, ILLINOIS



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Gail Anderson	Membership	<a href="mailto:membership@lwvelmhurst.org">membership@lwvelmhurst.org</a>	January, 2006
Carolyn Landwehr	Shop Talk Editor		
LWV of Elmhurst website - <a href="http://www.lwvelmhurst.org">www.lwvelmhurst.org</a>			



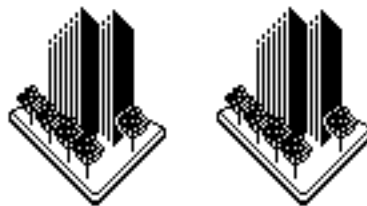
## Calendar

Saturday, January 7, 9 a.m. At the home of Laura Kratz	<b>Board Meeting</b>
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Wednesday, January 11, 4:30 p.m. Grove Junior High School	<b>District 6 Health Care Hearing</b> 777 Elk Grove Boulevard, Elk Grove Village
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### *What Are the Plans for the Future of Downtown Elmhurst?*

**Come to the January General Meeting**  
**Thursday, January 19, 7:30 p.m.**  
**At the Elmhurst Public Library, 125 Prospect**



Saturday, January 21, 9 a.m. At the home of Laura Kratz	<b>Committee on District 205 Finances</b>
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Tuesday, January 24, 10 a.m. Elmhurst Public Library	<b>Annual Program Planning Meeting</b> 125 Prospect
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Saturday, February 4 Place to be announced	<b>LWVIL Issues Briefing</b> Chicago
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*A comprehensive January through March schedule of events and activities is on page 3.*

## *President's Corner*

I'm delighted to begin this month with a heartfelt thank you to **Sally Hoffman** for graciously opening her home to us for our annual Holiday Party and to **Ruth Fox** for coordinating everything. Members and guests certainly enjoyed nibbling on the impressive variety of savorys and sweets as we chatted with friends, old and new. **Jeanne Davik** challenged us – very gently – with a geography game that taught me one new thing: my husband knows more about Notre Dame football than he has been letting on!

Also in the holiday spirit, thank you to **Kay Gavin** and **Ileen Rubinstein** for delivering our gifts for the children at the Family Shelter. Also, **Jan Dorner** was surprised to find three boxes of gifts for the Shelter on her front porch. They were donated by York High School students in Lindsey DiTomasso's Women's Studies and Government classes. Ms. DiTomasso's students frequently attend our monthly League meetings to fulfill their civic engagement requirement for the government class.

As we move forward toward the holidays, our local study committee has welcomed **Marilyn Thompson** to its ranks. There is extensive coverage of the criteria that have been written for evaluating school finance referenda and the schedule for consensus meetings in the pages that follow. We hope every member interested in this issue will attend a consensus meeting and participate in the process, assuming the Board of Education does decide to place a referendum on the March ballot.

The entire board wishes to thank **Iligene Anderson** for taking the minutes at our December meeting. Since we don't have an elected secretary this year, we really appreciate her willingness to step in and help out.

It is a pleasure to welcome our newest League member: **Lisa Landreth**. And be sure to check **Corinne Johnson's** latest profile of another of our newer members in this issue.

**Elaine Libovicz** has informed me that a former Elmhurst League President, **Sue Swanson**, has passed away. Sue was president from 1961 to 1963 and had been living in Indiana.

Looking forward to next year.....**Ruth Fox** has scheduled a program planning meeting for January. This is the time for members to voice your support – or opposition – for the positions we hold on a variety of issues. The Illinois League has specifically asked us to add our support to the Abolition of the Death Penalty position that will be taken to the LWVUS Convention next June. Background information from the Illinois League is also in this issue.

Finally, I do hope many of you will be able to accompany **Carolyn Landwehr** (and me) to the hearing on Illinois health care reform on January 11. Carolyn has worked long and hard at the state level on this vital issue and would truly welcome your support.

Happy Holidays!

*Laura*

## Looking Forward to 2006 . . .

### January

- 5 Dist. 205 Public Hearing on Finance Issues, 7:00 pm, Hawthorne School
- 7 LWV Board, 9:00 am, Laura Kratz's house
- 11 District 6 Health Care Hearing, 4:30-6:30 pm, Elk Grove Village
- 17 Last day to submit referendum proposals for the ballot (This will determine the direction our study committee will take and the need for consensus meetings in February.)
- 19 LWV General Meeting, 7:30 pm, Elmhurst Public Library
- 21 LWV Study Committee, 9:00 am, Laura Kratz's house
- 24 LWV Elmhurst Annual Program Meeting; 10:00 am, Elmhurst Public Library
- 29 LWV Voter Registration, 1:30-4:30 pm, Elmhurst Public Library
- 30 Study Committee Reports Due

### February

- 2 Morning Consensus Meeting, 9:15 am, Kay Gavin's house (Great Decisions)
- 4 LWV IL Issues Briefing, Chicago
- 8 LWV Voter Registration, 5:00 – 9:00 pm, Elmhurst Public Library  
Evening Consensus Meeting, 7:00 pm, Jan Vanek's house
- 9 Afternoon Consensus Meeting, 12:30 pm, Cheri Niewiara's house
- 11 LWV Board, Consensus Reports and Board Vote 9:00 am, Laura Kratz's house
- 13-15 Member Notification of Board's Vote on Referendum Action
- 19 LWV Voter Registration, 1:30 – 4:30 pm, Elmhurst Public Library
- 20 LWV Voter Registration, 5:00 – 9:00 pm, Elmhurst Public Library
- 23 LWV General Meeting on District 205 Referendum, 7:30 pm, Elmhurst Public Library

\*\* The Illinois LWV fundraising event originally scheduled for January 26 will be rescheduled to mid-February due to a scheduling conflict. The actual date had not been announced before the *Shop Talk* publication deadline.

### March

- 2 Great Decisions, 9:15 am, Kay Gavin's house
- 4 LWV Board, 9:00 am, Laura Kratz's house
- 16 LWV General Meeting, 7:30 pm, Elmhurst Public Library
- 21 Election Day

## January General Meeting

What does the future hold for the Elmhurst Downtown Sector? If you are interested in the answer to that question, plan to attend the January 19 program at 7:30 p.m. in the Elmhurst Public Library. Susan Rose, Third Ward Alderman and chairman of the Elmhurst Development, Planning, and Zoning Committee, and Darrell Whistler, chairman of the Elmhurst Zoning and Planning Commission, will be our guests. They will present the proposed 2006 Elmhurst Downtown Plan. This plan updates the 1990 Comprehensive Plan. They have asked that a majority of their time be available to answer your questions.



### Membership Gail Anderson

Please welcome new member **Lisa Landreth**.



### Holiday Gifts for the Family Shelter Kay Gavin

For quite a few years our League has participated in the Family Shelter's drive to provide gifts for the children of families in their protective program. This year again our League has responded very generously. Ileen Rubinstein and I delivered a packed trunkful of gifts to the big room at Lucent Technology in Wheaton.

We arrived as the Shelter personnel and volunteers were accepting donations and setting up the shop where mothers may select new gifts for their children. It was still early, and already they had many donations, so we were sure that again the mothers would have many gifts to choose from.

It is sad to think of families in a shelter because of abuse at this happy time of the year, but we are glad to have done a bit to help the children and mothers enjoy the season.



## Highlights from the December Board Meeting

- In response to an inquiry from the Glen Ellyn LWV, the board agreed to explore the possibility of working with other area Leagues to conduct a candidate forum for the 6th Congressional District election.

- Due to recent changes in Illinois law, voter registrars may now register any Illinois resident, regardless of their county of residence. Laura will contact the PTA Councils in Elmhurst, Villa Park, and Lombard, as well as parent organizations at private schools in the area to let them know that the LWV registrars are available for school events. In addition, letters to the editors of local papers will publicize the service to other community organizations in our membership area.
- The February, 2006, Board meeting has been rescheduled for February 11 so that Board members may attend the Illinois LWV Issues Briefing which is scheduled for February 4 in Chicago.



### **LWV Elmhurst Local Study on School District 205 Finance**

In anticipation of at least one referendum being placed on the March 21, 2006, ballot by the District 205 Board of Education, the study committee has adopted a set of criteria for evaluating school funding referenda and developed a schedule of events to allow our members to discuss the proposals. Ultimately, through the discussion process, our League may reach consensus and decide to support, oppose, or remain neutral on the ballot issue(s). Once consensus is reached and a position is formally adopted, the League can adopt and carry out an action plan on the issue.

Assuming the March 21st ballot includes at least one referendum on School District 205 finance, here is the Elmhurst LWV's planned sequence of events:

#### **January**

- 17 Last day for the Board of Education to submit referendum proposals for the ballot
- 21 LWV Study Committee meeting, 9:00 am, Laura Kratz's house
- 30 Study Committee reports on criteria due; Distribution to membership begins

#### **February**

- 2 Morning Consensus Meeting, 9:15 am, Kay Gavin's house
  - 8 Evening Consensus Meeting, 7:00 pm, Jan Vanek's house
  - 9 Afternoon Consensus Meeting, 12:30 pm, Cheri Niewiara's house
  - 11 LWV Elmhurst Board Meeting, 9:00 am, Jan Vanek's house
- Consensus Meetings results will be reported. Based on results, the Board may vote to support, oppose, or remain neutral on the referenda and whether or not to take action.
- 12-18 All LWV Elmhurst members will be notified
  - 23 LWV Elmhurst General Meeting on School Referenda; Content will be determined by the outcome of the LWV Board vote

### *What are these Consensus Meetings?*

The study committee has designated three dates, February 2, 8, and 9, 2006, for members to participate in group discussion on the referendum proposal(s). Members will receive the consensus questions and background information in advance, either electronically or by regular mail.

All League members, including committee members, may participate at only one consensus meeting (although committee members may be present at all consensus meetings). The public may not

participate in the consensus. The press is not invited. Each meeting is to be conducted by an experienced discussion leader (moderator). A recorder notes the key points of the discussion and the results (i.e., whether there is agreement among the members present and what that agreement is).

The study committee reviews the results of each consensus meeting, looking for areas of member agreement and disagreement. The committee summarizes what the members have said and drafts a position for the LWV Board. The collective opinion of the membership is reflected by the consensus.

The LWV Board then reviews the results of the meetings and fine-tunes the position statement. Once the Board approves a position statement it recommends adoption of the position by the full membership and develops an action plan.

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**Attention Members:** The following criteria for evaluating an anticipated referendum on School District 205 finance have been selected by the Study Committee. If you have suggestions for additional questions, or if you believe a question should not be included, please contact Laura Kratz by Friday, January 20, 2006.

**League of Women Voters of Elmhurst**  
**Questions for Evaluating School Funding Referenda**  
*Adopted by the LWV Elmhurst Study Committee on District 205 Finance*  
*December 10, 2005*

#### **Focus of the Study**

1. What financial issues have faced District 205?
2. What consequences of insufficient funding has District 205 already experienced?

#### **Referendum Criteria (Study Committee members are now researching background information on each of these questions.)**

1. Is the funding request consistent with other positions of the LWVUS, LWVIL, and LWV of Elmhurst?
2. Do income and expense projections portend future financial difficulty?

3. Do enrollment projections portend overcrowding in school facilities?
4. Has the school board communicated specifically where and how the increased funding will impact student learning, achievement, and wellbeing, and ensure equity for diverse student populations?
5. Does the referendum include any new components or expansion of existing quality of student learning, achievement, and wellbeing?
6. Has the school board demonstrated fiscal responsibility by:
  - a. Implementing cost-effective measures?
  - b. Conducting accurate long-range planning?
  - c. Aggressively seeking and securing additional funding from state and other viable sources?
  - d. Lobbying for meaningful school funding reform?
7. Has adequate opportunity been provided for citizen response to the school board's proposals for increased local school funding?
8. Has the school board laid the groundwork for the referendum's success, including setting a realistic timeline and developing working relationships with all segments of the community?

### **Consensus Question**

Does the funding request reflect the values of the community?



### ***What's Your Bag? Opportunities to take action . . .***

#### **Poll Watchers**

The Illinois LWV is looking for poll watchers for the primary election on March 21. Information will be available in the December State Board Report scheduled for distribution soon.

#### **Housing Advocates**

Jan Kay, our LWVIL Issue Specialist for Social Policy, is hoping to identify grassroots advocates that may have a specific interest in housing policy. Her goal is to have a housing policy contact at each of our Illinois local Leagues to work with her on housing issues in their particular area. For example, a particular League's housing advocate might accompany other advocacy coalition partners on legislative district meetings on League approved legislative initiatives.

Please let us know if you are interested in taking on this role. Feel free to contact Eileen Hattan Lynch, Issues Coordinator, or Jan Kay for further information.

## **Candidate Forum Moderators**

The Oak Park-River Forest LWV has contacted us to initiate a candidate forum moderator training session in late January or early February. Contact Laura Kratz if you are interested in becoming a candidate forum moderator or if you would like to help develop the program using an existing framework.

## **Illinois League Contact for Grassroots Network on Civil Liberties, Homeland Security and/or Causes of Terrorism**

The LWVUS has proposed setting up a network on Civil Liberties to keep track of what is going on among Leagues and to provide resources of speakers in this area. If you are interested in Civil

Liberties and networking at the LWVIL level please contact our State President, Paula Lawson, before January 5.

## **Health Care Justice Act Public Hearing: Adequate Health Care Task Force, 6th Congressional District**

Help to publicize the Health Care Hearing in our Congressional District, which will be held on Wednesday, January 11, 2006, at Grove Junior High School, 777 Elk Grove Boulevard, Elk Grove Village, Illinois, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Carolyn Landwehr will have flyers which we can distribute after the first of the year. Call her if you can help. Also, we hope to have a good group of Elmhurst League members at the hearing to show our support for this effort to create a plan that will improve the health care situation in our state. We will arrange car pools; call Carolyn if you can drive or would like a ride.



## **Brief Summary of Pros/Cons of the Death Penalty**

“Arguments for the Death Penalty” are those most often used to justify the use of the death penalty. The “Arguments against the Death Penalty” section is numbered in parallel fashion to the “for” arguments and responds to those positions. These issues can be explored in more detail using the resources provided (see additional resources on the web <[www.lwvil.org](http://www.lwvil.org)>)

### **Arguments for the Death Penalty**

1. Without a death penalty, murder rates would soar.
2. To take murder seriously, only the forfeiture of life is adequate punishment.
3. The death penalty is the only effective way for society to express its rage in the face of horrific acts of violence.
4. The death penalty is a deterrent to violent crime.
5. The death penalty saves taxpayers thousands of dollars.

6. Only the death penalty provides closure for families of murder victims.
7. Safeguards in our justice system ensure that only guilty persons have been executed.
8. The death penalty is given only to the worst criminals for the worst crimes, so it is fair.
9. A high regard for human life leads a civilized society to seek the death penalty.

## Arguments against the Death Penalty

1. Studies show that states without the death penalty have murder rates as low or lower than states with it.
2. Only 2% of all murders result in the imposition of the death penalty.
3. Any violence is destructive to society.
4. Studies on the matter have fairly consistently concluded that the death penalty does not act as a deterrent.
5. Cost analyses have shown that life imprisonment is actually less costly than a death sentence.
6. A prison term provides speedier justice for the families of victims. The mandatory appeals process that accompanies a death sentence is very lengthy and postpones the possibility of closure.
7. Over 100 innocent people have been released from death row, most of these despite the system and not because the system worked.
8. The same crime that lands one person on death row may result in a prison term for another. The worst criminals often escape the death penalty because it is used as a bargaining chip.
9. The international community, for the most part, has determined the death penalty to be a violation of human rights.

The End