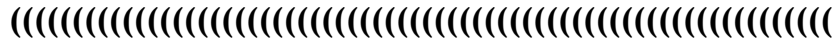


SHOP TALK

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS of ELMHURST, ILLINOIS

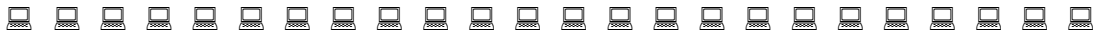


Laura Kratz
Donna Blue
Carolyn Landwehr

President
Membership
Shop Talk Editor

president@lwvelmhurst.org
membership@lwvelmhurst.org
shoptalk@lwvelmhurst.org
LWV of Elmhurst website - www.lwvelmhurst.org

Vol. 58, #4
November, 2006



November Calendar

Wednesday, November 8, 2 p.m.
At the home of Laura Kratz

Immigration Study Group

Thursday, November 2, 9:15 a.m.
At the home of Kay Gavin

Great Decisions

November General Meeting

Thursday, November 16, 7:30 p.m.
at the Community Bank of Elmhurst
330 West Butterfield Road

*Should We Change the Way We Elect Our President?
The Pros and Cons of the National Popular Vote Movement*

This meeting is open to the public.



This year our Holiday Party will be on Friday evening, December 8. Please save the date!

President's Corner

October is always a month when things change – the trees start to turn, the weather becomes noticeably cooler and November election interest soars.

Our Voter Registrar, **Jan Vanek**, and her team -- **Cindy Reedy, Evelyn Zerfoss, Joanne McCurdy, and Colette Kubiesa** -- were busy registering new voters in Elmhurst and Lombard, and transferring registrations for people who have moved recently.

Despite the unseasonable snow flurries on October 12, the 6th Congressional Candidate Forum drew an audience of 1,000 people – an overflow crowd – plus news media from around the world. Thanks to Elmhurst LWV volunteers **Gina Brigham, Charles Mueller, Lisa Landreth, Jeanne Davik, Jan Vanek, Gail Anderson, Carolyn Landwehr, Jan Dorner, and Cheri Niewiara** for helping with setup, crowd control and cleanup that night. From my perspective, negotiating with the campaign staffs working for candidates Tammy Duckworth and Peter Roskam was very interesting -- and sometimes challenging. As byproducts of the Forum, we forged stronger ties to our fellow DuPage County Leagues – Glen Ellyn, Wheaton, Naperville, and Downers Grove – and formed new associations with the College of DuPage, Congregation Etz Chaim in Lombard, and the Union League Club of Chicago. We are especially indebted to Diane Lloyd of the Lake Forest/Lake Bluff LWV for doing an outstanding job as moderator.

Our Voter Service Chairman, **Gail Anderson**, and our Webmaster, **Jeanne Davik**, have prepared an on-line voter's guide featuring the Illinois General Assembly 46th District race.

Meanwhile, **Marilyn Thompson** represented us at the Lake Michigan Inter League Organization annual meeting in Milwaukee, "Connecting the Drops: Keeping the Lake Clean." Her report on the meeting and health of the Great Lakes appears in this issue.

Thanks to our Program Chairman, **Lisa Landreth**, the screening of An Inconvenient Truth at the York Theatre brought together a young and diverse audience. York High School science teacher, **Bob Blaus**, filled us in on some simple ways to help the environment on a daily basis and SCARCE provided additional resource information.

Our Immigration Study Committee met and began working with the materials provided by the Illinois League. Chairman **Carolyn Landwehr** and the committee, **Barbara Swords, Mary Eleanor Wall, Alice Byrne, Milly Smith, Joan Taylor, Jeanne Davik and Lisa Landreth**, will keep us apprised of their progress in preparation for our consensus meetings early next year.

We are pleased to welcome new members **Bert and Holly Cohn** this month.

Looking forward to November, **Jan Vanek** has put together a great program on the National Popular Vote Movement. Remember, that meeting will be held at the Community Bank at Spring and Butterfield Roads. I hope to see you there!

Laura

Family Shelter Service

Every year during the holidays the Family Shelter has a “store” where victims of domestic violence can choose new holiday gifts for their children. For a number of years we have helped to provide these gifts, for which the Family Shelter workers have expressed sincere gratitude. Please take a little time to buy a present or two so that these victims of abuse can have happy holidays with their children. **They are asking for new toys and games only. The only clothing on their wish list is warm hats and gloves.** Don’t wrap the gifts; the mothers will then be able to choose toys that will be appropriate for their children. Please, no violent toys or games.

A list of suggested gifts follows. **Please bring whatever you buy to the Great Decisions meeting on November 2 or to the General Meeting at the Community Bank on November 16.** If that is not possible, you can take your presents to Kay Gavin’s house. (Call her first.) Be sure to bring them before December 7.

Suggestions for Gifts for Family Shelter Clients

Infants through Toddlers: Building Blocks, Crib Toys, Dolls, Educational Toys, Puzzles, Rattles, Balls, Warm Gloves and Hats

Elementary Through Middle School Children: Hand-Held Electronic Games (include batteries), Tea Party Sets, Puzzles, Walkman Radios, Sports Balls, Art Supplies, Videos/DVDs, Lego Building Blocks, Musical Toys, Youth Jewelry and Cosmetics, Dolls (Black-White-Latino), Warm Gloves and Hats

Teenagers: Games and Books, CD Walkman/Walkman Radios, Cameras, Writing Journals, Make-up and Jewelry, Warm Gloves and Hats, Purses/Wallets, Crafts, Movie Theater Passes, Bowling Passes, Gift Certificates to: Blockbuster/Hollywood Video, fast food restaurants, Target, grocery stores, music stores, malls



Immigration Study

Carolyn Landwehr

The Immigration Study group will meet on Wednesday, November 8, at 2 p.m. at Laura Kratz’s home. If you were unable to come to the first meeting, but can be at this one, we will be glad to have you join us. Please go to our Elmhurst League website, then to the Members section. There you will find much material on immigration, including the pages that were in the October Shop Talk and those that I will put at the end of this issue. I hope that all League members will read and save at least the material in these two Shop Talks. Committee members should, if at all possible, read everything. At the November meeting we plan to go over this source material, using the Consensus Questions to organize our discussion.



Great Decisions

Our Great Decisions discussion group will meet on the first Thursday in the month, November 2, at 9:15 a.m. at Kay Gavin’s home. We will be discussing topic #7, **Turkey: on Europe’s verge?**

If you have purchased your gift for the Family Shelter by November 2, please bring it to Great Decisions. It will be easy to collect them there. We will, of course, also be collecting the gifts at our General Meeting at the Community Bank on November 16.



The National Popular Vote Movement

At our November General Meeting, we will present a program on the National Popular Vote movement. The meeting will be on Thursday, November 16, at 7:30 p.m. at the Community Bank of Elmhurst, 330 West Butterfield Road.

Did you know that since the 1940s more than 70% of voters have favored a nationwide popular election of the President? Under the current Electoral College system, Presidential candidates concentrate over two-thirds of their advertising money and campaign visits in just six states. Illinois is not one of those states, even though it is one of the nation's ten most populous states.

The New York Times, The Chicago Sun Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Sacramento Bee, and The Minneapolis Star-Tribune have already endorsed the national Popular Vote Plan.

In the Illinois Senate, the bill (SB2724) is sponsored by Senators Kirk W. Dillard, (R. and DuPage County Republican Party Chair), James T. Meeks (I) and Jacqueline Collins (D). In the Illinois House, the bill is sponsored by Representatives Robert S. Molaro (D) and Jim Durkin (R). Website: www.nationalpopularvote.com

Come to this meeting to find out about the plan -- and bring any friends or neighbors who are curious about it. Our guest speaker will be Dan Johnson-Weinberger, a lawyer from Chicago, and a lobbyist who follows this topic in the Illinois Legislature. If time permits, Senator Kirk Dillard will join us. He will be coming from Springfield from the last day of the Veto Session.



Membership

Donna Blue

Please welcome these new members and add their names to your directory: **Bert and Holly Cohn**



Directory Changes

Please make the following changes to your League directory:

The Illinois Governor's e-mail should be: governor@illinois.gov

Voter Registration

Jan Vanek

During October our registrars registered: on October 3 at Elmhurst College - 18; on October 6 at Elmhurst College - 15; on October 7 at the Elmhurst Public Library - 23; and on October 10, the last day of registration, **Cindy Reedy** spent the day at the Lombard Public Library registering voters -- sorry, the number registered there was not available for this *Shop Talk*.



Lake Michigan Interleague Organization

Annual Meeting, October 6-7, 2006

Marilyn Thompson

This year's annual meeting was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Co-presidents Judy Johnston and Jeanette Neagu, Secretary Shirley Batchelder, and Treasurer Suzanne Dixon were re-elected. The board is looking for a Bulletin Editor.

The recommended program was passed. Items for action and emphasis are water conservation, treatment of ballast water in ships before discharging into lakes in order to control invasive species, passage of the Great Lakes Restoration bills, and continued support for the Water Quality Agreement.

Our weekend began Friday afternoon with a visit to the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD). United Water runs two sewage plants in Milwaukee under contract from MMSD, which owns the plant. The unusual feature of this plant is that it produces the fertilizer product called Milorganite, which can be purchased for our gardens. There are elaborate machines for this production, which has been going on since Milwaukee got the plans for the plant from England in 1926. There are 6,300 miles of sewers in the Milwaukee system as well as a 19-mile, 405-million-gallon-capacity tunnel storage system. With the tunnel system in use since 1993, sewage overflows per year have been reduced from 50 to approximately two per year, with a big improvement in the quality of the water entering Lake Michigan. Kevin Shafer, Executive Director of the District, who was one of our dinner speakers, explained the process.

Our other dinner speaker was Rebecca Klaper, who is doing research under the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, on the effects of pharmaceuticals in our water systems. On Saturday afternoon we visited the Great Lakes Water Institute where she has her research facilities. She uses tiny animals called daphnia and small fish called fatbacks to observe their reactions to different chemicals. There are indications that some of these chemicals affect their reproductive genes and their metabolism, even at low levels. From these animals, further research may be done on effects on humans. She stressed that old, unused medications should not be thrown away in the toilet, because they may then enter the water system.

We saw other examples of research being done there with marine animals and fish. Another project involves the use of a "green roof," meaning the roof is fitted with shallow trays filled with dirt and plants, which capture rain water to prevent runoff and also serve as insulation for the roof. Our last event was a trip to the recently opened Discovery World at the pier area, next door to the Art Museum. We saw a number of interactive exhibits of fish, boats and boating equipment, and Great Lakes history.

Next year we are scheduled to meet in the Chicago area.

Some Reasons for and Responses to Undocumented Immigration: A Summary

Anita Buchholz

People immigrate to the U.S. and other developed countries to better their lives. Jobs in the U.S. are not available in the underdeveloped countries from which they come. The Pew Hispanic Center report states that there are 11.1 million undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. Being undocumented makes them illegal, and they should not be here, but 7.2 million of them are employed doing jobs that are necessary for our economy and standard of living.

Of the 1.6 million immigrants living in Illinois, four to five hundred thousand are here illegally. People would not leave homes in other countries and take the dangerous route of entering without proper documentation if there were an appropriate legal way to do it. The legal way takes so long due to unrealistic quotas and long waiting lists. Desperate people find ways around the laws, so we are confronted with an immigration system that needs fixing to better accommodate the economic needs of our country. The U.S. Border Control has tripled its number of agents with a budget increasing tenfold, but the number of undocumented people crossing the border has risen. As long as the jobs are here, they will come no matter how tough we make it. Undocumented immigrants want to be here more than most of us want to get rid of them.

Some legal changes are being considered: Not law yet but passed in December, '05, the House of Representatives bill (Sensenbrenner Bill) would make it a felony for foreigners to be here without permission and a felony for anyone to knowingly help an undocumented immigrant. The bill also authorizes the building of a 700 mile fence on the Mexican border.

The Secure America and Orderly Immigration Act – S1033 and HR 2330 -- is more comprehensive and has bipartisan sponsorship. It addresses problems of those already here and border security. There are provisions for: earned legalization; essential worker programs; family unity and backlog reduction; enforcement and border security. This bill addresses the immigration system holistically, which might have a chance of solving some of the immigration problems.

Trafficking of immigrants to places where employers want them has increased due to the tightening of border enforcement. It becomes somewhat like a slave system since the immigrants have no rights once they are here. Years ago immigrants could easily cross the border, work, and return home when they wanted. Now it is harder, so they stay once they are here because they need the money they earn for bettering the standard of living for themselves and their families.

Many Americans know about the immigration problem, but they are often not aware of all the complexities of the situation. Homeland Security since 9/11 has also become a factor in the overall picture. Simple, easy answers are not readily available.

Most people believe that the U.S. Immigration system is broken, but how to fix it is a complex question. There are many views on how to try and solve the huge set of problems that the broken system has created. It is an emotionally charged subject with passionate people on all sides.

In a *Time* poll (*Time Magazine*, April 10, 2006, p. 36)

- 78% favored allowing citizenship for those already here if they had a job, spoke English and paid taxes

But the same poll found:

- 82% thought that the government was not doing enough to keep undocumented immigrants out of the U.S.
- 75% favored denying government services to undocumented immigrants—health care and food services
- 51% favored denying public school education to undocumented immigrant children
- about 21 % favored making it a felony to be in the U.S. illegally

In the April 10th magazine, *Time* focused on three considerations that would probably be addressed by any legislation considered in the near future: Tightening borders; Assuring labor supply; Amnesty of some kind.

Since 2006 is a Congressional election year, it may be safer for some legislators to do nothing about the Immigration System rather than anger base constituents.

On March 10, 2006, a march of 100,000 in Chicago was just one of many enormous immigrant demonstrations across the country that have brought the pending legislation to the public's attention.

In a Pew Hispanic Center report printed in the *Chicago Tribune* 3/12/06, results showed:

- 25% of agricultural jobs are filled by undocumented workers
- 17% of office and housecleaning positions are filled by undocumented workers
- 11.1 million undocumented immigrants were in the U.S. in March, 2005
- 7.2 million undocumented immigrants employed in the U.S.
- 850,000 undocumented immigrants have arrived in the U.S. each year since 2000
- 56% of undocumented immigrants are Mexican

Businesses involve themselves in illegal immigration since they benefit from paying lower wages to people who have no rights of appeal. There are laws already in place to prohibit this practice, but there is no realistic form of enforcement.

Sources:

Fact Sheet – IL Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights

Chicago Tribune 3/12/06 Metro, p. 1

Chicago Tribune 3/19/06 Sec. 2, p. 7

Immigration, Opposing Viewpoints, Greenhaven Press, Inc., 1998

Illegal Immigration, Greenhaven Press, Inc., 1994