



The League of Women Voters of Elmhurst
Celebrating 75 Years of Public Policy Debate and Voter Education in our Community

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September 2007
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Shop Talk

Sustainable Rainwater Management

September General Meeting
Lisa Landreth, 1st VP/Program

Thursday, September 20, 7:00 pm

**Note starting time is earlier than usual!
Elmhurst Public Library, Large Meeting Room

Following August's heavy rains, it's a good time to talk about techniques that provide **Sustainable Rainwater Management** for our homes and businesses. Jay Womack of Wight and Company will discuss strategies including porous pavement, bioswales, rain gardens, green roofs, and native plant restoration.

Mr. Womack is Wight & Company's Director of Sustainable Design. He is a member of the American Society of Landscape Architects and has Professional Accreditation from the US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. He works extensively on natural resource-based planning projects that holistically integrate site, building, rainwater, and landscape. Wight & Company has worked on many projects in our area including York High School and the new "green" dormitory under construction at Elmhurst College.

Great Decisions

Barbara Swords

Thursday, September 6th, 9:15 am

Our meetings will take place this year at the home of Barbara Swords. The Great Decisions group is allowed to park on the street in front of the house, in the driveway, or around the corner on Utley. You may ignore the *No Parking During School Hours* signs.

The first topic for the new year is **Chapter 4, International migration in a globalized economy**. The interconnections between these two issues and the contentious arguments about them in Congress and the media will stimulate our discussion, and, we hope, suggest future resolutions.

Please contact Barbara if you need a copy of this chapter.

Illinois will host this year's Lake Michigan ILO (LMILO) conference at the Illinois Beach State Park Resort and Conference Center. Just 40 minutes north of Chicago, the resort is the only hotel in Illinois located directly on Lake Michigan.

Friday's agenda includes two tours and a dinner. The first tour, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm will visit the North Shore Sanitary District sludge recycling facility in Zion. The first of its kind in the world, the facility takes dewatered sludge cake from the sewage treatment plants and pumps it into storage silos. A closed-loop, oxygen enhanced combustion then bakes the sludge cake to vitrified glass aggregate granulate form. Energy recovery, as part of the system operation, provides fuel for combustion, an air scrubber for odor treatment, and a mercury removal system.

The second tour, from 3:30-5:30 pm, takes us to the Des Plaines River Wetlands Demonstration Project. The wetland is a living laboratory used to develop and test design principles, construction methods, and management programs needed to re-create and manage wetlands. The Des Plaines River is polluted with both nonpoint source contaminants from a variety of land uses including agriculture, and point source contaminants from

small wastewater treatment plants. Vegetation is heavily grazed and the site contained three abandoned gravel pits. The Project seeks to establish the use of wetland restoration as a viable, economical, and preferred method for stream improvement along similarly degraded streams and watercourses in the US.

Friday evening dinner speakers are Joyce O'Keefe and Debra Nelson. Joyce O'Keefe is currently vice-chair of the Illinois DNR's Natural Resources Advisory Board and a board member of the Illinois Environmental Council. Debra Nelson is a dunes expert with the Illinois DNR.

Saturday morning will be devoted to our Annual Meeting where we will discuss a possible name change for the LMILO. The central question is: *Can we advocate for all the Great Lakes, as we do now, without an all inclusive name plus the additional approvals needed to take any action?*

The conference will conclude with a Saturday afternoon tour of the Illinois Beach State Park that encompasses the only remaining beach ridge shoreline left in our state. The 4160-acre park also boasts dunes and swales with sprawling marshes, oak forests, and vast arrays of flora and fauna.

Issues & Action

Jan Vanek, Director, Issues and Action

Local League Action Item: Cool Cities

The committee met again on August 15th and welcomed representatives from the Elmhurst Presbyterian Church's Heaven and Earth Growers to our ranks. This group created the children's garden on church property (the corner of Spring and St. Charles) and has numerous members who garden elsewhere to donate fresh produce to local PADS and food pantries.

The two City Committees that will review the Mayor's Proclamation to Reduce CO2 emissions will not take up the question until their joint meeting on September 26th. Therefore, the LWV will draft a letter encouraging the Mayor and Aldermen on the committees to support this movement in Elmhurst and get the Cool Cities designation. Depending on the outcome of the committee meeting, the LWV and coalition partners Sierra Club and AAUW will begin lobbying the entire City Council for support.

Coalition partners discussed ways their organizations can contribute to public

education and advocacy for a better environment. LWV activities will include lobbying, mentioned above, and providing volunteers to assist the city with its emissions audit, a Cool Cities requirement.

Meanwhile, the City of Elmhurst has formed a committee of employees from each department who are working together to identify ways the City can continue to reduce CO2 emissions. For example, Mr. Streicher, Wastewater Management Director, has identified renewable energy sources that can provide some energy to the City inexpensively.

On September 19th, LWV reps Jan Vanek and Gina Brigham, and City of Elmhurst Zoning and Planning Administrator, Than Werner, will attend the Green Town Conference in Oak Park. The Committee will meet again at the Elmhurst Public Library at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, September 26th.

LWVIL Action Item: Making Democracy Work – The Show Us Amendment

Do you think the Illinois General Assembly should know the content of the bills they are passing? Do you believe we should have the right to public review of bills before they are passed?

Then the Show Us Amendment is a way to achieve these goals. This is a grassroots petition drive to place an amendment to the Illinois Constitution,

Article IV, on the November 2008 general election ballot. The amendment seeks a 21 day public review before any non-emergency legislation is passed by the General Assembly.

Support for this Amendment is part of the current LWVIL Action foci and League members are encouraged to participate in the non-partisan,

statewide effort to circulate petitions and collect 350,000 registered voters' signatures by the end of April 2008.

Go to www.showus.org to download petitions and for full instructions on their completion. You can make a difference. Circulate a petition or two in

your neighborhood and carry one with you when you are out and about.

For further information or to organize a petition day or event contact Jan Vanek.

Issue Update: National Popular Vote

Last November our League heard a presentation about this movement, an alternative to abolishing the Electoral College (which is the LWV's position). The National Popular Vote initiative encourages states to pass legislation to award all their electoral votes to the presidential candidate who receives the most votes nationally. For this to work, enough states must pass this legislation to ensure that the popular vote winner will have 270 of the 538 electoral votes required to be president.

Since our meeting, the movement has progressed nationwide and has 348

sponsors in 47 states. Maryland Governor O'Malley has signed the bill into law. The Illinois and Hawaii legislatures have passed it and the bill is now waiting for their respective governors' signatures. In California, Colorado, Arkansas, and North Carolina it has passed one house. In six more states – Washington, Montana, New Mexico, Louisiana, West Virginia and Connecticut – it has passed one committee. The bill has been introduced in 30 state legislatures and is in drafting in four more -- Ohio, Minnesota, Delaware and New Hampshire.

Keeping it Green – tips and techniques for living in a greener world

The 30 Second Rule

It's a question many drivers wonder about while waiting for a train to pass or picking up the kids at school – how long can we idle our cars before we use more energy than we would use if we turned it off and restarted the engine later? The answer is 30 seconds.

Source: *National Geographic*

Last Chance..... to Renew Your Membership before we publish the Yearbook & Directory.

New rates are:

\$60 Individual

\$90 Household for two members at the same address

\$30 Full Time Student

Please make your check payable to League of Women Voters of Elmhurst and send to LWV Elmhurst, P.O. Box 12, Elmhurst, IL 60126.

A Memorial Gathering in honor of Kay Gavin will be held on Saturday, September 29th. Kay's daughter, Linda, has invited us to an open house at the Gavin home between 2 and 5 pm.

Kay, a long-time League member and former co-president, passed away on Friday, August 17th.

Webmaster Update

Jeanne Davik, Webmaster

We now have email addresses for 100 members. If you have email but have not been receiving our all-member announcements, it could mean one of two things: first, we do not have your correct address. To rectify, please email Jeanne at **webmaster@lwvelmhurst.org**. It could also be that your security system blocks group emails. In that case you

would need to add us to your "Safe Senders" list.

Contact Correction: Our 2nd Vice President/Program Lisa Landreth's email has been incorrectly stated in several places. Her email address is **program@lwvelmhurst.org**

In Our Community

Elmhurst College Schade Lecture

Sunday, September 30th, 7:00 pm

Hammerschmidt Chapel

Giving Politics a Good Name: Abraham Lincoln and the Permanent Campaign will be presented by Richard Norton Smith at this year's Schade Lecture. Mr. Smith was the first Executive Director of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum and directed the libraries of Presidents Hoover, Eisenhower, Reagan and Ford. He has published biographies on Hoover, Robert Dole, and Chicago icon Colonel Robert McCormick. He is currently working on a book about Nelson Rockefeller.

The lecture, presented in conjunction with the Elmhurst Historical Museum, is free and the general public is encouraged to hear this dynamic speaker who says, "There's no excuse for a dull book, a dull museum, or a dull speech, especially when dealing with history – the most fascinating topic I know."

LWV Elmhurst Activities and Events

Great Decisions Thursday, September 6th, 9:15 am, Barbara Swords

LWV Elmhurst Board Saturday, September 8th, 9:00 am, home of Jan Vanek

Constitution Day Monday, September 17th

LMILO Registration Due September 19th

LWV Elmhurst Program	Thursday, September 20 th , 7:00 pm, Elmhurst Public Library
<i>Sensible Rainwater Management presented by Jay Womak, Wight & Company</i>	

Cool Cities Wednesday, September 26th, 7:00 pm, Elmhurst Library
Committee

Schade Lecture September 30, Hammerschmidt Chapel, 7:00 pm
Elmhurst College

Lake Michigan ILO October 5-6, Illinois Beach State Park, Zion
Annual Meeting