



# Illinois Voter

Volume 1112, Issue 2

A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Illinois

Winter 2011-12

## LWVIL 2011 HIGHLIGHTS

*made possible, in large measure, because of your faithful and generous support:*

**JANUARY** helped convene the Illinois Campaign for Accountable Redistricting and to monitor and critique the 2011 Illinois legislative redistricting process.

**FEBRUARY** partnered with WLS/ABC7 and the Mikva Challenge to sponsor a Chicago Mayoral debate at the Oriental Theatre.

**MARCH** Governor Quinn signed SB3539 repealing Illinois' death penalty, capping a decade-long grassroots effort for LWVIL and ICADP.

**MAY** sent out Time for Actions (TFAs) on issues, including campaign finance reform and the budget, encouraging members to communicate with their legislators before the end of the legislative session.

**SEPTEMBER** filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court challenging the legislative districts drawn by the Illinois General Assembly on the grounds that the map violates the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights of LWVIL members by using political data and protecting incumbents.

**OCTOBER** began a study on the Illinois' pension systems. Members and guests were entertained at the semi-annual outing to *Wait Wait... Don't Tell Me*, NPR's weekly quiz program.

**NOVEMBER** LWVIL Board adopted 2012 Strategic Plan.

*Help keep the momentum going! When you are called during our Spring Phonathon, please pick up and consider making a contribution or send a contribution without receiving a phone call.*

## Membership



Are you a "people person?" Do you have a passion for the League and a desire to see it grow? Are you a good listener? Do people come to you for support and encouragement?

If you answered yes to these question, then the LWVUS' Membership/Leadership Development team is the place for you. Become a state coach! Training for this important program will be April 13<sup>th</sup> through 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012. So mark your calendars and email Joni Painter at [JONILPAINTER@gmail.com](mailto:JONILPAINTER@gmail.com) to sign up for this amazing opportunity

## LWVIL Annual Issues Briefing SATURDAY, January 28, 2012

University Center  
Conference Chicago · Lake Room · 525 South State Street · Chicago

**REGISTRATION/BREAKFAST/NETWORKING** Opens at 8:30 a.m.

**ISSUES PROGRAM** 9:15 a.m. to Noon

**VOTING IN ILLINOIS: MYTHS AND REALITIES**  
*Information to aid in preparing for the 2012 elections*

**SUSTAINABLE FOOD & WATER SUBCOMMITTEE**  
*Policy, Politics, and Progress in Protecting our Food Supply*

**LUNCHEON:** Noon to 12:45 p.m.

### WORKSHOPS: (select one in each session)

**Session 1: 12:45 – 2:00 p.m. (select one)**

- ⇒ *Legislative Outlook 2012*
- ⇒ *LWVUS Privatization Study*
- ⇒ *Candidate Forums 2012 – What Planners Need to Know*

**Session 2: 2:15 – 3:30 p.m. (select one)**

- ⇒ *Legislation, Regulation and the Illinois Smart Grid*
- ⇒ *LWVIL Pension Study*
- ⇒ *Candidate Forums 2012 – What Moderators Need to Know*

*To register for the Issues Briefing...  
complete and return the Registration Form on page 3  
or register online at [www.lwvil.org](http://www.lwvil.org)*

*by January 16, 2012*

**Directions to the 2011 Issues Briefing:** University Center is located on the southeast corner of State Street and Congress Parkway. For location, driving directions, parking and public transportation info:

<http://www.universitycenter.com/overviewnew/location>



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

What a great fall we have had! The weather has finally turned to remind us that winter is approaching soon. Let's hope for a mild winter!

I have been reading your newsletters and it looks as if you are all busy wrapping up your consensus meetings on the role of the federal government in public education for LWVUS study. Many of you will be moving on to the LWVUS Privatization study at the beginning of the new year.

The legislature added another day onto their veto session on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving. I write this before that last day, but we thank you for the calls you made during the previous two weeks of the veto session. Check our [lwvil.org](http://lwvil.org) website for updates on the "Time For Actions" (TFAs) sent to you.

We held our **Leadership Rap** on Saturday, October 29. Membership was a concern for many local Leagues and the state board is concerned as well. The State League has written a grant request for "capacity building" with the hope of using this for membership and communications. Local Leagues are choosing what is the most important to them, evaluating partnerships and breaking League jobs up into smaller increments so members don't feel overwhelmed. They are also preparing for the upcoming 2012 elections with registration drives and candidate forums. We all need help in the area of technology and the new social media sphere. There are many Leagues conducting studies on issues in their community.

LWVIL has been accepted into the **LWVUS Membership and Leadership Development Program** for 2012. Thirty one states and the District of Columbia already have state coaching teams, so all those who preceded us will be there to support our goal of helping you

- o increase visibility,
- o improve and develop relationships with media and community organizations,
- o renew relationships between Leagues and
- o renew enthusiasm and pride.

We will need some members to become coaches for local Leagues. A coach would act as a mentor/cheerleader/communication bridge from state board to local Leagues and a resource for a local League. If you, or anyone you know, would like to be a coach, please contact Joni Painter at [membership@lwvil.org](mailto:membership@lwvil.org). Joni is our state coordinator for this program.

On the **gerrymandering lawsuit**, the court granted the defendants' motion to dismiss. The LWVIL/EF Board voted to appeal this and our attorney has already filed a motion to reconsider. The Board also committed to spend up to \$5,000 on this issue. It could cost anywhere from \$1500 to \$5,000 to make a direct appeal to the Supreme Court, basically for printing costs.

I've been in touch with Senators Durbin's and Kirk's staff about both of them appearing at our **State of the State**. Their staffs replied that the Senators would like to be with us, but their schedule does not fit with our usual practice of a weekday luncheon. The best time to have both appear would be a Monday morning for breakfast. We are currently trying to find an acceptable date. We will send out 'save the date' information as soon as possible.

Lastly, I'd like you to read the **Strategic Plan** (*see column to right*) that the LWVIL Board approved at the beginning of November. This is the new LWVIL Board's first try at this, but it is a good thing to know where we are headed and what future we want for this organization. Your League may want to go through this exercise. There are many resources available online to help you get started.

As we move into 2012, I wish you a happy holiday season. Enjoy others, relax and rejuvenate. Appreciate this downtime in preparation for the exciting election seasons ahead!

*Jan*

## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ILLINOIS 2011-2012 STRATEGIC PLAN

**League of Women Voters of Illinois** is a statewide membership organization that was founded in 1920 geared toward ensuring newly-enfranchised women had the information needed to cast their hard-won votes. The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

### Establish positions on public policy through member participation and agreement.

- Study pension systems within the Illinois government.
- Proactively advocate for the action foci adopted at our 2011 Biennium Convention.
  - o Fiscal policy and tax reform
  - o Campaign finance and ethics reform
  - o Redistricting reform
  - o Immigration
  - o Climate change
  - o Large-scale livestock facilities
- Continue to advocate on our other existing positions.

### Take concerted actions that secure policies consistent with League positions.

- Establish and enhance relationships with public officials.
- Participate in coalitions that increase our effectiveness.

### Enhance citizen participation in federal, state and local government decisions.

- Encourage individuals to run for office.
- Nurture interest in contacting public officials by
  - o Letters to the Editor (including templates for local Leagues to customize)
  - o Freedom of Information requests
  - o Attendance at governmental public meetings
  - o Motivate volunteerism in governmental task forces, committees, etc.
- Update the League's publication "Making Your Voice Heard" and distribute it.

### Increase citizen participation in the election process.

- Increase voter registration drives at corporations, libraries, malls, schools etc.
- Furnish opportunities for new citizens to register.
- Empower youth to register and vote through
  - o Illinois Student Vote ([illinoisstudentvote.org](http://illinoisstudentvote.org))
  - o High School mock elections
  - o Social media
- Provide education on ballot and public policy issues.
- Offer state and encourage local League debates, both with media coverage.

### Broaden and expand membership.

- Expand leadership training.
- Develop a mentor program.
- Increase participation through electronic means.
- Increase the number of local Leagues in the state.

## 2012 Legislative Interviews

2012 will usher in the 98th Illinois General Assembly and an opportunity for Leagues throughout the state to reconnect with their legislators by conducting Legislative Interviews early in the year. The LWVIL Issues Committee will provide directions and specific questions to guide your conversation as you share ideas and information, ask for their support on League issues, and thank them for past support on areas of common interest. The interviews strengthen the lines of communication and nurture good working relationships with elected officials. Meeting senators and representatives in their home offices is also a stimulating experience for newer members.

## Candidate Filing Dates Affected by Gerrymandering Lawsuits

The same 3 judge panel that granted the motion to dismiss the LWVIL gerrymandering lawsuit also granted the motion to dismiss for the Republican state gerrymandering lawsuit. The 3 judge panel for the other Republican gerrymandering lawsuit (for Congressional districts) has changed the beginning filing date from Nov. 28th to Dec. 23rd (IF the court makes a decision by Dec. 21st. If they don't, it could get pushed back even further. **NOTE: This different filing date is just for Congressional candidates.**)

So, for all candidates, except those who are running for Congress, filing dates are Nov. 28th through Dec. 5th. As of this date, those candidates filing for a Congressional seat have filing dates of Dec. 23th through Dec. 27th.



The public holds the League in high regard work on forums and important to follow best and well executed debate or forum. This respected tradition also offers state and local Leagues wonderful opportunities to be visible with the public and to help strengthen the organization through inviting new members to join and developing new leaders. Information to assist Leagues in these areas is also found on the LWVUS website ([www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)) in the Members section, under Voters Service. LWVIL will have a more complete list of best practices and tools on our website soon. This is a short list of best practices to help you prepare:

- Review and adopt your League's criteria for candidate participation in debates. Do this well in advance of when you intend to invite candidates to participate, so there can be NO charge of setting criteria that could be construed to purposely include or exclude any candidate.
- Designate someone in your League (on board or off board) to be the debate manager. No matter how large or small the debate project, it is important for someone to be in charge and to communicate with the board on various logistics.
- Know the federal, state and local laws that may govern or have an impact on holding a debate or forum!
- Make sure you are maximizing visibility and organizational growth opportunities (new leadership development, membership recruitment, etc.) affiliated with conducting candidate debates or forums.
- Procure a law firm or lawyer who can offer pro-bono legal advice in case it is needed before, during or after your debates.

## REGISTRATION FORM: Issues Briefing January 28, 2012

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ League: \_\_\_\_\_

- \_\_\_\_\_ **FULL DAY—\$50 per person** (includes morning plenary sessions, 2 afternoon workshops, briefing packet and workshop materials, continental breakfast and boxed lunch)
- \_\_\_\_\_ **MORNING Program only: \$35 per person** (includes plenary sessions, briefing packet and continental breakfast)
- \_\_\_\_\_ **AFTERNOON Program only: \$40 per person** (includes 2 afternoon workshops, workshop materials and boxed lunch)

### Afternoon Workshops:

#### Session 1 (12:45—2:00 p.m.) (Select One)

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Legislative Outlook 2012**      \_\_\_\_\_ **LWVUS Privatization Study**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Planners' Guide to Candidate Forums**

#### Session 2 (2:15—3:30 p.m.) (Select one)

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Illinois's Smart Grid**      \_\_\_\_\_ **LWVIL Pension Reform Study**      \_\_\_\_\_ **Moderators' Guide to Candidate Forums**

*IF YOU WOULD LIKE A VEGETARIAN LUNCH OR HAVE OTHER DIETARY RESTRICTION, PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE AT 312-939-5935 EXT. 37 OR EMAIL ([INFO@LWVIL.ORG](mailto:INFO@LWVIL.ORG)).*

**Please make checks payable to LWVIL or, to save paper and time, register online at [www.lwvil.org](http://www.lwvil.org)**

**Forward your registration form and fees to:**

League of Women Voters of Illinois  
332 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 525  
Chicago, IL 60604

**REGISTRATION FORMS DUE  
BY JANUARY 16, 2012**

**The League accepts Visa and MasterCard for your convenience. Please indicate which card you are using.**

Visa \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature (required): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_



THE LEAGUE  
OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF ILLINOIS

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**IN THIS ISSUE**

President's Message ..... 2  
**ISSUES BRIEFING** ..... 1, 3  
 Leadership Development Training ..... 1  
 Illinois Issues ..... 3  
 Candidate Forums tools ..... 3  
 LWVUS new website info ..... back page

**ISSUES BRIEFING  
REGISTRATION DEADLINE:  
JANUARY 16, 2012**

**LWVIL Diversity Policy**

The League of Women Voters of Illinois, in both its values and practices, affirms its belief in and commitment to diversity and pluralism. The LWVIL recognizes that diverse perspectives are necessary for responsible and effective decision-making in democratic organizations. LWVIL affirms its commitment to remove barriers to participation in any League activity on the basis of age, race, color, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, or national origin; and to actively be inclusive.



LWVUS is proud to unveil our new website design. We are modernizing the way we inform and interact with the public. We hope this new site will better showcase the work done by Leagues – local, state and national. **Check us out at [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org).**

**League of Women Voters of Illinois**

President, *Janice Dornier*  
 Vice President-Communications, *Hollis Burgess*  
 Vice President-Issues, *Laura Kratz*  
 Vice President-Membership, *Joni Painter*  
 Vice President-Voter Service, *Missey Wilhelm*  
 Secretary, *Anne Logue*  
 Treasurer, *Nancy L. Clark*

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**LWVIL ENewsletter**

Have you been receiving LWVIL's monthly ENewsletter? If you're not sure, go to <http://www.lwvil.org/Epubs.asp> and take a look. If you didn't receive it, we might not have your current email address. Please update our list by sending your correct email address to [webmaster@lwvil.org](mailto:webmaster@lwvil.org). Also, to avoid having the ENewsletter go to your spam folder, make sure your email program accepts messages from [webmaster@lwvil.org](mailto:webmaster@lwvil.org). Thanks.