



Illinois Voter

Volume 87, Issue I

A Publication of the League of Women Voters of Illinois

Late Spring 2007

PAULA'S THOUGHTS...

What response did you get in your League to the Immigration Study? What type of event gets the most response from membership and the community? How does your League work with the schools and government in your community? If these are questions you've wanted to ask League leaders in other communities, convention is your chance.

What was the outcome of the LWVIL Immigration Study? How are LWVIL board members selected? How is the PMP and budget determined? What issues will League be addressing over the next two years? If these are issues that concern you, convention is your opportunity to get answers.

LWVIL convention is a time for questions and answers, a time for **Strengthening Our Roots and Branching Out**. It's a time when local Leagues get to express their views on what and how LWVIL should be meeting its mission. Delegates to Convention will be asked to cast informed votes for

- ⇒ The state League budget and dues (PMP),
- ⇒ The state League's program,
- ⇒ The state League's bylaws, and
- ⇒ The next state League board.

Your participation helps determine the path the League will take over the next two years - whether it's the issues you feel League needs to address, as the Glen Ellyn and Wheaton Leagues did in proposing the Immigration Study at the 2005 Convention, or voting on a budget to fund the work/services of the state League.

It's also a time to exchange ideas and opinions with other League representatives, to find out what's happening around the state. It's a time to *strengthen our roots and branch out* in workshops that help local Leagues find solutions to administrative issues and learn new and/or better methods for active participation in League advocacy or legislative issues.

If you can't attend the entire Convention, consider participating in the workshops on Friday or Saturday afternoons. All have been designed to help League members maximize their talents and expand League opportunities.

Can't make the workshops or plenary sessions? Join us in the evening for the social part of Convention. Friday's dinner will feature the outstanding work of some of our local Leagues as

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STATE OF THE STATE LUNCHEON

LWVIL President Paula Lawson welcomed members and honored guests to the 2007 *State of the State* luncheon "Financing Illinois' Future – Building a Solid Framework". A proclamation from Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley commending the League for its work and designating April 24 as League of Women Voters Day in Chicago was read by Laurie Huget, LWVIL VP Communications.

Paula presented the League's 2007 Civic Contribution Award to the Public Affairs Committee of the Union League Club of Chicago for their commitment to address public policy concerns and to educate citizens on important issues. Esta Kallen, President of the Chicago LWV, announced that Edna Pardo, a 50-year member, was the recipient of the LWV of Chicago Appreciation Award for her leadership in educating the public in the areas of social and fiscal policy in Illinois and Chicago.

Aurie A. Pennick, Executive Director of the Field Foundation of Illinois, acted as moderator for the panel presentation. Ms. Pennick introduced the guest speakers on the panel and called upon Daniel Hynes, Illinois Comptroller, to begin the proceedings.

Mr. Hynes provided a historical perspective of the state's financial situation. He noted last fiscal year produced a \$2.3 billion structural deficit. Comptroller Hynes discussed Governor Blagojevich's proposed gross receipts tax, commitment to expanding health care, funding of education and pension benefits payments. His concern on the health care initiative is that once a commitment is made, the program must be funded. If funding sources are insufficient, other areas, particularly education, may suffer. He emphasized that we need to bring the state into fiscal soundness and any expansion of programs must be balanced by a stable financial structure.

R. Eden Martin of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club presented a report by the Civic Committee's Task Force on Illinois State Finance showing state budgeted revenues and expenses as they relate to actual cost commitments. According to the report, borrowing when revenues are not enough adds expenses that are hard to eliminate. With the state budget of \$28.8 billion actually underfunded by approximately \$5.9 billion, gross receipts tax and leasing the lottery are not substantive solutions. Mr. Martin recommended a review of the tax structure, with attention to expanding the sales tax to services and modifying the pension and health care benefits offered to state employees to be more in line with the private sector. He suggested that reforms are needed to improve

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Strengthening Our Roots
And Branching Out

Convention 2007 Reminders

Convention Forms Due June 1st

Send in all registration forms and checks to Emily Lieber. If you have a question about Convention, call or e-mail Emily at (312) 939-5935, Ext. 37 or elieber@lwwil.org.

Send in Silent Auction Items

Donations for Convention's Silent Auction are being accepted until June 1. Your or your League as a group could donate something indicative of your locale, put together a theme basket of goodies, donate a handmade or specialty item, create a "night on the town" or get local merchants to contribute goods or gift certificates. If you have any questions, please contact Emily Lieber at the LWVIL office. Previous auction items have included:

- * Tickets to local stage productions;
- * Weekend stays at hotels and resorts;
- * Artwork and crafts

CONVENTION DECISIONS

Delegates will be asked to cast informed votes on the following:

- ◇ Retaining LWVIL's current positions;
- ◇ Adopting recommended Immigration position;
- ◇ Re-adopting current Action Focus: Funding of Public Education and Social Services;
- ◇ Re-adopting current Action Item: Making Democracy Work ;
- ◇ Re-adopting Exploration Item: 2010 Illinois State Constitutional Convention;
- ◇ Proposed by-law changes;
- ◇ LWVIL budgets for 2007/08 and 2008/09;
- ◇ PMP of \$24.00 for 2007/08 and \$26.00 for 2008/09; and
- ◇ Recommended slate of new Board members

Local League presidents should have received information (which is also available on the LWVIL website) so that members can discuss the above issues. Delegates will then come to Convention with an understanding of their League's view of issues and the ability to actively participate in debate, whether on the Convention floor or in caucuses.

Nominated LWVIL Slate 2007-09

President	Paula Lawson
Vice Presidents	Jeanne Davik, Kathleen Graffam, Michelle Jordan, Sylvia Tillman
Secretary	Jan Dornier
Treasurer	Nancy Marcus
Directors	Faye Grossman, Valerie Krejcie, Mary Kubasak, Kim Reed, Jean Sanger, Annette Smith

Nominating Committee 2009-2011

Chair	Donna Moore
Members	Janet Kittlaus, Mary Lubertozzi

State of the State (continued from page 1)

school accountability, operations, results and transparency, including eliminating the legislative cap on charter schools, in addition to stabilizing education funding. The Civic Committee believes these issues must be resolved so that Illinois is a better place to live and do business.

The Center for Tax and Budget Accountability's Ralph Martire reviewed the need to ease Illinois' current fiscal problems and to help reform education funding. He explained that the Illinois constitution requires a flat rate and outlined the impact the financial crisis has on the educational system and on minorities and their potential livelihood. HB750 was discussed as a means to alleviate some of the problems by reducing property taxes by 25 percent, increasing the state individual income tax from 3 to 5 percent and the corporate income tax rate from 4.8 to 8 percent. It expands the sales tax to cover consumer services. The bill provides for the amortization of state pension obligations and allocates payment of \$3.4 billion per year from new revenues generated. Mr. Martire stressed the need to do something now and that HB750 is a step in the right direction.

Governor Blagojevich was represented by Ginger Ostro, Director of the Governor's Office of Management and Budget, and John Filan, Chief Operating Officer State of Illinois. Ms. Ostro pointed out the state's ineffective and outdated corporate tax structure, the pension obligation problems, the lack of affordable health care, and the need for better funding for education. She explained that the Governor has eliminated operating deficits, reduced long term debt and cut the state payroll by \$900 million in an effort to get the budget crisis under control. Ms. Ostro talked about leasing the lottery as a means to reduce debt and a move to an 83 percent funded level for



L to r: John Filan, Ginger Ostro, R. Eden Martin, Paula Lawson, Dan Hynes, Ralph Martire

pensions with a more predictable payment schedule. In addition, she spoke of an increased \$1.5 billion annual contribution to fund education, with \$350 million in reimbursement for special education, and a move to provide preschool for all three and four year olds. Mr. Filan spoke to the need to help provide access to health care for the approximately 320,000 people without insurance. He talked about the problems with corporate income tax and the movement of money across borders.

After questions from the floor, Ms. Pennick concluded by thanking the panel for their insights on financing Illinois' future.

CONVENTION 2007 WEEKEND-IN-BRIEF

PLEASE NOTE: ALL VOTING WILL OCCUR ON SUNDAY

REGISTRATION **Friday**, starting at Noon for the Workshops and 2:30 for Convention
Saturday and Sunday at 7:30 am; closed during the sessions

WORKSHOPS **Friday Pre-Convention: 1:00– 2:30, and 2:45 – 4:15**
Building a Visible League (1:00 and 2:45)
Civics 101: Illinois State Government (1:00 and 2:45)
Democracy in Action (1:00 only)
Newsletter Anatomy 101 (1:00 only)
Running for Public Office (2:45 only)
Increased Communication (2:45 only)
Saturday Lunch Workshops: 12:15 – 1:45
Being an Effective Local League President
Running a Successful Forum with Moderator Training
Expanding Membership Using Program
Speaking Out: Building Confidence in Public Presentations

Caucus Schedule: as arranged by local Leagues and Committee Chairs.

PLENARY SESSIONS **Saturday Morning**
Roll Call of Leagues
Budget, PMP and Bylaws Motions
Nominating Committee Report
Discussion and Debate Begins

Saturday Afternoon
Recommended Program Motions
Introduction and Consideration of Non-Recommended Program Items
Introduction of Will of Convention Motions
Discussion and Debate Continues

Sunday Morning
Discussion & Votes on all motions
Election of the 2007-2009 Board
Directions to the Board

Throughout The Plenary Sessions
Member Services, Development, Communications, Voter Service and Issues Committee Reports
President's Report
Q&A sessions on recommended and not-recommended items will be scheduled
Friday evening, Saturday evening and/or Sunday morning

FRIDAY EVENING: "Making a Difference" Award; Spotlight on Success;
Speakers: Judy Davis, LWVUS Liaison and Illinois Senator Deb Halvorson
SATURDAY EVENING: Carrie Chapman Catt Award, US Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr.
and Political Satirist Aaron Freeman
SILENT AUCTION: FRIDAY – SATURDAY EVENING IN PUBS & WARES

STATE BOARD HOSPITALITY SUITE NIGHTLY TILL 11:00 pm
PUBS AND WARES...daily

AND MORE... **TIPS FOR FIRST-TIME DELEGATES ...** Friday afternoon and Saturday morning
MEET WITH OUR PARLIMENTARIANS ... Friday, Saturday and Sunday



League of Women Voters OF ILLINOIS

332 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1150
Chicago, IL 60604

Paula's Thoughts *(continued from page 1)*

well as Illinois Senator Debbie Halvorson and LWVUS Liaison Judy Davis. Saturday U.S. Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. will be our guest as we are entertained by political satirist Aaron Freeman. Find out who will be receiving the Carrie Chapman Catt Award.

Wander through our Pubs & Wares. Bid on items in our Silent Auction. Visit the LWVIL Board Hospitality Suite. There's something for everyone at the LWVIL Convention. Make sure you're a part of it.

**Join Us at Convention—June 22-24
Matteson, IL
Be Part of Strengthening League's
Roots and Branching Out!**



LWVIL is proud to be a member of the Community Shares Illinois workplace giving program.

When you choose Community Shares, you decide which of the 70 member organizations, including the League, will receive your employee contributions.

For more information, visit www.communitysharesillinois.org.

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.

League of Women Voters of Illinois

President, *Paula Lawson*
Vice President for Issues, *Edith Auchter*
Vice President for Communications, *Laurie Huget*
Vice President for Member Services, *Syvia Tillman*
Voter Editor, *Hollis Burgess*

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Illinois Voter

Volume 87-Issue 1, Late Spring 2007

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Founded in 1920, the League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization which encourages citizens to play an informed and active role in government. At the local, state and national levels, the League works to influence public policy through education and advocacy.

Articles from the Voter may be reprinted in full with complete acknowledgement.

Editor: Hollis Burgess

President: Paula Lawson



Strengthening Our Roots
and Branching Out

Strengthening Our Roots and Branching Out Convention 2007 Registration

June 22-24, 2007

(Registration Deadline June 1, 2007)***

Please copy both sides of this form and **complete a separate copy for each delegate, alternate and visitor**. Return all forms with the appropriate fees for convention registration, meals and Friday workshops to the state League office by June 1, 2007.

NOTE: Rooms must be booked by June 1, 2007. Call the Holiday Inn Chicago-Matteson, IL at 708/747-3500 and state that you are with the League of Women Voters of Illinois. The room rate is \$109.89/night/room (single or double occupancy) tax included.

Name: _____ Day Phone:(_____) _____
(as you would like it to appear on your name tag)

E-mail: _____ Local League: _____

REGISTRATION FEES (check one): Don't Miss Out!! Convention Registration Deadline is June 1, 2007.

- _____ Delegate* \$125 (includes full convention packet, Saturday workshop and voting credentials)
- _____ Alternate* \$125 (includes full convention packet, Saturday workshop; alternate may sub for voting delegate)

***Your League president must sign here if you are a delegate or alternate:** _____

- _____ Friday Workshops \$45 Choose two workshops. (Descriptions on reverse side of this form).
- _____ Saturday Visitor \$40 (includes convention floor pass, Saturday workshop).
- _____ Sunday Visitor \$15 (includes convention floor pass).

MEAL PACKAGES:

- _____ Full Meal Package \$115 (Friday dinner with speaker; Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner; Sunday breakfast)
 - _____ Saturday/Sunday Package \$105 (Saturday breakfast, lunch and dinner; Sunday breakfast)
 - _____ Friday Dinner only \$50 (Illinois Senator Debbie Halvorson; Judy Davis LWVUS Liaison; League Awards)
 - _____ Saturday Dinner only \$55 (US Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr.; Political Humorist Aaron Freeman; Carrie Chapman Catt Award; Silent Auction)
- Sorry, no meal package substitutions----**

PLEASE DON'T FORGET to Complete Reverse Side of this Form to:

- Mark your two Friday workshop choices and add \$45 to your total enclosed.
- Mark your Saturday workshop choice.
- Mark your meal preferences for Friday and Saturday dinners.

\$ _____ **TOTAL ENCLOSED** for registration, meals and Friday workshop fees

*****Refunds/Late Charges:**

A \$25 late charge will be applied to all registrations postmarked after June 1, 2007. **No registration changes will be accepted after June 15th.**

A \$25 processing charge will be deducted from any refund. Any charges incurred by LWVIL because the refund request was received after the hotel deadline cannot be refunded.

Strengthening Our Roots and Branching Out Convention 2007 Workshops & Meal Preferences

PRE-CONVENTION WORKSHOPS: Friday, June 22 1:00 – 2:30 pm; 2:45 - 4:15 pm
(select two—\$45 per person covers two workshops).

_____ **Building a Visible League:** Learn how to focus on an effective project that will include enlisting members, incorporating fundraising, raising visibility in the community and creating opportunities for gaining and retaining new members. No talking heads. Come ready to work. **Judy Davis LWVUS liaison. Workshop offered at 1:00 and 2:45. Limit 15**

_____ **Civics 101: Illinois State Government:** Introduction to the basics of Illinois Government: Learn what you didn't in high school about how the state government really operates including how a bill becomes law, shell bills, lobbying, and ethics reform. **Cristina Cray, Director of Legislation, State Board of Elections. Workshop offered at 1:00 and 2:45.**

_____ **Democracy in Action:** Learn to observe your local government bodies (including village and school boards) and use the tools provided by the Open Meetings Act and the Freedom of Information Act. Review the basics of public financing. **Susanna Stone, Citizen Advocacy Center, Community Counsel. Workshop offered exclusively at 1:00.**

_____ **Newsletter Anatomy 101:** Interactive workshop examines your League's bulletin with tips on Bulletin Editor responsibilities; content/copy; layout/design; useful links; paid ads; outreach tool, and pros and cons to sending electronically (pdf/word doc) vs. US mail. Bring a copy of your most recent local League newsletter/bulletin. **Darlene Bakk, LWV Geneva-St. Charles. Workshop will be offered exclusively at 1:00.**

_____ **Running for Public Office:** Contemplating a run for public office? Want to explain to your community how it's done? Get the ins (making the decision and more) and outs (how to avoid being knocked off the ballot) of a campaign. Learn the steps of getting organized, from volunteer needs to timetables and resources like legal tips on filing for office. **John M. Izzo, attorney and Gayla Boomer, LWV Homewood-Flossmoor/ former campaign manager. Workshop will be offered exclusively at 2:45.**

_____ **Increased Communication:** Increase communication with your community: using the media to get the message out including constructing and maintaining a website, learn how to communicate on-line through blogs, broadcast e-mail and discussion groups. Increase your public relations opportunities; maintain your database. Addressing the digital divide, audio taping, working with your local cable station. **Barb Knoff, LWV Palatine. This workshop will be offered exclusively at 2:45.**

CONVENTION WORKSHOPS: Saturday, June 23 (select one—cost included in registration)

_____ **Being an effective President:** Network, pick up tips on how to run board meetings and refresh your knowledge of League process and policy. If your League has no president, please send another key leader. **Paula Lawson, LWVIL President.**

_____ **Running a Successful Forum with Moderator Training:** Share ideas with other League members on how to set up and run a successful forum, dividing up responsibilities for working with the media, publicity, menu, facilities and background resources. **Robin LaBedz, LWVIL Voter Service Chair.**

_____ **Expanding Membership Using Program:** Target your programs to the members you want to attract: Discuss various topics for League programs, timing and structure, facilities. **Jan Kay, LWV Wheaton.**

_____ **Speaking Out: Building Confidence in Public Presentations:** Strengthen your presentation skills and become a confident public speaker. Learn to organize your thoughts, speak with poise and persuade your audience through engaging interactive activities. **Michele McMaster, Governors State University**

DINNER SELECTIONS

Friday: _____ Chicken Florentine _____ Pasta served with a Marinara Sauce

Saturday: _____ Prime Rib of Beef _____ Grilled Sword Fish _____ Linguini with mushrooms and Alfredo Sauce

Please let us know if you have any special dietary needs: _____