

Member Bulletin



A Note From the President, November 2021

And so it begins, our season of holidays. From now until the middle of January communities across the country will be celebrating more than a dozen different holidays.

It's a time that prompts reflection. Our reflections have ever expanding circles and the ripple effect quietly carries us from our starting point. We are all part of many communities nested within each other. We are all part of the fabric of the community. We reap benefits and we have responsibilities.

Events of the past few weeks and now even the past few days have had a profound impact on communities—and the impact quickly spreads, becomes global even, because we can all find a way to connect personally to what happened or is happening.

Communities are created by looking at what we have in common. It is time to look for the commonality - and then to reach out to each other in those spaces—what do we share? A sense of history, a house on the same street, a holiday table?

As League members our commonality is based on participating and effecting change. Our League community is based on a common mission and set of beliefs. Our mission work is based on the idea that each voice holds a place of importance within the community. This is why we work, every day, to make sure that every voice is heard, every voice is empowered, and every vote counts. Our work builds community.

As we begin this season of holidays, may we all be safe and have bounties to share. As Leaguers, I urge you to share what you know to be true - so that those at your tables and in your neighborhoods feel the need to rise to action - to use their voice—to protect votes—to protect communities.

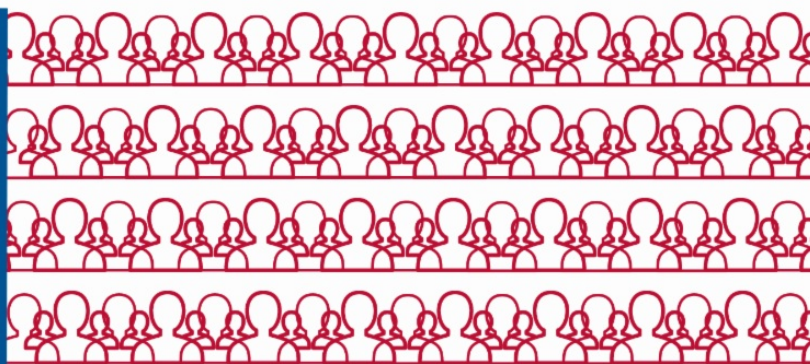
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Allyson".

Allyson E. Haut, Ph.D.

President

League of Women Voters of Illinois

VOTING RIGHTS FOR THE PEOPLE



Take Action - Defend Democracy!

Every senator in every state must be contacted and urged to reform the filibuster if that is what it takes to pass the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Senators count every call and email they receive and factor it into how they vote on legislation.

Common Cause is phone banking to mobilize voters in key states such as West Virginia and Arizona. [Sign up for dates](#); training will be provided.

Tell Senators Durbin and Duckworth (again!) that process must not stand in the way of progress.

[Senator Dick Durbin](#)

202-224-2152 DC office
312-353-4952 Chicago office

[Senator Tammy Duckworth](#)

202-224-2854 DC office
312-886-3506 Chicago office

Does My Vote Still Count?

Monday, November 29, 7:00-8:30 pm

Live Virtual Town Hall

[Plan to attend](#) this important exploration of the future of voting and democracy in the US. What happens if the Freedom to Vote Act and John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act pass? If they don't? How can we strengthen voting rights in Illinois to ensure equitable ballot access and protect all voices?

Keynote speaker Dr. Barbara Arnewine will discuss the importance of national voting rights legislation, followed by a panel discussion with Ami Ghandi, Senior Counsel, Chicago Lawyers for Civil Rights; Frederique Desrosiers, Policy Director, Chicago Votes; Dr. Barbara Arnewine, President, Transformative Justice Coalition; Jay Young, Executive Director, Common Cause. The panel will be moderated by Lance Gough, former executive director of the Chicago Board of Election.

Please [register and share this event widely](#). Hosted by the DuPage NAACP, with LWVIL as one of the cosponsoring organizations.

No More Excuses Demonstrations

LWVUS, together with [People For the American Way](#) and the [Declaration for American Democracy](#), held the [fifth and largest in a series](#) of direct actions in front of the White House to demand that President Biden put his power behind passing Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Hundreds of protesters gathered on November 17 in Lafayette Park, and as expected, nearly 200 were arrested by the National Park Service for blocking the public sidewalk. LWV led a training session for all participants prior to the action, explaining that those who chose to risk arrest would be issued a citation and required to pay a fine. Due to advance notification, the park service had set up a tent on site to facilitate processing, which took about two hours according to news reports.

Leaguers were among those arrested, including LWWUS Board president Dr. Deborah Ann Turner and CEO Virginia Kase Solomón, two LWWUS board members from Illinois, and two members of LWV Naperville. The Naperville members compared their actions to those of early suffragists who were arrested in their fight for voting rights.



'Tis the Season - for Training

With election season around the corner, voter service training season is in high gear. Many local League members have started preparing for 2022 elections by attending LWWIL's voter service training sessions. We've recently wrapped up:

- Candidate Forum training for 35 members
- Moderator training for 29 members
- Observer training for 86 members
- Protecting Pretrial Citizens' Right to Vote Training for 22 members

Additional training sessions will be scheduled if there is enough interest. Please email voterservice@lwwil.org to be put on a list for future candidate forum and/or moderator trainings.

Illinois Voter Guide Training

Thursday, December 9, 7:00-8:00 pm

Learn about our one-stop voter education tool so you can promote it to our members and communities throughout Illinois! Take a walk through the Illinois Voter Guide and learn more about:

- How IVG increases equity for voters, candidates, and local Leagues
- How to use IVG
- How Leagues and candidates can contribute content to IVG
- How to promote IVG

Registration required. Members only. Registration closes 24 hours prior to the event. *The event link will be sent a day in advance and one hour before the event.*

Observer Training

Thursday, January 6, 7:00–8:00 pm

The League's trained Observer Corps are a respected part of the community— they work to keep local governments accountable and community members informed.

[Registration required.](#) Members only. Registration closes 24 hours prior to the event. *The event link will be sent a day in advance and one hour before the event.*

Engage the Next Generation

Election season offers multiple opportunities to extend your reach to the voters and Leaguers of tomorrow. Young leaders are looking for ways to use their voice. Show them how the League provides opportunities to amplify their voices through issue education, advocacy, and voting.

Think about creative ways your League can reach out beyond high school registrations. Consider inviting college students to participate in your voter registration drives, candidate forums, and get out the vote activities. Offer guidance for their on campus voter and citizen education activities. Suggest ways your League can collaborate and support their organizations.

The League has a history of working to attract youth leaders. LWVUS' [Building the League of Tomorrow](#) is one possible source of ideas that are adaptable to the realities of attracting youth leaders to your League today.

Positive, productive involvement with your League today may lead to League membership wherever their future takes them.



Catherine Waugh McCulloch Trail Marker

LWVIL president, board members, and local League members joined the granddaughter of [Catherine Waugh McCulloch](#), state legislators, and Evanston's mayor, city officials, and neighbors in McCulloch park in Evanston on October 30 for the dedication of a marker on the [National Votes for Women Trail](#) in honor of this little known suffragist.

Among the many civic leaders who spoke, the message was clear: we need to surround ourselves with an understanding of our history so as to learn how to build and implement a better future. McCulloch's life is lesson in building that future through persistence and creativity.

McCulloch shared a law practice with her husband, was the first woman elected

justice of the peace in Illinois, and was a prolific writer, authoring everything from bills to strengthen rape laws, letters to the editor, and even several plays. She was a dedicated mother to her four children and was nearly 60 years old before the 19th amendment was passed!

Her creativity helped gain the vote for Illinois women, and her strategy influenced suffragists nationwide. Because presidential elections were not mentioned in the Illinois state Constitution, McCulloch wrote a bill allowing women to vote for president on a partial ballot. She introduced the bill every year for the next 20 years until it passed in 1913, making Illinois the first state east of the Mississippi River where women could vote.

The rest, as they say, is history, and until her death in 1945, McCulloch continued to be a champion for legal protections for women and children.

Thanks in large part to the dedicated efforts of LWVIL member Lori Osborn, director of the [National Votes for Women Trail](#) program for Illinois, the state's strong suffragist history is recognized on the Trail. More than 50 of the 2,272 mapped suffrage sites in the nation are in Illinois, including four of the 250 sites recognized with permanent trail markers.



CEJA: Prairie State Coal Plant Closure

As a member of the Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition, LWVIL actively educated and advocated for more than two years to pass the Clean Energy Jobs Act (CEJA). After protracted and difficult negotiations through the summer, the emergent bill, The Climate and Equity Jobs Act (also CEJA) bore a striking resemblance to the original bill. Signed into law this fall, the bill's focus on environmental justice and equitable economic development is considered a model for the country.

LWVIL members helped ensure that the final version of the bill included closing the Prairie State Coal Plant. Even though closing Prairie State posed a potentially serious obstacle for advancing CEJA, League members and other activists helped convince legislators and coalition leaders to support the effort. A [first-hand account by an LWVIL issue specialist](#) offers an inside look at what took place.

Are You on the LWVUS Membership Roster?

All state League membership and mailing lists are downloaded directly from the US Roster. This means your opportunities to connect with LWVIL depend on your US Roster status. It is every local League's responsibility to put all active (dues paying) members on the LWVUS roster so that every member receives all the benefits of membership, including:

- Important, timely information directly from LWVUS and LWVIL's newsletters and action alerts .

- Access to League sponsored Training and Education events to increase knowledge and professionalism.
- Liability insurance protection for designated member activities.
- Inclusion in your League's delegate count for state and national conventions, ensuring your League has the full power of its voice.

Event Calendar

Connect with local Leagues across the state. Post and find virtual candidate forums and other educational events on the LWVIL website's [event calendar](#).

Thank you for supporting our work to defend democracy and empower voters.



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