

# The Chicago Voter

October Voter 2007

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League of Women Voters of Chicago



## President's Corner

October has come so quickly. We will put away the summer things and change activities. We continue to thank members who have supported the League by renewing their memberships. Another way of supporting our organization is to become involved in our events and projects.

Our activities are committee meetings and briefings. All of these need the involvement of the members, not just the Board Directors. Some work can be done by phone, e-mail or USPS. There are two major areas of work for all. One is the Immigration Study: a briefing on Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. The follow-up to this will be unit meetings and a report to the LWVUS.

A long term project is Voter Service. After all, we are the League of Women Voters. The briefing is Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. The election season will cover the next thirteen months. There is the primary election in February and the general election in November. Our members should be willing to participate in registering voters, poll watching, attending and working at a campaign forum. Training is required in order to be a Registrar (through the LWVChicago) and the schedule of classes is in this issue. We need to have our name in the public eye. People know us in relation to elections, so let's be there!

There are some public issues that are LWV issues, such as building the Children's Museum in the park. We have a position on keeping the parks natural. You can contact your alderman on this. Another LWV favorite is public school funding. A+ Illinois has been lobbying the legislature all summer on this issue. If you have e-mail you can contact them for updates.

LWVChicago is studying/updating our positions on Education and Affordable Housing in Chicago. Join a committee. If the Illinois Constitution is of interest to you, the LWVIL has a meeting on October 11<sup>th</sup> about studying the need for a constitutional convention.

Are you looking for more choices? The LWVUS has many areas of study and advocacy to keep you involved. For information on any LWV topic, call the office and leave a message. If you have some suggestions about program please write to us.

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## Leaguers are Registrars

One of the Voter Service Projects taken on by Leaguers is Voter Registration. In order to be a Registrar who may register people at any time, the Chicago League's Voter Service Chair, Terry Williams, will submit your name to the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners Volunteer Deputy Registrar Program. The request to become a Volunteer Deputy Registrar with a date and time requested for training must be submitted by the Chicago League for you to be qualified for this vital activity.

So that you may determine whether you can participate in the training, 69 W. Washington, 8<sup>th</sup> floor Conference Room. We are providing you with a schedule of the times the class is offered. Registration usually closes two days before the class for morning sessions and one day before for afternoon and evening sessions.

### October 2007

Saturday the 6<sup>th</sup> – 9:30 am  
Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup> – 3:00 pm  
Tuesday the 16<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm  
Saturday the 20<sup>th</sup> – 9:30 am  
Thursday the 25<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm

### November 2007

Saturday the 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9:30 am  
Thursday the 8<sup>th</sup> – 3:00 pm  
Tuesday the 13 – 6:00 pm  
Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup> – 9:30 am  
Tuesday the 27<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm

### December 2007

Tuesday the 4<sup>th</sup> – 3:00 pm  
Tuesday the 11<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm  
Saturday the 15<sup>th</sup> – 9:30 am  
Thursday the 27<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 pm  
Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup> – 9:30 am

The Training sessions may be cancelled if the response for that day is poor.

Voter registration by Volunteer Deputy Registrars will end on January 8, 2008 for the February 5, 2008 Presidential Primary Election.

## U. S. Poverty, as well as Extreme Poverty. Declines

*By Lois Snyder*

Heartland Alliance quoting from the "Poverty and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States 2006," indicates that the U.S. POVERTY RATE in 2006 is down slightly from 12.6% in 2005 to 12.3%. The number of people living in poverty remains high at 36,459,670 in 2006, still higher than it was in 2001. Millions of people in the U.S. live in EXTREME POVERTY, meaning they live below 50% of the federal poverty line. While extreme poverty declined slightly from 5.4% in 2005 to 5.2% on 2006, the 2006 extreme poverty rate is higher than the 2001 rate of 4.8%. This is 15,447,176 people trying to make ends meet on an annual income meeting basic needs at \$10,000 for a family of four in 2006. In 2006 the rate of individuals without health insurance rose to 15.8%, a significant increase from 2001. For more see <http://www.heartlandalliance.org/maip>.

The National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP) reports according to their updated data:

- "39% of children live in low income families (28.6 million children)" [a level that remains unchanged from the previous year]
- "43% of young children (under age 6) live in low-income families (more than 10 million children)
- Rates of children living in low-income families vary dramatically across the states, from 21% in New Hampshire to 53% in Mississippi."

The data book provides national and 50-state trend data on the characteristics of low-income children over the past decade: parental education, parental employment, marital status, family structure, race and ethnicity, age distribution, parental nativity, home ownership, residential mobility, type of residential area and region of residence. This can be accessed on line at [www.nccp.org-see](http://www.nccp.org-see) NCCP's 50 State Demographic Profiles or the Demographics Wizard.

## Immigration Consensus

*By Helene Gabelnick*

The briefing meeting for the LWVUS immigration study will be held on Saturday, October 13 at 10 AM in the League Office. Unit meeting(s) to take consensus will take place this Fall so that the results can be collated and submitted to the Chicago LWV Board for approval at its January meeting. This national study is in its second year and will lead to a national position to be adopted by the LWVUS board in Spring 2008.

There is a large amount of background material posted on the LWVUS web site, ([www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)). To obtain it go to the For Members page and click on Immigration Study in the Quick Links Box. Hard copies of many of these documents are in the Chicago LWV office but are too lengthy for general distribution. Members who attend the briefing will be given some additional background information.

Some summaries of LWVUS documents have been published in the National Voter; A Historical Perspective in February, Global Interdependence, and a combination of Immigration and the Economy and Economic Aspects in June. Another two summaries will be in the October Voter – one on border enforcement and the other on family reunification and inclusion.

This Chicago Voter includes an insert including the consensus questions with discussion points. Plan to bring this to your unit meeting(s).

If you would like to work on this study item at the committee level please contact Helene Gabelnick.

## League News – All Levels

### LWVIL

In November of 2008 a proposition regarding holding a Constitutional Convention to study and possibly rewrite the State Constitution will appear. LWVIL has studied this item in the past and has taken a position against doing so. Since this is up for consideration again, a Committee on this issue will meet on Thursday, October 11<sup>th</sup>, to discuss the possible need for such a Convention and will consider a position for LWVIL. If you are interested, attend this meeting.

### LWVCC

The League of Women Voters of Cook County has asked us to help in their fund-raising by shopping at Jewel-Osco on October 29<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and 31<sup>st</sup>. Forms for this shopping date are included in this *Voter*.

### LWVChicago

Don't forget our Theater Party with Reception on Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm.

The Education Committee is gearing up to review the positions which the League has on Education. Committee members are being sent copies the Education Positions of LWVUS Impact on Issues 2006-2008, LWVIL Where We Stand 2005-2007 and The LWVChicago Where We Stand 2003-2005. If you are interested in receiving this background information call Winnie Slusser.

Lois Snyder would like to hear from anyone interested in the Affordable Housing Study.

**More on NCLB.**

Testing remains a problem for the English Language Learner-ELL (used to be Limited English Proficient). Necessary changes to assessments so that if subject matter is tested it can be done in the native language rather than English. Accountability procedures need to be updated. Other improvements required to truly assess the abilities of ELL students.

Test quality should be improved.

The high school dropout situation needs to be tackled. Ways to keep the student in school and provide him/her with an adequate education so that he/she may become an informed and productive member of society.

Make the teaching profession more attractive to college students. This will probably require higher starting salaries and career ladders. New teachers need adequate mentoring so that they do not leave teaching within the first few years. There is much discussion of performance pay.

Adequate funding so that all schools have the wherewithal to help all children succeed.

Make changes to the intervention strategies so that children are tutored at the home school before they are given a choice of other performing schools to attend. In urban areas there are few performing schools within easy accessibility as nationwide, and in Chicago, few places are available and few students actually transfer. Providing services to those in need of help at the home school first makes more sense than asking them to choose to spend time in traveling to a new school.

<b><i>The Chicago Voter</i></b>	
League of Women Voters of Chicago 332 S. Michigan Avenue, Suite 1150 Chicago, IL 60604 312-939-5935	
Esta Kallen	President
Margaret Herring	Vice President
Pamela Stauffer	Vice President
Winnie Slusser	Voter Editor pro-tem