



# The Chicago Voter

League of Women Voters of Chicago  
Website - [www.LWVChicago.org](http://www.LWVChicago.org)

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## Upcoming Events

### Social Policy/Housing

Tuesday, November 3, 10 AM

### Health Care Briefing

Saturday, November 7, 10 AM

### Communications Committee

Monday, November 9, 2 PM

### LWVChicago Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 10, 5:30 PM

### Chicago in Focus

Wednesday, November 18  
5 to 7 PM

Union League Club

Call 312-939-5949 or

Email: [League@LWVChicago.org](mailto:League@LWVChicago.org)

For more information

## President's Message



November – We're off daylight savings time and into the winter holidays. I want to thank every member who participated in the National League's consensus about amending the U.S. Constitution. Although I knew that Article V provided for a convention to amend the Constitution, I was unaware that there is interest in doing so. I learned a lot and I look forward, as I am sure you do, to the upcoming National consensus on money in politics.

Our response to the Money in Politics consensus is due to LWVUS in early February. The briefing for this topic is January 9 and Units will discuss the **information** and take consensus at their January meetings. See the article on page 4 of this voter about the schedule change. I urge everyone to begin boning up on this topic. As we read about and watch the 2016 campaigns, which have begun, we see that money and politics are intertwined.

I wish you a Happy Thanksgiving,

**Margaret**

## Health Care Briefing



The November Health Care briefing will be held on Saturday, November 7 from 10 AM to noon. The topic is the Chicago Department of Public Health. The presenter will be Jaime Dirksen, Deputy Commissioner CDPH. She will be giving an overview of CDPH, which does everything from providing clinical service, to overseeing regulatory compliance, and evaluating environmental health. She will also provide data collected about health issues and will discuss the four year plan, Healthy Chicago 2.0, being released across the city this November. This plan will outline the goals and strategies to improve the health of Chicago residents and communities. Jaime is pleased to be meeting with such an informed and involved audience as the LWV, and I believe it will be an interesting and timely Briefing.

Please RSVP, 312-939-5949 or by **email**, to be put on the building security list.

**Margaret O'Hara**

## Chicago in Focus Report



On September 30, Madeleine Doubek of Reboot Illinois spoke to about 40 attendees at the first **Chicago in Focus** (CiF) event of this

program year. This series is co-sponsored by LWVChicago and the Union League Club.



**REBOOT  
Illinois**

Before founding Reboot Illinois Doubek was a political reporter and editor of the Daily Herald. The

Reboot Illinois **web site** features many news articles and provides links to many organizations.

Doubek emphasized that coping with problems at the state, county and city level are intertwined and the finances of all levels of government affect their ability to address social service needs and infrastructure. For too long, these governments have ignored financial realities. The 2008 recession aggravated problems but did not precipitate them.

Citizens should engage with events. Everyone should follow at least one source of news about government. Every citizen should call, email or write elected officials about concerns. It is important to be knowledgeable and clear on what the citizen wants the legislator to do. Doubek cited concerns of residents in the collar counties about rapidly rising property taxes which led to passage of tax cap legislation.

**Margaret Herring**

## Next Chicago in Focus

The next Chicago in Focus on November 18 will be "Why is Child Care Important in Chicago?". See the flyer on page 8 of this **Chicago Voter**.



## Education and SOC Committees

The education committee has been meeting and gathering information on school boards around the country. We have found that most large city school boards are elected, with the superintendents either appointed by the board of education or by the mayor. In some instances the cities are divided into districts with a representative from each district on the board. Other cities have those who get the most votes winning a seat on the board.

The education committee has also been working on plans for the State of the City fundraising luncheon in April. We have decided on a three member panel with a moderator asking questions. The focus of the luncheon will be the schools and the community. We are now working to secure the panel members and a moderator.

**Rae Sokolow**

## Affordable Health Care Update



Enrollment period for the Affordable Care Act for 2016 is from 11/1/15 thru 1/31/16. In 2016 penalty for not having health insurance is 2.5% of the yearly family income, or \$695 per

person and \$347.50 for each child under 18 years, whichever is higher. In Illinois enrollment in the ACA is handled by **GetCoveredIllinois**.

**Margaret O'Hara**

## Social Policy/Housing Committee



At its October meeting the committee reviewed some of the annual briefing topics for the past few years (income inequality, linked job training/food insecurity, budget cuts/ sequestration and the safety net, and the foreclosure crisis).

The Committee also considered two proposed ordinances before the Chicago City Council: "Keeping the Promise" (focused on the Chicago Housing Authority) and Civilian Police Accountability Council.

The next committee meeting is Tuesday, November 3, 10 AM. All are invited to join.

**Herb Ziegeldorf**

## **Unit Meetings**

### **Topic: Health Care**

Far Southwest Side Unit – evening  
Wednesday, November 11 – 7 PM

Home of Alice Murray  
Leaders – Marcia Cowing, Betsy Perrine

Hyde Park Unit – afternoon  
Thursday, November 19 – 1:30 PM  
Montgomery Place

Leaders – Susan Hamburger, Dorothy Scheff

Loop Unit – afternoon  
Wednesday, November 11 – 1 to 3 PM  
LWVChicago Conference Room

Leaders – Norma Braude, Carol Ziegeldorf

Loop Unit – evening  
Tuesday, November 24 – 5 PM  
LWVChicago Conference Room

Leader – Margaret Herring

Loop Unit – morning  
Thursday, November 19 – 10 AM  
LWVChicago Conference Room

Leader – Bernice Fortini

West Side Unit  
Sunday, November 22 – 1:30 PM

Third Unitarian Church

301 N. Mayfield, Chicago

Sunday, December 13 – 1:30 PM

Home of Mary Austin

Leader – Joan Morton

## **Welcome to New Members**

*Laura Kratz*

*Mary Kubasak*

*Nancy Shapardanis*

## **Donations**

THANK YOU to the following members who have made donations to the LWVChicago Education Fund.

*Sheila Kusch*  
*Betsy Perrine*  
*Jacquelyn Sanders*

## **Terry Williams**

Terry Williams, a 42 year LWVChicago member, passed away in late September. Terry was active in her units, and served as a Board of Directors member and Chicago Voter Editor. She was, however, best known as an expert on election law. She was the Voter Service Chair for LWVChicago and the faithful observer at Chicago Board of Elections meetings. She developed materials explaining the election process in Chicago which were used in the development of the Election Judge Handbook and as part of an extensive pollwatching guide.

## **Voter Service**



Plans are underway for voter registration events in January and February at Roosevelt University and various Chicago high schools. To volunteer to help with this project contact the **office**.

Seventeen-year old citizens who will be 18 before November 8, 2016 are eligible to register and vote in the Primary on March 15, 2016. This will be the first time for Election Day registration.

## **Deputy Voter Registrar Training**

Members can take the training provided by the Chicago Board of Elections to become a Deputy Voter Registrar. There will be three sessions scheduled in November. Please **contact** the office to find out the dates and times and so that you can be enrolled in the class.

## **Communications Committee**



The communications committee will meet Monday, November 9 at 2 PM to review the communications methods used by LWVChicago, consider their effectiveness and

discuss possible additions and changes. All members are welcome.

If you are interested but cannot attend the meeting please let us **know**.

**Helene Gabelnick**



## LWVUS Money in Politics Change in Schedule

At its October meeting the LWVChicago Board decided to change the scheduled January briefing to the LWVUS update (including consensus) on the position on campaign finance. This is for the purpose of addressing the lack of member understanding and agreement as to whether financing a political campaign is protected speech under the First Amendment.



The LWVUS campaign finance position will be updated through a study and consensus process to consider (1) the rights of individuals and organizations under the

First Amendment to express their political views through independent expenditures and the finance of election campaign activities and (2) how those rights, if any, should be protected and reconciled with the interests set out in the current position. The briefing on January 9 will address issues for this study.

**Additional information** may be found on the LWVUS web site and also will be provided in an article in the next Chicago Voter.

The current League position on campaign finance is: *The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that the methods of financing political campaigns should ensure the public's right to know, combat corruption and undue influence, enable candidates to compete more equitably for public office and allow maximum citizen participation in the political process. This position is applicable to all federal campaigns for public office –presidential and congressional, primaries as well as general elections. It also may be applied to state and local campaigns.*

**Carma Forgie**

## Interviewing Chicago Aldermen

Recently, forty-two aldermen signed a resolution for a moratorium on new charter schools. Eight did not. Where does your alderman stand on this issue? And other issues? Make an appointment to visit your alderman and let him/her know that you care how they are voting.

To find contact information for your alderman and to set up an interview, check with the City of Chicago **reference**.

Please let the office **know** when you are visiting your alderman. If possible, plan your visit with another League member in your ward. To find other members who live in your ward, **contact** the office. Aldermen always like to talk to their constituents, and it might be easier to go to the interview as part of a team. Your alderman will have an office in the ward, and also in City Hall.

The primary purpose of interviewing your alderman is to strengthen communications and to make him/her aware of the League of Women Voters of Chicago – that we are an active participant in city government and we follow the activities of the City Council. Be prepared to discuss the purposes of LWV Chicago:

- To educate its members and the public to lobby government on selected issues,
- To observe the functioning of government bodies to monitor their accountability and transparency.
- To help the public understand how democratic government functions, and
- To educate the public about the election process by providing information about candidates and voting rights and procedures.



Additional **information** and suggested questions for the interview are **available** on the LWVChicago web site.

**Pat Graunke**

## League in Your Neighborhood

On October 20, Krista Grimm, Vice President of the League of Women Voters Lake Michigan Region and Co-chair of the Water Committee for the Sierra Club Chicago, offered practical ways for ways that we, collectively and individually, can help reduce stormwater flooding. Her presentation, **"Stormwater from the Ground Up"** was given to League members and guests at the Sulzer Regional Library.



Native Gardens

Raingardens

Shoreline Stabilization

In addition to the specific actions to reduce flooding indicated in her presentation members should be aware of Illinois HB 2401 which would provide a ban on coal tar sealants. League is in support of this legislation; let your state representative know.

**Pris Mims**

## Observers' Reports

Following are selected summaries of public meetings attended by observers from LWVChicago. See the web site [LWVChicago.org](http://LWVChicago.org) for the complete reports.

If you are interested in observing meetings at Chicago City Council, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD), the Chicago Board of Education, or the Board of the Chicago Public Library [contact](#) the League office for more information

### MWRD, October 15



MWRD will enter into a partnership with the City of Chicago to submit a grant to HUD to make green infrastructure improvements to capture stormwater and reduce the incidents of flooding in the West Side Demonstration Area.

MWRD will enter into a similar partnership with Cook County that will include stormwater management project to address flooding issues in the south suburban pilot area.

The CTA Yellow Line will reopen by October 30.

**Pat Graunke**

### Chicago Board of Education, Sept.29



Forest Claypool, President, reported that attendance on the first day of school was up to 94.8%.

Dr. Janice Jackson, the Chief Education Officer, reported that the district is committed to serving each special education student

as required by their Individual Educational Plan (IEP). Dr. Winston, from the Office of Diverse Learners gave a detailed report on the special education services. She stated that all special education students will receive services as it is the law. There are 71,000 students with IEP or 504 plans. About half of these students have average to above average IQ. The goal is to make more of them proficient or higher in reading and math. The special education budget is \$826 million. There are 2,928 fewer IEP students today than in June, 2015.

Alderman Scott Waguespack (32) and others protested the recent cuts to special education. Mr. Claypool asked for precise examples, saying that compliance with special education IEPs is sacrosanct. There was a group supporting the new Noble charter school in Bronzeville as well as a large group of community members against Noble. They said they have enough

high schools and Noble will only take students from the traditional public schools in the neighborhood. There were several speakers, including **Rae Sokolow** from LWVChicago, who [spoke](#) requesting a moratorium on new charter schools until accountability measures are in place and the financial difficulties of the district are resolved.

In the last two meetings there has been new activity by aldermen, who as public officials are allowed to address the board first. They are speaking as advocates for or against proposed CPS activity in the schools in their wards. This would seem to portend a new level of interest on the part of the aldermen.

**Rae Sokolow**

### Chicago City Council Budget Hearing October 8



The Department of Family and Support Services was the subject of this City Council budget hearing. Lisa

Morison Butler, Commissioner, and her staff, answered the questions from aldermen.

This department has the following divisions: Children Services, Community Service Centers, Division on Domestic Violence, Homeless and Emergency Services, Policy and Advocacy, Senior Services, Veterans Resource Office, Workforce Development and Ex-Offender Programs and Youth Services.

The proposed 2016 budget for the DFSS is \$348,060,930 compared to \$348,226,516 appropriated for year 2015. This would provide for 403 employees, down from 516 employees in the current budget. Department staff explained that 76% of the expenses are sent to "delegate" agencies, such as Head Start and After School Matters. Greater funding will be made to these agencies, reducing the department's own employee count while keeping the total department budget flat.

Many aldermen expressed the need for funding services for the homeless throughout the City. Commissioner Butler said the latest "point-in-time" count showed Chicago had a 6,700 homeless population. She estimated that 19.4% suffer from mental illness and 22.7% have substance abuse problems. Furthermore, homeless individuals cannot be compelled to go to shelters or accept services. Butler said she is working closely with the Department of Public Health to reach them.

**Rockelle Riffer**

## LWVUS (LWV.org)

### League Opposes Senate Attempts to Block Clean Power Plan



The League sent a letter to the U.S. Senate opposing any attempt to block the implementation of the Administration's Clean Power Plan.

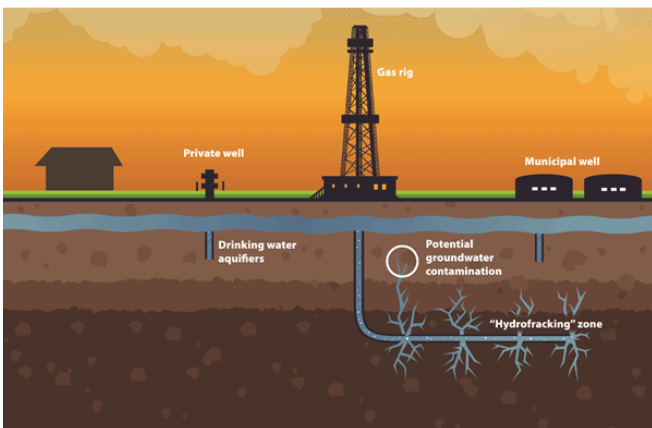
Under the Congressional Review Act, Congress can review the implementation of regulations developed by the Administration. Members of the LWVUS Lobby Corps will be visiting Senate offices to discuss this groundbreaking regulation that will save lives and protect the environment. Visit the LWVUS Climate Change Toolkit for background on the Clean Power Plan and a section outlining what Leagues and League members can do to help build support for, and promote compliance with, the Clean Power Plan.

### League Submits Comments to EPA Science Advisory Board



The League submitted written comments to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Science Advisory Board (SAB). The comments are in regard to the EPA SAB's study on the effects that hydraulic

fracturing has on drinking water sources.



## LWVIL (LWVIL.org)



The State of Illinois 2016 budget impasse continues! The General Assembly is scheduled to meet next on November 10. Contact your state legislators to

strongly urge them to work on resolving this major problem.

LWVIL President, Mary Kubasak, was a cosigner on a letter to the Chicago Tribune on this crucial issue.

## LWV Cook County

([cookcounty.il.lwvnet.org](http://cookcounty.il.lwvnet.org))

To find out what is happening with regard to the proposed 2016 Cook County Government budget, go to the Observer Blog. As in past years, Cook County League observers expect to cover all the meetings that the Cook County Board's Finance Committee holds with the individual departments of Cook County government. Observers will also cover three of the four public hearings where members of the public may provide their comments on the proposed budget.

## LWV Lake Michigan Region (LWVLMR.org)

On November 5, 2015 at noon, Karen Hobbs, Senior Policy Analyst with the Natural Resources Defense Council, will discuss recent progress and setbacks to the Waters of the U.S. rule and the Great Lakes region's resulting ability to work toward cleaner waters. Information on accessing this event is on the LWVLMR website.

### The Chicago Voter

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Margaret Herring	President
Helene Gabelnick	Vice President
Pat Graunke	Vice President
Esta Kallen	Vice President
Annie Logue	Vice-President
Alice Perlin	Secretary
Pat Vogtman	Treasurer
Helene Gabelnick	Voter Editor

## Join a Great Decisions Group

League members and their friends are invited to join a Chicago League-sponsored Great Decisions Group that will begin meeting in early 2016. The Chicago League-sponsored groups have generally met every 2 weeks from late January to May to discuss the 8 topics covered by 10 to 12 page articles in the *Great Decisions* booklet published by the non-partisan Foreign Policy Association. Cost of the booklet will be between \$20 and \$25.

The topics for 2016 are the Middle East, the Rise of ISIS, the Future of Kurdistan, Migration, the Koreas, the United Nations, Climate Change, and Cuba and the U.S.

Participating is a wonderful way to get to know people while you are expanding your interests and knowledge. At each session, we also watch a short video program on the topic before beginning a discussion led by one of the participants who volunteers to do so. You need not have any background in foreign policy or the topics to be able to participate.

We expect to have at least one group that will be meeting on Tuesday afternoons in the Aqua at Lakeshore East Building, downtown near Millennium Park. Additional groups will be formed if there is sufficient interest. If you (and any of your friends) are interested, please complete and return the form below by no later than **December 7**.

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### GREAT DECISIONS DISCUSSION GROUP INTEREST FORM

\_\_\_\_\_ I would be willing to participate in a group in the Aqua Building on Tuesday afternoons from late January/early February to May.

\_\_\_\_\_ I cannot meet then, but I am interested in participating and I could meet in the

\_\_\_\_ League office downtown OR \_\_\_\_ (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

on (specify what days of the week and times – e.g., morning, afternoon, or evening are good for you) :

---

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

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to** League of Women Voters of Chicago, 332 S. Michigan, Suite 525, Chicago, IL 60604;  
**or**

**email** [League@lwvchicago.org](mailto:League@lwvchicago.org); **phone** 312-939-5949. Deadline: **December 7**.





# Chicago in Focus

A quarterly discussion series featuring All Things Chicago

**November 18, 2015**

Union League Club

5 - 7 p.m.

65 W. Jackson Blvd.

Doors open at 5 p.m.

Chicago, IL

Program begins at 5:30

Admission is free, cash bar

Dress: Business casual, no jeans/denim

RSVP to 312-939-5949 or [League@LWVChicago.org](mailto:League@LWVChicago.org)

Bring a friend!

## ***Why is Child Care Important in Chicago?***

*What is quality child care? Where does Chicago fall short? What is the cost to all of us of NOT providing quality child care?*

Documentary:

Taking a Closer Look at Child Care

Created by the Committee on Child Care in Chicago of  
the Working Women's History Project

Speakers:



**Sessy Nyman, Vice President, Policy and Strategic Partnerships,  
Illinois Action for Children  
and Members of the Committee on Child Care in Chicago**

Sponsored by  
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