

President's Corner *By Mary Truss*

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Intercom Park Forest Area

The year is almost over but we have a few more exciting events to complete before the fiscal year ends. For instance, a group of us will be attending the State of the State Luncheon June 2, 2010, at the Union League Club of Chicago in downtown Chicago. The keynote speaker will be Patrick Collins, chair of the Illinois Reform Commission. He will speak on **“The State of Reform in Illinois.”** There will be a car full of us, but there is room at our table for more of our leaguers. The ride alone should be insightful. We will talk about this, that and the other, all interesting topics to be sure.

Barbara Moore and her committee are gearing up for the **House Tour** (the pride and joy of Park Forest) on June 6, 2010 and everyone is happy that the house tour has returned to the springtime. For more information see the article on the **house tour**.

Back on March 27, 2010 League members and their guests dressed up in their finest black & white duds to crown the woman of the year and the middle school essay contest winners in University Park, Illinois. See the Black & White Gala article.

The Cook County Program presentation in April was informative and very well presented. Cook County has as much activity as some states. Hats off to the league members of the Cook County League, who completed this study. If you live in Cook County, don't go to bed tonight without asking yourself, how is my money spent?

We are getting praises about our website. Pamela Wickliffe is doing a great job. Please visit our website when you are surfing the web, www.lwvpfa.org.

The voter service committee is doing what they do best, registering voters. And they are gearing up for the fall election and winter/spring 2011 candidate forums.

Sharon McGuire and Mary Truss are going to the national convention June 11-15, 2010, in Atlanta Georgia. Just to bring you up to date, the National League of Women Voters has proposed raising the per member payment (PMP) to \$29.60, Cook County LWV remains \$4.50 and the State LWV is \$27.00, which brings the total membership dues to \$61.10 per person. The budget committee is not recommending an increase in membership dues this year. This means there will be a \$1.10 deficit in the budget, so our fundraising will subsidize the difference. The projected budget for fiscal year 2011 will be presented to the full membership at the annual meeting. The annual meeting will be June 26, 2010 at Carlo's Lorenzetti 456 Lincoln Highway (Rt.), Chicago Heights, Illinois, at 12:00 PM. See reservation form enclosed.

The League has planned an exciting year with the summer breakfast meeting in the garden of the long time Park Forest resident at 225 Berry on July 24, 2010. The potluck kickoff, at the home of Marge Friedman-Scherr on September 15, 2010 in Park Forest, Illinois sets the tone for the rest of the year. The League is now 90 years old and we are having a party to celebrate at the Park Forest Library in October, the date and time TBA. We will be viewing a movie and having cake and punch.



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Special points of interest:

6/6	House Tour
6/11- 15/10	2010 LWV Convention Atlanta, Georgia
6/26	Annual Meeting & Lunch
7/24	Summer Breakfast
9/15	Potluck Kick-Off

Voter Services *By Claudette Hall*

Members of the Voter Service Committee have been active. Local high schools were contacted to arrange voter registration drives before graduation. Staff of Rich Central High School requested two (2) drives; one held April 7th during Senior Night; the other held May 6th during the school day. A total of 45 students were registered. Many thanks to Pat Cline, Sandra Warren, Penny Shnay and Claudette Hall for registering students of Rich Central High School.

Pat Cline and Claudette Hall conducted a Voter's Registration Drive at Lincoln Mall on Saturday May 8th. Approximately fifty people were offered the opportunity to register to vote. The majority of the individuals stated they were registered voters. A few people needed to have their registrations changed. Also people inquired about



Second Annual Black & White Gala *By Barbara Sturges*

When I planned to attend LWVPFA's second annual Black & White Gala, I expected to have fun and a nice meal. I had no idea how educational and moving the event would be! About 75 guests (only a few of whom are LWVPFA members) were treated with jazz, harp, and vocal music and several inspirational speakers, only one of whom was an adult!

Bobbie Greer and her committee planned a lovely event. Thanks to Bobbie -- and to the Village of University Park for their support of the event. We were entertained initially by the Jazz Band from Crete Monee Middle School. During dinner we had harp music by Sophie Schloen, a student of member Beverly Myrow, and a vocal solo by Aundrea Pointer, one of Bobbie's fifth grade students.

Three of the four winners of the essay contest were introduced. Because of Women's History Month the theme of the essay was "A Woman Who Made a Difference." Montel Murry brought tears to the eyes of his mother (and probably some others) with his essay in appreciation of her. Ra'Jean Randle's essay also praised her mother who was busy snapping pictures with a big smile on her face. The essay by Leslie Elizabeth Garrett told of the efforts of Autherine Lucy (later Autherine Lucy Foster) to attend the University of Alabama in the 1950's. Autherine Lucy was Leslie's great aunt! Christina Gray who wrote about Coretta Scott King was unable to attend.



Donna Dettbarn was honored as University Park's Woman of the Year for her years of service to the Village where she has lived since 1971. Her early involvement was with the schools, as an officer of the PTO and later as a member of the school board.. Mrs. Dettbarn is currently chairperson of the University Park Academic Scholarship Fund. She has also served on the University Park Police and Fire Commission and was a Monee Township Trustee for 16 years. She is currently Monee Township Supervisor. Many township trustees were present to cheer Ms Dettbarn's award and accomplishments!

Dr. Marvel McCain Parker, director of Community Development for the Village of Summit and founder of AIDS Awareness Advocacy Inc., was keynote speaker. She is the author of "Breaking the Silence, the Impact of HIV/AIDS on African American Women and the Silence of the Church." She told the audience that 50% of the African-American students in five South Side Chicago high schools are HIV positive, and urged advocacy for HIV/AIDS prevention education in our schools.

If I hadn't attended the Black & White Gala, I wouldn't have appreciated the content of the winning essays, Mrs. Dettbarn's contributions to University Park, or the extent of the HIV/AIDS crisis among Chicago's youth. You can read the essays on our website www.lwvpfa.org.

26th Annual Park Forest House Tour "An Afternoon of Ideas" *By Barbara Moore*

As you all know by now, the Park Forest House Tour, cosponsored by The League of Women Voters and the Village of Park Forest is returning to the springtime this year.

The tour is set for Sunday, June 6, 2010 from 12:00pm to 5:00pm. This long-standing, well-received yearly event showcases the diversity of the Village's housing stock and many unique remodeling and decorating projects owners have undertaken and it serves as the League's major fundraiser.

You recently received a mailing asking you to sell tickets to your friends and family and to volunteer to staff the homes on the tour. We hope that you have responded to this request already but just in case you haven't this is a friendly reminder to do so. This is a great way to support the activities of our League!

Advance tickets for the tour are also available in the Manager's office at Park Forest Village Hall, 350 Victory Drive for \$10. On the day of the Tour, tickets can be purchased for \$15 between **noon and 3 p.m.** in the lobby of the Village Hall. You may call Barbara Moore at 708-481-5251 for more information.

Membership Update *By Pamela Wickliffe*

Mary Brown has joined the Membership Committee. We are very excited about this new development. We are looking for ideas of how to reach more men and women in our communities and let them know how great and easy it is to be part of the League. We are also looking for ideas on how to help our members get the most out of the League.

Intercom Mailings

We will be sending out electronic versions of *The Intercom*, starting with the Autumn issue. If you still would like to receive a copy through the mail, please let us know. Contact Sharon McGuire at sameguire@netscape.net or at our mailing address: LWVPFA, PO Box 782, Park Forest, IL 60466.

Observer Report on SD 227 Meeting April 20, 2010 *By Barbara Sturgess*

The meeting was held in the Rich East auditorium. All board members were present. Superintendent Howard Hunigan was absent due to the death of his father. There were over 100 in the audience, some of whom were newly tenured teachers who left after being introduced.

After the usual preliminaries, board secretary Jackie Upshaw explained the public comment process. She told the audience that board policy allows the board president to deny the right to speak to a citizen who had spoken on the same subject with the last two months. (The subject is to be shown in the card one submits to request to speak.) She explained there is a board policy that making insulting comments about another individual will be considered out-of-order.

Many citizens spoke. Fred Veazey requested a new superintendent search, stating that SD 227 is seen as a "closed district rife with nepotism, cronyism, and patronage.) Larry Roberts spoke in favor of the completed search process, stating, "Mrs. Leak has the credentials." Issac Hayes criticized the board president for, in an earlier meeting, stating that residents who don't like her board leadership should move. Beve Sokol was allowed to speak, after some consideration, and described the unprofessional handling of the "stakeholders" meeting she attended. Gerald Madison spoke in favor of the superintendent choice, stating that a new search would take too long. Dr. Taft challenged Dr. Leak to prove herself as superintendent and said he is tired of the board not listening to the public. Finally, Katie Armstrong said she is amazed the board went ahead with a decision on the superintendent before the results of an Attorney General investigation into whether they defied the Open Meetings Act.

Next Sonya McDonald, the district's Human Relation Director, introduced 23 district teachers who were just awarded tenure, after teaching four years in the district. Board members and principals congratulated them.

A teacher then presented information and slides on the SECME (Southeast Consortium for Minority Students in Engineering) program. She explained that two district students from the group have been awarded Exxon Mobile scholarships. She described the mousetrap contest, a conference for girls in engineering, trips to Kraft Foods, and the Museum of Science and Industry.

Next the consent agenda was approved, followed by Dr Leak presenting the 2010-2011 school calendar. After discussion of how dates were determined, the board approved the calendar.

The board then heard a report on recommended changes to the Discipline Section of the Parent-Student Handbook. Some changes were minor wording changes such as the addition of "mixed media" to restricted devices; electronic devices "must" be off instead of "should" be off; and the elimination of "shower shoes" as improper footwear because 'slippers' are already listed. There was a change in consequences for tobacco use, with "intervention" to occur after a second or third offense (not the first). The most controversial change was the recommendation that students not be allowed to wear ski vest in class.

There was discussion as to whether intervention should be provided earlier for students who use tobacco. The teacher responded that tobacco use was not a big problem in the schools. Both Ms. Hernandez and Ms. Upshaw expressed reluctance to approve the ski vest prohibition, largely because the only reason given for it was "a lot of students wear them." a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously passed to table approval of the changes to the Discipline Section of the handbook.

New teachers were introduced. There was an explanation of the PSAE exam. Scholarship winners were announced. There was approval of the contract for the new superintendent, Dr Leak. Dr. Leak expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve the students in this district. Ms. Upshaw complained that her son received a flyer recommending a school boycott which on the back featured her picture with a line drawn through her face.

Under new business, it was the consensus of the board to improve the communication with the community.

The observer left at 9:50 PM although the meeting hadn't adjourned.

Fair Map Update *By Sharon A. McGuire*

The following is an excerpt from The Chronicle.

“The Illinois Fair Map Amendment did not make the Nov. 2 ballot, but supporters have no reason to hang their heads. The five-month campaign to gather petition signatures generated surprising support for the grass-roots effort to reform Illinois’ broken legislative redistricting process.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois deserves accolades for coordinating this huge citizen initiative. Fair Map Amendment supporters, such as the Illinois Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Farm Bureau, and other groups, worked hard to educate the public and gather signatures.

While 120,000 is far short of the 288,000 valid signatures necessary, the number is not bad for a five-month petition campaign. On average, 24,000 signatures were collected each month. Had the campaign sustained that pace for 12 months, exactly 288,000 signatures would have been collected.

League members say they are not giving up, particularly after the rough verbal treatment they received at the hands of the Democratic-controlled Senate Redistricting Committee. These politicians don’t want to give up the power to redraw districts next year, after the final 2010 Census figures arrive.

With no changes coming for 2011, politicians might think their redistricting worries are over. We’re not so sure. Politicians will be under extreme public scrutiny during next year’s redistricting process. If a new Fair Map Amendment drive is launched during that time, it could attract renewed support from Illinoisans who are repulsed by unfairly drawn maps.

In the meantime, what’s reform-minded voter to do? Keep a watchful eye on the upcoming redistricting process. Ask legislative and congressional candidates about their stances on open and fair redistricting. Put pressure on candidates to support redistricting improvements, such as increased public input and scrutiny, and refuse to support politicians who back the status quo.”

During the May 15th Board Meeting of League of Women Voters Illinois, it was reported that the League and the Fair Map Amendments co-partners will analyze the petitions and decide on where we go from here. The Board wanted the members and volunteers who gathered so many petitions to know that their efforts were not in vain. While 2010 will not be the year of this reform, it might have laid the groundwork for future success.



American Government/History Awards *By Sharon A. McGuire*

It is with the spirit of having well informed citizens in the areas of Government and US History, that one of our members, Gretna Connor, initiated the Park Forest Area League of Women Voters Awards Program. This program acknowledges middle school students who have outstanding achievements in those areas. It is the belief of the League that being well informed is a requirement for being a good citizen, and the members of the League are proud of the accomplishment of these students.

All schools in the service area of our league are invited to participate in this award program. At the time of this writing, the only two schools who have replied with students to receive our award are Columbia Central School in Steger and O.W. Huth Middle School in Matteson. On May 25th the following students from Huth will be recipients of our American Government/History Award: Tiera Williams and Nia Stringfellow. On June 1st the following students will be recipients of our American Government/History Award: Angeliqua Ruthowski and Joshua Maghirang. Students will also receive a \$50.00 savings bond.



Park Forest Area League of Women Voters
Annual Meeting and Lunch
June 26, 2010
Carlo's Lorenzetti's
560 West Lincoln Highway (Rt. 30)
Chicago Heights, IL 60411

Lunch	12:00 pm
Meeting	1:30 pm
Cost	\$20.00

This is a good time to introduce friends to the League and all we stand for.

Make checks payable to **LWVPFA**

Mail with reservation form to:

Mary Truss
622 Old Forge Lane
University Park, IL 60484-3326

Deadline: June 19, 2010

Detach and mail to address above

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____ email _____

Number of reservations _____ Total Check \$ _____

Lunch choice

Please check one per reservation:

Chicken Picatta

Homemade Lasagna (Cheese)

Fettuccine Primavera

Wild Salmon



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS® OF THE PARK
FOREST AREA**

P.O. BOX 782
PARK FOREST, IL 60466

LWV/PFA

The Park Forest Area League of Women Voters welcomes all persons interested in promoting responsible government at any level. Good government does not happen without active citizen participation.

The LWV studies issues, gets to know public officials, observes at public meetings, lobbies on issues, registers voters, and provides many educational services.

Keep Democracy in Action Help Others Be Involved

League of Women Voters

Park Forest

P.O. box 72

Park Forest, IL 60466

lwvpfa.org

**We welcome members from Park Forest,
Bourbonnais, Chicago Heights, Crete, Matteson,
Mokena, Monee, Olympia Fields, Richton Park,
Steger, University Park, etc.**

Calendar of Events

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6/26	Annual & Meeting Lunch
7/24	Summer Breakfast
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