



Area

VOTER

July 2011

President's Corner

Sigi Psimenos

Dear Friends,

Summery 'cool' greetings to everyone! I'm writing this letter from our summer home in the Antarctic where I'm watching migrating whales..... don't I wish, but aren't you feeling a little cooler already!!! Despite the temperature, it's been a busy month! Hardworking **Wendy Covich, Kaye Gamble & Fran Cella** made our program with **Dr. Kimberly Nelson (cosponsored with ECN & Gail Borden)** a huge success. Whatever the outcome of our consensus, we, together with the rest of Elgin are surely learning through this local study issue, "**Method of Electing Elgin's City Council-At/Large, Ward, Mixed, or Other**". We've even had to extend the timetable of this study - as soon as one question is answered, two more pop up in its place and we want to make sure we're thorough in our research.

Loni Mecum, Sue Harney and Diane Robertson are busy putting the finishing touches on a 4-part

Continued on page 3



Don't miss our calendar of "Upcoming Events" on page 2

Online readers try this:

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This gives you the flexibility to zoom in to a size that's comfortable for you to read ("Actual Size" is my fave for Voter).

Plus you'll be able to navigate by clicking the bookmarks & hyperlinks, for instance the Table of Contents, any of the contact emails, or "see Page ___"

In this Issue:

President's Corner.....	1
Upcoming Events.....	2
LWVEA Co-Sponsors Kids Count Symposium.....	3
Federal Education Study Underway	4
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!	4
Study Group shares information on Electing Elgin's City Council Members.....	5
How to Run for Office: A Woman's Focus	6

Upcoming Events

Date	Time	Place	Description
Wednesday, August 17, 2011	7:00 pm	Tyler Towers Clubhouse 1450 Plymouth Ln, Elgin, IL 60123	Board Meeting. Attend this action-oriented meeting to bring our local programs alive. Key community issues are always discussed in a non-partisan manner.
Saturday, October 1, 2011 thru Saturday, November 5, 2011	9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Elgin YWCA, 220 East Chicago Street, Elgin, IL 60120	How to Run for Public Office: A Woman's Focus. Are you interested in becoming a civic leader? Let us help you. The YWCA Elgin and the League of Women Voters of Elgin/Carpentersville are offering a four week workshop that will help participants understand the process of becoming a civic leader and how to achieve this goal. The program is scheduled to occur over the course of four (4) weekends, from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm each day: - Oct 1, 2010: Free Introduction/Orientation & Nuts and Bolts - Oct. 15, 2011: Building Your Leadership Team, Define Your Message & Public Speaking - Oct. 29, 2011: Fundraising - Nov. 5, 2011: Mobilize to Win Election Day - Early Bird Registration: \$90.00 (deadline: July 1, 2011) - Registration Fee: \$120.00 after July 1, 2011 For more information, or to register, visit www.ywcaelgin.org or call the YWCA Elgin at 847.742.7930
Tuesday, September 20, 2011	7 pm	South Elgin High School (tentative)	Federal Education Study: Common Core Standards Forum with Dr. Cynthia Campbell of NIU
Thursday, October 13, 2011	8:30 am – 1:30 pm	DePaul University Naperville Campus	Voices for Illinois Children Kids Count Symposium
Thursday, October 19, 2011	7 pm	Batavia Library	Federal Education Study: Funding Forum with Ralph Martire of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability
Saturday, October 22, 2011	8:30 am - 1 pm	TBD	Federal Education Study: Consensus Meeting
Wednesday, December 14, 2011	TBD	The Anvil Club, 309 Meier Ave, East Dundee, IL 60118	LWV Annual Holiday Dinner. Join us for the League's annual holiday dinner on Wednesday, December 14th, 2011 at the Anvil Club. Additional details to be provided.

LWVEA Co-Sponsors Kids Count Symposium

Laurel Bault

The 2011 Illinois Kids Count data book, published by [Voices for Illinois Children](#), looks at the many factors that prepare children to have the greatest opportunities for learning in school. By the end of third grade, children should be ready to make the shift from “learning to read” to “reading to learn” – a critical building block for continued success. Much goes into preparing children for this transition, from high-quality early learning opportunities to good health to supportive families and communities. The Kids Count Symposium will provide the opportunity for attendees from Suburban Cook, DuPage and Kane Counties to hear leading experts discuss the importance of the years from birth to 8 and how these years impact life-long learning. Because the League of Women Voters and public policy are key components to healthy families and communities, our board voted to become a co-sponsor of this event. Please mark your calendars:

Voices for Illinois Children Kids Count Symposium
Thursday, October 13, 2011
DePaul University - Naperville Campus
8:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

For more information, please contact [Laurel Bault](#) at laurelbault@yahoo.com.

Continued from page 1

program, done in collaboration with the YWCA, and aptly named “**How to Run for Office - A Woman’s Focus**”. This will be the first program of it’s kind in the country and we think it’ll be an invaluable tool for anyone looking to make a difference in their community whether it’s running for the local school board, or a state office. Not only will this program teach political tactics, and the nuts & bolts of running for any office (from legal requirements to mock candidate forums), but participants will learn, first hand, from veterans who’ve both won & lost major elections.

Our national study, “**The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education**,” is underway. Be sure to review the attached information submitted by [Laurel Bault](#) and go to the national website so you can join us as we learn more and prepare for member consensus in late October.

[Sandy Kaptain](#) is busy getting our local league involved with **climate change issues** on a statewide basis through LWVIL. [Myra Becker](#) is working on **Mental Health**. [Carol Grom](#) is working on the **Brunner Property** & the issues that could face it in the future. [Fran Cella](#) is not only working

Continued on page 4



The LWVEA delegates at the LWVIL Annual Meeting in June.

There were a variety of educational sessions and excellent opportunities to learn League “best practices” from other chapters across the state.



Federal Education Study Underway

Laurel Bault

The Education Study scope is broad and includes the following areas under the role of the federal government in public education (preK through grade 12): the history, funding and equity issues which are addressed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and the common core standards/assessments which are required for many federal grant programs but are national, not federal. The culminating position will address only those issues delineated in the scope.

Mark Your Calendar:

September 20, 2011 (Tuesday) – Common Core Standards Forum – Dr. Cynthia Campbell – NIU

October 19, 2011 (Thursday) – Funding Forum – Ralph Martire – Center for Tax and Budget Accountability

October 22, 2011 (Saturday)
League Consensus Meeting

Sub Committees are working on pre-study packets for League members and will be distributed with enough time for members to come fully prepared for a rich discussion and consensus process.

Questions???, please contact **Laurel Bault** – **EA Study** Chair via e-mail at laurelbault@yahoo.com. Please title your e-mail as LWV Education Study. To access the study guides and background papers on standards and funding issues, [click here](#) or search for education study on the homepage of lwvus.org.

Continued from page 3

on **redistricting**, but has added **fracking** to her plate. These are not easy issues, in fact, they're enough to make you scream at times. But, if we don't tackle them-who will????

You joined the League for a reason. For some it was to register voters, for others it was to be of service and make a difference. Let us know how we can help you achieve these goals. Join us at our next **monthly board meeting** which is open to all members on July 17th @7 PM.

Yours,
Sigi

P.S. **Janet Poyner**, our Membership Chair, has notified me that not everyone has paid their dues. Even losing one member is important to me. If it is for hardship reasons, or any other reason, please let me know so we can rectify the matter. sigiusa@yahoo.com

LWVEA members Loni Mecum and Gretchen Mitchell at the New Citizen Recognition Ceremony in June.

We registered 14 new citizens, some as "new" as 5 days!

Thanks to Andrea Fiebig for the photo.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Would you like to serve on the **Community Garden Network Committee**? If so, please contact **Donna Askins** at donna.askins@gmail.com or 815.751.2799.

League Committee Members are needed for the **Elgin City Council Study**. Contact **Wendy Covich** at w.covich@dla-ltd.com



Study Group shares information on Electing Elgin's City Council Members

Wendy Covich

To paraphrase the LWVUS website, Studies are part of League Program. It is the basis for all of the positions the League uses to affect public policy. Program is such an integral part of the League that, according to one League publication, "Program is the League's reason for being."

Part of our 2011 Program is our **City Council study** and the committee has been busy meeting and gathering information to share with the group. One of our first educational sessions occurred in July in a program our League organized. Special thanks to **Kaye Gamble** for putting in the tremendous effort to make it happen. The event was co-sponsored by the Elgin Community Network and Gail Borden Public Library.

At this session, Kimberly Nelson, assistant professor of public administration at Northern Illinois University, gave pros and cons of ward and at-large council systems.

According to a [TribLocal report](#) by Melissa Jenco who attended the event, "roughly 64 percent of city governments whose daily operations are overseen by a city manager - like Elgin - use an at-large system of council representation, according to Nelson. She said the system was created to eradicate machine politics."

The key advantage of an at-large system appears to be that council members in this system tend to advocate for the community at large, rather than their specific ward.

The ward system, it seems, has historically increased the occurrence of black males being elected to councils, but statistics do not show that women or Latino candidates have realized any advantage from this system. Indeed, Nelson explained that a concerted effort must be made to draw ward boundaries that deliberately focus on corralling underrepresented populations if there is to be any advantage for those populations.

Another option would be to have wards, but also a certain number of council members representing the at-large population. Not much research has been conducted on this type of system.

Melissa Jenco reported that "...government issues like efficiency and how the council is spending money are more affected by whether a mayor or a city manager oversees the day-to-day operations rather than how councilmen are elected."

Kimberly Nelson also brought up the potential for lawsuits with any changes to the current system.

The LWVEA Study Group will be sharing additional findings in the coming weeks. We're also working on a survey to further understand how well the community feels the current system is representing us.

Special Thanks to Janet Poyner and her sister for treating the LWVEA City Council Study Group to a wonderful presentation on a real life comparison of Ward vs. At-Large systems.



Kimberly Nelson, assistant professor of public administration at Northern Illinois University, shared her expertise on the pros and cons of ward and at-large council systems.





How to Run for Office: a Woman's Focus

Are you interested in becoming a civic leader? Let us help you.

The YWCA Elgin and the League of Women Voters of Elgin/Carpentersville are offering a four week workshop that will help participants understand the process of becoming a civic leader and how to achieve this goal.

October 1, 2011 • October 15, 2011 • October 29, 2011 • November 5, 2011

Nuts and Bolts of Running for Public Office • Building Your Leadership Team • Fundraising Activities • Mobilize to Win Election Day

9:00am - 12:00pm

YWCA Elgin, 220 E. Chicago St., Elgin, IL 60120

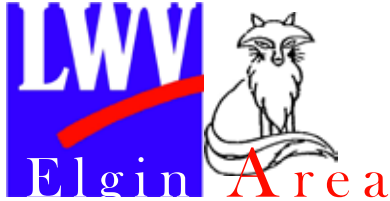
Registration Fee: \$120.00 after July 1, 2011



Act Now! - Early Bird Registration: \$90.00 (deadline: July 1, 2011)



For more information or to register visit ywcaelgin.org or call the YWCA Elgin at 847.742.7930



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 at w.covich@dla-ltd.com
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The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase the understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through citizen education and advocacy.

The League of Women Voters of the Elgin Area invites you to become a member of this active, grass-roots oriented organization. Membership costs: \$60 Individual; \$90 Household; \$30 Student.

To join, please send this form and your payment payable to: League of Women Voters of the Elgin Area, 569 Franklin Blvd., Elgin, IL 60120

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