



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF EVANSTON

THE INTERCOM

APRIL - MAY 2013

LWV Annual Meeting

Celebrate 100 Years of Illinois Women Voting in 2013

The Annual Meeting is always a special event, but our 2013 meeting, set for Wednesday evening, May 22, at the King Home, will be extra-special. We will celebrate the centennial of women's suffrage in Illinois with "A Conversation with Elizabeth Cady Stanton." No, we won't be channeling Mrs. Stanton, but we will have the next-best thing when Eileen Vorbach of WomanLore brings the pre-eminent leader of the 19th Century women's suffrage movement to life. Stanton's Declaration of Sentiments, presented at the first women's rights convention held in Seneca



Falls, New York, is often credited with initiating the first organized women's rights and women's suffrage movements in the United States.

This is our year to celebrate the League's proud history of promoting voting rights and civic engagement. Please come and be newly inspired! We will also conduct our annual business meeting and elect new leadership for the League of Women Voters of Evanston. Meeting materials will be sent out to members in early May.

Living History:

League Members in DC for 1913 Suffrage Parade Re-Enactment

Evanston League members Lori Osborne (L) and Cate Whitcomb (R) went to Washington, DC the weekend of March 1-4 to take part in activities celebrating the 100th anniversary of the parade organized by Alice Paul for the National American Woman Suffrage Association. Held one day before the inauguration of President Woodrow Wilson, the 1913 parade featured 8,000 marchers advocating for a constitutional amendment granting women the right to vote. "Though the parade began late, it appeared to be off to a good start until the route along Pennsylvania Avenue became choked with tens of thousands of spectators – mostly men in town for the inauguration. Marchers were jostled and ridiculed by many in the crowd. Some were tripped, others assaulted. Policemen appeared to be either indifferent to the struggling paraders, or sympathetic to the mob. Before the day was out, one hundred marchers had been hospitalized." (see link below)



American History. They photographed re-enactors playing the role of suffragists protesting in front of the White House and giving speeches in the History Museum. To cap off the weekend, they gained admission to the Library of Congress, where they studied original newspapers from June of 1913, when Illinois women won the right to vote.

Happily there was no "jostling and ridicule" during the 2013 re-enactment. While in Washington, Lori and Cate visited exhibits at the National Archives that included the original 19th Amendment, and campaign and suffrage material at the Museum of

Living History in Evanston: Did you know that Evanston held a rally to celebrate winning the right to vote for women in Illinois **seven years ahead of the ratification of the 19th Amendment?** Did you know that the author of the Illinois bill was Evanston attorney Catharine Waugh McCulloch? These and other hallmarks of Evanston's leadership role in the suffrage movement will be remembered on **Friday, June 14**, with a re-enactment of a 1913 rally that was described as "the largest public demonstration in the history of Evanston." The Evanston LWV, in collaboration with the City of Evanston; the Frances Willard Historical Association; the Evanston History Center; and the Woman's Club of Evanston, is spearheading the event. The rally will take place on the lawn of the Willard House on Chicago Avenue. More information to come!

President's Letter

I am not sure how many more League activities one could squeeze into one season. As spring begins, we are bursting at the seams just like the new plants and flowers that are patiently waiting to shoot through the ground. Our activities have been front and center in our community—a clear indication of a strong organization with an amazing commitment to safeguarding democracy.

If you're returning from some time away or if you've recently joined our League, this is a feast of activities that will delight your senses and stimulate your intellect. Starting things off has been an interesting array of candidate forums for the school board and aldermanic elections. (And here's a little secret: Kate Julian had more inquiries about whether our League could assist in organizing candidate forums for communities in the area than one could possibly imagine. With her steady hand at the tiller, she guided the process by either organizing a forum or working out alternatives that would help organizations or communities become familiar with the candidates.) Many kudos to Kate for her efforts. By the time you read this issue, we'll be parading to the polls and reminding our friends and neighbors to march right along with us.

While I'm on the topic of parades, Cate Whitcomb and Lori Osborne marched in the 100 Year Anniversary of the Celebration of Women's Suffrage in Washington, DC on March 3. When we march to the King Home on Wednesday, May 22 for our annual meeting, we'll have a wonderful presentation on Elizabeth Cady Stanton by WomanLore.

There's a new movement afoot at the LWVIL and we started learning about it at the 2013 LWVIL issues briefing. You've likely seen some announcements in recent issues of *The Intercom*. Now is the time for the discussions on the Fair and Graduated Rate Income Tax to build momentum and there's an article on Page 3 of this issue that builds the foundation for the initiative. The ultimate goal is to get the measure on the 2014 Illinois General Election ballot as a constitutional amendment.

As we reflect on elections that occurred in 2012, it is so blatantly apparent that the Citizens United ruling by the Supreme Court (in 2010) opened the floodgates to anonymous fund raising for campaigns resulting in a barrage of advertising in battleground states. Our league members (and their guests) will have a golden opportunity to hear a vibrant discussion of the absolute necessity of campaign finance reform at our 2013 LWV Evanston Education Fund dinner at the Evanston Golf Club. This stimulating panel discussion/debate will be moderated by Laura Washington and include Cynthia Canary, former Executive Director of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform; Evanston's own Brian Brady, Executive Director of the Mikva Challenge, a civic engagement program for high school students; and Mikva alum Allen Linton.

By then we'll need a breather but on June 7 - 10, we will have the LWVIL state convention in Bloomington/Normal and on the evening of June 14 we will have a rally at the Frances Willard House Museum with a celebration worth proclaiming to the world (even if it's only heard in Evanston): Illinois women have been voting for 100 years and we should never underestimate our power and influence!

See you at the annual meeting on May 22, and by all means please come to our rally on June 14.

Warm wishes for a beautiful spring, *Susan*



League of Women Voters of Evanston

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THE INTERCOM

March - April 2013

THE INTERCOM is the newsletter of the League of Women Voters® of Evanston



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State League Advocates for A Graduated Rate Income Tax

The Illinois LWV is taking on the state's income tax system—judged by many experts to be among the most unfair in the nation—as a major advocacy issue. Here is a statement on this key issue. For more information, go to:

www.lwvill.org/GRITProject.asp

While the Great Recession may have ended in June 2009, Illinois is still struggling with mounting debt, slow job growth and a structural deficit—hampering our ability to invest in job growth.



The Illinois Constitution mandates a flat-rate income tax, the effect of which is to over-tax low and middle income wage-earners and their families. Over time, their income in inflation-adjusted terms has been flat or declining. Their tax burden detracts from what they might otherwise spend in their local economies. (The biggest driver of the private sector economy is consumer spending, which now accounts for over 66 percent of all economic activity.) Illinois ranks third among the 50 states in the tax burden for low income families. By placing a heavier burden on low and moderate income earners, taxation is focused where the economy is contracting instead of where it is expanding.

The lowest 20% of Illinois earners (under \$18,000) have the largest tax burden (13.7%) with the highest 1% (\$500,000 and up) paying only 5.3%. Of the 41 states with an individual income tax, all but 7 have a graduated tax rate structure. A graduated rate income/fair tax could lower the tax rate of 94% of Illinois' taxpayers who earn under \$150,000 while raising the effective rate on those making over \$150,000 by just 3%.

This regressive tax system also contributes to the state's structural deficit, because it is not designed to grow to maintain needed services in a modern economy. To be considered sustainable, a tax system must yield a stream of revenue that grows at the same pace as the services it is intended to fund.

A graduated rate/fair income tax will not hurt the economy but will actually help it. The nine states with the highest graduated rate income tax rate structures had better growth in the state GDP per capita, better change in median wage, and identical unemployment rates, than the nine states with no income tax. **A graduated rate income/fair tax would not be a new tax**

but a new and fairer revenue system.

Structural deficits prevent the state from making investments in infrastructure, transit, education and other priorities. Essential services are being cut as revenue growth is not keeping pace with the cost of services. In fact, there have been many warnings that the State of Illinois is in a precarious financial condition and needs some solid changes very soon. Illinois State Comptroller Judy Baar Topinka noted that in the last four years, Illinois' general obligation bonds

have been downgraded four times by Fitch, three times by Standard and Poor's and four times by Moody's. Most recently, Standard and Poor's lowered the rating from A+ to A with a negative outlook **giving Illinois the lowest credit score in the nation** and costing taxpayers more in interest payments on borrowed funds.

And while the State struggles to pay its bills, essential services will suffer with the budget process. Education is facing \$400 million in General State Aid cuts next year because of increased pension cost pressure on the budget. This would be the third year that education suffers cuts and Illinois already ranks 50th in the nation for funding our public schools. Even worse, recent projections by the Governor's office indicate that by the year 2015-2016, education spending will drop by more than \$1.4 billion with human services dropping by \$1 billion.

There will continue to be serious cuts in essential services if our state legislators do not find a solution to the pension crisis. Pension debt payments will overtake every other service in our state if not resolved. Now at some \$97 billion due, each day this is not resolved another \$17 million is added to that total. The Governor's fiscal projections indicate that state taxes and federal assistance will increase in 2014 by \$600 million but pension obligations will increase by \$945 million, more than wiping out the increase in revenues.

There is not much good news for Illinois' financial future. With all this forecasting, it's clear that Illinois has a revenue problem and it's time to consider a new revenue plan.

The League of Women Voters of Illinois supports a Graduated Rate/Fair income tax system.

Ed Fund Dinner Serves Up Campaign Finance Reform As Main Course

— by Helen Gagel

In this era of multi-billion-dollar political campaigns and unregulated PACs, is there any possibility of putting a lid on spending? That is the question an expert panel will take up at the Evanston League of Women Voters Education Fund Dinner on Saturday, May 4 at the Evanston Golf Club.



Laura Washington (photo by Karen Kring)

Chicago journalist Laura Washington will lead a discussion of *Money, Media and Mayhem: Real Solutions for Campaign Finance Reform*. Joining her on the panel are Cynthia Canary, founder of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform; Brian Brady, executive director of the Mikva Public Service Challenge, and Allen Minton, a Mikva Challenge alum who is pursuing a PhD in American Politics at the University of Chicago.

Proceeds from the dinner will benefit the League of Women Voters Education Fund, which supports the League's nonpartisan educational programs including candidate and issues forums, voters guides, and voter registration. The event includes both a live and silent auction.

The League has a 25-year history of providing a forum for discussion of important local, state and national issues at our Education Fund dinner. This year we are putting the spotlight on an issue that has put a damper on the free exchange of ideas in our political campaigns. Among the topics up for discussion by the panel are:

- After all the votes were counted in the 2012 election, how influential were the Super PACS?
- The role of media: did coverage of money outstrip coverage of issues? Or **was** money the defining issue?
- What is/should be the role of "good government" groups, such as the League, in this new political ecosystem?

Our panelists:

Laura S. Washington, a columnist for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, brings more than two decades of experience as a non-profit professional and multi-media journalist who specializes in African-American affairs, local and national politics, race and racism, and social justice. She also serves as a political analyst for ABC-7 Chicago, and is a frequent commentator on National Public Radio and Chicago Public Radio. Her prior experience includes serving as deputy press secretary to Mayor Harold Washington, Chicago's first black mayor. She also served as a producer for the investigative unit at CBS-2/Chicago, correspondent for "Chicago Tonight" on WTTW-TV, and wrote an op-ed column for the Chicago Tribune. Washington earned her Bachelor's and Master's in journalism from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern

University, where she has also taught and lectured.

Cynthia Canary is a consultant to nonprofit organizations, providing leadership coaching, executive search, strategic planning and policy development services. She is best known as founder and former executive director of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, a non-profit, non-partisan public interest group that conducts research, educates the public and advocates reforms to promote public

participation to address the role of money in politics and encourage integrity, accountability, and transparency in government. Her resume also includes four years' service as executive director of the Illinois LWV. More recently, she chaired Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel's Task Force on Ethics, whose task it was to develop recommendations on best practices in municipal ethics for the City of Chicago.

Brian Brady has served as Executive Director of the Mikva Challenge for 13 years and has worked in education and youth civic engagement for over 20 years. Education Secretary Arne Duncan recently identified Mikva Challenge as a national model for a new strategy of civic learning called 'action civics'. Action civics involves young people taking authentic democratic action in their schools and neighborhoods through electoral participation, community activism, and youth policymaking, and Mikva currently provides action civics programming to over 5500 youth in over 90 high schools in the Chicagoland area including Evanston.

As a student at Chicago's Morgan Park High School, **Allen Linton** won the "I Dream a City" Mikva Challenge essay contest and went with 25 students to Washington DC to see politics up close and meet a freshman Senator from Illinois who would win the presidency two years later. He pursued his interest in politics as an undergraduate at the University of Chicago. Upon receiving his BA with honors in Political Science in 2011, he decided to remain at U of C to pursue his PhD in American Politics - specializing in youth politics, new/social media, and local electoral contests. He has worked on political campaigns at the local, state, and national level.

Invitations will be in the mail shortly for the May 4 dinner. Individual tickets are \$125, patrons, \$150. If you are interested in sponsoring a table, contact Karen Hunt. Want to donate auction items? Gloria Callaci will be happy to take your call. Support this event, our only major fundraiser for the LWV Education Fund!

Karen Hunt khunt@firstbt.com Ph: 847-733-7400
Gloria Callaci gicallaci@aol.com Ph: 847-491-1969

In Memory of Virginia Rosenberg



Former Evanston League President Virginia Rosenberg died February 27 at the age of 83 after a battle with cancer. She and her husband Robert Rosenberg, enjoyed their retirement years in Evanston. He is Professor Emeritus of Chemistry at Lawrence University, whose President, Jill Beck, sent this remembrance to the Lawrence community:

Born in Erie, Pa., Nov. 9, 1929, Ginny earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry and math from Northwestern University in 1950 and married Bob on June 7, 1951. After raising three children, Ginny returned to school and earned her master's degree in systems engineering from UW-Madison in 1976, which she applied in positions as an engineer for Kendall Manufacturing in Green Bay and American Can Corp. in Neenah until 1984.

During Bob's teaching career here, she was especially fond of welcoming into her home Lawrence students who didn't have a place to go for the holidays. She also enjoyed entertaining many of Bob's faculty colleagues and their spouses.

It was a pleasure for me, each and every time, to welcome Bob and

Ginny back to the Lawrence campus. One recent occasion was the awarding of the honorary doctorate to Bob's mentee, 2009 Nobel Prize winner Tom Steitz '62. Ginny's lovely, warm manner and engaging personality made that weekend even more enjoyable for all involved. I will remember her as a woman who consistently radiated good will and positive emotions toward others. Her presence will be greatly missed by the Lawrence community.

One of her life's highlights was spending 1984-85 in Nairobi, Kenya, working for the U.S. Agency for International Development conducting computer education projects to encourage Kenyan small business development. Upon her return to the states, Ginny launched her own business indexing books for various publishers around the country, a vocation she practiced for more than 20 years until 2008.

Both in Appleton and later in Evanston, IL., in retirement, Ginny was active in the community, volunteering with the League of Women Voters in both cities, as well the Appleton Redevelopment Authority, Appleton Memorial Hospital Board, the Presbyterian Church, Planned Parenthood and the Republican Party of Outagamie County. She also served on the Alumnae Board at Northwestern University.

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Dino Robinson Brings Evanston Black History to Life

– by Elizabeth Hayford

The League of Women Voters of Evanston observed African American history month on February 13 with a rich presentation by Dino Robinson, founder of Shorefront Legacy Center. Robinson, a graphic designer by profession and a historian by avocation, some years ago recognized a challenge when he saw three folders in the Evanston History Center titled "Colored." He faced the challenge by beginning research on the African American community in Evanston and the North Shore, by writing a series of articles in 1995 for the *Evanston Clarion*, and by embarking on an effort to collect documents and artifacts, now housed and displayed in the Shorefront Legacy Center in Evanston.

Robinson linked his engagement with family and community history to a childhood visit to his grandmother in South Carolina where he was fascinated by a family photograph album. This shaped his vision of Shorefront, which opened in 2002 as a repository for books, papers, photographs and other artifacts of the African American community in Evanston and the North Shore. He shared colorful stories of the quest for information about longtime Evanston families, which lead to interviews with family members willing to share their history and make connections with the community history.

He related the story of William Twiggs, one of the early African American employees of the City of Evanston as well as a businessman who worked as a barber, a printer, and in other trades. His wife was also a successful businesswoman and developer of beauty products, and

his daughter studied music at ETHS and Northwestern, and then went on to work professionally, including with Duke Ellington.

Edwin Jourdain, Jr, was not only Evanston's first African American alderman who served on City Council from 1931 - 1945, but was a successful Chicago journalist, a Harvard graduate who worked against discrimination there, and a leader in the national struggle to dismantle segregation who spoke widely throughout the United States.

The Evanston African American community included an active music scene, particularly in the 1960's, when local doo-wop groups performed and recorded locally and nationally.

One lesson from Shorefront is that the struggle against segregation in Evanston that became visible in the 1960's started much earlier in the century, and reflected a slow and steady push against Jim Crow restrictions that characterized Evanston in the 1930's and 1940's. Shorefront works to convey this history to the younger generation, providing programs for kindergarten students who are shocked to hear about the situation in the "old days." Shorefront also offers opportunities for teenagers to serve as Legacy Keepers and trains them to interview relatives to continue building the collections.

League members were fascinated by Robinson's insights into Evanston Black History, and moved by the leadership shown by so many Evanston African Americans. We appreciate the important work of Shorefront, and the vivid presentation provided by Dino Robinson.

Evanston Climate Action Campaign — 25% by 2016

- by Eleanor Revelle

Thanks to Community Choice Aggregation for Electricity, Evanston residents and small business owners are enjoying lower electric bills, saving an average of \$250/household over 12 months and an estimated \$7 million community wide. Moreover, with the City Council's unanimous decision to choose a provider offering 100% renewable energy, Evanston is on target to achieve a 17% reduction in its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (relative to a 2005 baseline), surpassing the 13%-by-2012 reduction goal set in the Evanston Climate Action Plan.



But much more remains to be done to reduce our collective carbon footprint. Members of Evanston's environmental community have developed a climate action campaign to achieve a next emissions-reduction goal of **25% by 2016** (again relative to the 2005 baseline). Assuming the continuation of 100% renewable energy for electricity, meeting the new goal will require additional emissions reductions of about 2% each year for the next four years.

The **25% by 2016** campaign will pursue five strategies.

1. Retain 100% green power for Evanston residents and small businesses. Evanston's current aggregation contract runs for just one year. Maintaining 100% green power in subsequent years is absolutely essential to achieving the 25% emissions-reduction goal.

2. Develop and implement a green power program for mid-sized businesses. Many Evanston businesses are too large for the community aggregation program but are too small to have leverage in contracting for a lower-cost electrical supply. Conversations with

electricity suppliers and the business community are underway to create a business green power program.

3. Improve building efficiency through an intensive retrofit program. Buildings are one of the two biggest sources of Evanston GHG emissions and are the focus of the Nicor Gas Community Challenge. This initiative is launching the push for building efficiency upgrades – and is giving Evanstonians a chance to raise \$25,000 to retrofit the facility of a local nonprofit chosen by the community.

4. Reduce transportation emissions through system innovations and behavior change. Transportation is the other big source of local GHG emissions. The campaign will promote system innovations aimed at making alternatives to the private automobile more attractive and will encourage Evanstonians to try different modes of travel that produce fewer GHG emissions.

5. Promote further energy savings by the City and other major Evanston institutions. The campaign will encourage the city's seven largest employers to commit to reducing their emissions by 2%/year through 2016.

An invitation to climate action.

Achieving this new climate action goal depends on all of us, acting individually and collectively. The **25% by 2016** campaign committee invites the League of Women Voters of Evanston to join the growing list of organizations that have endorsed the 25% campaign and agreed to mobilize their members to reduce their carbon footprints.

January Luncheon Recap: "Food & Water Are Essential for Life"

- by Beth Karlin

But will we always have access to good food and fresh water? On January 22, the Evanston League joined the Glenview League for lunch at the Koi Restaurant to discuss this question. An informal panel of Glenview activists and experts, including Henrietta Saunders, Joan Ziegler, Sheri Latash, and Roxanne Junge, discussed the latest trends in food and water sustainability. Joan's introduction covered how the Glenview League got involved with issues of sustainable food and agriculture at a 2010 Program Planning Pot Luck Dinner, noting that the a reason for the high level of interest is that "everyone eats."

Sheri focused on the multiple meanings of the terms "food security" and "food sovereignty." Security and safety play a role in redefining our means of producing and distributing foods, she noted: "Is our food and water supply secure in light of climate change, new diseases, exotic species? What about the adequacy of our supplies in an emergency? And the post 9/11 meaning of food security must include protecting our food & water systems from agri-terrorism." One response to concerns about food security is the rebuilding of our local food system, a common sense precautionary action.

The term "food sovereignty" refers to the right to have the food system we want, and is a movement to shift control of food systems from multinational agribusinesses to local governments and communities. The term was coined in 1996 by La Via Campesina, an international coalition that promotes sustainable agriculture by small and medium size producers. In the U.S. "food sovereignty" usually refers to local or individual efforts to produce, eat, or drink foods without government interference, such as the ability to purchase raw milk or the production of homemade "cottage foods."

As Manager of Glenview's Farmers Market, Roxanne Junge is dedicated to increasing community access to locally produced fruits and vegetables. She also serves on the Illinois Department of Public Health task force working on harmonizing regulations related to implementation of the Illinois Cottage Food Law. That law permits local entrepreneurs to prepare low-risk foods in home kitchens. "I hope I can make a difference by encouraging more cooperation between the Department of Public Health and local food purveyors." Roxanne described some of the constraints of Illinois's Home Food Act: "It permits some homemade foods (but not baked goods) to be

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LWVE Calendar At A Glance

Sunday, April 28

North Shore Leagues Panel Discussion on Graduated Rate Income Tax (GRIT)

Current Panelists: Robyn Gabel and Daniel Biss
Time and Location: TBD

Saturday, May 4 6:00 pm

LWV Evanston Education Fund Dinner
Evanston Golf Club (details page 4)

Wednesday, May 22 5:30 pm

2013 LWVE Annual Meeting

James L. King Home (details page 1)

Friday, June 7 to Sunday, June 9

LWVIL State Convention in Bloomingdale, IL

Friday, June 14 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Rally Celebrating 100 Years of Illinois Women Voting
Frances Willard House Museum

1730 Chicago Avenue in Evanston

All programs are free unless otherwise noted.

For more information call 847-866-7844

or visit **Calendar Updates** at: www.lwve.org



A warm Spring welcome to our new members!

Theresa Cameron | Lisa Stein | Ed Tivador

Civic Responsibility of Educated Women: A Lesson from Jane Addams

by Elizabeth Kinney

This was the title of Professor Beth Kelly's talk on March 11, 2013. Addams wanted to attend Smith College but her father was opposed, so she attended and graduated from Rockford College. In a college debate in 1880, she was the only woman among eight men, including William Jennings Bryan. In 1911 she lobbied the Illinois legislature with Ellie Bush, seeking suffrage for women. She also participated in the 1912 suffrage parade down Michigan Avenue. That same year, she addressed the Progressive Party, becoming the first woman to speak at a major party's political convention.

Addams was a tireless advocate for world peace, serving as a delegate to the Peace Convention in The Hague in 1915. In 1931 she won the Nobel Peace Prize – the first U.S. woman to do so, but she had to share it with Nicholas Murray Butler. Because of her activism, her activities were carefully monitored by J. Edgar Hoover's FBI.

She sought educational opportunities for all women, even if they were excluded from direct political participation. Addams was a founder of Hull House and a leader in the professionalization of social work. At one time Hull House occupied an entire city block. It provided services to immigrants, ranging from day nurseries to college courses, and served people of all races and ethnicities.

According to Addams, wisdom comes through knowledge of life – there are no set rules. Further, she believed that, if you are educated, you have an obligation to challenge authority. In this regard, she was a significant influence on Eleanor Roosevelt. She took civic responsibility very seriously and expected other educated women to do likewise.

There are still openings for the League's planned tour of Hull House on Friday, May 17, 2013 at 2 pm. If you are interested, please call the League office at 847-866-7844.

Virginia Rosenberg continued from page 5

At Ginny's request, a memorial service will be held in the spring in Appleton, when the flowers are blooming.

In addition to her husband, Bob, Ginny is survived by two children, Charlie Rosenberg, Milwaukee, and Dr. Margaret Wilde, New York, N.Y., and two grandchildren, Nathaniel Wilde, 15 and Emma Wilde, 18. She was preceded in death by a son, James Rosenberg, in 1994. Condolences can be directed to Prof. Rosenberg at 2001 Sherman Ave., #505, Evanston, IL 60201.

Ginny served as Evanston LWV president in 2007-2008. Said her son Charlie: "I can't remember a time when the League of Women Voters was not a very important part of my mother's life."

January Luncheon continued from page 6

sold in a farmer's market. However, much time and effort is required simply to register a small incubator business with the state health department. We all want food safety, but state and federal rules and regulations make it burdensome for small farmers and incubator businesses to gain access to public markets." She reminded everyone that more lobbying support is necessary to make needed changes in the law.

The issue of food labeling was addressed next. In addition to nutrition information, many people read labels for health & safety reasons or to determine alignment with their values. Labeling programs developed by the government, (e.g. National Organic Program), non-profit organizations (e.g. Certified Naturally Grown), and businesses (e.g. Whole Foods' Global Animal Partnership) were mentioned. USDA's little-known (to consumers) Country of Origin Labeling program (which applies to retail businesses that annually purchase \$230,000 or more of fruits and vegetables) was highlighted.

"Food and water are essential for life," emphasized Henrietta, president of the Lake Michigan League. "I am motivated by a vision of health for the Earth and its inhabitants; I love nature and believe that if we can get our food systems and our usage of water resources on a more sustainable path, then we would solve many of the problems of the world." She is also motivated by the "super-nice, super-thoughtful, and very smart individuals" she works with as a volunteer, which also describes all of the panel participants, as well as their audience.



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Join us at an informal coffee to learn more.



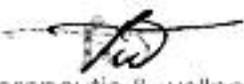
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Observers Summary

League observers are our “eyes and ears” at the City Council and its standing committees, which set policy and direction for the City. If you’d like to learn the nitty-gritty of local government, being an observer is a great way to start. Call Jessica Feldman, Observer Chair, at 847-864-2199 for more information. Here’s a summary of what happened recently.

Candidate Information for the April 9 Election: Members of the Local Government Committee developed a seven-question survey for the 12 individuals running for City Council. The survey was posted on the League’s website and distributed to major news outlets in Evanston. LWVE also held two forums on the morning of March 18 at the Morton Civic Center for contested races—one for Sixth Ward Alderman between Mark Tendam, the incumbent, and Mark Sloane, the challenger; and the other for Evanston Township Supervisor between two challengers, Keith Banks and Gary Gaspard.

Mayor’s State of the City Address: Mayor Tisdahl gave her State of the City address March 8, highlighting many positives and a few negatives about her assessment of where the City is. You can find the text on the City’s website: www.cityofevanston.org/government.

Water Sales: A February City Council meeting was devoted primarily to a report on Lake Michigan water sales from the City of Evanston to six municipalities which are considering purchasing water from us. The study identified four possible routes for pipes to carry water to these customers. Because of the differing possibilities, such as quantity of water, distance to the pump, volume at various times of day, no firm cost was defined for any of the municipalities. While it is likely that Evanston would have to expend funds for the upgrade of the water treatment plant, this was not factored in to this particular report. *Stay tuned. . .*

Chicago-Main TIF: Following discussion at several City Council meetings, the Tax Increment Financing District (TIF) covering the area around Dempster and Main Streets was approved by a 7 to 2 vote, with Aldermen Burrus and Wilson voting against it. Proponents feel it will spur development in the area of Chicago and Main. The TIF stretches from Oakton to Dempster along the Metra tracks and expands at Main and Chicago to include that significant shopping district. The TIF is expected to generate \$25 million in property tax increases over its 23 years of existence. Evanston currently has five other TIFs and has recently closed one out in the downtown area which is credited with funding the Century Theater complex and surrounding buildings.

Arts in Evanston: EvanstARTS, a joint project of the City of Evanston, the Evanston Community Foundation, and the Evanston Arts Council, has been working for a year and a half

on a report which could be the basis of a roadmap of the future of the arts in Evanston. This report was delivered to the City Council March 18. Another report, prepared for the City and the National Endowment of the Arts, was delivered to the City Council in January. It envisioned an “arts corridor” with three venues, one for a variety of performances, one for dance and music, and one to provide a home for Northlight Theater. While all these are being considered, there is activity at the other local venues such as Noyes, Fleetwood-Jourdain, Howard St. Theater, and the Children’s Theater at the Levy Center.

Citizen Comment: The Raos, daughter and mother (sometimes in absentia), continue to repeat their contentious comments as they have done for the past two years. The comments center around their concern for the trees on the Kendall property, and about having their constitutional rights denied because of interruptions when they plead their case at every City Council meeting. Ald. Grover, during her comments at the end of the Feb. 11 City Council meeting, called for “some minimal level of civility and politeness.” She has tried to make contact with the Raos to see if she can answer some of their concerns, but was rebuffed with “Please leave me alone.” It seems this is likely to continue.

Short Takes: Groundbreaking for the new Trader Joe’s store took place one cold day at the end of January. The store, in the 1200 block of Chicago Ave., may be up and running in the fall. **The Council passed increased limits on panhandling** and solicitation, limiting the time frame from 9 am to 6 pm. **Gov. Pat Quinn came to Evanston** to announce the awarding of a \$1 million grant to the City and Northwestern, designed to stimulate broad deployment of ultra-high-speed internet connections across the state. **Work began in January on the NU visitors center** on the lakefront near Sheridan Road with the removal of trees; City Council approved the project over the disapproval of the Preservation Commission. **The Preservation Commission will hear a request for a B&B** at a lakefront home on Forest Avenue. Another request was approved a year or so ago, following much controversy among the neighbors.



Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



League of Women Voters® of Evanston

2100 Ridge Avenue in Evanston, IL 60201

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