



League of Women Voters Highland Park/Highwood

BULLETIN

AUTUMN 2017

IN THIS ISSUE: *Click on Underlined Topics to See Full Articles*

**OUR HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE GATHERING
IS IN THE PLANNING STAGE ...**

**WATCH YOUR EMAIL FOR DETAILS ABOUT
THIS ALWAYS FUN
AND FESTIVE ANNUAL EVENT**



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Happy Autumn

MESSAGE FROM OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Opening Meeting

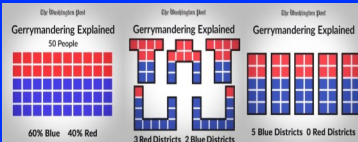
Voter Registration

Local Member Honored

National and State

VOTERS RIGHTS

AMI GHANDI



**Don't forget to send
your Membership Dues**

**We the People
Making Our Voices Heard:
The State of our Democracy**



CALENDAR *CLICK TO GET TO FULL CALENDAR / GREEN NOTES*



HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD LEAGUE

Message from our Leadership Team

Fall 2017

CELEBRATE OUR LEAGUE'S 90th Birthday in 2018

WE KNOW YOU LOVE LEAGUE WITH ITS FOCUS ON PUBLIC ISSUES.

We have come a long way since 1928, just eight years after the founding of the League of Women Voters of the U.S. when a Ravinia reading group formulated the LWVHP.

The establishment of our mission is worth reviewing for its durability.

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

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN KEEP THE LEAGUE'S MISSION ALIVE:

- Study and action have brought about myriad accomplishments and great public interest.
- Provide the support that is needed now, more than ever, because of the challenges we face in competing for precious time with other organizations and with our individual lifestyles.
- Recall the necessity for League, and renew your membership. Contact Ginger Seff (gingerseff@hotmail.com) for further information.
- Join the committee, currently in formation, to develop ideas and events for the coming year. RSVP to Elaine Adler (elainebadler@yahoo.com) for the meeting on November 1st at 7:00pm.
- Plan to spend time on the preparation or execution of one event that interests you.
- Invite a friend or neighbor to learn about League by visiting our websites, by accompanying you to a League occasion, or by being a guest at our always highly informative and festive December Holiday Party.
- Connect with us as we continue to focus on expanding League membership and its important presence in the community.

Happy autumn! Elaine Adler, for the Leadership Team.



LWVHP/HWD: Celebrating 90 years in 2018

HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD LEAGUE

Opening Meeting: -- Voting Rights – So Many Questions.

On Tuesday evening, October 3, 2017, the LWVHP/HWD held its opening meeting featuring guest speaker attorney Ami Gandhi, Director of Voting Rights and Civic Empowerment at the Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights. The event, held at Lakeside Congregation in Highland Park, was devoted to the topic of "Protecting the Right to Vote: Questions for a New Era."

Clearly there is no lack of highly relevant discussion topics in this area. Ami discussed many of them in the context of legal issues, current practices, and actions needed. She clarified many issues, posed relevant questions about the application of changes enacted or proposed, and gave us an enlightening view of some of the issues that arise on the ground when people try to exercise their right to vote. We had a lively question and answer session and discussion. The following are some of the issues talked about:

- In light of the newly enacted automatic voter registration in Illinois, there is a need to set up a regulatory process for implementation of this law. The Chicago Lawyers' Committee will work with community partners to monitor and participate in this planning process and also to see that there is adequate appropriation of funds to make the process work.
- The group, like the League of Women Voters of Illinois, has been monitoring and commenting on the actions of the Pence-Kobach Commission on Voter Integrity and, especially, its requests that state election boards turn over tremendous amounts of data about voters. These requests and other actions by the Commission raise questions about privacy rights; about other actions or statements of the Commission and its members; and about with whom such collected data would be shared (Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security?). Indeed, many question whether the Commission is in fact a genuine government agency with a public purpose. As a result of the comments and statements of the Chicago Lawyers' Committee and those of other organizations and individuals, the Illinois State Board of Elections has thus far denied the Commission's requests and indicated it requires more detail about the need for such data.
- We also discussed redistricting – and, in particular, partisan gerrymandering, which was the subject of oral argument in the U.S. Supreme Court on the date of our meeting. The case of *Gill v. Whitford*, out of Wisconsin, now handled by the Campaign Legal Center ([see http://www.campaignlegalcenter.org/](http://www.campaignlegalcenter.org/)) was originally filed in 2015 by attorneys associated with the Chicago Lawyers' Committee. Ami made clear that both political parties have engaged in gerrymandering to subvert rights. The technological tools available now enable those doing redistricting to take much of the guessing out of the process in favor of sophisticated mathematical tools—potentially leading to one-party rule in small or large areas for very long periods.

(continued on page 4)



HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD LEAGUE

Opening Meeting: -- Voting Rights – So Many Questions.

Continued from page 3

- As Ami pointed out, redistricting is an area where racial factors intersect with power. Given segregated housing patterns, it is important to monitor redistricting to see that partisan gerrymandering does not undermine minority voting. It is widely agreed that the current system is broken and that an independent commission may be preferable. At the same time, it is important that the group involved not be too small and that it be inclusive, so that minority rights are not abrogated.

Finally, we discussed the importance of voter protection, especially on Election Day. Ami pointed out that all sorts of expected and unexpected problems arise at the polls in all kinds of areas. Among those tracked by their Voter Protection effort in 2016 were problems of running out of ballots and telling people they had to use provisional ballots, which are used with registration problems and may not be counted. Also, someone told a man he knew he could not vote because he had been in prison. While that may be so in Florida, it is not true in Illinois.

If you are able, try to work as an election judge. You may be able to work in your local area. Proposals to allow half-day shifts for such judges have been discussed. Also, the Chicago Lawyers' Committee, ran a hotline staffed by attorneys during the 2016 election. (see <http://2016.electionprotectionillinois.org/> for a breakdown of reported issues). The hotline is staffed by volunteer attorneys.

For further information about the Chicago Lawyers' Committee For Civil Rights Under Law, its history and various projects, see <https://www.clccrul.org>.

Ami generously offered to speak with anyone from our group with questions about voting rights and related matters. You can reach her at agandhi@clccrul.org.

Submitted by Carole Kohn



Ami Ghandi



Editor's note: Many thanks to Carole Kohn for planning the opening meeting. Not only did Ami offer to speak with anyone from the group, but, she also circled around before leaving to be sure that questions were fully answered.

LWV HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD

PHOTOS FROM THE OPENING MEETING— OCT 3, 2017

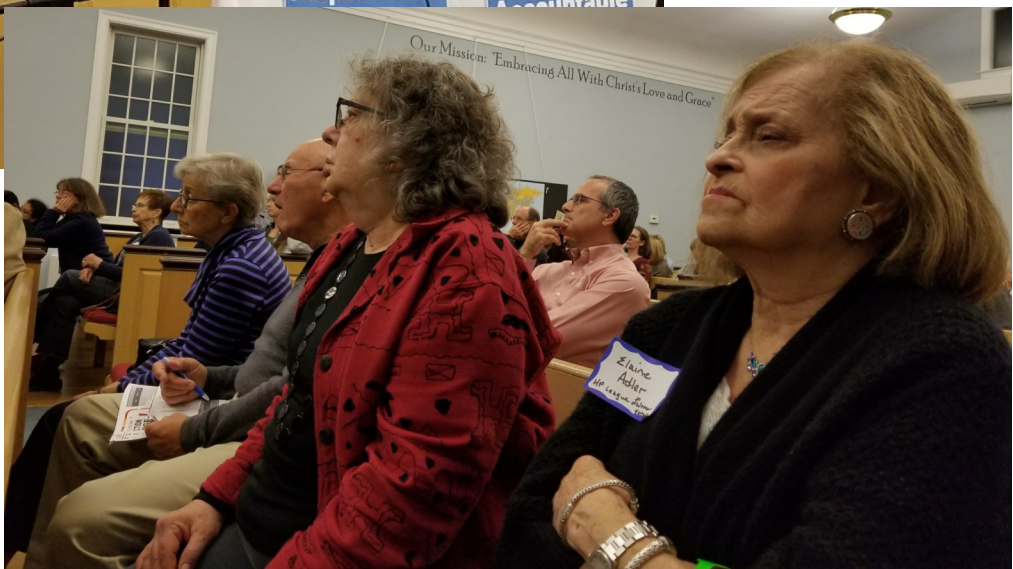


LWV HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD

We The People: The State of our Democracy

On October 17th, the Leagues of Highland Park/Highwood and Deerfield participated in an Advocacy Resource Fair event sponsored by Common Cause Northern Illinois and Christ United Methodist Church of Deerfield at the church in Deerfield. A panel of three speakers were featured following the fair addressing "The State of Our Democracy" and how we can participate in change. The speakers are listed below, and a Q&A session followed the panel discussion.

- **Peter Slevin**, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University: **Media/First Amendment**
- **Ami Gandhi**, Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights: **Voting Rights/Voter Suppression**
- **Jay Young**, Common Cause Illinois: **Campaign Finance/Money in Politics**



HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD LEAGUE

VOTER REGISTRATION EVENTS

Update on activities of the Voter Registration Committee-

Gail Brown, Betsy Lassar, Marilyn Revesz and Debbie Zirin registered 20 new voters during Senior Checkout at HPHS (May 15, 2017).

Debbie Brown, Gail Brown, Margaret Lindsay, Rheta Pickard, Cindy Wolfson and Debbie Zirin registered 27 new citizens after the May 16, 2017 naturalization ceremony at HPHS.

On September 26, 2017, Rheta Pickard helped members of the Lake Forest/Lake Bluff register 47 new voters at LFHS.

We expect to conduct a registration event at HPHS next January, in time for the March primary election. We'd love to have you join our enthusiastic group. To become a deputy register, you must be sponsored by a local civic organization such as the HP League and complete a brief training course. Training courses are currently scheduled for 6 pm 10/17/17 in Lake Bluff, 6 pm 11/7/17 in Mundelein, and 2 pm 11/15/17 & 10 am 12/7/17 in Waukegan. Please contact Rheta Pickard at if you are interested.



Submitted by Rheta Pickard rspickard@comcast.net

LWV HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD LEADERSHIP TEAM

Leadership Team 2016—2017:

- Elaine Adler
- Rose Feder
- Judy Miller
- Ginger Seff
- Marlene Senescu
- Carole Kohn

Contingency Nominating Committee 2017:

Barbara Kronish, Barbara Lippai, and Ginny Schulte

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HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD LEAGUE

HERO AMONG US AWARD

Highland Park “HERO AMONG US” Award

The City of Highland Park will be recognizing long-time League member, Jerry Adler, as a “Hero Among Us” as part of this year’s Veterans Day Observance on November 11th. Jerry was nominated for the honor by the American Legion Post #145 in Highland Park.

The City of Highland Park will host the Annual Veterans Day Observance on Saturday, November 11, 2016 at the Highland Park Public Library, 494 Laurel Avenue in the Adult Services Room, at 11:00 am.

Jerry served in the Korean War and received a direct commission to Second Lieutenant. He is currently Commander, State of Illinois Combat Infantrymen’s Association.



Chicago Area Peace Action/Climate Group



Chicago Area Peace Action/Climate Group and the Lake Street Church are co-sponsoring an event on climate change with speakers from Corporate Accountability International. This organization is known for tackling Nestle in the 70's and the tobacco industry more currently. Now they are taking global conglomerates to task for resisting carbon emission restraints. This free event is a great opportunity to get inside information on this issue with an action plan for individuals. There will be refreshments and time for questions.

The event will be held **October 26 at 7:30 p m—9:00 pm** at Lake Street Church, 607 Lake St, Evanston

Submitted by Andy Amend

HIGHLAND PARK/HIGHWOOD LEAGUE

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Membership renewal requests were mailed in early October.

Please support our League activities by returning your dues either by mail or via PayPal through our website.

League has continually been a catalyst for change, frequently initiating advances in local government as well as government at other levels. Our educational programs and candidate forums have contributed to the development of an informed electorate. No matter the level of support, we are certain you will benefit from your League membership.

Membership:

Individual \$70

Household \$100

Mailing address:

League of Women Voters Highland Park/Highwood

PO Box 396

Highland Park, Il 60035



Website: league@lwvhp.org



League of Women Voters Highland Park/Highwood



LWVHP/HWD: Celebrating 90 years in 2018

STATE AND NATIONAL

Current LWVUS and LWVIL Statements

EPA Clean Power Plan Repeal

Washington, DC - League of Women Voters president Chris Carson issued the following statement in response to the Trump administration's repeal of the Clean Power Plan:

“By repealing the Clean Power Plan, the White House is putting the interests of corporate polluters ahead of the health and safety of the American public. This decision will have a devastating impact on the planet at a time when we are seeing the powerful climate change effects with rising temperatures, deadly hurricanes and destructive wildfires. The League is appalled at this irresponsible decision that will have a long-term devastating impact on our planet and health of the American people.”

LWV Statement on Executive Order to End Health Care Subsidies

Washington, D.C. - League of Women Voters president **Chris Carson** issued the following statement in response to the White House executive order to end health care subsidies in the Affordable Care Act:

"President Trump's executive order to end health care subsidies for insurance companies will raise premiums and leave more Americans without meaningful health insurance. These subsidies were put in place deliberately to keep costs down for everyday Americans. Removing them now is a dangerous step toward unraveling a fragile system.

"President Trump is attempting to dismantle the American health care system piece by piece, in the same dangerous and under-the-table manner that the American people made clear to their Congressional leaders is unacceptable.

"We have said many times that the Affordable Care Act is not a perfect law. Congress should work to improve it. The White House should not undo the positive impacts this legislation has had for millions of Americans who previously could not afford health care coverage."

LWVIL Joins Group in Support of CHIP Extension

LWVIL joined a group of over 50 organizations -- all committed to improving health coverage for Illinois families -- in signing a letter urging members of the Illinois legislature to pass a clean, five-year extension of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), which provides \$454 million for an estimated 325,000 Illinois children enrolled in CHIP.

Check www.lwv.org and lwvil.org for up-to-date statements.



LEAGUE CALENDAR

DECEMBER

Holiday Open House

Details to follow soon!

FEBRUARY

Local Program Planning

MARCH

Women's History Month

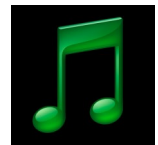
EVENTS/CELEBRATIONS FOR OUR 90TH ANNIVERSARY

Join the committee to plan our celebration—contact Elaine Adler elainebadler@yahoo.com

Editor's note: Thanks to Elaine Adler, Andy Amend, Rose Feder, Nancy Goldberg, Carole Kohn, Rheta Pickard and Marlene Senescu for contributions to this bulletin

We are very sad to hear of the death of Ted Funk, husband of our long-time member, Nancy Funk. Our condolences to Nancy and her family.

GREEN NOTES:



Join the campaign started by the Shedd Aquarium to reduce the use of single-use plastics and **“Shedd the Straw.”** Americans use an estimated 500 million straws a day. They are for all practical purposes not recyclable, so any plastic straw that ever was now still is even though it may have been broken into pieces. Roughly 19 billion pounds of plastic end up in the oceans annually and scientists estimate that if nothing is done, by the year 2050 the weight of plastic in the oceans will be equal to the weight of the fish. That's startling and horrifying at once. But, everyone can help rectify this situation. When you eat at a restaurant make a special request that the server does not bring a straw with your water or other beverage. If you really like to drink with a straw, there are re-usable ones available so you can b.y.o. Lastly, speak up to the restaurants you frequent. Let them know of your concern and suggest that if they do choose to furnish straws, compostable alternatives are the way to go. Remember, the consumer is the last word. If we don't want something, it won't be made.

Submitted by Andy Amend

