



LWV-HF February 2024 Bulletin

In Memoriam



It is with profound sadness that the League of Women Voters announces the passing of our esteemed president, Dr. Deborah Ann Turner, who passed away on Sunday, January 28, 2024, from complications from a pulmonary embolism.

Deborah Turner, MD, JD, served as the 20th president of the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) and chair of the Board of Trustees of the League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF). She was elected board president at the 55th National Convention of the League of Women Voters in June of 2022 and served until her passing.

[Read Dr. Turner's obituary.](#) A memorial fund is being established in her honor and LWVUS has posted **[a blog of inspiring quotes](#)** from Dr. Turner.

Sania Irwin (LWV Glen Ellyn), formerly LWVUS 1st Vice President, is now League of Women Voters President, and Dianna Wynn (LWV North Carolina and our national board liaison for Illinois) is serving as Vice President. The national board is very strong, and the board members will keep League moving forward.

Mark Your Calendar

Feb 8

7:00 PM

Illinois Cook County State's Attorney Democratic Primary Debate

The candidates are Clayton Harris III and Eileen O'Neil Burke

Sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Chicago, League of Women Voters Cook County, ABC 7 Chicago, WGBO/Univision Chicago.

The debate will be streamed live at abc7chicago.com, on ABC 7's 24/7 digital stream, and on the station's digital channel 7.2.

The debate will be broadcast Friday, Feb 9, at 10:35 PM on ABC 7 TV.

Feb 21

7:00 PM

Black History Month General Meeting

Guest Speaker: Dr. Tenia Davis

Grand Prairie Library

Hazel Crest

Feb 24

LWVIL Annual Issues Briefing

- Corruption and Democracy
- New Wave of Immigration
- Misinformation and Disinformation
- Gun Violence Prevention

Virtual or In-Person

[Learn more and register](#) here

Mar 13

7:00 PM

Flossmoor Library

Women's History Month General Meeting

Guest Speaker TBD

Mar 19

Primary Election Day – Go Vote!

Click Here: www.illinoisvoterguide.org to see who is on your ballot

April 17

7:00 PM

Irwin Center

Homewood

LWV HF Green Team/ Earth Day Meeting

Guest Speakers, David Mueller, LWV Lake Michigan Region
and Carrie Malfeo, Chicago Southland Green Committee

May 19

LWV HF Annual Meeting

Village of Hazel Crest Municipal Center

Speaker TBD

Black History Month Program

Dr. Tenia Davis presents: "The Art of Inspiring Others: A Leader's Guide"



Dr. Tenia Davis holds an MBA from Loyola University of Chicago and has also earned a PhD from Benedictine University's Center for Values-Driven Leadership after successfully defending her dissertation titled "The Influence of Organizational Culture on the Display of Servant Leadership." She is also a recognized community leader who expresses particular care and interest in mentoring the next generation of leaders and volunteers. She was recently acknowledged by the United States Senate and received Congressional recognition for her efforts to inspire the world's future leaders. Tenia is also an international businesswoman and has spent much time managing international corporations in multiple locations across the world.



There will also be a musical performance by the young adults music group: "The Beyond," during the Black History Month Program.

**Michell Hayes/Trinita Henry
Program Committee**

Voter Services



Voter Services Co-Chair, Veroncia Amen (center right) and Letina Brady-Pettis (center), LWVIL Issues & Advocacy Director, with school officials at Simeon High School's Get Out The Vote event.

In September, the Voter Services Committee held a GOTV event at Homewood-Flossmoor High School. Working directly with Gail Smith, Director of Student Activities and the cooperation of the U.S. History and Civics teachers, we registered over 100 students. As the March Primary and November General elections approach, the Voter Services Committee is preparing for other GOTV campaigns. We will be seeking opportunities throughout our service area to register new voters, including students. We certainly hope to repeat the success we had at Homewood-Flossmoor High School by registering as many qualified students as possible.

In this same spirit, the Voter Services co-chair, Veroncia Amen, participated in a LWVIL GOTV For Teens event at Simeon High School in Chicago, which was held on January 17, 2024 where over **250** students were registered.

Our first local GOTV event took place at the Hazel Crest Black History Month program on Saturday, February 3, 2024, at the Hazel Crest Municipal Center. Finally, the Voter Services Committee is working with the Cook County Board of Elections to facilitate a training session for new registrars. The Voter Services Committee will be meeting soon to create a calendar for 2024 activities.

If you are a Registrar, we hope we can count on your help with the GOTV campaign.

Mary Griffin/Veroncia Amen
Voter Services Co-Chairs

Holiday Charitable Giving Campaign Follow-Up



Rachel Forsyth, Anew Domestic Treatment Center

For our holiday charitable giving project, the H-F Chapter worked with ANEW's (formerly South Suburban Family Shelter) Rachel Forsyth. Rachel provided information for us to collectively purchase ten personally sized coats for client families who had come to ANEW for support. Thanks to all who contributed by sending monetary donations or shopping for and donating new coats!

Jessica Groen, Chair

LWVCC Black History Month Zoom Program **The Underground Railroad and the Calumet Region**

At the southern edge of the City of Chicago, on the Little Calumet River, sits the Ton Farm Underground Railroad Site. In 2020, this site was recognized by the National Park Service in its Network to Freedom listings. The Ton site is at

Lawrence and 134th Street which is where an historic black-owned marina is located. This is part of the larger story that has been researched over many years by Dr. Larry McClellan. The ridges at Sand Ridge Nature Center in South Holland also offered a path for some on the underground railroad trek through Indiana to Michigan, and into Windsor, Canada.

Dr. McClellan is an emeritus professor at GSU among many other credits. His books include *The Underground Railroad South of Chicago* and *To the River: The Remarkable Journey of Caroline Quarlls, a Freedom Seeker on the Underground Railroad* (Thorn Creek Press). *Onward to Chicago: Freedom Seekers and the Underground Railroad in Northeastern Illinois* (SIU Press) is his newest book. His work reframes the story of freedom seekers who had no set trail to use.

McClellan's work introduces us to earlier freedom seekers, the dangers in their journeys, and the residents of Chicago and Northeastern Illinois who helped them along the way.

Dr. Larry Mc Clellan will give a presentation on **Monday, February 26 at 11 am via Zoom**. The history of the underground railroad includes the Cook County Forest Preserves. This event will be limited to 100 people, but will be recorded.

Registration for this event can be made at info@lwvcookcounty.org . Ask that the Zoom link for Dr. McClellan's program be sent to you. It will be sent shortly before the event.

This is an opportunity to learn about remarkable individuals and their amazing stories. We hope you will be able to take advantage of this opportunity.

Carolyn Cosentino
Erin Roeper

Membership

How much do we know about the foundation and functioning of our government? Even though the League of Women Voters does not endorse candidates of specific Parties, we are a political organization. Unless you have eighth graders or high school students in your home, it may be time to brush up on some history and basic knowledge about the formation of our country, the United States of America. Kate Grossman wrote an article in the December 11, 2023 issue of the Sun-Times newspaper which included a brief quiz -"Can you pass an eighth grade Constitution test?" If you would like a challenge, google the title in quotation marks and take the test.

Member Spotlight: Barbara Donaldson

So that we can get to know our members better, we shine the Spotlight on one or more of our members in each Bulletin. If you would like to be in the Spotlight, please contact Lorea Farley, Membership Chairperson. Our current person of interest is Barbara Donaldson. Barbara is a long-time, dedicated member who has recruited many new members throughout the years. Let's meet her....Barbara Donaldson, a retired educator whose career spans over 40 years, has been a League



member for over 20 years. Her late husband, Robert, former Mayor of Hazel Crest, was a member as well. Barbara has been an active member and has valued meeting like-minded women, learning about issues with them, and working on initiatives such as voting rights and criminal justice reform. She enjoys recruiting new members into the League.

Barbara's career in education is varied. She has been a Principal, Guidance Counselor, Librarian, and classroom teacher. After retirement, she started a consulting company, Edudon, which focused on student teacher development and employment opportunities for high school students. Barbara and her daughter, Robyn Donaldson, JD, founded We the Peace, a local non-profit which offers scholarships and youth mental health programs for young people throughout the South Suburbs. Barbara is currently a Board Member there.

Barbara has served on Girl Scouts of America's Executive Board, volunteered for Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and was an Adjunct Professor at Governor's State University. She serves as a trustee for Grand Prairie Library and Water's Edge Condominiums. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. Among her leisure activities, Barbara enjoys attending plays, traveling, aqua aerobics and yoga, and socializing with friends.

Lorea Farley, Membership Chair

Sponsorship/Fundraising



Sponsorship/Fundraising Committee members (L - R) Elaine Chilsolm, Cheryl Gansauer, Sandra Slayton (Liaison), Veroncia Amen, Mamie Smith (Chair), and Lillian Lee at Flossmoor Library.

With a new year comes a new opportunity to expand the League of Women Voters throughout the South Suburban area. The Sponsorship/Fundraising Committee is promoting the League through its Business Advertising Initiative. While advertising businesses through the League's print media is not new, expanding the number of potential advertisers to almost 70 businesses in the south suburban area is new!

The committee worked diligently to list area businesses that might benefit from advertising across the League's expanded media platforms. Through the efforts of strategic planning, the committee drafted and compiled advertising resources that were mailed to targeted businesses the week of January 8th. The Sponsorship/Fundraising Committee is looking forward to a high response rate, as well as increased visibility for the League in the community.

This advertising opportunity is open to current LWV HF members who own or operate a business. Please contact Mamie Smith at smithflssmr@aol.com for information.

Also, be on the lookout for our upcoming popcorn sales fundraiser.

**Dr. Mamie L. Smith, Chair
Sponsorship/Fundraising**

Nominations Now Being Accepted

The LWV HF Nominating Committee is seeking nominees for the new slate of officers and board members for the FY 25 election. Nominations for the positions of Vice President and Treasurer, as well as for several directors, are being accepted and must be received by **April 6, 2024**. The nominating committee will compile a slate of candidates to be presented to the membership for election consideration at the LWV HF Annual Meeting on May 19. Please submit nominations to Nominating Committee Chairperson, Kate Atkins Trimnell, via email at kl@trimkins.net.

**Kate Trimnell, Chair
Nominating Committee**



Observer Corps

Flossmoor Village Board Meeting

December 2023 - Chief of Police Jerrell Jones presented for consideration an ordinance that changes administrative adjudication of municipal code violations. Hearing officer will preside over these hearings. Village provides opportunity for due process to be observed. New legislation allows the village to

adjudicate building violations locally. The Village is allowed to operate in ways similar to a home-rule municipality. Trustees commented that it is a long time coming and it is like a Christmas gift. Motion passed.

Jessica Groen
Observer

Homewood Flossmoor High School Board Meetings

Dec. 11, 2023 - Board Member, Jim Schmidt, said plans are underway for hiring a new Principal for Willow School. The Educational Progress Committee is considering a policy that for staff members not residing in the district to allow their students to attend the district schools tuition-free.

Superintendent McAlister gave a summary of the steps and activities that will be taken for hiring the new Principal at Willow School. He also indicated that he is looking at the '24-25 School Year calendar to add more time for teacher planning and collaboration.

Jan. 8, 2024 - Superintendent McAlister gave future dates and activities ie volunteer opportunities at ANEW and the Humane Society for MLK Day of Service, and In-Service Day for staff- Feb. 1 on Equity and Inclusion.

- Dr. McAlister praised and awarded a staff who has achieved the highest honor in Education – National Board Certification.
- Dr. McAlister gave an in-depth presentation on the progress of the Strategic Plan – this is the 5th year of the Plan.

Jan 16, 2024 - Zoom meetings will be held to review Academic Strategies. Two coaches, Nate Beebe and Rob Assise were honored for being named the Illinois Track and Cross Country Coaches of the Year. Student members commented that the swimming pool water is too cold. When swim meets are held, the water temperature is kept cooler. The Board approved the Consent Agenda/Routine Business and approval of minutes. The Board also accepted the Hearing Officer's findings on two students. The Board approved monthly expenditures of \$3,080,306.20, expenditures of the Imprest Fund of, \$35,937.09 and ratification of the December payroll of \$3,264,417, as well as extra responsibility personnel contracts of Activities:\$38,436 and a Sixth Assignment Contract for \$12,367.

Sylvia Tufts
Observer

Homewood Public Schools District 153 Board of Education Meeting

Jan 8, 2023 - the following items were approved or reported on:

- Approval of the Minutes of the Public Hearing Meeting and the Regular Board Meeting of Dec. 11, 2023.
- Superintendent McAlister gave future dates and activities ie – volunteering opportunities at ANEW and the Humane Society for MLK Day of Service, and In-Service Day for staff- Feb. 1 on Equity and Inclusion.
- Dr. McAlister praised and awarded a staff who has achieved the highest honor in Education – National Board Certification.
- Dr. McAlister gave an in-depth presentation on the progress of the Strategic Plan – this is the 5th year of the Plan.
- Board Member, Ashanti Bethea, indicated that there is a review of the Policy Manual.

- Dr. McAlister briefly spoke of the importance and progress on the Window Treatment for all three schools.
- Consent Agenda Items approved: Payment of bills and Personnel Changes and Additions
- Action Agenda Items approved: Payment of Bills, Window Treatment and Employment of new Staff

Dec 11, 2023 - After Calling the Board Meeting to Order by Shelly Marks, President, and roll call the following agenda items were approved and/or reported:

- Approval of the Minutes from the November 13, 2023 Regular Board Meeting
- Future Dates reported by Superintendent Scott McAlister
- Committee Reports:
- Board member, Jim Schmidt, indicated that new Food Service Director will be hired. He also said that plans are underway for hiring a new Principal for Willow School. The Educational Progress Committee is considering a policy for staff members not residing in the district to allow their students to attend the district schools - tuition free.
- Superintendent McAlister gave a brief summary on the steps and activities that will be taken for hiring the new Principal at Willow School. He also indicated that he is looking at the '24-25 School Year calendar to add more time for teacher planning and collaboration. He also reported that a progress report on the Strategic Plan will be given.
- Consent items approved: Payment of Usual and Customary Bills, new Beautification Club for students, and Personnel additions and changes.
- The Board went into Executive Session to determine the outcome of a Residency case.
- Action Items Approved: Payment of Bills, to prohibit a student from attending Homewood Schools and to determine the tuition to be paid, the Resolution to Levy 2023 Taxes for Certain Purposes and the Supplemental Tax Levy Resolution.

Cheryl Gansauer
Observer

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan, political organization whose mission is to encourage informed and active participation in government; to increase understanding of major policy issues, and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to anyone regardless of gender, race, or ethnic group.



League of Women Voters of the Homewood-Flossmoor Area | P.O. Box 801, Flossmoor, IL 60422

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