

# The Bulletin

Vol. 55, No. 2 November 2008

## Important Dates at a Glance:

- 11/19 7:00 p. m. U.S. Constitution forum, Tad Armstrong moderator  
Madison County Historical Museum Library
- 12/10 7:00 p. m. **Christmas Party**, Meg Oberlag's home  
All are invited to enjoy punch, light snacks, and  
Christmas Cheer with fellow League members!
- 12/17 7:00 p. m. Monthly board meeting, Ellen Nordhauser's home
- 1/7 7:00 p. m. Monthly board meeting, Ellen Nordhauser's home
- 1/28 7:00 p. m. Program Planning Meeting, Lisa Brenner's home

### LEARN ABOUT OUR CONSTITUTION

Tad Armstrong, Edwardsville attorney and moderator of the Edwardsville ELL club (Earn It, Learn It, or Lose It), will moderate a discussion of the U.S. Constitution, on Wednesday, November 19th at 7:00 p.m. The purpose of the ELL club is to bring the constitution to life. This forum will be held at the Madison County Historical Museum Library at 715 N. Main Street in Edwardsville.

The Library is the red brick building immediately north of the Museum. Parking is available in a lot behind the Museum and also along Main Street and Second Street.

## **In Memory of Sara Q. Twombly**

As you know, we lost one of our members this October at a very young age. Sara's interests in politics and government go way back. One of the first times I remember meeting Sara was at her home when she was hosting a gathering for Rich Walker's first run for alderman. She was also a driving force in her husband's appointment as alderman. She joined the League in 1994 and helped with annual meetings, garage sales and getting the word out. This is what Sara did best – bring people together. Sara never hesitated to strike up a conversation and made friends wherever she went. She had the ability to instantly touch people. She will be sorely missed.

Ann Stolte

## **Voter Registration and Renewal of Voter Registrar Oath**

This summer and fall, LWVEA members were active voter registrars.

Several times League manned a table at the Goshen Market. Many members spent Saturday mornings handing out literature and registering voters. A complete of participants was not available for this bulletin.

In September we helped with the SIUE voter registration drive. That was a huge success. Members who helped were Lisa Brennan, Carol Gerdt, Mary Pearson, and Carol Gipe.

Members who worked the Madison County High School Mock Election registered students who would be 18 years old before November 4<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 200 students were registered in the 12 schools. LWVEA members who helped were Wilma Jene Bond, Lisa Brennan, Ruth Ellis, Carol Gipe, Pat Hulme, Kathy Jones, Glenn Lanning, Susan Lucco, Ellen Nore, Carol Reinking, Sue Webb.

Effective December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, all voter registrars must renew their certification. Whether your oath was administered two months ago or two years ago, it expires on that date. The County Clerk's office will have a current copy of the League membership roster. Anytime after December 1<sup>st</sup>, be sure to go to the Madison County Court House and renew your registrar status.

M. Carol Gipe  
Voter Service Chair

## **A Brief History of the LWV**

The LWV is an outgrowth of the suffragist movement in America. The success of that movement enabled women to enter the front door of the political arena. As you may well know, the beginning of the push to gain the right to vote for women in USA began in 1848 at the Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls, New York. The Suffragist movement culminated 72 years later, in 1920, when the 19th Amendment to the USA Constitution was finally ratified by the 36th state, with a narrow one vote margin in Tennessee. The prime mover in that push was the National American Women Suffrage Association. In 1919 the president of that organization, Carrie Chapman Catt, proposed creating a new organization to "finish the fight". That organization was the LWV which was formed in 1920. Thus, the early league leaders were the suffragists. Getting the right to vote and then transforming that right into being influential in the political world was a long time

coming, about 50 years. Having the vote and then having women actually vote turned out to be disappointing for the suffragists. The early leaders were, for the most part, worn out so it was up to younger women to take up the challenge. The momentum for finishing the fight, was really gone. Part of that was probably the mood of the country beginning in the “Roaring Twenties” which was followed by the Great Depression, after which was WWII and finally the return to “normal life” from the late 40’s into the early 60’s. It is interesting to note that during the time frame of 1920-1970 (50 years) the number of women who served in the US Congress was 65; the number in the US Senate 10; and the number of State Governors 3. Most of them were the widows of former office holders.! Contrast that with today! Women in Congress are commonplace...led by the Speaker of the House. There are 15 in the Senate and 10 Governors one of whom is now running for Vice-President of USA.

From 1920 to the present, the LWV has stayed alive. In early days it had three goals: 1) the elimination of state laws discriminating against women , 2) general social reforms, and 3) the educating women to their responsibilities as citizens. It attracted lots of well educated women who had the time to do volunteer work outside the home.

For the most part, the LWV could be viewed in the time frame up into the 1960’s as a conservative women’s group in that they worked within the system. It was at the local level that many women were attracted to join LWV. They had visions of making their communities more responsive to the needs of families and did so by studying local issues, gaining consensus and then taking action. The LWVEA was organized in the mid 1950’s and has a strong list of accomplishments in making the community a “better place”. Through study and action, it pushed to institute fair housing laws as SIUE began to become a part of Edwardsville, upgrade the library facilities and staffing, encouraged the establishment of recycling programs, help pass school referendums and bond issues, to have long range planning and zoning for the city, and hire a City Administrator.

The civil rights movement, the impact of TV on Americans, the publication of Betty Freidan’s “The Feminine Mystique” were some of the factors that entered into the changing face of women in politics. LWV has changed, too. It has become a more diverse organization no longer conservative, but still not “radical. LWV, for a long time, preferred a step by step approach in reducing laws that discriminate against women. It was only in 1972 that the LWV publically approved the proposed amendment to the Constitution called the Equal Rights Amendment...ERA. Many joined league in the 70’s because of that push. League members took to the streets along with many other women. It is unfortunate that progress toward the ratification of that amendment was thwarted, but women has moved beyond the limited influence of earlier days of having only the right to vote, to many more rights, by law, to equality.

This is a summary of a talk by Ginger McCall to a *Women In Politics* class at SIUE on 10/17/08.

## **Caitlin Ellis meets Barack Obama**

Here's a great article from the Alton Telegraph about Caitlin Ellis, one of our local members. She is the daughter of Ruth Ellis, board member. As president of the college democrats, Caitlin was able to meet Barack Obama during his campaign rally at the University of Missouri, on October 30.

College campaigner

By LINDA N. WELLER

October 20, 2008 - 5:47PM

The 2008 election is particularly exciting to Edwardsville native Caitlin Ellis, who presides over the College Democrats at the University of Missouri. Besides the usual election enthusiasm that envelops the large campus in Columbia every four years, the university is smack in the middle of a strongly contested state in the presidential race.

And, on a more personal level, Ellis and the president of rival College Republicans are highlighted in a back-to-back photograph and interviews in this fall's edition of glossy Mizzou magazine, published by the Mizzou Alumni Association. That quarterly issue had a circulation of 182,511. "It was really exciting; it was kind of cool," said Ellis, 21, of her "fame." "It's been a lot of fun, people who I hadn't talked to in a while - seniors who graduated - got back in touch with me."

The write-up relates how Ellis' grandmother worked as a legislative assistant for late Illinois Democratic Sen. Paul Simon. It quotes her as saying students are concerned about the war in Iraq and the economy, the latter because some of them can't find jobs after graduating. She says a good leader is "someone who is willing to look at every part of an issue before making a decision, and has the ability to unite people."

Of Republican presidential candidate John McCain, she says in the article: "McCain is 50 years older than me. It's hard to imagine that he'll care about my issues." College Democrats and Barack Obama's Campaign for Change registered more than 7,000 people to vote, including 700 the final day. She said they wanted students to register locally, instead of in their hometowns, because they are more likely to vote in person than to go through the absentee process - not to mention that Missouri is a crucial state in the presidential race.

A daughter of Arno and Ruth Ellis, she graduated from Edwardsville High in 2005. Ellis admits that accompanying her mother to events sponsored by the League of Women Voters in Edwardsville as she grew up "definitely helped me get involved." "My parents had a big influence in my getting involved," she said. Ellis said she attended a Democratic meeting "on a whim," not sure she if she would support Obama, then got more involved, knocking on doors in Iowa during the primary. "It made me realize how energized the campaign was," Ellis said. "It is a revolutionary kind of campaign and I wanted to get involved." A senior, she is majoring in English and minoring in Japanese and anthropology, but isn't sure what career she wants to pursue. She previously was vice president and in charge of public relations for her sorority, Phi Mu.

## **Meet and Greet for the Candidates**

On October 8<sup>th</sup>, LWVEA, along with the Collinsville League, hosted a "Meet and Greet" for candidates in contested races. Eleven candidates were invited, and there was only one no show – incumbent Rep. John Shimkus, 19<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congressional District.

Each candidate had three to five minutes to speak about background and issues. Topics of interest were suggested by League. Some candidates addressed the issues, others chose what they thought were important topics to emphasize. Participants included Danny Davis 19<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congressional District (Democratic Candidate), 112<sup>th</sup> Representative State General Assembly, Jay Hoffman (D), Dwight Kay (R); Madison County Board Chair, Alan Dunstan (D), Hal Patton (I); Madison County Board Members: 18<sup>th</sup> Dist., Jack Minner (D), Jacob Dean (R); 24<sup>th</sup> Dist. Kent Scheibel (D), Patrick Ryan (R).

Despite a location change at the last minute, the meeting was well attended by Edwardsville and Collinsville League members, family and friends of candidates and people from the community. There were several newspaper reporters who provided some comprehensive coverage, and ECTV Channel 10 taped the speeches and aired them several times on the cable channels in Edwardsville and Collinsville.

League's goal is to get information to the public about candidates and issues. The preferred format is that of a forum or debate, but sometimes in order to get as many candidates as possible in on the action, there is a need to compromise and go with a less formal structure. Feedback on the October meeting was positive. It was the best way to give all candidates an opportunity to get their messages to the voters.

Thanks to League Presidents, Lisa Brennan and Melissa Leavy (Collinsville) for introducing candidates and providing general information about voting and elections. Thanks to others who helped with this meeting: Virginia McDole (timer), Elaine Ramsey (timer, Collinsville) Kathy Jones, Carol Juen, Carol Keene, Jane Klopfenstein, Lorraine Krusa, Janet Mallon, Meg Oberlag, Judy Thompson and Sue Webb.

M. Carol Gipe, Voter Service Chair

## Walk a Mile for Democracy

75 participant enjoyed a one mile walk, downtown Edwardsville on September 27, 2008. Participants obviously enjoyed this awareness event, during which 3 new members were recruited. Additionally, City Clerk employees purchased walk T-shirts, which were worn on Fridays, prior to Election Day. We hope to see you at our next walk, September 2012!

Mary Pearson, Event Organizer.



New League Members



Mark Von Nida

Numerous additional photos are posted on the LWVEA website at <http://edwardsvillearealeague.org>

# **Madison County Students New Elect US President**

Over 8,000 high school students in 12 Madison County schools elected Senator Barack Obama in the Illinois Student Vote mock elections on Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. Students headed to voting booths brought to their schools and used ballots designed and printed especially for the day. Votes at most schools were tabulated using authentic vote tabulators provided by the Madison County Clerk's office and grant monies from Illinois Student Vote and the League of Women Voters Illinois.

Though mock elections have taken place in schools for some time, this mock election was decidedly different in that not only were students given the opportunity to replicate an authentic voting experience, but their votes will now be recognized at IllinoisStudentVote.org along with results from schools across the entire state. This also marks the first time all the schools in the county were coordinated to hold mock elections on the same day. Voting results for all participating Illinois schools will be posted on the website on October 30<sup>th</sup>.

Madison County high schools were contacted in April and May by the League of Women Voters of Collinsville and Edwardsville Area who were working with County Clerk Mark Von Nida and the League of Women Voters Illinois. The website, IllinoisStudentVote.org, set up by the LWVIL, offered teachers and schools lesson plans and curriculum as well as provided a source for teachers and schools to report their voting results.

With cooperation from school administrators, organization took shape as the school year began, and September 30<sup>th</sup> was chosen as election day for the twelve schools participating. Von Nida was recognized in the LWVIL summer newsletter for his outstanding efforts and cooperation to make the event possible. The Leagues of Collinsville and the Edwardsville Area helped organize the event by working with schools and coordinating volunteers. High schools participating include Alton, Collinsville, CMHS, East Alton/Wood River, Edwardsville, Granite City, Highland, Madison, Marquette Catholic, Metro East Lutheran, Roxana and Triad.

In addition to the mock election activities, some students have taken part in election judge training programs and will work at polling places on election day. Other students, who are or will be of legal voting age by November 4<sup>th</sup>, were also given the chance Tuesday to register as voters.

Obama was the students' choice overall, but in Highland, at Marquette Catholic, and at Metro East Lutheran, McCain was victorious. Countywide, McCain finished with 2,838 votes (34.92%), Obama with 4,758 votes (58.54%), and Nadar with 309 votes (3.8%). McKinney had 86 votes (1.06%), Barr 68 (.84%), Polchek 31 (.38%), and Baldwin 38 (.47%). Individual school results will be posted at IllinoisStudentVote.org.

## **LVWEA Yard Sale**

The yard sale at Meg Oberlang's home, on September 20, was an overwhelming success. \$377.50 in profit was realized and many league members assisted at this event. Unsold items were delivered to an area charitable organization.

## **DISTRICT 7 BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Observed by Meg Oberlag

**October 14, 2008** - Rick Stamer from the Federation of Labor thanked the Board for allowing them to use district facilities for the Battle of the Badges. It raised over \$18,000 for the Glen Ed Food Pantry.

Several residents of the Sugar Creek Subdivision spoke their objections to the Sports Complex additions that were to be presented later in the meeting. They are concerned with water runoff, lights, noise etc. One man said that they had spent \$60,000 on street repairs in the last 4-5 years since the city does not own their streets. A lady from Ginger Creek objected to the loud rock music and lighting.

Supt. Hightower said that the District wants to be a good neighbor. The Sports Complex was purchased in 1980 by citizens for the purpose of having space for sports activities. The facilities are open for public use, but the kids are there to exercise their enthusiasm and talent for sports. These activities keep them from getting involved in other risky ventures. We are fortunate to have had many donations of materials and labor in the past and now have a large donation for a building. The Edwardsville Wrestling Association wants to construct a 23,000 square foot building for wrestling and multiple use. There would be four wrestling pads, bleachers for 775, offices, rest rooms, weight room, locker room, concession area and a theater-style area (125 seats) for meetings. All of the cost of 3.5 million would be donated and this includes an endowment to assist with future expenses. District 7 would build a parking lot out of the O & M fund.

Also mentioned was a Phase 3 plan (long term) for an indoor swimming pool of 50 meters with 8 lanes which would not come from Districts funds. This would have a 50-car parking lot and would be adjacent to the wrestling building.

There will be a detention basin to address all future storm water runoff concerns. Board members agreed that we should look into better lighting fixtures, adjustment of speakers, good drainage and we will continue every effort to be good neighbors. Apparently there were two noisy community events that went on into the wee hours. There was to be another meeting on the following Thursday (Oct. 17) to discuss just this issue.

**October 27, 2007** - Supt. Hightower announced that he had met with residents of Sugar Creek and Ginger Creek subdivisions regarding plans for the additions to the Sports Complex and they have scheduled another meeting for October 29<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Hightower pointed out that the generosity of donations to the District have made the Sports Complex what it is today. Now we welcome another generous offer for the wrestling facility from Mr. and Mrs. Mark Mestemacher. He recommended that we accept that offer (as described in notes from the October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting) and this was approved by the Board in a 7-0 vote.

### **City Council 10/7/08**

Sue Webb, observer

All present except Twombly, excused.

A moment of silence was observed for Alderman Twombly's wife Sara, who died on October 4, 2008.

Approved extending Land of Goshen Community Market until October 16, 2008.

Approved the final plat of Hearthstone Place - Phase 2 Subdivision.

### **City Council 10/21/08**

Sue Webb, observer

All present except Haroian, excused.

Recognized Dr. Joseph A. Weber who won the 2008 Local Preservation Award from the Illinois Association of Historic Preservation Commissions.

Announced that the first day to circulate petitions for the April 7, 2009 Consolidated Election is Tuesday, October 28, 2008. Packets are available at the city clerk's office.

### **Madison County Board Meeting**

October 15, 2008

Marcia Custer Observer

I Speakers approved for 3-minute address to the County Board.

- A. Billy Skaggs Jr., resident of the Madison County Shelter Care Home was granted 3 minutes to address the County Board. He urged all voters to approve the continued funding of the institution..

III Committee Reports

- A. There were no substantive issues related to resolutions from any of the Committees this month.

*It is interesting to note how much the newly installed electronic voting system expedites roll call voting. All League Members should take the opportunity to observe this in action.*

Kent Scheibel urged everyone to visit "Art East" sites in the Edwardsville and Alton areas this coming Saturday and Sunday October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>.

III Other

*As a side note approximately 25 college students from Denmark were in attendance. Some are full time students at SIUE, and others are just visiting for the week.*

IV Adjournment 5:30 PM

### **League of Women Voters, Edwardsville Area, Minutes of Meeting, September, 2008**

1. Lisa Brennan called the meeting to order. She handed out LWV badges and decals as mementos of the National Convention and reported on some of her experiences there. Present were: Lisa Brennan, Ruth Ellis, Carol Gerdt, Carol Gipe, Allison LaMothe, Ellen Nordhauser, Meg Oberlag, Mary Pearson, and Judy Thompson.

2. Treasurer Ruth Ellis' Report was approved. She noted a bill for \$60.00 for printing and postage for 85 copies of the Notice of Dues.

3. Bulletin: There was discussion of the savings from putting the Bulletin on the Web Site and keeping it under 10 pages. Some members still wish to receive their Bulletin by regular mail, and the group agreed that their wishes will be accommodated. There will be no Bulletin until after the next Board Meeting in October, when results of September activities can be reported.

4. Garage Sale: Lisa Brennan suggested that the League should look into an organization in Alton that, for a fee of \$25, takes care of selling the items and of publicizing the sale. Meg Oberlag, at whose home the Garage Sale was conducted reported that she had acquired a stock of chocolate bars to sell at the sale, large bars for \$2 and smaller bars for \$1, both sizes available at the checkout table. The sale was held on Saturday, September 20. Members could be bringing items to Meg's house on Thursday, the 18th.

She asked for tables. After 5:00 on Friday, volunteers prepared items for sale. Members were asked to put prices on their items before dropping them off.

5. Voter Registration: Allison LaMothe had registered voters at the last Saturday Market, between 10 and 12 a.m. Voters, she noted, could also register at the Court House, the Public Library, and on-line at the LWVEA Site.

6. Walk for Democracy: Mary Pearson announced that arrangements were going smoothly for the Walk, to be held on Saturday, September 27. Office Max charged 4 cents a page for the announcement given to school children. Mark Von Nida will speak to open the Walk, and the winner of the contest to design the T-shirt will be recognized. Judy Thompson announced that the Edwardsville Community Center would distribute water at the half-way point of the walk. (NOTE: Due to unforeseen circumstances, this offer was later rescinded, and water was available at the Market for walkers.)

7. Voter Services: A. Carol Gipe announced that the LWV would be working with Mark Von Nida's County Clerk Office to hold a mock election at regional high schools on Tuesday, September 30. The Schools will furnish lists of students and they will show i.d.s to vote. Von Nida has trained high school people to be election judges. Voting will be only for the national presidential race. The Web site for this operation, which is statewide, is [Illinoisstudentvote.org](http://Illinoisstudentvote.org). Talleys will be posted. Paper ballots will be used. Lisa Brennan noted that League Members would also be at the high schools to register eligible voters.

B. Carol Gipe also announced that plans have been finalized for the Candidates' Meeting to be held before the November election. The meeting will be at 8:00 on Wednesday, October 8. [NOTE: Although this was not part of the meeting, the Candidates' Evening was held at the Glen Carbon Senior Citizens Center. Plans had been made to hold it at the Edwardsville Community Center, but due to the Homecoming Parade of EHS, the venue had to be changed.] Although Rep. Schimkus declined to appear, his opponent, Dan Davis, agreed to come. Candidates for the County Board will also appear. The format for this meeting will be called "Meet and Greet." Each candidate will speak for 5 minutes. There will be no questions from the audience, but members of the audience may arrive early and stay later to "mingle" with the candidates. The program will be taped for the Public Access Channel. Senator Jay Hoffman and his opponent will also appear. This meeting will be coordinated with the Collinsville LWV through their President, Melissa Levy.

8. Meg Oberlag reported that she and Ginger McCall had spoken to a Women in Politics class at SIUE. They talked about the history of the LWV in general, its connection with women's suffrage and about the history and activities of the LWV in Edwardsville. The class asked many questions, and some new members were recruited. Members of the class drew for two shirts that Lisa Brennan had gotten at the National Convention.

9. New Business: A. Program for next year. Joanne Nabe and Carol Rhineking will help Lisa get ready for this meeting.

B. Mentoring for new members. Lisa Brennan suggested this as a good idea for our LWV to try. Judy Thompson suggested a social gathering for new members. Allison LaMothe thought this was a good idea. Before she joined the Board, she noted that she didn't know, outside of the Annual Meeting, what was happening during the rest of the year. Judy agreed to send the letter Lisa wrote last year to new members. Lisa also suggested that new members should be invited to come early to "meet and greet" candidates at the October 8 meeting. Allison suggested using the Phone Tree. Judy Thompson will call new members about the candidates' meeting. Who will qualify as a "new members"? Generally, people agreed that members of less than 1 year would be considered as new members. Carol Gerdt suggested that new members be given a hand-written invitation to the Christmas social. Lisa Brennan suggested that Board members bring ideas for new members to the October meeting.

C. Judy Thompson and Kathy Jones suggested Ted Armstrong as a speaker for a community meeting. Kathy Jones agreed to contact him.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30.

Recorded by Ellen Nordhauser

**League of Women Voters  
Edwardsville Area  
BOX 841  
Edwardsville, IL 62025-0841**



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.

The goal of the League of Women Voters is to empower citizens to shape better communities worldwide. Membership is open to any U.S. Citizen who is at least 18 years of age. Dues of \$45.00 include membership in our local, state and national organization. Send your check to Treasurer, LWVEA, P.O. Box 841, Edwardsville, IL 62025-0841