

The Bulletin

Vol. 55, No. 3 February 2009

On March 18th, the League of Women of Voters of the Edwardsville Area is hosting a Public Education Event, to inform community members about Wi-Fi issue/developments in our area. Two speakers are scheduled to make a presentation, to be held at 7:00 pm, in the City Hall meeting room.

Important Dates at a Glance:

- | | | |
|-------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 02/11 | 7:00 pm | Monthly board meeting, Meg Oberlag's home. |
| 02/18 | 7:00 pm | Public Education Meeting. Wi-Fi developments, City Hall meeting room. |

Procedure for Renewing Voter Registrar Eligibility

1. The membership roster serves as the appointment letter, and that information has been provided to the County Clerk's office.
2. Members may go to the court house and take their oath, or they may have the form signed, notarized and sent to the court house.
3. Be sure to mention you are a member of League.

LWVEA Annual Program Planning Meeting

The Program Planning Meeting commenced at 7 pm on January 28, 2009 at the home of Lisa Brennan. The consensus of this meeting was to keep all of the programs from last year. At this time, our local platform summary booklet, Where We Stand Locally, was reviewed and an update to this booklet was discussed. Program items, identified at the Program Planning Meeting, will be reviewed and accepted by the Board, for presentation to League members at the annual meeting.

In line with local program planning, the Illinois League is preparing to choose issues for Where We Stand 2009 – 2011, the platform of the League of Women Voters of Illinois. As part of this process our local board will complete the State League Program Planning Response Form, to provide local input. This is a companion to [*Impact on Issues*](#), the League of Women Voters of the United States' program book. Taken together, these publications and the [*League Principles*](#) form the basis for all action taken by Illinois Leagues on state and national issues.

This state form can be viewed on the state web site at lwvil.org and is previewed, in part, below:

Summary of the LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ILLINOIS, PROGRAM PLANNING RESPONSE FORM 2009 - 2011

Part one of this form requests recommendations on current position to retain, restudy/update, or drop. Areas include:

GOVERNMENT

Constitutional Implementation, County Government Structure, Criminal Justice, Death Penalty, State Election Laws, Gun Violence Prevention, Schools, State Fiscal Policy, State Redistricting

NATURAL RESOURCES

Land Use, Large-Scale Livestock Facilities, Pesticides

SOCIAL POLICY

Children's Services, Immigration, Income Assistance, Mental Health

The update process requires that the local League identify areas to restudy/update, and then to elaborate on the 1) position to be restudied, with specificity as to all or which part, 2) rationale behind recommendations for restudy, and 3) local League commitment and resources available.

Part Two of this form requests recommendations regarding new studies and action focus items.

Cool Cities Initiative

Inspired by the League of Women Voter's screening of Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth" at the Edwardsville Public Library in February 2007, board member Carol Gerdt and I began to collect petitions for Edwardsville to become a Cool City. Some were collected at LWV events. We then worked with the Paisa Sierra Club's staff member, Christine Favilla, and John Byrd also of the Sierra Club. Cool Cities is a grass roots greenhouse gas emissions reduction initiative begun in Seattle and sponsored by the Sierra Club. In one such meeting we met Phillip Hudson, an Edwardsville resident with strong environmental leanings who formerly worked for the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. We met with the mayor and Barb Stamer in April of 2007. Progress was slow and frustrating, until Edwardsville resident and Sierra Club Board Member Dave Gocken took over representing the Sierra club. Dave, Chris Krusa, Phillip Hudson and I formed the Citizen's Committee for Cool Cities. We have met frequently, Dave kept in good communication with the mayor's office, and we finally met with the mayor, Public Works Director, City Manager and the Director of Parks and then with the ACS Committee, and finally, on 1/22/09, Mayor Niebur signed the Cool Cities U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement. We now await the mayor's appointment of an advisory board, which will represent city personnel and citizens. The Citizen's Committee will continue to meet, to exchange ideas for recommendations to the advisory board, as well as other needed public education projects etc. Would the League be willing to partner with this Committee to undertake community education projects? Reported by Rachel Tompkins

The following articles about the Cool City initiative are from the Edwardsville Intelligencer and the Belleville News Democrat, respectively.



By ANN NICCUM

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Published: Friday, January 23, 2009 10:32 AM CST

The city of Edwardsville is now officially a "Cool City."

Surrounded by residents and members of the local Sierra Club and League of Women Voters (LWV) on Thursday, Mayor Gary Niebur signed the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement.

Under the agreement, the mayor took a pledge on behalf of the city to become a Cool City and take steps to reduce global warming through solutions such as, smart lighting, renewable energy, energy efficiency, green vehicles, clean transportation, green buildings and green communities.

Niebur became the 911th mayor to sign the agreement in the U.S. and the second in the Metro East.

Dave Gocken, of the Piasa Palisades Sierra Club in Alton, and Niebur thanked all who had worked on the process to get the city to join the Cool Cities Initiative.

Gocken said the goal of the agreement is to reduce global warming at a local level.

Gocken said the Sierra Club program uses the Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement as a guiding tool to reduce carbon emissions in line with the Kyoto Protocol.

"Over 900 mayors from all sizes of cities across the United States representing nearly 85 million citizens have signed the agreement," Gocken said. "Until the federal government acts, mayors are spearheading local efforts to reduce GHGs (greenhouse gases) which contribute to global warming."

Niebur said the city has been working with the Sierra Club for months on this measure.

"This is more than just signing a piece of paper," Niebur said. He said the city is making a commitment.

"Edwardsville has been a leader in many ways. We were one of the first communities to have weekly recycling and to ban leaf burning. Some of this was met with opposition, but it was the right thing to do," Niebur said.

Niebur said the city has initiated many environmental and energy efficient projects over the years.

According to Public Works Director Tim Harr, some of the city's energy efficient projects have included: using an \$80,000 grant from the Department of Commerce and Economic

Opportunity (DCEO) to distribute more than 300 energy efficient kits to residents, inspecting and tuning 53 residential furnaces for low income residents, replacing traffic signal bulbs with energy efficient LED bulbs and replacing an HVAC unit with a more energy efficient unit at City Hall.

Gocken said the steps to become environmentally friendly are also fiscally savvy.

"Reducing carbon emissions cuts down on global warming, these actions also save taxpayers money and in this saving of money citizens are better served by their elected officials," Gocken said.

Rachel Tompkins, a member of the Sierra Club and LWV of the Edwardsville area, spoke on behalf of the local LWV.

Tompkins said the organization supports the mayor's decision to sign the agreement. She said the LWV on the national and local level supports this initiative.

"The League of Women Voters is pleased today to have the city of Edwardsville designated as a Cool City," Tompkins said.

Three Rivers Project Coordinator Christine Favilla said she too was happy with the city's decision. She said hopefully neighboring communities will follow in Edwardsville's footsteps.

"Edwardsville is truly a leader in this matter," Favilla said.

There are four steps to become a Cool City: take the Cool Cities pledge, conduct a global warming emissions inventory, create a solution plan and implement and monitor progress.

Niebur said the next step in the process for the city is to form a committee to review opportunities for the city to reduce carbon emissions and advise the city as to which steps can be taken.

Alton's mayor signed the same agreement last year.

To learn more about the initiative, visit www.sierraclub.org/coolcities.

Posted on Friday, Jan. 23, 2009

Edwardsville makes it cool to live in the city

By ELIZABETH DONALD

EDWARDSVILLE -- Edwardsville is now the second "Cool City" in the metro-east.

Mayor Gary Niebur became the 911th American mayor to sign the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, pledging to reduce the city's contribution to global warming along the lines of the Kyoto Protocol.

"Until the federal government acts, mayors are taking steps," said Dave Gocken, on the executive committee of the Sierra Club's local chapter.

 Niebur said the city is forming a committee to find ways for energy efficiency.

"This is much more than signing a piece of paper," Niebur said. "This is a renewed commitment this city is making."

Niebur pointed out that Edwardsville was one of the first cities to begin weekly recycling and ban open burning, which he said were not always popular decisions.

Other environmental steps Edwardsville has taken include:

- A state grant funded energy-efficient lighting at City Hall, police and fire stations and the library, as well as energy-efficient HVAC systems at City Hall.
- Traffic signals at many intersections were replaced with LED lights.
- The parks and recreation department has switched to a hybrid vehicle.
- Single-pane windows have been replaced with energy-efficient windows.
- Promotes recycling, including mulching Christmas trees and buying recycled plastic park equipment.

"There's a definite impetus toward a cleaner, brighter future," said Christina Favilla, Sierra Club representative.

Niebur said the Edwardsville High School Environmental Club also intends to get involved, under the leadership of President Yanyi Luo, who wishes to join the committee.

Gocken said the energy-efficient policies serve taxpayers as well by saving money, and Rachel Tompkins of the League of Women Voters offered the group's support for the initiative.

Alton was the first metro-east city to sign the agreement but has not yet formed a committee, Favilla said. No St. Clair County cities have joined the initiative. There are 31 Cool Cities in Illinois, most in the Chicago region.

Contact reporter Elizabeth Donald at edonald@bnd.com.

DISTRICT 7 BOARD OF EDUCATION
Observed by Meg Oberlag

January 12, 2009 - The director of the Southwestern School Board Association spoke about the services and activities of the organization which includes the counties of Madison, Monroe, St. Clair, Jersey and Randolph. It is one of 21 divisions in the state. They have four meetings each year and offer networking and seminars for superintendents and school board members. This summer they will offer training sessions for new school board members who are elected in April. (Edwardsville has four seats that will be up for election.)

The board approved a new course for EHS – Veterinary Technology – which will be part of the Agricultural Education department.

Dr. Andre gave an overview of the planning to get ready for the 2010-11 federal mandate called Response to Intervention. This program requires school districts to give extra help to students who are falling behind and hopes to remedy the situation before they become labeled as disabled or in need of special education. The main targets are language arts, math and behavior. RTI is a strategy for meeting the goals of No Child Left Behind. Our District has already been working on this since 2004 when we started at EHS with the state Small Learning Communities grants.

City Council
Observed by Susan Web

12/16/2008

Tippitt excused.

Appointed Eric Scott Hanson from Columbia, Mo. as new city planner.

Passed an ordinance making an assessment, levy and collection of taxes for the fiscal year May 1, 2008 to April 30, 2009.

Authorized sole source awarding of the East Lake culvert and roadway replacement project to Baxmeyer Construction, Inc. at an estimated cost of \$230,000.

Passed an ordinance making all telecommunicators full time.

At 12/16/08 meeting also approved Edwardsville's participation in the Cool Cities program to help reduce global warming.

1/6/2009

All present.

Made presentations of appreciation to retired fire captains Anderson and Schrage.

Authorized purchase of a used (1999) aerial fire truck from Lake Forest Fire Dept. at a cost of \$150,000.

Awarded the Children's Museum parking lot project to DeLaurent Construction for \$49,444.40.

Approved agreement with Jim McAdams for resident engineering services as needed.

1/20/09

All present.

Passed a resolution supporting application for recycled content equipment grant from Madison County Solid Waste Recycling Program.

Had first reading of an ordinance authorizing sale of certain surplus personal property owned by the city and another ordinance adopting a registration program for residential properties rented within the city limits.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS BOARD MINUTES - NOVEMBER 2008

Present: Lisa Brennan, Ruth Ellis, Carol Gipe, Ellen Nordhauser, Meg Oberlag, Mary Pearson, Judy Thompson

WALK FOR DEMOCRACY: Mary Pearson reported that this event broke even. If we do it again next year, she suggested that we buy more T-shirts. Board members agreed that it had been a good event. Hal Patton and Mark Von Nida were there in support. Participation was fine for a day when other events were also scheduled. The connection with the Saturday Market worked well.

ILLINOIS STUDENT VOTE was also a success at local high schools. More than 3000 students participated and League Members assisting with the event registered more than 200 new voters from throughout the County. Carol Gipe suggested that, in the 3 schools where she worked that day, that teachers regarded the event as extra work, while administrators considered it a feather. Mark Von Nida, the County Clerk, gave major support to this event.

MEET AND GREET THE CANDIDATES NIGHT, held on Wednesday October 8, proved a great success. Ten of 11 invited candidates attended, and 90 citizens turned out to hear them. Press coverage was good. The meeting was replayed on the Public Access Channel. Melissa

Levy of the Collinsville LWV handed out a sheet of information about the candidates. Lisa Brennan and Melissa Levy welcomed the crowd.

MENTORING FOR NEW MEMBERS, Judy Thompson observed, has been a new initiative. She called all of them for the candidates' meeting. Carol Gerdt and Mary Pearson will write an invitation to new members to the Christmas Social.

Carol Gipe asked Meg Oberlag to write up for THE BULLETIN a summary of her talk, given with Ginger McCall to the WOMEN IN POLITICS CLASS at SIUE.

TAD ARMSTRONG, a local attorney with a strong interest in popular education on Constitutional issues will speak to LWV members and the public at the Auditorium in the Madison County Historical Society Annex on Wednesday, November 19.

The TREASURER'S REPORT was approved. After expenses, the Garage Sale fund-raiser, held in September, netted \$377.50.

The Board also approved asking Karen Buescher to conduct the annual audit. Meg Oberlag will call her.

A remembrance of our deceased member and friend, SARAH TWOMBLY, written by Ann Stolte will be in the Bulletin.

Board Members approved a list of local program items proposed by members in January 2008 and taken from the 2006-2007 listing in the Annual Report. On the list approved by the Board for continued discussion and study were the following:

- Continuing the Smart Growth study of rapid growth and development within the boundaries of the LWVEA with special emphasis on the I-55 Corridor Plan.
- Following the National LWV position on Health Care, the LWVEA puts a high priority on hosting informational events for public discussion of health care issues.
- Looking at the question: What are the human relations issues in Edwardsville?
- Looking at the City's response to issues of human contribution to climate change, examining the "Cool City" initiative.
- Possibly organizing an informational meeting on "home rule," perhaps combined with an update on issues connected with Tax Increment Financing [TIF].
- Exploring the ramifications of community-wide Wi-Fi.
- Possibly organizing an informational meeting regarding land usage and eminent domain, if compatible with the LWVIL program.
- Educating the public regarding the Open Meetings Act.

Submitted by Ellen Nordhauser

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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 \$55.00 include membership in our local, state and national organization. Send your check to Treasurer, LWVEA, P.O. Box 841, Edwardsville, IL 62025-0841