



CONVENTION 2021

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS'
OF ILLINOIS

Uplifting Democracy, Equity and Our Ideals

LWVIL BIENNIUM REPORT 2019-2021

President's Overview

Executive Committee

Development Committee

Finance Committee

Governance

501(c)(3) Transition Committee

Human Resources Committee

Voter Service

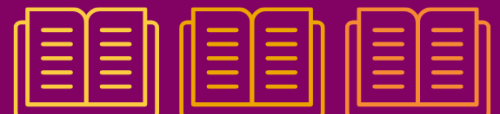
Membership Committee

Communications Committee

Issues & Advocacy Committee

Criminal Justice Update

100th Anniversary Committee



PRESIDENT'S OVERVIEW

In my role as president of the board, I have led with both heart and mind, working to inspire, grow relationships, and create community. My leadership begins with leading by example, developing the trust that in turn inspires the confidence and creativity to tackle goals. It moves to leading from behind, making space for each team member to use their strengths to the team's best advantage.

Within an environment of collaboration and shared responsibility, our team was able to exceed all expectations. We evaluated and rebuilt the crucial infrastructure LWVIL needs for action. We put our hearts and minds together to power the mission to fully empower voters and defend democracy.

Destined to be a challenging biennium, marked by a presidential election AND the census, it became even more challenging as we faced both the global pandemic that turned our in-person work on its head AND the unexpected departure of both our executive director and communications lead.

As a team, we adapted quickly, we stepped up.

Together with an amazing network of local Leagues and thousands of dedicated members, our mission was not interrupted. We took on the virtual world and we excelled—we empowered voters and protected democracy to the fullest. We registered, advocated and lobbied. We were not deterred.

As a state board, we also continued with the hard work of examining, exposing the deficiencies in our operations, and building a framework for future growth.

I came into this role with a vision—a vision of our state League with a greater impact and reach, as the first thing people think of when they think “advocacy, civic engagement, social justice and voter empowerment.” To do this, we need to amplify the voices and uplift the work of every local League.

I became president determined to use all that I have and **all that I can learn**, to make LWVIL the powerhouse it **MUST** be in order to protect democracy today.

For two years, I have led an incredibly talented team that has more than proven its dedication to the mission. This biennium report is a summary of the thousands of hours devoted to the League.

This is your League at work.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

CHALLENGES

- Deficit Budget
- Simultaneous operation of two businesses
- Unexpected resignations of staff: executive director and marketing/communications
- Ongoing discovery of operations & procedural deficits
- Pandemic:
 - March 2020: office closed due to state “stay at home” order
 - Remote work for 2020 and 2021
 - Ongoing adaptations for virtual work
 - Reduced opportunities for cultivating donor relationships due to remote work
 - Fundraising in time of severe hardship
- 100th Anniversary Year: increased demand for LWV community outreach, appearances, resources, activities and celebrations
- Presidential Election Cycle: additional activities
- Census: additional activities

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Led board assessment of organization needs at all levels
- Directed board identification of biennium goals, objectives and strategy
- Guided board committees in development and implementation of initiatives including
 - New website platform
 - New fundraising digital platform
 - Guides for local Leagues
- Guided and supported board committee chairs and committee members in execution and growth of mission work, including support for Criminal Justice study, Issues Briefing event production, Illinois Voter Guide expansion contract
- Partnered with the 100th Anniversary Committee to facilitate February 14th 2020, 100th anniversary event
- Partnered with Power the Vote event committee leadership to execute highly successful 2020 virtual benefit
- Partnered with Issues and Advocacy team to create the 2020 Issues Briefing at NEIU.
- Worked with pro bono legal counsel and LWVUS tax consultant on 501c3 transition research and planning
- Initiated creation of board Human Resources Committee
- Led executive committee in management of operations after resignation of executive director
- Led donor relationship cultivation efforts with individuals, businesses
- Cultivated relationship with retailer for multi-state in-store voter activation opportunities, event sponsorship, and major gift
- Developed relationships with legislators and leaders of coalition partners and like-minded organizations
- On call with securing resources and advising local League leaders with individual community situations
- Managed outreach from members and nonmembers with concerns
- Oversight, guidance and training to leaders of MAS units and early stage local Leagues
- Guidance and support for local League tax status compliance
- Promoted mission and organization with nonprofit organizations, newspaper editorial boards; authored op eds, LTEs, advocacy and lobbying statements

NEXT STEPS

- Complete onboarding and training for new board and executive director
- Complete and implement training opportunities for local League boards, treasurers and communication leads
- Complete steps for 501(c)(3) transition per Convention vote
- Lead revision of strategic plan with emphasis on generative, long term planning
- Continue to work with executive director to maximize LWVIL visibility and amplify impact of local Leagues
- Develop succession planning initiative for state and local boards
- Charter board committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion goals and objectives
- Use virtual tools to maximize local League opportunities for statewide networking, participation and representation
- Develop program for nonmember donor/major gift development, including messaging and annual report for use in donor relationship building
- Continue partnership development with leadership of Illinois-based organizations

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Allyson Haut, President
Jan Dorner, VP Voter Service
Jenny Grochowski, VP Governance
Barbara Sturges, Treasurer
Cate Williams, Secretary
Lali Watt, VP Membership (resigned June 2020
to assume LWVUS board position)

Per the Bylaws Article VI. Section 3. Executive Committee. The executive committee shall exercise such power and authority as may be delegated to it and shall report on all actions taken by it between regular meetings of the board of directors. The executive committee shall review the performance of the Executive Director annually.

CHALLENGES

- March 2020 Pandemic Lockdown and Remote Working
- Unexpected Resignations:
 - Executive Director, May 15, 2020
 - Communications/Marketing Staff member, August 25, 2020
- Discovered deficiencies in organization operations and procedures

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Collaborated with HR Committee to create and institute performance review process for the Executive Director position
- Beginning May 15, 2020, the Executive Committee met weekly in order to address a standing list of organization management items as well as other issues on an as-needed basis, in the absence of an executive director. Items were addressed by appropriate board committee when possible. The Executive Committee reported in writing monthly to the Board on status and actions taken in between regular meetings of the Board of Directors
- Standing list of management items included
 - Oversight and supervision of employees
 - General administration and finance related issues
 - Communications
 - Recruitment of various committee members

- Local League needs and support
- Independent projects to remediate identified operations problems including roster management, employee time tracking, phone system, payroll, Neon CRM cleanup, Constant Contact clean up, MAS unit support, local Leagues with tax status issues
- Assessment of office and staff functions and efficacy; and operations related function
- Needs and costs assessment for organization staffing
- Needs and costs assessment for organization expenditures
- Collaborated with and provided support to HR Committee on aspects of executive director search including job description and candidate interviews
- Endowment Research Update

NEXT STEPS

- Facilitate Executive Director onboarding
 - Return to usual Executive Committee functions
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DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Allyson Haut, President
Kathy Kenny, board member

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Ensuring the fiscal health necessary to support the organization mission through cultivation of major gifts, sponsorships, recurring donors and fundraising
- Create content for donor cultivation messaging materials
- Execute two successful annual benefits

CHALLENGES

- Unexpected resignation of executive director
- Unexpected resignation of communications/marketing staff member
- Pandemic restrictions on in person meetings and events
- Lack of staff facility with CRM donation software
- Absence of organization messaging materials
- Committee members resignations during biennium

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Collaborated with LWVUS on small Chicago event with LWVUS major donor and guests September 2019
- Calendar year-end appeal 2019
- Executed successful 2019 benefit with special event committee
- Provided support for 100th Anniversary Birthday celebration February 14, 2020
- Spring/fiscal year-end appeal 2020
- Successful 2020 Power the Vote annual benefit in partnership with the special event committee - Erin Roeper, Chair and Michelle Thorsell, Project Manager
 - We are indebted to Erin Roeper, Michelle Thorsell and all of the hard working committee members for the resounding success of the 2020 Power the Vote Annual Benefit and Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the League. The committee members worked tirelessly to create an excellent event, seek sponsors, activate League participation, and quickly adapt when the pandemic led to the decision to pivot to a virtual event
 - Established ticketing and sponsorship levels and pricing
 - Investigated virtual event platforms and fundraising software for virtual event support

- Implemented use of Mobile Cause platform for virtual benefit: event donations, sponsorships, text-to-donate functionality, and peer-to-peer fundraising
- Tripled net amount raised over the previous year
- Cultivated and executed donor and sponsor relationships, providing voter activation and education programs
 - AKIRA Clothing, retailer serving 18-30 year olds
 - Colectivo Coffee
 - Shedd Aquarium
- Cultivated in-kind donor relationships
 - WBEZ, Chicago Public Media
 - Katten Muchin Rosenman

NEXT STEPS

- Work with executive director's advice and expertise (development experience)
- Virtual annual benefit, fall 2021
- Develop donor relationship management program
- Collaborate with communications committee and executive director for creation of:
 - Donor cultivation messaging materials
 - Annual report
 - Planned giving program materials
 - Templates for annual appeals; calendar year-end and mid-year appeals

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Barbara Sturges, Treasurer
Allyson Haut, President
Jenny Grochowski, VP Governance
Kathy Kenny, board member

The Finance Committee monitors the financial performance of both LWVIL and LWVILEF, and recommends changes to financial policies and/or procedures as seen to be necessary. The finance committee also provides oversight for the review or audit of the organization's financial statements. The Finance committee monitors not only overall cash flow to cover the operations of the organization, but must review the cash flow between the two LWVIL entities.

Revenues for LWVIL are primarily the PMP income from local Leagues. The PMP revenues and contributions to LWVIL do not cover all the expenses for the organization. Fundraising is primarily performed through LWVILEF to generate additional income needed to cover program and administrative costs. The two entities have certain shared costs, such as salary and rent expense. Other activities are attributed to one entity or another.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Ensure adequate cash flow for LWVIL/LWVILEF operations
- Ensure committees prepare a budget and operate with their budget
- Assist local Leagues with tax-exempt status issues
- Support local League compliance with federal tax and regulatory items
- Gain understanding of LWVILEF's role in the Jo Daviess grants
- Update and revise policies dealing with LWVIL and LWVILEF finances
- Educate the board about the LWVILEF Endowment
- To "live within our means"

CHALLENGES

- Inherited a deficit budget
- FY19: \$419,000 in revenue; \$511,000 in expenses, resulting in a loss of almost \$92,000 (\$194,000 spent on salaries and benefits)
- FY20: the budget for staff was more than revenue could support. Resulted in deficit of almost \$79,000 (\$128,000 deficit if investment income and Jo Daviess grant revenue surplus not included)
- Pandemic: paying for office space we are not using; FY21 Power the Vote benefit switch to online resulted in extra costs but did result in greater net earnings
- Payroll Protection Program loan of \$40,255 forgiveness still under review

OTHER FACTORS/RESULTS

- Resignation of executive director and communications specialist reduced salary costs
- Financially successful virtual benefit for LWVILEF in September, 2020
- Benefactors' bequests or trust distributions of \$136,199 to LWVIL; \$48,100 to LWVILEF
- LWVUS Fair Maps grant of \$4,000 in FY20
- Just Democracy grant of \$10,000 in FY21 to LWVILEF
- Stock market performance: value of our investment account up despite draws of \$25,000 in FY20; \$20,000 in FY2
- (Investment account includes permanently restricted funds of \$472,951
- FY 21 through April is showing a combined surplus of over \$200,000 (revenue \$200,000 more than expenses, not including investment income and gains)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Completed financial audits, reviews and tax filings in a timely manner
- Due to PPP loan, draws from Endowment, and FY21 bequests, our cash position is excellent
- Committees compared financial performance favorably to forecast monthly
- Local Leagues have, or are making progress to, regain tax exempt status
- Monitoring of 990N filings resulted in no Leagues losing tax exempt status during this biennium
- Created and provided resources to local Leagues
 - Local League Annual Fiduciary Checklist
 - Town Hall training on above
 - Detailed instructions to complete IRS Form 990N
 - Promoted through communications channels and posted on website
- Met with Jo Daviess County point person, to increase understanding of Jo Daviess project grants and their impact on LWVIL financial statements
- Updated LWVIL policies for expense reimbursement; local League use of Ed Funds; local League use of LWVILEF sales tax exemption
- Updated understanding of Endowment and how it should be managed
- Provided \$200 pandemic assistance grant to each local League, MAS unit, and intra-state ILO
- Secured 621 hours of in-kind professional legal and accounting services

NEXT STEPS

- Monitor financial performance compared to budget
- Work to streamline accounting functions
- Work with Executive Director to execute finance related steps of 501(c)(3) transition
- Work with Board to develop treasurer training module for local League training series
- Advise new and/or struggling local Leagues on finances and/or tax exempt status
- Continue developing needed policies, including policies on cash reserve and internal control
- Finalize policy updates on use of the endowment
- Continue to live within our means!

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Jenny Grochowski, VP Governance
Jan Dorner, VP Voter Service, Bylaws
Cate Williams, Secretary

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Update the board policies and guidelines ('the Board Book')
- Provide training for the board
- Develop onboarding and offboard materials for board members
- Lead board self-assessment initiative
- Provide guidance to the Nominating and Bylaws committees

CHALLENGES

- Lack of resource capacity noted for all board committees throughout biennium
- All three governance committee members served on **several** other committees
- Executive director resigned
- Board members spent more time on operations due to unfilled Executive Director position
- Executive committee took on significant operational responsibilities; met weekly in FY21
- Every member of the governance committee was on the executive committee

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

UPDATED BOARD POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

- Many last created/updated in 2013
- Policies posted on website didn't agree with/match Board Book
- 72% of policies (23 total) were updated, including 2 new policies
- 70% of guidance documents were updated (19 total), including 5 new guidelines
- Wrote 15 committee charters - 100% of LWVIL committees in FY20-21
- Coordinated with communications committee to post updated policies on the LWVIL website

BOARD TRAINING

- Obtained subscription to BoardSource
- All members of the LWVIL Board completed BoardSource online training, obtaining a "Certificate of Nonprofit Board Education"
- Scheduled in person training through University of Chicago Booth School (cancelled due to pandemic)

DEVELOPMENT OF ONBOARDING AND OFFBOARDING MATERIALS

- Completed exit interviews for two of the three Board members who resigned
- Outlined onboarding and offboarding materials (to be completed)

BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT

- Board completed an anonymous survey at the end of FY20
- Capacity constraints limited the amount of work that could be reviewed/adjusted based on the results of the survey

GUIDANCE FOR NOMINATING, BYLAWS and HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEES

- Governance is responsible for the board's operational effectiveness
- Jan Dorner chaired bylaws committee; recommended improvements to support board effectiveness
- Jenny Grochowski served on nominating committee; provided input on resource needs of organization to support LWVIL effectiveness
- Cate Williams served on Human Resources committee; provided guidance for board effectiveness

NEXT STEPS

- Continue efforts to update and revise the Board Book
 - Seek board training opportunities, particularly in fiduciary responsibility and fundraising
 - Provide governance mentoring and assistance to local Leagues
 - Develop recruitment of offboard committee members for all committees
 - Develop recruitment plan for future board members
 - Return to oversight role and complete updating of policies and materials
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501(C)(3) TRANSITION COMMITTEE

Chair: Jenny Grochowski, VP Governance
Allyson Haut, President
Jan Dorner, VP Voter Service
Kelly Rotella (Central Kane County)
Laurie Rose (Lake Forest/Lake Bluff)
Tina Brady Pettis (Chicago)
Tom Carson, LWVUS Tax Consultant
Janet Hoffman and associates, Katten Muchin
Rosenman, LLP

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Develop roadmap for a successful transition to 501(c)(3) status for state and local Leagues
- Define the timeline and procedures for the 501(c)(3) transition for state and local Leagues
- Communicate updates to local League leaders and members on 501(c)(3) process
- Coordinate with bylaws, communications and convention committees to present the 501(c)(3) transition to membership and at convention
- Update the LWVIL Education Fund local League account policy

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

DEVELOPED ROADMAP TO 501(C)(3) FOR STATE AND LOCAL LEAGUES

- Retained tax and legal experts to help LWVIL establish its roadmap to 501(c)(3)
- Identified tax and incorporation structure of LWVIL and associated local Leagues and ILOs
- Identified outstanding regulatory compliance issues
- Identified the most efficient method to achieve 501(c)(3) status
- Determined bylaw amendments and article of incorporation changes to be presented at the 2021 LWVIL convention
- Assisted six local Leagues to begin 501(c)(3) process at their 2020 annual meetings
- Helped five local Leagues correct and/or avoid revocation of their tax status
- **In the FY20-21 biennium, one ILO and seven local Leagues received or are in the process of obtaining 501(c)(3) status**

DEFINED TIMELINE AND PROCEDURES TO 501(C)(3)

- Established checklist and timeline of procedures to achieve 501(c)(3) status
- The process for local Leagues and LWVIL is the same

COMMUNICATED UPDATES TO LOCAL LEADERS AND MEMBERSHIP

- Presented roadmap, timeline and checklist via webinar to local leaders in February and March of 2021
- Shared materials on LWVIL website and through LWVIL newsletters, March 2021
- Fielded member questions through email address 501c3@lwwil.org
- Held webinar/caucus prior to convention to answer delegate questions

COORDINATED WITH BYLAWS, COMMUNICATIONS AND CONVENTION COMMITTEES FOR A 501(C)(3) VOTE AT CONVENTION

- Worked with bylaws committee to add necessary clauses for delegate vote
- Worked with communications committee to develop materials, promote webinars & share materials on website
- Attended convention committee meetings, prepared materials for delegates and facilitated Q & A meeting/workshop before the convention

UPDATED THE LWVIL EDUCATION FUND LOCAL LEAGUE ACCOUNT POLICY

- Policy was put in effect in FY21
- Worked with the executive director and bookkeeper to analyze fund activity
- Updated use of funds and percentages for operation categories

NEXT STEPS

- Proceed with the LWVIL 501(c)(3) application, based on the vote at convention
 - Continue to support local Leagues pursuing 501(c)(3) status with guidance and advice.
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HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

*Chair, Cate Williams, Secretary
Barbara Hayes, board member*

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Created in February 2020 by the board of directors to handle Human Resource issues and add support for the executive director; ensure compliance with legal rules and regulations for employees & members; stay current on all current best practices in the industry.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

- Consulted with legal team from Katten, Muchin Roseman, LLP
- Worked with The Society of Human Resource Professionals
- Comprehensive Employee handbook adopted October 2020
- Employees gained additional sick time and an increase of vacation days

PERFORMANCE REVIEW PROCESS

- Completed in October 2020 for current staff
- Added goal setting for both staff and board of directors
- Focus on fair, equitable evaluations based on goals and skill building

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SEARCH

- Built a job description for the Executive Director
 - Accurately describes needs of the State League office
 - Enhances the advocacy work and core mission of LWVIL
- Used description to attract candidates for open position
- Conducted extensive interviews
- Hired executive director, May 2021

NEW PAYROLL PROCESSING SOFTWARE

- Allows for tracking hours allocated toward mission work
- Necessary for certain types of grants

NEW TELEPHONE SYSTEM

- Reviewed, selected, trained staff
- Reduces monthly cost by \$150
- Increases productivity and service to League members and general community.

NEXT STEPS

With the addition of this committee, we continue to carry out fiduciary duty and make LWVIL a good place to work and grow with the League. The work of the committee for the next biennium is to provide support to the executive director and staff.

VOTER SERVICE

Chair: Jan Dorner, VP Voter Service
Chair: Kathy Kenny, board member
Melissa Lieb (LaGrange Area)
Patti Lackman (Central Kane County)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Encourage voter registration and turnout
- Implement Illinois Voter Guide in 3 elections
- Provide moderator, observer and forum training
- Review candidate participation and pollwatcher policies
- Develop a toolkit for mock elections

CHALLENGES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The pandemic increased our workload and changed our process, but not our resolve. We took advantage of the ease and efficiency of the Zoom platform to elevate our reach.

MET WITH LOCAL LEAGUE VOTER SERVICE TEAMS

- Accelerated pace due to virtual meetings
- We met with 15 individual Leagues over the 2020 summer
- Google group established to leverage and share our local Leagues' talents
- Developed Local League/LWVIL Voter Service Shared Resource Center (SRC)
- We sent 8 successive notices to local Leagues during the election season, highlighting what they could find on the SRC. Nearly 200 local League leaders could view, contribute and use:
 - Social media toolkits
 - Summaries of changes to the election law
 - Forum policies/procedures
 - List of moderators
 - How-to's for a forum on Zoom
 - Calendar to schedule use of the LWVIL webinar platform
 - Actual forum videos to see how they work
 - Candidate questions submittal form for the Illinois Voter Guide
 - Seven VOTE yard sign templates
 - Letter-to-the-editor templates related to vote by mail
 - Several powerpoint presentations submitted by local Leagues or LWVIL
- Held several voter service group meetings and post-election debriefs to convey information about Shared Resource Center, Illinois Voter Guide, and new election law
- Provided Zoom webinar platform to local Leagues for forums and other events; included training in use of Zoom webinar

- Coordinated local Leagues sharing the same Congressional District to have ONE candidate forum. Successful for CD 6, 10, 14 and many state legislative and senatorial districts. The candidates really appreciated this approach
- Presented Power the Vote Chat Room associated with the Power the Vote benefit

NEW ELECTION LAW IN MAY 2020; RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC

- Translated the law into simple-to-read summaries
- Created a media campaign
- Produced a powerpoint presentation to help educate and protect the election
- Hosted webinars with representatives from the US Postal Service, employees of the Shedd Aquarium, Ageguide Advisory Council & Board, National Council of Jewish Women, Age Options Advisory Council, Advocacy Task Force, and smaller groups such as Congregation Hakafa and a Forest Park Unitarian Church
- Partnered with like-minded organizations to educate voters and protect the vote
 - Promote the Vote Coalition: distributed 120,000 dual language voter education flyers in Chicago
 - Know Your Rights: pamphlet for jails regarding voter rights
- Just Democracy/MacArthur foundation voter education grant - 2020
 - Printed 1500 dual language yard signs and 15,000 dual language palm cards for distribution to minority communities across the state, enlisting assistance from 26 local Leagues
 - Printed 15,000 Know Your Rights Flyers; distributed statewide to nearly 100 jails
- Worked with ACLU attorneys to prepare for potential litigation regarding voter intimidation on November 2020 Election Day

ILLINOIS VOTER GUIDE (IVG)

- Negotiated favorable 4-year contract with our vendor for 6 elections, 2020-2023
- Coverage of 100% of federal, state, and local candidates on Illinois ballot. Of note is the exclusion of write-in candidates
- Each election more features were included such as:
 - Vote by mail application
 - Drop box locations
 - Judicial candidate ratings
 - Year-round voter registration/confirmation
 - Spanish translation
- For the last 3 elections, IVG covered 14,339 candidates; over 6,944 races; 24 unique local Leagues submitted candidate questions for IVG covering nearly 700 candidates
- For 2021 consolidated elections, local Leagues used Zoom and produced 150 forum videos and 156 statement videos, covering nearly 800 candidates, for IVG

OTHER VOTER SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Revised Voter Service policies and website documents, including:
 - Candidate Participation Policy (twice)
 - General Considerations When Planning Candidate Forums/Debates
 - Legal Considerations for Candidate Forums/Debates
 - Sample Ground Rules for Candidate Forums
 - Virtual Youth Voter Registration presentation and script
 - Seven steps to a Successful Registration Drive
 - LWVIL Organizational Political (Nonpartisan) Activity Policy
 - Template for the Broadcast Agreement for a virtual forum
 - Template for the Ground Rules for a virtual forum
 - Template for the checklist for a virtual forum

- Conducted Trainings
 - 3 moderator trainings, adding 43 moderators to the list
 - 5 observer corp trainings, adding 156 League members
 - 1 forum training of 29 League members
 - Mellissa Lieb (LWV LaGrange) produced/presented forum training at the LWV National Convention (2020)
- Conducted Voter Service Impact Study 2020: 82% of 28 responding local Leagues produced recorded candidate forum/candidate statements, 36% acquired poll watcher credentials, and 83% posted to social media at least once per week. Combined reach for social media was Facebook: 12,762; Instagram: 4,729 and Twitter: 5,932
- Conducted “Educating and Empowering 2020 Voters” workshop at the 2019 LWVIL Convention
- Co-Hosted “Access, Technology, Turnout: Enacting Voting Reform in Illinois” with Reform for Illinois and National Vote at Home Institute on October 18, 2019
- Partnered with Women’s March Chicago for the 1/18/20 March in Chicago
- Issues Briefing 2020 - presented a Get Out the Vote powerpoint discussion
- Contributed content to the 2 monthly LWVIL newsletters and to the recently created bimonthly Leader’s Edge
- Daily resource for local League leaders and outside organizations inquiries on voter service issues
- Spoke at numerous events

NEXT STEPS

- Always Empower Voters and Defend Democracy
- Include more local League voices on our Voter Service Committee
- Leverage the combined communication power of 40+ Leagues to convey our message
- Raise the profile of Illinois Voter Guide and allow candidates to update their candidate page. Show the Guide in even more languages
- Encourage more Observers in local Leagues; more training
- Facilitate resource sharing between local Leagues

MEMBERSHIP

Did not meet as Committee 2020-21; chair left for LWVUS position. Responsibilities were met/exceeded by board president, officers and directors.

Statewide membership as of January 31st 2020 : 3,627
Statewide membership as of January 31st 2021: 3,700
73 member net increase

GOALS and ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Secure equity and effectiveness of communication with accurate membership lists
- Educate and encourage local Leagues regarding update of US membership Roster for accurate report of the names and email address of members and all officers
- Data clean up US Roster and LWVIL membership management tools - NEON and Constant Contact
- Completed integration of US Roster, NEON and Constant Contact
- Provided operations and mission support and guidance for MAS units and new local Leagues

- Created procedures for MAS unit membership join and renewal
- Establishing guidelines for MAS unit and new local League formation and mentorship
- Advised and supported existing local Leagues with various membership and status situations
- Increased leadership trainings for local Leagues across all committees

NEXT STEPS

- Continue weekly integration of Roster, NEON and Constant Contact
- Continue to develop procedures for Leagues in formation
- Provide support to Leagues in formation - MAS units and newly formed full League status
- Help local Leagues stay current with their LWVUS Membership Roster
- Use Neon to generate/create new welcome letters to new League members from the 41 Leagues in Illinois
- Establish a membership Google group
- Assess membership trends, correlated factors and potential barriers to membership evaluate
- Work with individual local Leagues on membership goals, outreach and exploration of why membership totals may have changed over the past two years

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair: Rosemary Heileman, board member

Chair: Cheryl Budzinski, board member

Sara Kurensky (Wilmette)

Sophie Mucciaccio (Chicago), contract staff

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- New website (continuation of goal from previous committee)
- Clean up mailing lists so as to better leverage capacity of tools
- Enhance communications with local Leagues and community at large
- Establish social media posting frequency
- Formalize process/procedures for monthly publications and all communications requests

CHALLENGES

- Small committee
- Staff reluctance to work with committee to establish procedures/goals
- Unexpected staff departure
- Integrating contracted staff into committee process
- New tools with learning curves (SquareSpace, MobileCause)
- General election increased activity
- Pandemic and online events resulted in major increase in communications support

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

NEW WEBSITE

- Content updated throughout
- Dynamic content on landing page to reflect advocacy & linked calls to action
- Webinars and meeting recordings posted for consistent education
- Additional update management: Action Alerts, Bill Tracker; events calendar

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Increased posting frequency and promotion of LWVIL events
- Increased use of original content
- Began tracking engagement

NEWSLETTER IMPROVEMENTS

- Audiences defined: members, community, leadership
- Content and schedule defined by audience:
 - *News You Can Use* - community plus members audience, first week of month; circulation 6900
 - *Member Bulletin* - members only publication, third week of the month; circulation 3500
 - *Leader's Edge* - local League presidents, to guide & advise on business of League management, second and fourth weeks
- Eliminated duplication of articles to reinforce identity of each publication
- Other materials updated
 - Action Alerts: branded, mailed to updated list, posted on website
 - Program Planning (8), Fiduciary Checklist, Legislative Interviews (5)

ELECTION-RELATED MATERIALS

- IVG, vote by mail, ballot drop box, new law, etc.
- IVG, A Just Democracy grant, designed cards and yard signs in Spanish & English
- AKIRA: IVG promoted with special graphics for round-up fundraising; included outreach day at flagship store with posters & buttons
- Shedd: social media graphics created for Voter Service presentation

ONLINE EVENTS GRAPHICS/CAMPAIGNS

- Graphics & content developed for all items: mailings, fact sheets, slides, social media posts
- Events for which special graphics/materials were created
 - 501(c)(3) Transition
 - Lobby Day - included webpage
 - Legislative Hours
 - Ranked Choice Voting
 - Power the Vote: included MobileCause webpage design
 - Issues Briefing: included MobileCause & LWVIL webpage designs
 - Convention

ONLINE EVENTS REGISTRATION

- Neon registration, lists coordinated/imported for mailing
- Established registration procedure; three mailings per registrant

NEXT STEPS

- Develop all messaging to reflect strategic goals of board of directors
 - Refine/redesign graphics to coordinate newsletters, website, social media landing pages
 - Design templates and style guide for all LWVIL materials
 - Develop communications training module for local League training series
 - Provide communications toolkits for local Leagues
 - Annual report
 - Position LWVIL materials as a resource for advocates & education
 - Formalize procedures for communications requests to ensure consistency of message
 - Establish regular meetings with I & A, VS, and Benefit committee
 - Design website to accommodate regular reports and updates from Issue Specialists
 - Develop production calendar - standardize timeline around regular/annual League events
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ISSUES & ADVOCACY

Chair: Jean Pierce, board member

Chair: Rosemary Heilemann, board member

ISSUE SPECIALISTS

Sharon Alter (Chicago) Election Laws, Equal Rights Amendment
Jane Ballengee (Glenview etc.) Government Consolidation, Redistricting
Sarah Bury (Chicago) Climate Change: Water
Kathy Cortez (Palatine) Affordable Housing
Ann Courter (Oak Park etc.) Fiscal Policy
Janet Craft (Central Kane County) Healthcare, Reproductive Health
Laura Davis (Palatine) Climate Change
Hilary Denk (Downers Grove) Census
Lorri Grainawi (Arlington Heights etc.) Mental Health, Affordable Housing
Allyson Haut (Wilmette) Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
Jan Kay (Wheaton) Social Policies
Janet Kittlaus (Glenview etc.) Criminal Justice, Juvenile Justice, Death Penalty
Bill Koehl (Central Kane County) Climate Change
Barbara Laimins (Wheaton) Election Policies
Paula Lawson (Glenview etc.) Redistricting
Donna Limper (Roselle etc.) Campaign Finance/Ethics Reform
Jennifer Lucas (Palatine) Plastics
Jim McGrath (Palatine) Gun Violence Prevention
Elizabeth "Joy" Guscott-Mueller (Lake Forest etc.) Abolishing Electoral College, DEI
Margaret O'Hara (Chicago) Healthcare, Reproductive Health
Kim Reed (Glen Ellyn) Immigration

GOALS

- Update Where We Stand
- Revise and update the Issues and Advocacy Section of the LWVIL website
- Plan and execute the 2021 Issues Briefing (Measurement: Evaluation Survey)
 - Develop strategies to expand audience target to youth
 - Target issue choices to youth
 - Invite youth leaders as panelists
 - Utilize relevant marketing messaging and vehicles
- Increase community visibility of League Issues
- Provide templates for letters to the editors
- Provide links to LWV monthly newsletters
- Add coalition membership listing to website
- Increase use of expert videos (YouTube) for local League meetings
- Offer packaged programs about action foci including youtube videos

CHALLENGES

The pandemic changed our ability to meet with our partner organizations, committee persons and members. It also changed the legislative session for Spring 2020. We found in the new virtual meeting tools the ability to reach membership throughout the state to participate and offer video taped meetings for people who could not attend. There was easier access to elected officials and experts within and outside the state. And, our program Issues Briefing was more economical for members to participate.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ADVOCACY 2019-20

- Seriously curtailed by pandemic
- General Assembly did not meet for most of the session
- Signed on to 17 letters (Criminal and Juvenile Justice, Environment, FOIA, Healthcare, Housing, Immigration, Redistricting)
- Filed 5 Witness Slips
- Issued 14 Time For Action Requests (Census, Criminal Justice, Election Laws, Environment, Gun Violence, Housing, Redistricting)
- Two Op Eds

ADVOCACY 2020-21 AS OF 4/27

- Signed on to 16 Initiatives (Affordable Housing, Criminal Justice/Juvenile Justice, Environment, ERA, Immigration, Mental Health, Redistricting, Social Policy)
- Filed 55 witness slips
- Issued 18 Time for Action requests (Affordable Housing, Criminal Justice, Education funding, Election Laws, Environment, Ethics, Fiscal, Healthcare, Immigration, Mental Health, Racial Impact)

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES 2019-2020

- Affordable Housing workshop
- Google Groups expanded: 390 people in 16 google groups
- Where We Stand updated for 2017-19
- Legislative Hour (virtual)
- Issues Briefing 2020, Northeastern Illinois University
 - 173 participants
 - 11 topics

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES 2020-2021

- Criminal Justice Study completed:
 - 32 Leagues participated, representing 3463 members
 - 584 members participated in the study
- Educational Webinars: Braver Angels, Ethics, Ranked Choice Voting
- Recordings: How to File Witness Slips, How to Track Legislation, How to Lobby
- Issues Briefing 2021, online, two days
 - 213 participants
 - 6 topics
- Legislative Hour: 4 webinars
- Legislative Interviews: 18 Leagues reported on visits with 31 Legislators
- Lobby Day (virtual)
- Added Bill Track 50 to the website
- Program Planning: videos and written materials for local Leagues
 - 28 Leagues participated representing 3180 members
 - 400 members participated

NEXT STEPS

The pandemic has caused LWVIL to explore new ways to connect remotely with our members. This has improved communication with downstate Leagues.

- Future Issues Briefings may need to be “hybrid” – in person and virtual
- Explore ways to improve timeliness of advocacy communications with membership
- Work with the Communications Committee to provide Issues Specialist Updates on the website in a user friendly way
- LWVIL will continue to have a strong educational and advocacy presence in our state

CRIMINAL JUSTICE POSITION UPDATE STUDY

Chair: Janet Kittlaus, Issue Specialist
Laura Davis (Palatine)
Patti Lackman (Central Kane County)
Susan Sosin (Chicago)
Sharon Welsh (Chicago)

The study to update the criminal justice position was approved at the 2017 LWVIL Convention and needed an extension to complete in 2021.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Expand scope of study to reflect current events and research
- Add section on Policing
- Focus research and sources on criminal justice system in Illinois
- Craft questions for each of 14 sections to develop consensus
 - Not too specific, position had to be flexible—not too narrowly worded
 - Present pro and con for each question—proved difficult. What is the “con” to this question: “Is building trust and nurturing legitimacy on both sides of the police/citizen divide foundational to positive relationships between law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve?” (local League feedback in some cases about the lack of a balanced pro/con)
- Engage local Leagues in process
- Use local League input to develop revised position
- Present position to membership at Convention 2021

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Issues Briefings in 2018-20 included Criminal Justice Reform
- Study posted on the website, June 2020
 - The 61-page study with the questions, speakers bureau, video and written resources,
 - “how to do a consensus study” video
 - Model consensus study script with powerpoint
- Communication with local Leagues
 - Created a google group
 - Created email list of study participants in each League
- Email and phone outreach to local Leagues
 - Resulted in participation of 32 Leagues
 - 584 members (of 3,463 Illinois League members) participated in the consensus meetings
- Promoted criminal justice events
 - Used google group and participating member list
 - Both League-sponsored events and those of other organizations
- Gave Zoom presentations to a number of local Leagues
- Analyzed results of local League consensus meetings
- Responded to comments and made modifications
 - Modified position to read “ongoing evidence-based training” rather than “implicit bias training”
 - Developed “umbrella” position for question regarding gender and emerging adults,
 - Dropped Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils from position when local Leagues failed to affirm
 - Restorative Justice question affirmed (with concerns); added to Position

- Leagues rejected our recommendation to delete section in Sentencing Laws and Procedures; committee made a needed modification in Equitable and Appropriate treatment section
- No consensus on connection between public health and crime. Equitable and Appropriate Treatment position allows consideration connections between crime and public health matters such as: mental health, PTSD, and drug addiction
- Revised position prepared and presented to the LWVIL Board for approval
- The Board adopted the position March 27, 2021

NEXT STEPS

- Ratification of revised position at Convention 2021
 - Continued member education about position
 - Report on process posted to website
 - Post research materials on website as educational resources
-

100TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

Chair: Mary Kubasak
Secretary: Pris Mims

CHALLENGES

Cancellation of in-person events due to the pandemic, included gatherings at Ravinia, Grant Park and the Palmer House, and collaborations such as that with the Chicago History Museum, (online exhibit is available).

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Contributed to the February 14, 2020 100th Anniversary Celebration at the Congress Plaza Hotel (where LWV began on February 14, 1920)
- Comprehensive history of the League's past 100 years
 - Written and compiled by Marge Massarello and Lori Osborne
 - Shared monthly via LWVIL monthly newsletter
 - Posted on LWVIL website - historical article and photos
- Educational resources: Speaker's bureau, book, and movie list
- Pomeroy Foundation Suffrage Markers
 - Part of the National Votes for Women Trail
 - commemorate five Illinois women/suffrage sites
 - Catherine McCullough in Evanston, Grace Wilbur Trout in Oak Park, Alpha Suffrage Club in Chicago (IIT Campus), Michigan Avenue in Chicago, and Ellen Martin in Lombard
- Yellow rose/100th anniversary design by Mary Gramins, useable on stickers and stationery
- Advocated for bill to honor women on state quarter coins (H.R.1923 passed 1/13/21)

NEXT STEPS

The Committee wrapped up its work in 2020 after three years of diligent planning and accomplishments.