



2021 VOTER SERVICE ELECTION DEBRIEF

Thank you for attending the LWWIL Voter Service Election Debrief. It's always a pleasure to see and talk to everyone. LWWIL Voter Service chairs are reachable at voterservice@lwwil.org

We have included a synopsis, below, of the discussions as well as other helpful information.

Let's continue the conversation at [voterservices@lwwil.org](https://www.google.com/groups/list/voterservices@lwwil.org), a google group(different address from voter service chairs address) in which you can begin conversations about your voter service ideas and questions. This is a searchable tool, so you will be able to search by a keyword such as "registration" or "zoom" and be able to find any previous conversations about those topics. Let's get the conversations going.

We would like to remind everyone to look for and read the monthly newsletters you receive from LWWIL. News You Can Use(broad readership); Member Bulletin(only League members) and Leaders Edge(local League Presidents). They are focused on announcements and information you need to know.

If you would like to use the LWWIL zoom webinar software, contact us at voterservice@lwwil.org (note there is no "s"after service!)

Our forward focus is to

- increase our reach, so League is THE resource for non-partisan voter education
- learn from each other so we provide the highest level of voter service

DISCUSSION ITEMS REQUESTED BY LEAGUERS FOR DEBRIEFING

Ann Prisland(Champaign) 1 pm

TRUST IN ELECTION PROCESS

What specifically are chapters planning to do to build greater trust in the election process especially among people who might have concerns?

Voter education on changes in voting laws for Illinois as well as promotion of election judges, observer training; publicize our efforts so the community knows we are actively defending democracy; Education; poll watchers; support For the People Act;

Karen Fresco - LWV Champaign Co has started a "Countering Mis-information Committee." When they see/hear some mis-info, they reply with a letter to the editor, making a statement at a public meeting, etc with the correct information. Encouraging Election Judges (who have been judges for the last 2 or 3 elections) to make a 15 second video "Why voting is important."

LWWIL SHARED RESOURCE CENTER

*Now that we've had the shared google drive and chapter resources there for 2020, what worked well?
What changes could be made?*

Shared ideas and keynote presentations of how to vote by mail and the new voting law due to the pandemic helped with having consistent information for all to share equally. Additionally the timer for the forums was a huge help. As the shared Google drive is in its infancy, there is always room for improvement. Source for social media toolkits, zoom resource for forum planning; summaries of new election law, letter-to-the editor templates; upload/download What changes could be made? Tutorial on how to use SRC; combine with use of Voterservices@lwvil.org Google group to steer users to the SRC

Karen Yee Reid(Park Ridge) 1 pm

ELECTION CALENDAR

Please include a timetable of events we should be tackling for the 2022 elections.

- The IL BOE posts the timetable and deadlines by August. Typically the end of December is the candidate deadline to withdraw for primaries. Thus, by January you should be able to identify which elections are contested to determine the races to focus on for the candidate forums. Ideally, by the end of January contact information for the candidates are obtained and the invitations are issued.

- Now: educate on HR1/S1 For the People Act and HR4 John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (details to come)
 - Some would like the content in form to put on posters
- Now: plan to get back to high school/nursing homes/ drive-ups to register voters. Last day of online voter registration is February 27, 2022
- Now: dropboxes are back.....encourage your Election Authority to plan to use them
- Now: talk with other Leagues about coordinating/combining your overlapping candidate forums: congressional and state senate/rep races
- Target your low turnout precincts for voter registration/voter turnout education
- January 3, 2022 - beginning of candidate forum season
- January 9, 2022 - deadline for local Leagues to submit candidate questions for IVG
- February 3, 2022 - desired go live date for Illinois Voter Guide(ambitious)
- February 4, 2022 - First day of early voting at Election Authorities - 40 days before the election.
- February 4, 2022 - Pollwatcher credentials need to be requested by 40 days before the election.
- February/March - educate voters toward IVG to make a plan to vote; candidate information, early voting times/dates/locations, dropbox locations, voter registration, VBM ballot application, election day precinct location/latest info, bilingual
- March 10, 2022 - last day to apply for VBM ballot
- March 15, 2022 Primary
- Include in this timetable important dates, activities, social media. The IL BOE posts the timetable and deadlines by August. Once the dates are established, we can provide a suggested timetable with associated tasks.

Sue Swearingen(Glenview/Glencoe) 1pm

VOTER TURNOUT

Any efforts towards voter turnout?

Target your low turnout precincts for voter registration/voter turnout education

LEAGUE RELEVANCE

What is the League's relevance in these elections (with newspaper interviews, other org forums, questionnaires, interest group meetings, what is our place/relevance when we're no longer the "only game in town?")

The LWV has been in existence for over 100 years and has consistently maintained our non-partisan stance. A LWV forum is unique compared to any other interview, meet and greet, or candidate sponsored

gathering.

- The LWV is non partisan, we have no skin in the game.
- There is a LWV trained moderator that asks the questions submitted by constituents. ○ It is recorded so the public can view and become educated on a candidate.
- There are very few opportunities for constituents to be able to ask the candidates their own question, the LWV provides that opportunity.
- Newspapers interview candidates then decide what to write about. The constituent is not part of the process.
- Not all interest groups are non-partisan, so how can you be assured the information is presented unbiased? The LWV guarantees this.

Use the forum as an opportunity to highlight the importance of League in non-partisan voter education

Dorcy Prosser(Jackson County) 1 pm

ZOOM FORMAT

What has been learned about using the ZOOM format for Candidate Forums?

It is an effective, and preferred way to reach voters and include more candidates. It is here to stay. LWVIL provides free access to its zoom webinar software to local Leagues with assistance if necessary. Contact us at voterservice@lwwil.org The schedule can be found in the Shared Resource Center (of which most of you are members) under “forums” and then “calendar for use of LWVIL Zoom.” You still need to contact us so that we can enter your request. We keep it to a few of us who can enter/edit/cancel dates/times so something doesn’t get double booked/cancelled by mistake.

CANDIDATE PARTICIPATION

What are others’ experiences about how best to contact and get responses from candidates as to whether or not they will participate?

Be consistent and firm. The LWV is the leader in candidate forums across the country so that is the presence we need to emit. Include in the invitation that a non-response is considered an unwillingness to participate. If there are non responses, notification on social media, interviews from local newspapers, letters to the editor, etc may convince a candidate(s) to participate. However, if it does not, what those public notices do is publically establish/remind the community of who the LWV is and what its purpose is.

Anyone having some difficulty in getting Republican candidates to respond and /or participate in LWV candidate forums? What could be done to address this?

Refer to the comment in the previous question. If we are an established and trusted neutral source, then this will help. In a general election, the other candidate(s) may attempt to shame another candidate(s) to participate

Gail Ryan(Naperville) 1 pm

TURNOUT

Were there any precincts or counties that saw better than the average turnout in the April Election? We created a spreadsheet of turnout by each Election Authority for the Consolidated Election and compared it to 2019. There are some counties that raised their turnout to the 20+%'s versus their 2019 lower turnout and a 2021 statewide 15% average. Some were McDonough, Montgomery, Adams, McLean Counties, City of Galesburg and City of Bloomington.

If so, are there best practices to share? Do we understand why they had better turnout (efforts to register and educate, or hot issues on the ballot, or other)?

I think external sources (i.e. hot issues, unhappy with the status quo, etc) are forces that tend to drive voter turnout which is not in our control, but those are the races that need forums if contested. Bring recently elected officials back to talk about what they ran on. Issues drive elections

CANDIDATE EMAILS

Is there an opportunity to make a state-wide request for candidates to provide an email address in addition to their USPS address when they file their candidate paperwork? Is this a requirement set at the state level or do we need to work with each jurisdiction to make this request?

In the 4/19 "Legislative Hour" where Senator Julie Morrison and Representative Katie Stuart spoke about election law with LWVIL Issue Specialist Barbara Laimins, one question that BL asked was if, when submitting a petition, a candidate could include an email address. Both were interested in this possibility, but Sen. Morrison took note of it.

Melissa Lieb(LaGrange) - AGREE 110%. We are submitting a request with Cook Co to add a line item for candidate campaign email to be part of the filing paperwork then posted on the election website. If it can be done on a state and federal level, no reason it can not work for a local level.

Helene Gabelnick(Chicago) 1 pm

REDISTRICTING/ELECTION LAW

I assume you will be updating us regarding General Assembly (in)action on election law and redistricting. You can follow progress on state election law by going to the LWVIL website/Taking Action/Action Alerts. Hopefully action will be taken in the Omnibus bill on or before May 28th.

The state legislature is going ahead with drawing maps by their due dates and before census numbers are finalized. Litigation is possible.

Susan Russell(DeKalb MAS) 1 pm

UNOPPOSED CANDIDATES

A lot of candidates locally run unopposed. What is the best way to get information about them to the public?

They can be listed on voter guides such as Illinois Voter Guide. IVG. Make sure uncontested candidates are entered into the spreadsheet along with the contested.

Carla Hillman(Kewanee Area) 1 pm

COMBINING FORUMS

Please cover how it is best to have US Representative forums since sometimes they involve many leagues and/or large geographical areas. I hear it takes time to communicate with other leagues. Example - District 17 with Cheri Bustos who is not rerunning next year. The Peoria League has done forums and has invited us to attend in the last few years. I think other leagues have also hosted. We are a small league and it takes a lot of time to plan for other offices. So we have put this race last in our considerations to have this race in our forums. We have not done it in years.

If there is a local league that wants to take the driver's seat with a forum where the geography overlaps with another local league, it is ok to sit in the passenger seat and just offer to provide volunteers if needed and especially promote the event before and after it occurs. Virtual forums have significantly reduced the need for many volunteers. Promoting an event for a sister league is a huge help. As a small league this is a great opportunity to learn how others coordinate a forum without the weight of a heavy workload.

- This is a GREAT use of zoom! It was proven to work with Congressional candidates in the Chicagoland area....like District 6, where 10 local Leagues participated in one zoom webinar.
- LWVIL currently has a zoom account available for local League use that can contain 500 attendees in a webinar.

Jennifer Manning(Wilmette) 1 pm

LEAGUE MEMBERS RUNNING FOR OFFICE

Our league had the wonderful fortune of having 4 board members and 1 non-board member run for local office this spring. (And all of them won a seat - huzzah!) I felt like we had to underplay their LWV connection

and accomplishments to preserve league non-partiality/non-endorsement rules. We kept a strict wall between LWV activities and their own activities. This meant that, whereas non-LWV candidates got to talk up their volunteer work and tap their groups' memberships for votes, our LWV candidates did not. And where other local groups were touting their members as candidates for office, we did not tout our member-candidates to our membership. Is that how we should continue handling this situation in the future? I think you handled it well, if a candidate is involved with the LWV and is participating in a LWV forum, the cleanest means is to avoid connecting the dots between the LWV and the candidate, yet the candidate can state they have volunteered for/against certain issues, they do not have to state it is with the LWV. But this would only be at a LWV event, I would imagine other non LWV events where the candidate is free to state their volunteer work with the LWV.

Asking not how to leverage LWV status, but how LWV members can run for office without feeling they have to actually hide it,

I think that the LWV candidate can state they are a League member, "but not actively participating in this election season." I also think it would be appropriate for the candidate to say that their interest in running as a candidate was encouraged by League membership.

Wendy Connell(Aurora Area) 7pm

GET OUT THE VOTE

I would like to discuss how to encourage our community's registered voters to get out and vote - especially in smaller elections.

Relay it is local elections that affect our day to day lives more directly. Target your low turnout precincts for voter registration/voter turnout education. Use door to door or post card efforts. This is where you, as a voter, have the biggest impact in an election! In forums, remind viewers how important it is to make a plan to vote. Zoom will reach more people, gives more exposure to candidates.

ILLINOIS VOTER GUIDE

I would also like to talk about how Leagues use(d) the Illinois Voter Guide or Vote 411 in addition to the forums and/or their own questionnaires for candidates. Also, I'm curious to see what is on everyone else's mind after the last election and just learn more!

Melissa Lieb(LWV LaGrange) - at the beginning of each forum during the LWV Moderator's opening statement, we relayed info about the Illinois Voter Guide. This also encourages the candidate to complete the IVG questionnaire as it was part of the forum so they can not state they did not know it existed.

IVG provides a year-round site to register online/confirm status. IVG was bilingual this year. Provided a link to the 866-our-vote for trouble on election day, provided dropbox locations/where to vote early, application for VBM ballot. We received a \$10,000 grant that was used to print 1500 bilingual IVG yard signs and 15,000 palm cards(voter education/IVG) that were distributed by 26 local Leagues to minority communities across the state.

Local Leagues provided candidate questions for IVG, but we are looking to create some standard questions for higher ballot races, so we can cover the whole state

Judy Hoffman - Evanston

VOTER HOTLINE

LWV Evanston and their library had a "voter hotline." The League bought a cell phone and advertised the number. Mentioned that the phone was available any time of the day or night for any type of election related question. Had one Leaguer primarily in charge of the phone.

Shawn Fasules(Glen Ellyn) 1pm

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS:

Because all of our forums were held on zoom we had to gather questions before the forum. I felt this was an advantage of the new circumstance although it is something that can be improved upon and maybe ideas can be shared.

Regarding question sorting - I felt we could have taken better advantage of the question submitted. I was not "in the room" when questions were selected but I do think the nature of League is cautious in this area. We do not want to select "gotcha" questions but I wonder if we avoided controversial or difficult questions. Maybe this is an area of education/training that can be addressed.

VOTER REGISTRATION:

Since we could not do in person voter registration we focused on online registration. In DuPage County Jean Kaczmarek would prefer that online voter registration is used whenever possible. What ideas do other leagues have? Bernie thought that investing in iPads might be beneficial.

Jo Minor(Rockford)

RESTORING COVID ELECTION LAW

Are we doing anything to push for the expired election laws to be reenacted? We should be making statements that the election was secure and accurate.

LWVIL Voter Service and I&A specialists have met with Allyson Haut, LWVIL president to compile our position on election law changes. It was published in our March 2021 News You Can Use newsletter under [Positions on Illinois Election Law](#) and sent to select state legislators.

Kelly Rotella(Central Kane)

OUTREACH

Texting campaigns could increase reach

We are using QR codes and LWVUS' is offering demos on Fridays in May to view Outreach Circle, a peer-to-peer platform.

COMBINING DOWN BALLOT RACES WITH TOP BALLOT RACES

Combining ballots will not be happening - ballot gets too long - elections would be monopolized by top of the ballot candidates.

Senator Morrison and Rep Stuart were not interested in this.

WEBINAR AND FACEBOOK

Most Leagues used Zoom webinar or partnered with a library or media to show their forums. A lesser number used facebook live. Facebook live seems to have a larger initial audience, but allows less control over the final product.

WEBINAR TRAINING

Could have teams that train Leagues on the use of zoom webinar and conducting a forum

STUDENT MODERATORS

Arlington Heights and Wheaton used students to moderate their forums. This warrants further discussion weighing the value of student involvement vs. the level of expertise a League would like to have at the microphone.