

News from the Northwest

September, 2020



Newsletter of the Northwest Suburban Branch

***Our Mission: To advance gender equity for women and girls
through research, education, and advocacy.***

Our Vision: Equity for all.

Continue to Stay at Home! Stay Safe!

It has been a long time since we've been together for any activities, and it appears that it will be quite some time before it happens again. In our wildest dreams we would never have thought that we would experience such a situation, but since we are still in the throes of the pandemic and the illness and resultant deaths continue, we must continue our policy of care. We certainly hope that our members and their families are well.

As we've said before, though, even though we can't be together in person, we have lots of things going on to keep us involved and together in spirit. Last month we were able to join the Jane Addams Branch for a discussion of *The Woman's Hour*, with Elaine Fisher as one of the discussion leaders, and this month we will again be joining that branch for a presentation on *Getting Out the Vote in 2020* with Ed Spire and Jim McGrath as presenters. We are hearing a great deal about Vote by Mail, both pro and con, and because it will be a new experience for so many of us, we will certainly want to learn as much about it as we can. We know now that there will be many secure drop boxes for ballots, in case voters fear that ballots entrusted to the USPS might not reach their destination on time. All early voting sites will have secure drop boxes, and more and more such early voting sites are being identified.

Information on registering for *Getting Out the Vote in 2020* is found on the next page of the newsletter, in the Presidents' Message. You can join by computer or phone, so please be a part of the action. Also included in this newsletter is information on the proposed amendment to the Illinois Constitution that would change our state income tax from a flat tax to a graduated rate tax. AAUW has no position on this proposal, but the League of Women Voters of Illinois, with whom we often partner, endorses it.

We are also providing information on a couple of interesting programs sponsored by other branches that you might want to access. See the next page for the needed links. Although we can't be together actually, there are so many ways for us to gather virtually. An added advantage is that when we join another branch, we get to know some of their members, too.

MUMS ARE COMING!

At the time of this writing, we expect that our fall mums will be delivered on September 17. They will be brought to Irene Jinks' home and may be picked up there, probably late in the day on the 17th or on September 18th. Thanks to all of you who placed orders. You will be notified about the exact pickup times as soon as we hear from the nursery about delivery. The proceeds from this sale will be a great help in funding our Oakton scholarship and our contribution to AAUW projects – both means of promoting our mission and vision.

FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS

We hope you were able to join us for the discussion of the book, *The Woman's Hour*. It reminded us of how precious our right to vote is and the difference one vote can make sometimes. If you missed the discussion, you can listen and watch the video recording by going to the AAUW Jane Addams branch website: <https://janeaddams-il.aauw.net/>

To honor the efforts of the suffragists, we all need to have a plan to vote in 2020. Active citizens are vital to keeping our democracy alive and thriving. And remember, the next president will probably appoint a Supreme Court justice. The impact of this election will affect our personal health, our rights in the workplace, common sense gun regulation, protection of the environment and support for public education and voting rights. You could say we need to vote as if our life depends on it, because it does (as well as those of children or grandchildren.)

Our next program, **Get Out the Vote 2020**, will be Sept. 17th, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. via Zoom. Presenters Ed Spire and Jim McGrath are experts on the new bill passed in Illinois in June regarding voting. Since they are also experienced election judges, they can answer all our questions about Vote by Mail, voting procedures and voting during a pandemic.

Advance registration is required in order to receive the Zoom login info:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAscOigqDkjH9dY6KRTK_4kV6d46Emk3K3V

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information to join the meeting.

Getting Out the Vote is a traditional project for AAUW members, however 2020 is a challenge of how to Get Out the Vote during a pandemic. Following the informational presentation, we will discuss ways we can get out the vote in 2020.

This program is co-sponsored by the Jane Addams AAUW branch.

We hope you can join us so we can all vote in 2020.

Elaine Fisher & Wendi Thourson

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

There are several presentations that you might want to access:

Tuesday, September 15, 4:00 p.m.: *A Conversation with IL State Rep. Ann Williams*

Lobbyist and Chicago Branch member Jenni Purdue will converse with Rep. Williams on how a bill becomes a law and will answer questions from those in attendance. Rep. Williams serves the 11th District on Chicago's north side and supports neighborhood schools, protecting critical human services, preventing gun violence and restoring fiscal stability to Illinois. She is a leader on issues related to the environment.

RSVP to Ruth Holst at holstruth@gmail.com to receive the Zoom link.

Thursday, September 17, 7:30 p.m.: *Get Out the Vote 2020*

This program, cosponsored with the Jane Addams Branch, will feature Ed Spire and Jim McGrath who will speak about Vote by Mail and answer questions, as outlined above. Register in advance to receive Zoom login information:

https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAscOigqDkjH9dY6KRTK_4kV6d46Emk3K3V

September 27-October 11: *Alice Paul, Winning Votes for Women*

This program, which was presented live in March by Leslie Goddard for the Riverside Branch, was recorded and is available free online at elmhursthistory.org, programs page, and click link.

Monday, September 28, 7:00 p.m.: Forum, Illinois House District 20

Northwest Suburban AAUW joins the Park Ridge LWV to host a virtual forum with candidates for the 20th Illinois Rep. District: incumbent Bradley Stephens (R) and challenger Michelle Darbro (D). Holly Graham, president of the Arlington Heights LWV will moderate. Email cgrau8@gmail.com to register and receive the Zoom link.

THE ILLINOIS FAIR TAX

A most important item on our ballot in November will be the referendum to amend the Illinois State Constitution to change the Illinois State Income Tax. At present, our State Constitution mandates a flat tax whereby all those who pay the tax are assessed at the same rate, established by the legislature. The proposal is that our tax be changed to a graduated rate tax, much like the federal income tax, with the tax brackets and rates established by the legislature. If the referendum passes, it would go into effect in January, 2021, so taxes for 2020 would not be affected.

Under the new rates single filers would pay the maximum rate of 7.99 percent on all income once their taxable income tops \$750,000. For joint filers, that rate takes effect on all income when it exceeds \$1 million. For the rest of the brackets, each varying tax rate would apply to only one specific margin of income.

The rates are 4.75 percent on taxable income from \$0 to \$10,000; 4.9 percent from \$10,001 to \$100,000; 4.95 percent from \$100,001 to \$250,000; 7.75 percent from \$250,001 to \$500,000; and 7.85 percent from \$500,001 to \$1 million.

For single filers, tax rates are the same as joint filers up to \$250,000; but the 7.75 percent rate applies from \$250,001 to only \$350,000, while the 7.85 percent rate applies from \$350,001 to \$750,000.

The bill also includes an increase in the property tax credit from 5 percent to 6 percent, and up to a \$100 per-child tax credit for couples earning less than \$100,000 and single persons earning less than \$80,000.

The information below is from a Sun Times article, Feb. 20, 2020:

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2020/2/19/20999063/graduated-income-tax-illinois-referendum-everything-you-need-to-know>

What is a graduated income tax?

The specific progressive income tax Gov. J.B. Pritzker has proposed would raise taxes only on people who earn \$250,000 or more a year — incomes between \$250,000 and \$500,000 would be taxed at 7.75 percent. It would maintain the current tax rate of 4.95% on incomes between \$100,000 and \$250,000. And it would reduce the rate on incomes of \$100,000 or less.

Income from \$500,000 to \$1 million would be taxed 7.85 percent and income over \$1 million would be taxed 7.99 percent. The corporate tax rate within the package would also be raised to 7.99 percent.

The current income tax levied on all taxpayers is 4.95%. The flat tax rate, which has fluctuated over the years, has been part of the Illinois constitution since 1970, a year after income tax was first enacted in Illinois. With a constitutional change, the Pritzker administration estimates that 97% of Illinois residents will see at least a modest decrease in their income taxes.

Why is there a referendum? Why is this coming up for a vote?

The Illinois Constitution lays out the rules for how an amendment introduced in the Legislature can be adopted. To become part of the Constitution, a proposed amendment must be approved by either 60 percent of those voting on the question or a majority of those voting in the election.

How do I figure out how much I might pay under a graduated income tax?

Use the state's calculator linked below to see how much your income taxes might change.

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/gov/fairtax/Pages/default.aspx>

How many states have it?

Thirty-four states have a graduated income tax.

When would the new rates take effect?

The new income tax rates are currently set to go into effect Jan. 1, 2021.

Who stands to benefit?

The money generated from the tax will help pay off the state's bill backlog which stood at \$6.29 billion on Jan. 3 and some middle and low-income taxpayers will see some savings.

NEWS FROM THE PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Since we have no idea of how long it will be before we will be able to have regular face-to-face meetings again, we are doing all that we can to stay connected via the Internet and have joined other groups to provide informative and interesting programs. We have listed several opportunities for you in September and will add others to our list as they become available to us. As we gather virtually, we at least have a chance to see and greet each other.

Watch for further details on these upcoming online programs:

October: Virtual Tours and Oakton College Women's Art Exhibit

November 18: Women Filmmakers and Movies, sponsored by AAUW Jane Addams Branch

December: Zoom Social; Trivia?

DON'T FORGET THIS: "TRAILBLAZING WOMEN OF PARK RIDGE" EXHIBIT

The Park Ridge History Center has an exhibit highlighting the work of four trailblazing women with connections to Park Ridge: **Hannah Greenebaum Solomon, Clara Barck Welles, Mother Francis Cabrini, and Hillary Rodham Clinton**. The significant contributions of each of these women are highlighted in an exhibit open to the public. This is something that you could do on your own or with a friend – properly masked and distanced!

Where: Park Ridge History Center, 721 N. Prospect Ave., Park Ridge, IL 60068

When: Typically weekends from 1:00 p.m.- 3:00 p.m. through 2020 but please consult the website to confirm. A limited number of viewers are permitted per time period.

Cost: A \$10 donation is requested

Further information: info@parkridgehistorycenter.org

A COUPLE OF INTERESTING SITES

As mentioned above, there are many organizations concerned about political action and rights for all. This year, we have been especially reminded about the 19th Amendment and women's suffrage, even though suffrage was only given to white women by that act. A couple of websites that you might want to visit are:

The [Illinois Voter Guide](#) (IVG), provided by the League of Women Voters of Illinois, currently has links to confirm voter registration, register to vote, and apply for a vote by mail ballot. Later, IVG will go live with additional information, including candidate bios, forum videos, Q&A's, endorsements, and bar association ratings for judicial candidates.

[National Votes for Women Trail](#), created by the National Collaborative for Women's History Sites, will culminate in a nationwide outline map of suffrage sites. Illinois currently has 48 sites on the map. Permanent markers will be installed at a minimum of five sites in each state. The LWWIL 100th Anniversary Committee has nominated three women for markers: Grace Wilbur Trout (Oak Park), Catharine Waugh McCulloch (Evanston), and Ellen Martin (Lombard). Four other Chicago sites are in development to mark the importance of Agnes Nestor, Fannie Barrier Williams, the Alpha Suffrage Club, and Michigan Avenue.

BRANCH NEWS

Remember your AAUW sisters who do not have Internet connection and so cannot keep in touch with us that way. Please try to keep in touch by phone or by sending a card. They will appreciate it!

Carolyn Baker is now at Norridge Gardens, 7001 W. Cullom Ave., Norridge IL 60706. We do not yet have a room number, but she would certainly enjoy receiving cards at this address.

Merna Folkers has been experiencing some health problems and is now in a care facility for a while. Cards to let her know that we are thinking of her should go to her home address, Box 388, Mt. Prospect IL 60056.