

EVERYDAY DEMOCRACY

Seasonal Newsletter from the Citizen Advocacy Center and Citizens in the Western Suburbs
WINTER 2000

THE CITIZEN ADVOCACY CENTER CELEBRATES SIX YEARS AT THE SECOND ANNUAL SUBURBAN CIVIC FAIR!



The Citizen Advocacy Center opened on April 13, 1994, to build democracy for the 21st century in the western suburbs of Chicago. This is our sixth year of working to strengthen the citizenry's capacities, resources, and institutions for self-governance. We work at the local level, as a shoe horn, not a crutch, for direct citizen involvement in community affairs. The Center forges ahead in the 21st Century in its mission to strengthen the voice of citizens by providing training skills for civic activism and making government more accountable to the people.

In Celebration of its sixth year anniversary, the Citizen Advocacy Center invites citizens and nonprofit associations, projects, clubs or religious groups in the suburbs to come together for the Second Annual Suburban Civic Fair, "**DEMOCRACY & ACTIVISM.**" **The Suburban Civic Fair is designed to encourage people to get more involved in their communities and to refresh the faith of those who are already committed to making a difference.** The Suburban Civic Fair is an opportunity for citizens and nonprofit organizations to meet one another, to share information, accomplishments, ongoing goals, and to introduce themselves to those who want to engage in a cause, in a community, or in a matter of concern.

The 1999 Suburban Civic Fair was a terrific beginning. The keynote speaker, Ralph Nader, inspired an audience of over 500 by highlighting the vast differences between community culture and corporate culture and the importance of everyday democracy in our lives. Over 100 nonprofit organizations from both the suburbs and Chicagoland gathered. Nonprofit organizations created a festive environment by providing hands-on activities and distributing organizational information to the public. We even had a greyhound join us! The whole family had fun exploring booths, children's corner, a scavenger hunt and speaker's corner.

With your participation, we anticipate the Second Annual Suburban Civic Fair, "**Democracy & Activism,**" to surpass last year.

CITIZEN TRAINING CORPS

Citizen Training Corps, an action based seminar to teach citizens basic civic skills, is currently offered at the Center. Citizens throughout DuPage and Cook counties have actively participated in the CTC and are well on their way to learning tools to become empowered citizens.

The CTC program has received local and national attention. People and organizations across the country are citing the Citizen Training Corps program as an example of how to effectively teach civic activism.

Remaining classes:

- MARCH:** Basic research tools
- APRIL:** Open Meeting Act
- MAY:** Government budgets
- JUNE:** Discuss all sides of an issue.

It is never too late to learn how to flex your civic muscles! For more information call the Citizen Advocacy Center at (630) 833-4080.

DEMOCRACY &

Join the Citizen Advocacy Center and more than a dozen panelists- citizen activists and speakers from some of the most energetic nonprofit, civic, religious, or governmental groups in the state- will join us to share their experience and facilitate discussion about what is happening in our communities.

DEMOCRACY & ACTIVISM, The Second Annual Suburban Civic Fair, will be on **June 24, 2000** at the **College of DuPage**, Building K, Glen Ellyn from 10 A.M -4:30 P.M. **General Admission and Parking are free.** Registration is \$25 for organizations that register before May 6, 2000 and \$35 May 7 to June 23. **Space is limited this year so sign up early!** Organization set-up begins at 8:30 A.M. and a continental breakfast will be provided to registrants. All fair participants are invited to attend a networking reception from 4:30 P.M.- 6:00 P.M. for a \$15 donation. The Citizen Advocacy Center will present The Citizen Initiative Awards at the reception.

It's a Fair!

- ◆ Speaker: Dr. Quentin Young
- ◆ Over 100 Exhibits
- ◆ Speakers Corner
- ◆ Concessions
- ◆ Free Information
- ◆ A Chance to Get Involved
- ◆ Free Admission & Parking
- ◆ Children's Corner
- ◆ Children's Games
- ◆ Panel Discussions

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

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|--------------|---|
| 8:30 - 10:00 | Registration and Exhibitor Table Set Up Continental Breakfast |
| 10:00 | Exhibits & Table Talk Panel Discussion 1: Affordable Housing Panel Discussion 2: How to be a Public Citizen |
| 11:00- 11:15 | Welcome Address Exhibits & Table Talk |
| 12:00 | Exhibits & Table Talk Panel Discussion 3: Urban Sprawl Panel Discussion 4: Democracy & Cyber Space |
| 1:00 | Exhibits & Table Talk |
| 2:00 | Speaker: DR. QUENTIN YOUNG |
| 3:30 | Speaker |

PANELS

Panel 1: Affordable Housing

- ◆ Affordable Housing in DuPage Co.
- ◆ The Future of Affordable Housing in DuPage Co.
- ◆ Improving Access to Affordable Housing

Panel 2: Democracy & Activism

- ◆ Community Input: The Key to Sound Policy
- ◆ Organizing for Effectiveness
- ◆ Advocacy Techniques

Panel 3: Impact of Development by Urban Sprawl

- ◆ Traffic Congestion
- ◆ Loss of Open Space
- ◆ Water and Air Quality Concerns

Panel 4: Democracy & Cyber Space

- ◆ Your Privacy
- ◆ Access to Cyber Space
- ◆ Censorship

YOU'LL PAY FOR NEW TOLL ROADS EVEN IF YOU DON'T USE THEM!

The Illinois State Toll Highway Authority proposes to build two new tollway extensions in Lake and Will Counties. They would raise tolls for *all* tollway users.

EVERYONE WOULD PAY HIGHER TOLLS

- New extensions of I-355 *South* and *Route 53* would cost **nearly \$4 billion**: \$2 billion for construction expenses, plus financing costs almost as expensive as the roads themselves.
- A **15 cent toll increase** on **all** toll roads would be necessary to pay for the extensions.
- A daily commuter on the tollways could pay an increase of **\$156 per year**.

DUPAGE AND COOK COUNTY TOLLPAYERS WOULD PAY MOST CONSTRUCTION COSTS

- New extensions on *I-355 South* and *Route 53* would not pay for themselves as tollways should; tolls collected on **the extensions would pay only 22% of their cost**.
- Most toll baskets are in DuPage and Cook counties, so **drivers through Cook and DuPage would pay most of the remaining cost—over \$3 billion**.
- Those drivers would have to pay 55 cents, **over 5 billion times**, at DuPage and Cook County toll booths to subsidize the extensions, even if they never drive them.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Business and Professional People for the Public Interest (BPI) at (312) 641-5570
 Environmental Law and Policy Center (ELPC) at (312) 759-3400 or www.elpc.org
 Citizen Advocacy Center at (630) 833-4080

EYE ON SPRINGFIELD

I'm disgusted by the tawdry and blatant misuse of power by our representatives in the recent legislation on gambling, horse racing and beverage dealerships.

Lincoln once defined democracy as, "Government of the people, by the people and for the people". This legislation is not "for the people". It provides millions in tax breaks to a few who are already wealthy. "The people" will have to pay for those tax breaks? This is Robin Hoodlums in reverse.

Jim Howard, Common Cause of Illinois Director, recently said, "Unfortunately, the vast majority of citizens have decided not to pay attention to government because they feel they can no longer affect public policy. The reason is that they see millionaires.....who make public policy and are walking away with everything they want." Illinois voters have the power to stop these outrages. Margaret Meade, the anthropologist, once said, "Don't ever believe that a small group of dedicated individuals can't change the world. Indeed that's the only thing that ever has."

We need to monitor our legislators, to be vocal in expressing our concern, and to vote them out when they violate their oaths of office.

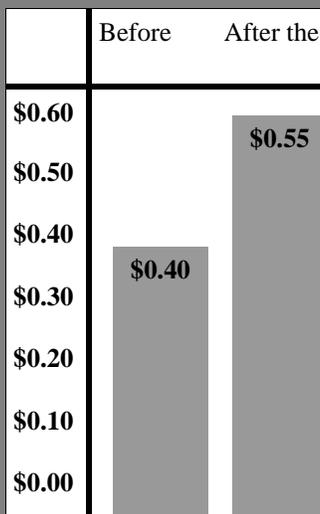
Mr. Jean Chevalier

CENTER NEWS !

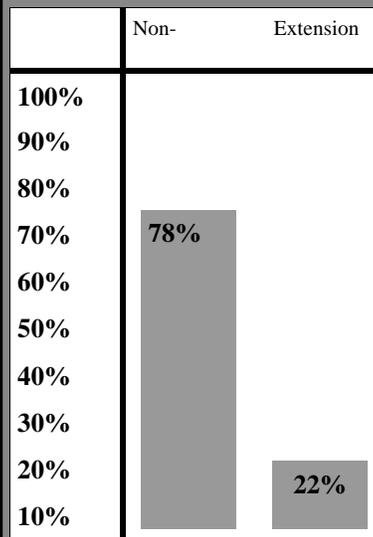
◆ The views expressed by the contributors to *Everyday Democracy* do not necessarily represent the views of the Center. The Center is in the process of developing a policy for citizens who submit letters and responses to letters. The policy will be detailed in the next issue of *Everyday Democracy*.

◆ The Center is seeking a detail-oriented data entry person for a short term project. This is an opportunity to earn extra money and to help improve government accountability. For more information, call the Center at (630) 833-4080.

Toll Increase Necessary



Who Will pay for the New Extension?



All figures are based on ISTHA reports and projections. See detailed reports at www.elpc.org

Everyday Democracy is a publication of the *Citizen Advocacy Center*, a non-profit, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) corporation. Submissions from citizen advocates in the western suburbs of Chicago are encouraged.

The *Center* is an educational and charitable organization dedicated to building democracy for the 21st century by strengthening the public's capacities, resources, and institutions for self-governance.

If you are interested in more information, becoming a volunteer, or making a tax-deductible contribution to the *Center*, please feel free to contact or visit us.

non-profit org.
US postage
Bulk Rate
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The Citizen Initiative Award was created to recognize citizens who act as catalysts for more citizen participation in the democratic process. Recipients of this award have demonstrated significant and informed civic participation in their communities and by their example have inspired others to build democracy.

To nominate a citizen or organization, please send the nominee's name, address, phone number, fax/ E-mail and references with phone numbers. In addition, please explain, give examples and attach documentation as needed. Please include your name and phone number.

DEADLINE is JUNE 11, 2000

Return Service Requested

It's a Fair!

The Second Annual Suburban Civic Fair, "DEMOCRACY & ACTIVISM" will be on June 24, 2000 at the College of DuPage. There will be over 100 nonprofit exhibitors, exciting speakers, panel discussions and fun for the whole family. Learn more about the **DEMOCRACY & ACTIVISM FAIR** in this newsletter or call the Center

New Addition

The Citizen Advocacy Center welcomes new community lawyer Laurel O'Sullivan! Laurel will be focusing on legal assistance and the procurement project. Welcome! Everyone is encouraged to stop by the Center and say hello.