

EVERYDAY DEMOCRACY

Seasonal Newsletter from the Citizen Advocacy Center and Citizens in the Western Suburbs.
Spring 2001

Third Annual Suburban Civic Fair Get Up, Get Out & Get Active...In Your Community!

In celebration of our seventh anniversary, the Citizen Advocacy Center will sponsor the third annual Suburban Civic Fair on October 13, 2001, at Harper Community College in Palatine. All nonprofit organizations, associations, projects, clubs or religious groups are invited to gather under one roof to meet one another, to build coalitions, and to provide countless opportunities for people who live in suburbia and Chicagoland to **Get Up, Get Out and Get Active in Your Community.**

The Suburban Civic Fair is a day-long event jammed with activities featuring 50-100 community groups from DuPage and Cook County, panel discussions with community leaders on hot topics affecting suburbia and a thought provoking key-note address by, "America's #1 Populist", Jim Hightower. The Suburban Civic Fair is an opportunity for people to learn of the countless community groups close to home that address every kind of cause or issue. If you are interested in healthcare, the environment, transportation, politics, civil or civic rights there will be a group for you to discover and join. If you are a community group, the Suburban Civic Fair is the place to broaden your volunteer and membership base and increase your organization's visibility in the community.

With the infiltration of beepers, cell phones and the Internet people "stay connected" 24 hours a day. We now live in a global community where the concept of community is more expansive than ever before. Despite the ability to stay connected constantly, more people feel disenfranchised, displaced and disconnected from the community in which they live, to the point of not even knowing neighbors. How and where do people build relationships outside of family, work or school? The Citizen Advocacy Center's Suburban Civic Fair is a home remedy to this trend of losing a connection with the local community. The Suburban Civic Fair is the first step to rejuvenating community involvement and reminding people the value of face-to-face people contact and building relationships.

Suburban Civic Fair Key-Note Speaker

JIM HIGHTOWER



Hightower is a progressive populist political commentator heard on radio and published nationwide. He has been an advocate for consumers, hometown businesses, working families, farmers, and minorities for more than 30 years.

His new book, *If The Gods Had Meant Us To Vote They Would Have Given Us Candidates*, comments on the state of politics in the new millennium, focusing on the presidential candidates, all beholden to the powers-that be; the topics of interest to ordinary people which no candidate will discuss; and moving stories of citizens beginning to create a new politics with candidates beholden to the power-that-ought-to-be.

No one in America today delivers a motivational speech like Jim Hightower, bringing home a hard-hitting, tell-it-like-it-is political message, yet keeping his audience doubled-up with laughter. In the tradition of Mark Twain, Will Rogers and Woody Guthrie, he skewers the Powers That Be on behalf of the Powers That Ought to Be --America's workaday folks.

Get Up, Get Out & Get Active...In Your Community
Saturday, October 13, 2001
Agenda

**Organization Registration
& Continental Breakfast** **8:30 - 10:00**

**General Public Registration
& Table Talk** **10:00**

**Table Talk & Panel One -
Electoral Reform** **11:00 - 12:15**

Community leaders will discuss how to improve the electoral process in Illinois, in addition to instant run-off voting, proportional representation, redistricting, campaign finance reform in IL, and voter's rights.

**Table Talk & Panel Two -
Justice?** **11:20 - 12:35**

Community leaders will discuss racial profiling, police brutality, the drug war and for-profit prisons.

KEY-NOTE SPEAKER **1:00 - 2:30**
JIM HIGHTOWER

**Table Talk & Panel Three -
Cyberspace** **2:30 - 3:45**

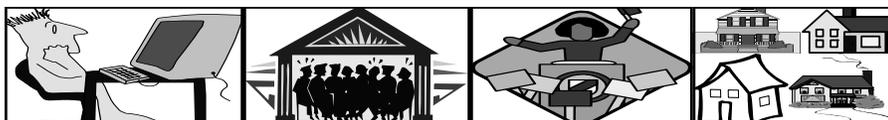
Cyber-space community leaders will discuss Internet communities, ICANN, privacy issues and marketing on the Internet.

**Table Talk & Panel Four -
Transportation** **3:00 - 4:15**

Community leaders will talk about O'Hare, Peotone, the lack of public transportation in suburbia and suburban sprawl.

Register Your Organization Today!

- ◆ Network with 50-100 organizations!
- ◆ Attract New Members and Volunteers!
- ◆ Increase Your Organization's Visibility in the Community!
- ◆ Educate the Community about Organization's Missions & Goals!



Get Up,

Get Out,

& Get Active,

In Your Community

NO CHILD

I facilitated a brown bag lunch on President Bush's education proposal, "No Child Left Behind." The focus of the discussion was the testing provision of the proposal and the President's call for increased accountability for both schools and teachers based on the results of standardized assessments.

While the President's plan has been outwardly criticized by both liberals and conservatives, it has also received broad support by both major parties, as evidenced by the House of Representatives passing the President's proposed mandate for schools to administer annual assessments in grades 3-8. If the plan survives the U.S. Senate, these annual assessments would serve as a basis for distributing federal funds to schools through a system of rewards and sanctions.

I became interested in President Bush's education proposal after reading a series of articles in the New York Times which exposed the shortcomings of the test scoring industry and addressed concerns regarding the effect of scoring errors on thousands of students in public schools nationwide. Through further research, I became fascinated with the overwhelming concerns being voiced on the Internet and in newspapers by education experts and watchdog organizations, as well as teachers, students and parents nationwide. I discovered a sharp divide in regard to issues such as the proposal's effect on minority and low-income students and the academic effectiveness of test-driven reform.

During the brown bag lunch, former principals, a current educator, as well as concerned parents and grandparents in the community discussed these issues, coming to a general conclusion that although schools must be accountable for students who are not performing at grade level, federal funding should not be awarded solely on the basis of standardized test results. More importantly, all present were in agreement that school reform is an important issue in communities across the nation that must reach beyond increased testing and include more comprehensive, personalized methods of assessing student achievement.

Rebecca Gold

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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.

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YOUR Citizen advocacy center plans for the future

If you remember, it was just seven years ago that Theresa Amato and the original Board of Directors brought life to the Citizen Advocacy Center. The CAC began its development based upon the original ideas and mission outlined in our articles of incorporation as a 501(c)3 corporation.

Our number one purpose then and now is to build democracy at the grassroots level by developing the voice of citizens and their self-government capacities, and by working to deepen democratic practices and laws so that the government becomes more

accountable to the people.

This mission and its continuance is more necessary than every before. Its success rests upon our ability to reach out and develop increased civic consciousness through the program and activities that CAC has sponsored through the years.

To prepare for the next seven years, we must develop and grow a larger civic minded activists network. This type of outreach will not happen without the deployment of energetic programs and services which will allow us to reach deeper into the communities we serve. This democracy mission will require

careful planning and continued frugal use of our resources. To sustain the drive to democratically empower communities we must raise funding from amongst our supporters that know us as well as those that we have yet to meet.

The board of directors of the Citizen Advocacy Center would like you share your ideas for fundraising with us through the creation of a fundraising committee for our common good. Please call or write the CAC at 630-833-4080 c/o Steve DeLaRosa to join this planning committee.