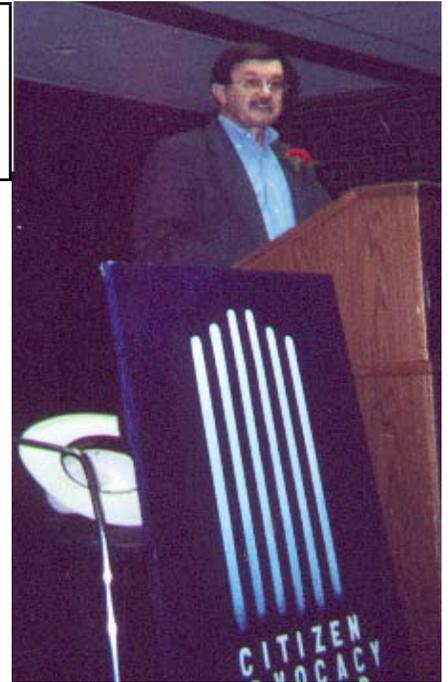


EVERYDAY DEMOCRACY

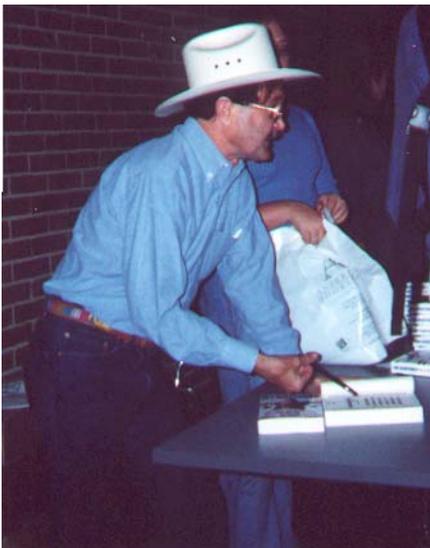
SEASONAL NEWSLETTER FROM THE CITIZEN ADVOCACY CENTER
FALL 2001

Jim Hightower Speaks at Citizen Advocacy Center's Third Annual Suburban Civic Fair Get Up, Get Out & Get Active in Your Community!

October 13, 2001 the Citizen Advocacy Center held its Third Annual Suburban Civic Fair: *Get Up, Get Out and Get Active In Your Community* at Wm. Rainey Harper Community College. The Suburban Civic Fair was a celebration of community activism and building democracy at the grassroots level. Thirty-four diverse nonprofit organizations and community groups participated in the Suburban Civic Fair. Organizations from Cook and DuPage County that focus on environmental, health, transportation, and religious causes as well as political and civil rights organizations attended. Community leaders in electoral reform, racial profiling, cyberspace and democracy, and transportation and sprawl led panel discussions throughout the day.



Jim Hightower's keynote address was the highlight of the day-long celebration of community activism. National radio commentator, writer, public speaker, former Agricultural Commissioner of Texas, best selling author of, "If the Gods had Meant us to Vote They Would Have Given us Candidates" and America's #1 Populist, Hightower discussed the importance of outspoken advocacy for the people's interest and the common good, particularly in light of new threats in the wake of September 11 terrorist attacks. Hightower commented on how the rise of a moneyed aristocracy within our nation and a global moneyed elite imperils our freedoms and political power. As examples, Hightower criticized the newly created Office of Homeland Security, which is not subject to Congressional oversight but allows military authority over domestic affairs, and the reemergence of autocratic Fast Track legislation as contrary to economic and social justice.



Hightower also emphasized Nobel Prize winner Gunter Grass' statement that the first duty of a citizen is to keep his mouth open! What can we do? Hightower stated that we need a new politic that puts the common good first through agitating, advocating and organizing!

**SET YOUR CALENDAR
SPRING SESSION!
CITIZEN TRAINING CORPS**

**FREE CIVIC EDUCATION
PROGRAM begins March 6th, 2002.**

- ◆ What does it mean to be a good citizen?
- ◆ What are civic skills?
- ◆ How are local decisions made in your community?
- ◆ How do you get power in your community?

**Learn the answers in
CAC's Free Course!**

**Call the CAC and sign up today!
630-833-4080 or visit our website
at www.citizenadvocacycenter.org**

Wednesday, March 6 - 7:00 PM

- ⇒ Learn Who Represents You at Every Level of Government and How to Write a Letter to the Newspaper Editor.

Wednesday, March 13 - 7:00 PM

- ⇒ Exercise Your Right to Know! Learn How To Request Public Documents With the Freedom of Information Act.

Wednesday, March 20 - 7:00 PM

- ⇒ How Does Government Operate? The Open Meetings Act and First Amendment Rights.

Wednesday, March 27 - 7:00 PM

- ⇒ Learn How To Find City Ordinances, How a Bill Becomes A Law and What Is the Illinois General Assembly.

Wednesday, April 3 - 7:00 PM

- ⇒ Learn How to Protect Your Privacy.

Wednesday, April 10 - 7:00 PM

- ⇒ Learn Basic Debate Skills and How to Discuss All Sides of an Issue.

**Citizen Initiative Awards
— 2001 Recipients —**

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. This year's awards:

Congratulations to Ms. Marget Hamilton of Wheaton, IL!

Marget Hamilton became a citizen activist in 1940 when she, along with friends from the League of Women Voters, protested the fact that the children of Japanese American citizens were not being allowed to swim in the Barrington pool. In 1955, after she moved her family to Wheaton, she started the Wheaton Chapter of the League of Women Voters and helped change the Wheaton form of government from Commission to Council Manager.

Mrs. Hamilton was Wheaton's first woman candidate for Council Manager and in 1959 won the seat. Among her many accomplishments in government service, she was instrumental in drafting and adopting in 1967, Wheaton's Fair Housing Ordinance, the first of its kind in Illinois. She served as Mayor of Wheaton in 1969 and was the head of the DuPage Mayors and Managers conference in 1970.

Since Mrs. Hamilton's retirement in 1971 she has: organized and directed the office of the DuPage County ACLU, served on the Board of Directors of the DuPage County Legal Services Foundation, and is the director of the College of DuPage Older Adult Institute. The Institute now serves 10,000 people every year.

Congratulations to Dr. Wendy Morris, Bolingbrook, IL!

In the words of Dr. Morris' nominator, "Wendy is a one-woman tour de force." She received her doctorate from the University of Illinois and she was nominated for her outstanding work in the fight against racism, homophobia, anti-semitism and other forms of discrimination.

Dr. Morris understands that fighting hate is central to building democracy. As a member of DuPage Voices for Racial Justice and the DuPage County Unity Coalition, Dr. Morris has helped to organize anti-racist sentiment in DuPage County. Working with these organizations and others, she took the initiative and established a Rapid Response Network that can respond quickly to hate crimes. She has not only worked tirelessly herself, she has inspired others to get up, get out, and get active in their communities.

To nominate a candidate for the 2002 award, call the CAC!

With Liberty & Justice For All?

Like everyone else, I was shocked by the events of September 11th. My shock, however, paled in comparison to my sense of disbelief as I have learned of passed and pending state and federal legislation labeled as "anti-terrorist" or "patriotic". This legislation is supposed to protect the health and safety of Americans but instead restricts civil liberties.

A civil liberty is a constitutional restraint on government guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and protected by the courts. Unlike other countries, the U.S. Constitution cannot simply be suspended during times of a national security threat. Prompted by the surge of "anti-terrorist" legislation, I began researching the United State's historical approach to national security threats and how civil liberties have been affected in the past. I was surprised to learn that infringement on civil liberties seems to be the American way. During the McCarthy era, immigrant members of the Communist Party were deported and in World War II, Japanese immigrants were sent to internment camps simply for having Japanese ancestry.

In the blink of an eye after September 11th, Congress passed and President Bush signed the USA PATRIOT Act, the most recent infringement on civil liberties at the federal level. Among its many provisions, this anti-terrorist legislation expanded the government's ability to conduct electronic surveillance, reduced procedural due process safeguards and allows the detention of immigrants without being charged for a crime.

Since the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act, several states have followed the federal government's lead and proposed or passed patriotic or anti-terrorist legislation to varying degrees. For example, the Pennsylvania legislature passed a bill mandating the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance or singing of the national anthem at the beginning of each school day. Students can refrain from participating only with the written approval of their parents. In a more dramatic move, some Wisconsin legislators have proposed the institution of the death penalty in order to deter terrorism.

Illinois Attorney General, Jim Ryan introduced an "Anti-Terrorism" bill during the veto session that currently defines terrorism extremely broadly. Under the proposed bill, terrorism could include any activity designed to put pressure on the government which results in property damage. We must monitor the progression of this bill and contact our state legislators to let them know we do not want our civil liberties compromised in Illinois.

How far are we willing to allow legislatures to chip away at civil liberties before people stand up and say enough? At a time of crisis, it is important to remember the words of Ben Franklin who wrote in 1759, "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

Ms. Jill M. Dressner

UP AND COMING PROGRAMS

January 11th, Brown Bag Lunch Attack on Civil Liberties

On October 26th, President Bush signed legislation redefining civil liberties in the USA PATRIOT Act and Illinois has followed suit with an Anti-Terrorism Bill. What is happening to civil liberties? Is it possible to be critical of government actions and still be patriotic?

January 16th, Evening Program Corporate Profiteering During War

A \$15 billion bailout plan for the airlines? A proposed economic stimulus package that would give \$70 billion in corporate tax cuts? Handouts to the Insurance Industry? Where is the aid to the more than 130,000 airline and civilian aircraft aviation, hotel industry, and other workers who have been laid off in the wake of September 11th events?

January 30th, Evening Program Lack of Public Health Funding and Pharmaceutical Gouging.

The events of September 11th have brought attention to the serious lack of funding in state and local public health programs. What action needs to be taken to improve funding for public health? Why has the Bush administration refused to authorize generic competitors to manufacture ciproflaxacin to help alleviate public fear of Anthrax? Why does CIPRO sell for \$4-\$5 per pill in U.S. pharmacies, a rate two to three times as much as in many foreign countries? These and other questions will be discussed.

February 8th, Brown Bag Lunch Campaign Finance Reform in IL.

The Illinois Supreme Court

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 receiving 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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Volunteer and Donor Holiday Party & Open House!

Thank you to the many volunteers and donors who helped the Citizen Advocacy Center build democracy in 2001.

This party is for you!

Visit the Center
Thursday, December 13, from
6 - 8 PM for a celebration of civic
energy and volunteerism!

Bring a friend and introduce
them to the Center!

New Class Added to the Citizen Training Corps. Protect Your Privacy!

The Citizen Advocacy Center has added a new class focusing on PRIVACY to the Citizen Training Corps program!

- ◆ Is there such a thing as privacy in the workplace and on the Internet?
- ◆ Is it possible to keep your financial and health information private?
- ◆ How can you reduce the amount of junk mail and "Pre-Approved Credit Card Offers" from landing on your doorstep?
- ◆ How can you check your credit report and remove inaccuracies?
- ◆ How can you protect yourself from identity theft and credit fraud?

Call the Citizen Advocacy Center at 630-833-4080 or visit our website at www.citizenadvocacycenter.org to sign up for the Citizen Training Corps by March 6!

Participants will learn privacy protection tools as well as many other important civic tools in the Citizen Training Corps.