



THE VOTER

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IMPORTANT DATES

**Nov. 5, 6 pm.
Constitutional
Amendment
Consensus. AMT
Building.**

**Nov. 9, 6:30 pm, Storm
Water and CSO issues.
AMT Building.**

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Nov 5, Thursday, 6 pm, AMT Building, is our consensus meeting on Amending the U.S. Constitution. Members only participate in the consensus. Several articles have been included in recent newsletters and the official questions from LWVUS are included in this issue. You don't need to be an expert on the issue, we will have "pro's and con's" to consider. This is so that if a constitutional convention is seriously proposed, the League will have guidelines to support or oppose. Now there is no position on amending the constitution. Thanks to Pat Landes for chairing this effort.

Nov 4, Wednesday, at 5:30 pm at the Gateway Building is the public meeting about the Riverfront Park plan for the replacement sites (that relates to the River Trail Apartment complex)-hosted by the City. Many Leaguers were involved opposing the apartments. My letter-to-the-editor, however, was incorrectly titled. The letter did not state the League was opposed to the apartments.

Nov 9, Monday, at 6:30 pm, our League, partnering with the Sierra Club and NAACP, is hosting a public meeting at the request of the City of Peoria's Public Works Dept. on the topic of Storm Water and the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO.) I have been participating on the City's One Water Committee as have Leaguers Joyce Blumenshine (for Sierra Club) and Joyce Harant (for Central Illinois Healthy Community Alliance.) Consider: Peoria does have a storm water problem and a CSO problem that should have been addressed before 2015.

The 100% Green Solution to the CSO that the city has proposed (to settle the EPA lawsuit against the city) is great in several ways: cheaper initially, employs local businesses/labor, but has high operating costs, and depends on citizen acceptance. Funding either a "green solution" or (initially a more expensive) pipe solution is something we need to look at immediately. For residences, this may be a regressive tax.

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- At the One Water meeting in October we finally heard the possible, proposed utility tax cost and timeframe. Contrary to what some other governments have done, the proposal is strictly based on square footage of impervious surface on each parcel - so residential and commercial (including non-profits and schools) would have the same rate.
- The average residential figure of \$20 a month for a stormwater utility fee starting in July 2016 was suggested.
- As we heard at our League's Sept.2014 meeting, credits and/or incentives may be used and should be asked about at the Nov 9 meeting. What are credits and incentives? Do you have a suggestion of what those should be? Credits and incentives would possibly be offered because a homeowner or business is doing something that significantly lowers the amount of stormwater going to the city's system.
- You can look at information and videos of what other communities have done to solve their CSO problem at: <http://www.peoriagov.org/wetweather/>

The Oct 19 Illinois Local Government Consolidation and Unfunded Mandates Task Force meeting in Peoria was interesting. You may have seen Farrell and me in the Journal Star article about the meeting. (Our October general meeting speaker talked about the Task Force's work.) Representatives from the Soil and Water districts and the Drainage Districts spoke Oct 19. I had no idea there were that many small districts which are governmental units of the business of farming. Of course the Task Force is an advisory group which hopes to find sponsors for their proposed legislation in 2016.

Wow. Former Peorian **Colleen Coyle Mathis** spoke Oct 22 about her experiences with the AZ Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court in her talk, "**Independent Redistricting - the Arizona Experience.**" She gave a very interesting assessment of what happened and why independent redistricting is important. (Colleen was the state chair and the governor of AZ kicked her off the committee; but, the AZ Supreme Court reinstated her. Then the AZ legislature sued over the existence of the Independent Commission at the US Supreme Court level.) She encouraged us to continue our efforts to get an independent redistricting committee in IL.

Thanks to Leaguer Brad McMillan for bringing Colleen back to Peoria to tell of her experiences and thanks to sponsors- the Institute for Principled Leadership in Public Service and the Pre-law Center at Bradley University. For information on petition efforts in Illinois: www.mapamendment.org Leaguer Gary Stella chairs our efforts at the Peoria League.

We are looking for a skilled Facebook user to give some lessons to me to make our League's Facebook page more interesting and maximize its potential to get information and photos out to members and prospective members. email me at c_budzinski@hotmail.com

Cheryl Budzinski, President

Springdale Cemetery Observer report, meeting Oct 20, 2015

New county representative, Mary Ardapple, made several interesting suggestions during the course of the meeting.

Savannah update from Mike Rucker included a proposed new look to the entry to the Savannah. Later in the meeting, the manager commented on how nice the Savannah and Scattering Gardens were looking compared to previous appearance. Mike and the manager are working together on these changes.

A cell tower has been proposed. The photo looked like a flag pole and had a flag flying on it. There were many suggestions including taking it to the Historic Commission, dollars, ancillary equipment location, and incorporating it into the new, proposed cemetery entrance -or- elsewhere. More investigation was requested.

The committee is requesting audit bids at this time.

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Springdale, continued. Fundraising through the Foundation Committee for the enhanced cemetery entrance is not published yet.

A Veterans of Foreign Wars group which had been very active at Springdale is disbanding. Leaguer Al Harkrader sent a \$5,000 check to Springdale due to that disbanding. That money will be put toward the entry.

Events including Prairie Folklore, another Bruce Brown event, and runs were discussed. Vinyl signs to promote activities/functions (that hang on their larger signs) were shown. These will be promoted to groups using Springdale.

Marketing presentations have been made to various organizations large and small including the Geneological Society.

The committee voted to get the area platted that a family may build a mausoleum on.

Leaguer Rick Fox will be our League's Observer at Springdale meetings. – Cheryl Budzinski

Sustainability: Why Should We Care About Water will be the focus of the discussion at the November 18th Drinks & Dialogue program hosted by the League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria. The meeting will be from **5:30-6:30pm at the Hearth Restaurant, 4604 N. Prospect Ave, Peoria Hts.**

The importance of water is a global issue, and now the significance of water shortages hits close to home in the United States as droughts and water shortages impact many areas of the country. The League has long been engaged in activities to protect groundwater sources to ensure the safety of drinking water.

The dialogue will be facilitated by League members and led by Dr. Robert Fuessle of Bradley University. Dr. Fuessle earned his Masters and PhD degrees in environmental engineering from the University of Illinois, Urbana. He is a specialist in the area of hazardous waste treatment and management modeling for environmental systems, stabilizing hazardous wastes, environmental management and policy analysis and environmental risk assessment.

Drinks & Dialogue provides an opportunity for people to share opinions and ideas, ask questions and become more aware of local, state and national issues and options for making change. There's no cost to participate, refreshments are available to buy.

-facilitated by Nora Sullivan

HOW MUCH INFLUENCE DOES BIG MONEY HAVE IN OUR ELECTIONS?

With the 2016 presidential campaign season in full swing, we are already hearing about and seeing the influence of major Supreme Court rulings on campaign finance, particularly the 2010 Citizens United v. FEC decision. On a regular basis, campaign ads, news stories, and social media are bursting with examples of the current and potential impact of these decisions on our elections and government.

If you're wondering about the full and real influence of these decisions now and into the future, please join us on **Thursday, December 3rd at 6:00 pm at Advanced Medical Transport, 1718 N. Sterling, Peoria**. A distinguished panel of three local experts will direct their comments to these rulings and their relationship to the topics listed below that we will address in the Money in Politics Consensus meeting in January.

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MONEY IN POLITICS CONSENSUS QUESTION TOPICS

PART I QUESTIONS: Democratic Values and Interests with Respect to Financing Political Campaigns

PART II QUESTIONS: First Amendment Protections for Speakers and Activities in Political Campaigns

PART III QUESTIONS: Methods for Regulating Campaign Finance to Protect the Democratic Process

All of the consensus questions from each of the three parts will be listed in the next issue of the Voter. However, if you are interested in reviewing the questions now, please go to <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/money-politics-consensus-questions>.

We invite you to submit questions that you would like the panel to address. Please send your questions by email to Irene at ipritzker@comcast.net. There will also be an opportunity to ask questions at the meeting.

-Farrell Davies

League Members Only!

You are invited to participate in the consensus meeting on Constitutional Amendments

Mark your calendars for the General Meeting

Thursday, November 5, 6 pm, AMT Building

(Advanced Medical Transport Building located at intersection of Nebraska & Sterling, enter parking lot off of Sterling, enter building through doors facing Nebraska)

Please join us, and other Leagues across the country, as we contribute our input for the national League's policy on constitutional amendments. No prior knowledge or experience in constitutional amendments required. Basically, all of us will hear some background information, and then discuss and reach consensus (member agreement) on a series of questions related to circumstances that might allow or compel the League to endorse a constitutional amendment or Article 5 Constitutional Convention (both are included in the US Constitution in Article 5 "Method of Amendment"). Our responses will be sent to the national League and will be used with responses from other Leagues to develop the LWVUS position on constitutional amendments; more specifically:

1. How would the League evaluate a proposal for a constitutional amendment
2. What aspects of a Constitutional Convention are important in conducting such a convention.
3. How would the League balance process and position?

Let's have a good turnout and contribute our ideas and opinions on this critical topic. We have provided some background materials in the past two VOTERS, and are presenting the questions we will address below. Note that for each question there is a brief pro and con section to help formulate your response. If you want a refresher on the background material, please go to <http://forum.lwv.org/category/member-resources/our-work/constitutional-amendment-study>.

The meeting is going to be great and will be presented by all newer members – Dick Williams, Sherry Hillman, Farrell Davies, and Marcus Fogliano. If you have any questions about the meeting or process, please contact Pat Landes, 309-648-3504 or landes.pat@gmail.com

The consensus questions are:

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Constitutional Amendment Consensus Questions

This study is in three parts. The questions in Part I are to develop guidelines for evaluating constitutional amendment proposals. Part II asks about aspects of a Constitutional Convention that may be important in conducting such a convention. Part III asks two overall balancing questions between process and positions.

Answer each question, regardless of your answers to other questions.

Part I - Considerations for Evaluating Constitutional Amendment Proposals

(answer to these questions: "Should", "Should Not", or "No Consensus")

1. Which of these should or should not be a consideration in identifying an appropriate and well-crafted amendment?

a) Whether the public policy objective addresses matters of such acute and abiding importance that the fundamental charter of our nation must be changed.

PRO: *Amendments are changes to a document that provide stability to our system and should be undertaken to address extreme problems or long-term needs.*

CON: *When public sentiment is overwhelmingly in favor of change, restraint based on veneration of the document is misplaced.*

b) Whether the amendment as written would be effective in achieving its policy objective.

PRO: *Amendments that may be unenforceable, miss the objective or have unintended consequences will not work to achieve the policy objective.*

CON: *It's all right to deliberately put something in the Constitution that will need to be interpreted by courts and legislatures over time.*

c) Whether the amendment would either make our political system more democratic or protect individual rights.

PRO: *Most amendments have sought to make our system more democratic by extending voting rights, for example, or to protect the rights of minorities from powerful interests.*

CON: *What has been typical in the past is not a good measure of what's appropriate or necessary today or in the future, especially since there have been relatively few amendments.*

d) Whether the policy objective can be achieved by a legislative or political approach that is less difficult than a constitutional amendment.

PRO: *Due to the difficulty of amending the Constitution, it is important to consider whether legislation or political action is more likely to succeed than an amendment, in order to achieve the objective and to expend resources wisely.*

CON: *Important policy objectives should sometimes be pursued through a constitutional amendment even though it may be difficult for it to be enacted and even when other options are available.*

e) Whether the public policy objective is more suited to a constitutional and general approach than to a statutory and detailed approach.

PRO: *It is important to consider whether the goal can best be achieved by an overall value statement, which will be interpreted by the courts, or with specific statutory detail to resolve important issues and reduce ambiguity.*

CON: *Getting action on an issue is more important than how a policy objective can best be achieved.*

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Part II - Aspects of an Article V Constitutional Convention

(answer to these questions: "Agree", "Disagree", or "No Consensus")

2. What conditions should or should not be in place for an Article V Constitutional Convention initiated by the states?

a) The Convention must be transparent and not conducted in secret.

PRO: *The public has a right to know what is being debated and voted on.*

CON: *The lack of public scrutiny and the ability to negotiate in private may enable delegates to more easily reach agreement.*

b) Representation at the Convention must be based on population rather than one state, one vote.

PRO: *The delegates represent citizens and should be distributed by U.S. population.*

CON: *The U.S. is really a federation of states that must agree by state to any change in the Constitution.*

c) State delegates must be elected rather than appointed.

PRO: *Delegates represent citizens and therefore need to be elected by them.*

CON: *Appointment allows for experts who wouldn't run in an election.*

d) Voting at the Convention must be by delegate, not by state.

PRO: *As at the Articles of Confederation Convention, delegates from one state can have varying views and should be able to express them by individual votes.*

CON: *Because any amendment proposal will go to the states for ratification, voting by state blocs—however the delegates are originally chosen—reflects the probability of eventual ratification.*

e) The Convention must be limited to a specific topic.

PRO: *It is important to guard against a "runaway convention".*

CON: *The convention alternative was provided for a time when Congress was not listening, so the delegates should not be constrained.*

f) Only state resolutions on a single topic count when determining if a Convention must be called.

PRO: *Counting state requests by topic ensures that there is sufficient interest in a particular subject to call a convention, and enhances citizen interest and participation in the process.*

CON: *There is no requirement for Congress to count state requests by topic and when enough states are unhappy enough to ask for a convention, it should happen.*

g) The validity of state "calls" for an Article V Constitutional Convention must be determined by the most recent action of the state. If a state has enacted a rescission of its call, that rescission should be respected by Congress.

PRO: *A state legislature should be free to determine its position in regard to an Article V Constitutional Convention. A rescission should be equally acceptable to Congress as a state's call for a convention.*

CON: *A state legislature's call for a Convention can not be overturned because the process may never end.*

3. Should the League oppose an Article V Constitutional Convention to propose amendments to the U.S. Constitution because of unresolved questions about the powers and processes of such a convention?

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PRO: *The Constitution is too important to trust an unknown or uncontrollable process. It is unclear whether conditions or safeguards regarding powers and processes for a convention can be successfully put in place.*

CON: *A convention is intended to be an unrestrained process to propose amendments to the Constitution.*

Part III – Balancing Questions

4. Should the League consider supporting a Constitutional amendment that will advance a League position even if:

(answer to these questions: "Should consider", "Should not consider", or "No consensus")

a) There are significant problems with the actual amendment as proposed?

PRO: *Our positions have been studied and agreed to. If other organizations are supporting an amendment in a policy area we also support, we might participate even though it is inconsistent with the evaluation guidelines we support under Part I.*

CON: *If the League has a consensus on the evaluation guidelines outlined in Part I, then the League should not campaign on an amendment when it is inconsistent with those standards, even though the League supports the policy outcome.*

b) It is being put forward by a procedural process the League would otherwise oppose?

PRO: *Our positions have been studied and agreed to. If other organizations are supporting an amendment in a policy area we also support, we might participate even though it is inconsistent with the process criteria we support under Part II.*

CON: *If the League has a consensus on the process criteria outlined in Part II, then the League should not campaign for an amendment when the process being proposed is inconsistent with those standards, even though the League supports the policy outcome.*

Thank you for your support!

We appreciate the financial contributions from all our members, and want to acknowledge our 2015/16 Susan B. Anthony members:

- ♦ Beth Akeson
- ♦ Farrell Davies
- ♦ Mary McDade
- ♦ Sonni & Dick Williams
- ♦ Katherine Coyle
- ♦ Michael McCuskey
- ♦ Kathie Raeborn
- ♦ Cheryl & Ron Budzinski
- ♦ Pat Landes
- ♦ Irene Pritzker
- ♦ Shirley Belke
- ♦ Jan & Emil Deissler
- ♦ Elliott Murray
- ♦ Sherry Hillman



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

ON THE WEB:

www.lwvqp.org

IMPORTANT DATES

Nov. 5. 6 pm. Constitutional Consensus. League members ONLY participate.

Advanced Medical Transport (AMT), 1718 N. Sterling, Peoria 61604.

Nov, 9. 6:30 pm. City of Peoria educational presentation on **Storm Water and Combined Sewer Overflow.**

Advanced Medical Transport (AMT), 1718 N. Sterling,, Peoria. 61604

Nov. 19. 5:30 pm. Drinks & Dialogue, Sustainability/Water.

Hearth Restaurant, 4604 N. Prospect Rd. Peoria Hts.

Nov. 23. noon. LOGO Committee at Lakeview Library, 1137 W Lake, Peoria 61614

Dec. 3. 6 pm. Money in Politics. Panel discussion.

Advanced Medical Transport (AMT), 1718 N. Sterling,, Peoria. 61604