

### President's Message

## More opportunities to get involved

Autumn leaves are falling and squirrels are busy hiding nuts to prepare for the winter. As days get a bit shorter and weather cooler, this is a good time for our members to get involved in some of our upcoming events.

We welcome four new observers to our Local Government Observer Corps (LOGO): Chris Kaergard, Michele Kaergard, Monica Frenner and Dottie Strickler. Another training has been scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 21 at 10 a.m. This will be virtual training and is for members only.

Consider joining this group to help promote transparency in government and sharing information with League and community members. Some of the meetings that are not currently covered are: Tazewell County Board, Woodford County Board, Peoria Sanitary District, Peoria Landfill, Peoria Housing Authority, Peoria Park Board and public school boards across the tri-county area. This is a rewarding activity and is a great way to get involved in other League activities.

Another opportunity to be involved is participating in LWVIL Lobby Day in Springfield during the 2023 Veto Session. Members will be advocating for multiple League priority issues, including lobbying against the renewal of the [Invest in Kids school voucher program](#). More information on the agenda to come soon.

**You can make a difference!** During Lobby Day, you'll meet with your legislators and advocate for the issues you care about. Never lobbied in Springfield before? No worries, LWVIL Board members will guide us. **Participants will meet at the Illinois State Visitor Center on Tuesday, Oct. 24, at 10:00 a.m.**

Locally, we will coordinate carpooling for those interested. Parking instructions will be provided for registrants nearer to the event date. The day will

wrap up between 3–4 p.m. Email [cromanus1249@yahoo.com](mailto:cromanus1249@yahoo.com) if you are interested in participating.

———— Connie Romanus, LWVGP president

### Important Dates:

- 7 p.m. Mon., Oct. 2 (virtual):** Mis / Disinformation Task Force Meeting – [sign up online](#), info below
- 6:00-7:30 p.m. Wed. Oct. 4:** ACLU Banned Books Week event, Bradley University Westlake Hall 116 – [sign up online](#) (League members invited)
- 4 p.m. Mon., Oct. 9:** LWVGP Executive Board via Zoom.
- 6:00-7:30 p.m. Wed. Oct. 11:** Community book talk with author of “Mansfield and Dirksen: Bipartisan Giants of the Senate,” Bradley University Westlake Hall 116 (League members invited)
- 5:30 p.m. (social), 6-7 p.m. (program):** Drinks and Dialogue at Lariat Steakhouse
- 10 a.m. Sat., Oct. 21 (virtual):** LWVIL Observer Corps Training
- 10 a.m. Tue. Oct. 24:** LWVIL Lobby Day in Springfield
- 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Sat. Jan. 20, 2024 (\*Save the date\*):** LWVGP Annual Program Planning meeting, Peoria Public Library North Branch

### UPCOMING EVENTS: DRINKS & DIALOGUE

Thanks to Chris Setti, the CEO of the Greater Peoria Economic Development Council for his presentation at the D&D gathering on September 20. Chris told us how a self-described “California guy” came to Peoria for a job in City Hall then and chose to stay and raise a family. He then reported on the mission of the EDC and some of the companies that are growing in our region.



For October, we have arranged a program on ranked-choice voting. President Romanus was impressed with a recent presentation by Change Illinois and FairVote Illinois on that topic, and FairVote Illinois volunteer Marc Proud will speak on it at the Lariat Steakhouse on October 18. Social time begins at 5:30 and the presentation will begin at 6. As always, I hope to see you there.

———— Terry Kohlbuss

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### VOTER SERVICES

It was a quiet month for the Voter Services Committee. We did participate in the Political Interest Group Fair (PIG) day at Pekin High School at the invitation of

Colleen Kahl from the social studies department. We were one of several groups presenting our organization and the process by which we engage politically. The end result is the students identify a particular issue or project they want to work through the political process, they are assigned roles (i.e., legislator, lobbyist, citizen, etc.) and pick and choose from the options presented on how they want to work it.

Additionally, we participated in the National Voter Registration Day event by registering voters at both Quest Charter Academy and Neighborhood House.

Petitions started being circulated by candidates for the March 19, 2024, primaries as of Sept. 5. The final filing date is not until Dec. 4, but we are already watching races in Peoria and Tazewell counties to determine which races to schedule for a Candidate Forum.

Anyone who wants to take the forum moderator training from LWVIL, please let us know as we are always looking for good moderators. You don't have to come up with the questions or do much work in advance. Mainly you show up on the day of the forum and run the questions and the process. Or if you just want to help us organize forums, let us know that also. The more volunteers we have, the more forums we can do.

———— Rob Parks and Eileen Steed, Voter Services Co-chairs

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Thank you to members who have recently renewed their membership! We appreciate your support. If you have not renewed, we invite you to go online and update your membership or print renewal form: [www.lwvgp.org](http://www.lwvgp.org).

Forms can be sent to LWV Greater Peoria, P.O. Box 9786, Peoria, IL 61612-9786. Membership is currently 115. Remember to check us out on Facebook and share.

———— Jan Deissler, Membership Chair

## **VOTE BY MAIL BALLOTS**

At the Sept. 11 Board meeting of LWV Greater Peoria, action was taken to support the postage paid envelopes for VBM ballots in Peoria County to ensure full access for all voters. A letter was sent to Election Commission Chair James Manning and Executive Director Elizabeth Gannon recognizing this matter. While this is not an

insignificant expense to the Election Commission, it is one that will bring peace of mind to voters, regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic or gender status.

————— Connie Romanus

## **MIS / DISINFORMATION TASK FORCE**

The proliferation of mis/disinformation has emerged as a significant threat to our democratic processes and informed decision-making of the electorate.

Join our effort to educate the general public on mis/disinformation! Attend the LWVIL Mis/Disinformation Task Force's first virtual planning meeting.

Contact [communications@lwvil.org](mailto:communications@lwvil.org) with questions.

## **RECENT LWV OF ILLINOIS ACTION**

- LWV of Illinois signed onto a letter authored by the Illinois Environmental Council, of which LWV of Illinois is an affiliate. The letter urged the EPA to expand the scope of its triennial efforts to comply with state requirements and better protect our waterways for citizens and our wildlife.
- LWV of Illinois signed onto a letter authored by the Metropolitan Planning Council advocating on behalf of universal lead pipe replacement.

Note: Illinois American Water Company has map on its website showing homes in its Peoria service area by address. Citizens can view this and report the type of pipe if known. Lead pipe use declined for incoming water lines in the 1960s locally; lead was banned for use water lines in 1986. IAWC is replacing lead lines to homes at no cost to the homeowner. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires water utility companies to inventory service lines and create a replacement plan.

IAWC is asking for homeowners' help in identifying materials on their side of the service line. This was discussed at the Sept. 12 Peoria City Council meeting.

You can look up your address to see your home on map:

<https://www.amwater.com/ilaw/Water-Quality/Lead-And-Drinking-Water/>

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## **PEORIA COUNTY BOARD: Sept. 14**

The Peoria County Board held its Sept. 14 regular meeting with all members present except members Jennifer Groves Allison and Steve Rieker.

In regular business the board unanimously approved the potential sale of its property within the One Technology building in downtown Peoria. The county owns 7,500 sq ft of office space that is currently leased to the State of Illinois Dept. of Human Services. The building will be auctioned later this year following a foreclosure. This resolution permits the county to sell its office suite if it approves of the building auction price, or to retain ownership and seek a local Realtor for a future sale.

Also unanimously approved were the following:

- A Safe Routes to School Grant in Limestone Township
- A Multi-Jurisdictional Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan
- Amendments to the county code to permit the use and regulation of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) for solar farms and other future energy storage needs
- Zoning requests in Hollis and Radnor Townships.

Proclamations were read recognizing the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Clubs at River City in north Peoria, Dean Troutman's fundraising walk for St. Jude's Children Research Hospital, National Rail Safety Week, Hunger Action Month and National Preparedness Month.

Among items approved unanimously on the Consent Agenda were:

- Participation in the joint City/County Greater Peoria Auto Crimes Task Force (GPACT)
- Annual salaries for the county sheriff and the county public defender
- Installation of a new boiler at the Juvenile Detention Center.

Three citizens' remarks were received focused on a continuing call for a CO<sub>2</sub> pipeline moratorium, feral cats, and a culvert dispute in Kickapoo Township.

**Links to the meeting agenda and video are here: [Agenda](#) & [Video](#)**

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

## **PEORIA COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION: Sept. 12**

The Peoria County Election Commission held its monthly meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 12, but due to a lack of a quorum, they could conduct no official business.

They did receive updates from Executive Director Elizabeth Gannon on the security upgrades that were approved last month. None of the currently accepted upgrades needed Commission approval because they were each under the \$5,000 limit to Director Gannon's discretion. Heart Technologies, which has a contract for the current security system, will install a badge system, panic buttons, and a parking lot camera. Window covers for exterior windows went out for bid and came in under \$5,000. A security remodel for the front desk will be going out for bids.

In other updates, the County is working with the GIS office on putting precinct information onto the County website. Petitions for the March 19, 2024, primary have started circulating.

———— Irene Pritzker, Observer

### **PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: Sept. 12**

Council members recognized Aurthur Mae Perkins for her impact on the community and many roles she held over the years, as an educator and principal in Peoria Public Schools, member of Peoria Housing Authority Board, and Peoria Public Library Trustee. Carl Cannon, Chair of PHA, announced that the recreation center for Providence Point would be named for Mrs. Perkins.

The consent agenda was approved unanimously. Highlights of Council items:

- First reading of ordinance proposing W. Lamont Special Service area for sidewalk replacement in 1700 and 1800 blocks; this will be on agenda for Sept. 26, 2023.
- First reading of ordinance amending code of city of Peoria regarding tobacco licensing, with creation of two tobacco license classes. Corporation Counsel Patrick Hayes explained how ordinance would be enforced. Will be on the agenda for Sept. 23 meeting.
- Presentation by Illinois American Water Company (IAWC) was made on overview of lead line service replacement in Peoria Service Area. Kyle Smith, Western Division Manager, Melissa Litteken and Anna Kubas spoke. Ms. Litteken gave overview of the history of lead usage in plumbing, as well as current regulatory action by Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Visit IAWC website to learn more: <https://www.amwater.com/ilaw/Water-Quality/Lead-And-Drinking-Water/> To view Illinois EPA regulations: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/drinking-water/public-water-users/lead-service-line-information.html>

- Approved agreement with Phoenix Community Development Services for operations of Haven Group Home in amount of \$111,000.
- Approved agreement with Peoria City/County Health Dept. for additional funding to complete homeowner roof replacements in 61605 area code using funds from Edwards Settlement in the amount of \$125,000. This meets the funding target to improve community lung health.

The Council meets 2nd and 4th Tuesday at 6:00 P.M. and can be viewed online, at cable access channel 22, and heard on WCBU radio live. Agenda, minutes and video available: [www.Peoriagov.org](http://www.Peoriagov.org).

————— Connie Romanus, Observer



League of Women Voters  
of Greater Peoria

P.O. Box 9786, Peoria, IL 61612-9786

**League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria Board of Directors  
2023-2024**

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