



THE VOTER

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IMPORTANT DATES

Wednesday, Sept. 21,
Drinks & Dialogue,
"Will You Die as You Wish?" 5:30 – 6:30
pm. at Lariat
Steakhouse.

Oct. 3, 10, 17, **Running
for Elective Office**, see
ICC Adult Community
Programs.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Yes, it is disappointing that our third effort to get redistricting reform done in Illinois has been smacked down again. The Illinois Supreme Court voted along Party lines (4D's & 3 R's) to rule the ballot issue "unconstitutional."

Thank you to our 2015-16 chairs to get reform - Gary Stella and Connie Romanus. Brad McMillan was an active participant on the state Board overseeing the effort. Our state League, the IL Chamber of Commerce, and Farm Bureau have been good partners in the effort. Leaguer Bill Mahl helped so much with collecting signatures and volunteering in Springfield with validation of petitions and in so many ways. Others who were committed to the effort at League include: Pat Landes, Terry Matthews, Shelley Epstein, Sherry Hillman, Gary Alwan.

This 2015-16 effort started for me at a planning meeting in Chicago that Pat and I attended. We received a donation to "do something" at the LWVIL Convention (June 2015.) We put together clipboards with detailed instructions for the convention delegates to get each of them committed and excited to start immediately collecting petition signatures. Change in Illinois is needed. Although the issue failed, what did not fail is the attention millions of Illinois voters saw of the League's passion to "Make Democracy Work." Thanks to all who put a great effort into this reform!.

Many city council, mayor, school board, ICC Board, and township positions will be elected in April 2017. Do you want to run for office or will you encourage a friend to run for office? Our League has partnered with ICC and NAACP to offer classes to help you find your way to get on the ballot - or not. Nine people with good (and bad) campaign experiences will give you strategic tips on what to do and not do campaigning. Sign up for classes will begin the week of September 6.

Sign up for "Running for Elective Office" classes at <http://cce.icc.edu/acp/>

Class moderators and panelists include: Rick Cloyd (former Peoria Public School Board President); Ernestine Jackson (Peoria Public School Board); Beth Jensen (Peoria City Council); Pat Landes (campaign strategist); Matt Jones (campaign strategist); Allen Mayer (Peoria County Board and campaign strategist); Gary Stella (former County Board Chair, formerly City Council); Gale Thetford (ICC Trustee, formerly City Council); and Cheryl Budzinski (formerly County Board.) Classes take place on Mondays, Oct 3, 10, and 17 from 6:30-8:30pm at ICC North. The cost is \$45 total for all three classes.

Please consider running for office or encourage someone you know would do a good job. Frequently all it takes is a little encouragement.

(continued on p. 2)

(Presidents Message continued)

Thanks to chair Pat Landes, the Membership Committee, and our wonderful members. We have had a great response to renewing memberships and have some new "**Defenders of Democracy**" this month. Our League's membership has doubled in the last few years.

Drinks & Dialogue in August had 42 people participate. Topic was "Medical Marijuana." Speaker and discussion were great. Come to the September 21 D & D with topic, "**Will You Die as You Wish?**"

The **September 29 public meeting** on our League's study on whether public or private ownership of the water company offers greater benefit to the people of Central Illinois, is in the research phase. Members and non-members - the public- are encouraged to give thoughtful reflection on what is important to the issue of providing water utility to the public.

We hear about a "future water crisis" in our country and world-wide. Our area is fortunate to have abundant water from the Sankoty aquifer and Illinois River, but less so in the Champaign area with the Mahomet aquifer. Similarly Northeast Illinois is under federal court order about the amount of water draw-down from Lake Michigan. Do you know: "Who owns the water?" 85% of water utilities are publicly owned. What are or should be the important aspects of the "public - private ownership" question? We need to hear from you about what we have been studying which will produce our study/ consensus questions for consideration at our February 18 League meeting.

Again, thanks to all who continue to help make democracy work, and hope to see you at one of our programs this month.

-- Cheryl Budzinski, President

Volunteers needed - and it will be fun!

Needed: 2 helpers for the Selma movie on Sat Sep 10 at 12:30pm (call Marge 693-9388 to rsvp)

Our League is partnered with Peoria Election Commission to offer **mock elections in area high schools**. The Election Commission is providing voting equipment and ballots. Our League is providing volunteers to run the program. Several Leaguers are already trained, but **we need some additional volunteers** to help run the elections. The students will vote for 3 positions: U.S. President, U.S. Senator, and Congressional Representative (17th or 18th depending on the school location.) We will also recruit Election Judges from 17 and 18-year olds. Please call Mary Jane 323-5333 for more information and to see who you will be working with and possibly car pool.

Sep 7 - 1 person to go to Elmwood High School for the morning

Sep 7 - 1 or 2 to go to Quest for part of the morning

Sep 8 - 1 person to go to Brimfield

Sep 12 - 1 person to go to Farmington High School from 9am-1pm

Sep 13 - 1 person to go Peoria Christian from 11 to 1

Sep 20 - 1 person to go to Limestone High School

* Three more schools want to participate, but we don't have dates yet.

The state League (LWVIL) encourages local Leagues to do mock elections in the schools, but that depends on volunteers to run the election.

* Note that a civics curriculum has come back to schools in Illinois with a push from LWVIL.

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER PEORIA ASKS: DOES PUBLIC OR PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF THE WATER COMPANY OFFER GREATER BENEFIT TO THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL ILLINOIS?

A brief timeline of the key dates for the City of Peoria's opportunity to purchase the private water system:

- The 1889 franchise agreement allows the City of Peoria the option to consider buying the water system every five years. The next time that opportunity arises is May 2019; the city must provide notice of its intent to purchase six months prior to that date.
- In 2013, the last time the purchase option was considered, the City Council voted 8-3 to decline pursuing a full appraisal. We believe the Council has voted only once to get an appraisal. That concluded in 2005 with the Council declining to complete the purchase of the water system.

One problem regarding a potential purchase is the **lack of transparency** of financial data from the water company. That makes it difficult, without a full city-authorized appraisal, to determine an appropriate value of the system.

How that appraisal is conducted is critical in how the system is valued. The 2005 appraisal included a hybrid of values of both a GOU (government owned utility) and an IOU (investor owned utility) that inflated the value beyond what the City Council believed it could afford.

There has been little opportunity for the public to participate in the process. In 2013, the city offered no public discussion or debate on this issue, other than a few brief Council sessions.

The LWV study committee has collected information in the following areas:

- Water quality and the water supply
- Maintenance of the water system
- Water rates
- Economic development and viability of the region
- Public Health
- Conservation

The LWV will hold a public meeting for input and suggestions on Thursday, September 29 at 6 pm at the Peoria North Branch Library. Please visit our website www.lwvgrp.org look in Current Issues/Topics and Public Ownership of the Peoria Water System for information related to this study.

We invite League members and the public to participate on the committee and at the meetings.

Did you know...

- Peoria water consumers pay twice the national average for residential water usage and twice as much as East Peorians pay for water, even though much of the water comes from the same source.
- 85 percent of water consumers in the nation are served by public water systems, including many communities – Morton, Washington, Peoria Heights, etc, -- around Peoria.
- Under public ownership, excess revenue paid to shareholders of the private operator, revenue paid to subsidiaries of the public operator, and taxes funneled to federal and state governments and local bodies, that money could be retained by the City of Peoria to repair streets, hire police officers, stabilize rates or invest in a myriad of projects important to Peorians.

- Public ownership could be used as an economic development and land-use planning tool. Private water system owners do not cooperate in local economic development efforts.
- Water is the reason Peoria is located along the Illinois River and water remains our most important natural resource. That natural resource is currently controlled by a private out-of-state corporation, not the public.
- To date, the public has had little input in whether the water system should be owned by a public or private entity. We would encourage a full public information campaign and a public discussion about the future ownership of the water system.

Running for Elected Office - Tips for a Successful Campaign

Want to run but don't know how? Ever thought, "I could do a better job!"? Get your start in politics now!

Classes at ICC North will tell all. They take place from 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm on Mondays, from October 3 - October 17. It costs \$45, but it's worth it.

Six accomplished politicians who've won and lost on the ballot will explain the campaign process from start to finish. Topics will include:

- * Designing and implementing an effective Campaign Plan
- * Budgeting for the real cost of campaigning
- * Deadlines for petitions and other essential documents
- * How to identify District boundaries and potential voters
- * Communicating your message to voters
- * How can friends and family help with your campaign
- * How to respond to negative/attack ads
- * What materials are essential for running a successful campaign

Two local politicians will present at each class: They are Rick Cloyd, Ernestine Jackson, Beth Jensen, Allen Mayer, Gary Stella, and Gale Thetford. They have served and campaigned for themselves and for others. Each class moderator - Matt Jones, Rick Cloyd, or Pat Landes - will also offer campaign experience.

- * A journalist from the Peoria Journal Star will give tips on dealing with the media at one class.

In April, local voters will decide who will fill many municipal, school board, ICC board, and township seats. Will your name be on the ballot?

The classes are co-sponsored by ICC, the League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria and NAACP Peoria Branch.

Sign up for classes at <http://cce.icc.edu/acp/>

COMING SOON: CANDIDATE FORUMS

The League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria will host three candidate forums for contested local races and encourages voters to attend and ask questions:

Tazewell County Candidate Forums:

- Tazewell Auditor: Shelly Hranka and Tom Shrier
- Tazewell County Board # 1 for 4 yr term: Kim Joesting, Nancy Proehl, Darrell Meisinger, Susan Sundell, Joseph Wolfe.
- Tazewell County Board # 1 for 2 yr term: Jay Hall and Gary Sciortino.

The forum takes place at **6 p.m. on Tuesday, Sep 27** in the Justice Center Community room in Pekin, IL
Pat Landes is Moderator

Tazewell County Board #3: Michael Godar, D. Michael Doolan, Mary Holford, Michael Harris, and Russ Crawford.

This forum takes place at **5:45 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 4**, at the Washington 5 Points Library, Washington IL
Gary Stella is Moderator

Peoria County Candidate Forum:

- 10th Judicial Circuit: Jodi Hoos and Tim Cusack
- Peoria County Board District 11: Gregory Adamson and Laurie Covington
- Peoria County Auditor: Carol Van Winkle and Alan Paredes
- Peoria County Coroner: Johnna Ingersoll and Jamie Harwood

This forum takes place at **10:15 am on Saturday Sept 24** at the Peoria North Library, 3001 W. Grand Parkway, Peoria, IL (Behind Menards off Allen Road).

These forums are free and open to the public. All are encouraged to participate.

SELMA: THE BRIDGE TO THE BALLOT

League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria and NAACP Peoria will host a special screening of the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) documentary *Selma: The Bridge to the Ballot*, the true story of the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery voting rights march.

The film will be screened at **1pm on Saturday, Sept. 10** at Lincoln Branch Library 1312 W. Lincoln Ave. Peoria 61605.

“You will see in the movie how the teachers and students 50 years ago made a difference,” said Helen King, NAACP co-chair of "Selma" film screening. "We should remember the sacrifices made to be able to vote. Everyone needs to vote. We can change things.”

Narrated by Academy Award-winning actress Octavia Spencer, the documentary by the SPLC’s Teaching Tolerance project tells an important story not touched on by the Hollywood feature – the true story of the forgotten heroes of the fight for voting rights, the courageous students and teachers in Selma, Alabama, who stood up against injustice despite facing intimidation, violence and arrest.

By organizing and marching bravely, these activists achieved one of the most significant victories of the civil rights era – passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The film is a powerful reminder that each person has

the ability to bring about social change.

Despite this victory, only about six in 10 eligible citizens exercised their right to vote in the 2012 presidential election. That means approximately 90 million voters did not cast ballots. Voter turnout dropped to a 72-year low in 2014.

A key to increasing voter turnout is encouraging young people to vote. Research shows that when young people vote, they are more likely to vote later in life – helping to ensure a new generation of active and engaged voters.

Voter Service, September

We have several interesting and exciting activities coming up. We will be looking for helpers at each of them.

Mock elections for 9 area high schools will happen the first 2 weeks of Sept. They will vote electronically on 3 national races. The committee wants **your** help.

LWVGP will be conducting three candidate forums, one in Peoria and two in Tazewell County. We will need timers, question gatherers and question screeners. This is a wonderful time to start your league work. It is easy training and fun work as you meet new and great people in our community.

There are two other contested races on our ballot, the 17th and the 18th District federal seats for Congress, but we have not been able to get them on the calendar for an event. Stay tuned.

One of our good, ongoing works is registering new citizens to vote at Naturalization Ceremonies. There will be one ceremony at **11 am on Friday, Sept 16** at the Peoria Public Library Downtown. I have a list of registrars that I contact, but I am happy to add new registrars' names to our list for this fun job. We have five ceremonies each year. Join us!

-- Mary Jane Crowell

OBSERVER REPORT: Peoria City/County Board of Health, August 15, 2016.

The following took place:

1. Long discussion introduced by Board President Joyce Harant regarding violence in our community and whether the Peoria Health Department can do anything to combat it.
2. Proposal to reconfigure the space that Environmental Health unit occupies in the building. Plans have been drawn up. The Board of Health voted to spend \$300,000 to do this.
3. There will be extensive work by the City on Sheridan Rd. It will be closed from McClure to Nebraska cutting off the entrances to the Health Dept. for a long time. During this closure Ellis will become a thru street running right thru the Health Dept. parking lot with a bus stop in the parking lot.

Elliott Murray, Observer

OBSERVER REPORT: Peoria Housing Authority (PHA), August 22, 2016. The commission meets on the 4th Monday at 4:30 pm usually at the Office on Richard Pryor Blvd. The Board has 7 commissioners appointed by the Mayor. Five of the seven members were present for the August meeting.

- The Master Development Agreement for Phase 1 of the Taft Redevelopment work will be worked on Wed. 8/24/16.) "It is moving along well." The Board is disappointed that the media has stopped attending and reporting on the work being done here.
- The Journal Star article, "The Sky is Falling" article in the Journal Star (8/16/16) was discussed and PHA's version of the incident was shared with the Board. In fact that resident's report of the incident was attended in the 3 hours after the report. The resident has been moved to another unit as it requires much more work to repair her unit. It was first reported last Dec. and work, contracts, etc have been in progress all this time.
- The PHA did conduct three "Night Out Against Crime" at their sites and they were well attended and enjoyed by all who did attend them.

Mary Jane Crowell, Observer

OBSERVER REPORT: Springdale Cemetery Management Authority - August 16, 2016 meeting

- Special guest volunteer Don Kettleborough discussed the door faux painting of the Zotz mausoleum that has been featured in the PJ Star. He is proposing to do door faux painting for two more mausoleums.
- The administrator reported that the Johnson family signed a contract for a 12 crypt mausoleum plus 24 graves plus out lots for landscaping. The revenue will be \$147,000 minus 30% Peoria county discount.
- The Prospect Road entrance project continues to move forward. Peoria Historic Preservation Commission issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project on July 27th. Project bids are being sent out. Target construction timeline is to start in late fall. Bids will be due on Sept 7th.
- Marketing:
 - new arrangement with the Prairie Folklore Theatre group for their performances at Springdale during the first two weekends in October. Laura Ellis will be promoting this year. Recent years saw minimal promotion.
 - partnered with the SHPF to contract with ALPHAMEDIA radio stations for a one year program titled "Know the Pros". Springdale will have category exclusivity on six area radio station websites as well as a schedule of live Promotional announcements for one year
- Financials: nothing unusual noted.
- Monument restoration: no details to report.
- Foundation report: At their last meeting they discussed if the foundation has authority to relocate markers. No conclusion was reached.
- Public toilets: Director not in favor of reconfiguring restroom in office to open to public. Too risky. Options for portable pots presented. No conclusion.

Rick Fox, Observer

OBSERVER REPORT: Peoria Election Commission - August 9, 2016 Annual Organizational meeting

- Chief Judge Kouri introduced his new appointment to the commission, Mark Ketterer. JoAnn Thomas is going off the commission.
- Officers were elected: David Collins, chair; Matt Bartolo, vice-chair; LaColis Reed, treasurer; Camille Gibson, secretary.
- An intern worked on an election judge tutorial video which staff was excited about.
- The Election Commission will move to the Brandywine location after the Nov. election.
- Their 2017 budget will need to be modified if citywide Primary is necessary (about \$30,000 cost for the primary.) Budget included a \$10 increase for election judges.
- They discussed the federal cumulative voting consent decree as it relates to the At-Large vacant seat(s) in the April 2017 election. There is one open At-large seat and there may be one or two more openings. (The consent decree was based on five seats open for election. But the Spring election is the district council election cycle. The question was how many candidates in the multiple scenarios until the Primary is necessary. The city had hired an attorney to work on a solution. (One more than twice the number of open seats may be the threshold, but that would not allow candidates the ability to benefit from cumulative voting. So, with one open seat, people would have one vote. Tom Bride had discussed this with retired professor Aspin from Bradley who has studied Peoria's past At-Large elections.
- The Commission passed a resolution thanking JoAnn Thomas' service to the commission and voters.
- Next meeting Friday, Sept 9 at 2pm.

-Cheryl Budzinski, Observer

Special Peoria Reads book "Dream Land" by Sam Quinones is about America's opiate epidemic. Presenters said it is Peoria's epidemic also. I saw several League members at the two events that I attended (7/25 and 8/16.) This is a very directed effort to raise awareness of the heroin addiction problem in our area and in the United States. At the end of the July 25 meeting, they told us what we, the audience, could do to make a difference: dispose of old medicines or medicines not needed any longer. The book and problem is an eye-opener. Cheryl Budzinski

September **DRINKS & DIALOGUE: Will You Die as You Wish?**

The League of Women Voters' Drinks and Dialogue meeting in September will discuss how you tell others- healthcare workers and family- your wishes about your death. Bonnie DePalma, RN Care Navigator with UnityPoint Health-Peoria, will lead the discussion about navigating complicated end of life healthcare choices.

League members and the public are invited to participate in the dialogue on **Wednesday, September 21st** from **5:30–6:30p.m.**, at the Lariat Steakhouse, 2322 W. Glen Ave., Peoria, Illinois. League member Ron Budzinski, will facilitate the dialogue.

We will all face an end to our life. But will we have prepared others for our end of life directives? There are many questions:

- Do you know the difference between an "End of Life Directive," "Healthcare Power of Attorney," and a Will? Can't the Will suffice?
- How do you talk to your loved ones about your directives?
- How is a DNR - Do Not Resuscitate - enforced?
- What is the difference between a DNR and a POLST, or a Will and Living Will?
- What if a relative objects to the DNR?
- What happens if there is no end of life directive? Is the outcome different at "faith-based" facilities? Does Sarah Palin's 2009 "death panel" or "death squad" get involved?
- How can one sign up for Palliative care - a specialty that focuses on relieving the symptoms, pain, and stress of serious illness and is widely available?

Knowledge of providing your end of life directives is in support of the National LWV position to have efficient and economical delivery of healthcare for all United States citizens.

There is no cost to participate. Refreshments are available at the Lariat bar for purchase.

Drinks & Dialogue is offered on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, starting at 5:30 p.m. and ending promptly at 6:30 p.m., at a local area restaurant, with local, state and national topics relating to approved LWV positions. Please join us at Drinks & Dialogue and join the LWV in "Making Democracy Work!"

REDISTRICTING UPDATE

The fight for redrawing the IL legislative districts has failed, but we fought the good fight.

The *Peoria Journal Star* published three letters to the editor from League members in the past few weeks. Thank you to Bill Mahl, Terry Mathews and Connie Romanus. Letters have been posted to LWVGP Facebook page.

Sherry Hillman submitted an update on status of the map amendment and a copy of 'Independment Map Amendment: Our Message' to the Peoria County Farm Bureau for their August Newsletter. On August 18, Sherry, Susan Leighty and Joe Romanus volunteered at the Farm Bureau peach pickup and distributed Map Amendment information to the Farm Bureau members.

-- Connie Romanus, LWVGP Co-Chair ReDistricting Committee

Membership Report

We are almost finished with the annual renewal process – 83% of our members have renewed, and the remaining still have time to send in their renewals.

The Membership Committee is now shifting focus to several other projects designed to engage and retain members, and recover former members. Watch the mail in September for your renewal packet that will include our calendar, membership guide/roster, and opportunity for you to identify ways you may want to participate more in the League experience.

One of the great things about the League is we have a place for everyone – some join to support our work here and around the country, others to become more informed on issues and policies that impact their lives and futures, and others to have that unique League hands-on-experience to safeguard democracy, leading to civic improvement.

If you've lost your renewal form, you may renew by going online to lwgvp.org and using PayPal to renew. Or, you can send a check **payable to LWVGP** to our Treasurer: Dick Williams, 5802 W. Woodbridge Pl., Peoria, IL 61615. Regular dues are \$62 for individual or \$93 for 2 people in a household.

-- Pat Landes

Thank you for your support

Since 100% of a regular dues' payment goes to the LWVIL and LWVUS, we need to raise money through fundraisers and donations to pay for our operating expenses. At this time we would like to acknowledge those members that selected the Defenders of Democracy membership category as a way to donate to LWVGP. Thank you for your additional support!

▪ **Carrie Chapman Catt members:**

- **Carol & Allan Hedeman**
- **Elliott Murray**
- **Lisa Uphoff**

▪ Susan B. Anthony members:

- Shirley Belke (Life Member)
- Joyce Blumenshine & David Trachtenbarg
- Jerry Brady
- Cheryl & Ron Budzinski
- Nancy Clemmer (Life Member)
- Katherine Coyle
- Farrell Davies
- Jan & Emil Deissler
- Tracy & Rick Fox
- Sherry Hillman
- Dave Koehler & Nora Sullivan
- Sue Ann Kortkamp
- Pat Landes
- Kathleen Leson
- Larry & Terry Matthews
- Michael McCuskey
- Mary McDade
- Roberta Parks
- Irene Pritzker
- Kathie Raiborn
- Debbie Ritschel
- Carolyn Shepherd
- Sandy Stemler
- Connie Torrey-Romanus
- Sonni & Dick Williams



League of Women Voters
of Greater Peoria

623 W. Stratford, Peoria, IL 61614

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

ON THE WEB:

www.lwvgp.org

IMPORTANT DATES

Saturday, Sept. 10. 1 pm., *Selma, The Bridge to the Ballot*, Lincoln Branch Library, 1312 W. Lincoln Ave., Peoria, IL

Friday, Sept. 16, 11am. Register new citizens to vote at Naturalization Ceremony - downtown Peoria Library.

Wednesday, Sept. 21, 5:30 – 6:30 pm. Drinks & Dialogue, Will You Die as You Wish?
Lariat Steakhouse, 2322 W. Glen, Peoria, IL .

Saturday, Sept. 24, 10:15 am. Peoria County Candidate Forum,
Peoria Public Library North Branch, 3001 W. Grand Parkway, Peoria, IL (Behind Menards, off Allen Road).

Tuesday, Sept. 27, 6 pm. Tazewell County Candidate Forum, Justice Center Community Room, Pekin, IL.

Mondays, Oct 3, 10, 17 from 6:30-8:30pm Running for Office classes at ICC North, signup at: cce.icc.edu/acp/

Tuesday, Oct. 4, 5:45 pm, **Tazewell County Candidate Forum**, Five Points Library, Washington, IL.

Thursday, Oct. 6, 6pm **General Meeting. Ballot Referendums**
Advanced Medical Transport (AMT) 1718 N Sterling Ave, Peoria, IL. 61604

Thursday, Sept. 29, 6pm Public Meeting on Public/Private Ownership of Water System
(special meeting of League study committee) Peoria Public Library, North Branch.

Sept. 29 – Nov. 7. Early voting (locations/dates are advertised by election authorities).

Oct. 12 –Nov. 8. Grace Period Voting – you can register and vote, requires photo ID.