



THE VOTER

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March 2017

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IMPORTANT DATES

Thurs. March 2, at 6pm
General Meeting,
Alternative Election
Systems.

Wed March 15, 5:30 pm.
Drinks & Dialogue,
Charter Schools

Tues. March 28, 4:30pm
Environmental
Discussion Group

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Kudos to our candidate forum coordinators Connie Romanus, Terry Matthews, and Mary Jane Crowell. Thank you Moderators: Terry Bibo Knight, Sonni Williams, and Tanya Koonce. Thanks to the timers, greeters, collectors for their work. And, thanks to Elaine Hopkins who tirelessly does our Voter newsletter and media releases. Thanks to Sharon Maule for our electronic reminders and newsletter. We have received many complements on these primary election forums. We have had big attendance - people are paying attention to the election.

We have several Candidate Forums scheduled for the April election: **Peoria Heights** on March 14; **Dunlap School Board** on March 16; **ICC Board** on March 30; and **Peoria Dist 5 & At-Large** on April 1.

Leaguers have completed several of our Legislative Interviews and have more in the works. It is really interesting talking "face-to-face" with our state legislators and hearing their responses to our League positions.

Our consensus meeting for the Water Ownership Study was fairly straightforward. The wording of the position is being worked on by the committee. That draft position then goes to our Board who may approve or make revisions. The position will be included in our April newsletter so that it goes to membership for approval at our May annual meeting.

It has been interesting to hear the positions of city council candidates at our forums on water ownership and the due diligence next steps.

Please mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting on **Thursday May 4 at 6pm at Schnucks on University (the Community Room.)** We elect officers and directors; vote on the new water position; approve the recommended calendar for 2017-18; decide whether a study will be done; adopt the budget; discuss two "action" items; and enjoy refreshments. Please include this event on your calendar.

Drinks & Dialogue has continued to grow in attendance and discussion. Thanks to presenters Nora Sullivan and Terry Matthews for their insight into the Peoria Rally to Support the Women's March and the Women's March in Washington DC. The energy that is being focused on the many issues enumerated in the march and rally will hopefully make a difference. See [Facebook.com/Peoria-rallies](https://www.facebook.com/Peoria-rallies)

Sadly, one of our most energetic Leaguers is moving and has reassigned her responsibilities. Pat Landes will move to the Little Rock area to live near her daughter. We wish her the absolute best. In her short time at our League and as Membership Chair, Pat and committee has been responsible for doubling our membership. Pat added so much to our Board of Directors meetings and efforts. She is incredibly talented in many areas. Many thanks from me and from our Board for her exceptional contributions to LWV of Greater Peoria and LWVIL.

--Cheryl Budzinski, president

March 28th Environmental Discussion Group

Are you interested in League Environmental issues? Do you have ideas for Earth Day?

Meet with other members on **Tuesday, March 28th, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the Panera Bread located off North Knoxville Ave.**, at 1101 W. Bird Ave. for discussion and making plans for April Earth Day or Earth Week. For more information phone Joyce Blumenshine at 309-688-0950.

REPORT: Candidate Forum in Washington, IL

About 150 people (!) attended the Washington, IL candidate forum. Both mayor and all four aldermen candidates participated. One highway commissioner did not and the other gave an opening statement. This forum was broadcast live.

Thanks to LWV volunteers: Barb Appleby, Mary Jane Crowell, Cynthia Hsieh, Connie Romanus, Donna Uphoff, Lisa Uphoff, and moderator Sonni Williams.

-- Terry Matthews, Coordinator

REPORT: Candidate Forum in Peoria, IL Feb. 23

Our last forum for contested Primary Election candidates was a great success.

On Thursday evening, Feb. 23 we had a great audience, great questions, a lively moderator as Tanya Koonce led the sessions, first our six at-large candidates and then the three District 4 candidates.

We now would look for a better than average turnout on election day and then anticipate some forums for contested races before the April 4 election. Thank you to our many volunteers- Mary Ardapple, Irene Pritzker, Bill Semens, Peter Kobak, Lori Hanson, Connie Romanus, and Cheryl Budzinski.

We always welcome new members and welcome volunteers to help with the forums.

-- Mary Jane Crowell, Coordinator

REPORT: Candidate Forum in Peoria, IL Feb. 4

The LWV held a well-attended forum for Peoria Mayoral candidates and Peoria Township Supervisor candidates on February 4 at the Peoria Public Library North Branch. Terri Bibo Knight was our Moderator and fielded questions to our candidates.

Other League volunteers for this event were Pat Landes, Cheryl Budzinski, Marge Semmens, Bill Semmens, Dick Williams, Pat Barton and Megan Pulley.

Attendance was approximately 127 people. There was news coverage by the three local television stations, as well as the Peoria Journal Star. My thanks to everyone who helped make this a successful event.

-- Connie Torrey-Romanus, Coordinator

LWVGP Opportunity for Input and Participation

As we approach a new year in the LWVGP, we need your help in planning and leading our programs and studies. While a number of wonderful ideas have been submitted, we continue to search for additional meaningful topics that will meet your needs as members to learn about and to participate in Making Our Democracy Work!

As you consider submitting your suggestions, please take the time to think about planning a program or leading a study. If you are a new member and want to take a leadership role, we have great experienced League members who are prepared to support you as you get started- so don't hide your light!

If you have program/study suggestions and/or questions about what is involved in any League role, please don't hesitate to contact me.

-- Farrell Davies, 696-3217 or farrelldavies2@gmail.com

March 2, 2017 event, Alternative Voting Systems That Illinois Should Evaluate

The League March meeting is a program on Alternative Voting Systems that Illinois Should Evaluate, at **6 pm. on Thursday, March 2** at the Advanced Medical Transport (AMT) Building Auditorium, 1718 N. Sterling, Peoria, IL 61604.

Edward Burmila, Assistant Professor at Bradley University's Political Science Department will explain the vote by mail system that Washington and Oregon use. They do not have polling places and election judges. All ballots are sent by mail with a candidate information booklet. All ballots are returned by mail or drop off. The questions are many about this system: do they get a high turnout, does this encourage candidates to run for office, is there much fraud?

Mr. Burmila will also talk about California's "top two" primary voting system, which is credited along with redistricting reform in changing California's budget problems, voter turnout, turnover in offices, etc. This is another reform that Illinois could evaluate.

The event is free and open to the public. Bring your friends.

Dunlap School District Candidate Forum March 16

The LWVGP is partnering with the Dunlap School District to host the Dunlap School Board Candidates' Forum on **Thursday, March 16 from 6:30-8:00 pm** at the Dunlap Valley Middle School, 13120 IL 91, Dunlap.

All four candidates running for three seats will be present, including Cheryl Bluth, Karen Disharoon, Christine Finley, and Abby Humbles. Illinois Central College Board candidates have been invited to offer brief comments about why they are running. -- Farrell Davies

Peoria Heights Candidate Forum March 14

The LWV is co-sponsoring a candidate forum with the Village of Peoria Heights Chamber of Commerce on **March 14, 2017 from 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM**. The candidates for Village Trustee (three positions) will have an opportunity to respond to questions from the audience. Terry Campion will be the Moderator for this event.

In addition, candidates for: Mayor, Village Clerk, Peoria Heights School Board, Peoria Heights Library Board, and ICC Board will be introduced but will not participate in the question and answer portion of the forum.

This event will be held in the Peoria Heights Village Hall on Glen at Prospect Avenue. Connie Torrey-Romanus is Coordinator for this forum.

Legislative Interview

On February 20, I had an opportunity to join two League members, Cheryl Budzinski and Kathy Leson, for a visit to Representative Ryan Spain's office to interview him on several issues. The State League encourages members to participate in the Legislative Interviews which is a discussion with members of the state legislature on specific issues. This process helps to strengthen communication with our legislators and establish relationships.

The topic that I chose to lead was Campaign Finance. I enjoyed meeting Rep. Spain and discussing the League's stand on Campaign Finance issues, such as nonprofits 501(c)4 and 501(c)6, term limits and the Illinois Campaign Finance Reform Task Force. Representative Spain was very welcoming and gracious with his time.

I would certainly get involved with this process again. It was interesting and rewarding to meet with a local legislator and establish communication on important topics. The State League outlined a process to use for this, as well as provide talking points on the selected issues that can be used for the meeting. Additional information on issues can be found on www.lwvil.org, Where We Stand 2015 - 2017.

-- Connie Torrey-Romanus

Greater Peoria League of Women Voters March 15, 2017 event

Do you have questions about Charter Schools? The League has a position on Charter Schools.

The Greater Peoria League of Women Voters will discuss Charter Schools at its Drinks & Dialogue event, **5:30 – 6:30 pm on Wednesday, March 15, at the Lariat Steakhouse, 2322 W. Glen Ave., Peoria.**

Leaguer Lisa Uphoff will discuss the League's position on Charter Schools and explain the relationships with public school districts and funding.

The League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria participated in the state League's Charter Schools study in 2014-15. LWVIL's position is: "The League of Women Voters of Illinois supports accountability, transparency, and equity in the use of public funds for education, including charter schools...." LWVIL believes (partial list):

- Adequate funding is needed for all public schools including charters, but the financial impact on the local school districts should be evaluated prior to granting charters
- Existing charters should be evaluated at least every 5 years
- Charters should be revoked if they repeatedly or egregiously fail in 7 specific areas
- Employees have the right to unionize
- Authority to renew or authorize exclusively should be done by the local school board
- Local voters should be able to override any ISBE decision overriding a local school board decision re: charters
- Good communication on effective innovations is needed among all public schools

Further, four concerns about charters are: financial impact on school districts; privatization and profit-making; lack of transparency; and virtual education.

League members and the public are invited to participate in the dialogue, to be facilitated by League secretary, Lisa Uphoff.

The event is free and the public is invited. Refreshments are available for purchase.

Observer Report for Peoria Election Commission

February 14, 2017

The Peoria Election Commission held their monthly board meeting on Tuesday afternoon at the Election Commission offices. They started by approving the payment of various bills and the changes to several polling places. All county polling places are now set, except for the one at Lake Camelot which has an issue with accessibility because of a bridge being out. That change will take place after the bridge repair is finished. Single polling places were merged in order to save on the cost of elections. One polling place was changed because of a poor cell phone signal required for same day registration.

Director Tom Bride also briefed the board on the progress of moving into the new location. Some mold and asbestos has been found in the building. The county engineer is working with the owners to get the needed repairs done. In the interim, the county is paying rent and utility bills, even though they cannot use the building. The election commission has no control over these payments.

The calendar for early voting in the general election was approved by the Commission. It will start on February 23, for those precincts not holding a primary and March 10, for those precincts holding a primary. Early voting will be available for one day in Brimfield, Chillicothe, Alpha Park, and Dunlap, and for one week at ICC North.

The Commission also gave the director permission to make small technical changes to precinct lines when parcels are annexed or errors are detected. The need for this was apparent after Princeville annexed two properties recently. This change would put the properties into the precinct of the town of Princeville rather than the rural precinct.

The next meeting of the Election Commission will be on March 9, 2017, combining the canvas of the primary with their regular meeting.

– Irene Pritzker

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Our League has had 41 new members join since the start of the League year 7/1/16. Of those, 63% (26) have joined since the November 2016 election.

Our League membership, like many organizations, had plateaued for a number of years at 75 members, but in response to our increased programming and voter services we have seen a strong pattern of growth in the past 2 1/2 years, doubling in size for a current membership of 152.

We welcome new members from the past month:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dorothy Noirot | <input type="checkbox"/> Molly Schumacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Laura Turner | <input type="checkbox"/> Barbara Drew Pierce |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pat & Roger McHugh | <input type="checkbox"/> Sarah Bauer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Michael Savoie | <input type="checkbox"/> Monica Reising |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brittney Ferrero | <input type="checkbox"/> Velma Walton |

Thank you for your support

Since 100% of 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!

- Eleanor Roosevelt Members:
 - Lori Hanson
 - Tracy & Rick Fox
- Carrie Chapman Catt members:
 - Carol & Allan Hedeman
 - Elliott Murray
 - Lisa Uphoff
- Susan B. Anthony members:
 - Bettsey Barhorst
 - Shirley Belke (Life Member)
 - Joyce Blumenshine & David Trachtenbarg
 - Jerry Brady
 - Cheryl & Ron Budzinski
 - Katherine Coyle
 - Nancy Clemmer (Life Member)
 - Farrell Davies
 - Jan & Emil Deissler
 - Sherry Hillman
 - Dave Koehler & Nora Sullivan
 - Sue Ann Kortkamp
 - Pat Landes
 - Kathleen Leson
 - Larry & Terry Matthews
 - Michael McCuskey
 - Roberta Parks
 - Irene Pritzker
 - Kathie Raiborn
 - Carolyn Shepherd
 - Sandy Stemler
 - Connie Torrey-Romanus
 - Sonni & Dick Williams

OBSERVER REPORT: PEORIA CITY/COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, Feb. 13, 2017: The terms of the Board members will be adjusted so that there will be four ending each year. The department will look at how repeal and replacement of the ACA will affect people in this area and how state funding or lack of funding of Public Aid will affect recipients in Peoria County. --- Elliott Murray



League of Women Voters
of Greater Peoria

623 W. Stratford, Peoria, IL 61614

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

ON THE WEB:

www.lwvqp.org

IMPORTANT DATES

Thursday, March 2, 6pm. Alternative Voting Systems that Illinois Should Evaluate, Asst Professor of Political Science at Bradley University Ed Burmila presenting.

Advanced Medical Transport (AMT) 1718 N Sterling Ave Peoria 61604

Tuesday, March 14, 6:30pm. Candidate Forum - Peoria Heights Trustees, including ICC Candidate Intros; co-sponsored with Peoria Heights Chamber of Commerce & LWVGP,

Peoria Heights Village Hall on Glen at Prospect Avenue.

Wednesday, March 15, 5:30 pm. Drinks & Dialogue, Charter Schools,

Lariat Steakhouse 2232 W. Glen, Peoria.

Thursday, March 16, 6:30-8pm. Candidate Forum - Dunlap School Board Q & A, ICC Candidate intros,

Dunlap Valley Middle School 13120 IL 91, Dunlap.

Tuesday, March 28, Environmental Discussion Group, 4:30 pm.,

Panera Bread located off North Knoxville Ave., at 1101 W. Bird Ave, Peoria.

Thursday, March 30, 3pm. ICC Candidate Forum

at East Peoria Campus Lecture/Recital Hall (127F).

Saturday, April 1, 10:30am - 12. Candidate Forum At-Large and 5th District Peoria City Council Candidates,

Peoria Public Library North Branch, 3001 W. Grand Parkway, Peoria.

Tuesday, April 4, Consolidated Election at your polling place

Thursday, April 6, 6pm. General Meeting - LISC's strategy of Building Successful Communities in Peoria- the East Bluff and South Peoria projects

Thursday, May 4, 6pm, Annual Business Meeting of LWVGP

June 9 – 11, LWVIL Convention, Hilton Garden Inn, Chicago O'Hare Airport