



THE VOTER

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IMPORTANT DATES

Thursday, Oct. 5, 6 pm
General Meeting,
Marijuana as a Revenue
Source in Illinois,
Advanced Medical
Transport auditorium,
1718 S. Sterling, Peoria..

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

A Special "First"

Think of some of the "firsts" in your life- first date, first time you drove alone, first Thanksgiving meal... Well, I had a "first" recently that I will not forget- the first time I registered a new citizen to vote!!! What a special memory! I was able to register new citizens from China, Mexico, and India- individuals among over 620 who participated in the Naturalization Ceremony held at the Peoria Civic Center on September 20.

Working alongside 22 other League volunteers, **233 new citizens were registered to vote!!** What an amazing accomplishment organized by Mary Jane Crowell, our Voter Services Committee Chair!!! I will never forget how these new citizens proudly and reverently presented me with their Naturalization papers. It was a great reminder of the precious value of the vote that is so critical to **"making democracy work"!!!**

Lifelong Learning Opportunities

The LWVGP continues to offer wonderful opportunities for lifelong learning. This month a variety of special events are planned on a broad range of topics. We hope to see you soon!

To start the month, you are invited to attend the General Meeting on Thursday, October 5 from 6:00-7:00 PM at Advanced Medical Transport to hear Tom Howard and Fadi Rustom, two attorneys with cannabis law experience, share information about **"Marijuana as a Revenue Source in Illinois."** Bring a friend, your curiosity, and your questions.

Hopefully, you've been paying attention to the special meetings and activities focused on the decision to conduct due diligence on public ownership of the Peoria water utility. This month, you have a chance to learn more by attending the showing of the **documentary FLOW** on October 11 from 6:00-8:00 PM at a Peoria Public Library. See details in this newsletter.

If you care about quality education of children, you will want to attend Drinks & Dialogue on Wednesday, October 18 from 5:30-6:30 PM at the Lariat Club to learn more about **Evidenced-based Education Funding.** Additional details in this newsletter.

If you are interested in the environment, you have an

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Presidents's Message, continued:

opportunity to learn more and to share your concerns at the **Environmental Committee morning coffee** on Monday, October 23 at 9:30 AM at Panera's in the Westlake Shopping Center. Joyce Blumenshine, Committee Chair, will be there to facilitate an informative gathering.

Sincerely,
Farrell Davies
President- LWV of Greater Peoria

PROTECT OUR CARE ILLINOIS COALITION

Peoria's North Branch Library was host to the Protect Our Care Illinois Coalition (PoCIL) meeting on September 23. Representatives from members across Illinois gathered to develop an understanding of healthcare policies and programs under threat and to discuss strategies and opportunities that lead to universal, quality, and affordable coverage.

Our League was invited to select a local member to represent the League of Women Voters of Illinois at this coalition meeting. The LWVIL works with PoCIL to protect health access gains made through the ACA and Medicaid Expansion in Illinois. LWVGP President, Farrell Davies, was privileged to attend the meeting as the LWVIL representative.

A variety of resources to examine were presented, including the following:

- Nevada's "Sprinkle Care" at <http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2017/06/30/state-single-payer-and-medicaid-buy-in-a-look-at-california-new-york-and-nevada/>
- Illinois Health Benefits for Workers with Disabilities Medicaid Buy-In Program at <https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/MedicalPrograms/hbwd/Pages/default.aspx>
- Senator Sander's Plan at <https://berniesanders.com/medicareforall/>

Achieving the LWVUS position (<http://www.lwv.org/content/health-care>) is an ongoing effort that requires each local League to get involved. Fortunately for our LWVGP, healthcare advocacy is in "good hands" with our new representative, Sandy Anton, who brings years of experience and knowledge to the table. Thank you, Sandy, for agreeing to "make democracy work" in healthcare!

Interested in the environment? Our small group environmental coffee morning is Monday, October 23 at 9:30 a.m. at Panera's off of Sterling at West Lake shopping center. Bring your topics of concern. We are also working on a local coal tar sealants flyer.

Contact Joyce Blumenshine 309-688-0950 for more information.

Election Judges Needed

Are you available ALL day (5am to at least 7:30pm) on Tuesday March 20, 2018 and want to do rewarding work that day? Be an election judge and get paid for your work .

Go online to www.peoriaelections.org for an application or in Tazewell County call 309-677-2267 for an application. To see requirements and qualifications, check out <http://www.elections.il.gov/Downloads/ElectionInformation/PDF/electionjudges.pdf>

Pay in Peoria has been \$155 if you complete mandatory training. (Training is in January or February usually.)

It is very interesting work. High school students who qualify (good grades plus permission from parents and school, etc.) are welcome also.

-- Mary Jane Crowell

FLOW DOCUMENTARY

LWVGP's Water Position Action Committee invites you and your buddies to watch the movie "For the Love of Water (FLOW)." It is a powerful documentary that focuses on the challenges of managing our most vital but dwindling resource: water.

FLOW builds a case against the privatization of our water systems by examining the failures of corporations to provide people with safe, clean, and affordable water. It highlights practical solutions to the water crisis we face today like turning our water systems over to local and public control.

Wednesday October 11 at 6pm-8pm

McKenzie Room, Peoria Public Library, North Branch, 3001 West Parkway, Peoria, 61615

Sponsored by Peoria Families Against Toxic Waste and Food & Water Watch. this is a FREE documentary screening to learn about the intersecting influences of policy, pollution, climate change, and economics on our water system and examine your personal role in our local water system.

Drinks and Dialogue: Evidenced Based Education Funding

The Greater Peoria League of Women Voters will discuss Evidenced Based Education Funding at its Drinks and Dialogue event, 5:30 – 6:30 pm on Wednesday, October 18, at the Lariat Steakhouse, 2232 W. Glen Avenue, Peoria.

The League of Women Voters of IL has long been an advocate of access to equal and equitable education for public schools. Recently, the Illinois General Assembly and the Governor passed and signed HB 1947. This bill has the potential for equity for education funding for our schools. While not perfect, this law allows the budget item for General State Aid to Education to be funded for school year 2017-2018.

Illinois public schools can operate during current year with expectation that funding will arrive in timely manner. It also reforms the formula for school aid to enable public schools to meet needs of students using an evidence based model with strategies that have been proven. The old formula asked: "What money does the state have available and how should it be allocated?" The new model asks: "What do schools need to provide their children with the education they need?"

Some concerns with this law is that schools need more money to do their job than the state is providing. More than half of the schools districts in the state have been operating at a deficit. The percentage of the state's contribution continues to dwindle. The strategies in the evidence based model will require more money to implement, thus more money to operate. Will there be enough revenue to fund spending in the current budget. Some items such as special education and transportation is not covered by General State Aid. These expenses are paid when state has enough money its checkbook.

Beth Derry, Peoria County Regional Superintendent of Education, will present an overview of the elements of the recent education bill passed by Illinois State Legislature and its impact on Peoria County schools.

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

Drinks and Dialogue is offered on the 3rd Wednesday of the month, starting at 5:30 pm and ending promptly at 6:30 pm, always at a local restaurant, to discuss local, state and national topics relating to approved LWV positions, aimed at "Making Democracy Work."

MEMBERSHIP

We are celebrating 21 new members. Thanks to everyone who is out there recruiting! Current membership is 106. It is hoped that many have just misplaced their information and they will contact me for another form or go online and pay with PayPal.

New members this month include Judge Michael and Gretchen Brandt, Faw Lane, and Linda Wilson.

-- Jan Deissler, Membership Chair

Consolidation of Governmental Units and Sharing of Major Governmental Services

Adopted by concurrence with a New York LWV position 2015 LWVIL Position

The League of Women Voters of Illinois supports the efficient and effective operation of government. Consolidation (1.) of governmental units and the sharing of major governmental services may be a way of promoting the efficient and effective operation of government. In achieving this goal, the League supports a cooperative and transparent process, in which citizens have sufficient and timely information with which to make informed decisions about proposed actions, and well-defined channels for citizen input and review. Administrative and fiscal efficiency should be included in the criteria by which local governments consider whether to consolidate or share major services.

The League supports a system of state-funded grants to local governments to study the feasibility of the consolidation of governmental units or sharing of governmental services. In determining whether to support a consolidation/shared services proposal at the local level, as a way of making government more efficient and effective, local Leagues must consider both the adequacy of the process and the likely effects of the proposal's implementation. In determining whether to support a consolidation/ shared services proposal as a way of making government more efficient and effective, local Leagues should apply the following criteria. While it is not necessary that each standard be met, the League recognizes that these standards represent potential benefits of consolidation, leading to more efficient and effective government:

- Will the proposal result in projected cost savings and a positive effect on taxes over the long term;
- Will the proposal either result in an increased quality and/or efficiency of services or, at a minimum, maintain services at existing levels;
- Will the proposal fairly address disparities in employee contracts;
- Will the proposal result in increased social and economic justice;
- Will the proposal result in a reduction in the number of governmental entities?

As used in this position, consolidation refers to both the process of consolidation and the process of dissolution.

Action: It is anticipated that Local and County Leagues will take action under this position, as well as LWVIL

THE BIG REGISTRATION ON SEPTEMBER 20

Twenty three of us registered 233 new citizens of the 691 that were sworn in as US citizens. We spoke to at least that many more who could not register then. There were reasons like: moving next week, changing name, got to get back to work, etc.

It was exciting. We weren't perfect, but we welcomed new citizens. Thank you, a big thank you for your time and cheery spirits.

-- Mary Jane Crowell

Observer Notes from Peoria Park District Meeting, August 23, 2017

Peoria Park District Board members were all in attendance. A larger room was utilized in expectation of sizable number of community members attending. Meeting start was delayed by the sign-in process and the large crowd of approximately 150-200 people waiting to be seated. The room was filled to capacity with some people standing along the walls.

The board quickly approved minutes from the August 9, 2017 regular board meeting. Finance Committee report was accepted and Accounts Payable were also approved.

New Business:

1. Peoria Zoo Memorial Funds were allocated to Zoo Improvements.
2. Public comment regarding Management of the Peoria Park District Golf System

Tim Cassidy, Board President, explained the order of discussion starting with background information from Park District staff, brief presentation by Golf Visions Management staff, questions from the Park Board members to Golf Visions Management, followed by questions from the audience. A Request for Proposals was issued early in the summer through a formal committee. Golf Visions Management was selected at the August 9 board meeting as the best candidate to be considered for a management relationship with the Peoria Park District Golf System. A printed copy of the powerpoint presentation was distributed to the audience.

Mr. Cassidy indicated that this issue was not a voting item at this point in time. It may become a voting item at the September 7, 2017 board meeting. He stated that the board meeting would continue until everyone had been heard.

Audience members asked about the availability of a microphone in order to hear better. Emily Cahill stated that a microphone wouldn't work well in a room of that size.

Emily Cahill, Executive Director of Parks and Recreation, reviewed the financial reasons for a possible change in how the Golf System was managed. Despite a 16% reduction in the park workforce, closure of Donovan Golf Course and leasing the pool at Central to PAWS, a deficit of \$230,000 is projected for the Golf System. A significant downward trend in Golf System usage was also a factor in looking for additional ways to cut operating costs.

The powerpoint presentation and handout detailed these concerns as well as information about Golf Visions Management. She stressed that the relationship under consideration with Golf Visions Management is not one of leasing the Peoria Park District Golf System to them but one of management where the Peoria Park District retains ownership and control over physical assets as well as budget approval. A savings of approximately \$250,000 over the three year contract period is projected.

Three members of the Golf Visions Management staff, including the owner, spoke and played a brief video profiling other golf systems that they currently manage. Park board members then asked questions about similarities and differences between those other golf systems and the Peoria Park District Golf System. Questions were also asked about fees, access, financial advantages and disadvantages of Golf Visions Management, projected improvements, and efforts to attract diverse members of the community.

Questions from the audience were taken starting at approximately 7:30 pm. Community members expressed concerns about how much more it costs to golf in the Peoria system compared to neighboring communities. Audience questions revolved around the issue of fees, access for pass holding golfers, proposed alternative fee structures, retention of employees, continued use of volunteers, and possible incentives for golfers.

Golf Visions staff members answered questions politely and with multiple examples of possible changes that have worked in similar systems. Some savings would result from consolidating staff positions. Current staff members are considered assets and would remain in their positions upon review. Many audience members had pending questions when the LWV observer left at 8 pm. A special meeting was convened on August 30, 2017 to continue the discussion. Observer: Monica Reising



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, Oct. 5 , 6 pm General Meeting, Marijuana As a Revenue Source for Illinois, AMT Auditorium 1718 N. Sterling, Peoria.

Wednesday, Oct. 11, 6 – 8 pm FLOW, For the Love of Water, Peoria Public Library North Branch, 3001 W. Parkway, behind Menards, off Allen Road) Peoria.

Wednesday, Oct. 18, 5:30 pm. Drinks & Dialogue, Evidence Based Education Funding, Lariat Steakhouse, 2232 W. Glen, Peoria.

Monday, Oct. 23, 9:30 am, Environmental Issues Committee, Panera at Westlake Shopping Center, off Sterling, Peoria.

CLASS CANCELLED: The class 'Running for Office' at ICC has been cancelled because of low enrollment.