



THE VOTER

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IMPORTANT DATES

Saturday, Jan. 13, 9 - 11 am, Planning Meeting, AFT office 733 SW Washington, Peoria.

Voter Service and Environmental Committee meetings
Continued on back page.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Save the Date: January 13th LWVGP Planning Breakfast

"If you're not a part of the solution, you're part of the problem." Have you heard or used this quote? Over the years, I've heard it a number of times and it never fails to make me stop and think about my role in a situation.

At this time of year, League members across the nation are called to be a "part of the solution" by engaging in the process of program planning for 2018-2020. This planning process maximizes the impact of League resources as we face multiple problems challenging our democracy. Each League meets to offer input on the League program, the education and advocacy platform to move our mission forward. The Program planning begins locally and moves ultimately to the adoption of the program of education and action at the National Convention in 2018 in Chicago, IL.

On Saturday morning, January 13, 2018, you are invited to participate in this amazing process by attending the LWVGP Planning Breakfast. At this meeting, we will work together through a guided process 1) to identify LWVUS positions that we choose to use in education and lobbying efforts and 2) to talk about how we will continue to support the Campaign for Making Democracy Work, including a focus on voting rights, improving elections, redistricting, and/or campaign finance/money in politics. For more information on the League positions and issues we will address, go to www.lwv.org. Additional information on our local planning process will be available in the January Voter.

Be a part of the solution: join your fellow League members on January 13th to impact the 2018-2020 League program!!!

**Time: 9:00-9:30 AM Breakfast 9:30-11:00 AM Planning
Location: Illinois Federation of Teachers Office, 733 SW Washington, Peoria**

IMPORTANT NOTE!!! Learn and share how you can be "a part of the solution" every day by checking us out on Face Book and on our website at www.lwvgrp.org for information about our local activities and events!!!!

--Farrell Davies, President, LWV of Greater Peoria

The eTransparency Survey

League volunteers have again reviewed the information available on 39 local government websites.

This review was structured to **identify those** providing the **best information** needed for the public to understand and **participate in the democratic process**.

There is a common expectation today that information will be readily available on the internet. When this is true of the information related to our government, it facilitates citizen involvement, and can provide confidence that our elected and appointed officials are making decisions in the public interest.

The review was not intended to be comprehensive or evaluate how well websites meet the day- to- day needs of that government's constituents.

Our Goals

- To evaluate websites in the context of a citizen's right to know about the decision making process as it impacts their lives and communities.
 - o who makes decisions (board member information)
 - o how and when the decisions will be made (board meetings, agendas, policies)
 - o how one can access information that influences those decisions (including FOIA)
 - o how public money is collected and spent (budget and audit)
- To review for transparency best practices rather than minimum standards set by state law.
- To suggest where government bodies can improve access to their information on their websites.

Overview of the Process

A group of local volunteers that have experience as elected and appointed officials, government staff, and community activists designed a survey of the information they felt should be readily available on the optimal public website. They did this with a novice member of the public in mind, perhaps someone wishing to weigh in on an issue of concern for the first time: when and where are the meetings, who is on the board/council, what will be discussed, how can I participate, how do I get more details?

After this survey was developed, a group of League members used it to evaluate the websites of many local government bodies. The completed surveys were compiled, and the raw scores across surveyors averaged. A relative weighted scoring system was developed that assigned a higher multiplier to the questions that were deemed the most important. Then based on the scores, grades were assigned.

2017 Results

This year we have chosen to not publish the list of overall scores. This is with the intention to focus on each of the four areas of electronic information that we feel are important to drive good government. In the detail report provided to each government body we provide details of the particular items of information that our surveyors had difficulty finding, and do include an overall score there. In the following pages you'll find summaries of the results by our four key areas. Those are followed by our conclusions. Additionally, we have provided a supplemental evaluation of availability of annual public meeting schedules required by state law.

Our surveyors reviewed these sites between July 19th and Sept 5th. The process is subjective based on a judgment by our surveyors on how easy it was to find each item. Our process suggests surveyors not to search for any individual item for more than a few minutes. Each surveyor spent approximately 20-30 per site reviewed.

-- Rick Fox

Drinks and Dialogue 2017 Wrap Up

At the November 15 Drinks and Dialogue, Brad McMillan, Director of Bradley University Institute for Principled Leadership in Public Service, spoke on gerrymandering and its impact on election outcomes. There was lively discussion with the audience; 29 people attended.

All were encouraged to be involved in the voting process by registering new voters, becoming involved in local politics by volunteering for candidate that represents your values, and staying current on events that affect legislative redistricting. Thanks to John Brady for planning this event.

There will be no Drink and Dialogue in December. We will resume January 17 with Mike Miller as our featured speaker.

Thank you to all who have attended Drinks and Dialogue meetings this year. Our Committee appreciates your support and feedback you have given on topics you would like to have presented.

Happy Holidays!

-- Connie Romanus, John Brady, Mary Ellen Brady, and Molly Schumacher

The Environmental Issues Group will meet **Wednesday, December 6th**, 9:30 a.m. at Panera's off of Sterling, Peoria. We are continuing with a review of local coal tar sealant issues and plans for a program on this topic in 2018. Bring your environmental issues and questions!

Join in a relaxed discussion with whatever beverage or treat you like at Panera's. Meetings last under an hour. Just drop-in and give this group a try! For more information contact Joyce Blumenshine at 309-688-0950.

Peoria City/County Landfill Committee Observer Report: Our publicly owned municipal waste landfill committee is comprised of appointed members from Peoria City Council and the Peoria County Board and a citizen member appointed by each of those governmental entities. The committee meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 3 p.m. in room 404 at Peoria City Hall. Landfill Committee agendas and minutes are posted on the City website under Solid Waste Committee <http://www.peoriagov.org/boards-commissions/> The committee will not be having a December meeting and the next meeting is January 17th, 2018.

At the November 15th meeting, citizen representative Rick Fox chaired the meeting in the absence of Chair Steve Morris. During the Foth Engineering report and review of special wastes going into the landfill for the previous month, clarification was made that MGP (Manufactured Gas Plant) waste accepted at the landfill for disposal was from contaminated soil found regarding work on a perimeter fence. This waste was not actual MGP manufacture residuals, which are extremely toxic and go to hazardous waste landfills.

The Landfill Committee will take the official vote on the new budget in January. Finances are looking improved and the Committee is proceeding with plans to reserve any excess funds from the year for capital projects that are greatly needed. Peoria Disposal Company reported on completion of construction for a concrete pad which will be part of the new citizen convenience center which will be built when PDC takes over landfill operations.

PDC has until June, 2019 to begin construction of the new Landfill #3, which they won via a bidding and selection process against Waste Management in 2009. Some construction had to be done before this year end to meet timelines for the Illinois EPA approval of the new Landfill #3 permit. Waste Management operates Landfill #2, which is now estimated to be filled and in closure in 2021-22.

- Joyce Blumenshine, Observer

Voter Service Report

Election 2018 is soon to get going! So we must prepare to get going! Our Voter Service committee had a good meeting in November and we are planning to meet on our regular day – 2nd Thursday – December 14 at 3:30 pm. We would welcome any new members who would be interested in working with us. Our work before the March primary will include organizing and implementing forums for contested races in the tri-county area and working with BallotReady.org to input candidate information so our citizens can access that as they consider the candidates they will have to vote for when they go to the polls. The LWV Ed Fund has partnered with them to host an online voter guide for the March 20 primary. This site will be accessible through lwvill.org. These activities will require some extra people power! We are looking forward to an exciting year!

-- Mary Jane Crowell, Chairperson

Membership Report

We currently have 119 members. Three of those are life members and thirty-seven have joined at the Defenders of Democracy level. We continue to collect dues from former members, so we expect the membership to grow.

We have had a membership table at all events of the League. The President or presiding member makes an announcement that we are available for new or renewable memberships. If you receive The Voter and have not paid your dues, please do so as soon as possible. If you have a friend who you think would enjoy the League Activities, let me know and I'll mail information or refer them to our website for information. **And** – a League membership would make a great Holiday Gift!

-- Jan Deissler, Chairperson

Thank you to the following for being Defenders of Democracy!

Susan B. Anthony

- Bettsey Barhorst
- Joyce Blumenshine and David Trachtenberg
- Ron and Cheryl Budzinski
- Katherine Coyle
- Farrell Davies
- Jan and Emil Deissler
- Rick and Tracy Fox
- Jeanette Gruber
- Joyce Harant
- Mary and Al Harkrader
- Carol and Al Hedeman
- Raymond Keithley
- Judge Michael McCuskey
- Terry and Larry Matthews
- Linda and Gary Millen
- Steve Sonnemaker
- Irene Pritzker
- Connie Torrey-Romanus
- Kathie Raiborn
- Sid Ruckreigel
- Nancy Schweitzer
- Carolyn Shepherd
- Sandra Stemler
- Gale Thetford
- Jo Ann & Jim Thomas
- Lisa Uphoff
- Rob Parks(37)

Carrie Chapman Catt: Elliott Murray

LIKE US

During the holiday season, we often talk about the importance of sharing. With that in mind, there are some quick and easy things you can do to help share the great things LWVGP is doing with your family and friends.

The first thing you can do is to Like our Facebook page
https://www.facebook.com/lwvpeoria/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel.

After you do this, you will be able to see posts from our page in your news feed.

When you see a post from our page, you can like it (give it the thumbs up), share it, or comment on it. Those actions tell Facebook that the post is resonating with people and they should show it to more users, and your Facebook friends can also more easily see the post.

When you see events on our Facebook page, such as our general meetings, or Drinks & Dialogue, you can mark yourself as Interested or Going. Similar to liking or sharing posts, this allows your friends to see the LWVGP events that are going on so they can be informed about the great things we are doing in the community.

We want to reach more people and maximize our impact. This upcoming year, let's spread the news about our good work by sharing!

Cheryl Budzinski (309)253-9594





League of Women Voters
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

ON THE WEB:

www.lwvqp.org

IMPORTANT DATES

Saturday, Jan. 13, 2018, 9 am, General Meeting, Planning, AFT Office 733 SW Washington, Peoria.

Thursday, Dec. 6, 9:30 am. Environmental Issues Committee, Panera at Westlake Shopping Center, off Sterling, Peoria.

Thursday, Dec. 14, 3:30 pm. Voter Service Committee, call Mary Jane Crowell, 309-674-5313.

Wednesday, Dec. 20. Applications begin for Voting by Mail, in person or on the Peoria Election Commission website www.Peoriaelections.org

February 8, 2018. Early voting begins in the Election Commission Office, 542 SW Adams, Peoria, IL 61602

February 21, 2018. Grace period registration and voting begins.

March 20, 2018. General Primary Election.

June 28 – July 1. National LWV Convention in Chicago, IL