

President's Message

Thanks to departing board members

Over the past year, I hope you enjoyed the Meet Your Board Members section of our newsletter. I have learned some fascinating things about the life stories of my colleagues on the Board.

While it's always a pleasure to work with smart people, it is a special privilege to see intelligence applied for progress. I appreciate and respect our Board members. Two departing members of the Board, Sandy Stemler and Tim Howard, should be highlighted.

Sandy has served as our secretary for a number of years and done that work with a remarkable level of precision and diligence. I first got to know Sandy when she was an elementary teacher at the school my daughters attended. Only recently I learned she is also a master gardener who has won awards for her gardens and landscaping. To say she is multitalented is an understatement.

As an attorney, Tim rendered invaluable legal assistance when LWVGP converted from 501(c)(4) to 501(c)(3) status. That was a complicated transition and Tim worked long and hard to make it happen smoothly. The most interesting thing I learned about Tim is that he was a linebacker for the Princeton University football team during his college years. That sort of combination of intellectual prowess and athletic skill is beyond impressive.

When you have the opportunity, please express your thanks to Sandy and Tim for their dedicated service to our organization and to our community. And please tune in for our May 19 Annual Meeting as new talents join the Board.

——— Terry Kohlbus, LWVGP president

Important Dates:

4 p.m. Mon., May 9: LWVGP Executive Board

6 p.m. Thurs., May 19: Annual Meeting (in lieu of Drinks & Dialogue this month)

7-8 p.m. Thurs., June 9: Virtual Observer Training

See Voter Services for multiple candidate forums coming up soon. We'd love to see you!

Proposed 2022-2023 Local Program

Summer Social - 5-7 p.m. July 20, Oliver's Pizza

Drinks & Dialogue - The plan is to schedule a D&D event on the third Wednesday of each month.

Annual Dinner - Our annual dinners in 2020 and 2021 were cancelled due to COVID. Our 2022 dinner is planned for August, September, or October. A specific date will be announced as soon as possible.

Member Program Planning Meeting — Sat., January 21, 2023

Annual Meeting of LWVGP Members — May 18, 2023

Areas of Focus:

Climate change policies of local government

Investor-owned public water systems

Transparency and local government

Candidate Forums

External and Internal Communications

Study Issue

Does the township form of government promote the most cost-effective and efficient delivery of services to the citizens of the City of Peoria, or are there better ways to provide these services?

LWVGP NOMINATING COMMITTEE SLATE OF OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

2022-2023

PRESIDENT: Terry Kohlbus 2021-2023

1ST VP: Connie Romanus 2023-2025 President-Elect

2ND VP: Cheryl Budzinski 2022-2023

TREASURER: Sean Koors 2021-2023

SECRETARY: Jim Runyon* 2022-2024

DIRECTORS:

Kim Armstrong 2021-2023

Terry Bibo Knight 2021-2023 Editor Newsletter

John Brady 2021-2023 Liaison to Local Government Committee (Observers)

Cathy Molchin 2021-2023 Drinks & Dialogue

Hind Abi-akar* 2022-2024

Andy Diaz* 2022-2024

Kathleen Kelly 2022-2024 Communications Committee

Roberta Parks 2022-2024 Voter Services

Appointed Directors:

Jan Deissler 2022-2023 Membership

Kathie Raiborn 2022-2023

Sokonie Reed* 2022-2023

Couri Thomas 2022-2023 _

(* indicates new to the LWVGP Board)

2023 Nominating Committee: Shelley Epstein, Mollye Bright, and . (After the 2022-23 Board commences, that Board will identify two additional members.)

Submitted by the 2022 Nominating Committee: Chair Cheryl Budzinski, Nancy Long, Jim Runyon, Mollye Bright, and Shelley Epstein

MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS



Cathy Molchin

Cathy Molchin has been practicing law since 1988. She concentrates her practice in product liability and toxic torts. She has tried many cases to verdict, and she has a significant record at the appellate level, as well.

A native to the Peoria area, Cathy received her bachelor's degree from Eastern Illinois University, her Master's degree from Bradley University and her Juris Doctor from North Carolina Central University. In addition to her practice, she taught in the paralegal program at Illinois Central College. She has been active with Prairie State Legal Services as a volunteer attorney in their expungement program.

She has previously served as Chairperson, Pro Bono Committee of Peoria County Bar Association, Chairperson of the Young Lawyers Committee, at-large director of the Peoria County Bar Association, Chairperson of the Peoria County Law Day Committee, mock trial coordinator for area schools and Law Explorers program, mock trial judge at Bradley University and Eureka College, and Coordinator for the Cancer Society Jail & Bail.

MEMBERSHIP

Greetings from the Membership Committee! We have no additional members to report this month so our membership at this time is 136. It is not too late to have your friends and /or family join and be counted for the end of the year and through next year as well. Thank you for reaching out to others.

The Membership Committee needs your help! We are committed to having representatives from the League at every live event during the coming year – armed with forms, brochures and other membership materials. If you are available to help, please contact me via text or email at the following email address.

It's not too early to begin planning for the Membership Social. Mark your calendars NOW – for Wednesday, July 20th, 5:30 – 7 p.m., for the patio at Oliver's Pizza on Willow Knolls Road. It's a time to pay dues, socialize (network), and hear about the League's plans for the coming year. Feel free to bring guests. Again, RSVP to the email address below.

We are looking forward to a busy year. We need lots of volunteers. Thanks for all you do and don't hesitate to contact the committee if you have a question. If we don't have the answer, we know who does.

“Spring into Summer” and make Democracy work!

Jan Deissler – 635-1872 or jandeissler77@gmail.com

VOTER SERVICES

Voter Services has been very busy! We currently have five candidate forums scheduled with one more that we are working on.

Below is the list of the forums.

7 p.m. Tues., May 3: **17th Congressional District Democratic Primary Forum** Global Communications Center Room 126 on Bradley University Campus. WCBU will broadcast this forum live on 89.9 Peoria Public Radio and live stream it on their Facebook page.

10:45 a.m. Sat., May 14: **87th Illinois House Republican Primary Forum.** North Branch Library (3001 W Grand Parkway, Peoria). Also live-streamed on the League's YouTube channel.

12:15 Sat., May 14: **93rd Illinois House Republican Primary Forum.** North Branch Library (3001 W Grand Parkway, Peoria). Also live-streamed on the Leagues YouTube channel.

6 p.m. Mon., May 16: **105th Illinois House Republican Primary Forum.** Beverly Manor School (1014 School Street, Washington). Also live-streamed on the League's YouTube channel.

6 p.m. Wed., May 18: **Peoria County Sheriff Republican Primary Forum.** North Branch Library (3001 W Grand Parkway, Peoria). Also live-streamed on the Leagues YouTube channel.

We hope to have a live audience at all forums (please plan to join us for the races that are important to you) and we will livestream them on the League's newly formed YouTube channel.

You are welcome to become a subscriber to our YouTube channel. Simply go to https://youtube.com/channel/UCHjdurif6_j7aqNLLIFXzKQ and click on subscribe.

We will also be posting direct links to the various forums on Facebook and in future newsletters, but if you subscribe you can watch them all!

We had three other forums scheduled. The first was for the 37th Illinois House Republican primary. Candidates Win Stoller and Brett Nicklaus did not respond to our repeated contacts via email and phone by the deadline to sign the agreement to participate. In the Tazewell County Treasurer Republican primary, Hannah Clark and Mindy Darcy either didn't respond to repeated contacts or were not available on the date we had selected and indicated that no other dates would work. Likewise, the 17th Congressional District Republican candidates — Esther Joy King and Charles Helmick, Jr. — did not respond.

This is disappointing and bad for the voters in their areas. You can see a report about this issue at [League of Women Voters struggling to connect with candidates to set up forums | CIProud.com \(centralillinoisproud.com\)](#)

On a more positive note, many thanks to the Drinks & Dialogue committee for a wonderful program in April about voting and voter registration. Tom Bride, executive director of the Peoria County Election Commission, and John Ackerman, Tazewell County Clerk, explained early voting, vote by mail, the need for election judges, voter registration options, redistricting and much more. It was live-streamed on our Facebook page, and you can watch it there. Or you can watch it on the League's YouTube channel at [Drinks and Dialogue April 20, 2022 Voting in the June 28, 2022 primary - YouTube.](#)

———— Roberta Parks, Voter Services chair

CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE LAUNCHES

On Earth Day 2022, LWVGP put out the call for a Climate Change Committee to provide reliable information about climate change, global warming and sustainability — and help individuals/governments address these challenges.

First, the committee will determine how different units of local government are addressing climate change now:

- Who is specifically charged with addressing climate issues?
- What funds are being devoted to addressing these issues?
- How will the unit of government eliminate its dependence on fossil fuel?
- What plan is in place to specifically address these issues?

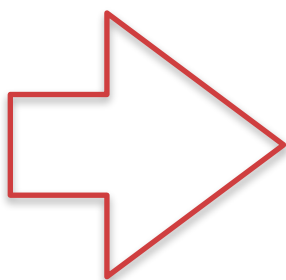
Based on the answers received, LWVGP will inform citizens, and encourage them to become active in demanding specific, meaningful, and measurable action.


Working together, we can create a realistic plan for central Illinois to address what a United Nations panel has called a “code red for humanity.”

Please join us! For more information, see climate@lwvgp.org

As Dr. Seuss said in The Lorax, “*Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot // nothing is going to get better. It’s not.*”

———— John Brady, Chairman






VOTE


IllinoisVoterGuide.org

Tuesday, June 28
Illinois General Primary Election Day

March 30	First day to apply for a vote by mail ballot.
May 19	First day to vote early at the office of the election authority. First day for the election authority to mail an official ballot to a registered voter within the United States.
June 1-28	Grace period registration and voting at election authority and polling sites.
June 12	Last day for online voter registration. Grace period registration is available at election authority and early voting sites.
June 13	First day to vote early at permanent polling places. (Vote early at the office of the election authority starting May 19.)
June 23	Last day for election authority to receive vote by mail applications.
June 28	General Primary Election Day! Polls open from 6:00 am to 7:00 pm.



Non-partisan voter information
Powered by the League of Women Voters of Illinois
Activated by YOU



PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: April 12

The Council meeting opened with the Township of Peoria Annual Meeting. LWVGP representatives, led by Janet Roth, read a statement regarding League plans for a study to examine transparency and efficiency of Peoria Township operations over the coming year.

In the regular meeting which followed, Councilors deferred a vote on approving a liquor license for Exposition Gardens to gather more information on the number of outdoor events, cut off times and comparison with other Class I licenses, such as Louisville Slugger Complex.

Video gaming fees were discussed. Interim Corporation Counsel Chrissy Kaputska reviewed city code: video gaming terminal fees set at \$500 per terminal, equally split between local business and terminal operators, as well as \$1,000 fee for terminal operators per machine. The Illinois legislature changed Video Gaming Act in December 2021 to require all fees shared equally between local business and terminal operators. The city is required to amend the current fee system. Ms. Kaputska spoke to the inconsistencies in State legislation regarding home-rule language and impact on establishing flat registration fee of \$500.

Concerns for small business were expressed, as well as how other municipalities were handling this and if there were alternative fee structures.

Councilors approved scheduled increase in City's Sanitary Sewer Lateral Fee effective May 1, on a 7-3 vote; Councilors opposed were Denis Cyr, Zach Oyler and Sid Ruckriegel

City Manager Patrick Urich explained this increase is for properties serviced by the city-owned sewer system to fund repairs, maintenance and operations. Increase will be just over \$.50 per quarter per property. This will allow the city to maintain the sewer system to meet standards in order to transfer jurisdiction to Greater Peoria Sanitary District.

Council was reminded the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) funds were used for sewer improvement projects and the yearly Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) loan application and approval.

Note: agenda, video and minutes are available at www.peoriagov.org.

————— Connie Romanus, Observer

PEORIA COUNTY BOARD: April 14

Peoria County Board held a 38-minute meeting with all present but Member Phil Salzer and three members participating via phone: Brandy Bryant, James Fennell, and Rachel Reliford.

The meeting began with proclamations to recognize: Brimfield High School Girls Basketball IHSA Class 1A State Championship, National Correctional Officers Week, National Police Week, National Work Zone Awareness Week, National County Government Month, Peoria Humane Society's fundraising efforts and support for PCAPS animal shelter

There were no Citizen's Remarks.

The Consent Agenda passed 17-0 without discussion. Most items were focused on regular financial matters. The employment agreement with County Administrator Scott Sorrell was amended following his performance review.

On the regular agenda, the board approved a special use request for an Airbnb/VRBO property in Limestone Township and suspension of the rules to extend the Declaration of Emergency due to COVID-19.

You can link to the agenda and video here: [Agenda & Video](#)

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

ELECTION COMMISSION: April 12

Peoria County Board of Election met April 12, with Commissioner Sandra Burke absent.

Director Tom Bride reported that almost all of the new voting system has been delivered. The printers had arrived, and the pollbooks were due in a few days.

Staff is working on various processes, such as how to handle provisional ballots. Training will be followed by a mock election with the judges. Tentatively, there will be an open house for the press and possibly the public. The Peoria office has been coordinating with DuPage County because they are the only other jurisdiction in Illinois using the same voting system.

During the discussion on whether to continue using pre-paid envelopes for Vote by Mail, it was decided the current supply would be used for the upcoming primary and general election.

New voting booths will not be available until July 1, due to a shortage of aluminum for the legs. Staff is looking to borrow booths from St. Louis County and/or Indiana, since they will have completed their primaries. Hopefully, the only cost will be for transportation.

At the State level, objections are still being handled. No voting bills were passed by the State Legislature this spring, but some may come up either in the veto session or next spring. Things that had been discussed include vote centers and pre-paid postage for vote by mail.

———— Irene Pritzker, Observer

PEORIA HOUSING AUTHORITY: April 4

Due to lack of quorum, the regular monthly meeting was not held. Next meeting of Board of Commissioners is scheduled for May 2, 2022. Meeting agenda available on website.

It is noted that a Special Meeting regarding approval of the CEO employment contract was held on March 31.

Agendas are posted on website: [www peoriahousing.org](http://www.peoriahousing.org).

————— Connie Romanus, Observer

GREATER PEORIA SANITARY DISTRICT: April 19

The FY 23 Annual Budget and Appropriations Public hearing had only this Observer requesting the budget and audits to be posted on their website.

It was pointed out that the audits are posted on their website under “ABOUT.” The four-page budget ordinance was posted with the April 19 agenda. Trustee president Robert Gates thanked Executive Director Brian Johnson for his deliberate process to get trustee feedback on the budget.

Financials, charge rates, investments, etc. in a longer format is reviewed monthly at the board meetings. Interest rates yield up from Treasury. Replacement taxes are up significantly. Collections for bills due over 90 days doubled last month so there are fewer overdue bills now. Collection rate was 73.75% in March. GPSD is looking at various billing solutions to get bills sent also to tenants but it is complicated and electronic billing doesn’t necessarily cost less money.

GPSD is doing some early outfall clean out work to save money before decree projects. The 13 projects that GPSD is operationally/financially responsible for in the decree involve work on the GPSD-owned system. The city’s decree projects involve city-owned system.

Position titles and base salary ranges (primarily used for new hires), include one range for collective bargaining and another for non-collective bargaining.

One sewer backup last month on Willow Knolls Road indicated wipes were clogging the lines. (In July all wipes will include warnings against flushing.)

State legislation included changing the IEPA “disadvantaged community” definition, which previously only included rural areas. The new definition includes community income levels so impoverished communities will qualify for grants.

Trustee Matt Bender chaired the meeting. Three trustees participated by video.

————— Cheryl Budzinski, Observer

PEORIA PARK DISTRICT: April 20

John Martin was presented with the Landen Memorial Volunteer Service Award for his volunteer service since 1997 in the joint association of the PPD and the Peoria Irish Fest/Erin Feis.

Presentation of the Rhodell E. Owens Distinguished Group Community Service Award was made to Kappa Alpha Psi.

Information Security Supervisor Willie Howe reported that over \$10,000 was saved by revamping of the golf telephone system.

Chief of police Todd Green commented the job posting for one full-time officer will bring the total up to four, the number of officers needed.

During public comments, a member of the Center Bluff Coalition discussed the need for a shelter at Columbia Park. Staff will follow through with that request.

The last Springdale Cemetery Management Authority meeting minutes were included in the meeting packet and will be routinely included from now on.

Trustee Kyle Bright was absent. The meeting convened at 6 p.m. and adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

————— Melanie Anderson, Observer

PEORIA SCHOOL BOARD: April 11

All Board members were present. Announcements included: upcoming SATs and PSATs and Summer School signups.

Student Showcase:

Young Authors Competition Winners K-8 entries are shared through Peoria Public Schools social media channels.

Middle School Boys Basketball City Champions A.J. Guyton presented the Championship team Roosevelt Rough Riders recognized for winning city middle school championship.

“We try to get these boys into a state of mind outside what they see on the streets” and work to get them prepared for college.

Presentations by audience Seven people spoke. Among topics: free Little League, support for schools promoting democracy, upset with mask mandates (2), upset with school name changes, support for Accelerated Reader program which has been discontinued and using Covid money on truancy solutions.

Superintendent Dr. Sharon Kherat's update:

- Summer school for Grades K-8 June 13 - July 1. High school summer school June 6 to June 24.
- State of our Schools: May 4 at 7:30. Sheridan 4 Points

- 8 weeks left to go in school.
- Will follow up on Accelerated Reader program. Dr. Kherat is a supporter.
- June and July grades 5-12 will be receiving new desks and new chairs. Some are 50-60 years old.
- Big focus on flexible seating at the primary level, which is coming in the fall.

Consent Agenda

1. Donations to Peoria Schools to date
2. Payment of bills
3. Payment for travel
4. HR report
5. License agreement with Jolt Foundation
6. Field trip approval Harrison
7. Field trip approval Washington
8. Extend the fuel purchase with Hoerr Petroleum
9. Purchase of five used buses
10. Peoria High varsity cheerleaders overnight trip
11. National model UN Club conference

Consent agenda items 5 and 9 were pulled for discussion.

Questions about the Jolt Foundation for Harm Reduction agreement included security and the professional medical office availability. Will the school on-site program be open to anyone? Are children safe? (Clients must buzz in.) Loitering? (Hasn't been an issue to date.) Hours will be 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays across the street from the Health Department.

With reimbursements, PPS would pay a little less than half for the gently-used buses, which may have wi-fi.

Both items passed unanimously.

Deliberation Agenda Expulsion agenda approved unanimously.

Board notes

- April is National Autism Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention month.
- May is Mental Health Awareness Month
- Middle school speech tournament at Glen Oak. Inspiring tournament.
- Committee meeting schedules announced.

To see the meeting, go to PPS' YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFNu3PTGzEyjDH6qV7FKSnA>

———— Becky Doubleday, Observer

SPRINGDALE CEMETERY MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY: April 19

Although the County, City, and Park District have signed the Intergovernmental Agreement, Manager Mark Matuszak's signature is required. There is still a question about when the new IGA goes into effect since the composition of the Authority Board will change at that time.

The 2022 streambank project is being designed by Farnsworth and may include a replacement bridge – the current one has a serious weight restriction.

Eighteen trees will be planted using city grant money and Rucker donation. Money for trees can be donated and would be appreciated. More trees die than are replaced annually since the trees are very old in the historic cemetery. Tree planting includes the black tray for watering and cage for each tree. A director asked if trimming the trees would be good – but that is very expensive.

Site development surveys are happening in two new areas — one by the mausoleum and another north of the Savannah (North Center.)

The Springdale Historic Preservation Foundation's President is Kate Pastucha. They are planning many activities for May 28 Memorial Day and would appreciate people "sharing" those FaceBook posts for additional participation.

Public comment included the request by a woman whose grandson's remains are in the Prairie Gardens for a standard receptacle that could hold flowers on the back of the niches. She submitted a sketch with dimensions and suggested that the cemetery could offer them for sale. (There are 41 plaques and 6 niches currently in that area.)

Meetings are in person or by phone since internet service isn't available in the building the meeting occurs. Linda Daley chaired the April meeting.

———— Cheryl Budzinski, Observer

Observer Training

LWV-trained Observers work to keep local governments accountable and community members informed. With local news sources shrinking, it's a vital and respected service to the whole area.

If you want to become an Observer, virtual training will be held from 7 to 8 p.m. Thursday, June 9. You must be a member to attend and registration closes 24 hours before the event.

For more information, call Cheryl Budzinski, 309.253.9594

[Register to attend.](#)



It's Happening in July!

You're Invited!

Summer Membership Social

Wednesday, July 20, 2022

Oliver's

3300 W Willow Knolls Drive, Peoria

5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Please come and bring prospective members to celebrate our League's successes this past year and hear about plans for the upcoming year. League members and their invited guests are welcome. RSVP names by July 15 by responding to this e-mail or by phone to Jan Deissler 309-635-1872.

RENEW RENEW RENEW!!!

Renew your League of Women Voters' membership (Due July 1)

**Your membership gives the League the political
clout to make democracy work!**

3 ways to renew, plus more membership categories

Please choose the renewal option that works best for you

- 1.** In person, at the Summer Renewal Social with check or cash.
- 2.** Online, go to www.lwvgp.org.
- 3.** Mail, use enclosed form and mail a check payable to LWVGP, P. O. Box 9786. Peoria 61612-9786.

As a member you will receive electronically our newsletter, *The Voter*, and alerts on breaking action in Illinois and Washington, D.C. You will also have opportunities to:

- Connect with and strengthen our community
- Help shape the policy decisions that affect our lives
- Learn more about and foster dialog on a broad range of issues
- Help preserve our constitutional rights and liberties

The League of Women Voters, making democracy work!



**League of Women Voters
of Greater Peoria**

413 W. Lawndale Ave., Peoria, IL 61604

**League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria Board of Directors
2021-2022**

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president@lwgo.org

Connie Romanus, 1st V-P
Sean Koors, Treasurer
Tim Howard, 2nd V-P
Sandy Stemler, Secretary

Kim Armstrong John Brady Jan Deissler Kirsten Hall Tim Howard Kathleen Kelly Cathy Molchin Roberta Parks Couri Thomas Jamila Wilson

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