



**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF McLEAN COUNTY**

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New web site!
www.lwvmclean.org

LWVIL – www.lwvil.org
LWVUS – www.lwv.org



Tuesday ▪ May 25, 2010 ▪ 7:00 p.m.

McLean County Government Center
Front & East Streets, Bloomington
Use Front Street entrance

**League of Women Voters of McLean County
ANNUAL MEETING**

*Reminder –
All the items which we’ll be asked to approve
at the Annual Meeting are included
in this issue of the Voter.*

Please remember to bring it with you.

Wednesday ▪ June 2, 2010

Union League Club of Chicago
65 West Jackson Boulevard, Chicago

“Celebrating 90 Years of League”

**League of Women Voters of Illinois
State of the State Luncheon**

Keynote Speaker: Patrick Collins

*Chair, Illinois Reform Commission
Partner in the firm Perkins Cole
Former Federal Prosecutor
Lead Prosecutor, Trial of Gov. George Ryan*

From the desk of . . . Co-Presidents Julie Sullivan and Maureen O'Keefe

As we wind down this League year, I want to thank all Leaguers for their help and commitment to non-partisan, but political, civic involvement. Especially, I want to thank the 2009-2010 Board of Directors who have gone above and beyond to keep our League on track, on task, and thriving.

A few highlights from the past year include:

- A highly successful membership party, celebrating our League's 75th anniversary and honoring past members who contributed to our League's success;
- A history of our League's 75 years;
- Consensus on establishing a single election authority for McLean County and recommendations for improving election practices;
- Spearheading Complete Census Count activities in McLean County;
- Collecting signatures for the Fair Map Amendment petition;
- Initial planning to establish a Court Observer's program;
- A League survey to determine member's interests;
- A well-attended McLean County Clerk candidate's meeting.

This short list doesn't capture all that League has accomplished. We've also sponsored programs on topics of local, state and national interest, often in partnership with other community groups. Observers continue to monitor both councils, school boards and the County Board. League members have regularly contacted public officials to express views on vital topics. And, we've kept members and the community informed through the Voter and on our website.

Our League year isn't quite over, so I want to invite you all to the Annual Meeting on May 25 to continue the work of League by electing officers, adopting a budget, amending bylaws and establishing program positions. Your voice at the annual meeting is important. See you on May 25.

. . . Julie

Thanks to all who contributed to the outstanding success
of our League's Annual Dinner and Silent Auction event.

Frank Mackaman, our featured speaker, entertained a rapt audience
at Eastland Suites with informative and often humorous anecdotes and quotations
in his presentation on 'Some Truisms in Politics'.

And the committee responsible for coordinating this event
earned the gratitude and respect of all who attended for their dedication and hard work.

Diane Williamson, Maureen O'Keefe, Linda Stockton, Laurie Bergner
and many other League members, as well as the multitude of community businesses
and organizations which provided the wonderful group of items for the auction,
are to be congratulated.

This successful fund raising event brought in over \$2,000.00 for our League!

Observer's Report: **Bloomington City Council**

The Bloomington City Council is composed of a Mayor elected at large and nine aldermen, one per ward. Steve Stockton is Mayor.

There are nine wards of the city of Bloomington. Aldermen are:

Ward 1, Bernard Anderson; Ward 2, David Sage; Ward 3, Kevin Huetter; Ward 4, Judith Stearns; Ward 5, Jennifer McDade; Ward 6, Karen Schmidt; Ward 7, Steven Purcell; Ward 8, John Hanson; Ward 9, Jim Fruin.

Candidates for elected offices of the City of Bloomington are elected for four-year terms. City council members are elected at a consolidated municipal election and, upon qualifying, take office on the May 1 following their election.

Regular meetings of the City Council are held on the second and fourth Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. in the council chambers of the Bloomington City Hall. The council may set a special meeting to complete the unfinished business of an adjourned meeting. City Council meetings and additional work session meetings are open to the public and are handicapped accessible.

Bloomington City Code states that all reports, communications, ordinances, resolutions, contract documents, or other matters must be submitted to the Council no later than 12:00 noon on Wednesday preceding each Council meeting.

A number of citizens regularly attend City Council meetings, and when special interest items appear on the agenda attendance is usually high. Opportunity for public comment is included as well as news media questions or comments on "regular agenda" items. Bloomington residents can be active participants in council meetings and work sessions and offer suggestions to aldermen.

The city of Bloomington's website contains extensive information about City Council proceedings, including minutes, a record of motions and votes, bios of council members and a link to WJBC 2 for live broadcasts of council meetings. Go to <http://www.cityblm.org/>.

Full council packets (agenda and supporting documentation for all items) are now available on the website. Emails may be sent to all aldermen at citycouncil@cityblm.org.

Budget issues remain foremost in City Council business and concerns. The March 20, 2010 issue of the Pantagraph perhaps states its problems best: "With financial swings that ranged from a \$4 million deficit to a \$2.1 million surplus and audits that showed \$2 million in accounting mistakes, keeping track of the city's budget felt more like taking a roller coaster ride for much of 2009. While the City Council was struggling with balancing its 2009-10 budget and planning for the 2010-11 budget, the council also was trying to clean up its books for 2008-09."

The City Council has taken several additional steps this year to be more responsive to its constituency. At a Citizens Summit on November 30, 2009, invited guests, city employee and council representatives exchanged ideas and priorities were discussed. The council then held a work session to discuss the concerns of citizens. An open public meeting to discuss the 2009 -10 budget was held and town meetings with various wards are proposed. These steps indicate a willingness by city government to remain responsive to citizens.

Financial concerns of the state of Illinois and decreasing tax revenue, coupled with increased costs from every expenditure area complicate the budget process more than ever. A new fire station and the request for several new positions will add more expenses. The threat of shrinking state reimbursement also adds to revenue concerns. Asking the public library to repay a loan earlier than proposed may add some revenue.

However, the City Manager states that the budget gap for this year does not seem as daunting as last year's budget. The city "took its lumps" early in the recession and is hoping the new budget will be easier to balance. At its last meeting the council passed the proposed budget of \$144 million for fiscal 2010-2011 which begins May 1.

--Submitted by Jim Parr and Phylis VerSteegh

Help Wanted: Observers

An honored tradition of League of Women Voters of McLean County is the League Observer Corps. League observers learn about local government, become involved in the community and perform a valuable service for the League.

Observers monitor:

- Bloomington City Council
- Normal Town Council
- Unit 5 School Board
- District 87 School Board
- McLean County Board
- Heartland Community College Board meetings

Once a year, observers report to the membership in a newsletter article and bring important items to League Board for consideration, as appropriate.

The time commitment is minimal and no experience is necessary. Information packets are provided and the Observer Chair is always available to help.

For more information, please contact: Observer Chair, Judie Bey
judiebey@juno.com 309-662-1774 309-826-1774-cell

Become the eyes and ears of the League.

A meeting of current and future Observers will be held at the home of Judie Bey
Thursday, May 6th at 7:30 pm

For more information contact Judie at the sites listed above.

We would also welcome anyone interested
in being a substitute at one of our Observer locations.

Call for Nominations

The Florence Fifer Bohrer Award is presented annually to recognize outstanding civic contributions by an individual. Recipients of the Bohrer award may be League members or non-League members who have contributed significantly to the betterment of the community.

If you are interested in nominating someone for the Bohrer Award, submit a brief biography focusing on non-League community contributions and achievements, give reasons why you think the person is deserving of the Award, provide contact information for the nominee and provide contact information for yourself.

Nomination forms will soon be found on the League website
and may be sent to Co-President Maureen O'Keefe.

Our 2010 Membership Interest Survey has been completed

34% of the membership responded and the results have been tabulated. Heartfelt thanks to all who responded. It really helps in guiding the League program for the future!

Generally, most respondents said they joined because of interest in governmental issues, admiration for League process, and/or because a friend encouraged them to join.

Issues that were of interest to people ran the gamut:

Health care, Children's issues, Women's issues, Mental health, Justice options
Urban sprawl, County election commission, Education, Water supply, and
Environmental issues were all mentioned, to name a few...

We are grateful to all who volunteered for various projects. The results were dispersed to the Board and you will be contacted as the need arises. The comments were collated separately and will remain completely anonymous. They will be used by the Board to help chart our course for the coming year.

Thanks again for your input! Your participation is very important to us!!

The Publicity/Marketing Committee:

Kathy Tosh, Chair Joni Painter Carol Straka Yadira Ruiz

A big 'Thank You' from Carole and Earl Reitan...

Thanks for everyone's help with the garage/moving sale. Particular mention goes to Carol Straka, who initially organized the "stuff", dusted and washed things so they looked great and was active in sales for the three days; Mary Lynn Edwards who took on the task of organization of the Leaguers for the three days of the sale and was present every minute; and both Jane Turley and Mary Lynn for doing the big job of pricing the items before the sale started.

Of course, I cannot miss thanking all the League members and the public in general for buying the items and making the sale so successful. The proceeds were 50% for the Reitans and 50% for the League - we each came away from the sale with \$890!

Earl and Carol Reitan's new address is

Westminster Village - 2025 E. Lincoln, Apt. 1216, Bloomington, IL 61701
309-662-1925 • car@reitan.info • ear@reitan.info

Carol and Earl say: Give us a call, send an e-mail, or come see us in our new home.

League of Women Voters of McLean County
2010 Annual Meeting

Tuesday ▪ May 25th ▪ 7:00 p.m.

McLean County Government Center ▪ Front & East Streets in Bloomington

Issues of Importance to be considered at LWV Annual Meeting

2010 – 2011 Slate of Officers

The Nominating Committee would like to propose the following slate of officers for the upcoming year:

Co-President: **Phylis VerSteegh** (2 years) Vice President – Action: **Sally Rudolph**

Treasurer: **Linda Stockton** (2 years) Membership: **Becky Hines**

Publicity: **Kathy Tosh** Observers: **Judie Bey** (1 year term)

2011-2012 Nominating Committee – Chair: **Jane Turley** Members: **Gary Hoover, Carol Baker**

Submitted by Jane Turley – 2010-2011 Nominating Committee

Thank you all for your willingness to serve!

Proposed Budget 2010-2011

BUDGET CATEGORY

Beginning Balance \$ 6,702.00
General Account, Checking & Savings

Jean Sessions' Account \$ 885.00

INCOME

Dues paid @ \$60 Full;
 \$30 for Second \$ 5,500.00
 Members contributions \$ 1,040.00
 Money making projects \$ 2,500.00

Total Income \$16,627.00

LWVIL Education Fund

Current balance \$ 1,123.29
 Pending SF Grant Money \$ 1,000.00
 Zimmerman Donation \$ 500.00

Education Fund Balance \$ 2,623.29

EXPENDITURES

Membership and Kick-off Event \$ 300.00
 Hospitality \$ 200.00
 Meeting Expenses \$ 200.00
 Program Expenses/Study \$ 1,500.00
 Publicity \$ 100.00
 Insurance \$ 150.00
 Supplies \$ 250.00
 Postage \$ 500.00
 Internet site \$ 100.00
 Printing \$ 1,000.00
 Convention \$ 2,500.00
 Workshops \$ 300.00
 Voter Service \$ 200.00
 LWVIL PMP 26.40 \$ 3,000.00
 LWVUS PMP 29.80 \$ 3,500.00
 Awards/Gifts \$ 200.00
 Judicial Grant \$ 0
 Money making projects Events \$ 1,500.00
 Jean Sessions Funds – Essays prizes 0
 Observer \$ 50.00
 Carry-over General Fund 0
 Court Observer – *based on detailed
 proposal to be presented* \$ 877.00
 Auditor \$ 200.00

Total Expenditures \$16,627.00

LWV OF McLean County – PROGRAM POSITIONS

Local Program Positions Committee Recommendations, April 2010 – Gwen Pruyne, Chair

I. The local program committee recommends **the retention of all the current positions**, as follows with a wording change under Alternatives to Jail:

ALTERNATIVES TO JAIL

League endorses:

▪ **Support efforts to maintain a Drug Court Program, Mental Health Court Program, GPS electronic monitoring, and the Community Justice Committee.**

▪ **Study Victim-Offender Mediation and Day Reporting Center.**

Mental Health Court Program, GPS electronic monitoring and the Community Justice Committee were moved to bullet point one to reflect the current situation, i.e. mental health court is in progress, there is GPS monitoring and there is a Community Justice Committee.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR McLEAN COUNTY

League supports:

- A written narrative accompanied by maps;
- Development of community support;
- Preservation of natural resources and prime agricultural land;
- Enforceable land use ordinances.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT (Adopted 2005)

League supports:

Administration

- Appointment of all administrative personnel;
- Election of all policymakers

County Board

- Review of the general structure, procedures, committee structure, districts and size with a view toward greater transparency, accessibility to the public and more effective communication within the board;
- Production of a five-year strategic plan required of all county department heads, including budget provisions; presentation of these plans each year to the county board as part of the budget process for accountability purposes;
- Pursuance of intergovernmental agreements that address the issue of land annexation, including transferring road maintenance to the annexing body.

ELECTION COMMISSION (Adopted 2009)

McLean County should unify its election offices in a County Election Commission.

EMERGENCY HEALTH CARE

League supports a paramedic service for Bloomington-Normal, funded by a combination of government support and use fees. League opposes a separate taxing district or special assessment.

HOME RULE FORM OF GOVERNMENT FOR BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL (Adopted 2004)

League strongly supports provisions in the 1970 Illinois Constitution that allow certain local governments to adopt home rule and opposes any attempt to restrict this option.

JUVENILE JUSTICE/CHILD WELFARE

League supports cooperation and coordination among agencies and government officials who work with juveniles.

LIVING WAGE (Adopted 2009)

League supports a living wage for all City of Bloomington employees.

LOCAL EDUCATION

League supports:

- Broadly-based measurement of student achievement by teachers, parents and students, using both behavioral objectives and standardized tests;
- Frequent teacher evaluation by principals or department heads, with official procedures for participation by parents;
- A diverse curriculum made possible, if necessary, by an extended school day.
- Organization of districts for educational benefit to students, administrative efficiency, and economy;
- A financial basis for schools in McLean County that can provide a good education for all students;
- Merger of Districts 87 and 5.

LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH

League supports expansion of community-directed services to children, adolescents and the elderly.

PUBLIC HEALTH

League supports the following:

Financing the McLean County Health Department

- Primary support from the State of Illinois;
- Increase of the current limit on the local county tax level for the Health Department.

Hiring Practices for the Health Department

- State set minimum standards;
- Open hiring policy, including an equal opportunity statement.

Services

- Continuous evaluation of needs and monitoring of existing programs;
- High priority on services to low-income families;
- Cooperation and coordination between the Department of Public Health and mental health services.

Selection of New Board Members

- County-wide representation;
- Unlimited number of terms for members;
- Application for appointment through the County Board.

Keeping the Public Informed

- Filing of reports in the public libraries;
- Publicizing of services available;
- Publication of board meeting times.

PUBLIC RECREATION

League endorses:

- Maintain and improve recreational facilities (national standards based on population are an appropriate goal);
- Continued development of recreational programs for both large numbers of people and a wide variety;
- Cooperation among government units whenever possible.

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

League supports an integrated solid waste management strategy that encourages a regional approach to ensure maximum waste reduction, adequate disposal capacity, recycling/reuse program for the entire community.

WATER CONSERVATION

League supports:

- Government action to promote water conservation;
- Public education about the need for conservation;
- Fair rate system that encourages conservation.

II. At the May 23, 2006 Annual Meeting, the membership voted to pursue a new study on Land Use, Sprawl and Affordable Housing, as follows:

“A study of local comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances and issues regarding urban sprawl and affordable housing.

The scope will include, but shall not be limited to:

- ***The current state of affordable housing and urban growth in McLean County.***
- ***The role of government at all levels in managing land use in McLean County.***
- ***The role of the private sector in meeting housing needs and directing growth.***
- ***Innovative smart growth ideas and practices and how they could be encouraged in McLean County.”***

It is now May 2010 and the study has not been done, primarily for lack of a chair.

**The recommendation of the Local Program Positions Committee
is that this item be dropped as a study.**

However, it should be noted that, if the proposed study is dropped, the soonest it can be reconsidered will be at the 2011 Annual Meeting.

BYLAWS OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MCLEAN COUNTY

(Changes to be considered are in *Underlined Italics*)

ARTICLE IV – BOARD OF DIRECTORS

SECTION 6: Quorum.

A simple majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum.

Explanation: Change the number from 5 to a formula because the number of board members can vary.

ARTICLE V – OFFICERS

SECTION 1: Enumeration & Election of Officers

The officers of the League of Women Voters of McLean County shall be a President or Co-Presidents, *a Vice-President-Programs, a Vice-President Action*, a Secretary, and a Treasurer, who shall be elected for terms of two years by the general membership at the Annual Meetings and take office the following June 1. In addition, the outgoing President or Co-President may serve a one-year term as President Emeritus with no specified duties other than advisement to the new Board. The President (or one of the Co-Presidents), Vice President-Programs and Secretary shall be elected in odd numbered years. The Second Co-President (if any), the Vice President-Action, and Treasurer shall be elected in even numbered years.

Explanation: Changed names for consistency.

ARTICLE VIII – NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS

SECTION 3: Elections

The election shall be by secret ballot. If there is but one nominee for each office, the Secretary may be instructed to cast the ballot for every nominee. A majority vote of those qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

Explanation: If it ever happens that nominations are taken from the floor and nominees are voted on separately, it could be very contentious and the ballot needs to be secret.

ARTICLE X – NATIONAL CONVENTION, STATE CONVENTION & COUNCIL

~~(SECTION 3: State Council.~~

~~Two delegates shall represent the League of Women Voters of McLean County at State Council under provisions of the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Illinois.)~~

Explanation: State Council no longer exists.

**LWV of McLean County
MEMBERSHIP**

Welcome to our new Members –

Jane Chamberlain ◦ Betty Jones ◦ Gail Kear
Gayle Miller ◦ David Marvin ◦ Lois Soeldner

Women Nominated for YWCA Women of Distinction Award

The YWCA of McLean County has announced that twenty-four women have been nominated for this year's ***YWCA Women of Distinction Awards*** as a result of outstanding contributions to the community.

Our League is proud that four of these nominees are League members.

They are: **Madonna Courtright, the Honorable Rebecca Foley, Myra Gordon and Charline Watts.**

Congratulations!

We hope on May 27 they join the ranks of past recipients who are League members.

These include: **Dr. Laurie Bergner, Judy Buchanan, Jana Edge, Marlene Gregor, Dr. Sandra Harmon, the Honorable Lee Ann S. Hill, Janet Hood, Janet M. Hood, Ruth Ann Lipic, Judy Markowitz, Carol Reitan, Sally Rudolph, Karen Schmidt, the Honorable Elizabeth Robb, and Barbara Stuart.**

Information regarding the event is below. Please plan to attend.
The nominees will, of course, be getting together tables of family, friends and co-workers.
We will also be putting together some "League tables" to support our nominees.

Please do not send in your reservations to the YWCA at this time.
Sally Rudolph will send an email and collect names and reservations about May 1.

Thursday ▪ May 27, 2010

ISU Bone Student Center – Brown Ballroom – Normal

21st Annual Women of Distinction Awards Banquet

5:30 pm - Social Hour ♦ 6:30 pm – Dinner ♦ Awards Presentation

Keynote Speaker: Mavis Nicholson Leno

Chair, Feminist Majority's Campaign for Afghan Women and Girls

Cost: \$50 per person or \$350 for table of eight

www.ywcamclean.org



**THE LEAGUE
OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF McLEAN COUNTY**

30 Stonebrook Court Bloomington, IL 61704

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Bloomington, IL 61701
Permit No. 188

Find inside:

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-----OUR LEAGUE IN ACTION-----

This month our members have:

- Contacted Representative Dan Brady in support of HB6205, expanding access to reproductive health care
- Contacted Representative Tim Johnson in support of the federal health care bill
- Contacted Representative Dan Brady in support of HB4650, the Prisoner Census Adjustment Act
- Contacted Representative Dan Brady and Senator Bill Brady in support of campaign finance reform
- Submitted a letter to the editor promoting action for climate change to celebrate Earth Day
- Worked on the LWVIL Fair Map Amendment petition drive, collecting several hundred signatures
- Completed a Census 2010 campaign to increase census participation, working with a variety of local partners