



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

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of McLean County Bulletin
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**The official address of the
League of Women Voters
is 1918 Owens Drive
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**New web site!
www.lwvmclean.org**

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

The Voter

Vol. 76 No. 2 of McLean County October 2009

Tuesday, September 22nd • 5:30 - 8:00 pm

Annual Membership Kickoff and LWV of McLean County's 75th Anniversary Celebration!

Universal Unitarian Church
1613 E. Emerson Street, Bloomington

• • •

Join us for a fun program highlighting 75 years of McLean County League of Women Voters' history. Cameo speakers will share anecdotes highlighting our League's accomplishments and fun remembrances.

Come and enjoy appetizers and drinks with your League friends. And bring a guest who might enjoy joining our dynamic group.

The Bohrer Award will be presented to an individual recognizing their outstanding civic contributions in support of the betterment of our community.

League's 75th Anniversary History Booklets, compiled by Historian Gwen Pruyn, will be available to all members.

Reservations are due now! Contact Phylis VerSteegh
309-824-1508 -or- phylvs@hotmail.com

A Story from League History . . .

Florence Fifer Bohrer was the first President of the McLean County League. She was President of the League of Women Voters of Illinois from 1941-1945 and served on the Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

In August 2005, a bronze marker was placed in front of 909 North McLean Street in Bloomington to commemorate Florence Fifer Bohrer's contributions to the State of Illinois and to the League of Women Voters.

To erect the marker, the McLean County League raised donations and led the effort, along with the Franklin Park Association and the Illinois State Historical Society.

Many thanks to Gretchen Monti for making this marker possible.

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

Dear League Members,

Thunder and lightning, night and day, salt and pepper – some things just go together. One of the classic pairings is League and consensus. Consensus is not majority rule, but a sense of whether most members agree, disagree or have no opinion on an issue.

Through the consensus process, League examines all aspects of a selected subject and tries to reach agreement on which to base a position. The LWV's reputation for fairness rests on its practice of thorough and impartial study. Members discuss the issues; pros and cons are researched; and everyone has an opportunity to express an opinion.

After discussion, the League Board determines if consensus was reached. If it was, then a position on the issue is developed. Once the LWV has a position based on the consensus, the League moves to action in order to support that position.

On October 6, LWV McLean County members will have the opportunity to participate in consensus. The Election Study group has been studying issues related to election practices in McLean County and will present a consensus program on establishing a single election authority for McLean County. All League members are eligible to take part in deciding what our League's position will be on this issue.

League has operated through consensus for decades. It is the voice of the League and the bedrock for action. I encourage you to make your voice heard. Come to the meeting and be part of a process core to the League of Women Voters.

Julie

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

In September, League members have:

- Marched in the Labor Day parade to publicize League
- Sent an official League letter to our U.S. Senators asking them to support the United States' ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) Treaty
- Written letters to the editor in support of healthcare reform
- Sent an official League letter to Governor Quinn urging him to veto HB182, a law which would allow concealed carry of handguns into another person's home
- Joined the McLean County Justice Coordinating Council, with Carol Reitan from the League Citizens for Justice Options committee as our representative

WHAT THE HELL IS WRONG WITH ILLINOIS STATE GOVERNMENT?

Is political and ethical reform in the air?

*Hear interesting views from three knowledgeable observers
of the Illinois political system.*

Robert C. Bradley

Professor of Politics and Government Department at Illinois State University since 1982, Dr. Bradley teaches primarily law-related courses and also teaches American Government and Campaign courses.

He recently developed a course where he takes students to Washington D.C. for an intense behind-the-scenes look at how decisions are made there. His research focuses on enhancing political engagement among college students and examining the legal rights that individuals have to their genetic material. At the University Dr. Bradley is involved with the American Democracy Project and was named a

Carnegie Scholar for Political Engagement.

This past year at the invitation of WJBC-AM, a local radio station, Dr. Bradley co-hosted a live talk show from both the Democratic and Republican Nat'l Conventions.

He gives talks and workshops for Senior Professionals at ISU and many other community organizations and is now doing a regular segment at WJBC called "All Things Political".

Dr. Bradley is also the university's prelaw advisor, the Director of the Prewlaw Advisement Center, and is the university liaison for the Constitution Exam.

Dan Brady

Illinois State Representative for 88th Legislative District, since 2001, Brady was named Republican Caucus Chairman of House Republican Leadership team in 2003. He is a member of the following committees in the General Assembly: Higher Education, Drivers Education Safety, Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, Insurance, Executive and Minority Spokesperson for the Executive Committee.

Rep. Brady has been active in legislative efforts affecting insurance, families, law enforcement, emergency medical services and most recently championed legislation dealing

with identity theft and combating the production of methamphetamine, as well as drug paraphernalia legislation. He has received recognition for his efforts to build a stronger community from state and local groups. Among those are Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and the Illinois Drug Education Alliance. Eagle Forum named Brady their 'Friend of the Family' for his positive voting record on family issues. Brady received his B.A. from St. Ambrose University in Davenport, IA, and his Associates Degree from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. He was elected as McLean County Coroner in 1992 and was re-elected in 1996.

Cynthia Canary

Director of the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform (ICPR) a statewide non-partisan, education and advocacy project, Canary received her B.A. in political science from Hampshire College and did graduate work at Georgetown University. ICPR, which was established by the late Sen. Paul Simon, conducts research and advocates reforms to promote civic participation, address the role of money in politics and encourage accountability in government. ICPR was actively involved in the passage of the groundbreaking 2003 Illinois State Officials Employees Ethics Act, the 2005 Omnibus Elections Reform Act and the 2009 ban on pay to play in contracting. Under Canary's leadership, ICPR addresses a range of issues including campaign finance reform, governmental ethics, judicial independence, elections administration and media reform.

ICPR maintains an award-winning website and campaign finance database at www.ilcampaign.org

Previously, Canary was Executive Director of the LWVIL, where she helped lead the successful effort to implement the National Voter Registration Act in Illinois. She has also worked in the Public Education Division of the American Bar Association and has had experience in both state and local government. She serves on the board of Chicago Appleseed Foundation and as president of the Mikva Challenge Grant Foundation. She is a member of Justice at Stake Campaign, and the National Center for State Court's Ad Hoc Committee on Judicial Campaign Conduct. Canary also coordinates the Midwest Democracy Network, a five state collaborative devoted to enhancing governmental practices and public participation throughout the Midwest. Canary, who the Chicago Tribune describes as "the state's most vocal advocate for good government", is a nationally-known speaker and writer. She is a frequent media commentator on campaign finance, elections, ethics and judicial reform.

Tuesday ▪ October 6th ▪ 7:00 p.m. ▪ McLean County Government Center

ELECTION COMMISSION STUDY: Program and Consensus Meeting

McLean County has two election authorities:

- **City of Bloomington Board of Elections Commission (BEC)** for Bloomington only
- **County Clerk's Office (CC)** for Town of Normal and the rest of the county

If there is consensus favoring a single election authority, there are two different ways to do it – (ILCS Article 6A). The first step in both cases is to reject the law establishing BEC by a Bloomington city referendum. If no further action is taken, CC will take over all the business of BEC.

If the Bloomington referendum passes, it is also possible to establish a **County Election Commission (CEC)**. CEC requires either a vote by the County Board or the passing of an additional referendum in McLean County. If a CEC were established, our County would still have an elected County Clerk and CC would retain all of its other duties (such as taxes and records).

Consensus Question #1:

Should the law establishing the City of Bloomington Board of Elections Commission (BEC) be rejected so that McLean County, including the City of Bloomington, will from that time forward have one single election authority for all its citizens?

Consensus Question #2:

Provided the referendum rejecting the law that established BEC passes, should a McLean County Election Commission be established in lieu of the McLean County Clerk's Office (CC) becoming the election authority?

From 7:00 to 8:00 p.m., members of the Election Study Group will outline problems in Registration and Voting encountered in their 2008 Election Survey of McLean County and present recommendations to improve the system. The full report, more detailed pro and con arguments, and a list of recommendations can be accessed by contacting the Study Group Chair, Julie Prandi at jprandi@iwu.edu.

From 8:00 to 9:00 p.m., the two questions above will be discussed for League members to debate. League Consensus will be taken at the end of this second part of the meeting.

••All citizens of the community are invited••

Tuesday ▪ October 27th ▪ 7:00 p.m. ▪ ISU Bone Student Center Ballroom

HEALTH CARE: National and Local Issues

A PANEL DISCUSSION

Wendell Potter – Senior Fellow on Health Care with the Center for Media and Democracy
National Speaker – PBS, CNN, NPR – Bill Moyers Journal, The News Hour with Jim Lehrer

Shirley Drazewski – Executive Director of the Community Health Care Clinic

Roger Hunt – President and CEO of BroMenn Healthcare System

Jane Turley – Faculty, ISU Department of Health Sciences

The program will begin with a presentation by Wendell Potter, who will then join the panel for a discussion covering such topics as:

- Current state of health care in McLean County
- What the health care proposals will mean for our community.

Co-Sponsored by:

Campaign for Better Health Care

Student Health Information Management Association

Social Justice Network of Local Congregations

HEALTH CARE REFORM AND THE LEAGUE

The following article is from the LWVUS Health Care Task Force...

At-Risk Americans: The Uninsured and Underinsured *By Janis McMillen*

Data from multiple sources agree that in 2007, 47 million Americans (15.6% of the total U.S. population) lacked any kind of health insurance coverage. When these numbers are adjusted for age (excluding those 65 years and older), the uninsured percentage of the population rises to 17.9%. Moreover, it is estimated that 25 million adults under age 65 were underinsured during 2007, despite having insurance all year.

In total, 42% of *all* adults (86.7 million) were either uninsured or underinsured during 2007.

Putting a face on persons who were uninsured or underinsured during 2007 and 2008¹

- **Age:** One of three people under age 65 were uninsured for some or all of 2007 and 2008; of the total uninsured population, 60.1 million were adults (between 19 and 64 years of age)
- **Duration:** Among the underinsured/uninsured, 74.5% were uninsured for nine or more months and one-quarter were uninsured the entire 24 months
- **Employment status:** 80% of individuals who were uninsured were in working families and only 16% were not in the labor force (due to disabilities, chronic illness, or serving as family caregivers)
- **Income:** Nearly 60% were in families with incomes below the federal poverty level (FPL: \$21,200/year for a family of 4); 52% with incomes between 100 to 200% of FPL went without health insurance in 2007/2008
- **Racial and Ethnic origin:** 55% of Hispanics/Latinos, 40.3% of African Americans and 34% of other racial or ethnic minorities had no health insurance in 2007/2008, compared to 25.8% of whites. While racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to be uninsured, whites accounted for 49.8 % of the uninsured
- **Age breakdown:** The likelihood of being uninsured declines with age;

49.5% of those 19 – 24 years old	36.3% of those 25 – 44 years old
32.5% of those 45 – 54 years old	21.2% of those 55 – 64 years old

 were uninsured over this two-year time period. The 55 to 64 year-old age group consumes more health care on average than younger adults.

For all ethnic and racial groups, lower-income families and individuals were more likely to be uninsured than lower-income whites. This disparity continues even as incomes rise in all groups.

There is a marked increase in the number of adults having difficulty paying medical bills – the most visible consequence of the weakening in insurance coverage. In 2007, 41 percent of adults (72 million people) reported problems paying medical bills, faced bill collectors or were in debt for medical care, up from 34 percent or 58 million in 2005. The majority had insurance at the time these bills were incurred² – well in advance of the economic downturn.

¹ All statistics above and below are from
<http://www.familiesusa.org/resources/publications/reports/americans-at-risk-findings.html>

²The statistics in this paragraph are from
<http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Content/Publications/Testimonies/2009/Feb/Testimony-Insurance-Design-Matters-Underinsured-Trends-Health-and-Financial-Risks.aspx>

**Janis McMillen (LWVUS Board member and LWVKS)
is chair of the LWVUS Health Care Education Task Force.**

Additional articles addressing Health Care Reform will be included in upcoming issues of
The Voter of McLean County and may be found on the LWVUS website: www.lwv.org

OBSERVERS 2009-2010: “The Eyes and Ears of the League”

We welcome the new Observers, offer our thanks to all the participants and always welcome anyone else who is interested.

Unit 5 School Board 7:00 pm – 2 nd & 4 th Wednesday	(2 nd) Pam Zimmerman	(4 th) Amy Mobley
District 87 School Board 6:30 pm – 2 nd & 4 th Wednesday	(2 nd) Pam Lubeck	(4 th) Judie Bey
McLean County Board 9:00 am – 3 rd Tuesday	Joni Painter	
Normal Town Council 7:00 pm – 1 st & 3 rd Monday	(1 st) Jana Edge	(3 rd) Ken Berk
Bloomington City Council 7:30 pm – 2 nd & 4 th Monday	(2 nd) Phylis VerSteegh	(4 th) Jim Parr
Heartland Community College 7:00 pm – 3 rd Tuesday	Judy Poultney	

Observer Chair: Judie Bey (309) 662-1774 judiebey@juno.com

Search the Web and Raise Funds for the League!

Earn money to support the LWV Education Fund (LWVEF) every time you search the web!

Simply log onto www.goodsearch.com

Designate the League of Women Voters Education Fund – LWV (Washington, DC) as your charity of choice; and start using GoodSearch as your primary search engine.

Each time you search, 50 percent of the advertising revenue (about a penny per search), will automatically go to the LWVEF.

GoodSearch is powered by Yahoo!, so you'll get the same high quality search results you're used to.

HB7 – Campaign Finance Reform Legislation – Vetoed by Governor

The League and our coalition partners contended that this legislation fell short of real reform. Some of the issues making the bill inadequate were allowing contribution limits that were so high as to be ineffective; establishing limits on an annual basis as opposed to an election cycle; and allowing an elected public official to organize a political committee that can be used to defray costs related to constituent services and office upkeep in addition to the currently permitted political committee to promote his/her candidacy.

The Governor vetoed this bill in part due to pressure from the public. If you would like to thank Governor Quinn for his action in vetoing HB7, feel free to send him a letter to that effect.

His addresses in Chicago and Springfield:

James R. Thompson Center • 100 W. Randolph Street, Suite 16-100 • Chicago, IL 60601
207 Statehouse • Springfield, IL 62706

**THANK YOU TO ALL WHO TOOK ACTION ON THIS LEGISLATION.
YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE!**

Nancy Marcus
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Our League's 75 years were celebrated at the Labor Day Parade in downtown Bloomington.

Displaying their new League T-shirts and 1930's period costumes are (from left):

Mary Zeller
 Rose Marsaglia
 Laurie Bergner
 Carol Straka
 Julie Sullivan
 and Julie Prandi

Reminder –

Membership Renewals are due September 30th

Please mail your check today to
 Membership Chair Phylis VerSteegh
 49 Kenfield Circle, Bloomington, IL 61704

- \$60 Individual member
- \$30 Second household member
- \$30 Full-time student

Thank you for your cooperation

**Statewide IL Voter Registration System is up and running –
 See if your Voter Registration Status is Correct**

The Illinois Voter Registration System (IVRS) has now been updated with information from all local election authorities in Illinois.

There is a public access component allowing you to check your own voter registration.

Go to the Illinois State Board of Election's website and click on

"Am I Registered to Vote in Illinois"

under the **"What's New"** heading on the left side of the page

<http://www.elections.state.il.us>

We encourage you to try this! If you find you are **not** registered, contact your local election authority who is responsible for these records.



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OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF McLEAN COUNTY**

30 Stonebrook Ct, Bloomington, IL 61704

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
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Normal, Illinois
Permit No. 37

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September 22, 2009
Unitarian Universalist Church
75th Anniversary and Membership Party

September 29, 2009
Normal Public Library
What The Hell Is Wrong with Illinois State Government?

October 6, 2009
McLean County Government Center
Election Commission Study: Program and Consensus Meeting

October 27, 2009
ISU Bone Student Center • Ballroom
Health Care: National and Local Issues

November 18, 2009
ISU Bone Student Center • Prairie Room
International Intervention in Humanitarian Crises: Balancing Nations' Sovereign Power and Human Rights

January 26, 2010
Venue to be announced
Community Justice Committee: What's New in McLean County

February 23, 2010
Venue to be announced
Terrorism and Peace Prospects: Pakistan, India, Kashmir

April 15, 2010
Eastland Suites
Annual Dinner

April 27, 2010
Venue to be announced
What's Happening with Higher Education in Illinois?

May 25, 2010
Venue to be announced
Annual Meeting

Programs are free and open to the public.