



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

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**League of Women Voters
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. 7 of McLean County April 2010

Tuesday • March 23, 2010 • 7:00 p.m.

ISU Manchester/Hewitt Dorms • Escalante Room
215 W. Mulberry Street, Normal

Parking: College St. Parking Garage - or - ISU lot east of First Methodist Church

**TERRORISM AND PEACE PROSPECTS
Pakistan, India and Kashmir**

Dr. Matthew A. Rosenstein - Associate Director
Program in Arms Control, Disarmament & International Security at U of Illinois

Terrorism isn't just in the Middle East, and doesn't involve only Al Qaeda. Some of the most dramatic – and deadly – terrorist attacks in recent years have taken place in India and Pakistan, and much of it involves fighting over the small territory of Kashmir.

What it's all about and how it affects the United States – broader issues of terrorism and world peace – is the topic of this stimulating talk.

Saturday • March 27, 2010 • 8:30 - 9:30p.m.

Light a Candle...EARTH HOUR

Turn off lights for an hour to promote conservation.

Thursday • April 15, 2010 • 6:00 p.m.

Eastland Suites Conference Center

ANNUAL DINNER and AUCTION

Speaker: Frank Mackaman, The Congressional Dirksen Center

“Some Truisms in Politics”

(More information on page 3)

Tuesday • May 25, 2010 • 7:00 p.m.

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

ANNUAL MEETING

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

Each spring, the League of Women Voters of McLean County holds two events of particular interest to members. The first is our Annual Dinner and Silent Auction on Thursday, April 15 at Eastland Suites. The Annual Dinner is our major fundraising event for local League activities, since the majority of your annual dues are dedicated to membership in LWVIL and LWVUS. This year, the speaker is Frank Mackaman from the Dirksen Center, who will offer a witty and informative perspective on the political scene. Please join your friends in League for an evening of good food, good fun and good fundraising for League.

The second event is our League's Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 25. The Annual Meeting may not have the glow of the Annual Dinner, but it is critical to keep our League functioning. At the Annual Meeting, all members present will be asked to elect the 2010-2011 members of the Board of Directors, to adopt the operating budget for 2010-2011 and to vote on local program positions, including proposals for new League studies. In addition, this is your chance to give direction to the 2010-2011 Board of Directors. Your voice and vote are important.

We hope to see you at both the Annual Dinner /Silent Auction in April and the Annual Meeting in May.

. . . Julie

Auction Items Needed

The 2010 Annual Dinner and Fundraiser is just around the corner and we're seeking donations from our membership to make our one and only yearly fundraiser a success.

We use funds raised through this effort to support our many educational efforts, most notably, the myriad costs incurred in hosting our thoughtful, timely, and sometimes even provocative monthly programs which we offer free to the public.

You can help us by donating items you create through your own unique talents (crafts, art, homemade treats) or services you might provide: lawn care or gardening, a special dinner prepared by you and served to a lucky recipient, car or window washing, etc.

We welcome treasures you may unearth in your spring cleaning that you no longer need but will be just the right touch for someone else's home or yard. Decorative boxes or baskets would be appreciated as well...we'll use them to package donations we've already received.

Unleash your creativity and think about what you can do to enhance our Silent Auction.

Donations are being collected by Maureen O'Keefe –
mokbg@comcast.net • 309 258-4233 • 501 Centennial Avenue, Normal, 61761.

Maureen will be happy to arrange for a pick-up for your donation.

And finally, we hope to see as many of you as possible at the Annual Dinner and Silent Auction on April 15. As always, we have a great speaker, but the real fun comes from socializing with our many League members, friends, and guests.

Carol and Earl Reitan will be moving to Westminster Village in April. Carol, a long-time and active member of our local league, has generously offered to donate a part of the proceeds of her moving sale to the League in exchange for our help with it.

The event will be held at Carol's home at 1319 Chadwick Drive in Normal on Friday, March 19 and Saturday, March 20 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. each day. There will also be an early bird session for League members and friends on Thursday, March 18 from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

We could use some helpers during the sale, so if anyone has a couple of hours on the 19th or 20th, please contact Mary Lynn Edwards at 309-452-2593 or by e-mail at papermoon2@verizon.net. Moving sales can be a lot of fun, especially when doing them with League friends and Carol has many nice items for sale.

League of Women Voters of McLean County ANNUAL DINNER and SILENT AUCTION

• • •

Thursday, April 15th • Eastland Suites Conference Center

5:30 – Social hour and Auction bidding 6:30 – Dinner

7:00 – Presentation: **“Some Truisms in Politics”**

Frank Mackaman, The Dirksen Congressional Center

Professor Mackaman majored in U.S. History and Geography at Drake University, Des Moines, and received advanced degrees at the University of Missouri at Columbia earning a Masters in U.S. History and his PhD in U.S. Diplomatic History.

From 12/05-5/07, he served as Mayor of Pekin and is currently on the Teaching Faculty at the Institute for Principled Leadership in Public Service.

Since the mid '90s Mackaman has been on the staff at the Dirksen Congressional Center and is an Adjunct Professor of Political Science at Bradley University.

His past employment also includes:

Director of the Gerald R. Ford Library & Museum in Ann Arbor, MI;
Professor of History and Visiting Lecturer in Political Science, University of Michigan;
Curator & Deputy Director of the Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, Michigan;
and Executive Director at The Dirksen Congressional Center.

Mackaman is the author and editor of many articles, book reviews, Web sites, and op-ed pieces dealing with Congress and politics;

- *Milestone Documents of American Leaders: Everett McKinley Dirksen*
- *Facing the Post-War World: Everett Dirksen Abroad, 1945*
- *Campaign 1944: Everett M. Dirksen's Bid for the White House*
- *The Long Hard Furrow: Everett Dirksen's Part in the Civil Rights Act of 1964*
- *The Education of A Senator: Everett McKinley Dirksen*
- *Gerald R. Ford: Presidential Perspectives from the National Archives*
- *Understanding Congressional Leadership*

Professional and Community Activities of which Mackaman is currently involved:

Executive Committee member, Association of Centers for the Study of Congress, 2003-present
Member, Pekin Hospital Community Advisory Board, 2007-present
Chairman, Community Relations Board, Federal Correctional Institution
Member, Pekin Police Foundation, president, 2009-present
Member, Advisory Council, Peoria Area World Affairs Council, 2008-present
Member, Pekin Economic Development Advisory Committee, 2009-present

Frank H. Mackaman

2815 Broadway, Pekin, IL 61554 • 309-347-7113 • FAX 309-347-6432 • email: fmackaman@dirksencenter.org

A Very Special VIP Delegation Hosting Opportunity!

Our League has received a grant to host a special VIP group of four from Kazakhstan for a week in April. All four are members of Parliament, and all have impressive prior government, including areas such as Minister of Justice of Kazakhstan, Director of Economics for Astana, the capital, and Minister of Foreign Affairs!

They are arriving April 23 and departing April 29 and will be staying in a hotel instead of with host families.

If anyone is interested in participating with the planning for this visit or spending time with them during their visit, please let one of the co-chairs know: Judie Bey (662-1774) or Laurie Bergner (454-3113 or drlaurieb1@verizon.net).

Also, please save the date for our pot luck reception for them: Wednesday, April 28.

We'll let you know the details later.

Observer's Report: **Normal Town Council**

The Normal Town Council consists of the Mayor and six Council members. The elections are nonpartisan and there are no wards. Three Council positions are contested in each election, each voter can vote for three candidates, and the three with the most votes are elected. Mayor Koos and Council members Chambers, Gaines, and Nielsen were reelected in April 2009 for four-year terms. Council members Fritzen, Reece, and Scott were elected in 2007 and their terms expire in 2011. Salaries are \$10,000 for the Mayor and \$4,800 for each Council member. The position of Mayor is extremely time consuming, but fortunately Mayor Koos has a business that allows a flexible schedule. The Mayor and Council members have assigned places in a U-shaped seating arrangement, along with the Corporation Counsel, City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Town Clerk. Other Town of Normal managers are present in case questions arise.

Meetings are held the 1st and 3rd Mondays each month. For each meeting the agenda, a report with details about the agenda (running around 100 pages), the minutes, and a video of the meeting are available on line at <http://www.normal.org/Gov/Council/AM/meetings.asp>

The video is shown Tuesdays and Saturdays following the actual meeting at 6 p.m. and 10 a.m. on Comcast public access TV channel 20.

Occasionally the Normal Liquor Commission, which has the same membership as the Council, meets prior to the Council meeting. They grant liquor licenses, issue fines and reprimands, and sometimes revoke liquor licenses.

Meetings are covered by The Pantagraph, ISU Vidette, the Normalite, and WJBC.

A typical audience is 15-20 people, including Town of Normal staff, ISU students assigned to attend, and Town of Normal citizens. Town staff members, and occasionally others, are sometimes invited to speak to the Council from a table at the open end of the U-shaped seating arrangement. Usually, this is at the request of City Manager Mark Peterson to assist him in providing details about an agenda item. There is provision for citizen input at Council meetings, as indicated by this from the Town of Normal website: <http://www.normal.org/Gov/Council/index.asp>

If you wish to appear at a Council meeting to support or oppose an issue, please contact:

City Manager Mark Peterson mpeterson@normal.org (309) 454-9503 -or-

Assistant City Manager Pam Reece preece@normal.org (309) 454-9503

However, such appearances are infrequent.

The Council employs an Omnibus Vote Agenda, which consists of non-controversial items such as acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting and routine expenditures. There are usually 7 to 10 items, and the whole list is passed on one vote without discussion. If a Council member has an issue with an item or believes that it needs further explanation, then it is removed from the list and it is discussed separately.

Mayor Koos does a good job of conducting the meetings as he moves the agenda along while encouraging discussion of each item. Council members seem well-informed on the issues – they do their homework. Usually, all Council members are present, and sometimes when they are out of town they are still able to participate via an electronic connection. Most agenda items pass either unanimously or with one dissenting vote, but an occasional agenda item is voted down.

The general atmosphere at the meetings is positive. Occasionally meetings are adjourned after less than 30 minutes, but sometimes they last more than 2 hours.

With regard to the chemistry among Council members, it is interesting to see what Fritzen and Koos said before the 2009 election. Fritzen lost to Koos by less than 200 votes in 2005. In an interview with Mary Ann Ford published in *The Pantagraph*, Fritzen said "I don't see any reason (to run for mayor) at this time. For the most part, the issues I felt were there three years ago have passed - they've been dealt with and we've moved on." About Mayor Koos, he said "We've developed a good working relationship. The whole council works well together."

Ford's article went on to give the Mayor's view: Koos said the good relationship among council members is one of the reasons he's seeking re-election. This is in accord with our impressions of Council meetings. If Fritzen were Mayor, it would not make a big difference in the votes of the Council. Fritzen is a little more conservative, but most of the time he and Koos agree.

Financially, this is a difficult year for the Town of Normal. At the October 19 meeting, City Manager Peterson and Finance Director Hill discussed problems with declining revenues. Sales tax revenue is expected to be 3.6 percent below last year, and state income tax revenue is expected to be even worse, 18.6 percent below last year. Furthermore, the state is three months behind in its payments to cities. Fortunately, Normal has a savings cushion, so it is doing better than many other cities that have gone through their reserves, but more revenue is needed. The Council has approved a real estate rate increase from \$1.0936 to \$1.1368 (3.95%), which amounts to about \$21.60 more on the yearly tax bill for a \$150,000 house. With increases in assessed evaluation, the 3.95% increase should add 9.16% to property tax collection. [Note that *The Pantagraph's* Mary Ann Ford wrote incorrectly that "The proposed budget also includes a 9.16 percent increase in the town's property tax rate."] In addition, the Council approved an increase in the sales tax from 7.5% to 7.75%, which makes it even with Bloomington. It has been 9 years since the last increase in sales tax.

In spite of the tax increases, there are a number of major cuts, including the Town's preschool program and the Harmon Arts Grants.

You might think that the real estate tax increase would be perfectly clear to anyone who attends Council meetings and reads the agenda and minutes, but to get the numbers you need to delve into the detailed 88-page Report on the November 16th Council meeting.

Although Finance Director Hill believes that the economy has bottomed out, meaning that it will not get worse, the recovery may be slow and the financial problems are not necessarily over. We can anticipate that financial issues will continue to be an important part of the Council agenda.

The Mayor and Council have a vision for Normal that looks to the future. This vision is wide-ranging and includes such considerations as the International Building Code, land use, population density, signage, and cooperative relationships with ISU, Illinois Wesleyan, Bloomington, and the business community.

-- Submitted by Ken Berk and Jana Edge

Help us Reform Illinois Redistricting

Join our petition drive to put the Fair Map Amendment on the November Ballot

The problem under the existing process:

- Illinois legislators create their own legislative districts behind closed doors.
- Either the Democrats or the Republicans gain full control by a hat drawing.
- Districts are drawn to protect incumbents of the winning party.

The solution which the Fair Map Amendment offers:

- Legislative districts would be drawn by an independent commission.
- Maps would be drawn in an open and transparent process, with public input.
- Specific criteria would be used to make the process fairer to all.

What you can do to support the Fair Map Amendment:

- Sign the petition to put the amendment on the November ballot.
- Leave us your contact info (link to e-mail)
- Gain more signatures by circulating a petition. Download petitions and instructions.
<http://www.ilfairmap.com/>
- Learn more. (link to Q/A)
- Tell others about the Fair Map Amendment.

Remember to return signed petitions to Laurie Bergner by April 10th.

For more information, contact Laurie at: drlaurieb1@verizon.net

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission

U.S. Supreme Court Decision, January 21, 2010

What was the Citizens United v. FEC ruling?

In the most simple of terms, the US Supreme Court ruled that the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gives corporations, like people, free speech protections and spending money is a form of speech. The Court held that there is no difference under the law between an individual citizen and a multinational corporation (or any other corporation) when it comes to independent expenditures. Corporations will now be able to pay for television advertisements that directly call for the election or defeat of political candidates. The corporations may fund these political advertisements directly out of their treasury funds. *Citizens United* does not permit corporations to make cash or in-kind contributions to candidates or communications that have been coordinated with a candidate for federal office or a political party.

How does *Citizens United v. FEC* effect Illinois Campaign Finance Reform legislation?

The decision has no immediate effect on the contribution limits legislation passed last year. Current Illinois law and the upcoming system of contribution limits set to take effect January 1, 2011 do not prohibit independent expenditures by corporations, labor unions or other organizations.

Federal law governs the races in Illinois for the U.S. Senate and House, and this case does apply. It is quite possible that Illinoisans will see many TV commercials about candidates that are paid for by corporations, labor unions and other groups. The U.S. Supreme Court ruling does away with the McCain-Feingold restrictions on independent corporate and labor advertising that opposes or supports federal candidates. If there is a torrent of spending, the ruling has the potential to drown out the messages of state and local candidates and change the level of voter turnout.

What will help mitigate the possible effects of the *Citizens United v. FEC* ruling?

Mary G. Wilson, LWVUS President testified before the Committee on House Administration on "Defining the Future of Campaign Finance in an Age of Supreme Court Activism" on February 3, 2010. In the testimony, she defined vital steps the Congress could take to govern the conduct of the 2010 elections including:

- Enhanced Disclosure - Voters need information about the sources of funding for the charges and countercharges that come during elections. Disclosure is one key way that voters test the accuracy of campaign statements and is essential if the "free and open marketplace of ideas" is to function properly.
- Do No Harm – The League urges Congress not to pass proposals that could make our election system and government processes worse such as increasing or doing away with contribution limits to candidates, supporting changes in limits on contributions to and from PACs and allowing corporations and unions once again to make huge contributions to political parties.
- Corporate Governance – The League supports the concept that shareholders should approve election expenditures by corporations, as well as other possible reforms to corporate governance in the campaign finance context.
- Foreign Corporations – *Citizens United* opens the door for independent expenditures by foreign corporations in American elections. The League urges Congress to carefully consider blocking election spending by foreign corporations.
- Governments – The League believes it is inappropriate for government to intervene in elections. Those corporations that have substantial governmental involvement, particularly financial involvement, should be barred from making independent election expenditures.
- Connections with Lobbyists – Every member of Congress who receives a visit from a lobbyist for a corporation knows that the corporation can make unlimited expenditures in his or her election. Lawmakers will change their behavior because of the potential for unlimited expenditures. Congress should explore methods of regulation to deal with this issue. The League also supports additional regulation of bundling by lobbyists and increased disclosure of lobbying activities.
- Coordination. Though the FEC has yet to develop acceptable anti-coordination rules following enactment of Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 (BCRA), it is worth looking at tighter controls to ensure that "independent" expenditures by corporations and unions are truly independent.
- Public financing. As a long-time supporter of clean money in elections, the League of Women Voters supports enactment of congressional public financing and repair and updating of the presidential public financing system. Enhanced small contributions through a fair elections system would provide candidates with clean funds, challenging both corruption and the appearance of corruption in our electoral system.

The testimony concluded as follows: The League of Women Voters believes that the Court's majority decision in *Citizens United v. FEC* was fundamentally wrong and a tragic mistake. The majority mistakenly equated corporate free speech rights with those of natural persons. And the majority confused associations of individuals with corporations. But this is the decision of the Court. Even though we believe it will be overturned eventually, both in the judgment of history and in the law, Congress needs to respond now, recognizing its own authority and responsibility to uphold the Constitution. Full testimony at:

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=14805>

By Paula Lawson, Champaign Finance Reform, Issues specialist

Save the date...

“Celebrating 90 years of League”

League of Women Voters of Illinois
State of the State Luncheon

**Wednesday, June 2, 2010
Union League Club of Chicago**

Guest Speaker: Patrick Collins

A partner in the firm Perkins Coie and a former federal prosecutor, Patrick Collins led the 8-year Operation Safe Road investigation, which culminated in the 6-month trial and conviction of former Governor George Ryan.

In January 2009, Collins was appointed by Illinois Governor Patrick Quinn to chair the Illinois Reform Commission, which was tasked with making recommendations for ethical reform for Illinois government.

Indiana's Voter ID Law Put to the Test

**Indiana Supreme Court will soon decide
the fate of the state's Voter Identification Law.
It's being challenged as unconstitutional.**

Indiana requires a photo ID when casting a vote at a poll. The law's been on the books for 5 years. It was passed as a way to prevent voter fraud. But LWV says it's unconstitutional. Indiana Supreme Court has heard arguments from both sides. The League says the law does not require those voting by absentee to show a photo ID, thus imposing a requirement on some voters but not all.

Indiana Court of Appeals agreed last year and threw out the law. But that ruling was vacated and the ID requirement remains in place. A lawyer for the League says the law was passed to prevent something that has never happened in the state: Someone trying to vote in person using the identity of someone else.

Indiana Secretary of State Todd Rokita says the law ensures the integrity of elections. It's unknown when the court will make a ruling.

Of potential interest to Leaguers...

Partisanship: Is It Crippling Our Democracy? What Are the Choices?

The Living Democracy Project of Bloomington-Normal invites you to a Community Forum

April 17, 2010 • 9:15-11:30 a.m. • Normal Public Library • Community Room

Former Senator David Boren, now President of the University of Oklahoma, writes in his recent book, *A Letter to America*, "Our political system is broken. Bipartisanship, with the parties working together to solve urgent problems, is viewed with nostalgic romanticism." Senator Evan Bayh expresses similar sentiments recently, "There is too much partisanship and not enough progress – too much narrow ideology and not enough practical problem-solving...the people's business is not getting done."

This spring, we are offering the opportunity to think together, as we grapple with partisanship issues using a process called Deliberative Dialogue. The format is not a lecture, debate, or "panel of experts," but a community conversation with trained moderators. Such a "safe" environment includes a shared agreement for respecting each other's views, listening to understand rather than refute, and seeking areas of common ground. In small groups we will deliberate three different approaches to partisanship, noting benefits and drawbacks for each. The timed process will conclude with ideas about common ground and possible "next steps".

To register: Email Peggy Scott, pescott@ilstu.edu or call her at 309-454-2990 no later than Tuesday, April 13th

Free and open to the public

Living Democracy Project of Blm-Normal provides opportunities for citizens to come together for civil dialogue about issues of public life.



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

30 Stonebrook Court Bloomington, IL 61704

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INSERT:

Annual Dinner Registration Form



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

This month our members have:

- Attended the Women's International Day Breakfast, co-sponsored by League, Soroptimists, and AAUW;
- Contacted Representative Brady and Governor Quinn urging them to support HB174 to help relieve Illinois' budget crisis;
- Circulated Fair Map amendment petitions and presented programs on redistricting and the Fair Map Amendment at the Republican Women's lunch and at a Kiwanis breakfast;
- Partnered with local and state Chamber of Commerce and Illinois Farm Bureau on the Fair Map Amendment petition drive;
- Sent a letter to the editor promoting the Fair Map Amendment petition;
- Contacted Representative Brady and Senator Brady asking them to support campaign finance reform for Illinois;
- Sent a letter to the editor promoting Sunshine Week.

. Calling all Deputy Registrars!

Voter Services Chair, Yadira Ruiz is requesting help with a project for late summer/fall.

If you are a Deputy Registrar and might be available to register people to vote, please send Yadira an email at ms.yadiraruiz@gmail.com if you are interested in helping.

This project is still in its planning stages and dates have not been set.
You will be provided with more details once they have been determined.