



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF McLEAN COUNTY

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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. 78 No. 2 of McLean County October 2011

LWV 2010-2011 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Monday • October 17, 2011 • 7:00 p.m.

LWV Book Club • More information on page 3

Tuesday • October 18, 2011 • 7:00 p.m.

County Government Building • 115 E. Washington St.

**National Government in Education
Consensus Study**

Final three questions to be discussed

More information on page 4

Wednesday • October 19, 2011 • 7:00 p.m.

ISU • Moulton Hall • Room 208

The Dangers of U.S. Militarization

Speaker: Mel Goodman

More information on page 5

Tuesday • November 15, 2011 • 7:00 p.m.

Bloomington Public Library – Community Room

**Hidden McLean County
Looking at illiteracy and the homeless**

Tuesday • February 28, 2012
Venue and time to be announced

Columbia

Speaker: Laurie Bergner

Tuesday • March 27, 2012
Venue and time to be announced

The Politics of Climate Change

Speaker: Anne Nadakavukaren

From the desk of . . . Co-Presidents Phylis VerSteegh and Maureen O'Keefe

We League members have heard MANY times that we are a “nonpartisan, political organization.” Since we adopt nonpartisan and inclusion policies each fall, this is a good time to remind all members once again what that means.

The League is nonpartisan in that it never supports or opposes any candidate for elective office or political party; the League is political in that it does act on those governmental issues selected by its members and on which a position has been reached through study and member agreement.

What does the League’s nonpartisan policy mean for you? League believes that participation in politics is the core of democracy and, with the exception of certain Board positions, urges members to support the party and candidates of their choice. However, a League member cannot “undertake any activity which may constitute a public statement or partisan position which could be attributed to the League.” It’s fine to say: “I support Candidate X” but it’s not okay to state, “I’m in the League of Women Voters and I support Candidate Y.”

In other words, it should be clear that you are acting as an individual and not representing League in any way. It goes without saying that partisan political statements or activities at a League event are also prohibited. The League does not take sides.

Of course, we want all members to talk about League and what we do. If you are in a discussion about a topic for which League has a position, you can say that the League position supports your viewpoint. However, you should not imply that you are speaking for the League. The co-presidents, or their designees, are the only official League spokespersons. If someone wants to debate why League has adopted a position, it’s easiest to suggest that they contact one of the co-presidents for more information.

Simply put: Talk about League, not for League. Although this nonpartisan policy may seem cumbersome at times, adhering to these guidelines for over 90 years is what has made the League of Women Voters the highly respected organization it is.

If you have questions about this policy or any other League matters, contact co-presidents Phylis VerSteegh or Maureen O’Keefe.

. . . Phylis

MARGE BUSEY SCHOLARSHIP

Marge Busey was a long-time member of the League of Women Voters with a special interest in education.

This scholarship grants a one-year Student Membership in the League of Women Voters of McLean County and is intended to encourage civic involvement through participation in League activities and meetings.

An applicant must be a full-time student, over 18 and attend a school in McLean County.

Applicants are encouraged to visit our website – www.lwvmclean.org – and fill out and submit the form online. Three scholarships will be awarded by December 1.

MEMBERSHIP EVENT AND SOCIAL

League of Women Voters of McLean County celebrated the beginning of our program and membership year on Tuesday, September 13, at the Moses Montefiore Temple.

Dr. Barry Reilly, Superintendent of Bloomington District 87 Schools, was our guest speaker. He presented an eye-opening picture of the financial situations facing his district in "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly."



The Florence Fifer Bohrer Award, named after the founder of the McLean County League, was given to a very deserving Cheryl Gaines for her outstanding and ongoing service to the community. Pictured to the right of Cheryl is Carol Reitan, who was proud to have nominated her.

Over 80 people enjoyed visiting, sharing friendships and meeting new people. We were thrilled to get many renewing memberships and also welcome several new members.

If you are a current League member and have not paid this year's dues, please send them to Becky Hines, LWV of McLean County Membership Chair, as soon as possible.

• • • New and Renewing Members to date • • •

Kathleen Conley
Val Farmer-Dougan
David & Elaine Gill
Bob Grosse
Esaw Peterson

Amy Davis
Jim Fruin
Ruth & William Gnagey
Paul Lawrence
Charles & Judy Valente Reynard

Dawn Dannenbring
Cheryl Gaines
Judy Green
Sonny O'Connor
Barbara Thake

The League of Women Voters Book Group

Our next Book Club meeting will be Monday, October 17th, 7:00 pm at the home of Diana Hauman 48 Kenfield Circle, Bloomington. RSVP 309-662-6765 or ddhentinc@aol.com



The book selection is "The Post-American World" by Fareed Zakaria.

Participants may also bring ideas for future books to the meeting.
Carpooling is appreciated.

The LWV of McLean County VOTER will soon be sent to you by email via the Internet. For the next few months you will still receive your newsletter in the mail as we make preparations to 'Go Green'. And as always it will also be available on our website: www.lwvmclean.org

Our goal is to continue to provide up-to-date information regarding our League programs and activities in the most efficient way possible. As we move forward we will appreciate receiving your comments and suggestions.

LWV of McLean County Board of Directors

**September is LWV Voter Registration Month – our League got an early start
We registered 91 voters from Aug. 8 to Sept. 1, most of them first-time registrants.**

NCHS: August 8, Senior Registration Day, we spent five hours and registered a total of 30 students. We handed out about 45 sheets with information for new voters and 27 voter pledges.

Central Catholic: 26 new voters were registered during lunch hour on August 29! 2 pledge cards.

ISU Fall Festival: LWV registered 38 voters on September 1 in five hours. 12 Voter pledges were signed and 5 information sheets were passed out.

YWCA: No one stopped to register at the table on September 9, 11 am – 1 pm.

**Our next scheduled High School registration will take place
October 11, 13, and 18 at BHS.**

Many thanks to all the League members who helped, several on more than one occasion:

Candace Armstrong	Judy Green	Betty Jones	Alexis Kalish
Rose Marsaglia	Judy Poultney	Julie Prandi	Mary Zeller.

---submitted by Julie Prandi, High School Registration Project

National Government in Education Consensus Study

The United States League of Women Voters has not had a formal position on the role of the federal government in education. It is now in the process of conducting an education study which will develop a League position in order that we may act at the national level when legislation is proposed.

Our McLean County League has selected five areas within the larger study on which to focus:

1. National common core standards:
Should they be mandated for states as a prerequisite for federal funding?
2. Should there be a national assessment aligned with the common core standards?
3. Should national standards lead to a nationally-mandated curriculum?
4. If we adopt a national assessment, what information is most important to be reported to parents, teachers, students and the community?
5. How should information from nationally-required assessment data be used?

These questions, critical to any thorough assessment of educational priorities in the United States, have been well researched by our League's Education Study Committees. At the forum held September 20, in-depth information on the study and consensus process was provided by Amy Davis, Education Study Chair. Anne Nadakavukaren and Marlene Gregor represented the sub-committees which studied the first two questions and outlined those issues to be discussed. What followed was a well conducted question and answers session, participated in by over 30 League members and several non-members and recorded by Carol Straka. In conjunction with Leagues throughout the country, LWV of McLean County will produce a consensus based on the discussions regarding all these questions.

The final questions will be discussed at

7:00 p.m. • Tuesday • October 18, 2011 • County Government Building

You are invited to attend the meetings and to add to the discussion of these vital public issues.

Please plan to attend this important meeting

• Free and open to the public •

THE DANGERS OF U.S. MILITARIZATION

Wednesday • October 19, 2011 • 7:00 p.m. • ISU • Moulton Hall • Room 208
• *Free and open to the public* •

We are delighted to bring back ex-CIA officer Melvin Goodman! He has taught national security issues at the National War College, Johns Hopkins and The American University. He is also an analyst for the Center for International Policy. A 20 year veteran of the CIA, where he specialized in Russia, Goodman is one of its most articulate critics.

His latest book is *"Failure of Intelligence: The Decline and Fall of the CIA."* He is also sole author of *"Gorbachev's Retreat: The Third World,"* and co-author of *"Bush League Diplomacy: How the Neoconservatives are putting the world at Risk."* Goodman is currently working on a book entitled *"National Insecurity: The Threat of Militarization."*

Here is a summary of his talk:

The United States is in a period of geopolitical decline: the U.S. economy is contracting; the money for huge U.S. defense budgets will be more limited; the U.S. military has been hurt by fighting two counter-insurgencies over a ten-year period; and the current political process is dysfunctional. One of the key changes that must be made is to reduce the size of the defense budget as well as the influence of the Pentagon.

Over the past two decades, we have developed far more military power than is necessary for strictly military purposes and have given too much influence to the Pentagon in the conduct of national security and foreign policy. The defense budget should be strictly for purposes of defense, and not to build power and influence in Third World regions where a U.S. military presence is counter-productive. We need to reopen the debate on the impact of the military-industrial-congressional complex and look for significant change in U.S. policy, particularly in the policy processes of weapons acquisition and power projection.

***Moulton Hall is located on the northeast corner of the ISU Quad,
south across the pedestrian bridge over College Avenue from the Bone Student Center.***

Parking is available and most convenient at the Bone Student Center Parking Lot.

Students will be available there to help people find Moulton Hall.

---submitted by Laurie Bergner, LWV of McLean County Program Chair

Court Observer Program Going Gangbusters!

Our Court Observer program, which started last January, is going gangbusters!

We now have 26 enthusiastic volunteers. Each gives about six hours a month to observing judges and each has observed a different judge every month, so they are all getting a wide variety of experience.

We have had two trainings since our initial training, with both Appellate Justice Jim Knecht and retired Chief Judge John Freese talking with them to help everyone get the same understanding about what they are observing. All the volunteers are still excited about the project, and all report they are continuing to learn a great deal about the justice system.

Director Steven Kossman and Laurie Bergner are giving feedback to Chief Judge Beth Robb regarding the findings thus far, and she will share them with the judges. The project will continue, with future findings shared again with the judges as well as with the public to help them become more informed voters.

---submitted by Laurie Bergner, LWV of McLean County Program Chair



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107 Warner St., Bloomington, IL 61701

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

The League year has begun! Members are involved in:

- League Book Club – For our October 17th meeting we are reading “The Post American World” by Fareed Zakaria;
- Continuing voter registration in local high schools and college campuses;
- Wrapping up the national study on the role of the federal government in education – Note next consensus meeting is October 18th;
- Observing local boards and McLean County courts;
- Contacting legislators on important issues affecting the voters of McLean County;
- Developing monthly programs that are of interest to all citizens.

**PLEASE VISIT US ON FACEBOOK AND BECOME A FRIEND
OUR WEBSITE IS www.lwvmclean.org**

WHO League of Women Voters and their guests
WHAT Live Performance of “**WAIT, WAIT, DON'T TELL ME**” with Reception in Auditorium lobby
WHEN Thursday, October 13 • Reception: 6 pm – 7 pm • Theater doors open at 7 pm
WHERE Chase Bank Auditorium, 10 South Dearborn, Chicago, IL
WHY To have a great time and support League of Women Voters of Illinois!!
 Taping begins at 7:30 pm and may last until 9:30 pm
Space is limited • RESERVATION DEADLINE – SEPTEMBER 29
 Visit the LWVIL website www.lwvil.org to make your reservation