



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. 78 No. 4 of McLean County December 2011

LWV 2010-2011 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Saturday • December 3, 2011 • 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Holiday Shopping Opportunity

for LWV of McLean County at **CROSSROADS**

428 N. Main Street • Bloomington

See page 2 for more information on this event

Tuesday • December 6, 2011 • 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Join us for the new **FUN FUNDRAISER Wine Tasting** at

A Renée Wine Café in downtown Bloomington,
sponsored by LWV of McLean County.

See page 3 for more information on this event

Tuesday • January 24, 2012 • 7:00 pm • Normal Public Library

Media and the Courts

Speakers: **Jim Knecht** – Appellate Court Judge

Edith Brady-Lunny – Pantagraph courts reporter

Tuesday • February 28, 2012 • 5:30 pm

Moses Montefiore Temple • 102 Robinhood Lane • Bloomington

Colombia: Violence and Beyond the Violence

Speaker: **Laurie Bergner**

A look at Laurie Bergner's League-sponsored trip to Colombia

An inside view of a fascinating country

Free chili dinner at 5:30 pm • Program begins at 6:30 pm

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

The Politics of Climate Change

Speaker: **Anne Nadakavukaren**

Tuesday • April 17, 2012 • Time and speaker to be announced

LWV of McLean County Annual Dinner

Holiday Inn • 3202 E. Empire • Bloomington

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

As noted in the last Voter, two fund raisers will take place in early December –

Saturday, December 3rd

Crossroads will return 15% of the cost of any purchases we make there to our local League. Simply identify yourself as a League of Women Voters member when you check out.

If you haven't shopped there, it is a fabulous place with handcrafts (and super good coffees) from all over the world. Crossroads-HANDCRAFTS of THE WORLD is a member of the Fair Trade Federation which promotes fairer trading relationships between nations and economic justice for people in developing countries.

Located at 429 N. Main St. in Bloomington, it will be open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on December 3rd.

Tuesday, December 6th

We will enjoy a "Fun and Fundraising" wine tasting event being held at A. Renée's Wine Café located at 306 N. Center St. in Bloomington from 5:00 -7:30 p.m. We will be able to sample sumptuous wines and enjoy delicious hors d'oeuvres as well as do some holiday shopping. Wine and other gifts will be available. Again, this is a fabulous place to shop and it will be a fun evening to be with friends. Make reservations on our League website - www.lwvmclean.org - or you may purchase tickets from League board members.

After the holidays you will begin receiving information about another study that we plan to do. At the last annual meeting, members voted to do a re-study of the possible consolidation of Unit 5 and District 87 school districts. This local study was done some years ago and members feel it is a timely issue now and should be studied again. If you are interested in this important issue and taking part in the re-study, please send me an email at info@lwvmclean.org. Watch for more information on this in the next issue of the Voter and check our website.

Fall and winter holidays remind us of the value of family and friends. And as we head into 2012 which is a national election year, I hope you are reminded of the value of living in a democracy and the liberty we have to vote for the candidates and issues of our choice.

MAY YOU AND YOURS HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!

. . . Phylis

CROSSROADS

HANDCRAFTS of THE WORLD

428 N. Main Street ▪ Bloomington ▪ 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

**Holiday Shopping Opportunity
For League of Women Voters of McLean County
Saturday, December 3rd**

When taking advantage of this opportunity, 15% of our members' purchases will be returned to LWV to support our many good causes.

Be sure to identify yourself as a League of Women Voters member

League members are also invited to enjoy holiday music, egg nog, and cookies while browsing the shop at the Crossroads Holiday Party from 7:00 - 9:00pm

***Relax and unwind at a
Fun ~ Fundraiser***



**WINE
TASTING
& Social**

Tuesday, December 6th, 5:00-7:30 p.m.

A. Renée Wine Café

306 N. Center Street, Bloomington

*Relax and unwind – sample sumptuous wines,
enjoy delicious hors d’oeuvres
and try some special chocolates*

- ◆ Gift Basket Raffle
- ◆ Purchase wine by the glass or bottle
- ◆ Shop for gifts for the wine lovers on your list

Tickets - \$25



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OF McLEAN COUNTY**

Deadline for reservations is December 1

Reservations and information at: www.lwvmclean.org/winetasting.pdf

“Hidden McLean County” Looking at illiteracy and the homeless

November's educational program, "Hidden McLean County," spotlighted some of the groups we don't usually see, helping to put a face on the homeless, adult illiteracy, and a small but growing group of immigrants from the Democratic Republic of Congo. Each brought with them a client from their organization who spoke movingly about the experience of being in these groups.

Mary Ann Pullin, Chief Executive of Home Sweet Home Mission, told us that our community has a similar poverty rate as the rest of the county of 16%. HSH provides food and shelter for adults and families while they look for work and places to live. Bradford Hays spoke of feeling like a failure when he lost his job and then his home, leading him to stay at the mission where he volunteered his time helping others. He is now a staff member and had much to say about the value of the organization.

Charlotte Cooney, Director of Star Literacy, part of the Regional Office of Education, teaches math and reading to adults who lack a basic level of education, as well as English as a Second Language (ESL). Calvin Whitehead spoke of his shame at having such a low level of reading after having dropped out of school very early in his life due to poverty and neighborhood violence, a shame that led him to cover up his illiteracy throughout his life. According to Mr. Whitehead, "not having an education is like being in prison without an escape."

Kerry Urquizo of One Heart for Congo, helps Congolese immigrants make their way in our community. There are now 200-300 Congolese living here. Pathy Echo, now a resident of McLean County, talked about immigration and the process they must go through to enter the United States. He told us about being bewildered by English signs when he stepped off the plane, and his perception of how busy we all are, as well as the isolation in our neighborhoods.

The speakers helped us to see the needy in our midst, who are often invisible to us. But they also helped us to see how many services are available in our community, services that are lifesavers to those who need them.

The League of Women Voters Book Group

Our next Book Club meeting will be Monday, January 2, 2012, 7:00 pm
at the home of Joni Painter, 1903 Hedgewood Dr., Bloomington
RSVP 309-662-8413 or jonilpainter@gmail.com



The book selection is
"Methland: The Death and Life of an American Small Town"
by Nick Reding

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

Media and the Courts

Tuesday • January 24, 2012 • 7:00 pm • Normal Public Library Community Room

- How does the media influence the public's perception of the courts, of judges, of trials?
- How do the judges and attorneys feel about the media's coverage of the courts?
- What limits are there on the media's ability to report on trials?

Join us for this fascinating look at one of the media's core missions:
to be a watchdog for the government, in this case, the courts.

Panelists include: **Edith Brady-Lunny** – Pantagraph courts reporter
Jim Knecht – Appellate Court Judge
Kim Campbell – Public Defender



**THE LEAGUE
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OF McLEAN COUNTY

30 Stonebrook Ct., Bloomington, IL 61704

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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.

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We've had some inquiries regarding the Marge Busey Scholarship that we were unable to decipher. If you have interest in this scholarship, please email your name, address, phone number, and a brief introduction about yourself to: Maureen O'Keefe at mokbg@comcast.net.

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

This month League members have:

- Added new members and continued to renew current memberships;
- Observed local boards and McLean County courts;
- Learned many things about three groups of people in our area at our November 15th program, "Hidden McLean County, Looking at illiteracy and the homeless";
- Completed our portion of the LWV national study on education and sent our consensus to the national office;
- Contacted legislators on important issues affecting the voters of McLean County;

PLEASE VISIT US ON FACEBOOK AND BECOME A FRIEND

OUR WEBSITE IS www.lwvmclean.org