



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF McLEAN COUNTY

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League of Women Voters
of McLean County Bulletin
is published 8 times a year.

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The Voter

Vol. 79 No. 1 of McLean County September 2012

LWV 2012-2013 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Tuesday, September 11, 2012 • Moses Montefiore Temple
102 Robinhood Lane, Bloomington

League of Women Voters of McLean County Membership Event and Social

◆ 2012 Bohrer Award presented ◆

Program Speaker: **Lane Crothers**
Professor of Politics and Government at ISU

**"Who Said Money and Looks Don't Matter?
Romney v Obama 2012"**

RSVP by September 7 • Reservation information inside

*The following Programs planned for this League year.
Find more details on page 5.*

October

Candidate Forums

November

Health Reform

Program Speaker: **Wendell Potter**

January

Government's Response to Global Warming and Other Environmental Issues

February

Hidden McLean County – Part 3

April

Judicial Activism and the Roberts Court

Program Speaker: **Geoffrey Stone**

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

Okay, can someone please tell me how summer went by so quickly?

Kids waiting for the school bus, cooler weather, leaves in my back yard, election activities, etc., all tell me that fall is fast approaching. Sooo ...

Welcome to another exciting LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF McLEAN COUNTY year!
We have lots to tell you.

In 1920 the League of Women Voters was founded to educate newly enfranchised women about how to effectively use their votes. Membership is now open to all voters and we remain true to our core belief that a well-informed voter is an effective voter. In keeping with that core belief, we are planning lots of activities for this fall: candidate and voter education forums; voter registration drives; educational programs to new voters in high schools, colleges and others; a voters' guide; a poll watching program (see more information on page 4 in this Voter); and much more.

We're also starting to plan the 2013 LWVIL State Convention which will be held next June here at the Marriott Hotel and the Carol Reitan Convention Center. We'll need lots of help; there will be all sorts of jobs. You've heard it before – the League has something for everyone!

Please join us on September 11 (see notice on pages 11-12 in this Voter) for our membership social and kickoff. It promises to be fun and informational. No matter what your interests are, we have something for you. I hope to see you all out and about in League this year!

. . . Phylis

LWV of McLean County ▪ Board of Directors ▪ 2012 – 2013

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

- We honored Dianne Williamson as Leaguer of the Year at our Annual Meeting;
- We sent a representative to the League of Women Voters of the US in Washington, DC;
- We organized a Voter Services committee, and they have begun planning for fall activities;
- We have several more members trained as Voter Registrars;
- We have done more planning for League activities for this fall and the entire year;
- We are making plans for the LWV IL State Convention to be held here in June, 2013.

VISIT US ON FACEBOOK AND BECOME A FRIEND

OUR WEBSITE IS www.lwvmclean.org

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LWVUS 2012 NATIONAL CONVENTION

What an experience! The atmosphere was similar to the national political conventions we see on television. There were about 850 delegates plus many other attendees. I think having it in Washington, D.C. also added to the political excitement.

It was also exhausting – we registered Friday afternoon and sessions started at 2:00 that day. On Saturday, Sunday and Monday we had caucuses beginning at 7:00 a.m., then plenaries, then more workshops through lunch, more plenaries and workshops in the afternoon, a dinner, and the day usually ended with a “gab session” with other Illinois delegates till midnight. We finished at noon Tuesday, and then we visited the capitol and had a tour arranged by Senator Durbin’s office. The House is not in session now and though we didn't speak directly with Durbin, we did see him on the Senate floor.

Lots of issues were discussed in sessions, but two topics which seemed to be important to most delegates were Voter Disenfranchisement (pretty much led by the Florida delegation) and Campaign Finance reform (championed by the Wisconsin people).

A national study on the 2012 Farm Bill (championed by the Glenview, Illinois League) was approved, so that will start in 2013. The last time a farm issue was studied was 1988 – slightly out of date!

President Elisabeth MacNamara was exciting to watch – she presided over every session with knowledge, fairness and firmness. Watching all of the parliamentary procedures was educational in itself. I attended a workshop conducted by the Wisconsin state League on poll watching and brought back lots of good information. I also got information on recruiting members and increasing our visibility which I will be sharing with specific board members.

Thank you so much to all members who helped make it possible for me to attend this convention. It was an experience I'll never forget, and I hope additional members will be able to share more convention experiences in the future.

...Submitted by Phylis VerSteegh

A Special Invitation

As a member of the League of Women Voters,
you are invited to become a part of a valuable group.

The League Observer Corps uses members like you to attend meetings of local governing bodies and be the eyes and ears of the League.

The time commitment is minimal and NO experience is necessary. Information packets are provided and the Observer Chair, Camille Taylor, is available to help you.

Observers monitor the meetings of:

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

And new for 2012-2013, the meetings of:

- Bloomington Human Relations Committee
- Normal Human Relations Committee
- Central Illinois Regional Airport Authority

For more information, contact the Observer Chair, Camille Taylor, at –
309-663-7307 (home) 309-310-9852 (cell) taylorcr54@yahoo.com

Please accept this invitation to become the eyes and ears of the League!

The **Voter Services** committee is looking for new members.
We have opportunities for those interested in registering new voters and/or making presentations to high school and college classes on registration, candidate forums, creating an on-line voter guide and poll watching.

If interested, contact Voter Services Chair, James Keeran, at –
james.keeran@frontier.com.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF McLEAN COUNTY **AN EXCITING NEW PROGRAM.....**

The League will be doing **Poll watching** this year on Election Day, November 6, 2012.

The goal of poll watching is to aid in ensuring the free and fair conduct of elections.

It is a program the League has long endorsed and encouraged. Your responsibilities will be minimal – attend a 90-minute training session, get to your assigned poll on time, wear the identification that we provide, introduce yourself to the election judges, fill out the short form we will provide to you and email it back to us. We are asking for a minimum 2-hour block of time to poll watch on Election Day.

PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING – Send me a message at phylvs49@gmail.com.

Give me your name, address, contact information, how long you are willing to observe on November 6th and whether you would prefer attending training on a weekday evening or a Saturday morning. Training places and dates will be set as soon as we know approximately how many people are interested.

AND PLEASE PASS THIS NOTICE TO YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.

We will allow non-members to participate as long as they are trained.



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF McLEAN COUNTY

2012-2013 Programs

We have a full roster of great programs this year, starting with an October program that will provide information on all three referenda that will be on the ballot:

- Putting the Recorder's office under the County Clerk's office;
- Constitutional Amendment regarding making changes in pension and benefits;
- Town of Normal's electricity aggregation referendum.

The program will be held in October – date and time to be announced.

• • •

November's program will be an update on healthcare, with national expert Wendell Potter making a return visit. His program will include a local healthcare expert. The program will be held at Illinois Wesleyan – date, time and place to be announced.

• • •

Other programs:

- January will feature a program on environmental issues;
- February will continue our popular Hidden McLean County, in which we highlight the experiences of "hidden" groups in McLean County;
- Our final program will be University of Chicago Law Professor Geoffrey Stone speaking on Wednesday evening, April 3. Place and time to be announced.

Court Observer Project

Steven Kossman is stepping down from his job of coordinating dates and assigning judges to observe. We appreciate the great job he's done in the last year and a half – we couldn't have done this project without him! He worked out the details in data collection and assigning judges to us, enabling our League to do this project.

We are looking for someone to do those jobs so that we can restart the project this fall. It usually takes about 1-2 hours a week, and Steven is willing to work with the new individual to teach them how to do it.

Please let us know right away if you are willing to consider the position.

Contact Laurie Bergner at 309-454-3113 or drlaurieb1@frontier.com.

...Submitted by Laurie Bergner

The League will be participating in the **Labor Day Parade** this year after a 3 year hiatus!

The Parade is Monday September 3rd at 10 a.m.

Anyone interested in riding or walking the fairly short route or making posters to carry should email Rose at rmarsaglia@msn.com.

We will be driving a pickup so that anyone who gets tired can take a ride.

It's always a lot of fun and good exposure for League during this very political year!!

Hope you can join us!

2012 Election Information . . .

- ▶ **Early Voting** – October 22nd to November 3rd
- ▶ **Close of Registration**– October 9th
- ▶ **Grace Period** – For those who did not register to vote or change their address before the close of registration, will take place from October 10th to November 3rd.
- ▶ **General Election** – November 6th
- ▶ **Disabled Absentee Ballot** – City of Bloomington Board of Election Commissioners has a disabled absentee ballot for what they term ‘permanently disabled’ people, 75 and over. No documentation is required to be considered ‘permanently disabled’.
Applications can be obtained from this office and voters will automatically be notified for 5 years thereafter – 115 E. Washington St. Room 403 – P.O. Box 2400, Blm, IL 61702.
Email becvote@becvote.org if you want more information or call (309) 888-5136.
Since implementing this service, the number of voters in this category increased from 200 to 450.

Of potential interest to Leaguers...

Citizen Voice Meeting

Wednesday ▪ September 26th ▪ 6:00 - 7:30 pm

Miller Park Pavilion ▪ 1020 S. Morris Ave. ▪ Bloomington

The City of Bloomington is again holding a series of open forums to offer citizens an opportunity to engage with its local government, provide input, offer feedback and ask questions. At the Citizen Voice Meetings, participants can ask questions of Mayor Stockton, Administrators, and City Department Representatives. Mayor Stockton and the members of the City Council, City Manager and City Staff will be present to listen to concerns, hear ideas and answer questions.

Specific guidelines will be in place for those wishing to speak, in order to allow as many citizens as possible to participate.

City Manager David A. Hales notes that the Citizen Voice Meetings continue to be successful and provides an excellent opportunity for our citizens to engage with their municipal government on a one-on-one basis.

Information on the meeting, including a map of the location site and participation guidelines, is available on the City of Bloomington website: www.cityblm.org.

LWV of McLean County – Program Positions – 2012-2013

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.

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 MENTAL HEALTH

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

OPTIONS FOR JUSTICE

League endorses:

- Support efforts to maintain a Drug Court Program, Mental Health Court Program, GPS electronic monitoring, and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council and its committees.
- Study Victim-Offender Mediation, Day Reporting Center, and 24-hour probation reporting kiosk.

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.

There are no changes recommended in the above program positions.

**The following change in Local Education is recommended and has been approved
by the Board of Directors.**

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 benefits to students, administrative efficiency and economy;
- A financial basis for schools in McLean County that can provide a good education for all students.

NOTE: The last two bullet points were removed last year in anticipation of a re-study on local education. That study did not materialize. Therefore, the board recommends adding these two points back into our program position. Our previous position stating “merger of District 87 and Unit 5” was not recommended to be reinserted due to the fact that our study on this merger was done many years ago and is perhaps not relevant at this time. District 87 is initiating a long-range strategy study and League members have requested to be involved. We will investigate taking part in similar activities with Unit 5.

LWV of McLean County – Inclusion Statement

The League of Women Voters of McLean County, in both its values and practices, is committed to inclusion and diversity. This means that the League will attempt to minimize barriers to participation in any activity of the League on the basis of economic position, gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability.

We recognize that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision making. We believe inclusiveness enhances the organization’s ability to respond more effectively to changing conditions and needs.

We affirm our commitment to reflecting the diversity of McLean County, Illinois. --Re-adopted 9/14/10

LWV of McLean County – Nonpartisan and Political Activity Policy

Purpose: The purpose of the League of Women Voters is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League is a nonpartisan, political organization: nonpartisan in that it never supports or opposes any candidate for elective office or political party; 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.

Guidelines for Political Activity by Members

The League believes that participation in the activities of our political parties is an essential ingredient of citizen responsibility and urges members to support the party and candidates of their choice.

- No member shall undertake any activity which may constitute a public statement or partisan position which could be attributed to the League.
- A member may represent the League in the following activities (even if the League member has known political affiliations) so long as the member does not wear or present anything that would identify a party or position: registering voters, moderating candidate meetings or debates, or observing government meetings.
- The Co-President is the spokesperson for the League, but may designate a member to testify before government panels, to lobby, or to otherwise represent the League.
- A member may circulate and sign petitions, but not at a League meeting.
- The League membership roster is not to be made available for non-League use without Board approval.

Guidelines for Political Activity by High Profile Board Members

Board members holding a public high profile position: the President or Co-Presidents, VP: Action, VP: Program and Voter Service Chair may not undertake any action which would publicly identify them with partisan activity, such as:

- May not run for public or party office. A high visibility Board member who decides to run for public or party office shall resign from the Board. After the public or party election (regardless of the outcome), the Board member may return to the Board by appointment or election at the next McLean County League of Women Voters annual election.
- May not work as precinct committee person or other elected party official.
- May not engage in visible support of political candidates.
- May not solicit money for a candidate or party.
- May join a political party.
- May attend partisan functions for the purpose of becoming informed about candidates and issues.
- May work as an election judge or poll watcher.
- May be appointed to Boards, Commissions, Committees, or other offices, if that body is clearly nonpartisan. As a member of a Board, Commission or Committee, the Board member must act as an individual and may not speak for, or represent, the League.
- May not take leadership roles in groups connected with controversial issues, where a conflict with the League's position could occur.

Guidelines for Political Activity by Other Board Members

Political activities are permissible for members of the Board, if the activities do not create any doubt in the public's mind as to the nonpartisan nature of the League. Neither should such activities jeopardize the League's ability to deal with current issues. Board members should use discretion to ensure that their own activities are not identified with the League. Board members (other than high visibility Board members):

- May not run for partisan public office. A Board member who decides to run for partisan public office shall take a leave of absence from the Board. After the public election, the Board member may resume a Board position after the election (regardless of the outcome) for the remainder of the Board member's original term.
- May be candidates for nonpartisan public office.
- May be candidates for party office.
- May work as precinct committee person or other elected party official.
- May engage in visible support of political candidates.
- May host fundraisers, solicit money and contribute money to a candidate or party.
- May work as an election judge or poll watcher.
- May be appointed to Boards, Commissions, Committees and other offices. As a member of a Board, Commission or Committee, the Board member must act as an individual and may not speak for, or represent, the League.
- May take leadership roles in groups connected with controversial issues, even where a conflict with the League's position could occur.

Political Activities of a Spouse or Relative

The political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member shall be considered separate and distinct from the activities of the member.



*We're Kicking Off Our Year
and You're Invited!*

**League of Women Voters of McLean County
MEMBERSHIP EVENT and SOCIAL**

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11
5:30-7:30 P.M. Open House
Moses Montefiore Temple
102 Robinhood Lane
Bloomington, IL 61701-3429

Join us as we celebrate our past 77 years
and begin an exciting new year!

Guest speakers throughout the evening

Lane Crothers, Professor of Politics and Government at ISU @ 6:30 p.m.

"Who Said Money and Looks Don't Matter? Romney v Obama 2012"

Please RSVP by Friday, September 7. Detach and mail the form below to:
Maureen O'Keefe; 501 Centennial Ave., Normal 61761

Please contact with questions at mokbg@comcast.net

=====

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

I will attend.

I will bring ____ guests.

Sorry, I cannot attend.

I wish to join the League. Enclosed is a check for annual dues.

*Please make your check payable to the **League of Women Voters of McLean County.***

\$60. Individual member dues

\$30. Second household member dues

\$30. Full-time student dues

Please send more information to me

Florence Fifer Bohrer Award

This prestigious award is given annually to a member of our community, LWV member or non-member, who has demonstrated a history of significant nonpartisan civic engagement with an emphasis on improving the social welfare of McLean County.

**The 2012 Bohrer Award
will be presented at our
MEMBERSHIP EVENT and SOCIAL
September 11th**

**Moses Montefiore Temple
102 Robinhood Lane ▪ Bloomington**