



# THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF McLEAN COUNTY

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# The Voter

Of McLean County

Vol. 81 No. 7

April 2015

## Community Screening: *A Path Appears* Wednesday March 18, 7:00 p.m. Normal Theater

- Documentary sheds light on the effects of extreme poverty on children in the U.S. & across the world. Panel discussion follows.
- Of Interest to League members. Sponsored by Save the Children Action Network & YWCA of McLean County. See YWCA's [facebook](#).

### Save the Date:

## Living in B-N as an Undocumented Immigrant Wednesday April 8, 5:00 p.m. – Drinks & Dialogue

- **Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, Uptown Normal**
- Chat with Jasmine McGee, Executive Director of The Immigration Project, and Jennifer Carrillo, from Illinois Peoples Action
- See page 3 for details and pre-meeting reading

### Documented

## Wednesday, April 8, 7:00 p.m.

- **Normal Theater, 209 W. North St., Normal**
- Film about Pulitzer Prize winning journalist Jose Antonio Vargas
- Open to the public – donations to support the Immigration Project are encouraged

## LWV Annual Dinner & Silent Auction

### Wednesday April 22, 5:30 p.m.

- **Holiday Inn & Suites, Bloomington Airport**
- Speakers from The Illinois Innocence Project, including a client who was exonerated

## Annual Meeting

### Tuesday, May 26, 7:00 p.m.

- **McLean Co. Govt. Center, 115 E. Washington, Bloomington**
- Review last year's accomplishments
- Discuss next year's programs, bylaws, budget and officers

## *From the Desk of Our President...*

As we begin preparations for our Annual Meeting in May, I've reflected back on the many successful endeavors our League has engaged in since last May. Again, as usual, it's been a rather busy year for us! As we set goals last July, we made a commitment to grow our membership and we've surpassed even our own expectations.

At the same time, we also made a commitment to support three important studies: an action focus for the Mental Health Services initiative, conducting research on any real or potential threats to our local water resources, and studying issues relating to affordable housing in McLean County.

I'm happy to report that the water resources study was completed and the study group's findings were reported to the public in February. And many League members remain actively engaged in our efforts around affordable housing and mental health services. For example, nine League members recently offered to serve on a Speakers Bureau to continue to inform the public on where we're succeeding and where we have work left to do on county-wide efforts to improve mental health services.

For those of you new to League, you'll find our commitment to education and advocacy efforts such as these will afford you ample opportunities to learn and (if you'd like) become more actively engaged in our shared community here in McLean County. As we plan for next year, it's our intention to further grow and develop our education and advocacy efforts, so expect us to be soliciting your thoughts, ideas, and most likely, sending you multiple invitations to participate the work of our League!

About a year ago, our League lost one of its most vital, engaged and connected members, Carol A. Reitan. She was a model Leaguer, consistently offering her wisdom and direct participation on countless League projects. And although Carol is sorely missed by many, I'm also reminded we have many other role models in our ranks who also continuously step up and offer us their time, commitment, and energy to efforts such as Voter Services, the Observer Team, and the studies we engage in at the local, state, and national levels.

This year I'd like to particularly thank Anne Nadakavukaren who led our Water Resources Study group, Karen Major and Laura Furlong who are leading the Affordable Housing study, and Judy Buchanan who's been the League's leader of the action focus we've taken with our mental health services project. I'd also be remiss if I didn't mention Rose Marsaglia, who organized our presence in the Labor Day Parade, and our Nominating Committee Chair, Diana Hauman, who in addition to running for a seat on Bloomington's city council, is also working diligently to recruit new Board members. All of these project leaders have worked with numerous League members, some of whom have just recently joined us!

Therefore, on behalf of the LWV McLean County Board of Directors, I offer a sincere thank you to these leaders and to everyone on their teams who've contributed to our League's success.

*-Maureen*

## Participate!



### **Living in B-N as An Undocumented Immigrant Drinks & Dialogue: Wednesday April 8, 5:00 p.m.**

Please join us for a comprehensive evening on the topic of Undocumented Immigrants. First, we'll start with Drinks & Dialogue at a new time and location: in the restaurant/bar area of the Marriott in Uptown Normal with socializing starting at 5:00 p.m. From 5:30 to 6:30 the Dialogue will be facilitated by Jennifer J. Carrillo from Illinois People's Action and Jasmine McGee, Executive Director of the Immigration Project. Immediately after the discussion you are invited to walk the very short distance to the Normal Theater to view the film *Documented*. It promises to be an enlightening evening!

For another view of this topic, please see the following article from the Not in Our Town website: [Project Seeks to Protect Deportees](#).  
—Camille Taylor, Laurie Bergner & Becky Hines

### **Documented: A Film by An Undocumented American – Wednesday, April 8, 7:00 p.m.**

**Come to the Normal Theater** for a showing of the film that tells the story of Jose Antonio Vargas, a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who lived in the U.S. for years without knowing he was here illegally.

The screening will be followed by a discussion with the Immigration Project, immigrants, and other advocates and experts. The event is free but donations are requested to support the Immigration Project, a nonprofit providing legal assistance to immigrants living in Central and Southern Illinois. Besides the Immigration Project, other event partners are: First Presbyterian Church, Illinois People's Action, Mennonite Church, Moses Montefiore Temple, St. Mary's Church, and Unitarian Universalist Church.



## Annual Dinner & Silent Auction Fundraiser



The 2015 League of Women Voters of McLean County's Annual Dinner and Silent Auction will be held on **Wednesday, April 22 at the Holiday Inn & Suites, 3202 East Empire in Bloomington**. The fun starts at 5:30. Guests will enjoy a sumptuous buffet catered by Baxter's American Grille and have time to shop and bid on silent auction items.

Featured speakers will be from the Illinois Innocence Project, University of Illinois. John Hanlon, Executive Director and Legal Director, Lauren Kaeseberg, Staff Attorney, and client Anthony Murray will talk about working on exonerations and discuss exonerates' "life after" issues.

It's certain to be an educational yet enjoyable fundraiser. Tickets are \$50.00 and are available from any LWV board member. Reservations can be made by calling Dianne Williamson at 309-662-6129 or sending an email to Dianne at [dd.willi@hotmail.com](mailto:dd.willi@hotmail.com). Reservations are due by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

—Dianne Williamson

## More News

### Mental Health Study & Action: Roadmap to Impact

The *Action* phase of the Mental Health Study has received great reception as our presentations for civic organizations, churches and other interested groups continue. Nine League members have participated in a training session to become familiar with the PowerPoint, common message and script. Now actively engaged, they report what was gleaned from the league's study of local mental health services and share recent improvements as reported in local media and advisory groups.

The Mental Health Study Speakers Bureau includes Debi Brownstone, Judy Buchanan, Rachel McManus, Valerie Parker, Mary Riddle, Sally Rudolph, Mary Anne Schierman, Julie Sullivan and Phylis VerSteegh. Thanks for their continued commitment to this important issue.

—Judy Buchanan

### Support Your League

While membership dues support state and national LWV efforts, your fundraising dollars stay here in McLean County. If you have any service, crafts, art, or other treasure you'd like to contribute to the Silent Auction in April, please contact Dianne Williamson at [ddwilli@hotmail.com](mailto:ddwilli@hotmail.com) by April 17. Support your Local League by donating and dining!

### Consolidated Election

**Tuesday, April 7**

(1<sup>st</sup> day for Early Voting – March 23)

### Council Forums Educate Voters

Part of the League's mission is to provide unbiased voter education. To that end, the League cosponsored three candidate forums for the city of Bloomington and town of Normal councils with public radio station WGLT. The Normal Forum was unique because of the candidates' own questions to their panel, including one about participating in democracy and getting out the vote. If you missed attending or hearing the broadcasts, you can listen to them on GLT's web [archive](#).

Below (l-r): David Sage, Joni Painter, Karen Schmidt, Alton Franklin, Diana Hauman and Guadalupe Diaz of Bloomington



LWV Secretary, Alexis Kalish (r), provides timing for candidates



Mike McCurdy (l), host of Sound Ideas, and forum moderator

# Observer Team 7 Months into Revitalized Process

The learning curve has been challenging, but mostly exciting, as the nearly 20 member LWV Observer Team has ramped up our local observing of governing bodies. The table below shows the activity by unit of government.

You will note that significant portions (38%) of the meetings observed were linked to the County Board. We initially assumed that observing the McLean County Board Executive committee would provide adequate insight to County government action. But based on the three-tiered structure of the County Board we modified our approach to enhance our information capture. The decision to broaden County coverage to all committees was made in mid-October.

Goals were established for each government body linked to the frequency / number of meetings we determined to be adequate. Based on 7 months being 58% of a year, you will note we are ahead of our YTD date goal in several areas. We have had difficulty in covering our three targeted educational bodies, however; so, if you are interested in joining the team, we can use your support.

While we are not sure if there are good records of past observer activity, we are quite confident that we are on target to exceed the number of meetings observed in recent years.

--Glen Ludwig

<b>LWV Observers Activity Report</b>			
<b>Government Body</b>	<b>Meetings</b>	<b>% of Annual</b>	<b>Annual</b>
	<b>Observerd</b>	<b>Goal in</b>	<b>Goal in %</b>
	<b>first 7 Months</b>	<b>7 months</b>	<b>of all Mtgs</b>
Normal Town C.	9	64%	75%
Bloomington City C.	14	100%	75%
<b>Total Council Mtgs</b>	<b>23</b>		
<b>McLean Cty Board</b>			
Transportation Com.	1	14%	40%
Justice Com.	2	29%	50%
Finance Com.	3	43%	75%
Land Use Com.	1	14%	20%
Property Com.	4	57%	75%
Rules Com.	1	14%	TBD
Executive Com.	4	57%	45%
Monthly County Board	5	71%	45%
<b>Total County Board Mtgs</b>	<b>21</b>		
Regional Planning Comm	2	29%	50%
County Board of Health	1	33%	85%
Unit 5	2	14%	50%
District 87	4	29%	50%
Heartland CC	1	7%	50%
CIRA	2	29%	33%
<b>Meetings Observed</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>August thru February</b>	

**The success of the Observer effort is directly linked to the commitment and talent of the following team members:**

Laura Baue, Phylis VerSteegh, Julie Prandi, Teri Liston, Gary Hoover, Kari Lane, Judy Valente, Jean La Paze, Galen Crow, Emily Vigneri, Brooke Rhoda, Judie Bey, Olemuel Ashford, Marlene Gregor, Janet Warfield, Alexis Kalish, Betty Jones and Agnello Dmello.

Thanks for your excellent efforts!

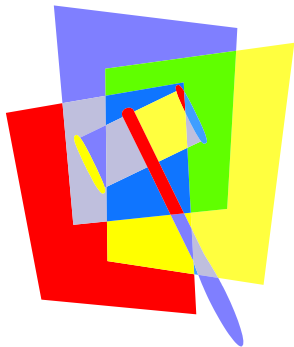


**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®**  
Of McLEAN COUNTY

# **ANNUAL DINNER & Silent Auction**

**Wednesday, April 22, 2015 ♦ 5:30 p.m.**  
**Holiday Inn & Suites**  
**3202 E. Empire, Bloomington**

**Buffet by**



*Baxter's American Grille*

**Guest Speakers from**

**The Illinois Innocence Project**

**Tickets - \$50**

**Deadline for reservations – April 15**

For information or reservations:

Email [dd.willi@hotmail.com](mailto:dd.willi@hotmail.com)

Or visit our website:

