

LWW LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® of Greater Rockford, Illinois VOTER

<http://www.lwvgr.org>

March 2015

The purpose of the LWVGR shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

It's easy to stay connected to the League:

Email:

lwvgr22@gmail.com

•

Facebook:

Search for:

*LeagueofWomenVotersofGreater
RockfordIllinois - (one word).*

•

Website:

<http://www.lwvgr.org>

Event and meeting calendar available.

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Listserver:

LWVGR has a private email listserver for members only. If you have an email change, email to: janiewc@mac.com.

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Newsletter mailing list:

If you prefer to receive mailed copies of the VOTER newsletter, just pay the \$12.00 fee.

Go the website and the option is on the membership renewal page.

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Paypal:

You can now join/renew on our website, using the mail form or Paypal! You can also make donations using Paypal.

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Tell your friends!

Do you know someone who might be interested in joining?

Please introduce them to our website and Facebook page. They can join through Paypal as well.

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LWVGR Mailing Address:

4990 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61114

Environmental Issues Committee

Diane Cushing, chair

For the 21st year the League is instrumental in presenting the Youth Groundwater Festival on March 11. About 250 4th and 5th graders come for a morning at Rock Valley College to learn about our precious groundwater. They do experiments in the science rooms in the relatively new Karl Jacobs Center for Science and Math. They also play a fun game of Dripial Pursuit (like Trivia Pursuit only about water) in the Performing Arts Room. The League gives \$100 plus organizational time and volunteer time in Dripial



Students play a fun game of Dripial Pursuit.

Pursuit. The League was instrumental in starting this field trip for students and now the Winnebago County Health Department, Burpee Natural History Museum, Rock Valley College and the Northern Regional Groundwater Protection Planning Committee are all sponsors and planners in this important event for students.

Local Government Committee

Paula Lind, chair

Local Government continues to meet the second Wednesday of each month at Noon at Katie's Cup, Seventh Street.

We are hosting, along with AAUW, three candidate events prior to the April 7th Election that will be highlighting the candidates for school boards in the Harlem, Rockton and Belvidere Schools Districts.

School Board Forums

March 2, 2015

Harlem School Board
Candidates Meet & Greet
Harlem Township
819 Melbourne
Machesney Park, IL
Time: 5:30 – 7:00 pm
Moderator: Paula Lind

March 9, 2015

Belvidere School District
Candidates Forum Com-
munity Building
111 West First Street
Belvidere, IL
Time: 6:00 pm
Moderator: Wally Haas

March 10, 2015

Rockton School Board
District Forum
Whitman Post Element-
ary School
1060 East Union Street
Rockton, IL
6:30 – 8:00 pm
Moderator: Eric Wilson

The Board of Directors for the League of Women Voters of Greater Rockford meets the second Monday of the month at 5:30pm, currently at the home of Vice-President Christina Hiltrop, 2606 Point O' Woods, Rockford, 61114.

Any member is welcome at Board meetings.

President:

Susan Janson

sjjanson@comcast.net

Vice President:

Christina Hiltrop

ckhiltrop@gmail.com

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Kathy McNeely-Johnson

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Diane Cushing

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Communications:

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Elaine Pfluger

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Local Government:

Paula Lind

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Campaign Finance Reform:

Elizabeth Lindquist

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Member-at-Large

VOTER Editor & Webmaster:

Janie Wilson-Cook

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Member-at-Large

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LWVGR Margaret Wyeth Scholarship

After many years of representing the Rockford League in the selection process of the Wyeth Scholarship and many others through the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, Jeanne Claeys decided to step down. She asked Janie Wilson-Cook to take her place (as if anyone could) and represent the local League. Janie attended a training meeting held at Rock Valley College February 17 to learn the computerized selection system. She will look at several scholarship applications vying for the over 80 scholarships available from the Community Foundation and meet with her selection committee April 1. LWVGR has awarded the \$500.00 Margaret Wyeth Scholarship to deserving graduating seniors since 2003.



Margaret Wyeth

2015 IL LWV Issues Briefing (THIS SATURDAY!!!)

There is still time to register for the Briefing.

Saturday, March 7, 2015: 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

University Center, 525 South State Street, Chicago, Illinois

FULL DAY - \$65 per person

(includes continental breakfast, boxed lunch, briefing packet, workshops & materials)

MORNING PROGRAM ONLY - \$25 per person

(includes continental breakfast, plenary, workshop & materials and briefing packet)

AFTERNOON PROGRAM ONLY - \$35 per person

(includes boxed lunch, plenary, workshops & materials, briefing packet) (\$20 without lunch)

Morning workshops:

10:45 - 11:45 a.m. - (Choose one)

The School Funding Reform Act of 2014 Immigration
Legal Challenges to the Affordable Care Act

Afternoon workshops:

2:00 - 3:00 p.m. - (Choose one)

Becoming a More Effective Advocate
Climate Change: Hot Issues in Illinois
How Human Services Are Affected By State Cutbacks

Contact a board member for car pools and possible discounted prices or register on the LWVIL website at: <http://www.lwvil.org/issues-briefing-registration-2015.html> or by calling Roberta Borrino, Members Services, at the LWVIL office, 312-939-5935.

Although the registration period has ended, there may still be spaces left. This is a very popular and informative event so please call soon if you are interested. There are several Rockford members attending.

MEETINGS:

VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE:

1st Thursday of the month, 8am
Stockholm Inn
Rockford Plaza
2420 Charles Street
Rockford, IL 61108

LWVGR BOARD MEETING:

2nd Monday of the month, 5:30pm
home of Christina Hiltrop
2606 Point O' Woods
Rockford, IL 61114
All are welcome.

HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE:

2nd Thursday of the month,
5:30 pm

LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

2nd Wednesday of the month, at noon
Katie's Cup
502 7th Street
Rockford, IL 61104.

EDUCATION:

3rd Tuesday of the month, 9am
Stockholm Inn
Rockford Plaza
2420 Charles Street
Rockford, IL 61108

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES:

4th Tuesday of the month, 11:30am
Katie's Cup
502 7th Street
Rockford, IL 61104

COMMUNICATIONS:

2nd Tuesday of the month
Katie's Cup, 502 7th Street
Rockford, IL 61104

MEMBER SERVICES:

1st Friday of the month, 11:30 am
Thai Hut
Sandy Hollow Road
west of 11th Street
Rockford, IL 61109

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM:

3rd Tuesday of the month, 6pm
Meg's Daily Grind
3885 N Perryville Road
Rockford, IL 61114

LWVGR ANNUAL MEETING

June 13, 2015, 9-11am
Forest Hills Country Club
5135 Forest Hills Road,
Rockford, IL 61107
\$25.00

Sent with yearly dues by mail
or online.

Communications Committee

Claire McIntyre, chair

Janie Wilson-Cook is the current *VOTER* editor. Many thanks to Teresa Hill, who stepped in to do the *VOTER* when Leigh Lakey fell ill and continued publishing it. She is continuing as Facebook contact person. The deadline is about the 17th of the month. Please email *VOTER* articles, art and photos to janiewc@mac.com.

Our article on the ERA was published in the Register Star e-edition. We would just like to add a thank you to June Jacobs for further researching the ERA article and putting it in final form. Please know, however, that a paper editorial mistake listed Justice Ruth Ginsburg as Justice Anthony Ginsburg. Here is the link:

<http://www.rrstar.com/article/20150301/OPINION/150309956>

2015-17 Program Planning Meeting

Saturday, March 1 members of the League attended a bi-ennial Program Planning Meeting at the Great Wall chinese restaurant on East State Street.

The purpose of the session is to make recommendations to the State League regarding positions the state has taken on various subjects. More information regarding these positions are available from: <http://www.lwvil.org/convention-2015-program-planning.html>

Subjects studied were:

Representative Government:

Constitutional Implementation, County Government Structure, State Election Laws, Registration & Elections, State Board of Elections, Election Systems Criteria, Term Limits, State Redistricting.

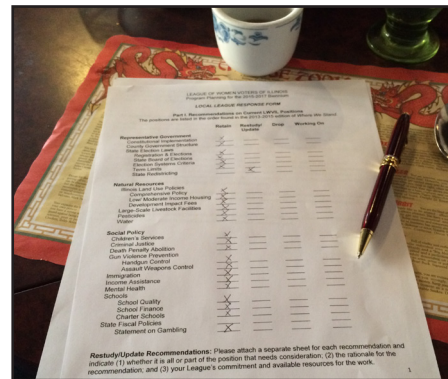
Natural Resources:

Illinois Land Use Policies, Comprehensive Policy, Low/ Moderate Income Housing, Development Impact Fees, Large-Scale Livestock Facilities, Pesticides, Water.

Social Policy:

Children's Services, Criminal Justice, Death Penalty Abolition, Gun Violence Prevention, Handgun Control, Assault Weapons Control, Immigration, Income Assistance, Mental Health, Schools, School Quality, School Finance, Charter Schools, State Fiscal Policies, Statement on Gambling.

All positions were retained except Redistricting, which was decided as "Re-study/Update."



President Susan Janson reads position rationale; Decision form.

Campaign Finance Reform

Elizabeth Lindquist, chair

LWVGR's campaign finance reform committee met in January. Jessica Jones of the National League of Women Voters outlined the four things that the League will be working on in the coming year.

Improve Disclosure:

Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy said: "Disclosure permits citizens and shareholders to react to the speech of corporate entities in a proper way." Citizens have a right to know who is trying to influence their vote and disclosure of donations and spending is necessary to shine a light on secret money. The League is a longtime supporter of the DISCLOSE Act and we will continue to push for passage of this important piece of legislation.

Establish a Public Financing System:

The League believes that public financing is the best long term solution to getting big money out of politics. States like Arizona, Connecticut and Maine have had success in public financing with state house and statewide elections. The League continues to look for ways to limit the size and type of contributions from all sources as a means of combating undue influence in the election process.

Strengthen Regulations on Coordination:

The Federal Election Commission (FEC) is the federal agency in charge of our nation's campaign finance laws, but so far they've done practically nothing to address the U.S. Supreme Court's disappointing decision in Citizens United. Under existing law, the FEC can work to define "coordination" as a way of cutting back on the "independent" expenditures that really are coordinated with candidate campaigns, but thus far they have refused to do so.

Vote:

If the American public wants to get money out of politics, it's time to take our elections back. Voting is the most powerful form of expression that a single citizen has. When citizens vote, politicians have to listen. We must improve voter turnout and engage within our communities to combat the undue influence of money in our political system.



Our local committee is closely following the efforts of the League, Illinois Campaign for Political Reform, and Common Cause Illinois in their efforts to establish small donor democracy (aka public financing) systems for Chicago, Evanston, and Oak Park. We are working with the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform to determine the viability of such a system here in Rockford. In February 79% of Chicago voters gave their support to this idea in an advisory ballot question. Voters in Winnebago and DeKalb Counties will have the opportunity to weigh in on a similar idea on their April 7th ballots.

Our members have a lot to learn about public financing systems; how they are operated and how they are funded. We welcome all League members to help us explore this exciting area. Our next meeting is March 17th at 6pm at Meg's Daily Grind, 3885 N Perryville Rd, Rockford. We meet there the third Tuesday of every month. We hope to see you.

2015 State Convention

Plans are underway for the 2015 League of Women Voters of Illinois convention taking place at the Lisle/Naperville Hilton Hotel.

Between now and the June convention, the LWVIL Board and convention committee will be sending reminders, updates and information upon which we will be asking local leagues to take action.

2015 Awards: Please take a few minutes to think of all the things your League has accomplished during the last two years: a forum, program, event or project that was noteworthy. Please consider nominating your local league in either the Spotlight on League Achievement or Community Impact category.

We all know many wonderful League Leaders that should be honored. Nominate one (or some!) of them for the Carrie Chapman Catt award.

League of Women Voters of Illinois Amendments to the Bylaws: Article XIV of the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Illinois requires proposals for bylaw amendments to be submitted at least two months before the convention. Here are the current Bylaws.

The State Board, as required, will e-mail all proposed amendments with recommendations to Local League Leaders in the May 2015 Leaders Update.

Please indicate which article and section of the Bylaws you wish to amend, the exact wording you propose and a one-two sentence rationale for recommending the amendment. Please underline the proposed wording and put in parentheses the wording you want dropped. Please complete and return the form at https://files.ctctcdn.com/f257eb8e001/1042c35c-0b8d-457a-b450-2e911bf3b03a.pdf?utm_source=Leader%27s+Update%2C++Volume+1%2C+Issue+6&utm_campaign=Leader%27s+Update+1&utm_medium=email to Mary Schaafsma, League of Women Voters of Illinois, 332 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 525, Chicago, Illinois 60604 or by fax to 312.939.6887 or by e-mail to marys@lwwil.org.

Convention costs:

REGISTRATION			
Delegate	\$125.00	Alternate	\$125.00
Friday afternoon workshops (two sessions)	\$45.00	Saturday visitor	\$45.00
Sunday visitor	\$15.00		
MEAL PACKAGES			
FULL MEAL PACKAGE (Saturday lunch & dinner; Sunday breakfast)	\$105.00	Saturday (lunch only)	\$35.00
Saturday Package (lunch & dinner)	\$90.00	Saturday (dinner only)	\$60.00

Convention 2015 Highlights

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, 2015

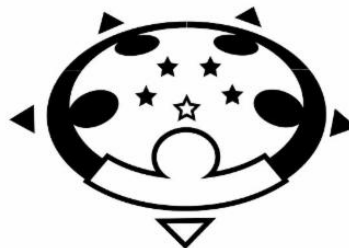
- Two workshop tracks
- “Dine-Around” in Naperville

SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 2015

- Convention convenes
- Plenary session
- Lunch program with Ruth Conniff, editor-in-chief of *The Progressive* magazine
- Dinner, awards presentations, entertainment, silent auction
- LWVIL Board hospitality room

SUNDAY, JUNE 7, 2015

- Plenary and convention business



**Knowledge
to Action**
The League, Media and You