



Rockford VOTER

April 2013

Rockford Mayoral Forum *April 2 at Rockford College*

Rockford mayoral candidates Jim Hughes (D), Mayor Larry Morrissey (I) and Michael Kleen (R) will participate in a debate on Tuesday, April 2 at 7 p.m. in Regents Hall, Burpee Center, located on the Rockford College Campus, 5050 East State Street, Rockford. The debate is sponsored by Rockford College's

Jane Addams Center for Civic Engagement and is the last scheduled mayoral debate before the April 9 elections.

LWVGR NEWS

Leaguer Sue Stephens wins 3 first-place awards for excellence in broadcasting. Keep up the good work, Sue.

The debate will be 90 minutes with each of the three candidates having two minutes to answer each question. Pre-submitted questions will be chosen by the moderator in advance. If all pre-submitted questions have been asked within the 90 minutes and time remains, questions from the audience will be taken. Professor of Political Science Jules Gleicher, Ph.D., will moderate with representatives from the League of Women Voters serving as the official time keepers.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES COMMITTEE

Our committee is planning a tour of the Karl Jacobs Center for Science and Math at Rock Valley College. It has been awarded LEED Gold certification and we want to learn more about that building. Some may have toured the building when it first opened but some may not have and we want to provide another opportunity to see how our tax dollar is being spent sustainably. The date is May 22. The time is 10 a.m.. We will meet inside the front door of the KJSM building. Call Diane Cushing to reserve a spot on the tour at 815-877-2386 or email at dc@juno.com. Come one, come all and bring a friend. We will NOT meet in April so our next time together will be the tour. Diane Cushing - EIC - chair.

MEETINGS:

VOTER SERVICE
COMMITTEE: April
4, 8am, Stockholm
Inn

LWVGR BOARD
MEETING: the
second Monday,
North Suburban
Library, 5:00.

HEALTH CARE
COMMITTEE: third
Thursday, 5:30 p.m.
P.A.Peterson

LOCAL
GOVERNMENT:
second Wednesday, at
noon, Katie's Cup

EDUCATION: April
16, 9a.m., Stockholm
Inn

ENVIRONMENTAL
ISSUES: May 22

VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Voter Service has little to report at this time. However, we will be meeting next Thursday, April 4, at 8:00 a.m. at the Stockholm Inn to make plans for the future and will have more news then. Our registration efforts this spring have been minimal, 21 or 22, nothing compared to the 580 we did last fall.

HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE
Elaine Pfluger, Chair

Eighteen League of Women Voters chapters in Illinois participated in the Program Planning for the 2013- 2015 Biennium. Recommendations on the current LWVIL Mental Health Position, developed in the 1980s, is outdated. Our health committee will study, with some other LWV members in the State, the need to clarify behavioral health issues. One of the other issues our committee will be working on will be - Support of the Illinois Children's mental health Act of 2003. The act contains short-term and long-term recommendations for comprehensive, coordinated mental prevention, early intervention and treatment services for children from birth to 18,

and youth ages 19-21 who are transitioning out of key programs.

Join the Health Care Committee and make a difference in Winnebago/Boone County. If you are unable to join our meetings help us advocate for Behavioral Health Care funding in Illinois by contacting our Legislators. Please send an email to elainepfluger818@comcast.net if you want to be informed of pending legislation.

Next meeting: April 18, 2013 5:30-6:30 p.m.

P.A. Peterson Center for Health Library, 1311 Parkview Ave.
Rockford, IL 61107

2013 CALENDAR of LWV Health Care Committee

May 16, 2013
June 20, 2013
July 18, 2013
August 15, 2013
September 19, 2013
October 17, 2013
November 21, 2013
December 19, 2013

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Education Committee met on March 19th. Donnette Nailor from the Regional Office of Education spoke to the committee about Common Core Standards implementation and assessment. Common Core Standards are new learning standards that have been adopted by 46 states and were initiated by the State Governors Association. It is not a federal program, although it has the support of the federal Department of Education.

We began the conversation by asking whether the projected budget cuts and federal sequester cuts would have an impact on the CCS. Despite the cuts to education, implementation will go through as planned. Districts will still have professional development to train teachers how to use the new standards. The CCS are focused on critical thinking skills- teaching students to think mathematically and creatively, for example, rather than focusing strictly on right or

wrong outcomes. Assessments will reflect this, helping to eliminate teaching to the test.

In addition to local and regional training and support, teachers will have access to open source materials via the internet. They will be trained to evaluate the materials and the state board of education is currently reviewing the open source material to find and recommend the best.

The new assessments (PARCC) for the CCS will be implemented beginning in 2014. It will consist of three benchmark tests throughout the year to help teachers evaluate where children strengths and weaknesses are so that learning materials and teaching strategies can be more accurately and effectively planned, ensuring that children continue to progress. These benchmark tests will be followed up with a year end test scheduled as close to the end of the year as possible. Because these standards are so new and the assessments will be so different than those required under NCLB, it is projected that student scores will drop initially before beginning to rise again.

On the legislative front, the LWVIL has recently submitted a witness slip opposing a statewide voucher system (HB 76). This bill creates a 1,000-pupil voucher program funded with revenue from the Illinois Lottery. The Catholic Conference of Illinois supports the bill, which is opposed by the State Board of Education, the Illinois Federation of Teachers, the Illinois Education Association and the American Civil Liberties Union. This would divert \$6.1 M from schools. LWVIL also submitted a letter to several schools boards and the IL Charter Commission opposing a for-profit company that proposes to run K12 virtual charter schools. Governor Quinn's budget has called for a cut of \$400 M to education for Fiscal Year 2014, beginning July 1, 2013. These cuts would affect schools during the 2013-2014 school year. One of the cuts would further reduce the General State Aid that schools depend on. The Illinois Education Funding Advisory Board has recommended that schools receive \$8672 per student (minus local property tax share). The GSA grant per student has never been that high but the Governor's proposed budget would bring the GSA back to 2009 levels, or \$5734 per student. Since 2009, education has been cut by \$900 M.

The Education Committee will meet April 16 at 9 am at the Stockholm Inn. We will be reading and discussing the book 'Hope Against Hope' by Sarah Carr, the story of the reinventing of the New Orleans' school system after Hurricane Katrina.
Respectfully submitted,
Claire Flynn McIntyre

FAREWELL A SUCCESS

Janyce Fadden, former president of the League, is leaving Rockford, the RAEDC, and the weight of the world on her shoulders, for a new life in the deep south (Alabama to be specific) with close family and new friends. We joined the parade of well wishers at a brunch last month filled with good food, conversation and intelligent people.



Farewell to Janyce Fadden

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION ADVOCACY DAY in Springfield has been rescheduled for Thursday, April 11th. The full-day event includes a rally at the Capitol at noon followed by visits with legislators. League members from Illinois are encouraged to participate. The Illinois Council to Prevent Gun Violence is organizing the event. Buses will be departing from various locations. League members are encouraged to sign up.

LWVGR ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, June 1, 9am, Forest Hill Country Club

\$20 reservation to Ann Powell
Elect officers
Approve a budget
Adopt program
Amend by-laws
Informative speaker TBA

LWVGR CONTACTS

President: Karen Fysh - pfeffer43@charter.net
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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.

Forward email



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