



## **VOTER**

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**April 2017**

### **Upcoming League Events:**

#### **How Deficits in Mental Health Care Impact the Children of Winnebago County**

The League of Women Voters invites the public to a discussion concerning the lack of mental and behavioral health care for children in Winnebago County. A panel of local experts will present information to educate the public on the need for increased funding and awareness in this area of social services. The expert panel includes representatives from Rosecrance, NAMI, Group Hope, and the Rockford Public School System. This event is sponsored by Rosecrance, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, and the League of Women Voter Greater Rockford.

**What:** Lack of Behavioral and Mental Health Care for the Children of Winnebago County

**When:** Tuesday, May 16, 6:00 pm.

**Where:** North Suburban Library, 6340 N. 2nd Street, Loves Park

**Cost:** Free. Public is invited.

### **Immigration Information Forums:**

In May, the League will present forums to educate the public regarding the Winnebago County Sheriff's proposal to contact with ICE to use the Winnebago County Jail as a detention center for undocumented immigrants. Although League position does not include the use of local facilities for detention centers, the impact on the community will be such that LWVGR feels it is critical to provide information to the public. Please watch your emails for more information and share widely. Thank you.

## President's Report - Claire McIntyre



It is not often that we get to congratulate League members on running and/or winning political office. While over the years we have had many who have held both statewide and local office, including League member Angie Goral who has been a long time County Board member and continues to represent her district with intelligence and dedication, we now have two more League members to congratulate, Tom McNamara, Rockford's mayor-elect, and Elizabeth Lindquist, newly elected to the Roscoe Township Board of Trustees. In addition, we had two members run excellent campaigns for city aldermen in the April election, Dyanna Chandler Walker and Barb Verni-Lau. Although Dyanna and Barb didn't win, we congratulate them for their dedication to the principles of democracy and hope they make a run at office again.

This year the Legislature is once again considering the Equal Rights Amendment. To date, it has passed out of Senate committee and will be considered for passage by the Senate. Thank you to all who submitted witness slips. Your input often makes or breaks a bill. We'll keep you abreast of how it moves and what steps you can take to help it pass. It's been too long coming. The League was born out of the struggle for women's rights, and visibly working for the ERA's passage is a continuation of the fight for equality, particularly critical in this political climate. Paraphrasing Hillel, the 1st century C.E. rabbinic sage & scholar, "If not us, who? If not now, when?"

June 3 will be our Annual Meeting. We are excited to announce that our speaker will be the new Rockford Mayor and League member, Tom McNamara. He will address his vision for Rockford. More information on the Annual Meeting will be sent out ASAP and the May Voter with the Annual Meeting packet. Please RSVP as soon as possible. We hope as many members as possible attend to hear our annual update, approve our budget, program, officer slate, and welcome Rockford's new Mayor.

June 9-11 will be the LWVIL biennial Convention. Information on the Convention was recently sent out and can also be accessed at [www.lwvil.org](http://www.lwvil.org). Please consider attending. It will be held at Hilton Garden Inn Chicago O'Hare Airport, 2930 S River Road in Des Plaines. The board will pay for half of an LWVGR member's registration. It's fun, an opportunity to meet League members from around the state, to hear interesting speakers at excellent workshops, and learn more about how the League operates.

The Legislature is in full swing. It is unclear if the most pressing issue, the 2018 budget, will pass or if Illinois will enter its third year with no budget. However, aside from the stagnant budget bills, there are many bills that have passed or are close to a third reading and a vote. Our job is to respond to and advocate for those bills the League position supports and oppose those position does not support. When you receive notice of a Time for Action, please take a moment to take action. It doesn't take long and can mean so much.

Claire

## **Committee Reports:**

### **Education Report- Glenda Shaver and Claire McIntyre**

The committee is examining the current LWVIL education position with an eye towards updating it with a concurrence at Convention. As a non-recommended study, the LWVIL board approved examining the CA position to see if it is in its entirety or in part deemed appropriate for updating the IL position. Our next meeting will be on April 18th at 9 am at the Stockholm Inn.

We are also examining whether there is a way to hold a second education committee meeting to accommodate working members or those who find mornings inconvenient. So far one member has indicated an interest in a late afternoon or evening meeting.

### **Environmental Issues Committee: Diane Cushing**

On April 18, 2017 The EIC presented a program, "How the Trump Administration Has or Will Affect the EPA" at the North Suburban Library in Loves Park, IL. Laura Kratz, LWVIL issue specialist for air quality and energy, spoke. There were 33 people in attendance. Laura spoke on the current presidential executive orders and Congressional legislation as well as addressed legislation being considered in Springfield.

### **Communications Report- June Jacob**

With the upcoming election and candidate forums, we decided to try a new approach on our Facebook page to advertising events. For a nominal amount, the post can be 'boosted'; that is, it goes out to a wider identified audience that the page might not reach otherwise (the administrator sets the budget and number of days the post is boosted). In one case, the boost was worth the money, driving the post to a far larger audience and getting a positive response.

In the other case, we boosted the post because of the short planning time and advertising period. It's hard to tell how well boosting this particular post affected participation, although there were people in attendance who are not normally attendees.

Using this as a method of advertising needs to be further evaluated before using it again.

### **Local Government- Paula Lind**

Local Government is recovering from a very busy Election Season. A big thank you to all who helped and attended candidate forums!

Local Government meets the second Wednesday of each month at Katies' Cup at Noon.

The committee is working on a fall, fundraising event that highlights "Human Trafficking." Anyone interested in helping organize this event is encouraged to join our monthly meetings.

## **Additional Reports:**

### **Winnebago County Mental Health Advisory Steering Committee: Tricia Cratty-Sweeny**

Tricia Cratty-Sweeny continues to represent the League at the Winnebago County Mental Health Steering Committee. She reports the committee has been evaluating the last attempt to pass a

708 board in order to plan for a successful upcoming campaign. Workgroups have been identified and will move forward as the committee firms up its intent and recommendations.

### **LWVGR Presents a Question and Answer Session with 16<sup>th</sup> District Congressman Adam Kinzinger**



On Saturday, April 22, the League sponsored a Q&A session with Rep. Kinzinger at Rock Valley College. In March, League members met with Rep. Kinzinger and suggested we host a town hall meeting for him using the League forum model and in April he agreed. Working with his staff and the RVC staff, the League organized and promoted the evening. Eric Wilson, news anchor for WTVO, moderated and did an excellent job in encouraging the Representative to expand on his answers. League members collected and sorted the almost 200 questions submitted by the audience of

500+ people. One of the key issues of audience concern was the Republican repeal and replace proposal for the Affordable Care Act. The Representative favors repeal and replace but responded to the evident concern of the audience, which mostly favored retaining the current ACA, by saying that he would bring those concerns back to Washington with him. Thanks to all who helped, in particular to Diane Cushing who sat in on the phone conference calls with the Congressman's staff and who worked with RVC.

<http://www.rrstar.com/news/20170422/kinzinger-constituents-disagree-on-health-care-agree-on-trumps-tax-returns-at-town-hall>

[http://www.mystateline.com/news/video/rep-adam-kinzinger-town-hall-meeting\\_20170423030800/697516910](http://www.mystateline.com/news/video/rep-adam-kinzinger-town-hall-meeting_20170423030800/697516910)