

LWV LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®
of Greater Rockford
VOTER

July 2017

**You are invited. Please bring a
friend!**

LWV LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®
of Greater Rockford

Invites you to our

1922 **95th** **2017**

**Anniversary
Celebration!**

**Friday, July 21
6-8pm**

**Ethnic Heritage Museum
1129 South Main Street
Rockford**

Refreshments • Speakers • Historical Exhibit

Please park at the Graham-Ginestra House parking lot

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:

lvvgr22@gmail.com

Facebook:

LeagueofWomenVotersofGreat
erRockfordIllinois - (one word).

Twitter

#LWVGR

Website:

<http://www.lvvgr.org>

Event and meeting calendar
available.

Listserver:

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

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.

Paypal:

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

Tell your friends!

Do you know someone who
might be interested in joining?
Please introduce them to our
social media.

LWVGR Mailing Address:

4990 East State Street
Rockford, IL 61108

President's Report

Claire McIntyre & Chris Hiltrop LWVGR Presidents



Illinois finally has a budget! Thank you to all who made calls asking your legislators to support a fully funded budget with sufficient new revenue to meet the needs of Illinois citizens and to begin to pay down the \$15 Billion backlog of bills the state currently owes.

As you will read later in the Voter, while education will receive an appropriation, the money cannot be released without the Governor's signature on an Evidence Based Model bill. SB 1 has been passed but is being held in the Senate due to the Governor's threat to veto it. You will be asked to take action on this and other bills sitting on the Governor's desk in the next couple of weeks. Please take a moment to make those calls or send those emails or letters. We are only effective advocates if we make those contacts. Thank you.



In August the Board will meet to plan for our upcoming League year. Monthly meetings begin in September and the topics we'll cover will be diverse and meaningful.

While all topics are important, please make special note of the October meeting, which will focus on Human Trafficking. Yes, this is a real problem for Winnebago County and RAASE is reaching out throughout the community to educate the public on the dangers and signs to look for to help prevent it. LWVGR's Local Government Committee and AAUW will partner on presenting this important topic.

Thank you to all who attended our Annual Meeting in June. I think we all enjoyed hearing from Rockford's new mayor, Tom McNamara. He focused on some of the challenges (such as the burgeoning pension costs) Rockford is facing but also on some of its successes, such as the growing cooperation between the city and the county. We look forward to Tom's tenure and wish him great success.

Congratulations to our newest committee- immigration. It has already seen action as it worked to host a discussion on the proposed immigration detention center and advocated for the county to reconsider its plan to utilize the county jail in such a manor. With a great deal of effort by a coalition of immigrant advocates, the plan was scrapped.

We look forward to working with all of you again this year.

Chris and Claire

Communications Committee

Teresa Hill, chair

The Communications committee meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month at Katie's Cup, 502 7th Street, Rockford, IL 61104. If you have any questions, please contact Teresa.

Education Committee

Glenda Shaver, chair

Education met July 11 at Meg's on Alpine. The committee decided to shelve the update of the LWVIL education position until further notice, focusing instead on the immediate need of getting SB 1, the Evidence Based Funding School Reform, signed by the Governor or, failing that, convincing our legislators to help override his veto.

Although a fully funded, full year budget has passed the General Assembly which appropriates funding for schools, that money cannot be released unless SB 1 is signed into law. LWVGR recently co-sponsored an

informational forum. Ralph Martire from the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability and Ginger Ostros of Advance Illinois spoke on both the need for the bill and what it entails.

The committee had decided to work in concert with local leaders and organizations to continue educating the public and putting pressure on the governor and legislators to ensure SB 1 becomes law.

As details become available, we will pass on to you what action needs to be taken.

The next committee meeting will be August 14 at 4:15 PM at Meg's on Alpine. New committee members are welcome to attend.

Environmental Issues Committee

Shawn Choinard, chair

The next EIC meeting will be August 22, at Katie's Cup the 4th Tuesday, at 11:30. Shawn is considering moving the time to noon. She is hoping to set up a Facebook discussion page where she can post material relevant to environment issues. If you wish to be involved, please contact Shawn.

Healthcare Committee

Elaine Pfluger, chair

The Health Care Committee meets on the 2nd Thursday of the month @ 12 Noon.
Location: Culvers, 235 Phelps Ave., Rockford. IL 61108

Local Government Committee

Paula Lind, chair

Members discussed at length the October 4th Luncheon Event. It was agreed, that the Luncheon scheduled for October 4th at the Radisson will be canceled.

Members agreed to work on an event with our State Senators and Representatives that would highlight the legislative side of the issue of Human Trafficking. Paula will cancel the Radisson.

Faye will arrange another meeting with RAASE to discuss arranging an event with a different angle – solutions and legislative initiatives. Paula will contact Rep. Leticia Wallace to coordinate a legislative meeting.

Members discussed the potential for an October 4th evening event at the Unitarian Church with Legislative Leaders, Elected Officials, Community Leaders, etc.

NEXT MEETING WILL BE AUGUST 16TH AT KATIE'S CUP

Immigration Committee

Vacant, chair

The immigration committee will meet for the first time Thursday, the 20th, at 5:15 at Meg's on Alpine.

Sunshine Committee

Alice Heath, chair

Please remember to send Alice information about League members whom we might wish to send a congratulatory, get well, condolences or other type of note.

Member Services

Diane Cushing, chair

The Membership Committee will be meeting the second Tuesday of each month at 11:30 at Del Rio restaurant. We are looking for new ways to reach out to new members and also helping members to become active once they have joined. We will be printing new brochures and "Save the Date" cards for dates of our monthly meetings at North Suburban Library. Anyone is welcome to join us for lunch at Del Rio! Contact: dlcfec@gmail.com or 815-543-2513.

Voter Services

Susan Janson, chair

The next Voter Services committee meeting is at 9:30 on August 3rd at Stockholm Inn. We will be discussing the upcoming election-the Primary on March 20, 2018 as well as plans for the year. We welcome everyone to join us.

Campaign Finance Reform

Vacant, chair

The chair is vacant. If you are interested, please contact Claire.

Special Edition on School Funding Plus education committee meeting info

Although the House passed a full year spending and revenue budget for FY 2018, Governor Rauner has vowed to veto it. As the budget includes SB 1 as the spending vehicle for schools, without its passage, schools are still in danger of not opening as appropriated funds cannot be spent without passage of SB 1 or another evidence based funding method.

Speaker Madigan has said that he supports SB 1 but is open to changes in it. Until LWV knows what those changes are, we will continue to support SB 1 as written. Governor Rauner and the Republican caucus believe SB 1 contains a handout for Chicago schools.

However, LWVGR, in cooperation with Advance Illinois and Rockford Public Schools, presented a discussion on SB 1. Ginger Ostros, executive director of Advance Illinois, and Ralph Martire, Executive Director of the Center for Tax and Budget Accountability, spoke on the specifics of the bill and addressed the governor's concern that it contains a \$200 million bailout for Chicago.

In essence, the \$200 million the governor objects to provides funding for pension costs to CPS. It is the only district in the state which is not on the TRS pension system. Without that \$200 million, pension money would come out of CPS's education fund (i.e. classrooms).

As Ralph Martire pointed out, you can't spend the same dollars twice- for both pensions and education. Without that money, CPS loses funding in the new funding formula.

However, the governor chooses to frame it as a Chicago giveaway.

For those of you who wish to know more about SB 1, please go to:

<http://www.advanceillinois.org/2017/05/explore-state-education-data-understand-inequity-new-interactive-data-visualization-features/>.

Call Reps. Cabello and Sosnowski and urge them to vote for the bill should it return to the House. If Rep. Wallace is your representative, please thank her for her support.

A Brief Synopsis on the 58th LWVIL Convention June 9-11, 2017 Making Democracy Work- Shaping the Future

In addition to the usual convention work of planning for the 2017-19 Biennial, convention attendees were asked to consider the role of race and inclusion in our perceptions, our organizational voice, and public policy. This is a discussion that LWVGR needs to have.

Speakers included LWVUS CEO Wylecia Wiggs Harris, who addressed diversity in the League and Kyra Kyles, former Editor-in-Chief of Ebony Magazine who spoke on Changing the Narrative in Discussion of Race.

Wiggs Harris asked that we ask ourselves, do we have images of inclusion? Have we had a discussion on diversity? Are we prepared to diversify? What does that mean for the way we do business? Are we welcoming? How does that impact our vision of 'the League way'? Is that way the only way to approach who we are, what we do and how we address the future?

Increased media programming and reporting on race and racial inequities have created greater mainstream awareness on these issues. The time to engage in meaningful discourse on these issues is now.

She also charged us to unabashedly reclaim the LWV's role in the American election process by 2020. (One small change in making elections and election information more accessible shared by the Harvey-Dalton League- having translators at forums.)

Convention decisions:

In 2018, the Per Member Payment to LWVIL will increase by \$2 per person. As we pledged when we held our fundraiser, we will keep our membership fees at their current level for the foreseeable future. It will decrease funds available to our operating fund by \$2 per person, meaning our individual membership will in 2018 return \$11 to our League's operating fund instead of the current \$13.

Passed:

LWVIL now has a higher education position which will allow us to advocate on behalf of public colleges and universities as well as on such things as MAP grants for needy students.

A non-recommended program item was approved to update LWVIL's Criminal Justice position, last updated in 1995. If anyone is interested in serving on the study group, please let me know and I will put you in touch with Issues Specialist Janet Kittlaus.

A Will of Convention was approved to ask LWVUS at the 2018 convention to make the abolition of the Electoral College a high priority item for the 2018-20 biennium.

Directions to the new LWVIL Board of Directors included directing the Board to write to the Governor, four legislative leaders, and all legislators demanding that a balanced budget be passed, among other directions.

All current positions were readopted and Action Foci for the 2017-19 Biennium determined. These foci were expanded this year due to the current administration's attack on many of them. They include:

- Election laws, including Voting Rights, Redistricting, and Campaign Finance
- Environmental Issues
- ERA
- Fiscal Policies with a particular focus on Education and Human Services
- Gun Violence Prevention
- Healthcare and Reproductive Choices
- Immigration

Look to much of our work focusing on these issues in the coming months and over the next two years.

In addition, several of the position corrections were made, adopting many of the changes that Rockford recommended in its planning session. (Thank you to all who attended our January meeting to slog through our positions).

Updates to the LWVIL By-Laws were made. If you keep track of these, I would be happy to share them with you.

Convention workshops provided an opportunity for League members to share ideas and update our skills. I have a number of ideas to bring to our committees and the LWVGR board.

Bonnie Kay Cox of the Jo Daviess County League is the new LWVIL president. Many of us are familiar with Bonnie and she brings great intelligence, energy, and ideas to the job. With the new LWVIL board, I expect that she will make a great impact as we move forward.

Friendly Reminders: Dues

Yearly dues were due July 1. If you have not had an opportunity to send your dues in yet, please send a check to Martha Pippitt at 3703 Sherbrooke Rd., Rockford, 61114.

You may also pay by going online at http://www.lwvgr.org/join_form.html

Dues are:

\$75.00 one member. \$110.00 two members same household. Other available membership categories:

- Young Member (35 years of age and under) \$40.00
- Student Member (Full-time High School or College w/ Student I.D.) \$40.00
- Carrie Chapman Catt \$125.00
- Susan B. Anthony \$150.00
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton \$200.00
- Julia Lathrop \$300.00

Upcoming Dates:

- BOARD MEETING: August 8, 2017 @ 5:30 pm
At the home of Co-President Christina Hiltrop, 2606 Point O' Woods, Rockford, 61114
- VOTER SERVICE COMMITTEE: August 3rd @ 9:30 am
Mary's Market, 2636 McFarland Road, Rockford, IL 61107
- MEMBER SERVICES: August 8th @ 11:30 am
Del Rio, 1201 Sandy Hollow Rd, Rockford, IL 61109
- COMMUNICATIONS: 2nd Tuesday of the month
Katie's Cup, 502 7th Street, Rockford, IL 61104
- ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES: August 22nd @ 11:30am
Katie's Cup, 502 7th Street, Rockford, IL 61104
- EDUCATION COMMITTEE: August 14th @ 4:15 pm
Meg's Daily Grind, 1141 N. Alpine Rd., Rockford, IL 61107
- HEALTH CARE COMMITTEE: 2nd Thursday of the month, 12 Noon
Culvers, 235 Phelps Ave., Rockford. IL 61108
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT: August 16th, at noon Katie's Cup
502 7th Street, Rockford, IL 61104.
- IMMIGRATION COMMITTEE: August 20th @ 5:15 pm
Meg's Daily Grind, 1141 N. Alpine Rd., Rockford, IL 61107
- LWV MONTHLY MEETING: Tuesday, September 19, 2017
6-8 PM North Suburban Library, 6340 North Second Street, Loves Park, IL
The speaker will be an expert in their field. TBA
Refreshments will be served.