



Volume 69, Issue 4

January 2014

JANUARY PROGRAM: YES FOR INDEPENDENT MAPS

Putting Voters Back in Charge

It is time for voters to raise their voices and demand fair, honest, effective Illinois government. The first major step on the road to fundamental change in Illinois is to establish an **independent** process for drawing legislative maps. That is why **Yes for Independent Maps** is working to place a redistricting ballot measure on the November 2014 ballot.

Join us and special guest Michael Kolenc and Patricia Landes. Michael is the state-wide campaign manager of YES for INDEPENDENT MAPS; Patricia is from Peoria who joined League specifically to work on this effort.

Petitions will be available to sign and pick up; we will also provide a notary to certify completed petitions.

For more information on the independent map campaign please see the website:

<http://independentmaps.org/>

13th Annual

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Countywide Celebration

Friday, January 17th, 2014 at 4PM

Hilton Garden Inn

1501 South Neil Street

The League is a co-sponsor, please consider attending. The event is free and open to the public.

JANUARY GENERAL MEETINGS - *yes, two of them. Come to one or both.*

Yes for Independent Maps

Evening:

WHEN: TUESDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 2014

TIME: 7:00PM

LOCATION: CHAMPAIGN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Noontime Tape Replay:

WHEN: THURSDAY, JANUARY 23RD, 2014

TIME: 11:30AM - 1:30PM

LOCATION: CLARK-LINDSEY ACTIVITY ROOM

LWVCC Board - 2013-2014

President:	Barbara Wysocki bwysocki16@gmail.com
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2 nd VP (Program):	Theresa Michelson thmichelson@gmail.com
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Treasurer:	Sandy Volk sandyvolk803@gmail.com
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Voter Service Chair:	Carole Rebeiz caroler57@comcast.net
Webmaster:	Corrie Proksa corrieproksa@hotmail.com
Nominating Committee:	Chair: Lois Gullerud Jan Anderson, Gerri Kirchner

Do you have friends or acquaintances who might be interested in the League? Email Sue Phillips at suephillips1018@att.net or phone her at 359-8818 with names and addresses and we will send them *the Voter* for the next three months.

LWVIL

2014 ISSUES BRIEFING

Mark your calendars: the annual LWVIL Issues Briefing. This year's briefing will feature a plenary session on redistricting and another on fracking (hydraulic fracturing) and a targeted helpful workshop on the getting the word out on graduated income tax.

WHEN: Saturday, February 1st, 2014 at 8:30AM

WHERE: University Center, 525 South State Street,
Chicago

Visit www.lwvil.org for the registration form.

Please contact Debbie Rugg if you are planning to attend to coordinate rides, 217-621-7180 and debrugg@aol.com

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

League of Women Voters of Champaign County

Dear Members,

The cold and darkness of winter offers time to take stock of our accomplishments and matters still in progress. There is much to consider.

2013 commemorated the centennial of women suffrage in Illinois! Suffrage not only legitimized women's activity and interest in governance and public service, but challenges us to do more – educate ourselves and the community, encourage and engage citizens in their political processes. League's mission needs you to fulfill its purpose; what can you do?

Firstly, in 2014, League will co-sponsor candidate forums to inform us about those interested in public office in advance of March primaries. League needs you to attend the forums and ask questions.

League views and supports GRIT and the Independent Map referenda as significant reform in Illinois. The former invests all of us in the method of financing our state while the latter asks citizens to gather as an Independent Commission to determine legislative districts. League needs you to circulate petitions.

League has invested itself in building the future of jails and justice in Champaign County. We've done three programs on this topic, and we'll do another program in the fall as the discussion continues. League needs you to volunteer fresh eyes and ears on this complicated subject.

League's court-watching and observer pursuits extend our long-standing commitment to transparent government. Both require a strong League presence, a reporting system, an action component – all demanding that we be present to observe and report on the activities of governmental bodies. League needs more court watchers and observers.

Sincerely,

Barbara Wysocki

LWVCC President



LWVCC says YES for INDEPENDENT MAPS!

YES for INDEPENDENT MAPS -- the state-wide petition drive to secure a constitutional amendment regarding drawing legislative districts every ten years by an independent citizens commission rather than the controlling legislative political party -- is in full gear! League supports this initiative, recognizing this change as a means to achieve greater transparency, honesty, and grassroots involvement in the legislative process. LWVIL is working for a second time and with a non-partisan network to obtain the necessary 298,000 signatures.

Our League meeting on January 21st will focus on this campaign with guests Michael Kolenc and Patricia Landes. Michael is the state-wide campaign manager of YES for INDEPENDENT MAPS; Patricia is from Peoria who joined League specifically to work on this effort. Petitions will be available to sign and pick up; we will also provide a notary to certify completed petitions. Join League at the Champaign Public Library at 7:00 for this informational meeting.

Statewide, the campaign goes well. Since September, twenty-five Illinois communities have been organized to promote the referendum, circulate petitions, and secure signatures. So far, the count is on target.

And in Champaign County? An active group has emerged consisting of LWV members: Wysocki, Volk, and Michelson along with Trent Shepherd, Diane & Ed Wilhite Al Nudo, Steve Beckett, Shirley Splittstoesser, and Sherry Steigmann to coordinate activities. Others too numerous to mention have signed or sought petitions.

In three months, 2703 signatures have been collected from Champaign County; 786 alone in the first half of December. All of us have been impressed with the popular enthusiasm for this amendment – many seeing it as an antidote for the corruption in Illinois government.

Local activities include: a presence at Farmers Market, tailgate parties, and civic organizations. We've met with the Chamber of Commerce who now have petitions available in their lobby to sign, pick up, and/or notarize. They are approaching member-businesses to do the same. In addition, the Chamber is working through its regional council to coordinate with other areas to promote the drive. Beckett & Webber has provided space for obtaining and notarizing petitions on the 1st Saturday of February and March beginning at 10:00 a.m.

On campus, Lex Tate's journalism class developed a marketing plan to organize UI and Parkland student groups. Implementation will begin in mid-January. The LWV Student Unit has already been circulating petitions both on campus and in their home communities.

What can YOU do?

- 1) Check out the campaign's website (www.IndependentMaps.org) for more information.
- 2) Circulate a petition (15 signatures to the page) among family, friends, and/or other organizations to which you belong
- 3) Encourage other organizations to invite a local speaker with YES for INDEPENDENT MAPS to make the case for this referendum
- 4) Be energetic; only hard work will encourage people to sign on and get us to the 298,000 signatures needed

A MESSAGE FROM THE STATE LEAGUE

Take Action
Yes for Independent Maps Campaign

Are you ready to help make Illinois state government more transparent and accountable and stop the process enabling one political party to gerrymander districts in its favor? Then request a petition from Yes for Independent Maps at www.IndependentMaps.org or email Scott at ssiebel@independentmaps.org. Ask friends and family to sign the petition.

LWVIL is supporting the nonpartisan grassroots campaign Yes for Independent Maps to place the Illinois Independent Redistricting Amendment on the November 2014 ballot.

The 1970 Illinois Constitution's process of drawing state legislative districts has led to one political party having control of drawing all of Illinois's legislative districts, enabling that party to gerrymander districts in its favor, often enabling it to control these safe, incumbent-protected districts for 10 years. The Illinois Independent Redistricting Amendment would provide for a restructured, independent redistricting commission to draw the maps.

You may also contact Kathy Nesburg or Paula Lawson at issues@lwvil.org with questions about League involvement.

Membership Form – League of Women Voters of Champaign County

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Include this email address in the League Membership Directory? YES NO (please circle one)

Please circle the type of membership: Individual Dues* \$65.00 #New Individual Dues \$32.50
Student Dues* \$5.00 Household Dues* \$97.50 #New Household Dues \$48.75

Dues for new members, for one year, are half the amount paid by continuing members.

* Dues and donations are not tax deductible as charitable contributions from your federal income tax return. You may, however, make a tax deductible contribution to the Education Fund (of LWVCC) by writing a separate check made payable to "LWVIL Education Fund". Please include "Champaign County" on the memo line of your check to the Education Fund.

Check your Voter mailing label for the month your membership dues are payable.

Please make checks payable to LWVCC, and mail to: Sue Phillips, 1018 W William, Champaign, IL 61821

Graduated Income Tax Amendment Update

By May 4, 2014, Illinois legislators must make a critical decision- whether or not to vote yes to legislation permitting a referendum amending the Illinois Constitution on the November 2014 general election ballot. This amendment would allow a fair tax instead of the current flat tax. Support for a fairer, more sustainable revenue system has long been an LWVIL position. In this workshop, Midwest Academy trainer and strategist Kate Barthelme will lead participants through strategic planning and strategies for organizing which will help League members effectively work to get this crucial legislation passed. Focus will be on influencing legislators to support the graduated rate income tax amendment. These strategies can be applied to other League advocacy efforts.

Happy 101st Birthday to Helen Levin!



Thank you for all the time and work you have given to the League over the years Helen. We hope you have a wonderful birthday.

By-Laws Review Committee

The LWVCC Board has established a committee to review the By-laws of our League.

We are looking for volunteers for this Committee. The Committee will report to the Board and any recommended changes will be up for vote at the Annual Meeting in May. There will be a few meetings, but the Committee members' commitment will time limited. Discussion of By-laws can be exciting! Please consider volunteering for this Committee.

Interested? Contact Trisha Crowley at tcrowley9491@gmail.com.

LWVCC 2013-2014 Programs

September: The Affordable Care Act: Its Impact on Local Health Care Providers

October: Illinois: Time to Pay off the Credit Card

November: Champaign County Criminal Justice Review

December: Social and Final Celebration of our 100th Anniversary

January: Yes for Independent Maps

February: Pre-trial Services in the Champaign County Criminal Justice System

March: Observer Reports

April: Observer Reports

May: Annual Meeting

June: LWVUS Convention Report

Check our website for updates:
www.lwvchampaigncounty.org



Find us on Facebook!

League of Women Voters of Champaign County

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of Champaign County
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Urbana, IL 61803-0201

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

GENERAL MEETING – EVENING SESSION

WHEN: TUESDAY, JANUARY 21ST, 2014

TIME: 7:00PM

LOCATION: CHAMPAIGN PUBLIC LIBRARY

TOPIC: YES FOR INDEPENDENT MAPS

GENERAL MEETING–REPLAY OF 1/21 MEETING

WHEN: THURSDAY, JANUARY 23RD, 2014

TIME: 11:30AM - 1:30PM

LOCATION: CLARK-LINDSEY ACTIVITY ROOM

TOPIC: YES FOR INDEPENDENT MAPS

BOARD MEETING

WHEN: TUESDAY, JANUARY 28TH, 2014

TIME: 9AM

LOCATION: CHAMPAIGN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Champaign County
League of Women
Voters would like to
wish everyone a
Happy New Year!

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