

Peoria ACLU News Spring 2018

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ANNUAL MEETING AND BANQUET 5.10.18

The Peoria ACLU chapter's 57th annual meeting and banquet begins with a 5:30 p.m. social hour on Thurs., May 10 at the IVY Club in Peoria. Dinner takes place around 6:30 p.m.

Reservations are due by May 3. See enclosed invitation. Go to <http://aclupeoria.org> for additional invitation forms.



Guest Speaker:
CELESTE STEWART STACK

She will speak on:
Civil Rights Violations and Wrongful Convictions

Celeste Stewart Stack is an attorney with extensive experience litigating constitutional violations including wrongful convictions, police misconduct, psychiatric issues, and conflict of interest cases. She worked in the Cook County State's Attorney's office in Chicago for three decades where she held various supervisory positions for 15 years, including supervisor of the Conviction Integrity Unit which was created based on the organization set out in her application for federal grant funds. As the Supervisor of the Conviction Integrity Unit and the Special Litigation Unit, her units were responsible for reviewing and litigating 1,000 post-conviction petitions. She assisted Chicago attorney Andrew Hale on the Cleve Heidelberg wrongful-conviction case as well as other Central Illinois post-conviction and civil rights cases, and she recently opened an office for Hale Law in Peoria at 456 Fulton Street.

COMING EVENT:

ANNUAL PICNIC, June 26 in Lower Bradley Park. 6 pm. For all members and friends. Bring table service and a dish to share. Lively discussions!

Keep up with what's going on with the Peoria chapter. Sign up for e-mail notices at khofbauer@comcast.net. Visit our Facebook page.



Peoria Chapter ACLU Officers, 2017-2018

PRESIDENT:

Jeff Johnson

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Newsletter contributions are always welcome, but may be edited. Financial contributions to defray publication costs also are welcome.

ACLU Meetings

Open to all members and friends

The Board of Directors of the Peoria ACLU meets at 7 p.m. on the 4th Tuesday of every month (except June and Dec.) at Universalist Unitarian Church, 3000 W. Richwoods Blvd., Peoria. Discussion meetings are held on the 2nd Thurs. of the month. Sign up below for notices of these meetings.

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because freedom can't protect itself

BUSINESS MEETING:

The Business Meeting will include presentation of awards and election of officers and directors. The Sam Belfer Award will be presented to Dr. Rahmat Na'Allah and Judge Lisa Wilson.

Dr. Rahmat Na'Allah is a family physician practicing at UnityPoint Health, and she is on the faculty at University of Illinois College of Medicine at Peoria. She believes access to health care is a basic human right and all women should have access to reproductive health care.

Judge Lisa Wilson has been an Associate Judge in the Tenth Judicial Circuit since 2009. She is the chair of the Tenth Judicial Court Pro Bono Committee and the Tenth Judicial Circuit Family Violence Coordinating Council and a leader among many other organizations.

OFFICERS TO BE NOMINATED ARE:

President: Jimena Lopez
Vice President: Yolanda Riley
Secretary: Cheryl Hofbauer
Treasurer: Ken Hofbauer

DIRECTORS, TWO-YEAR TERM:

Brandes Cayson	Julia Hoffman
Marilyn Copp	Jeffrey Johnson
Nina Gougis	Deric Kimler
Ryan Hidden	Benjamin Thornton

Officers and directors also can be nominated from the floor.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE:

At all levels of the ACLU, from national to the ACLU Illinois to our Peoria-area chapter, the organization has faced both changes and challenges since early 2017. One member compared it to a prize chef refining a masterpiece recipe: "We've added and subtracted seasonings, undergone trial-and-error tweaks, even had multiple taste tests." And like any good recipe the final dish is always evolving. It now seems appropriate time to review our "ingredients."

RESISTANCE ... In many ways, this has been our key ingredient in the past year – and it is (and must remain) shaken, not stirred. Much more this past year than during preceding years, the ACLU of Illinois and our own chapter took a far more active role in rallies, marches and social media to raise our profile and take positive action where it's been demand-ed. The recipe will not cook itself – we must be proactive. We cannot wait for changes to happen TO us; we must stir the pot.

PERSISTENCE ... This ingredient is to be mixed with equal parts of resistance. The Trump administration has flaunted its efforts to find new ways to recreate an older America, when Jim Crow was not only accepted, but enforced. The days of assuming America will no longer tolerate the bigotry and injustice of Jim Crow are over! True racial and religious/non-religious equality is a slow-cooked Crock Pot recipe, demanding constant stirring and tasting. In our world, this means increasing our visibility and holding elected officials accountable. As our past President Elaine Hopkins said: "The enemies of freedom never sleep, so too, we must remain awake" and ever alert.

ALLIANCES ... A quality meal cannot consist only of the main dish. To be successful, side dishes, desserts and drinks are needed. The Peoria-area ACLU has significantly increased its interaction with other nonpartisan groups to help advance our mutual goals by partnering with organizations such as the League of Women Voters, Black Justice Project, area NOW chapters, Whole Women's Health, Central Illinois Healthy Community Alliance, Peoria Proud, Peoria No Ban/No Wall, the Universalist Unitarian Church, Save Riverfront Park, Change Peoria, and several others.

TRANSITION ... As the recipe begins to boil, be flexible to unexpected changes in the consistency of ingredients; be sure the ingredients are mixing well and cooking together, rather than any one overpowering the others. Following our 2017 annual dinner, the chapter implemented a new set of bylaws and our board experienced several changes with the election of several new board members, and three of four offices changing hands. Within two months of assuming my new role as chapter President, unforeseen health issues came to call on my mother and me. Nevertheless, with a more-than-capable VP filling in for my occasional absences, and with a mix of both experienced and energetic newer board members, the chapter forged forward with urgency and direction. We've seen a notable increase in involvement from our regular chapter membership, too.

The past year has seen real successes (IL HB-40, HB-4469, our ACLU Town Hall event) and more. To be sure, the ACLU has also faced challenges – by the administration in DC, as well as at local levels. I remind myself that our U.S. Constitution remains a groundbreaking document and dynamic tool with the ACLU its most prominent defender. Like-wise, I look confidently at the future our Peoria-area chapter, as I leave my role in excellent hands and knowing we have outstanding support from the ACLU of Illinois

— Jeff Johnson
President, ACLU of Illinois, Peoria Chapter