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McLean County Republicans

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Jeanne Ives Addresses the MCGOP

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Former member of Illinois House of Representatives Jeanne Ives (44th District, 2013-2018) gave a super-charged talk to about 60 members of McLean County Republicans in Bloomington on August 22nd. Her focus was on the activities of the Democrat party in Illinois and what Republicans can do to turn the state red. She rallied the troops to take the next crucial steps in the process.

Ives pointed out how radical Illinois Democrats have become and how this state has become “crazy,” even in relation to other liberal-progressive states such as New York and California. She described the Democrat modus operandi by stating, “This is the place where bad ideas become law, where the legislature takes away your rights and forces you to go to court to take them back.”

She pointed out that only by informing the voters about what’s *really* happening can Republicans expect to make a change.

“We win by informing people about what’s going on. Democrats never tell the whole story. For instance, they tell you that they support schools but will not tell you that they also support multi-gender bathrooms,” she noted. “The better informed the public, the better we will do in future elections.” She went on to say, “Politics matters! We are here because we care about our community and our nation... We have to win elections. We have an important mission.”

Ms. Ives then pointed out specific cases where Democrats in Illinois have worked to usurp the rights of the people. She pointed out SB 1909 – the Deceptive Practices Act that operates against pro-life pregnancy centers. “This bill is not needed and is not even constitutional.” She spoke about the Doxing Act (HB 2954) recently passed into law. This “incredibly aggressive bill” is designed to mute freedom of speech. “No other state has such a law.” Ives also pointed out the BIPA (Biometric Information Privacy Act) and noted that it, too, needs to be changed. She pointed out that the SAFE-T Act, with its no-cash bail, is another radical piece of legislation that no other state has. Ultimately, Ives said she must conclude that “Illinois is not a moderate state.” She pointed out that Rep. Lance Yednock, a Democrat (76th District, Ottawa), is “leaving the Illinois legislature because he sees the Democrat Party as being too radicle.”

During a Q&A session, Jeanne pointed out that the only way Republicans will make a difference in Illinois is by the hard work of precinct committee persons, block captains, and interested others. “We must call, email, knock, and text” to let conservative and persuadable voters know what’s going on and get out the vote. “We must make it easy to vote. We must turn out the voters. We must encourage citizens to sign up for permanent vote-by-mail and promote early voting. We must ask for their vote.” At the same time, she pointed out that we must build personal networks and get our conservative friends to vote and for them to encourage their conservative friends to vote. Ives was featured as a special speaker event for new and potential dues-paying members of the MCGOP.

Following the event’s conclusion, coordinator and membership chairperson Connie Beard



Jeanne Ives

2023 Membership Drive—Join McLean County Republicans!

McLean County Republicans officially kicked off their 2023 Membership Campaign with a by-invitation-only reception at the home of Connie and David Beard on Sunday, July 23rd. More than 60 attended this event, and each person was surrounded by like-minded individuals who shared common conservative values and a passion for politics. Several well-known political leaders and candidates attended, including Rep. Darin LaHood, Sen. Tom Bennett, Rep. Dan Caulkins, and candidate Regan Deering.

During this event, former MCGOP Chair Connie Beard and SURUS consultant CJ Gallo explained the membership program's goals, the various membership levels, and the benefits associated with each. The accompanying diagrams illustrate reasons for joining the MCGOP and the exclusive membership benefits at multiple levels. It should be noted that MCGOP memberships apply only to individuals, not couples or families.

JOIN THE PARTY

The McLean County Republican Party Membership Program
brings together a community of dedicated conservatives that learn, socialize, and celebrate together in support of our mission to turn McLean County and the State of Illinois Red.



Build Community
You'll be surrounded by like minded individuals who share your values + passion for politics.



Get Exclusive Benefits
Members get insider access to information and invitations to events that others will not.



Make a Difference
Your contribution will support our efforts to boost Republican voter turnout + win elections.

Choose your Membership:

BASIC

GENERAL
(Best Value)

PREMIUM

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS			
	BASIC \$120 Annually \$10 Monthly	GENERAL \$240 Annually \$20 Monthly	PREMIUM \$1,200 Annually \$100 Monthly
MEMBER NEWSLETTER	✓	✓	✓
ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING	✓	✓	✓
REPUBLICAN MUG	✓	✓	✓
SPECIAL SPEAKER EVENTS	X	✓	✓
BOOKS + DISCUSSIONS	X	✓	✓
FILM SCREENINGS	X	✓	✓
PREFERRED SEATING AT LINCOLN REGAN DINNER	X	X	✓
ELECTED OFFICIAL ROUNDTABLES	X	X	✓
SPECIAL RECOGNITION (OPTIONAL)	X	X	✓
		Best Value!	

*Memberships apply only to individuals, not couples or families

At one point, Beard noted, “Now more than ever, it’s important that Republicans provide support to the recruitment of new candidates, the integrity of our election system, and communication of truth in a world of misinformation.” She continued, “Our new membership drive provides an easy way to support the party and even comes with perks.”

By becoming a dues-paying member of the MCGOP, you can contribute to supporting our efforts to boost Republican turnout and win elections. You can also take advantage of opportunities to meet in small group settings well-known political leaders. The first such Special Speaker Event was on August 22nd, with the appearance of Illinois State Rep. and radio personality Jeanne Ives. Her presence exemplified one of the membership benefits for our general and premium levels. (Read more about this event below.)

Bear further noted, “Here in McLean County, the hard work of ensuring good government is done through the McLean County Republican Party. For less than a lunch at McDonald’s, a difference can be made in the future of our county and our state.” During the July 23rd event at the Beard home and August summer picnic, numerous members took advantage of the opportunity to “up” their memberships, with several becoming general and premium members. If you are interested in becoming a dues-paying

member of MCGOP, then visit our website at the following URL: <https://www.mcleancountyrepublicans.org/membership>

According to Connie Beard, former MCGOP Chair and new Fundraising chairperson, “Because the Lincoln-Regan Dinner is late October this year, we will try to screen a film in September as part of the General and Premier Membership drive. November would be a book discussion, and December would be a Christmas open house event for all paid members. We want to do an event with Jesse Sullivan in early 2024. It would be free for General and Premium members but sell tickets for others.”

Additionally, Coffee mugs are being designed and ordered to be used as membership incentives. We hope to have them available at the LRD in October. Details are forthcoming.

Connie Beard, former MCGOP Chairperson and current Fundraising-Membership Manager.



McLean GOP Leaders Attend SURUS Summit

Five leaders from the McLean County Republicans attended a conference sponsored by SURUS Illinois on August 16th. SURUS Illinois is a political operative of entrepreneurs, former candidates, political staffers, and passionate conservatives who envision an Illinois in which a motivated and galvanized citizenry is the most potent political force. Their stated mission is to turn Illinois Red. They believe they can do so by reaching a “victory number” of 562,399 votes. The hope is to develop a healthy political ecosystem that works daily to change the hearts and minds of pursuable voters.

Attending on behalf of the McLean County Republicans were Dennis Grundler, Chair; Joanne Knipmeyer, Project Manager; Connie Beard, Fundraising Manager; Carl Wenning, Communications Manager; and Kim Miller, Election Operations Manager. Each individual is charged with filing particular aspects of the SURUS battle plan.

According to Election Operations Chair Kim Miller, “I am working with a dedicated committee, and we are actively working to find conservative precinct committeemen and candidates to run for the local county board elections and also people to run for statewide offices. Our PCs are meeting monthly and gaining momentum to achieve our county victory number of 6,654.” The victory number is the additional votes needed to turn Illinois Red.

During the morning session, Barrett Davies, co-founder of SURUS, encouraged and challenged participants. He indicated that conservatives must all work together on the SURUS battle plan. He said it is possible to return Illinois to its conservative roots by doing so. Former gubernatorial candidate Jesse Sullivan from Petersburg also spoke. He challenged attendees to remember why we are involved in politics in Illinois and urged us not to compromise on our personal beliefs.

The afternoon consisted of breakout sessions where participants were segregated by party assignment. “In the breakout session I attended,” noted Miller, “I gained valuable ideas on effectively recruiting candidates from political veteran Dan Patlak. Dan serves with Illinois Policy Institute. I am looking forward to implementing the ideas Dan shared.”

“One of the speakers said that many people choose to get involved with politics when policy intersects with their personal lives. I know that was true for me,” said Miller. “For most of my life, I voted conservatively but was never personally involved beyond that. When Illinois legalized full-term abortion, policy intersected with my life, and I could no longer remain silent.” Miller has been working closely with McLean County Republicans for over a year. She noted, “I have met many wonderful like-minded people, and we believe that the direction of Illinois can be turned around, but it will take all of us working together.”

Miller continued, “I want the voters of McLean County to know that I have found that there are very diverse strong opinions among Republicans, but we have key things we generally agree on. Republicans believe in the Constitution. Freedom of religion and a belief in God is crucial for a strong nation. The right to bear arms is non-negotiable. We believe in the sanctity of all human life. Republicans support laws and policies that support strong traditional family values. We believe capitalism creates a strong economy. We want lower taxes. We want less federal control because we believe most decisions affecting our lives should be made at the local level. We believe in a strong military. We also welcome and believe in legal immigration.”

The SURUS Summit was held in Petersburg, Illinois.



Kim Miller





Cont. from Ives pg. 1

noted the following about the recently-announced membership program, "Tonight was the launch of one of the new features we are offering our General and Premier Members. We will invite people of note and influence to come and share their thoughts in a casual setting, allowing time for connections to be made and information shared."

Beard continued, "Our new membership program is focused on developing stronger connections with our community. We find our message of purpose and hope resonates with voters. We believe that when people understand what we as a county party do, their support will grow stronger."

Thanks to our hosts, Michael & Denise Cale of the Wilbur Group, for providing the beautiful venue for this event.

Ives addressing members of McLean County Republicans.



Did You Know?

McLean County Republicans have a Facebook page. We make multiple posts daily about every conceivable topic and issue, local, state, national, and even international. We typically make 70 to 80 posts per month, and you'll not want to miss any of them. Be sure to visit, like, and follow our MCGOP Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/mcleancountygop>. By going to this page directly, you can see all of posts at once and without having to wait for them to show up or search through your Facebook feed.

PolitiBits

PolitiBits are bits of useful political information too small to merit a separate article. They are compiled here for their appeal and interest. (Please note that announcements of candidacies do not constitute endorsements.)

- ★ MCGOP Executive Board member Jim Fisher attended the well-known *Leadership Institute* for a valuable day-long seminar on campaign management and getting out the vote! The event was held on August 12th. Jim received expert instruction from two of *Leadership Institute's* premier presenters, Angela and Chris Faulkner. The Faulkners shared their knowledge and political experience as they explained what effective and successful campaigns do. Jim expects that what he learned will pay benefits in the upcoming campaigns. Thanks for attending on behalf of McLean County Republicans, Jim!



- ★ Former MCGOP Chairman [Chuck Erickson](#) of Bloomington announced on August 15th that he's running against [Regan Deering](#) of Decatur in the spring 2024 primary for the Illinois 88th House District. Both Republicans are running for the open seat left by Rep. Dan Caulkins, who stepped down after completing three terms as he promised in his earlier election campaigns. We thank Dan for his unrelenting service to our community. Best wishes to Regan and Chuck in their campaigns.

- ★ Brian Loeffler, a Bloomington farmer and independent businessman, has announced that he is running as a candidate for the McLean County Board's 3rd District. He will be running as a Republican. The 3rd District is currently represented by George Wendt and Lyndsay Bloomfield. The next General Primary election will be on March 19, 2024. The General Election will take place November 5.



Chuck Erickson with Cities 92.9 FM Cat Petersen

- ★ Ross Webb announced on August 28th his candidacy to serve the citizens of the 10th District on the McLean County Board. Ross wants to give a voice to the constituents of the eastern Bloomington district and is delivering a message of common-sense approach to local government. Ross is an advocate for the taxpayer, a believer in policies that create economic opportunity, and that community safety is of the utmost importance to the families of McLean County. McLean County Board Member Chuck Erickson stated, "I am endorsing Ross Webb for McLean County Board's 10th District. I have known Ross for many years and know he will be a great addition to the County Board, he is service-minded, intelligent and works well with others."

Consider Becoming a Precinct Committeeperson



McLean County Republican's SURUS Project Manager Joanne Knipmeyer

Precinct Committeepersons (PCs) are the backbone of any political party. Precinct Committeepersons impact every level of government, from local school boards to who sleeps in the White House. McLean County is in great need of grass-roots political leaders who can serve in this capacity. These individuals should not be confused with election judges or poll watchers, for which there is also a great need to ensure election integrity.

Each precinct constitutes a legislative district with approximately the same number of voters. Earlier this year, there were 121 precincts in McLean County, and only 70 Republican precinct chairperson positions were filled, or just over 57%. With the 20 new precincts established by the McLean County Board earlier this year due to population growth and redistribution, the number of precincts is now 141. With 70 existing PCs, only 47% of all 141 Republican precincts now have chairpersons.

The MCGOP Election Operations team is busy gearing up for the next election cycle and is working diligently to get PC in all precincts, "It is important we have volunteers willing to join us," according to MCGOP-SURUS Project Manager Joanne Knipmeyer. She continued, "We need precinct committeepersons and also block captains. Block captains are volunteers who can assist their precinct committeeman by helping communicate with their neighbors about the upcoming election."

Knipmeyer further noted, "For those desiring our conservative values to remain and our County Board to be fiscally responsible, we need your help. Every precinct committeeman, every volunteer, and every vote will matter in this upcoming election." McLean County Republicans are happy to connect you so you can volunteer.



Becoming a precinct committeeperson is one of the most fulfilling methods to contribute to the Republican Party. These dedicated volunteers are the vital link between the party and Republican voters within their local community. Through their diligent efforts, they possess the potential to sway the outcome of closely contested elections. Additionally, in cases where no committeeperson currently serves in a precinct, they may receive an appointment by the party's Chairman.

The responsibilities of precinct committeepersons span a broad spectrum, encompassing tasks such as aiding Republican candidates in securing petition signatures and actively participating in voter mobilization during the general election. The role of a precinct committeeperson holds significant influence.

The selection of precinct committeepersons occurs biennially during the primary election. The prerequisites are straightforward: committeepersons must be U.S. citizens, aged 18 or older, and registered voters within the respective precinct. Aspiring candidates for committeeperson positions must complete and submit a statement of candidacy, a loyalty oath, and a petition before the stipulated deadline for the primary election.

To learn more about becoming a precinct committee person, visit this MCGOP website link. If you desire to be a Republican PC, contact MCGOP Chair Dennis Grundler at dennisgrundler@yahoo.com. If you want to become an election judge or poll watcher, contact Joanne Knipmeyer (joanne@surusillinois.com) or Kim Miller (millerkim617@gmail.com). We are all looking forward to hearing from you!

McLean County Republicans Rally Around the Judiciary

McLean County Republicans rallied around conservative justices during their 2023 Summer Picnic at the Hesed House Venue on Sunday, August 13th. Various judges and political candidates spoke, holding the audience of nearly 100 people in rapt attention.



Illinois Supreme Court Justice Lisa Holder White addressing the MCGOP while judges Don Knapp and William Yoder look on.

Primary among the spellbinding speakers was Illinois Supreme Court Justice Lisa Holder White. Justice White explained the process of her appointment to the Illinois Supreme Court. Clearly and with conviction, she spoke about the judiciary's critical role in the governmental process. Her speech was interrupted several times by supportive applause from the audience. Judge White declared her intent to be on the ballot in 2024 for the judge's seat. Also speaking were appellate court justices Amy C. Lannerd and Gene Doherty. Illinois 88th District candidates Regan Deering and Chuck Erickson gave brief stump speeches about their upcoming campaigns.

McLean County GOP Chairman Dennis Grundler served as master of ceremonies and highlighted the importance of precinct committee persons and that more are needed across McLean County. Former Chair Connie Beard spoke eloquently about the party's new membership program. People were open to joining various membership categories with defined benefits packages.

This family-friendly event was a fantastic opportunity for renewing old acquaintances and making new ones. Activities, both indoor and out, were available for the kids. The McLean County GOP greatly appreciated the beautiful *Hesed House Venue* provided by Desi & Nick Anderson of Carlock and the delicious meal presented by *Prairie Fire Grill* of Heyworth. Kristi & Troy from *Wild Style Design Company* of Normal for the face painting and glitter tattoos! Thanks also goes out to the co-sponsors of this event, Connie & David Beard and Carolyn & Carl Wenning.



Nearly 100 attended the 2023 MCGOP Summer Picnic.

Upcoming Events

(Updates about events can be found on the MCGOP [Website](#) and our [Facebook](#) page.)

September 4th: MCGOP seeks marchers (and float riders) for this year's **Labor Day Parade** (Monday) in Bloomington. Preparations begin at 9 AM, and the march starts at 10 AM. The walk takes about an hour. Learn more about this event by going to our [SignUpGenius](#) page! And be sure to sign up so we know you are coming!

September 5th: This is the **first day to start circulating petitions to obtain signatures to run** in the next election. The *2024 Candidate's Guide* is now available on the [Illinois State Board of Elections website](#)! Petition packets will be available to download before circulation. Also available are the dates for all activities before the 2024 General Primary Election.

September 5th: Event for **Congressman Darin LaHood** at the beautiful home of Ryan & Angie Gremore on Tuesday, September 5th, from 5-7 PM. We do request that you RSVP ahead of time. You may do so by contacting sara@thenewberggroup.org or by calling 815.513.5215. We look forward to seeing you at this great event! Learn more by visiting our [Future Events](#) page on the MCGOP website.

October 27th: This year's **MCGOP Lincoln-Reagan Dinner** will feature Illinois Supreme Court Justice Lisa Holder White. Emceeding the event will be radio talk show hosts from Cities 92.9 FM Cat Petersen and Ty Smith. The event will begin at 6 PM at the Doubletree Hotel and Conference Center. The Lincoln-Reagan dinner is named after two of the Illinois Republican Party's most outstanding presidential leaders – Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan. The event will feature a silent auction and a 50-50 raffle. Details are incomplete as this issue of our MCGOP Newsletter goes to press. Watch next month's MCGOP newsletter and the MCGOP [website](#) and [Facebook page](#) for announcements and RSVPs with reservations. For now, hold the date!



Supreme Court Justice Lisa Holder White

 **Mark Your
Calendar**
Don't sit on the sidelines...Get involved!

Featured Recipe – BAKLAVA

(Yields: 48 wedges; Total Time: 1 hour)

Editor's note: This is my recipe for Baklava. It has gone through many refinements over the years. I have perfected this recipe following my first encounter with Baklava over 50 years ago. The recipe makes the best Baklava I have ever had, including a half-century of sampling Baklava in Europe and the Middle East, where I have traveled 15 times. [CJW, Communications Mgr.]

INGREDIENTS

Pastry:

½ lb. of unsalted butter
1 lb. phyllo sheets
10 oz. chopped walnuts
6 oz. chopped almonds
½ c. granulated sugar
¾ tsp. ground cinnamon
1/8 tsp. ground clove

Honey Syrup:

1 lemon
1 c. granulated sugar
1 c. water
2 two-inch pieces of stick cinnamon
5-7 whole cloves
1/2-3/4 c. honey (to taste)

DIRECTIONS

Pastry: Mix the walnuts, almonds, sugar, cinnamon, and clove in a small bowl. Brush a 9" x 13" rimmed cookie sheet with some ted butter. Place 3-4 phyllo sheets on the cookie sheet. Brush with butter and top with the nut mixture. Top with 2-3 more sheets of phyllo, brush with butter, and top with the nut mixture. Continue until the nut mixture is used up, reserving 3-4 sheets of phyllo for the top. Butter the top layer. Cut the top layers of the phyllo with a sharp knife, producing about 24 diamonds. Bake at 325 degrees Fahrenheit for 50 minutes or until the top layer turns crispy and golden brown. Remove from the oven and, with a sharp knife, cut through the remaining layers of the pastry, using the top layer as a guide. Immediately pour the cool syrup over the pastry, allowing both to continue cooling. Cover and let stand overnight.

Honey Syrup: Remove the thin yellow skin from the lemon and set aside. Squeeze 1½ teaspoons of lemon juice from the lemon and set aside. Combine the lemon peel, sugar, water, cinnamon sticks, and cloves in a heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil, lower the heat to a simmer, and continue cooking without stirring for 25 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in honey and lemon juice. Set aside to cool.

