

# *The* **ACLU** *News*

## Chapter Activities

### Summer Outreach

One of our main initiatives this summer was to be more visible and attempt to engage members of the public in a casual setting. To that end, we participated in the 4th of July parade for the first time in several years and we redoubled our efforts to have an information table at more community events. Despite the challenge of many members being away on vacations, we had more than a dozen marchers in the parade carrying signs. We had an information table at four of Urbana's Markets at the Square, CU Days at Douglass Park, and CU Pridefest. In an attempt to make the tabling more fun and interactive, we also created a short Bill of Rights quiz for people to take and then talk about the answers. One candidate for the US House in the 13th District (who shall go unnamed in the interest of fairness) stopped by to take the quiz in August and "aced" it!

### Jail Discussion

The Chapter has spent considerable time discussing the jail needs assessment process and we have supported CU Citizens for Peace and Justice in their efforts to educate the public on alternatives to incarceration by co-sponsoring events and providing speakers. The Champaign County jails currently consist of a 32-year old jail in downtown Urbana and the newer "satellite" jail near Brookens Center. There has been discussion by county officials since at least 2005 that they would aim to consolidate the two facilities with an expansion at the satellite location and close the downtown jail. While the jail population peaked around 2002-2003, the current capacity is adequate due to declining crime rates, demographics, changing police options, and steps taken to speed the trial process (well over half of the prisoners in the county jail are awaiting trial). At the same time, new rules have disqualified some offenders from the option of home confinement, there are increasing prob-

lems housing special populations such as the mentally disabled, and work-release is no longer used.

Two of our monthly meetings included invited guests on this topic—in June, James Kilgore, a member of Citizens with Conviction and one of the activists leading the "alternatives" discussion, and in September Michael Richards, chair of the Community Justice Task Force set up by the County Board.

After significant public input, the County Board released a request for proposals (RFP) which specifically requested an evaluation of both the physical and programmatic needs for confinement or other alternatives and ways to prevent offenders from aggravating their sentences. Costs are to be estimated for any additional programs, expansion of the satellite facility, and/or remodeling of the downtown jail. The RFP also requested that the needs assessment include public meetings to allow input and make the process more transparent. The board recently chose a non-profit from California, ILPP, to do the assessment, which will be completed in approximately six months.

### Website Redesign

We have maintained an adequate but somewhat perfunctory website at [aclu-cu.org](http://aclu-cu.org) since the late 90s that serves as a document store and a way to provide specifics about upcoming events. We have had student volunteers on a couple of occasions begin a redesign but we're still in need of a web upgrade. If you or somebody you know has the time and talent to contribute to such an effort, please contact a member of the steering committee!

### Other Issues

We have also been involved with the CU Immigration Forum, and have discussed voting rights and local police arrest statistics. See inside for updates on these issues!

## STEERING COMMITTEE CONTACT INFORMATION

The local ACLU Steering Committee meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm, in room 3405 of the Siebel Center, 201 N. Goodwin Ave, Urbana. Meetings are open to members—if you would like to be placed on the agenda, please contact Bill Brown or any other committee member ahead of time.

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## Arrest and Citation Data Available

In late August, Jeff Kelly Lowenstein, a journalist with *Vivelo-Hoy*, a Spanish-language Chicago-based news site, posted an article on “jaywalking” citations issued in C-U over the period 2007-2011. He is collaborating with the local group CU Citizen Access (cu-citizenaccess.org) on a number of articles concerning the changing racial makeup of downstate Illinois. His post focused on the total racial makeup of the 865 tickets issued during that period, where 89 percent were issued to black people. This story was also picked up by the technology section of *The Atlantic* as an example of how the ease of large FOIA data requests is encouraging new directions in journalism. As a result, we now have more than 110,000 arrest & citation records detailed by crime, race, age, sex, and location.

We were first made aware of potential misuse of jaywalking citations by Mayor Gerard in a discussion about a year ago. By downloading the recent data request, we were able to do a yearly breakdown to see that the use is gradually declining (see table). Officials have said many of these were a result of neighborhood complaints about groups of young people blocking the roadway. There are many questions still about racial disparity, especially on campus, but with the full dataset we hope to be able to get a more complete picture.

### IMPROPER WALKING ON ROADWAY

#### CHAMPAIGN

Year	Black	White	Total
2007	131	25	158
2008	204	19	224
2009	164	11	179
2010	89	11	103
2011	70	6	80
Total Champaign	658	72	744

#### URBANA

2007	52	1	54
2008	24	2	26
2009	21	5	26
2010	10	2	12
2011	3	0	3
Total Urbana	110	10	121



**On Saturday December 1st, 2012, 400 activists will gather in downtown Chicago to initiate a civil liberties agenda for the next administration.**

The event will feature Aasif Mandvi, correspondent for The Daily Show, Steve Shapiro, our National ACLU Legal Director, Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, state legislators, panels on a range of civil liberties and human rights issues, how-to workshops, interactive centers where members can take action electronically, and much more.

When you register, be sure to enter chapter code **ILT**. If you're interested in carpooling, contact Carol Spindel cspindel7@gmail.com

**Details & registration at — <http://engage.aclu-il.org/>**

## IMMIGRANTS HAVE RIGHTS TOO! ACLU COOPERATION WITH THE C-U IMMIGRATION FORUM

Since the formation of the C-U Immigration Forum last year, the local ACLU chapter has been participating with it on issues of mutual concern. This article touches on some of the legal issues and initiatives that the ACLU membership may wish to be informed about. In the long run Immigration Forum points toward a broad Immigrant Friendly Community initiative such as the one in Dayton, Ohio. You can get a sense of this goal from the city's annual report for their "Welcome Dayton" Immigrant Friendly City program --

<http://www.daytonohio.gov/welcomedaytonreport>

However, current initiatives are more reactive to pressing needs. For example, the Forum has trained community members in the requirements for the Obama administration's DACA program (deferred action for young undocumented immigrants) and held workshops for families interested in obtaining DACA status for their children.

A successful early initiative was to work with the Sheriff's office to cease participation in the so-called ICE holds program, whereby local law enforcement may choose to cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to hold suspected undocumented immigrants in jail, even for minor infractions, while the government checks their immigration status. Without the proper identification on arrest, one could actually end up being deported after failing to come to a complete stop at a stop sign. The Sheriff notified ICE earlier this year that he would no longer hold inmates based on a routine detainer. We applaud this decision, as it relates to access to due process and equal protection guaranteed all people regardless of citizenship. With such a large foreign-born population associated with the University, this decision should also reduce the

### Law School Chapter

The student ACLU chapter at the UI College of Law has been active supporting voter registration and providing information about voter ID requirements for early voting and newly registered voters. They are also planning to provide poll watchers for many campus precincts on election day. A number of law students are taking on-line training and will travel to neighboring states to be poll watchers.

The student chapter is also planning to bring a nationally-known speaker in late fall or early next year. They are working on a date and funding to bring journalist Glen Greenwald.

chances of racial profiling affecting legal residents.

Perhaps surprisingly, the driver's license is a central concern to the Immigration Forum, precisely because it's hard to go to school or to work odd hours without dependence on an automobile. The undocumented immigrant, or even a documented immigrant with identification and an international or foreign driver's license that the local police do not accept, can end up in jail for traffic infractions that documented citizens would only get a ticket for, with a criminal record to boot. For this reason, immigration rights groups in Illinois are working with lawmakers on a bill that may come up in the fall veto session to allow residents to acquire a driver's license (though likely different from existing licenses) without a social security number, thus allowing the undocumented to legally drive and thereby both acquire clear identification and avoid criminal records incurred for driving without a license. An additional societal benefit is that a valid driver's license will permit the driver to buy auto insurance.

For more information on C-U Immigration Forum, see the website: <http://immigration-forum.blogspot.com/>

### Regular Social Gatherings Proposed

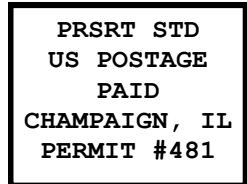
On October 17th, we held the first of what we hope will become a new tradition to help us get to know some of the nearly 700 ACLU members in Champaign County. We held an informal "social hour" consisting of a no-host gathering at Big Grove Tavern in downtown Champaign. We included an announcement of this event on a "save the date" postcard that went out for the upcoming Fall Gathering (Nov 11th). The card was delivered late so attendance was not what we hoped, but many who subscribe to our email announcements did show up.

We would like to do this regularly, maybe even monthly. The location may alternate, but Wednesday evening at 5:00 seems to be a preferred time. It's not practical to send a mail announcement each time, so if you are interested, please sign up for our email announcements!

[www.aclu-cu.org/mailman/listinfo/announce\\_aclu-cu.org](http://www.aclu-cu.org/mailman/listinfo/announce_aclu-cu.org)

**American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois  
Champaign County Chapter**

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OR CURRENT RESIDENT



**Fall Gathering  
Sunday November 11th!**

**EARLY VOTING IS GOING ON NOW  
BRING IDS!**

**Monday, October 22 through Saturday, November 3**

**Acceptable Forms of Identification for Early Voting and/or First Time Voters**

A current, valid, government-issued photo ID such as an Illinois driver's license, Illinois ID card or another government issued ID that has your photograph such as a military ID, FOID card, University of Illinois I-Card, Parkland College ID, Passport or MTD ID card.

AND, the first time you vote in Champaign County, if your photo ID does NOT have your current address at which you are registered to vote, you must bring ONE of the following:

- Government check or other government document that shows your name and current address
- A current bank statement with your name and current address on it
- A current utility bill with your name and current address on it
- Paycheck or paycheck stub with your current address on it
- A current lease contract, signed by you and the landlord with your name and current address (a University student living in a residence hall may download the Room Assignment Card)
- A piece of U.S. mail addressed to you at your current address that was postmarked October 9 or later

There are 8 different early voting locations located throughout the county. All Champaign County residents may vote at the County Clerk Office at Brookens Center (1776 E Washington, Urbana), which is also the designated location for much of Urbana. The other 7 locations are set up for specific precincts, and some precincts have a choice of 2 or 3 locations. Hours also vary by location. For the full list, go to: [http://www.champaigncountyclerk.com/elections/early\\_voting.html](http://www.champaigncountyclerk.com/elections/early_voting.html) or phone 217-384-3724 to ask for your location.