

The **ACLU** News

RENEWAL OF PATRIOT ACT TO BE DISCUSSED AT ANNUAL MEETING

Deborah Caldwell-Stone, Deputy Director of the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom will discuss the USA Patriot Act at the chapter's annual meeting at Milo's Restaurant on Sunday, April 5. Details are on the insert in this newsletter.

Passed by Congress in October of 2001, the Patriot Act was an attack on civil liberties, allowing indefinite detention of immigrants, searches of homes and businesses without the knowledge or permission of the owner, and expanded use of National Security Letters to allow the FBI to search telephone, email, financial and library records without a court order.

In 2003, the American Library Association passed a resolution opposing the Patriot Act, calling sections of the law "a present danger to the constitutional rights and privacy rights of library users." The ACLU filed several lawsuits challenging sections of the Act. The National Security Letters provisions of the Act were struck down by the courts as unconstitutional but when most sections of the Patriot Act were reauthorized, new language was added in an attempt to make them legal.

Most of the Patriot Act has already been reauthorized, but two sections of the act will expire on December 31, 2009 unless reauthorized by Congress: Section 206, the roving wiretap provision and Section 215, which allows access to business records under Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). Please join us on April 5 to learn about the work civil liberties advocates have done and will continue to do to protect the fourth amendment right to be free from unreasonable government searches and seizures.

Also at the annual meeting, the chapter will present the W. Ellision Chalmers Award to Kate Gorman, Urbana Public Television (UPTV) Station Manager, for her work to protect free speech when writing the new UPTV guidelines. Last year, Urbana's city council and mayor were under great pressure to enact some form of

censorship of UPTV programming to keep an anti-Semitic program from airing. Gorman was on the front line of the controversy, defending the first amendment in an especially emotional debate that lasted more than a year. We give honorable mention to the mayor and city council for their firm stand in support of first amendment rights.

Steven and Esther Portnoy will also be honored with Horace Norton Awards for service to the chapter. Steven is a former president of our ACLU chapter and he and Esther have been tireless ACLU volunteers for decades.

SAFE SCHOOLS ALLIANCE

ACLU members, concerned members of the public and local school teachers, administrators, counselors and students have joined together to form the Safe Schools Alliance of East Central Illinois. Modeled after similar projects in Bloomington and Peoria, the local project is dedicated to creating a safe environment in local schools for lesbian, gay bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) students. Sexual orientation, real or perceived, is one of the leading causes of bullying in schools nationwide.

Locally, students report an environment of intolerance based on ignorance with the words "gay" and "faggot" frequently used by students to mean anything bad or distasteful. Too often, no one challenges this behavior which creates a hostile environment for young people who are LGBT or questioning their sexuality. Creating a school climate that is safe and welcoming to all students, regardless of their sexuality, is the goal of the Safe Schools Alliance. The next planning meeting will be on Wednesday, April 1 at 5:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Urbana. Join us then or email estherpatt@hotmail.com to find out how you can become involved.

Legislation in the Illinois General Assembly to Protect our Rights

State Representative Naomi Jakobsson (D-103) has sponsored several bills to address civil liberties issues that arose in Champaign County last year. Protection of **Political Speech at public universities and colleges** would be codified by **HB 898** and **HB 899**. House Bill 898 states that all faculty and staff at public universities and community colleges are free to communicate their views to any member of the legislative, executive or judicial branches of government without notice to or approval by the university or college as long as they do not represent themselves as speaking for the institution. HB 899 provides that a university or community college cannot prohibit faculty or staff from attending political rallies on campus when not on duty, displaying bumper stickers on cars parked in campus parking lots or wearing political buttons while on campus provided that display by a member of the faculty in an instructional setting is only for a purpose relevant to the subject of instruction. Rep. Jakobsson introduced these bills in response to faculty and staff protests last fall against restrictions on their political speech and communication with elected officials that was announced in Ethics Matters, a publication of the University's ethics office.

The Right to Vote was wrongfully denied to many students in Champaign County last fall when their proof of residency was denied at some campus polling places. County Clerk Mark Shelden published a statement that a "government document that shows the name and address of the voter" would constitute valid proof of address but then instructed his election judges not to accept a voter registration card issued by the County Clerk's office as proof of address. **House Bill 4077**

amends the Election Code to require the State Board of Elections to prescribe the specific forms of identification and proof of residency that will be sufficient for people who registered by motor voter to use on election day. And, we are opposing **HB 4403** which would change the Election Code to require every voter to present government-issues photo identification in order to vote. This measure would disenfranchise many poor, elderly, minority and disabled voters.

Civil Unions would become legal in Illinois with passage of HB 2234, the Illinois Religious Freedom Protection and Civil Union Act. ACLU has been working on passage of this legislation for the last three years. The bill would allow any two adults, regardless of gender, to enter into a civil union. The bill also provides that this action would only be civil and would not impose any duty on any religious organization to recognize civil unions.

Have you been to the ACLU Blog of Rights ?

When you tire of the brief synopses of our issues all too often mangled by popular media, turn to the premier source for relevant in-depth analysis and links to further information on a variety of topics.

BLOG.ACLU.ORG

"...because freedom can't blog itself"

Champaign County Board Approves Jury Committee

At its February meeting, the Champaign County Board unanimously approved the appointment of a new Citizens Advisory Committee on Jury Selection. Work done over the past several years by the Champaign County Courtwatching Project, a collaborative effort by the League of Women Voters and the UI College of Law, has shown under-representation of African Americans and Asians in the jury pool and a statistically significant over-representation of Caucasian women. The stated objectives of the committee are to:

- Promote public awareness of jury selection procedures,
- Improve participation in jury service,
- Identify barriers that discourage participation in jury service, and
- Propose means to overcome barriers to participation in jury service.

A recent editorial in the News-Gazette stated that a more diverse jury pool is a "worthy goal" but implied that the problem was mostly perceptual, necessary only to make a defendant feel more comfortable with the fairness of a hearing. It would probably require a more competitive media environment for the News-Gazette to realize, as most ACLU members have long known, that diversity, whether on a jury or in the editorial room, actually improves the deliberative outcome due to a wider range of knowledge and experience.

The 16 members of the committee include: Pius Weibel, Matt Gladney, Presiding Judge Thomas Difanis, State's Attorney Julia Rietz, Public Defender Randy Rosenbaum, Courts Administrator Roger Holland, Joan Miller of the League of Women Voters, Aaron Ammons, Patricia Avery, ACLU Steering Committee member Bill Brown, Lorraine Cowart, Brian Dolinar, Deloris Henry, Barbara Kessel, Jenny Putman, and Patrick Thompson.

Reproductive Health and Access Act

One of the top legislative priorities of ACLU of Illinois is passage of the Reproductive Health & Access Act, House Bill 2354 which would protect the right of every woman in Illinois to make her own decisions about abortion, birth control and reproductive health care. The Act protects the right of individuals to make the personal and private medical decisions which are best for themselves and their families. The Act guarantees access, regardless of age or income to prenatal care, adoption, contracep-

tive care, timely access to emergency contraception, screening and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, abortion, and comprehensive, scientifically accurate, age-appropriate sexuality education in public schools. Urbana's State Representative Naomi Jakobsson is a chief sponsor of HB 2354. If you live in any district other than the 103rd, please contact your state representative today to ask that he support House Bill 2354.

STEERING COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The local ACLU Steering Committee meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm. After several years of meeting in a conference room at Campbell Hall, we now meet 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 Esther Patt or any other committee member ahead of time.

At the annual meeting on April 5th, the Champaign County ACLU membership will be asked to vote on the following slate of officers and steering committee members for 2009-2010:

OFFICERS:	STEERING COMMITTEE:	Stuart Laird 306 N. State St. #6, C 61820 369-9612 (h) stuart@laird.com	EMERITI
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	Elaine Gallagher Gehrmann 502 W. Oregon, U 61801 gehrmanns@aol.com	LAW SCHOOL CHAPTER: Tristan Bullington tbullin2@law.uiuc.edu	

**Annual Meeting
Sunday April 5th!**

**We're on the Web!
WWW.ACLU-IL.ORG**

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**American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois
Champaign County Chapter
P.O. Box 2651, Station A
Champaign, IL 61825-2651**

Who was Theophilus Mann?

Chances are, you have never heard of Theophilus Mann, but if you've been around long enough, you just may have heard of Spang's Cafe, a once-popular lunch counter at 621 E Green Street. In 1927, Mann, a black UI Law student, sued Spang's for discrimination.

Mary Stuart, UI History, Philosophy and Newspaper Librarian, "discovered" Mann while working on the Illinois Digital Newspaper Collection, which has made text-searchable digital copies of the Daily Illini and Urbana Courier available back to 1903. Access to historical black newspapers allowed Stuart to follow Mann's life and career, learning that he was the first African-American elected to membership in the Illinois Bar Association, married an actuary with Victory Life Insurance, and had a successful military and professional career. As she soon realized, "[precisely] because the voices and experience of African Americans were systematically excluded from the historical record, historical black newspapers are a critical resource for filling the gaps." According to Stuart, there were well over 100 black newspapers published in Illinois from the 1870s to the 1970s. "Tragically, the vast majority have been lost."

The UI currently has digital rights to four historical black newspapers and a trial subscription to four others through April: <http://www.library.uiuc.edu/hpnl/>

As for the outcome of the discrimination trial —go online and read two versions for yourself in the Courier and the DI (November 18th & 19th, 1927).

Building An Illinois We Can Be Proud Of...

Join the ACLU of Illinois at the 2009 Action Summit on March 28th, in Normal, Illinois. Confirmed speakers include:

- * Caroline Fredrickson
Director of the ACLU Washington Legislative Office.
- * Colleen Connell
Executive Director of the ACLU of Illinois
- * Joshua Spaulding
ACLU Midwest Regional Field Organizer
- * John Peller
AIDS Foundation of Chicago,
Director of Government Relations
- * Jill Metz
Board President of the ACLU of Illinois

Saturday, March 28th 8:30-3:30

100 N University Street
Bone Student Center
Illinois State University
Normal, IL

**Free Registration for ACLU
members!**
<http://action.aclu.org/summit>
Or call 312-201-9740

For carpooling information contact Esther Patt:
estherpatt@hotmail.com