



Bulletin

The League of Women Voters of Dane County, Inc.

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Dec. 2011–Jan. 2012

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Executive Committee:

- President** – Earnestine Moss
- Pres-Elect** – Donna Norton
- Secretary** – Barbara Mortensen
- Treasurer** – Kathy Johnson

Office Administrator – Sara Markham

Bulletin Editor – Brook Soltvedt

President’s Message

Earnestine Moss, emosse@aol.com, 244-0422

On November 2, Charles Franklin, Professor, UW-Madison Department of Political Science, shared his insight with us about *Politics and Public Opinion in Wisconsin and the Nation*. He noted that despite the recent recalls, the GOP maintains control in Wisconsin, by one member of the Senate. Nationally, Republicans are without a clear front-runner as a presidential candidate. Prof. Franklin suggested that this might be due to name recognition, and/or because some candidates, who had been viewed as traditional Republicans in the past, have changed their positions on core Republican values. It was also suggested it could be that GOP candidates have failed to present meaningful proposals for solving the nation’s problems. While Wisconsin had no elections this November, it was evident that voting weighs heavily on our minds, as evidenced by the great turnout for the Issues Forum. Thank you to **Kathy Kuntz**, Program Director, for bringing us another excellent program.

On January 21, our Lively Issues Forum, entitled *Forward Ever, Backward Never: Keeping Elections Open and Fair in Wisconsin*, will feature Melanie Ramey, President, and Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director, of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin (LWVWI). This is a critical forum, and I hope that you will attend and bring a friend.

I extend special thanks to **Pat Levin**, our accountant, for keeping our books and making sure that we are solvent throughout the year. Thanks to **Sara Markham** for her patience, tireless work, and devotion. Many thanks to all Board members for the excellent work you are doing. Keep up the good work! Members, thank you for your continued support. I encourage each of you to become involved in an initiative being advanced by your hardworking board (fundraising/grantwriting, outreach, publicity, voter service, and program development). Your expertise and input are welcome.

Lively Issues Luncheon

Saturday, January 21, 2012

11:30 AM gathering, NOON lunch, 12:30 PM speakers

**Forward Ever, Backward Never:
Keeping Elections Open and Fair in Wisconsin**

Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director LWV-Wisconsin

Melanie G. Ramey, President, LWV-Wisconsin

The West Side Club, 437 S. Junction Road, Madison

October and November Board Highlights

Minutes of board meetings are posted on our Web site when they are approved.

The Board polled the Education Committee as to whether we should take a position on the Madison Preparatory Academy. In email responses to the Board's request, most Education Committee members felt that we should not take a position on this project.

Lois Kiggins brought to the Board's attention an article about the Rock County Clerk bringing together City and Town Clerks from around the county for Special Registration Deputy training, which allows citizens to become certified to register voters from multiple communities in the county. The Board voted to request a similar meeting or meetings in Dane County. In follow-up, **Gail Bliss** and **Earnestine Moss** found that, although the Dane County Clerk is unlikely to do this, many clerks are recognizing deputies with Madison certification, and others are holding joint training with nearby municipalities.

Program Director **Kathy Kuntz** presented several options for venues for our Lively Issues Luncheon. Bearing in mind accessibility, availability of parking, and economy, the Board selected **The West Side Club**, which offers special pricing for nonprofits. We will look for an east side location for our Annual Meeting.

Our website now provides the ability to **donate online** with a credit card through PayPal. This should make it easier to raise money from the general public to support our voter education projects. Give it a try!

Join Us for a Lively Luncheon Discussion of Voter ID

The League's annual Lively Issues Luncheon on January 21, 2012, will feature **Melanie G. Ramey**, President, and **Andrea Kaminski**, Executive Director, of the League of Women Voters–Wisconsin with a presentation entitled *Forward Ever, Backward Never: Keeping Elections Open and Fair in Wisconsin*. They will update us on the lawsuit here in Wisconsin as well as national League efforts to protect voter rights.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network is challenging Wisconsin's new Voter ID law based on the state constitution. As a nonpartisan organization that encourages participation in government, the League is concerned about the many citizens who will be disenfranchised by the law.

Please be sure to complete and return the reservation form for the Lively Issues Luncheon enclosed in this mailing. And bring a friend!

Voter Service

We are still in desperate need of a Voter Service Director for the rest of the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Please notify Joann Elder (255-0533, elderj@ssc.wisc.edu), Nominating Committee Chair, or the LWVDC office if you are interested. As a Board Member with the Voter Service Portfolio you could expect to attend monthly Board meetings, and handle, or delegate leadership to handle, the annual farmers' market voter registration coordination, along with other voter registration and voter education requests or activities. Most individual Voter Service projects already have project chairs. These include *Candidates' Answers*; *Know Your Candidates* television interviews; live candidate forums; 18th birthday and Madison College voter registration; voter ID/birth certificate project.

Community Outreach

Earnestine Moss, emosse@aol.com, 244-0422

On 10/29/2011, I attended the **Black Women Council**, a group recently formed to address issues of black women and their families. I informed them that the League is very interested in the same issues, invited them to join us for our monthly Issues Forums, and encouraged them to coalesce with other established organizations to become familiar with voter ID issues, and to help to educate people on the process, to help increase voter turnout.

On 10/30/2011, **Mt. Zion Mission Ministry** held an **Educational Forum** to address issues of African American children in the School. The panel was comprised of Isadore Knox, Joe Gothard, a recent high school graduate, an attorney who was a stay-home mom, and a high school student.

On 11/3/2011, I attended a **North Side Community Meeting** at Mendota School. The meeting was in response to the deadly shooting of a young Black man on Troy Drive. It was entitled, *Healing and Community: What can we do as a community to heal, hope, and help one another through this time, and in this place we call our home.*" It was a coming together of the community (Mayor Soglin, Madison Police, the clergy, and community at large) to discuss ways to deter crime. I encouraged parents to get their children involved in some civic organization. I also encouraged the parents to attend LWVDC monthly issues forums, and let them know that we can be a resource to them, but advised that we don't have a youth component, except for registering 18 year olds to vote. The next meeting for the group will be held at Mendota School on 11/30/2011.

Thanks for Your Support!

We appreciate receiving contributions from the following members:

Emy Gartzke	Phyllis Reisdorf
Elizabeth W. Lewis	Barbara Clare Voltz
Elizabeth C. Magnuson	Patricia D. Watkins
Gloria Meyer	Phyllis Young

and from nonmember **Martha Christensen**. We are also grateful to **Church Women United** for their contribution toward voter education **in honor of Duane Turner**.

Your contributions allow us to continue our important work. And now you can make contributions online at our website! We are most thankful for your wonderful support!

Thank You for Renewing

Deborah Speckmann, 445-3426; daspeckmann@charter.net

As an organization dependent upon its membership for its effectiveness, the LWVDC wishes to thank all those previous members for renewing their membership for the 2011–2012 period.

Membership in the LWVDC ensures that we will be able to promote informed and active participation through member-led research, education, and democracy. Your renewed membership helps us to improve public participation in the democratic process and to champion public policy goals that are beneficial to all. At this writing (Nov. 13, 2011) the LWVDC has an **88% renewal rate**. This speaks volumes about the dedication of our membership.

It is this continued support of our strong membership base, as well as our ongoing recruitment of new members that enables the LWVDC to be a strong non-partisan political advocate in the public policy debates of our times and into the future.

Thank you, again.

Dane County Government Publication

The second edition of *Dane County Government: Services and Organizational Structure*, is now available on our website. This guide is the result of months of hard work by League members and friends, especially **Mary Bean, Carol Dutton, Kathleen Fullin, Clare McArdle, Pam Rewey, and Dorothy Wheeler**, with help from **Kris Frater, Diane Larson, and Maddy Smilowitz**. Thank you to the Dane County Government Committee for taking on this daunting task and seeing it to completion. Special thanks to **Kathy Fullin** for editing the final document for consistency.

Looking Forward to Spring Programs

Kathy Kuntz, kkuntz@chorus.net, 608-772-5452

The fall program season wrapped up on November 2 when UW-Madison Political Science Professor Charles Franklin discussed polling trends with a full house of LWVDC members and non-members.

We had some terrific speakers this fall, thanks in large part to great suggestions from our members. So if you have an idea about a good speaker for a spring program—or if you're involved in a League committee that's working on an issue we should feature in a program—please contact me.

Voter ID Assistance Project Underway

Gail Bliss, 231-3511 or gail3511@gmail.com

LWVDC announced its project to assist eligible voters in obtaining the required ID to vote, and a fund-raising drive to assist area voters to obtain the documentation necessary to get a Department of Transportation (DOT) ID for voting purposes. Citizens seeking assistance can call our office and request help. Tax-deductible contributions to help fund this project may be mailed to our office, or can be made online through our website.

Revitalizing our League

Our League's **Policies and Procedures** were last revised in **1991**. Needless to say, the document does not reflect our current membership, unit participation, committee structure, or new methods of communication. Are you interested in talking about our League operations? How can we engage more members and develop leadership? How much effort should be focused directly on voting (registration, *Candidates' Answers, Know Your Candidates*) and how much should be devoted to studying issues and developing positions? Join us for a discussion, **December 12, 2011, at 6 pm in the League conference room**. Please RSVP to the office, as we may need to find a larger venue if interest is strong.

New Printer in the LWVDC Office

With the recent erratic performance of the 4-year old free Xerox color-printer, LWVDC accountant **Pat Levin** started searching for a reasonably priced replacement. She also enlisted the expertise of **Charles Uphoff**, board member at The Madison Institute. Together they selected and installed a reliable monochrome laser printer. The new office printer works well, in time for the upcoming production schedule of the Spring 2012 *Candidates' Answers*! Thank you Pat and Charles!

December/January Unit Locations

League members meet monthly in one of five units to discuss the topic of that month's Issues Forum, using study materials provided by the program planners to guide the conversation. The discussion concludes with recommendations for further study or action. Units meet regularly at different times and locations. Find a meeting that is convenient for you and participate! Please let the host know that you plan to attend.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2011

NORTHEASTSIDE, 3:30 pm

Mary Bean, 222-5783; marybean@charter.net
Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711; dorothywheeler@charter.net
Topic: Lively Conversation
Location: Diane Liebert's home, 3750 Robin Hood Way, 698-4143
Treats: Bring only as many "cookies" as you plan to eat!

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2011

NORTHEASTSIDE, 3:30 pm

Lakeview Public Library, 2845 N. Sherman Ave.
Mary Bean, 222-5783; marybean@charter.net
Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711; dorothywheeler@charter.net

DOWNTOWN DINNER, 5:30 pm

Capitol Lakes Retirement Center Restaurant "The Seasons"
333 W. Main St. – Free parking across the street
Sally Phelps, 251-4834; phelpssa@charter.net
Priscilla Thain, 233-5578; priscillathain@gmail.com

NOT MEETING IN DECEMBER OR JANUARY

MIDDLETON

Diane de Vos, 836-0070; djdevos@chorus.net

TUESDAY EVENING WEST

Gloria Meyer, 288-8160; gloria.meyer@juno.com

TUESDAY AFTERNOON

Oakwood Village Retirement Community
Elizabeth Lewis, 230-3101; bettyfay1916@gmail.com

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **December 12** – Discussion of Policies & Procedures
- **January 5** – Deadline for *Bulletin* and study materials
- **January 9** – LWVDC Board Meeting
- **January 21** – Lively Issues Luncheon *Forward Ever, Backward Never: Keeping Elections Open and Fair in Wisconsin* (Andrea Kaminski and Melanie Ramey)
- **February 1** – Issues Forum (TBA)
- **February 5** – Deadline for *Bulletin* and study materials
- **February 13** – LWVDC Board Meeting
- **March 5** – Deadline for *Bulletin* and study materials
- **March 7** – Issues Forum (TBA)
- **March 12** – LWVDC Board Meeting
- **April 4** – Issues Forum (TBA)
- **April 5** – Deadline for *Bulletin*
- **April 9** – LWVDC Board Meeting
- **May 2** – LWVDC Annual Meeting (tentative)
- **May 14** – LWVDC Board Meeting
- **June 18–20** – LWVUS 50th Convention, Washington, DC

Great Decisions 2012 Reminder

Join the International Affairs group within the League for eight weeks of discussions based on the materials provided by the Foreign Policy Association's (FPA) Great Decisions 2012 series. Topics for 2012 were listed in the November Bulletin and are available at http://www.fpa.org/great_decisions/

This year's co-chairs are **Gail Bliss** and **Helen Horn**, and meetings will be at the West Madison Senior Center, 602 Sawyer Terrace from **1 to 3 PM on Thursday afternoons in February and March**, beginning on February 2. Each participant needs a copy of the Great Decisions book, which can be ordered (\$22) through Gail Bliss, 231-3511 or gail3511@gmail.com. **Please place your order by December 20, 2011.**

EXTRA! EXTRA! Late-breaking news! **LWVDC has received \$5,000.00 from the Evjue Foundation in support of our Voter ID Assistance / Birth Certificate Project.** Thank you to Gail Bliss for all her hard work in developing the project and the grant application. And, of course, enormous gratitude to the Evjue Foundation and to all the volunteers who will make the project a success!