



Bulletin

The League of Women Voters of Dane County, Inc.

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February, 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

Happy New Year everyone! I hope that each of you had a blessed holiday season. During the month of January, we celebrated MLK Day at the State Capitol and around the State. I hope you all remembered, “It’s not a day off: It’s a Day of Service,” and made it a great day of civic empowerment, to help make democracy work. On January 21, we had our Lively Issues Luncheon, with state League Executive Director Andrea Kaminski and state League president Melanie Ramey reporting on the lawsuit challenging the voter id legislation: *Forward Ever, Backward Never: Keeping Elections Open and Fair in Wisconsin*.

On February 1, I hope to see many of you at our forum, *The Year Ahead in Dane County*, featuring Joe Parisi, Dane County Executive. Thank you to Kathy Kuntz, Program Director, for bringing us another wonderful program!

February is a busy month. I hope you will find ways to celebrate Black History month by learning or teaching about Black history. The League will be 92 on Valentine’s Day. Please respond generously to our birthday appeal.

Candidates’ Answers will appear in *Isthmus* in early February in advance of Wisconsin’s spring primary election on February 21. We have primary contests for circuit court judge, two county board supervisors, a Sun Prairie aldermanic district, and the Edgerton and Wisconsin Heights School Boards. Thanks to the many volunteers who make *Candidates’ Answers* happen.

Thanks to Gail Bliss, Diane Martin, Gloria Meyer, Centro Hispano, and Freedom, Inc. staff for their voter service efforts (education-registration) in the south Madison community through the Voter ID project.

I extend a special thank you to Sara Markham for her patience, tireless work, and devotion. Many thanks to all Board members for the excellent work you are doing. Members, thank you for your continued support. Your expertise and input are welcome.



February Issues Forum Wednesday, February 1, 2012, 7 PM

The Year Ahead in Dane County

Joe Parisi, Dane County Executive

The Capitol Lakes Grand Hall, 333 West Main St., Madison
(Free parking in the ramp across the street)

January Board Highlights

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

President Moss is attempting to arrange for special registration deputy training following the Lively Issues Luncheon so members can become certified to register voters in multiple municipalities.

Teresa Holmes has volunteered to be Voter Service Director, completing a term that will end in June, 2013.

Treasurer **Kathy Johnson** reported that **Pat Levin** plans to “retire” as LWVDC bookkeeper, after six years of service. The Board voted to direct the budget committee to allocate funds to hire a bookkeeper for the coming year in the event that we cannot find a qualified member volunteer to serve. Given our 501(c)(3) status, it is more important than ever that we be fully compliant with all relevant financial reporting regulations.

Gail Bliss and **Earnestine Moss** reported on their outreach efforts surrounding the Voter ID law.

Kathy Kuntz presented several suggestions for programs for the rest of the year. The Board supported sponsoring a screening of the documentary *Patriocracy in March* (date and venue to be determined), and a program on affordable housing in April.

Community Outreach

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

On December 12, I attended a Birth Certificate-Voter ID event held at Centro Hispano, sponsored by **Freedom, Inc.** where we also promoted our Lively Issues Luncheon. On Sunday, January 8, **Gail Bliss** and I presented on the 8:00 am segment **Let's Go to Church** on 1670 AM Radio about the Voter ID. We announced our Lively Issues program and extended an invitation to the public. In addition, I sent flyers to community organizations, and email to other organizations and individuals.

Remembering Helen Navarre

Many of you knew Helen Navarre, who died in December. A social worker, who also taught at UW-Whitewater, Helen was a longtime member of the League, and PLATO, and she was also active in her church.

Fundraising News

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

We are thrilled to report that the **Dane County League received a \$5,000 grant from the Evjue Foundation, Inc., the charitable arm of *The Capital Times***. It is through the profits of The Capital Times Company that the foundation's work is possible. This grant supports voter education, voter registration, and voter ID efforts of the League. The project is partnering with many other local organizations, including the Madison City Clerk's office, the Madison Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., the Fighting Poverty Coalition, Freedom Inc., Dane County United, the Area Agency on Aging, and other groups.

As part of this grant, we challenged ourselves to raise an additional \$2,000. Fundraising appeals have been included in many venues, including an online donation button on our website, press releases, radio interviews on WTDY and WORT, and *Candidates' Answers*.

Our Voter ID project strives to help the 10% of eligible voters who do not have a state-issued photo ID to obtain the documentation they need to be able to cast their ballots in 2012 and beyond. If you want to be involved in the Voter ID project, please contact me directly or through the League office.

February 14 is the birthday of the League of Women Voters. We will again be soliciting for birthday gifts to help support the work of our organization. The League is 92 years young, and is as committed to voting rights as it was at its inception. Your gift will help support the work of the Dane County League. LWVDC is now a 501(c)(3) organization, so all contributions are now tax-deductible. Please respond generously when you receive your birthday appeal.

Great Decisions 2012

A reminder that the Great Decisions 2012 group will be meeting at the West Madison Senior Center, 602 Sawyer Terrace, from **1 to 3 PM on Thursday afternoons in February and March**. Our first meeting will be February 2. The Senior Center is just west of Hilldale Shopping Center. Sawyer Terrace is accessed from Segoe Road (next to the Hilldale post office). On-street parking is free.

Reviving Our Membership

A group of about 10 members gathered in December to brainstorm about how our League can continue to increase our membership, increase active participation among the members we have, develop leaders, and avoid volunteer burnout, particularly among Board members. Members contributed many excellent suggestions. Here are a few highlights:

Some of our greatest **challenges** are:

- ★ Our Madison location means many members are active with the state League.
- ★ Many members and potential members are unwilling to give up partisan activities to serve in a leadership position during this particularly charged time in Wisconsin.
- ★ There's a divide between the internet-savvy and those who are not "wired." This requires a double effort to engage and inform both groups.
- ★ Participation in some units is dwindling.

Some suggestions that emerged:

- ☆ We need a **team of people** each willing to help in some small way, to assist the Membership Chair. Whether it's **welcoming guests** who attend our public forums, **calling new members** and inviting them to a unit meeting, or **interviewing new members** for *Bulletin* profiles, there are ways to contribute to this effort without a huge time commitment. The national League's web site has a long list of suggestions for membership development, but we need a team of members willing to work on this.
- ☆ Hire someone part-time, for a limited time, to put in place membership development programs that can be maintained by member volunteers.
- ☆ **Leverage partnerships** with other organizations. Consider planning programs jointly with other organizations with expertise on the subject. (Caution required to be sure we present balanced views in a nonpartisan fashion!)
- ☆ Consider merging units, meeting at a different time or in a different location, or including a meal with the meeting. Find efficient ways of sharing outcomes from unit meetings. Have an active action committee to take ideas from units to positive actions.

At this meeting, we also reviewed our out-of-date **Policies and Procedures** document. Although the document defines the structure of many committees and processes that we no longer employ, leaving these structures in place in case they are needed in

the future might be reasonable. The Policies and Procedures update needs to be revisited.

If you are interested in helping in any way with membership development projects, revising our Policies and Procedures, or becoming a Board member in the future, **please contact Sara Markham, our Office Administrator, or Joann Elder, Nominating Committee Chair** (255-0533, elderj@ssc.wisc.edu).

Patriocracy

Our program in March will be a screening of the documentary *Patriocracy*, which explores the current polarization that has resulted in partisans screaming at and past each other, but not listening and not solving any problems. The producer and director, Brian Malone, interviews Congressional Representatives and Senators, big-media journalists, and academics, and explores how big money is manipulating elections.

We plan to invite other groups and the public to watch the film and join the discussion following, so we need to find a larger venue, which may also require meeting at a time other than our usual first Wednesday of the month. Because we are also required to pay \$5/head to the film's producer, we will be collecting donations to help cover the cost.

To learn more about *Patriocracy* and view the trailer, visit www.patriocracymovie.com.

Thanks for Your Support!

We appreciate receiving contributions from the following members:

Emy Gartzke

Karen Goebel, with a promised matching gift from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation

Lois Kiggins

Rose Sime, in honor of **Harriet Gorski**

And from non-members:

Anonymous

Grant from **The Evjue Foundation**, the charitable arm of *The Capitol Times*

Mary Jeanne Palmer

Dennis Ray

Mr. and Mrs. M.G. Singer

Your contributions allow us to continue our important work. We are most grateful!

League of Women Voters of Dane County, Inc.
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February Unit Locations

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2012

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

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2012

MIDDLETON, 7 PM

Community Room, Gardd Parc Condos
6767 Frank Lloyd Wright Dr.
Park behind building; walk through courtyard to lobby; Ring buzzer to # 221 if inside door is not open
Diane de Vos, 836-0070; djdevos@chorus.net

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2012

TUESDAY AFTERNOON, 12:45 pm

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

TUESDAY EVENING WEST, 7:30 pm

Please contact Gloria Meyer, 288-8160;
gkmeyer68@gmail.com

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- **February 1** – Issues Forum, Dane County Executive Joe Parisi, *The Year Ahead in Dane County*
- **February 5** – Deadline for *Bulletin* & study materials
- **February 13** – LWVDC Board Meeting
- **February 21** – Spring primary election
- **March 5** – Deadline for *Bulletin* and study materials
- **March** – Issues Forum, Screening of the documentary *Patriocracy*. Date and time TBA.
- **March 12** – LWVDC Board Meeting
- **April 3** – General election and Presidential primary
- **April 4** – Issues Forum on affordable housing
- **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 Convention, Wash, DC