



The League of Women Voters of Dane County, Inc.

General Meeting and Issues Forum

Topic:

What has Citizens United done to our Political System and can it be repaired?

Panel of Speakers:

**Mike Olneck,
Professor Emeritus of Educational Policy UW Madison, and former
Co-Chair of South Central Wisconsin Move to Amend**

and

**George Penn,
Outreach Committee Chair person and retired nuclear engineer**

When:

October 2, 2013, 7 p.m.

Where:

**The Capitol Lakes Grand Hall
333 West Main Street in Downtown Madison**

Free Parking in Ramp Available Across the Street

Discussion Questions:

1. What is bad about Citizens United?
2. Since the Citizens United decision, what has happened in Wisconsin?
3. Given that the LWV has no position on this situation, where do we go from here?
4. How can individuals be involved at the local and state level?

**LWVDC Committee:
Kathy Johnson and Dorothy Wheeler**

Money, Politics, Citizens United and our Response:

Starting with our January Lively Issues Luncheon last January, the League of Women Voters of Dane County has been informing themselves about campaign cash and what the effect has been in Wisconsin and our county. Mike McCabe of Wisconsin Democracy Campaign and Jay Heck of Common Cause started our thinking with their presentations which we continue this month with our October topic.

To refresh your memory, and to broaden our materials this month you can refer to several articles which have been published recently:

[Mike McCabe 3/18/12 in the Capital Times.](#)

Check out Common Cause at <http://www.commoncause.org> with the Issues paper in our materials this month;

The Milwaukee-Wisconsin Journal Sentinel Online, in an [article November 6, 2012](#) reported that outside political groups spent a record \$45.7 million on the US Senate race between Tommy Thompson and Tammy Baldwin. The candidates themselves had spent \$20 million at that point. "The Center for Responsive Politics, a watchdog group, now estimates that the 2012 election will cost \$6 billion. And if you buy the argument that money spent on a campaign enable free speech, is it really fair that the wealthy get more speech?"

November 21-27, 2012 in the captimes.com, Jack Craver wrote an article entitled: [Corporate spending in Wisconsin elections: Obvious, but undisclosed.](#) He states "even before the 2010 landmark Supreme Court ruling, Citizens United v. FEC, which removed restrictions on corporations and unions related to their independent expenditures on behalf of Candidates, WMC and other corporate-funded groups were able to skirt Wisconsin's century-long ban on corporate electioneering by setting up 501(c)(4) organizations that run "issue adds" which do not explicitly call for the election or defeat of a candidate".

Dave Zweifel, editor emeritus of the Capital Times goes even further [in an article July 17-23, 2013](#), when he states that these large outlays of money "lay bare the attack on democracy." He further chides the television stations and executives which take in hundreds of millions in profits from these negative ads and rarely monitor them for accuracy or even truthfulness. "For television execs, election time became what Christmas is for retailers."

John Nichols wrote: [16 states call to overturn 'Citizens United'](#) in an article in the Capital Times magazine issue July 10-16, 2013.

Join in the discussion this month as the LWVDC learns about "What Citizens United has done to our political system and if it can be repaired."