



Bulletin

League of Women Voters® of Dane County, Inc.

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Presidents' Message

Kathy Fullin, fullin@execpc.com, 238-9465

Ingrid Rothe, irothe@ssc.wisc.edu, 256-8124

The 2nd annual Moral Week of Action, organized by the NAACP of Dane County, began on August 21, 2014, and inaugurated 7 consecutive days of action at the State Capital. The League of Women Voters of Dane County was invited to speak on August 26, Women's Equality Day. Other speakers that day included representatives of Planned Parenthood, Wisconsin 9 to 5, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom-Madison Chapter. Following is the speech that Ingrid Rothe, co-President, delivered:

My name is Ingrid Rothe; I am the Co-President of the League of Women Voters of Dane County. I am honored to be here participating in this very important work during Moral Week of Action.

Today marks the 94th anniversary of the right of women to vote in the United States. The League of Women Voters believes that the most powerful act a citizen can take is to vote. I am here to talk about the economic status of women, and how that might affect your vote.

What is the economic status of Wisconsin women?

1. *We women in Wisconsin are committed to participation in the labor force. The proportion of women who are employed outside the home is higher than the national average –67% in Wisconsin compared to 59% in the nation. Wisconsin families have incomes higher than the national average because so many Wisconsin women are employed outside the home.*
2. *But: Wisconsin women earn less than men. Wisconsin women's median wage is 25% lower than Wisconsin men's. Black and Latina women have wages even farther behind those of white men. In fact, since 1979, real wages for black women have actually fallen.*

(Continued on page 2.)

Wednesday, November 5, 2014

Issues Forum 7:00 pm

Madison School District's Four-Year-Old Kindergarten: A Progress Report

**Scott Zimmerman (Director, Department of Early & Extended Learning,
Madison Metropolitan School District [MMSD])**
Macy Buhler (4K teacher, Sandburg Elementary School, MMSD)
Sarah Dill (Director, Meeting House Nursery School)

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

3. Wisconsin has fewer women working in professional and managerial positions than nationwide, 30% in Wisconsin compared to 36% nationwide.
4. Women in Wisconsin are 35% more likely to live in poverty than Wisconsin men.
5. 25% of families headed by a woman live in poverty, compared to 7% of families headed by a couple.
6. Education does help people escape from poverty.

So what are some things that Wisconsin legislators could do that might help?

1. Make education accessible and affordable. Spend money on public schools. Create low-cost loans for college students. Provide child care for parents returning to school.
2. Make the workplace more family friendly. Provide child care. Permit flex-time and adequate family leave policies.
3. Enforce laws related to equal pay and non-discrimination. Promote diversity and inclusivity.
4. Restore the cuts that were made in the Wisconsin earned income tax credit. Expand the federal earned income tax credit
5. Improve access to health care by accepting the Medicaid expansion.
6. Promote worker involvement in workplace governance.

Talk to your elected officials about what they can do to help you develop your skills and support your families.
VOTE!

Agriculture Forum

Brook Soltvedt, Webmaster

The LWWUS this year adopted a position on federal agriculture policies. The October forum featured two speakers from our very own UW College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALS), which is celebrating its 125th Anniversary. CALS has 19 academic departments, encompassing agriculture, food and nutrition, natural resources and the environment, and the life sciences, and shares many faculty with UW-Extension. Student enrollment in CALS has grown more than 40% in the last decade, reflecting both the interest and great employment opportunity in biological fields. This year's incoming class is 74% women!

Kathy Glass, Associate Director of the Food Research Institute (FRI) at UW-Madison, described their work in the area of food safety. Their focus is on protecting against infectious agents or toxins that can cause acute illness, rather than long-term effects on health such as nutrition or the effects of GMO foods or pesticides.

Most research funds at the FRI come from the USDA, NIH, and the food industry, which has a strong interest in food safety. The statistics show why. Every year in the US there are 48 million episodes of foodborne illness, resulting in 128,000 hospitalizations, and 3000 deaths. Most at risk of food poisoning are the elderly, the very young, pregnant women, the chronically ill, and those who are immunosuppressed because of transplants, cancer therapy, or HIV. Foodborne illness in the US results in annual losses of \$77 billion, mostly in direct medical costs and lost wages. This does not include the cost of recalls, legal and communication expenses, and the loss of confidence in a brand or food.

Scientists at the FRI test ways to change the formulation of foods to prevent bacterial growth. Companies often want natural or "clean label" ingredients to substitute for chemically purified preservatives. Consumers may prefer a product formulated with vinegar (instead of its active ingredient, acetate) or milk (instead of sodium lactate) if researchers can make it both safe and tasty.

Commercial producers must kill disease-causing microbes by pasteurization, cooking, canning, and novel processing methods now being developed. But sellers, servers, and consumers share responsibility for food safety.

Glass urges everyone to use a thermometer to keep refrigerator temperature at or below 40°F. Read labels and follow instructions for storing and cooking food.

She also discussed the confusion that can arise in interpreting "expiration" dates, which may reflect safety or quality. Canned goods will never "go bad" as long as the can remains intact. Frozen foods that remain frozen won't become unsafe. But both will decline in quality with time. Shelf-stable foods may taste stale, but will not become dangerous. Many refrigerated foods, if they contain preservatives or are high in acid (e.g. hard salami, hard cheese, or yogurt), are usually safe beyond the expiration date. But unpreserved foods, like deli salads or sliced turkey, should not be used beyond the recommended date.
(Continued on page 3.)

Assistant Dean of CALS, Heidi Zoerb, gave an overview of work done throughout CALS, including research, partnerships with industry, international service projects, and community outreach by student organizations.

CALS efforts fall into six broad areas:

1. *Healthy ecosystems* (including monitoring and remote sensing systems that collect data to improve decision-making),
2. *Food systems* (addressing urban agriculture, regional food systems, and issues of food inequality),
3. *Climate change* (risk assessment and data visualization tools for better resource management; education and outreach efforts),
4. *Bioenergy and bioproducts* (lignin and yeast as potential new energy sources),
5. *Economic and community development* (entrepreneurship),
6. *Health and wellness* (nutrition and drug development).

With a newly renovated dairy barn (now with 80 cows!), the biochemical sciences complex (with state-of-the-art lecture halls), and plans for expansion of the Center for Dairy Research, a new meat lab, and modernized greenhouses, CALS is truly a treasure on our doorstep.

Voter Services News

Gail Bliss, Voter Service Chair

It has certainly been a challenging and confusing election cycle. On September 12, the U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago removed the stay on Wisconsin's Voter ID. On October 6, the full 7th Circuit Court deadlocked 5-5 on reversing that action, so voter ID was still in place. On October 9, the U.S. Supreme Court vacated the 7th Circuit Court's ruling, so Voter ID is back on hold "due to proximity of the upcoming election." This does not mean the issue is settled, or that the Supreme Court will ultimately take the case.

Several people have contacted LWVDC wanting to help people without acceptable ID get to the DMV. One of our challenges has been dealing with connecting those who need rides to the people who want to help. This will be an ongoing issue, since the high court's vacation of the order is not the final chapter in Wisconsin's Voter ID battles.

Volunteers **Cathy Berndt, Susan Byrns, Grace Fleming, Kathy Fullin, Shirley Haidinger, Marian Matthews, Clare McArdle, Jo Anna Pautsch,** and Lynn Williamson registered voters and provided information and forms to students at the Truax, Downtown, and West campuses of Madison College on Sept. 23 - 25.

Because we register students at these campuses for each fall election, we can directly see the impact of the measures to require Special Registration Deputies to be certified by each municipality and requiring proof of residence for registration. We were able to register only 34 voters. Previously the smallest number we registered in those 3 days was 75. We did provide forms and information to an additional 41 people, people who in past years we would have been able to register on site.

We will be thanking the volunteers at our ongoing sites in the next newsletter.

Observations from the Frontlines . . .

Sara Markham

Voter registration at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry engaged me with citizens in conversations about the fundamental right to vote, leading several persons to decide to register to vote.

Although many were already registered, I proceeded to mention the November election date and, most recently, the need for a voter photo ID (which has since been placed on hold again by the Supreme Court), asking if they each knew which type they would actually take to the polls.

More than a few men and women were not yet citizens, one person was not yet "off paper", some declined when invited to register without saying why, while one young woman refused to register, stating, "One vote doesn't make a difference; the system is rigged." In such instances one is reminded of the ongoing urgency in the community to address issues of immigration, citizenship, and civic education.

On a more positive note, among the citizens who registered to vote was a 48-year-old man who had never before voted. Another citizen was a former felon who had been "off paper" for over 10 years and thought that she would never have the right to vote again.

Voter registration here is worthwhile and interacting with individuals to encourage voting remains rewarding.

CRANES and LWVDC

Connie Threinen

On October 1st, the Dane County Executive published a proposed budget for 2015. The League will be examining it for its potential impact on natural resources and transportation. We hope some members will testify at the public hearing in early November.

The Capital Region Advocacy Network for Environmental Sustainability (CRANES), of which LWVDC is a member, had already conveyed to the County Executive its recommendations for the FY15 budget. The Executive's proposed budget will now be taken under consideration by the County Board of Supervisors. Following is a summary of the CRANES statement to the Executive.

CRANES is urging a capital expenditure of \$17 million for land acquisition and protection, including \$12 million from funds appropriated in past years but never spent. (Capital expenses are covered by bonding.) Two million dollars are for completion of a ten-year project to reduce the flow of sediments and pollution into the lakes. Commentary on this problem is included in the Operations section of the Budget proposals.

CRANES has divided its Operations request into three categories, SKY, LAND and WATER, a division that it adopted in 2013 as part of a long-range goal-setting called the DANE 2100 initiative.

In the SKY category CRANES asks that \$20,000 be allocated for hiring staff to complete the Climate Action Planning that is just starting now with funding from the 2014 budget. With 2015 funding, a strategic plan can be created and a "public participation" program set up to allow the public to review draft inventories and to organize a "launch event".

Fifty thousand dollars are recommended for a feasibility study of a "no-fare" transit system for the entire county. Such a system was proposed earlier by CRANES. The idea has since been considered by other county leaders and accepted as a potential solution to some equity-related problems.

Under LAND, CRANES suggests a maximum of \$400,000 be included in the 2015 Budget for an analysis of a pending county land-use planning scenario. CRANES recommends adding \$25,000 for staffing a fiscal impact analysis of the scenarios.

While on the subject of land use, CRANES comments that municipalities continue to ask for more land development in spite of a one-third reduction in the U.S. Census Bureau's forecast of county population increase for 2035. CRANES views urban sprawl as a

threat to natural areas and the eco-system that will have a major impact on the quality of human life. CRANES would someday like to see a more cost-efficient approach to land protection, e.g., designation of almost all remaining non-urbanized lands as a Dane Rural Heritage Preserve.

In the WATER section, CRANES gives strong support to the program to mitigate the flow of urban pollution and sediments into the lakes. However, citing a specific controversial phosphorous reduction proposal, CRANES supports an expenditure of \$5000 for hiring an expert researcher to perform a review of scientific research, as well as reporting on the full potential of urban leaf-sweeping. Clean water is essential if Dane County is to retain its national rankings and local standards for drinking water and recreation.

Also very active in improving transit options in the City of Madison, CRANES urges the County to assist Madison to engage the well-known Calthorpe planning organization to implement its "Urban Footprint" system to carry out "state-of-the-art work on scenario and fiscal impact analysis in Dane County, and perhaps in collaboration with the seven adjacent counties.

This summary of the Budget proposals presented to County Executive Joe Parisi by CRANES should give LWVDC members a good start in preparing their own personal statements for the FY15 Budget hearing.

Lively Issues Forum

Save the date! January 17, 2015 is the Dane County League's Lively Issues Luncheon Forum.

Tamara Packard will discuss "Marriage Equality in Wisconsin: Are We There Yet? (She may also briefly discuss Voter ID lawsuit issues.)

Ms. Packard is a partner in Cullen Weston Pines and Bach and practices primarily in the areas of litigation and appeals, emphasizing employee rights and civil rights law. She has been listed in the Best Lawyers in America since 2011. She serves as an adjunct professor at the University of Wisconsin Law School.
Join us for a lively discussion.

Missed Any Forums?

Have you missed any of our forums? If so, many of them are taped by City Channel. Go to our website, www.lwvdanecounty.org, and click on the link, 'MadisonCityChannel Stream of LWVDC Programs' to view them.

New Members

The following members joined our League from September 3 through September 23. Welcome!

Donald Chambers

Margaret Gores

Virginia Link

Marjorie Pondell

Robert De Meuse

Jane Liess

Ann Niedermeier

Marilyn Zuckerman

Membership Greeters

Mary Anglim, Membership Chair

League events should feel welcoming. If you would enjoy greeting attendees at our forums, or calling new members to help them feel at home in the organization, please get in touch with the Membership Chair, Mary Anglim, mtanglim@gmail.com or 249-0031. Volunteers who helped welcome members and guests at the September Open House and Issues Forum: **June Blanchard, Natalie Deibel, Spring Greeney, Shirley Haidinger, Betsy Jensen, Sara Markham and Rose Stephenson.**

Thank You, Volunteers!

Our League would not be able to do all that it does without many hours from our volunteers. Along with the volunteers noted in other articles in this bulletin, we'd like to thank the following volunteers for their help in our office:

Mary Bean

Reta Harring

Pat Levin

Jan Van Vleck

Joanie Kanter for her work on layout of this bulletin.

Joann Elder

Alice Kissling

Carol Van Hulle

September Unit Reports

Diane Martin Liebert, Unit Coordinator

Four units reported, with a total of 32 members and 2 guests attending. The topic was: Race to Equality.

All units reported that there was lively discussion and reflect a collective general frustration with the issue of racism and the options available to deal with it, both on a personal and organizational level.

Here are several suggestions on how to increase diversity in League.

1. Increase collaborative efforts with other community organizations.
2. Explore how the League might collaborate with or support other community groups focused in this area.
3. As individuals, join diverse community groups.
4. Consider development of black/white women's group or work with YWCA in this area.

There were several action item suggestions for the Board to consider:

1. Keep housing issues alive.
2. Possible letter to the editor regarding the Police Chief's response to the imbalance of marijuana arrests.
3. Support raising minimum wage and expand income tax credit.
4. Support fully funding the Head Start program.

Suggestion for future meeting:

Bring in a developer who has successfully built/managed subsidized housing.

Renew Today

If you haven't already renewed your membership in the LWVDC, do it today! Our fiscal year runs from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. If you can't locate your renewal form, you can download one from our website at lwvdanecounty.org. You can mail your renewal payment to the League office or pay your dues on-line at our website.

Keep Us in the Loop

If your contact information changes (address, email, phone), let us know so we can update our records. We want to keep in contact with you!

Please call (608-232-9447) or email (lwvdc@chorus.net) the office regarding your changes.

In Memoriam

Ellouise Beatty, a 50 year member of the Dane County League, passed away April 20. She was a woman of diverse talents. Ellouise earned a pilot's license at age 16! She served as an organist and choir director at numerous Madison churches and Temple Beth El. After receiving a Master's degree in epidemiology from UW-Madison, Ellouise worked as a programmer and database manager in the UW-Department of Medicine until her retirement in 1992. She is survived by her husband and four children.

Upcoming Events Calendar

- **Nov 5** – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm
Progress Report on 4-year Kindergarten
- **Nov 19** – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- **Dec 10** – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- **Jan 17** - Lively Issues Luncheon/Forum
Marriage Equality in Wisconsin: Are We There Yet?

What are Unit Meetings?

Diane Martin Liebert, Unit Coordinator

Participating in Unit meetings is a good way to get to know other League members and to have input on the LWVDC's positions on important issues. I encourage everyone to participate in Unit meetings.

After each general meeting, the Units meet to discuss the issues raised at that month's program. Responses are recorded and passed on to the Unit Coordinator. Many of these responses have become our League's positions on that particular issue. League positions determine if or when LWVDC "takes action" by making statements to the Dane County Board, Madison City Common Council and the newspapers.

I was first introduced to LWVDC by a former member, Mary Boyd, a neighbor I played bridge with. She literally came knocking on my door reminding me of the local Unit meeting. At that time that Unit was made of probably 15 to 20 members. I remember at the first meeting they decided that there really wasn't enough time to discuss both the issues requested so they divided up in groups and reported out from them. After a couple of Unit meetings and the advent of Women Issues, I was hooked and the rest is history.

November 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. Find a meeting that is convenient for you and participate! Please let the host know that you plan to attend.

If any of the units have questions or issues, please contact the Unit Coordinator, **Diane Martin Liebert**, at dwliebert@gmail.com or (608) 698-4143.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2014

Monday Evening West - 5:30 pm

Panera, 3416 University Ave.

Marilyn Kupferberg, 831-3267, joelmerkup@gmail.com
Barbara Mortensen, 233-7563, morten21@att.net

Middleton - 7:00 pm

Gardd Parc Condos

6767 Frank Lloyd Wright Drive

Park behind the building; walk through the courtyard to lobby; ring buzzer to #221, if the inside door is not open.
Diane de Vos, 836-0070, djdevos@chorus.net

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2014

Tuesday Afternoon - 12:45 pm

Oakwood, Oaks D-76 (Jean Freese apartment)

Parking on grounds or in P1 Heritage Oaks Parking Ramp
Marie McCabe, 230-3536, mmccabe4805@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2014

Northeastside - 3:30 pm

Lakeview Public Library

2845 N. Sherman Ave.

Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711, dorothywheeler@tds.net
We will meet at Pam Rewey's house (5522 Comanche Way) on Dec. 17th at 3:30 pm for a cookie exchange.

Downtown Dinner Group - 5:30 pm

Capitol Lakes Retirement Center

Restaurant "The Seasons"

333 West Main St. - Free parking across street

Rita Kades, 251-2309, mkades@aol.com

Sally Phelps, 251-4834, phelpssa@charter.net