



Bulletin

League of Women Voters® of Dane County, Inc.

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Ingrid Rothe
- Vice President** – Sybil Better
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- Treasurer** – Mary Conroy
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Presidents' Message

Kathy Fullin, fullin@execpc.com, 238-9465
 Ingrid Rothe, irothe@ssc.wisc.edu, 256-8124

The 30th Annual Madison and Dane County Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Celebration was recently held with a program, “The Movement of the 60’s: A Legacy for Today,” which included an inspiring speech by Diane Nash. Nash is one of the lesser known pioneers of the Civil Rights Movement. She was the chairperson of the student sit-in movement in Nashville, TN, the first southern city to desegregate its lunch counters, as well as one of the founding students of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee. In 1961, she coordinated the Freedom Ride from Birmingham, Alabama to Jackson, Mississippi. She is still active as a proponent and instructor in the strategy and philosophy of non-violent social change.

The League of Women Voters of Dane County is also engaged in non-violent social change. We are unalterably committed to trying to ensure that all eligible people have access to the ballot box; it is well known that the League devotes many resources to trying to secure voting rights and assisting voters to become informed. It is useful to reflect on the enormous sacrifices made by activists to secure voting rights for women (prior to the adoption of the 19th amendment) and for African-Americans leading up to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and to contemplate the fact that some of these gains are threatened once again. Note: the LWVDC office has available to borrow a copy of *Iron-Jawed Angels*, the 2014 movie starring Hilary Swank about Alice Paul and the 1917 Suffrage movement.

During 2014-2015, we have also heard presentations on important issues concerning justice in our society. In September, we heard a presentation on “The Race to Equity,” a report by the Wisconsin Conference on Children and Families about racially unequal outcomes in Dane County. In November, we heard from the Madison Metropolitan School District about the 4K program which has made some progress in addressing racial inequities in academic achievement.

(Continued on page 2.)

Wednesday, March 4, 2015

Issues Forum 7:00 pm

Human Trafficking

Jan Miyasaki (Project Respect)

Morgan Young (Immigration and Poverty Attorney, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin)

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

Our 2015 Lively Issues Luncheon featured Tamara Packard speaking on same-sex marriage equality. At our February General Issues Forum, we discussed amending our state League positions to reflect our deeply held beliefs on the need to expand rights and equity for all. In March, we will be learning about Human Trafficking, a shocking loss of rights suffered by the victims of sexual and labor trafficking. And at our Annual Meeting in May, we will hear Laura Dresser discuss poverty, inequality and economic justice. All these presentations are designed to help us, both individually and collectively, to take action toward achieving greater justice.

To paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “The hope of a secure and livable world lies with disciplined nonconformists who are dedicated to justice, peace and brother-and-sisterhood.” Being members and volunteers with the League is a good way to continue being disciplined nonconformists.

Lively Issues Forum

Ingrid Rothe, Co-president

On January 17, the members and guests of LWVDC heard Attorney Tamara Packard speak on “Marriage Equality in Wisconsin: Are We There Yet?” Since the U.S. Supreme Court had announced the day before that it would hear appeals from 4 states (Michigan, Ohio, Tennessee and Kentucky) on the status of same-sex marriage in their states, it was a particularly timely Lively Issues Luncheon.

Tamara distributed an outline of her presentation, including a state-by-state status of marriage equality, which you can find on our League’s website.

Tamara’s response to the title question “Are We There Yet?” was a firm “NO.” This is because a map of the United States shows such a patchwork of rights across the states. (The map can also be found on the League’s website.) This means that married same-sex couples must pay attention to what state they are currently in or passing through to know if their marriage will be recognized. While same-sex marriages are recognized in Wisconsin, married same sex couples traveling to other states that do not recognize their marriages may confront such problems as being unable to participate in a spouse’s medical care decisions, should that become necessary.

Readers interested in more detail on how the United States came to the current patchwork of rights for same-sex couples across the United States should review Tamara’s outline on our website. Wisconsin has

not always recognized the rights of same-sex couples. In 2006, voters agreed to adopt an amendment to the Wisconsin constitution denying same-sex couples the right to marry. Then, in 2009, the Wisconsin legislature created a Domestic Partnership Registry, which granted some state rights to registered same-sex couples. On June 26, 2013, pursuant to the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Windsor* decision, married same-sex couples achieved significant federal rights, but still no state recognition.

On June 6, 2014, Federal Judge Barbara Crabb issued a very strong decision that same-sex couples have a right to marry in Wisconsin. The State appealed this decision to the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, which upheld Judge Crabb’s decision. The State then appealed this decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. On October 6, 2014, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to take the petition, thereby granting marriage equality in Wisconsin effective October 7, 2014.

Currently, Wisconsin is one of 36 states (and the District of Columbia) that recognizes same-sex marriages. The U.S. Supreme Court has just announced the schedule for briefing and oral arguments in the Anti-Marriage Equality Ruling from the 6th Circuit Court. We expect their ruling in June, 2015 and we are hopeful that the U.S. Supreme Court will find for marriage equality in all 50 states.

Outstanding Voter Service Award

Kathy Fullin, Co-president

Traditionally, at the annual Lively Issues Luncheon, the Dane County League recognizes a non-member who has contributed substantially to the League’s mission of assisting voters to cast an informed ballot. On January 17, we presented Marian Matthews with our Outstanding Voter Service award.

In 2014, Marian organized League voter registration drives at the Triangle Ethnic Fest and at Fresh Start. She designed a sign for our volunteers at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, which can be customized to include information about Voter ID, health care outreach, and registration. Marian developed the information brochure about Proof of Residence for City of Madison Special Registration Deputies (SRDs) that the City, the League, and other organizations use. She has trained many City of Madison SRDs over the last few years.

We are pleased that Marian has now joined the League as a member.

Rights and Equity

Karen Gunderson, *Bulletin Editor*

On February 4, over 50 members and guests were presented with much food for thought as four presenters, Linda Balisle, Balisle & Roberson S.C.; Brian Juchems, Director of Education and Policy at the Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools (GSAFE); Tim Michael, manager of GSAFE's GSA Outreach; and Lynn Breedlove, retired Executive Director of Disability Rights Wisconsin, spoke to us at our forum, 'Expanding Rights and Equity for All'.

The LWVWI has formulated Social Policy positions over many years. This year, the state board is recommending revisions to several of the positions and local leagues have been asked to review and discuss these revisions and report to the state league whether they agree with the changes. Our presenters provided us with perspectives on the language in those changes.

Linda Balisle addressed the suggested changes to the league's position on Marital Property Reform. She focused on the importance of statutory language that defines the official date of a same-sex marriage. That date makes a difference in how income and assets are shared, how divorce is handled and the validity of any pre-marital agreements.

Lynn Breedlove stressed that, though there is federal and state legislation to protect and empower people with disabilities, that legislation is not always understood and enforced, nor do communities always have the funding to implement the legislation. It is important that everyone know that the legislation exists, what it means and that it is followed. There is legislation related to education, housing and voting – all of this needs to be considered. People with disabilities often face discrimination, even from the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. Lynn presented us with several powerful examples of people with disabilities who are employed in mainstream jobs and thriving despite their disabilities.

Brian Juchems and Tim Michael addressed issues faced by students identified as lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and queer. Tim defined some terms for us (biological sex, gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation) as the starting point of the discussion. As with the laws for people with disabilities, there are laws that protect people who identify as LGBTQ, but not everyone knows about and understands those laws nor are they always enforced. Students, especially those of color, who identify as LGBTQ are more often bullied, disciplined and even

reported to the police. Brian shared several handouts with us that summarized studies showing that LGBTQ youth are more likely to be depressed, try suicide, feel that they don't belong and have poorer grades than straight students.

This brief article only gives a high-level overview of what was discussed at this forum. To hear the entire forum, visit our website (lwv.danecounty.org) to listen to the podcast. The handouts provided by our speakers and the league handout with the suggested changes to the Social Policy positions are also posted on our website.

For the Record

The following Letter to the Editor from our LWVDC co-presidents was published by Wisconsin State Journal on January 11, 2015:

GAB watchdog needed more than ever

Launched in 2008, the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board was formed by a virtually unanimous and bipartisan vote in the legislature. The GAB was crafted in response to the caucus scandal, which sent legislators from both political parties to jail for campaigning on the taxpayers' dime.

The GAB replaced separate boards, including political appointees, which oversaw government ethics and election administration. The GAB is a big improvement over the old Elections Board, which was often deadlocked as its members sought to represent the partisan interests who appointed them.

In contrast, the GAB has been hailed internationally as a model for nonpartisan election administration. The GAB's six former judges are selected through a process designed to minimize partisan influence.

A recent audit of the GAB by the Legislative Audit Bureau revealed the GAB to be an effective agency limited by its oversized workload and barely sufficient level of staffing.

With more than 1,800 municipal clerks administering elections in Wisconsin, we need a strong state agency to ensure everyone has the same opportunity to vote. The GAB has lived up to that charge.

Recent calls to restructure the GAB are a partisan power grab. In times of one-party rule, regardless of which party is in the majority, we need the nonpartisan GAB watchdog more than ever.

-- Ingrid Rothe and Kathleen Fullin, co-presidents, League of Women Voters of Dane County

Voter Services News

Gail Bliss, Voter Service Chair

Despite the new rules for Proof of Residency, we registered approximately 800 voters at various sites throughout Dane County in 2014. Given the increased challenges of registering voters, we had an amazing year. Thanks to everybody who worked on any of the voter registration projects.

We have already begun our Voter Registration efforts for 2015. On January 20, we registered 35 voters at Epic. **Marian Matthews** coordinated this effort with the help of Epic employee Liz Norton. Volunteers included **Cathy Berndt**, **Susan Byrns**, and **Pat Sammataro**.

Volunteers at St. Vincent de Paul food pantry in December and January were **Mary Anglim**, **Susan Byrns**, **Susan Fulks** and **Consuelo Lopez Springfield**.

New Members

The following members joined our League from December 25, 2014 through January 29, 2015. Welcome!

Marian Matthews **Kate Morand**
Mary Ellen Schutz

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 **Cathy Berndt**
Claire Dick **Shirley Haidinger**
Kathy Johnson **Jesse Kehres**
Myrna McNatt **Ingrid Rothe**
Joanie Kanter for her work on layout of this bulletin.

Contributions

Between December 18, 2014 and January 29, 2015, the following people contributed to our League. Thank you to all of our generous donors.

Mary Anglim Colleen Duffie
Arlan & Lori Kay **Maureen Kind**
Doug Knudson in memory of Lyn Knudson
Sue Ann Larson **Pat Levin**
Kate Morand **Ingrid Rothe**
Amy Schulz Susan Shoemaker
M. G. Singer

Know Your Board Member

Brook Soltvedt, Webmaster

For years I was a League member in name only. I was working, raising children, tending to the business of life. One night in 2008, out of the blue, **Maureen Kind** called on behalf of the Nominating Committee and convinced me that I could serve on the board. I knew she had to have dug pretty deep into the directory to be calling on me!

I agreed to give it a try. I work as an editor and was an instructional technology consultant at the UW, so I became the *Bulletin* editor and webmaster. After developing a new website and serving four years on the board, work commitments loomed and I gave up editing the *Bulletin*, but continued as webmaster.

With the retirement of **Sara Markham**, whose masterful hand for years guided the detailed process of creating *Candidates' Answers*, and with the increasing role of technology in gathering candidate information for the voter guide (Vote411), I have assumed more responsibility for *Candidates' Answers*. This and the need to update the format of the website led to my appointment to the board this year.

Why is the League important to me? I grew up in New England, the youngest of five girls. My mother was a high-school dropout, widowed at age 38 with not much more than Social Security to survive on. When she died at age 48, an older sister stepped up to adopt me. My commitment to League comes from first-hand experience. I know about poverty—we lived it. I know about white privilege—blonde, blue-eyed, well-spoken girls are given opportunities. I know education is the key to increasing socio-economic status. I know about domestic abuse and rape and why reproductive rights make or break a woman's life—it's hard to find a family of five women who doesn't. I know about substance abuse and failing schools—what family is immune? For me, these are not abstract "causes."

And so, although I graduated from Wellesley College (scholarships, grants, loans, work-study), and I have an M.S. in Molecular Biology from the UW (traineeships, fellowships), and I have been able to raise two sons, living in comfort in the "top-ten city for everything" with a husband I adore and two spoiled cats (thanks to many who gave me a chance), I try not to take anything I have for granted. We have to fight for all these positions the League holds, because so much of what we have has become very fragile, indeed.

Our Website Has a Fresh Look

Brook Soltvedt, Webmaster

If you have visited our website in 2015, you've seen a big change! Our website has a totally new, image-heavy look. Adapting to change can be difficult, so this article aims to help you navigate the new site.

Why did we change?

Our previous website was based on technology that became obsolete. We moved to a platform that allows us to create a more visual site that adjusts itself for viewing with mobile devices. If you have one, take a look at the site on your smart phone or tablet and see how easy it is to read. The site is easy to integrate with other tools, making our communications more efficient and allows us to collect information from candidates for *Candidates' Answers* directly through our website.

We want your feedback!

Not all change is good. The website has a feedback form within a *News* item describing the new site features. We want to hear from you about what you like in the new site, and also what is confusing or difficult. Please be aware that we are working with a template that doesn't allow us to make all changes we might like.

Announcement bar

Reminders or information about the next upcoming event are in a blue *Announcement* bar at the very top of the screen. This will usually be a link to more information, so try clicking on it! Once you have seen it, you can click the X in the right corner to dismiss it until a new announcement is published.

Navigation menus

On most desktop computers you will see navigation links across the top of the web page. If you have a smaller screen or are viewing on a mobile device, you will instead see an icon of three horizontal lines. You have probably seen such a menu elsewhere (Facebook and the Firefox and Chrome browsers, for example). Click this icon to display those same menu options vertically.

Image gallery

A gallery of images occupies much of the top of the screen. You can watch them cycle automatically or click through them using the small arrows on each side.

Candidates' Answers

Because we are in an election season, below the image gallery you will see an announcement link to the online edition of *Candidates' Answers*.

Forum announcements

As you scroll down the home page, you will see a place for non-members to sign up for email announcements of our forums. You can search the site. *Upcoming Forums* display on the left side and *Past Forums* on the right side. Click on the title to be taken to a page with more information. Information and study materials back to 2012-2013 are available.

News

Below the forum information you will see summaries from our most recent *News* items. Click on a title to see the full post. Each full post has navigation at the bottom to take you to the previous or next post.

Links of interest

Just above the footer are links to the national and Wisconsin Leagues, the GAB, Voting Information, and Municipal Clerks.

For Members

You no longer need to create and use a personal login and password. Only access to the Membership Directory will require a password. Members have been sent a common password.

Under the *For Members* link, you will see an option for a calendar, which will show board meetings, unit meetings, as well as forums and other events. These calendar events include links so you can import them into your Google or other electronic calendar.

Bulletins are also archived under this link.

Donations and membership payments

Our new website uses Stripe to process credit and debit card payments for donations and memberships. Stripe exceeds industry standards for security.

Send photos!

To keep the website fresh and interesting, we encourage you to take photos at League events. Whether you are at a unit meeting, a monthly forum, registering voters, or observing at a government meeting, please take a picture and send it to lwvdcsystem@gmail.com or to soltvedtbrook@gmail.com.

Share *News* items and *Forum Announcements* with your friends through email and social media. And encourage your friends to use our site to learn more about League.

LWVDC Annual Meeting

The LWVDC annual meeting will be held May 13th at the Inn on the Park. Laura Dresser, Associate Director of Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) will discuss poverty, inequality and economic justice.

50 Year Members

At our annual meeting in May, we honor any members who have been members of the League for 50 years. We try to keep our records up-to-date, but to be sure that we don't miss anyone, please contact the League office if this year marks your 50-year anniversary with the League or if you know of any members in our League who reached their 50-year anniversary this year.

Lavinia Reminder

The play, *Lavinia*, will be presented at the Bartell Theatre from Thursday, March 19 through Saturday, March 21. A number of LWVDC members plan to attend the Saturday matinee. See details in the February bulletin and at madisontheatreguild.org/Lavinia/.

Our Committees Need You!

Both our Program and Nominating Committees are in need of members for the upcoming year. If you are interested in serving on either committee, please contact **Clare McArdle**, Nominating Committee Chair at 255-3557 or claremcardle@att.net.

Missed a Forum?

City cable used to record our forums, but their new policy is that they only film if city staff are speaking or if the issue is very high priority for the city. The new low-power radio station, WMUU, can create podcasts of our events for \$40 per hour. They recorded the Lively Issues luncheon and the February forum and provided podcasts of those recordings for our website.

Upcoming Events Calendar

- **Mar 4** – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm
Human Trafficking
- **Mar 11** – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- **Apr 1** – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm
- **Apr 8** – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- **May 13** – LWVDC Annual Meeting

March 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 dwliefert@gmail.com or (608) 698-4143.

MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015

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, MARCH 17, 2015

Tuesday Afternoon - 12:45 pm
Oakwood

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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 18, 2015

Northeastside - 3:30 pm
Lakeview Public Library
2845 N. Sherman Ave.

Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711, dorothywheeler@tds.net

Downtown Dinner Group - 5:30 pm
Capitol Lakes Retirement Center
Restaurant "The Seasons"

333 West Main St. - Free parking across street
Sally Phelps, 251-4834, phelpssa@charter.net