



Bulletin

League of Women Voters® of Dane County, Inc.

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Office hours: Monday–Thursday, 9–1

March 2018

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President's Message

Change.

If you read our emailed weekly member updates, you know that we need to vacate our office suite on Marshall Court by the end of April to make way for an expansion of Ronald McDonald House. Former LWVDC secretary Barbara Mortensen has been working hard to find us a new home. We received many offers of help and suggestions for space from members and from the community. We have been paying below-market rent for years, so we have had sticker shock as we search for an accessible space

of the appropriate size, with ample parking, not too far on one side of Madison, in a transit-accessible location, at an “affordable” price. As I write this letter, we are close to signing a lease to move to 4513 Vernon Boulevard, near the Hilddale Post Office, for one year. Details on the timing of the move will be shared through the emailed weekly member updates.

I am sorry to share the news that Elaine Sinagra, our office administrator, has decided not to move with us to the new location. Her last day will be April 14. Elaine's love for the League and her dedication to our members and especially to her many volunteers have been appreciated and will be sorely missed. I hope you find the opportunity to thank Elaine for her hard work on behalf of the League over nearly five years.

I ask for your patience if our operations are not up to standard during the dual transitions to a new office and a new office administrator. Thank you!

Letters to the Editor.

I'm a fanatical reader of the opinion page of the *Wisconsin State Journal*. I nearly always learn something.

My heart always beats a little faster when I see a letter from one of our members. While I remind members not to speak for the League in such letters, I heartily encourage you to make your own informed opinions known. You can have more influence than you imagine. It is our practice to include in the *Bulletin* copies of letters to the editor written on behalf of the League. This edition includes two such letters.

Vote on Shareholder Resolutions, Too.

If you own shares of stock, you know this is also election season. Shareholder initiatives have forced corporations to change practices around political spending, climate change, animal welfare, diversity and human rights. Don't miss the opportunity to vote your shares in line with your values.

Brook Soltvedt, soltvedtbrook@gmail.com, 608-274-5184

Bobby Peterson Leads Us through the Health Care Maze

Mike Casey, bulletin@lwvdanecounty.org

The Lively Issues forum in January focused on the health care maze and the potential for changes in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) going forward. With a turnout of more than ninety members and guests, the discussion around health care service delivery and costs in Wisconsin was lively.

Bobby Peterson, Executive Director for ABC for Health, Inc., a non-profit public interest law firm founded in 1994 to link children and families (particularly those with special needs) to health care and benefits, presented his view of the current and future health care landscape in Wisconsin. Put simply, he called it a maze defined by the competing interests that have built, maintained or changed the available services and financial coverages (or lack thereof). He noted that political discussion often centers on the ACA and its application across the nation. Yet more than half of us are covered by employer-based plans, which are now heavily tailored to the requirements of the ACA as those employers and the healthcare system (hospitals, physicians and insurance companies) have had to implement them.



Although no one knows how the requirements or the financial support for the system will change by the end of 2018, the strategy of using fear and greed to develop policies that underfund healthcare systems doesn't end up saving money. People will still obtain healthcare services, perhaps on an emergency basis. Mr. Peterson suggested that the Dane County system alone would continue to lose at least \$150 million annually providing services to uninsured or underinsured patients. This loss will be covered by those who do pay for their care, creating "socialized debt" that will continue to be of significant concern within the medical system and the community at large.

Peterson and other healthcare advocates believe that many Wisconsinites are eligible for healthcare services that they aren't taking advantage of because the system is almost unnavigable. Most people who need help with healthcare insurance are already facing serious challenges including illness, age or infirmity, poverty, family and work commitments. It is nearly impossible for them to research and understand the patchwork of programs with different eligibility rules and coverages that might be available to them. With NIH funding, Peterson's group has developed software that operates a bit like Turbo Tax, interviewing the user to determine eligibility for various services, and providing personal reports on healthcare options.

In a lengthy question and answer period, Peterson suggested (1) opening BadgerCare+ to a much larger number of beneficiaries—spreading the cost is a good thing, (2) doing a better job of teaching and training those who process patients as they enter a facility—a critical point in the system and (3) accepting federal funds that are available to the state.

If you missed the presentation or want to share it or review it, you can [watch a video here](#). Peterson's presentation begins at 4:55 in the recording. Download or stream our audio podcast if you prefer.

We Appreciate Your Donations of Time and Money!

From stuffing envelopes to organizing name tags and other supplies for forums, our office volunteers help us serve you. If you'd like to help, email office@lwvdanecounty.org. These members helped in December, January and February.

Cathy Berndt
Judi Dilks
Eileen Hanneman

Joyce Knutson
Iris Levitis
Pat Sammataro

Brook Soltvedt
Jan Van Vleck

Financial contributions beyond membership dues keep our work going! Thank you to these members (bold) and nonmember supporters who donated in December, January and February!

General Donations

Janice M. Baldwin
Mary P. Conroy
Laura Davis
Susan Dottl
Margaret Dugan
Jean E. Espenshade
W. Emy Gartzke
Chet Gerlach
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Peggy A. LeMahieu
Allen and Joan Liegel
Susan S. Lloyd
Earnestine Moss
Cynthia Roskowic
Ava Schroedl
Cindy Schultz
Paul Shoemaker
Edith T. Sullivan
Ruth Wagner

Valentine / Birthday Gifts

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Sally H. Carpenter
Mary K. Dick
Susan C. Fulks
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Joan L. Schuette
Rose C. Sime
Margaret E. Stine
Priscilla G. Thain
Robert W. Topel
Phyllis L. Young

Candidates' Answers

Anonymous (3)
Barbara J. Arnold
Janet L. Axelson
Paul and Suzanne Buckner
Philip Cox
Roger Diggie
Jean E. Espenshade
Heather Farr
Edith K. First
JoAnn Gruber-Hagen
David Hildner
Ann W. Lacy
Evelyn J. Mazack
Deborah Kleinman McNeil
Tess Mulrooney
Mary Jeanne Palmer
Sara Richards
Andrew Ruis
Donald and Nancy Tubesing
Roland Richard Wagner
Peter C. Williams

In Memory of Annrita Lardy

Hatheway Hasler

If you find something interesting in the *Bulletin*, [share this link](#) with a friend!

High School Voter Education Action Team Update

Susan Fulks, Action Team Facilitator, susanfulks@sbcglobal.net

The LWVDC's High School Voter Education Action Team meets regularly to promote two major goals:

1. To assist eligible high school students in registering to vote
2. To help students become informed Wisconsin voters

Team members have been trained in the new voter registration policies and procedures and are developing materials to support both online and paper registrations within the high school setting. Outreach to high school principals within Dane County has promoted initial conversations with teachers and student organizations in area schools.

Our primary goal this year is to establish and support several pilot projects to train student groups to promote and organize voter information/registration drives. We are partnering with *Inspire U.S.*, a national non-profit, nonpartisan organization committed to registering and engaging high school students for their first vote in local, state, and federal elections. *Inspire U.S.* is currently active in ten states, with our LWVDC action team piloting the program in Wisconsin. The *Wisconsin Council for the Social Studies* has created an award for each high school that registers 75% of their eligible seniors to vote through the Inspire U.S. website.

Action team members collaborated with *Inspire U.S.* to hold three very successful student drives in January at MMSD East, MMSD Shabazz, and Sun Prairie High Schools. Drives are being planned at MMSD Memorial (in collaboration with the Rotary Interact Club) and DeForest High Schools. Future goals are to expand our outreach within Dane County and to promote student leadership activities to facilitate student-led voting education and assistance with voter registration.

Our next action team meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 31 (2–4 p.m.) at Sequoya Library. Interested LWVDC members are always invited to attend.



Susan Fulks, Joan Provencher, Jessica Bigirindavyi of *Inspire-U.S.*, Mary Ellen Schmit and Pat Patterson at an East High outreach event March 5.

Madison Students Plan Actions on Gun Safety

On March 14, area high school students will walk out of classes to protest the lack of action on gun control measures that would keep them safe in school and in the community. On March 24, the March for Our Lives begins at the Library Mall and goes to the Capitol Square. Students are demanding that lawmakers hear their concerns, not just those of gun manufacturers and large campaign donors. Chris Carson, LWVUS president noted "Our young people are saying "enough" and standing up for what's right. We can help by doing what we do best—connecting our inspiring young people to the other ways they can make an impact, especially by voting."

Letters to the Editor

The *Wisconsin State Journal* published these letters to the editor from LWVDC president, Brook Soltvedt.

Moving DMV will make it harder to Vote, January 17, 2018

In Wednesday's article "New DMV office set to open on Far West Side," the state Department of Transportation touted the advantages of the Excelsior Drive location and its ability to "better serve" the greater Madison area.

The League of Women Voters of Dane County is alarmed by this move. Unlike the Sheboygan Avenue and Odana Road locations it replaces, Excelsior Drive is poorly served by public transit. Transit-dependent citizens must visit the Division of Motor Vehicles to obtain a Wisconsin ID card for voting.

Who are our most transit-dependent? Students, the elderly and disabled, racial minorities and economically challenged citizens.

A study from the UW–Madison Center for Elections Research showed that about 17,000 registered voters in Dane and Milwaukee counties were deterred from voting in the November 2016 election because they either did not have a valid ID, or believed that they did not have one -- even if they did. Low-income and African-American voters were disproportionately affected. Making the DMV harder to get to will only exacerbate this situation.

Wisconsin residents who need help getting an ID for voting can call the Dane County Voter ID Coalition's hotline at 608-285-2141.

League of Women Voters is celebrating, February 14, 2018

The League of Women Voters of Dane County marks its 98th anniversary today.

We are proud of the work we do, empowering voters and defending our democracy.

Through our Candidates' Answers publication (available at www.lwvdanecounty.org) and our "Know Your Candidates" interviews on Madison City Channel, we provide unbiased candidate information that we know Dane County voters depend on to make informed choices.

Through our voter outreach efforts in workplaces, libraries, schools and senior centers, we assist voters with voter registration, voter ID and election information.

Through our voter ID hotline at 608-285-2141, we help citizens get an ID for voting. Through our published studies and public forums, we seek to educate voters on important issues.

As we approach the spring primary Feb. 20, which is the first of four elections in 2018, we invite men and women in Dane County to join us -- as members, as supporters and as consumers of our nonpartisan educational materials.

This Valentine's Day, share the love with your local league.

Please notify our office if your name, mailing address, or email address changes. It will save us postal charges and ensure you are kept informed about League activities. Thank you!

New Members!

In February, new and prospective members were invited to three events to learn more about what it means to be a League member—our structure, principles, activities, and more. Thank you to the many new and experienced members who gathered to get acquainted.

We welcome these new members who joined us in December, January, and February. An [updated member directory](#) is available on our website. If you have forgotten the password, there is a link to contact the webmaster for help.



Membership Director Mary Anglim talks to new members about League philosophy, positions and activities at a new member coffee at the Meadowridge Library on February 24.

Jane Bernstein
JoAnn Boushon
Tanya Buckingham
Joy Cardin
Emily Colo
Hanna Conner
Laura Davis
Susan De Vos
Roger Diggle
Kathleen Dutilly
Jane Dymond
Ashly Erickson
Kim Fowler
Chet Gerlach
Aleen Grabow

JoAnn Gruber-Hagen
Philip Heckman
Rebecca Holmes
Charlotte Jerney
Helen Johnson
Tom Johnson
Russell Kowalski
Justine Malinski
JoAnn Mayer
MerleAnne Merkel
Kelly Jean Ohl
E. Alison Rice
Ruth Robarts
Sue Salter
MaryJo Sanford

Barbara Schrank
Susan Shafer-Landau
Sherie Sondel
Melissa Sosman
Maria Spinozzi
Jaala Spiro
Barbara Tetzlaff
Jan Tymorek
Candyce VerBurg
Marianne Whatley
Melanie Witte
Nancy Worcester
Kimberlee Wright

Did You Drop in on Your Government in February?

Mary Anglim, membership@lwvdanecounty.org

As we did last year, the Dane County League encouraged members to choose one or two local government meetings to attend in February and to report on them in their February or March Unit meetings. If you did drop in on a meeting, please let your colleagues know how it went by:

- **Reporting on your experience.** Take a look at the online reporting form we developed and complete it online in the next several days. We hope to hear from many of you about your experience. Let's talk about how citizens experience government meetings: is it easy to get the agenda? Is lighting and audio adequate? Did you feel able to ask a question or to register to

testify if you wished to do so? What improvements would have helped? We'll report back to elected representatives to let them know their constituents are watching!

- **Writing a letter to the editor.** Did something you saw or heard at a meeting impress you, in a positive or negative way? Share your informed view with tens of thousands of readers of the *Wisconsin State Journal*, *Capitol Times*, or other local paper. Just remember—when you write, do not speak for the League. If you need more encouragement, the *WSJ*'s opinion editor, Scott Milfred, provides it [here](#).

Fair Voting Maps

Our issues forum on fair voting maps will be held on the second Wednesday of April, April 11. Please note the unusual date. Our speaker will be Emeritus Professor Bill Whitford, the plaintiff in the partisan redistricting case now under consideration by the U.S. Supreme Court. Member Joan Schwarz has written an excellent analysis of the legal issues surrounding the various redistricting cases that SCOTUS is considering this term. Find the article on our website. Please share it with interested friends!

Unit Meetings

Unit Coordinator, Diane Martin Liebert, dwliefert@gmail.com, 608-698-4143

League members typically meet in one of four units to discuss the topic of that month's Issues Forum, using study materials provided by the program planners. Please let the host know that you plan to attend.

Third Monday West/Middleton, March 19, 6 p.m.

Gardd Parc Community Room
6767 Frank L. Wright Ave., Middleton
Priscilla Thain, 233-5578, priscillathain@gmail.com
Barbara Mortensen, 233-7563, barbaramort@charter.net

Third Tuesday Oakwood West, March 20, 12:45 p.m.

B39 The Oaks, 6205 Mineral Point Rd., Madison
Park on grounds or in P1 Heritage Oaks Ramp
Nancy Simonsen, 230-3014, njsimonsen@gmail.com
Kathy Johnson, 238-1785, kjohnson44@ameritech.net

Third Wednesday Northeast Side, March 21, 3:30 p.m.

Lakeview Public Library
2845 N. Sherman Ave., Madison
Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711, dorothywheeler@tds.net

Third Wednesday Downtown Dinner, March 21, 5:15 p.m.

Capitol Lakes private dining room
333 West Main St., Madison; Free parking in ramp
Ingrid Rothe, 556-3174, irothe@ssc.wisc.edu

April 3

Spring General Election

- ★ *Candidate's Answers* is available on our website.
- ★ A schedule of candidate forums on our site will be regularly updated with recordings if they are available.
- ★ In-person absentee voting (IPAV) in Madison begins Monday, March 12. This may be a better option than mailing an absentee ballot because ballots are not counted if they do not reach the clerk or the polling place by Election Day.

Wednesday, March 7, 2018, 7 p.m.

How Are Unions and Workers Faring in Wisconsin?

Becky Shigiel, executive director of Worker Justice Wisconsin
John Wedge, WEAC Region 6 director, NEA, AFL-CIO

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

Upcoming Events

- Mar. 3 *Candidates' Answers* available on our website.
- Mar. 7 Issues forum on labor issues (see above), 7 p.m.
(Capitol Lakes)
- Mar. 14 LWVDC Board Meeting, 2:30 p.m.
- Mar. 15 *Candidates' Answers* available on newsstands.
- April 3 Spring General Election
- April 11 Issues forum on fair voting maps and redistricting,
7 p.m. (Capitol Lakes)
- May 23 Annual Meeting, 6 p.m. (Capitol Lakes)
- May 31 High School Voter Education Committee, 2 p.m.
(Sequoia Library)

Officers

- President**
Brook Soltvedt
- Vice President**
Ingrid Rothe
- Secretary**
Gail Bliss
- Treasurer**
Diane Liebert
- Office Administrator**
Elaine Sinagra
- Bulletin Editor**
Mike Casey

*Watch your email each Monday for a weekly update from LWV Dane County
with a roundup of action alerts and upcoming events.*

2018 Elections

- April 3 Spring election
 - August 14 Fall primary
 - November 6 Fall election
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Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.