



# THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

## League Lines

JULY/AUGUST 2007

### Calendar

414-273-8683

*New web site!!* <http://lwvmilwaukee.org>, e-mail: [info@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:info@lwvmilwaukee.org)

#### July

- 4 Wed., Independence Day
- 11 Wed., 5:30-8:00p.m.  
Board Meeting & Orientation  
Place: To Be Announced  
Contact: Louise Petering, 414/351-3617
- 23 Mon., Natural Resources Committee  
Jennifer Runquist's home  
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee  
Contact: Jennifer Runquist, 414/332-5067

#### August

- 8 Wed., 6p.m.  
Board Meeting and Bulletin Deadline  
Washington Park Library  
Contact: Louise Petering,  
414/351-3617
- 27 Mon., Natural Resources Committee  
Louise Petering's home  
7229 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Fox Point  
Contact: Jennifer Runquist,  
414/332-5067

### LEADERS LINES

Louise Petering, President

Many thanks to all of you for the gift of plants I received at the annual meeting. Your gift was transformed into Wisconsin native plants that are now thriving in the soil in my back yard. The wood phlox are now past bloom and all the plants I purchased with your gift are green and getting established so they can make their show next year.



**LWV State Convention:**  
Marilyn Slautterback,  
Chair, State Energy Study Committee,  
thanks Leaguers for their work on the energy study.



**LWV-Milwaukee County:**  
Angela McKenzie, outgoing LWV-MC co-president thanks keynote speaker Supreme Court Justice Shirley Abrahamson at the LWV-MC Annual Meeting in May.

At our annual meeting, members approved the "Convenient Lending" positions drafted by the study committee after the consensus units in April (See, Local Study Report). Our thanks go to Dorothy Dean, Chair of the Local Study, and her committee for leading us in the study and agreeing to proceed with a study of predatory lending in the coming year. We also approved a budget, elected officers and revised bylaws. Thanks to Angela McKenzie for arranging a wonderful evening with Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson as keynote.

Having passed our positions on "Convenient Lending," we prepared them to be considered for concurrence at the June 15 & 16 LWV Wisconsin Convention in Green Bay. We succeeded in getting a concurrence, so now all League around the state may act in their locales on the issue.

Thanks to the generous contribution of \$600 by an anonymous donor, most of the registration costs for our delegates to Convention were covered. Ann Baynton, Marilyn Boeldt, Karen Hansen, Joann Kreimendahl, Sue Lindberg, Rich Lindberg, Susan Slocum, Ruth Snedic and I attended on behalf of our League. Kit Halloran served as parliamentarian for the convention and delivered a Tribute to Fran Swigart for her contributions to League. Please read it elsewhere in this bulletin.

#### Highlights of state convention include:

Restructuring of LWVWI to a 501(C) (3) with an "h election" that includes local Leagues under that same IRS class; bylaws and budgets appropriate for this pending restructuring were adopted; the IRS will rule on restructuring by October 2007.

Adoption of new Energy and Voting Rights positions under Natural Resources and Citizens Rights programs, respectively. This marks the culmination of two, two-year studies by Leagues around Wisconsin. Concurrence by the delegates with the Lending Practices positions adopted by our League at our May 7 annual meeting. See "New Positions" below.

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### SAVE THE DATES

**September 29**

Saturday, 8a.m. -3:15 p.m.

#### **Making Democracy Work Summit**

Building a consensus on good government issues in Wisconsin among local civic, community and faith groups.

Details coming on the website and in the Sept/Oct bulletin.

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A talk by Barbara Freese on "Stepping off the Path Paved with Coal" that made clear we in the U.S. can ill afford the fiscal and environmental costs to build the 151 coal-fired power plants currently proposed. She asserted that we need an "energy revolution" to assure our future fiscal and environmental health.

Another talk, "Wisconsin Immigrants: Past Present and Future" mentioned changing perceptions of what constitutes "white," or acceptable immigrants.

## **YOUR LEAGUE LEADERSHIP**

Kerry Thomas, Chair Nominating Committee

As chair of the nominating committee, I've spoken with most of the women below! They have made commitments to serve the Milwaukee County League in various capacities, so keep their names in mind when you would like to help or have input on League events, decisions and topics. Contact them using our League email, [info@lwmilwaukee.org](mailto:info@lwmilwaukee.org).

President, Louise Petering  
Vice President, Sue Lindberg  
Secretary, Joann Kreimendahl  
Treasurer, Susan Slocum

### Directors

Ann Baynton (Voter Service)  
Mel Bromberg (International Relations liaison)  
Dorothy Dean (Local Study and Website)  
Hannah Dugan (Civil Rights)  
Helga Guequierre (Natural Resources liaison)  
Carol O'Neill (Membership)

### Off-Board Leaders

Action: Ruth Snedic  
Annual Meeting: Joanne Barndt  
Bulletin Team: Barb Hussin, Louise Petering, Mary Stefaniak, Kerry Thomas and Gloria Weiskotten  
International Relations Chair: Marianne Steigerwald  
Legislative Breakfast: Elaine Drobny, John Abelt  
Mail and Voice Mail: Karen Campbell  
Natural Resources Chair and Citz. Advisory Comm, MMSD: Jennifer Runquist

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Mary Stefaniak, Membership Co-Chair

Good News - we have had a **7% increase in membership this year**. The following have joined just within the last 6 months. Welcome to: Jenny Chay, Eileen Collins, Jerrienne and Hilbert Hayslett, Ethel Hood, Anita Lloyd, Theresa McCoy, Melinda Myers, Miriam Odden, Doris Redmond, Dennis Redovich, Allison Rohlfing, Bethany Sanchez, Dorothy Sherman, Gladys Thiel and Diane Steigerwald. Our effectiveness as a League depends on the number and participation of members, so we encourage all who have not already renewed for 2007/ 2008 year to use the membership form on the back of this newsletter to pay your dues. Your expiration date appears on the newsletter's address label.

Congratulations to member **Ellis Bromberg** on receiving the Saul Sorrin Leadership Award from the Milwaukee Jewish Council. Saul Sorrin, a longtime de facto leader of the secular Jewish community here in Milwaukee, and Father Groppi worked together during the civil rights activities in the 1960's and 70's. Ellis is General Manager of Milwaukee Public Television and has been elected as Vice President of the Milwaukee Jewish Council.

**Marion Druze**, a long time member of the League (Wauwatosa and Milwaukee County), died on April 23rd after a long illness. She, with her husband Fred, was a resident of Clement Manor. Marion served the Wauwatosa League in many capacities – president, vice-president and bulletin editor. She organized and hosted an evening supper Unit when more members began to work outside the home. She was an active supporter of all things League and of the issues studied and acted upon. Fred has received our sympathy.

Many of you know that our dear and dedicated member **Fran Swigart** passed away on Sunday morning, June 17, from a prion disease. Fran's husband Steve supported her League activities including opening their home for our Winter Social the past two years. The family held a memorial service for Fran on June 30 at Immanuel Presbyterian. We certainly miss Fran as a friend and optimistic leader in League. She joined League in 1976 and capably served in many capacities over the years including president, bulletin editor, education study chair, new citizen/new voter chair, treasurer and more. A League "Tribute to Fran" appears below. We send our love and sympathy to Steve, Martha and Andy.

## **ACTION**

Ruth Snedic, Coordinator/Chair

### **National**

In May, the LWVUS asked the League to lobby on the "Special Interest Influence" legislation in the House. An amendment to require lobbyists to disclose who contributed to "bundling" of large sums of money delivered to members of Congress by lobbyists was supported by the League. Currently, the lobbyist is the only one that has to declare.

Also in May, the LWVUS opposed an amendment to the federal immigration bill that would impose a Voter ID requirement beginning in 2008. We were asked to contact our senators to vote against this amendment.

### **State**

The Senate Committee on Campaign Finance Reform passed two bills that the League supports SB 77 and SB 171 and we were asked to call our senators and urge them to vote yes.

The State League opposed two bills allowing employers to refuse to hire or to fire as employees past felons based on their criminal record. We were asked to call our representatives to oppose these bills. AB 30 and AB260. Unfortunately both passed.

We were asked to call our representatives and senators to urge extending authorization and funding of the Stewardship Fund and to increase funding from \$60 million to \$105 million. It is due to expire in 2010. The Joint Finance Committee voted 9-7 to fully fund the Fund and removed the sunset provision. As of this writing, it remains in the state budget.

Our legislators were asked by our members to support Oral Health in Wisconsin by providing Medicaid patients with dental access and to make oral health a priority in the 2007-08 budget.

The Compassionate Care for Rape Victims Act was passed in the Senate but is now languishing in an Assembly committee with no intentions of bringing it to the floor for a vote. We were asked to call our representatives to get it out of committee and have a vote on this.

The League also lobbied on SB 119 the Great Lakes Ballast Water Bill. Members were asked to call the senators and assembly representatives to support this legislation.

### **Local**

We adopted our positions on "Payday Lending" at our Annual Meeting in May and took it to LWV WI Convention where delegates concurred to add our positions to those of the state League.

## **LOCAL STUDY CONVENIENT/PREDATORY LENDING**

Dorothy Dean, Study Chair

We did it! Members attending the Annual Meeting on May 7th adopted lending positions, pending their re-formatting and approval by the LWV of Milwaukee County board.

The re-formatted and board-approved positions appear below. Remember, we are continuing with the study of lending industry practices with a study of predatory lending, loans usually larger than \$10,000 where the borrower's house is the security for the loan. Join us as we investigate this second phase of the study of lending industry practices.

### **LENDING INDUSTRY PRACTICES – ADOPTED POSITIONS**

Support provisions to provide consumers accurate and complete information on the costs of loans (terms, interest, fees and penalties). Consumers would benefit if provided information about other financial options.

Support provisions for all lenders to implement a tracking system to enable shared information on monitoring of loans; preventing overuse of rollovers and concurrent loans. Lenders should be encouraged to assist in providing consumer education.

Support efforts of the municipalities in Milwaukee County to use the avenues available to regulate non-chartered lending businesses. The Milwaukee Task Force on Convenient Lending recommendations (see separate page) are reasonable standards.

Chartered financial institutions should be encouraged to maintain a presence in low to moderate-income areas.

The most important elements of consumer protection must come from state and federal regulations in the form of limits on interest, terms, rollovers, amount and number of concurrent loans.

(Note: "Chartered institutions" cover banks, savings & loans, and credit unions. Convenient lenders are not regulated or chartered.)

## **A TRIBUTE AND THANKS TO FRAN SWIGART**

*from the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County*

Someone asked that we tell you a little about Fran Swigart and her Voters Service efforts. Well, in our book Fran Swigart defines Voter Service and in the process gives it new meanings.

Of course, Fran excels at the standard definition of Voters Service. Her name comes up right away when we are looking for a debate or candidates meeting moderator, particularly if this one requires both a strong presence and humor, or the diplomatic skills of a Solomon. Even more she is always available when you need additional support at a debate or forum – the timer, the question sorting, the cards and pencils for questions, the box with the membership materials, bunting, signs, and extra bulletins, etc. Fran's questions for candidates get to the point without attack. Her insight and calm demeanor are equally valuable at issue forums particularly when the issue is challenging and divisive. A signature fashion note for Fran is a batch of wonderful hats that always contribute so much to her air of authority.

And when another organization asks the League for a moderator? Guess who! There was a time when Fran truly rescued a candidate's meeting. A joint effort of three organizations, the forum was the first of a series and was therefore to be video taped as a guide. The lieutenant governor was to start things off. All the Milwaukee area state legislators had been invited ---- but only three showed up and two left early! Again, Fran's calm demeanor, some ingenuity with the format, and the hat, somehow kept the night from utter disaster!

For many years, as a faithful Election Night reporter (along with all available members of the Swigart family), Fran turned the evening's work into true voters service or voting rights protection – the inaccessibility of a polling place was reported, a problem with a poll worker smoothed over, a tactful procedural reminder offered. Apparently this activity inspired more hands-on work.

First, Fran volunteered as a poll worker (thereby reducing the average age of Milwaukee poll workers significantly). Before long she took on the Chief Inspector job. When the polling place needed to be moved, Fran was pulled into identifying the better location. So by last fall her polling place, now in Sandburg Hall at UWM, registered a record

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numbers of new voters on election day (over a thousand) – and efficiently! Testament to the need to fend off those who would like to do away with “same day registration.”

New Voters, New Citizens! Fran Swigart! That’s practically all you need to say. About six years ago Fran took over the program of offering voting information to new citizens at the monthly Naturalization ceremonies at the Federal courthouse. These days folks from all over the state come to Milwaukee to become new U.S. citizens. At three or four ceremonies a month, League members distribute booklets of information on voting in Wisconsin, the booklets are collected from most of the new citizens so that we can personalize them with info on the individual’s polling place and current elected officials. After the ceremony, which usually includes a judicial pep talk on the importance of voting and recognition of the League, League members register the Milwaukee residents. Fran has a corps of us organized to attend the ceremonies, register voters, fill out and mail the booklets to the new citizens. When there, Fran is always in red, white and blue attire and the bunting clearly identifies the deputy registrar’s table. Of course, she also updated the booklet, arranged for printing, and sought the funds to underwrite the project.

Frustrated by not being able to register so many of the new citizens that are living outside of Milwaukee, Fran has been beleaguering Kevin Kennedy, head of the State Election Board, to get the regulations and training established for statewide special deputy registrars. We understand that will be happening fairly soon, right Ellen? Another service to voters and another service to other Leaguers around the state who have been similarly frustrated in Get Out the Vote projects.

Is offering yourself as a candidate the ultimate in Voters Service? In 1992 Fran ran for the state assembly. Sheldon Wasserman truly believes that the information and materials Fran gave him from her then unsuccessful campaign was a big factor in his victory two years later.

After the 2004 elections, Fran was a finalist for the job of Executive Director of the Milwaukee Election Commission. Just think what might have been! (However, her not having a job in city government has allowed Fran to be the League designee on the City of Milwaukee Ethics Board.)

Now we’ve just outlined some of what Fran Swigart is doing in the area of Voters Service. We’ve not mentioned the large number of important other jobs she has done within the Milwaukee League – like part of a leadership team, like treasurer when the need was desperate. Nor have we discussed the important roles she’s had in other organizations in Milwaukee, all of which contributed to her being named “Milwaukee Volunteer of the Year” by the Volunteer Center of Milwaukee a couple years ago. Nor have we mentioned her work in Africa.

We in the Milwaukee County League are very proud of Fran Swigart and grateful for the honor being paid her by all of you – the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin. But why are we bringing all this up now? Unfortunately, she is being laid low by a rare disease that is sapping her life away. We who have been fortunate to enjoy Fran’s company as

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Leaguers since her joining in 1976, celebrate her leadership, optimistic outlook, hard work and friendship. “Thank You, Fran!” for all you do.

**THANK YOU, FRAN!!**

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

Barbara Eisenberg, Committee Member and Milwaukee County Delegate to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC)

### **Summary: Wisconsin Conservation Congress Convention 2007**

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress is a citizen advisory group to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the WDNR Board. Each county has 5 delegates that are elected for 2 or 3-year terms. Citizens vote for two delegates each year at the annual DNR Spring Hearing and Meeting of the Conservation Congress (usually the 2nd Monday in April). In Milwaukee County the voter turnout was approximately 114 and incumbent delegates Jo Ann Kuharske and Jim Wrolstad were reelected. In addition to voting for delegates, citizens also voted on a number of proposed changes to DNR rules and on resolutions submitted by citizens.

In May, the delegates from all across the state meet at the annual convention to review results on from the April meeting and possibly propose and vote on new resolutions. This year the convention included speeches by Governor Doyle and DNR Secretary Scott Hassett as well as presentations on Pine Marten Research, Elk Biology and Management, Update Aquatic Invasive Species and Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS), Future of Wisconsin’s Muskie Program, Making the Connection: Public Health and the Environment, and New Gun Club Sales Tax Exemption: What your club should know about Wisconsin Act 327.

### **Motions passed on floor of WCC Convention:**

- Support reauthorization of Stewardship Fund with criteria listed below. If approved by state legislators, there would be approximately \$105 million/year allocated to the fund through bonding.
1. Expand hunting, fishing and trapping opportunities on all Stewardship funded lands by reviewing current and future properties to see which can be safely opened to hunting, fishing and trapping.
  2. Create a review process to increase public input on Stewardship land purchases.
  3. Restore wildlife habitat on lands the State already owns using Stewardship Funds.
  4. Post signs and publish a directory of all Stewardship funded lands including all public access information.
- Rescind DNR emergency rule to ban use of dead bait. This rule was passed by the DNR to prevent the spread of Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS), a fish virus that kills a wide variety of fish species and was diagnosed for the first time in Lake Huron, Lake Erie, Lake St. Clair, Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River in 2005 and 2006. Fish biologists believe the virus is already in Lake Michigan and ballast discharged from ships may have infected port cities on Lake Superior.
  - Sign on to a petition asking the DNR to strengthen the mercury
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rule to require deeper and earlier cuts than the federal Environmental Protection Agency regulations: 90% reduction in emissions from coal plants by 2012 (motion made by Barbara Eisenberg, Milwaukee County Delegate)

- Oppose legal challenge to the recent delisting of gray wolves in Wisconsin

#### **Other business and discussion of interest:**

- Each district in the WCC voted for two executive councilors to serve a one-year term, 2007-2008. Milwaukee County is the only county in District 12. Our councilors, Ted Lind and Ed Rewolinski stepped down and JoAnn Kuharske and Jim Wrolstad were voted in.
- Randy Stark, Chief Warden, spoke and said there is a good chance that legislators will take up a vote to lower the hunting age and allow shooting at a younger age.
- There was praise for the DNR Learn to Hunt Program, part of “No Child Left Inside” and some talk of the desire to expand the Archery in Schools program
- The rules and resolution committee asked for comments on several proposed reconfigurations of the WCC districts. All but the current boundaries merge Milwaukee County into a district with other counties. None contained districts with near equal representation.
- Discussion on the floor favored federal laws to regulate ballast water or closing the St. Lawrence seaway to ocean vessels.

In each county at the April Conservation Congress Meeting, resolutions can be submitted by residents and voted on. If they pass at the county level, they are reviewed by the Rules and Resolutions Committee and either rejected or assigned to another committee for approval. If the resolution is approved by the committee to which it is assigned, the wording of the resolution is refined for a statewide **vote at next year’s annual meeting. Here are some of the resolutions that passed in county meetings and were forwarded to WCC committees:**

- 040307 (proposed at Milwaukee County meeting) Ban the sale and use of phosphorus lawn fertilizers.
- 040407 (proposed at Milwaukee County meeting) Statewide prohibition of transportation of aquatic invasive species such as Eurasian water milfoil.
- 090107 Increase trapping opportunities for fisher.
- 200207 Extend the raccoon trapping season two weeks (to February 15).
- 210107 Increase bobcat daily bag limit (hunting/trapping) to one bobcat/hunter /season.
- 210307 Increase the number of kill permits for bear in the north-east part of WI.
- 210407 Structure a public harvest system for control of wolf population.
- 290107 Allow shooting coyotes over bait
- 300307 Stop killing mute swans.

- 360307 Mandate no net loss of public hunting grounds by legislation.
- 360403 Mandate no net loss of public fishing access or grounds by legislation.
- 360507 Allow youth to hunt when accompanied by adult hunter education graduate OR parent or guardian.
- 370407 Allow bear dog training only in zones where bear hunting with dogs is allowed.
- 390307 Allow youth turkey hunt on any Sat. or Sun. during the six-week turkey season.
- 400107 Encourage or demand watercraft used on Lake Michigan and Superior be washed with pressured soapy water before being used on inland waters.
- 420107 Reduce youth hunting license to ½ regular cost, remove stamp requirement
- 430207 No drawing for turkey tags for youth 12 to 15 years old. All youth who complete hunter safety would receive a tag at the normal price.
- 480107 Ban all baiting and placing of feed for deer statewide anytime.
- 530107 Increase squirrel daily bag limit to 10 and possession limit to 20.
- 530307 Institute youth hunt (age 12-15 w/adult chaperone) for resident Canada geese.
- 65207 Prohibit shining of wildlife with any artificial light except at point of (legal) kill.
- 670507 and 680207 Give preference for turkey permits to hunters age 70 and older.
- 690107 Allow the use of pistol cartridges larger than 34 caliber in rifles or other shoulder fired long guns for deer hunting within all Wisconsin shotgun only areas.
- 067107 Extend the dove hunting season until two days prior to November gun deer season.
- 097107 Allow the overnight placement of properly marked, portable, non-damaging tree stands on State Public Land open to hunting throughout the big game hunting season.
- 720207 Allow disabled members of the Conservation Congress to vote at home using a DNR supplied number.
- 720307 Extend bobcat harvest season (start third Saturday in Oct.) from Dec.31 to Jan.15.

#### **ABOUT LEAGUE: MEETING TYPES**

Different kinds of meetings foster different objectives. League “**Unit Discussion Meetings**” enable members to talk more in depth with one another, develop a topic or arrive at consensus. Our “**General Meetings**” allow members to hear presentations and ask questions of presenters. Often these topics are discussed at subsequent “Unit Meetings.”

## Join the League Today!

Become a member of the League of Women Voters and help *Make Democracy Work!*

Dues [Circle One]:      \$60 Individual      \$75 Household (2 or more individuals)      \$25 Student      \$25 Limited Income  
\$100 Sustaining (supports \$25 memberships)      \$160 Centennial (supports action & activities)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ WI Zip \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Involvement [Check One]: Active \_\_\_\_ or Supporting \_\_\_\_ Interests \_\_\_\_\_

Please Note: Please circle your preferred means of contact and mail this form with your check to the **League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County, P.O. Box 100785, Milwaukee, WI 53210**. Thank You. (Non-tax deductible contributions may be made to the LWV Milwaukee County. For a tax deductible gift to the LWV Milwaukee County, write a separate check, minimum \$50, payable to the LWV Education Fund. Mail contributions to the membership dues address above.)



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

P.O. Box 100785  
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<http://lwvmilwaukee.org>

Please pay your dues by this date ↻