



# THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

## League Lines

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2005

### Calendar

414-273-8683  
www.milwaukee-voters.org

#### September

- 14 Wednesday – 6 p.m.  
Board Meeting  
Washington Park Library  
2121 N. Sherman Blvd.  
Contact: Louise Petering (414) 351-3617
- 15 Thursday – 9:00, 11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m.  
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
Judge Adelman's Courtroom #390  
Contact: Fran Swigart (414) 962-8984
- 21 **Wednesday – 6:00 p.m. - Fall "Kickoff"**  
**SALAD BUFFET AND PROGRAM**  
**PUBLIC WELCOME**  
Informing Citizens - Public Broadcasting  
"Keeping the Public (Funding, That Is) in  
Public Broadcasting,"  
Speaker: Ellis Bromberg, General Manager  
of Milwaukee Public Television  
Gordon Park Pavilion  
Southeast corner of Locust and Humboldt  
Reservations & Contact: Helga Guequierre,  
(414) 225-0460  
See Article, p. 2
- 26 Monday – Natural Resources Committee  
Energy, Sewage, Grt. Lks. Water  
Jennifer Runquist's home  
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd.  
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 26 Monday – 9:15 a.m.  
Internatn'l Relations Committee  
Topic: AFRICA  
Marge Maxwell's home  
7012 Milwaukee Ave., Wauwatosa  
Contact: Marianne Steigerwald  
(414) 476-9272

#### October

- 6 Thursday – 7:30p.m.  
Alverno College Debate Series, Wehr Hall  
"Health Care: A Question of Justice"  
Contact: Donna Engelmann (414)382-6413
- 8 Saturday – 9a.m.- 3 p.m.,  
"Make Poverty History"  
a UN Millennium Development Goal  
Our Savior's Lutheran Church,  
3022 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee  
Contact: Susan at (414) 708-8420 or  
email: mcgovernsj@wi.rr.com.
- 12 Wednesday – 6 p.m.  
Board Meeting & Bulletin Deadline  
Washington Park Library  
2121 N. Sherman Blvd.  
Contact: Karen Campbell (414) 774-5944
- 14 Friday – evening  
League Leadership Training  
Clarion Suites, 2110 Rimrock Rd., Madison  
Contact: Barbara Hussin, (414) 351-0819  
See Article p. 4
- 15 **Saturday – 9a.m.-3:30p.m.**  
**State Issues Briefing**  
Sheraton Hotel, John Nolen Drive, Madison  
Contact: Barbara Hussin, (414) 351-0819  
See Article p.4
- 19 **Wednesday**  
**Unit Discussion Meetings**  
**TOPIC: Milwaukee County Government**  
  
WEST AFTERNOON UNIT, 1 p.m.  
St. Matthew's Church  
615 Wauwatosa Ave.  
Contact: Minna Jones (414) 476-5249  
  
EAST EVENING UNITS – 6:30p.m.  
Shorewood Public Library  
Community Rm. North  
Contact: Judith Lindsay (414) 963-9829  
or Barbara Hussin (414) 351-0819  
  
WEST – 7:30p.m.  
Location Varies  
Contact: Ruth Snedic (414) 771-7690
- 20 Thursday – 9:00, 11:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m.  
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
(Courtroom unconfirmed)  
Contact: Fran Swigart (414) 962-8984
- 24 Monday – 7:00 p.m.  
Natural Resources Committee  
Energy, Sewage, Grt. Lks. Water  
Jennifer Runquist's home  
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd.  
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 24 **Monday**  
**UNITED NATIONS DAY**  
UN Flag Raising Ceremonies  
8:15 a.m, West Allis City Hall  
75th & Greenfield  
8:30, Tosa Civic Center, 76th & North Ave.  
9:00 a.m., Zeidler Municipal Building  
E. Kilbourn, Milwaukee  
Contact: Marianne Steigerwald  
(414) 476-9272
- 24 **Monday** - 9:15 am  
Internatn'l Relations Committee  
Video: "The Eleanor Roosevelt Story"  
Academy Award winner for  
Best Documentary  
Marianne Steigerwald's  
7324 W. Wisconsin Ave.  
Contact: Marianne Steigerwald  
(414) 476-9272
- 27 Thursday - 9:00 & 11:00 a.m.  
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
(Courtroom unconfirmed)  
Contact: Fran Swigart (414) 962-8984

### Sept. 21 – ANNUAL KICK-OFF

Bring guests! RSVP for an evening of  
food, friendship and facts. (See pg. 2)

"Keeping the Public (Funding, That Is)  
in Public Broadcasting"

### DUES ARE DUE

**Check the address label for your dues due date.**  
If you have a paid date of June 2005 or earlier  
please use the form on the bulletin and pay  
now to help save volunteer work & postage.  
*Thank you paid members for your promptness!!*

## SEPTEMBER 21 "KICKOFF"

### Salad Buffet and Program:

#### "Keeping the Public (Funding, That Is) in Public Broadcasting," to Keep the Public Informed

Come to the "kickoff" with friends and guests. There will be interesting people, great salads and a topic vital to the League's goal of "making democracy work," namely, "Keeping the Public (Funding That Is) in Public Broadcasting." Because public broadcasting informs the public with its in-depth reporting, it shares League's educational goal. So it is appropriate to begin our 85th year with informing ourselves about public broadcasting. Ellis Bromberg, the General Manager of Milwaukee Public Television -- our local PBS stations, Channels 10&36 -- will tell us the latest news from the federal front and why public funding is justified for public broadcasting. Mr. Bromberg has spent more than 29 years in public broadcasting management, programming and production.

This summer, public broadcasting has been under the microscope to a greater degree than it was a decade ago when Newt Gingrich proposed the elimination of all federal funding for it. Kenneth Tomlinson, the controversial board chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting that disburses federal funds to local stations, made news when he charged that some PBS programming was "liberal advocacy," and that there needed to be more conservative spokespersons on the air. Liberal groups charged that Tomlinson, a political appointee, was wrong; that he was involving himself in programming decisions that should be made without government interference. Meanwhile, an effort in a U.S. House of Representatives committee to severely slash funding to public TV and radio stations was defeated by a bi-partisan majority in a dramatic floor vote.

**Please bring your guests and make reservations by contacting Helga Guequierre [(414) 225-0460].** Let her know you will be coming for the salad buffet and program. If you wish to donate an item for the buffet (salad, dessert, rolls, muffins) please let Helga know what you plan to bring.

### NEW VOTER/NEW CITIZEN

Fran Swigart, Chair

August 18th was a day to celebrate for all Leaguers and all women. On that day we and nine other Leagues around Wisconsin celebrated the 85th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, and the 85th Anniversaries of the founding of the League of Women Voters of the United States AND the LWV of Wisconsin. Our local league celebrated these auspicious events with our newest United States citizens -and those listening to WUWM. The station covered the event several times each of three days -- the day before, the day of, and the day after the celebration!

August 18th was also the August date for naturalization ceremonies at the Federal Courthouse. Since our volunteers were there to distribute information about voting and register new voters, we added one more element to the festivities. Under the large American flag that is suspended in the beautifully restored atrium, we had a punch and cookies reception for the new citizens and the people who worked in the building. About 100 people stopped by to help us celebrate and we registered 12 new voters. While that number is small, it represents only persons who live in the city of Milwaukee from the whole group of new citizens who live across the state. There were 150 people naturalized that morning.

During each naturalization ceremony, the presiding judge usually includes the importance of voting in his or her remarks as well as a reference to the 19th amendment that included the right for women to vote. We were delighted to share our anniversaries with the special day in the lives of our new citizens.

Thanks to Louise Petering, Kit Halloran O'Meara, Marilyn Goris, Mary Kae Nelson, Martha Swigart, and Mary Lou Zuege for helping me make the day a success.

### ACTION

Ruth Snedic

#### Milwaukee County LWV

- Ruth Snedic submitted an item to Op Ed page of Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (MJS) calling for timely legislative public hearings; it was printed July 31, 2005
- Louise Petering attended a County Budget Workshop 8/16 (the budget itself was not available & will not be available until mid-September; workshop responded to Co. Exec. Walker's presentation of County's fiscal situation)
- Letter sent to the County Exec. & Supervisors urging them to petition the MJS to have a "Milwaukee County Page" at least biweekly
- Letter sent to managing editor, George Stanley, of the MJS urging establishment of a "Milwaukee County Page"
- Email sent to Co. Exec. and Supervisors stating reasons for retaining paid Supervisors and not moving to volunteer Supervisors.
- Kit Halloran O'Meara represented the League of Women Voters at an 8/25 meeting of the "Special Committee on Election Law Review" here in Milwaukee
- Kerry Thomas and Louise Petering commented for LWV Milw. Co. at an 8/22 public meeting on the Great Lakes Basin (GLB) Water Resources Compact, a proposed agreement to govern GLB water use, withdrawal and transfer.
- Ruth Snedic lobbied West Allis Aldermen on behalf of LWV MC to support full funding for Community Access

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Channel 14. Community Access regularly tapes and cablecasts League informational programs.

### State LWV

- Lobbied for mental health insurance parity
- Provided an Op Ed piece to local Leagues on the need for legislative public hearings being mandatory if representative democracy is to prevail..

To find out about LWV Wisconsin's lobbying efforts from January - June 2005:

1. Go to the state Ethics Board website: <http://ethics.state.wi.us/> (an interesting website) and click on "Lobbying in Wisconsin."
2. Under "What are they lobbying about 2005?", search by organization (or another choice).
3. Click on "Organization."
4. Click on "L" for League.
5. Click on "League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, Inc." This will take you to our lobbying report card

## MEMBERSHIP

Mary Stefaniak, Co-Chair

We welcome National League members, Dr. L. Rosenberg, Sarah Lawhorn and Janice Gay. Continuing members, please find their contact information in the for-members-only insert. Phone and invite one of these women to join you when you attend a League function.

Help League's effectiveness: Update your email address by emailing me at [mvstef@attglobal.net](mailto:mvstef@attglobal.net). Long time member Vivian Hida has moved to Sacramento, CA and joined the League in her new hometown.

Several Leaguers staffed a booth in the "Information Exchange Center" at the NAACP Convention in July. Our discussions with visitors prompted 28 local NAACP members to sign up to receive copies of our newsletter. They have received the July/August League Lines and will be phoned and invited to our "Kickoff" event at Gordon Park Pavilion.

**HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?** Find out by checking the upper right corner of your mailing label. **IF THE DATE IS JUNE 30, 2006 OR LATER, THANKS FOR PAYING PROMPTLY. IF THE DATE A 2005 DATE, PLEASE PAY NOW;** complete the form at the back of this bulletin and send it with your dues to the P.O. Box indicated. If you have a limited income but can afford the \$60 individual dues level, please choose that level. Over \$50 of your dues goes outside our local League to LWV WI and US.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### 'MAKE POVERTY HISTORY' DAY, OCTOBER 8, OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Marianne Steigerwald, Chair

"Make Poverty History," a local and global call to action and celebration, inspired by the worldwide campaign for the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG), will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, October 8 at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 3022 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee. The "day" is open to the public and will begin at 9:00 a.m. with a "Millennium Fair" showcasing exhibits by local organizations that work to address poverty and hunger, women's empowerment, basic education, public health, homelessness, environmental sustainability and partnerships for development. There will be practical workshops to guide grassroots participants in taking further steps to advance the MDGs, locally or in partnerships with the developing world.

Sen. George McGovern, Roving Ambassador for UN World Food Program, will give the luncheon keynote talk. At 10:00 a.m. plenary speakers will make the "Call to Act," led by Tammy Walhof, regional director of The ONE campaign and William Lynch of the Tanzania Economic Development Initiative of Milwaukee. Invited elected officials include Lt. Governor Barbara Lawton who will present a "Response to the Call." The day will conclude with action taken by the group.

The public is invited. Advance \$5 registration includes luncheon. Admission will also be available through scholarships. At this writing, sponsors include the Wisconsin United Nations Association, the Interfaith Conference of Greater Milwaukee and many other civil society and governmental organizations. For information or to register, call Susan at (414) 708-8420 or email [mcgovernsj@wi.rr.com](mailto:mcgovernsj@wi.rr.com).

### COLUMBIA PEACE COMMUNITIES UPDATE

David Thomas & Diane Steigerwald

For us, who visited and celebrated with members of the peace community, it is very disheartening to watch the current efforts of the Colombian military to destroy the community. It is been very hard to write about the situation in the Peace Community of San Jose de Apartadó because tragic events have occurred since our January presentation. A full investigative report by the Colombia Support Network is at the following link:  
[http://colombiasupport.net/2005/6\\_26\\_RPT/](http://colombiasupport.net/2005/6_26_RPT/)

In summary, on February 21, 2005, one of the founders of the community, Luis Eduardo Guerra was brutally murdered along with 10 others including 3 children. As an example of the brutality, Luis's 11-year-old son, Deiner, was clubbed

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# OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW IN LEAGUE

Getting to know other Leaguers as we work together in “making democracy work,” is one of the big dividends of digging in on an issue. Discussions are informative, often controversial and always enlivening. Consider the opportunities below and contact the person(s) noted.

Please Note: These two events are held in different hotels, but the two hotels are within about

a quarter mile of each other. Both are close to the Madison Beltline and the Alliant Energy Center. A block of sleeping rooms in the Clarion Suites is reserved. Detailed information will be in the next issue of the “Forward.”

## JOIN “VOTERS RIGHTS” STUDY

Marilyn Boeldt, State Study Committee Chair

Now is the time for Leaguers wanting to assure voting rights to legally qualified citizens to join our local study group. This is one of two state studies voted in by delegates at League’s State Convention. Contact me at (414) 444-2111.

## LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND ISSUES BRIEFING

October 14th Weekend, Madison

### League Leadership Training

Friday, October 14

Clarion Suites, 2110 Rimrock Road, Madison

This program, offered by LWVWI President Melanie Ramey, is designed for local League presidents, as well as other League leaders, present and potential. Consider being an up-and-coming leader – someone who could be a future League President. At this workshop you will learn how to promote your League’s membership, advocacy, visibility, and fund development with every League activity. Contact: Barb Hussin (414) 351-0819.

### Issues Briefing

Saturday, October 15, 9:00-3:30

Sheraton Hotel, John Nolen Drive, Madison

Our annual Issues Briefing will have two concurrent tracks in the morning, one on each of our state studies: 1) State Energy Policy and 2) Voter Rights. Each track will have two sessions. Though the luncheon speaker is not yet confirmed, we promise you it will be a provocative presentation. In the afternoon you can choose between a sessions on access to dental care for low-income people or a legislative update from the LWVWI Legislative Committee. Contact: Barb Hussin (414) 351-0819

## COME TO OCTOBER DISCUSSION UNIT MEETINGS & JOIN THE COUNTY GOVERNMENT GROUP

Louise Petering, Director

An all-volunteer County Board? Not an elected Board??? This is one of many suggestions made by citizens at the August County Budget Workshops held by Co. Exec. Walker. As a County League we need to respond to budget and other measures that will surely affect us all – whether it is merging of the Milw. Police Dept. with the Co. Sheriff, or reduced health expenditures for the poor. By October, the Co. Exec’s proposed budget will have been issued and in process of discussion by the Co. Board. Come to the League discussion! Join the County Government Group and work to address County issues. Contact: Barbara Hussin (414) 351-0819.

## AN ALL-VOLUNTEER COUNTY BOARD???

Louise Petering, Director

On August 16th I attended the County Budget Workshop at the Brown Deer Senior Center. About 35 citizens came as well as several county employees. The session began with a power point presentation, “Overview of the Budget” (we have a copy). The group then broke into discussion tables. Table recommendations were summarized and reported back to the group.

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so hard his head was severed and found several meters from his body. Eyewitnesses implicated members of Colombia's 11th military brigade. The government's investigation of itself found no guilt whatsoever on the part of the Colombian military.

Following the international outcry, the Colombian police decided to end the controversy and occupy the village on March 20th. Because of the determination of the Peace Community to have no contact with any of the armed groups, community members gathered their belongings and relocated their community on a local farm several miles away.

The latest incursion by the military was as recent as August 13th, when community member Carlos Lopez was murdered. Leading up to the murder, in action typical of their continued harassment of the community, the military set up road-blocks, confiscated farm implements, stole food, burned houses and threatened members.

Concerned members of the international community are urged to send letters of protest to the President and Vice President of Colombia and to your senators and congressperson.

<http://www.colombiasupport.net/actioncenter.html>

*Thanks SO much for your concern.*

During my table's discussion one person suggested saving money by having an all-volunteer County Board. After listening to others, I said, "I am not sure you really want a volunteer Board." I then went on to explain my reasons.

1) To be informed on issues volunteer village trustees spend an average of 10 hours a week on village business and could spend more. Since the County Board of Supervisors is entrusted with overseeing a much larger governmental entity, a 40-hour weekly commitment would be realistic. [The Milwaukee Public Museum mess and ensuing resignations from Boards of Directors have resulted from the realization that the position means significant expertise and time commitments.]

2) An all volunteer Board would likely preclude service by people who needed to earn a living. Hence, the County Board would not represent an economic cross-section of Co. residents. After hearing my input, I understood that the group pulled back from the idea of a volunteer Co. Board, yet that was not reported out at the end of the meeting. (It was also included in a summary document reporting on all the workshops that I received in the mail from Exec. Walker.)

"Since leaving the workshop another reason for rejecting the idea of an all volunteer County Board occurred to me: since having an all volunteer County Board would likely attract almost exclusively the well-off, a significant and growing proportion of citizens would likely not have a representative from their socioeconomic group on the Board. They therefore would de facto relinquish their right to legislative representation." Continue with I firmly believe and go to the end of the paragraph.

The overview outlined the Co. Executives perspective of the County's fiscal situation and showed that unemployment in Milw. Co. increased from January 2000, reached a peak

around July of '03, and has since fallen off. Summer peaks of unemployment are the norm. In addition Milwaukee's share of personal income relative to the State as a whole has declined from 38% in 1970 to 21% in 2000. Milw. Co. has lost population from 1960 to 2000 while Waukesha and Dane Counties have experienced an increase in population during that time. (Currently Milw. Co. has about 940,000 inhabitants while Dane Co. has about 450,000 and Waukesha about 375,000.)

The presentation outlined existing fiscal pressure on the County to "reduce tax burden by maintaining flat levy" and listed "budget challenges as a) rising fringe benefit costs, b) contract negotiations, c) decreasing State aid, d) increasing need for services and e) economic development." It then went on to outline the budget process: mid June – County departments submit requests for 2006, late Sept – Executive budget is presented to the County Board, mid Nov. – County Board adopts the final budget.

Total income in 2005 was shown as \$1.19bn with 45% or \$556.6m, of the expenditures devoted to human services, 22% or \$266.1m to parks and public infrastructure, 11% or \$138.1m to public safety, 6% or \$69m to general govt., 5% or \$57.5m to courts and judiciary, 4% to both capital improvements and debt service, 2% or \$23.5m to recreation and 1% miscellaneous. The Co. Exec. projected a \$58.9m shortfall with \$38m needed for employee fringe benefits, \$3.1m needed for department operating expenses and \$12.4m for increased debt service. Recent articles in the newspaper discussed a decrease in health care for the poor. This is not consistent with League positions. And will cuts now mean greater expenditures later?

## **REPRESENTING THE LEAGUE AT THE 2005 NAACP CONVENTION**

Louise Petering, Director

Volunteers from the Milwaukee County and Ozaukee County Leagues staffed the League of Women Voters table at the Information Exchange Center (IEC) of the NAACP Convention July 9-13. Our League table was the only non-NAACP booth among several devoted to voting and voter education. At the opening of the IEC, the NAACP leadership toured the facility and the League booth was pointed out. Among the leaders was Julian Bond who acknowledged League's presence with a nod!

During the five days Leaguers spoke to visitors about the League, voting, and voter education, and other issues.

Popular free handouts provided by the LWVUS were "5 Things to Know on Election Day" and "Bill of Rights" book-marks. Because of our presence, over two dozen Milwaukee area residents will be receiving the next two issues of "League Lines" and invitations to our kickoff and other meetings.

Many thanks to the following League members for staffing the table: Mel Bromberg, Karen Campbell, Sonya Edwards, Helga & Denis Guequierre, Barbara Hussin, Mary Kae Nelson, Louise Petering, Mary Stefaniak, Fran Swigart and Barbara Toles from Milwaukee County and Jane Craig and Marge & Art Palleon from Ozaukee County. And thanks also to Dorothy Dean, Jan Martin and Ruth Snedic for volunteering to act as back-ups. Louise coordinated the project and Fran provided the decorations that spruced up our table.

## **NATURAL RESOURCES**

### **ENERGY**

Jennifer Runquist, Chair NR Committee

Electrical energy generation in S.E. WI - the basics of present and future generation is the focus of the Natural Resources General Meeting scheduled for Saturday morning, Nov. 19, 2005. We will meet at the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, 1111 E. Brown Deer Rd, Bayside, WI 53217-1999, phone (414) 352-2880. Save the date and watch the November/December LL for more information.

The meeting is designed to coordinate with the LWV WI study on energy. On August 27th, state study committee members decided the study would include all energy uses (transportation, industrial, residential/commercial, and energy generation). The goal is to produce informational papers that will be used to develop our state energy position and be the basis for action.

#### **An "Energy Note"...**

The information below is available from the Department of Energy. Companies are required to report where they get their oil and how much they import.

Here are some large companies that do not import Middle East oil: Citgo, Sunoco, Conoco, Sinclair, BP/Phillips, Hess, and ARCO.

These companies import this number of barrels per year of Middle East oil:

Shell	205,742,000
Chevron/Texaco	144,332,000
Exxon /Mobil	130,082,000
Marathon/Speedway	117,740,000
Amoco	62,231,000

Assuming a cost of \$60/ barrel, calculate how much money is going to the Middle East. What is that money supporting? Is there a relationship between these imports and opening ANWR to oil drilling? If so, what is it?

### **STEWARDS OF THE GREAT LAKES**

Louise Petering, Director

Kerry Thomas and I attended the Aug. 22 hearing on the "Great Lakes Basin Water Resources Compact" and the "Wisconsin Great Lakes Strategy." About 200 people attended the meeting. Out of a total of 50 speakers, 3 Waukesha people spoke in favor of diversion of Lake Michigan water to Waukesha. The remainder, including several Waukesha residents spoke against diversion and for protection, conservation, and restoration of the Lakes. The article in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel on 8/23 struck me as being about a different meeting - it reported in detail the comments of the manager of Waukesha's water utility, and made comparatively scant reference to the concerns of the great majority of speakers.

Our League testimony urged that several terms critical to water use, withdrawal, transfer, and diversion be included among the definitions. Two were watershed (defined in relation to topography not subterranean hydrology as is Waukesha's want), and person (defined so as to exclude a holding company whose components could individually be under the required reporting minimum but in aggregate far over that minimum).

Other key points we made were: a) opposition to out of basin diversions of water even for communities in counties straddling a divide, b) a 30-day averaging period instead of a 90-day averaging period for proposed withdrawals, transfers, & consumptive uses (WTC's) c) more frequent assessments of impacts to the Lakes and a requirement to reduce WTC's when lake levels approach their historic lows with further reductions required if the Lakes reach their historic lows.

Managing the incomparable, awe inspiring, natural wonder of the Great Lakes and Great Lakes Basin is a daunting responsibility. If we are wise stewards in the future, the Lakes will provide healthy lives for future generations; if we manage them poorly, impoverishment will be our legacy

### **COMPUTER RECYCLING**

Barbara Eisenberg, NR Committee

Get rid of that old computer in an environmentally sensitive way. Contact WasteCap Wisconsin, Inc. at 2647 N. Stowell Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53211-4299, phone number (414) 961-1100, email <http://www.wastecapwi.org/contact.htm> . For a link to results of a 2004 event on computer recycling go to Wisconsin Be Smart at: [http://www.besmart.org/events/computer\\_recycling.html](http://www.besmart.org/events/computer_recycling.html).

### **ENERGY**

Judith Lindsay, NR Committee

The recently passed federal energy bill supports League positions a bit better than did earlier versions given its incentives for homeowners to install solar systems and its tax credits to 60,000 lucky buyers of each brand of hybrid available on the auto market. But the bill does not provide measures that will bring us close to European standards of efficiency, or develop alternative energies as quickly as they. While the Bill gives tax breaks to companies for conservation and efficiency, provides loan guarantees for new, improved nuclear reactors, increases efficiency standards for appliances, and supports clean coal research, it none-the-less provides billions of taxpayer dollars to polluting energy industries, opens our coastlines and wild lands to destructive oil and gas activities (drilling, pipelines, transmission lines, etc.), and it increases our reliance on Middle East oil. Ironically, the U.S. recently joined other nations in a program for pollution cleanup in developing nations to avoid CO2 increase and climate change, while we with our own continued heavy use of coal, oil, and gas, are in our short lifetimes reversing the photosynthesis  
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of millions of years in the Carboniferous era. We are releasing all that once-fixed CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere, along with mercury and other pollutants. But pollution is only part of the problem. We are altering earth's climate.

While climate change had occurred many times in earth's history, the earth has never warmed so much in so short a time; nor was the earlier warming caused by human behavior. Today we are releasing the greenhouse gas CO<sub>2</sub> from fossil fuels while we are destroying the forests that act as a sink for CO<sub>2</sub>. Our transportation uses emit 32% of this CO<sub>2</sub> (of which 35.6% is passenger cars), electricity 41%, industrial 16%, residential 7%, commercial 4%. Projections indicate our use is likely to increase 33% by 2050.

So the U.S. is a long way from meeting the goals of the Kyoto treaty, which may explain why the administration would not sign it and dismissed the whole concept. Many may have had reservations when words such as "probability" were used in speaking about global warming, but as a judge once said: "It is not necessary that the plaintiff ascend the icy stratosphere of absolute mathematical certainty. Rather it is enough if, earth-bound and flat-footed, he merely demonstrate that the damage is more probable than not." We in the U.S. make up 5% of the earth's population, but emit 25% of human-generated CO<sub>2</sub>. We are culprits in this "probability."

It is our profligate use of energy derived from fossil fuels that leads to the "probability" of the global warming of Earth's climate. Like air and water, climate is not confined by political boundaries, not owned by any one nation, but part of the "common." Climate is global, and we are changing it faster than we can understand it. Global warming has already raised temperatures in the polar regions, destroying the Arctic ice shelf needed by polar bears to hunt for food and interfering with native life. In Antarctica, Adelie penguins are in decline. In Greenland and elsewhere, glaciers are receding and melting at increasing rates. These are a few of the most visible effects.

Contributing to the rate of climate change is the increase in world population, already beyond sustainable according to Negative Population Growth (NPG). In the journal NPG Kenneth Boulding states: "Anyone who believes exponential growth can go on forever is either a madman or an economist." If we turn to biomass, we will need more cropland for fuel instead of for agricultural products needed to feed a growing population. While biomass might support a part of our human energy needs as it did before the industrial revolution, "demographics is key." Half the present 6.4 billion people would

allow one quarter of all arable land to be used for biomass production. If we had 1.6 billion people, as in 1900, there would be enough land for both food and energy production based on biomass fuels. (A ton of wood generates about 60% as much energy as a ton of coal, grasses about 50%.)

What can we do about this predicament? I have recently learned (National Geographic, Aug. 2005, p.7) that by replacing one

incandescent light bulb with a compact fluorescent lamp, over the life of the lamp you will save the equivalent energy of a 500-pound pile of coal. In addition, as the July/August bulletin stated you could plant a deciduous tree, drive a fuel-efficient car, use public transportation, walk, bike, and car-pool. Better land use would help too. In Waukesha County I see new mansions in country that used to

be cropland and forest. Many have three-car garages. The people buying these are entirely dependent on cars, and the gas that runs them—and the developers know it.

Some companies are joining the effort to slow the warming trend. Wisconsin Energies is encouraging support of wind energy through a program that allows customers to choose to get a portion of their energy from wind generators, if customers are willing to pay a little more. And Wisconsin's PSC recently approved the state's largest wind farm. We have options.

Most members of the climate scientific community have been warning of global warming for more than 15 years. And our luxurious way of life attracts many immigrants who aspire to live as we do. Having used up most of our fossil fuel, our appetite for more has contributed to combat in the Middle East, thus using up more fuel! And if we finally withdraw and turn to biomass, we will need more cropland for fuel instead of for agricultural products needed to feed a growing population.

The information and concerns I present here point for the need to institute the League position on energy - reduction of energy growth rates, use of a variety of energy sources with emphasis on conservation and energy efficient technologies, predominant reliance on renewables, limits on nuclear fission, policies to reduce demand, and mandatory energy-conservation measures among others. Climate change is real. For now, I have used up my energy!

Sources: *The National Geographic*, Sept. 04 and Aug. 05 a Wisconsin DNR brochure

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Electrical Energy Generation in S.E. WI  
Sat. morning, Nov. 19, 2005**

Present and future generation is the focus of the Natural Resources Issue Meeting. Join us at the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center, 1111 E. Brown Deer Rd, Bayside WI 53217-1999, phone (414) 352-2880. Watch the Nov/Dec. LL for more info.

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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.)



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