



# THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

## League Lines JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2005

### Calendar

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

#### January

- 5 Wednesday – 7p.m.  
Natural Resources Committee  
Grt. Lks. Water Diversion + more  
Jennifer Runquist's home  
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd.  
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 12 Wednesday – 6p.m.  
Board Meeting  
Washington Park Library  
2121 N. Sherman Blvd.  
Contact: Karen Campbell (414) 774-5944
- 19 Wednesday **UNIT DISCUSSIONS**  
**Program-Making, League Grassroots**  
See Article Inside, p. 2
- WEST AFTERNOON UNIT, 1 p.m.  
St. Matthew's Church  
1615 Wauwatosa Ave.  
Contact: Minna Jones (414) 476-5249
- EVENING UNITS  
EAST – 6:30 p.m.  
Shorewood Public Library  
Contact: Judith Lindsay (414) 963-9829  
Or Fran Swigart (414) 962-8984
- WEST – 7:30 p.m.  
Location Varies  
Contact: Ruth Snedic (414) 771-7690
- 20 Thursday, 9 & 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.  
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
Contact: Fran Swigart, (414) 962-8984
- 27 Thursday, 9 & 11 a.m.  
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
Contact: Fran Swigart, (414) 962-8984
- 27 Thursday, 5:45 p.m. supper  
**Issue & IR Committee Joint Meeting**  
**The Columbia, SA Connection**  
Heinemann's Restaurant, 76th & Bluemound  
Reservations, contact: Barbara Hussin  
(414) 351-0819  
See Article Inside, p. 2

#### February

- 2 Wednesday – 7p.m.  
Natural Resources Committee  
MMSD & Lk. MI Beaches + more  
Jennifer Runquist's home  
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd.  
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067  
or Helga Guequierre (414) 225-0460
- 5 Saturday, 8:30 - noon  
**Legislative Breakfast, \$15.00**  
Issues in Women's Health  
Speaker, Helene Nelson, Sec., Dept. of  
Health and Family Services  
Alverno College Conference Center  
Contact: Elaine Drobny (414) 332-6760  
See Article Inside
- 9 Wednesday – 6 p.m.  
Board Meeting and  
Mar/Apr Bulletin Deadline  
Washington Park Library  
2121 N. Sherman Blvd.  
Contact: Karen Campbell (414) 774-5944
- 15 Tuesday, **PRIMARY ELECTION! VOTE!!**
- 16 Wednesday **UNIT DISCUSSIONS**  
**Consensus on State Education Study**  
Read Materials Inside and Bring to Unit
- WEST AFTERNOON UNIT, 1 p.m.  
St. Matthew's Church  
1615 Wauwatosa Ave.  
Contact: Minna Jones (414) 476-5249
- EVENING UNITS  
EAST – 6:30 p.m.  
Shorewood Public Library  
Contact: Judith Lindsay (414) 963-9829  
or Louise Petering (414) 351-3617
- WEST – 7:30 p.m.  
Location Varies  
Contact: Ruth Snedic (414) 771-7690
- 17 Thursday, 9 a.m., 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.  
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization  
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.  
Contact: Fran Swigart, (414) 962-8984

#### 20th Anniversary Catherine Conroy **LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST**

Feb. 5

Louise Petering & Elaine Drobny

The Legislative Breakfast is an annual event cosponsored by the Wisconsin Women's Network (WWN) and the LWV. It is our opportunity to meet and hear Assembly Representatives and Senators from southeast Wisconsin respond to our questions about issues of concern to us. This year we will celebrate the 20th Anniversary of Catherine Conroy's legacy. The topic of this year's breakfast is Issues in Women's Health. – including related issues such as environmental health effects of pollutants, hormone mimics, increased risk of cancer in parts of the metro Milwaukee area, and the Taxpayer Bill of Rights and its potential effect on health programs. Once again, the meeting will take place at Alverno College's Conference Center on the west side of the campus. Parking is accessible using both the 43rd St. and the Morgan Street (Holt exit west from I-94) entrances. Invite a friend to join you for an occasion that is mutually informative for the audience and the legislators. Watch your mail for an invitation and registration form from the WVN.

#### **SAVE THESE DATES**

##### **March 2, Wednesday**

Lynn Broaddus, Exec. Director of Friends of Milw. Rivers: "The Status of our Rivers"

##### **April 12, Tuesday**

Legislative Day, Madison Inn on the Park

##### **May 18, Wednesday**

LWV Milw. Co. Annual Meeting  
Social and Business Meeting

## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Mary Stefaniak, Membership Co-Chair

As these new members join our ranks, please welcome them by phoning and inviting them to one of our discussion groups or general meetings. Their contact information will be available to you in our new directory.

Leon Risser – Wauwatosa (Pat's husband)

Patricia Stamos – Wauwatosa

Alexis Anderson-Reed – Alverno College

Dawn Anderson – Shorewood

Barbara Timberlake – Shorewood

## **2004-2005 DIRECTORY**

Mary Stefaniak, Membership Co-Chair

We very much appreciate Zabelle Malkasian for underwriting the directory for a second year. You will receive your new directory at the end of December in your regular mail. Please keep it handy. We will keep you updated on changes in contact and new member information via bulletin inserts. Just tuck those into your directory.

## **KEEPING TRACK**

Louise Petering, Director

Having served for a couple decades on the Natural Resources Committee with Janet Bur and not being able to reach her locally, I decided to call the 312 area code number provided on her answering machine. A voice mail message prompted me to leave a message. I did so and to my delight I received a call from Janet herself a couple of weeks later. We had a good chat about League, Janet's new life with her daughter's family (grandchildren 3 and 6 years old), and NR issues and Committee members. Janet moved after Labor Day to live with her daughter's family at 707 N. Oak Street, Hinsdale, IL 60521. She'd love to hear from her League friends. I will be in touch with her and send her the January/February bulletin!

## **ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATIONS TO STATE LEAGUE**

Louise Petering

The leadership of our League has recommended these items for advocacy and action in the 2005-2007 League biennium. The Taxpayers Bill of Rights (TABOR – League opposes amending the State Constitution for purposes of fiscal management), Smart Growth and Transportation, Concealed Carry, Water Issues (diversion, wetland rules, quality), and Energy Policy. The State Board will process all recommendations from local Leagues and make recommendations at the State Convention in Janesville in June. There, delegates will vote on the recommendations.

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## **THE COLUMBIAN CONNECTION**

Supper Meeting

Barbara Hussin, Program Director

Our September/October LEAGUE LINES carried an article about human rights by two people who were part of a peace delegation with the Columbia Support Network. Events in South America are not well reported in this country and most of us have very limited knowledge of the countries that share our hemisphere. Diane Steigerwald and David Thomas spent a week in Columbia, SA meeting with ordinary citizens as well as people in high levels of government. (President Bush stopped there for a brief time on his recent trip.) Diane and David will be presenting a program, including slides, on their observations and experiences.

This will be a dinner meeting on Thursday, January 27 at Heinemann's Restaurant on 76th & Bluemound at 5:45 pm. From I-94, take the 68th/70th Street exit to Bluemound; go west to 76th St. Heinemann's is on the southwest corner of the intersection. January can be a cold and dreary month after the holidays. We think this is a great opportunity to feed your mind and your body and in the company of your fellow Leaguers! (Guests are CERTAINLY welcome) The menu is simple and reasonable: A cup of soup of your choice, chicken salad sandwich w/pasta and beverage, for a total of \$10 (tip included). Please call your reservation to: Barbara Hussin (414-351-0819) by January 25.

## **PROGRAM-MAKING UNIT DISCUSSIONS**

Barbara Hussin, Program Director

It seems fitting that our first meeting in 2005 will deal with planning. Our unit meetings on Wednesday, January 19 will be every member's chance to take part in a statewide grassroots planning process that happens only every two years. Since State Positions are the result of earlier studies and provide the basis for League Action it is necessary that there be a periodic review of these positions with a decision to maintain, drop or restudy them. This review is also a great opportunity to expand your understanding of issues we are involved with on the state level.

The second part of the meeting will be the opportunity to recommend a new State study idea or action focus. We are just finishing the 2003-05 State Education Study dealing with alternative forms of education. The previous state study dealt with Civil Liberties. What do you see as big issues in Wisconsin or what will be big issues in the future? In proposing a new study, the item must be timely, of statewide scope, have local participation and allow for effective action. If there is an existing state or national position an action focus can be recommended instead.

You may not have attended the state convention but this is our opportunity to begin the process at our level, as State League members. Come to the unit meeting of your choice!

# Thank You!

## ELECTION NIGHT REPORTING

Tom Simmons, Coordinator

I thank those of you who reported election results from municipalities in Milwaukee County. Many absentee voters made for longer waits for many of you. The LWV Milwaukee County Board and LWVWI send you a BIG THANK YOU!

## ELECTION DAY 2004

Fran Swigart, Coordinator, New Voter/New VoterCitizen

November 2 was THE big day for elections in 2004 and I had 692 reasons to say it was a great day!

After doing Election Night Reporting for our League for around 25 years, I thought to myself, why not just find out about working at the polls. So last January, I took the training to be an Election Inspector for the City of Milwaukee. The hours are lousy and the pay is not that terrific but who said Democracy is cushy?

The first three experiences of training and working at a polling place were great and full of diverse lessons in protocol and details. Three days before the Big One, I had a call that promoted me to "Chief Inspector" at a different location. A last minute medical emergency had left an opening.

At 6:20 AM on November 2, I arrived at the polling place with my bag of emergency supplies and lunch and dinner. My team arrived, four from the neighborhood and one from another side of town. The opening procedures were divided up and at 7 AM we were ready to open the doors. There was a line down the hall and lots of people ready to vote. Eight people arrived to observe our every move. They represented political parties, political campaigns and two voting rights organizations. We sat them down where they could see and hear everything and went about the business of the day.

About 9:30 AM, that long line of voters dwindled down to a steady 10 to 15 for the rest of the day and we were able to conduct business smoothly. Absentee ballots were delivered to the site four times and we processed them during times when voters were not waiting in line. About 1 in the afternoon, I said to the eight people in the "peanut gallery" "I am sorry that nothing spicy is happening here. You are just getting to see Democracy in Action." They agreed but only left long enough to grab some lunch.

Who voted? The neighborhood of the ward I "inspected" includes senior high-rise public housing, group homes, nursing homes, gentrified housing, and apartments. People were of all ages. One grandmother was delighted to look up and see her granddaughter getting a ballot. A mom brought her two children with her to vote and get their stickers. An older gentleman

asked for assistance due to his very poor vision and a younger woman in a wheelchair wanted help drawing the line between the arrows. We held babies while mothers voted. They all knew who they wanted to vote for and they knew that they wanted to vote. We registered about 25% of the people who voted at that location on Election Day. I was so proud of the team of workers and the efforts each one put it to facilitate the experience for each person. Frail voters were moved to the front of the line by others so they would not have to stand and wait. Numerous explanations were given about why the optical scanner would not accept ballots that had too many arrows filled in or too many erasures. The ability to have extra ballots on hand in case of a spoiled one was very important.

At 6 PM, we had all taken our dinner breaks and were ready for the evening rush. A special delivery of sandwiches replaced the morning donuts to keep us energized. The rush never happened. Our after dinner crowd was steady but thin. I know this sounds very "geeky" but the high point of the day for me was at 8PM when I could said loudly and clearly as I had learned from 25 years of Election Night Reporting, "Hear Ye, Hear Ye. The Polls are now closed." 692 people voted and the closing procedures confirmed their decisions. We signed our forms, sealed the bags and envelopes and delivered everything to City Hall at 8:30. The conscientious preparation and the heightened concern for good procedures gave the day a feeling of standing under a bare light bulb for 13 hours but I had 692 reasons to say it was a great day!

## ELECTION STANDARDS

Louise Petering, Director

Dr. Horacio Boneo brought 18 years experience in international elections observation to our November 13th Issue Meeting audience. He provided the following insights.

- The traditional approach to elections is to either get your people to vote or to prevent others from voting (poll tax, complicated language and procedures, intimidation at the polls [proof of identity required based on appearance of the voter], insufficient ballots in selected precincts, etc.).
- Our system is based on trust, a Protestant ethic; more checks are needed.
- Our system for national elections is extremely decentralized as to rules and procedures. Each state has its own set of rules (provisional ballot rules, election commission/board, etc.). This lead to disparities in voting rights and in close national elections this could affect who gets elected. Uniformity of national election procedures is needed.
- Electoral authority in some states (e.g. Ohio) is balanced between an equal number of Democrats and Republicans. This means deadlocks occur and impartiality and inclusiveness are sacrificed.

- Too many items are on the ballot in many elections. A California community recently had over a 100 items on the ballot.
- Voter verification works only if the number of issues on a ballot is small.
- The Electoral College discourages voting since the number of electoral votes is not proportional to the number of voters/eligible voters. It is an 18th century idea!
- Elections favor the incumbents. In 2002, 401 House members sought reelection; 98.3% were reelected. Gerrymandering that creates safe seats contributes to this.
- It is inadvisable to have national, state and local items on the same ballot.

## **CONGRESSWOMAN GWEN MOORE ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

Jennifer Runquist, Chair, Natural Resources Committee

The 4th and 5th Congressional Districts Candidate Forum on Environmental Issues cosponsored by the LWVMC, WEAL and MC3 took place on the evening of Wednesday Oct 27, '04 at the Pettit Ice Center. Candidates Boyle, Kennedy and Moore answered a number of questions on various environmental issues. All three candidates were well versed in environmental topics and were in substantial agreement in many areas of environmental protection. However, methods to accomplish environmental goals did vary between relying upon private or governmental entities.

Since Gwen Moore won the 4th Congressional District seat, we are summarizing her responses and her priorities for the environment. Gwen is very proud that she has been awarded a 2004 WI Environmental Stewardship Award for her 100% voting record for environmental protection.

**Energy:** She supports tax credits to encourage the use and development of alternative energy sources such as solar, wind and ethanol. She hopes this could lead to new jobs in the USA. Development of clean coal technologies is another goal she would support. She is somewhat fearful of more nuclear power plants because of nuclear waste and their transportation. She is also supportive of energy conservation policies that would lead to more efficient use of energy and in some cases would reduce pollution. We need to have an overall Federal Energy Policy which is proactive, not reactionary. We should have more control over our energy resources so that we do not create security and economic problems for ourselves.

She is very concerned about air pollution which comes from energy use and hopes that a reduction in air pollution might lead to reduction in health problems such as asthma. Also the pollution of Lake Michigan from airborne pollution by power

plants and transportation vehicles is unfortunate and should be prevented. As far as a role in the world we need to lead by example in reducing our carbon dioxide emissions and other emissions, but she does not believe that developing countries such as China should receive a 25 year exemption, as stated in the Kyoto Protocol, since pollution is not confined to the country of origin but ends up in places like the Great Lakes (which has been proven by scientific measurements).

**Transportation:** She believes that mass transit could have a positive impact for children and the elderly and is willing to seek Federal funding to provide subsidies for this. However, in this case and in the development of other projects, environmental impact statements (EIS) are always important to consider. She has always supported a Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) and believes we need a better regional vision for transportation. This could connect workers with work sites. However, there has always been resistance from the WOW counties (Waukesha, Ozaukee, Washington) regarding another taxing authority.

**Wetlands and the Great Lakes Basin:** We need to maintain a broad definition for wetlands. These areas are important to sustaining our ecosystem – which supports all plant, animal and human life. Wetlands filter many contaminants that otherwise would enter rivers, lakes and groundwater. We need to be careful about preventing ground water pollution. Since 20% of the world's fresh water resides in the Great Lakes Basin, we should consider sharing this asset yet protect our waters and set limits to its diversion or removal.

**Recycling and Superfund:** Gwen supports recycling efforts and thinks many items have too much packaging. Wisconsin has 38 Superfund sites. She believes polluters should pay for their pollution because otherwise there is no incentive not to pollute. However, we need to work in the present because it is often difficult to reach too far back into the past for accountability. On this topic she hopes for environmental justice. We might be able to create zones for handling waste and carefully monitor them to prevent water and air pollution.

**Trade and Outsourcing Jobs:** We deserve a level playing field in our trade agreements. We need enforcement of safety and environmental standards. International enforcement of environmental standards is important because air- and water-borne pollution move across borders and affect all of us. Also we need to be attentive to unfair trade barriers. Perhaps some of our trade agreements need to be renegotiated.

### **Gwen Moore's Top 3 Environmental Goals in Congress:**

- 1) She is upset by the raw sewerage getting into Lake Michigan and would seek federal dollars to help prevent this.
- 2) She will work to prevent air and water pollution.
- 3) She is worried that EPA has been cut 19% and wants to push for enforcement of the Clean Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act.

# EDUCATION STUDY

## *Consensus*

Barbara Hussin, Director

The February 16 unit meetings will be consensus meetings for the 2003-2005 State Education Study. Be sure to invite a friend or two for what promises to be an informative, thorough and animated discussion. The State Study Committee has made resource information available on the LWVWI's website. Go to <http://www.lwvwi.org>; click on "Activities" and go to "Current Studies."

The information we are providing in this bulletin is a shortened version of some of the information available online. This includes the consensus questions and several pages of additional background information on the substance of those questions. If you have website access, there is much fuller information available, but to insure all members have pertinent information, here is a condensed version of that resource information. PLEASE BRING THESE MATERIALS TO THE MEETING.

### EDUCATION STUDY HISTORY

The charge given to the Education Committee from 2003 State Convention: Find the impact of alternative forms of education on the public K-12 schools system with emphasis on virtual, home and charter schools, and study the effect of the "No Child Left Behind Act."

The League has a long history of studying and promoting improvements of the elementary and secondary system of public education in the state. (Education positions available at <http://www.lwvwi.org>. Click on "About League" go to "Position Papers" and then to "Education")

Because states have jurisdiction in education issues, alternative forms of education vary from state to state. In Wisconsin all charter schools are public, nonsectarian schools and the students are subject to the same mandated testing as students in traditional public schools. However they are free from many of the state rules and regulations of traditional schools. Laws regulating home-schooled students in Wisconsin are among the least restrictive in the nation. The committee defined virtual schools as schools where all instructional classes are provided on-line. Currently, the virtual schools operating in Wisconsin are chartered by a school board, and operate under the Wisconsin Open Enrollment and Charter School law.

### CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

#### **Virtual Charter Schools and Milwaukee Parental Choice Schools**

(Private Schools that Students Attend with Public School Vouchers)

Background: Currently public school districts must file reports with the Department of Public Instruction detailing how much was spent on teachers, administrators, support staff, transportation, etc. Districts must also have a yearly audit of their books. Recently, the Milwaukee Parental Choice schools have been required to file financial reports similar to those filed by the public schools. Districts that contract with a private entity to provide educational services (as has been done in the case of some virtual schools) show only how those funds are used by the district. There is no public accounting of costs/profits by private firms.

The students in K-12 public schools including Virtual charter schools in Wisconsin must take the tests required by the state and federal government. Districts must publicize how their students perform by providing a district report card to their community. Students in the Milwaukee Parental Choice program are not required to take any of the state or federal tests – or any other tests. This makes it impossible to track performance of those students whose tuition to private schools is funded through public dollars.

*Consensus Questions* (And background information):

1. Should any institution or organization receiving public funds or educating publicly funded students for K-12 education be held to the same requirements as K-12 public schools in
  - a. accounting for the use of those public funds  
yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. performance standards for their students  
yes \_\_\_\_\_ no \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Home School**

Background: After all states made home schooling legal in the 90's the number of students in home school have grown. In 1999, the federal government estimated the number of students being home schooled to be around 850,000. By 2003, the number is estimated to be between 1.7 and 2.1 million students nationwide, according to data from the National Home Education Research Institute. These numbers are difficult to estimate because each state defines and tracks home school enrollment

differently. Many studies of the performance of home-schooled students have been made but all face the problem of no standard assessment given to these students. Many states monitor home-schooled students' educational progress by requiring either a test, portfolio or teacher evaluation. New York, Rhode Island, and Pennsylvania require home-schooled students to take tests and require parents to submit their curriculum for approval as well as to undergo professional evaluations. Wisconsin law requires no teacher qualifications, record keeping or testing for home-schooled students. The only requirements for home schooling in Wisconsin are:

- Must provide "at least 875 hours of instruction each year"
- Must provide "a sequentially progressive curriculum of fundamental instruction" in reading, language arts, math, social studies, science, and health; such curriculum need not "conflict with the program's religious doctrines" and
- Must file a statement of enrollment with the state department of education by October 15 each year.

**Consensus questions:**

2. Should the law be changed so that the Department of Public Instruction requires for the home-schooled student the following:

- a. qualification guidelines for the person providing instruction?  
yes\_\_ no \_\_
- b. record keeping of student's learning?  
yes\_\_ no \_\_
- c. assessment of student's learning on a standardized test?  
yes\_\_ no \_\_
- d. enforcement of these requirements should be
  - 1. at the local school district level yes \_\_ no \_\_
  - 2. at the Department of Public Instruction yes\_\_ no\_\_
  - 3. a shared responsibility of both state and local yes\_\_ no\_\_

**Charter Schools**

Background: Wisconsin law grants all school boards in the state the authority to create charter schools within their particular district. The state legislature also grants chartering authority to the University of WI-Milwaukee, Milwaukee Area Technical College, The Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, and the University of WI-Parkside. Schools chartered by these entities are called Independent Charters. CESA's (Cooperative Educational Service Agencies) also have chartering authority.

Each Independent Charter school receives a set state aid per student payment. The Department of Public Instruction is directed by the state legislature to proportionally reduce the state aid payment of each school district in the state in the amount needed to fund the

Independent Charters. Local districts are allowed to make up the reduction in their state aid by increasing the tax levy in their community.

The entities that are the chartering authority have oversight responsibilities for the charter school. The public school districts in Wisconsin have elected school boards that are accountable to the electorate in their district. The universities and technical schools have appointed boards and no elected officials therefore these independent charter schools lack local public control.

**Consensus question:**

3. Should charter school authority be given only to K-12 public school districts?  
yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

**Public School Employee Requirements**

Background: All teachers and administrators of traditional, charter, and virtual public schools must meet requirements for a Wisconsin teacher's or administrator's license.

- The charter school license, as compared to a traditional Wisconsin Teacher's license, allows teachers to teach courses and levels outside the areas of their certification. A 1-year charter school instructional staff permit can be granted upon request to DPI if certain positions cannot be filled, if the applicant has a bachelor's degree in the subject assigned to teach or has proof of mastery in a trade that he or she is assigned to teach, and takes courses toward certification.
- Teachers and administrators of private voucher schools have no state license requirements.

**Consensus question:**

4. Should employees of Wisconsin schools receiving public funds or educating publicly funded students (including Milwaukee Parental Choice schools) meet the same state standards as those that are required of all public school employees?  
yes \_\_\_ no \_\_\_

**No Child Left Behind Act**

Background: The NCLB Act is Federal legislation for improving proficiency for all students. It states that by 2013-14 100% of the students will score at state-defined proficiency levels on reading and math assessments. Also schools and districts must meet annual targets for the percent of students at or above the proficient level, with those targets rising over time for both all students and for sub-groups of students who are poor, speak limited English, have disabilities, or come from racial-or ethnic-minority backgrounds.

Since this is federal legislation, state and local leagues can only act on a LWVUS position or national principle with the permission of the national Board of Directors of LWVUS. The committee, therefore, has no consensus questions about this legislation. However a

summary report of information from the NCLB survey conducted by local leagues will be posted on the LWVWI website and sent to each league.

At the national board retreat, the LWVUS board voted to start an LWVUS/LWVEF sponsored list on the impact of NCLB. Members can join the on-line discussion group through the Members Site on [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org) by sending an e-mail to [subscribe-lwv-nclb@lists.lwv.org](mailto:subscribe-lwv-nclb@lists.lwv.org).

## **ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **Virtual Schools**

(The following information came from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction)

In order to participate in virtual schools or courses a student must have access to a computer, an internet service provider, and, in some cases a printer, scanner, web cam, and/or special software. Some schools provide the necessary hardware and software as a part of the course or program fee. Some virtual schools are sponsored or subsidized by states. Currently Florida, Kentucky, and Colorado have functioning virtual schools at the state level. Illinois is expected to have its virtual high school on-line this fall. Other schools are run by for-profit companies. Some of these target religious or non-sectarian home-schoolers. Some function only as partners of school districts that use their courses as supplements to their own programs. Some are very traditional in the programs they offer, while others provide innovative approaches and courses targeted to students with special interests. Some are small and relatively local, serving only a few dozen students while others are huge, serving thousands of persons around the world.

The existence and growth of virtual schools is likely to have a major impact on education and schooling in the long run. Clearly, the possibilities offered by online courses are many. Wisconsin has a very liberal approach to both private and home schooling. A private school need only provide 875 hours of instruction in reading, language arts, math, social science, science, and health to operate. Parents may offer a similar program by simply notifying the state superintendent of their intention to do so. A virtual school could similarly offer such a program as a private school. The requirements for public schools are usually more detailed and specific.

The DPI has issued a Policy and Information Advisory called *Virtual Education--New Challenges, New Opportunities*. This document expresses the agency's current thinking about how school districts should address issuing credits for virtual courses. Essentially, it leaves most determiners of quality to local school districts. Although no licensing requirements would be established for providers, DPI recommends local districts have a licensed, local teacher of record in a content area similar to that of the course. The department also recommends that courses required for graduation

be offered to students in a face-to-face mode, although they might be offered virtually as well. DPI recognizes that virtual courses qualify in membership for equalization aid and revenue cap purposes.

As of February 2004 the DPI website lists eleven virtual schools in Wisconsin. These schools vary in purpose from serving a small targeted group to open enrollment throughout the state. The schools are based in: Appleton (2), CESA-7 (Northeastern WI), Oshkosh, Grantsburg, Waukesha, Kiel, Milwaukee, Monroe, Fredonia and Tomahawk. Some are cooperative partnerships with for profit providers. The schools vary in student scope from elementary, middle and/or high school, at-risk or to enrichment levels.

### **Home Schools**

(Information from Issues paper, "Education Week")

Home schooling has often been dismissed as a fringe activity, its practitioners caricatured as head-in-the sand reactionaries and off-the-grid hippies. The most vocal and organized home schoolers have tended to be religiously motivated, most often conservative Christians. But a newer breed of home schooler is emerging motivated by religious belief or counter cultural philosophy. Uppermost for such parents are concerns about violence, peer pressure, and poor academic quality in their schools.

While reliable numbers are hard to come by since states define and track home school enrollment differently, some experts argue that home schooling is the fastest-growing form of education in the country. Data from the US Department of Education suggest that although families who home school represent a wide spectrum of racial, ethnic, religious, cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, most are white, religious, and conservative. Most are also well educated, middle-class, and have two or more children.

One study of home school students found that students' median scores on standardized tests were typically in the 70th to 80th percentile, well above the national average. Such studies have drawn intense criticism from some educational researchers, with critics arguing that the study did not accurately represent the overall population of home-schooled students.

Opponents of the movement worry that there is no way to assure that all home-schooled students receive a quality education. Some feel it is a dangerously deregulated enterprise. Most states do not require parents to obtain any sort of teaching certificate in order to home school their children and only half the states monitor home-schooled students' educational progress by requiring any sort of evaluation although three states do require schools to take tests and submit curriculum.

Polls indicate that the general public has some concerns about a lack of regulations, although the number of people opposed to home schooling has dropped over the years. Students who have been home schooled tend to support home schooling. Recent surveys indicate that many home schoolers are happy with their parents' decision to educate them outside the traditional school system.

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While debates over the benefits and risks of removing children from traditional learning environments continue, the home school movement has carved out its place in America's education system.

### **Charter Schools**

(Information from Wisconsin Charter Schools 2003-2004, DPI) School boards in Wisconsin are the primary charter school authorizer in Wisconsin. (CESA agencies may do so within a CESA district.) The Milwaukee Common Council, UW-Milwaukee, MATC & UW-Parkside also have chartering authority. Other than Parkside, each may establish, sponsor and operate an unlimited number of charter schools.

In school districts, the school board may determine whether the charter school is an instrumentality of the school district in which it is located. If the board deems it an instrumentality, the district employs all personnel for the charter school. If the board determines that the charter school is not an instrumentality, the personnel are considered employees of the charter school.

A charter school in Milwaukee that receives its charter from the Council, UW-Milwaukee or MATC is not an instrumentality of the Milwaukee Public Schools. If the Council contracts with an individual or group operating for profit to operate the school, then that charter school is an instrumentality of MPS. Instrumentality is used for the Wisconsin Retirement System to define the entity responsible for worker's compensation, insurance, unemployment compensation, employee insurance and benefits, etc.

Charter schools in Wisconsin are exempt from most state requirements regarding public education. However, the teachers must be licensed by the DPI, have a DPI charter school teaching license or use a DPI-issued charter school teaching permit. Students in charter schools may be counted for membership in the local school district. The schools are not exempt from federal laws governing regular, special education, civil rights policies, nor are they exempt from local school board policies unless specially negotiated. Charter schools cannot charge tuition, must be accessible to all students in the district although preference is given to student living within the attendance area of an existing school that converts to a charter school.

Attendance is voluntary, and the district must provide alternative public education for pupils who do not wish to attend the charter school or who are not admitted to the charter school.

(The following information is from Charter School Survey with Howard Fuller)

There are 34 charter schools in Milwaukee, enrolling approximately 13,000 students in 2003-2004. MATC has not exercised its chartering authority. MPS has 13 charter schools within the school system and 11 independently operated schools chartered by MPS. The City of Milwaukee and UW-M have chartered an additional 10 schools.

The City of Milwaukee hires a monitoring firm and an accounting firm to monitor the schools on an annual basis, including gathering information from both state standardized tests and the local measures generated at the school level. At UW-Milwaukee, the school goes through the Malcom Baldrige process and student achievement results are a significant factor in the decision to renew. MPS's own schools are evaluated by the Office of Research. Schools that are operated by non-profits, hire their own evaluation firm to report to MPS.

### **Milwaukee & Racine Charter School Program and Milwaukee Choice Program**

(This information is from the Legislative Fiscal Bureau Report) The Milwaukee and Racine charter school program and the Milwaukee parental choice program are funded from separate GPR (General Purpose Revenue) sum sufficient appropriations established for each of the programs.

For the Milwaukee and Racine charter school program, DPI is required to proportionally reduce the general school aids for which each of the 426 school districts is eligible by an amount totaling the estimated payments under the program. Based on a general school aids estimate, in 2003-04, general schools aids statewide will be reduced by a total of \$26.4 million for the charter program. Each district's general school aids will be reduced proportionately by 0.6% to generate a total statewide amount of \$26.4 million. The Department calculates this reduction individually for each type of general school aid. Under revenue limits, school districts may levy property taxes to make up for the amount of revenue lost due to these aid reductions.

For the Milwaukee parental choice program, DPI is required to reduce the general school aids for which the Milwaukee Public Schools is eligible by 45% of the total cost of the choice program. Under revenue limits, MPS can levy to make up for the aid reduction. Thus, the general fund pays 55% of the choice program and MPS pays for 45%. Based on the estimate, in 2003-2004 MPS's general school aids will be reduced by \$34.3 million, or 5.3%. Other than MPS, all school districts aid payments and property tax levies are not affected by the choice program.

After the aid reductions for the charter and choice programs, the net amount of funding paid for school district general school aids, is \$4,212.5 million, which provides \$4,114.0 million for equalization aid, \$83.9 million for integration aid and \$14.6 million for special adjustment aid.

### **Milwaukee Parental Choice Program**

(This information is from DPI)

In January 2004, there were 106 private schools participating in the MPCP, with a total enrollment of 12,231 students in the program. Private schools notify the DPI of their intent to accept Choice students. The students who qualify do so on the basis of family income.

Under current law, no more than 15 percent of the MPS membership, or about 15,000 students, may participate in the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program each year. The department estimates that the program will reach the enrollment cap in the 2005-06 school year. The department is required to prorate the number of spaces available at each participating private school if in any school year there are more spaces available than the maximum number of students allowed to participate in the program. The new rules will set the process to prorate students spaces in the MCPCP giving preference to pupils in the following order: continuing pupils in the choice program and siblings of continuing pupils.

State law adopted in 2003 made a number of changes to the MPCP, requiring participating schools to provide evidence to the DPI of their financial viability and fiscal practices, as well as proof that the administrator of a school new to the program has participated in a fiscal management training program. The rules also specify the responsibilities of auditors and the DPI in determining if the school meets the laws requirements. The state superintendent has specified duties in her authority to withhold aid for a private school not in compliance and to terminate a school if conditions represent a threat to the health and safety of pupils.

## **MINNA JONES – A LIFE IN THE LEAGUE**

Sarajane Kennedy

September 2004 marked Minna Jones' 50th anniversary as a League of Women Voters member. Hers is the classic League story. Minna moved to Wisconsin in February 1954 and her neighbor, Alice Affronti, an attorney and Wauwatosa LWV member had just written a League publication on the judicial system in Milwaukee County. That fall, Ruth Rosenthal, a member of Minna's church, invited Minna to attend a Wauwatosa League meeting. League was exactly what Minna, newly relocated and young mother of two, was looking for. She joined immediately.

In those days, there were four Wauwatosa units which met twice a month. Minna was in the evening unit and, after her youngest daughter Allison's birth in April, she persuaded the evening unit members to meet at her house. At that time, Zelma Deist, a former Wauwatosa LWV president mimeographed various League materials and, because Minna had a business background, she was enlisted to work on the bulletin. Her involvement just kept growing. By 1958, Minna was unit coordinator and a member of then president Grace Wangerin's board.

Minna and family moved to Green Bay in 1959 and Minna joined their League and became acquainted with future LWVWI president Ruth Clusen. When Minna returned to Wauwatosa in 1960, she again was tapped for administrative tasks. She took over the bulletin and, you guessed it -- the mimeograph equipment wound up in her basement. She was responsible for printing the bulletin, local

studies, the member directory, and board minutes. You name it, she printed it.

About that time, Ruth Clusen became state president and enlisted Minna to act as an advisor to two provisional Leagues -- Whitefish Bay (which later became the North Shore League) and Elm Grove (which later became Elmbrook League). Minna put her skills to work, mentoring both groups until they became full-fledged Leagues.

Then John Paul Jones, Minna's husband, ran for and was elected to the Wauwatosa School Board. While Minna doesn't take credit for this, we suspect her community involvement and contacts were a large factor in his decision to run and in his victory. (Just a side note: John Paul was one of the pioneer male members of League and an active committee member in Wauwatosa's LWV. Minna was always a good recruiter.)

In the mid-sixties, Minna returned to the paid workforce. There were three daughters to put through college. While still working, Minna attended an Issues Briefing in Madison and Marianne Steigerwald, Wauwatosa LWV president at the time, invited Minna to come on the board. Minna accepted the invitation and remained on the Wauwatosa board until the formation of the Milwaukee County League in 1989. As she recalls, she did every board job, always worked on Voter Service, served as treasurer, secretary.

But inside that administrator, there was a program person just waiting for an opportunity. Minna became chair of the Human Resources Committee (known as Social Policy today). She takes pride in her hard work for the Equal Rights Amendment, speaking at high schools, and to women's groups and church groups. She worked on marital property reform and, for the first time, really got to know Zabelle Malkasian, also a 50-year member and Minna's current traveling companion. She went on to work on Wauwatosa's Chapter 220 study with Betty Brauer.

Minna served as president of the Wauwatosa LWV from 1984 to 1986 and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, especially working with her good friend and administrative vice-president, Marion Druse. Minna once again served the state board, this time in 1988-1989 as a local League liaison. After the merging of the area Leagues into the present Milwaukee County LWV, Minna served on the board as secretary until 1991. She still attends meetings when she's in town and this year is the Wauwatosa unit liaison to the board.

Minna's belief in and commitment to League is readily apparent when she talks about League, but as you may have noticed, when she speaks of her history in League, she speaks in terms of people -- so many of her good friends were and continue to be Leaguers. Congratulations, Minna, on your past and continuing life in the League!

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Instead of our January 24th meeting, the IR Committee will be attending the General Meeting on January 27th at Heinemann's Restaurant, 317 Wauwatosa Ave., 76th and Bluemound. The topic is "Human Rights Report – Colombia, South America." The presentation will include digital slides presented by Diane Steigerwald and David Thomas. Be at Heinemann's at 5:45 p.m. Details are in the article, "Columbia Connection" elsewhere in this bulletin.

The February and March IR Committee meetings focus on the Great Decisions series. Great Decisions is a national program provided by the Foreign Policy Association (FPA). It is available to the IR Committee through several venues: the University of WI-Milwaukee's Institute of World Affairs sponsors a lecture series and conducts a television program on Ch 36 that focuses on the topics; the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Sunday Crossroads section prints related weekly articles; WUWM (89.7 FM) broadcasts the programs each Monday at 3 p.m. January 21-March 21; the FPA provides a briefing booklet.

**The February IR Committee meetings** that follow the Great Decisions series at UW-Milwaukee are **Mondays at 7:15 p.m.** The topic and location of each IR meeting is listed below.

Feb. 7, CHINA

Marianne Steigerwald's, 7324 Wisconsin Ave., Wauwatosa

Feb. 14, U.S. INTELLIGENCE REFORMS

Betty Hinz's, 19225 Baythorn Way, Brookfield

Feb. 21, OUTSOURCING JOBS

Lucille Bowen's, 4215 N. 100 St., #240, Milw.

Feb. 28, SUDAN & THE DARFUR CRISIS

Marge & Ned Maxwell's, 7010 Milwaukee Ave., Wauwatosa

**The February weekly Tuesday programs at UW-Milw.**

**7:00 – 8:30 p.m.** are:

Feb. 1, CHINA, Chas. Freeman III, U.S. Trade Representative of China Affairs

Feb. 8, U.S. INTELLIGENCE REFORMS, speaker TBA

Feb. 15, OUTSOURCING JOBS, Allan Klotsche, VP for Asia, Brady Corp., and David Newby, President, Wisconsin AFL/CIO

Feb. 22, SUDAN AND THE DARFUR CRISIS, Dr. Sharon Hutchinson, Prof. of Anthropology, UW-Madison

**Contact Prof. Gary Shellman for location (414) 229-3228**

The March series of lectures at UW-Milwaukee and IR meetings will appear in the March/April League Lines.

## Part III: How U.S. Foreign Policy Is Made: The Policymaking Machinery

*This article is the third in a four part series. The last part will appear in our next bulletin. See your last two bulletins for parts 1 & 2. Excerpted, with permission, from GREAT DECISIONS 2004. Foreign Policy Association, New York. www.fpa.org.*

Written by Nancy Hoepfli-Phalon, FPA's editor in chief, 1981–98; updated by Justin B. Slaughter, editorial assistant, November 2003.

Making foreign policy requires the participation of the President, the executive branch, Congress and the public. Conducting foreign policy, on the other hand, is the exclusive prerogative of the President and his subordinates in the executive branch. The distinction is fuzzy but important: you make policy when you decide to protect the security of the Persian Gulf; you conduct policy when you send the Navy to do it.

Until World War II, one agency, the Department of State, established in 1789 and the highest-ranking Cabinet department, and one individual, the secretary of state, who is directly responsible to the President, managed foreign affairs. The traditional functions of the State Department and its professional diplomatic corps, the Foreign Service, include negotiating on behalf of the U.S. government with foreign governments and in international organizations; defending the U.S. position in the world; reporting on and analyzing conditions in foreign countries and institutions such as the UN; representing the American people and current U.S. policies to the world; promoting relations with decisionmakers abroad; advancing U.S. trade and investment; and protecting U.S. nationals overseas from discriminatory and/or inhumane treatment. It currently employs 25,000 people worldwide in just under 225 embassies, missions, consulates and branch offices.

The U.S. emerged from World War II a nuclear superpower with global interests. The National Security Act of 1947, among other things, created a Department of Defense, a permanent intelligence agency and a small Cabinet-level National Security Council (NSC), which includes the President, the Vice-President, the secretaries of State and Defense and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to help the President manage and coordinate foreign policy. The NSC staff, headed by the President's national security adviser, consists of specialists in geographic areas and functional issues, such as arms control.

Policymaking machinery tends to expand or contract, depending on the exigencies of the situation. The outbreak of the cold war with the Soviet Union within months of the Allied victory in World War II put U.S. security and the containment of communism at the top of the nation's agenda. This meant that the Defense Department and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) frequently shared the foreign policy limelight with the State Department. A host of new agencies

was also created to deal with security issues, from the National Security Agency, which collected, evaluated and disseminated intelligence gleaned from electronic communications, to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, which proposed, implemented and monitored measures to limit or reduce weapons of war.

**COLD-WAR AGENCIES.** Other agencies created during the cold war to deal with America's expanded global responsibilities were the U.S. Information Agency (USIA) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). USIA, along with its radio arm, the Voice of America, conducted informational and propaganda programs abroad. USAID administers foreign economic assistance programs.

**THE PENTAGON.** Military power serves as an instrument of diplomacy—as a means of achieving goals defined by civilian officials of the government. The head of the Defense Department is a civilian secretary who serves in the President's Cabinet. The principal military adviser to the President is the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a strategy board consisting of the senior officers of the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. The chairman is designated by the President.

When, where and to what extent the U.S. should use its armed forces to achieve its foreign policy objectives is a highly charged issue. Since World War II, U.S. troops have served in Korea, Southeast Asia, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon, Grenada, Panama, the Persian Gulf, Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, East Timor, Afghanistan and Iraq.

In the 1990s, the will to send U.S. troops abroad seemed to dissipate. In the aftermath of 9/11, however, the U.S. has engaged in two major military actions, in Iraq and Afghanistan, involving hundreds of thousands of soldiers. Additionally, the U.S. has taken on the burden of a worldwide war on terrorism, leading many to wonder whether the U.S. remains ambivalent about sending troops abroad.

**INTELLIGENCE.** The “intelligence community” is a group of federal agencies that includes the CIA, the National Security Agency and the Defense Intelligence Agency. They collect information (for example, how many nuclear weapons China possesses), assess its accuracy and reliability, and disseminate the information to decisionmakers. In addition, the intelligence community, most notably the CIA, undertakes, with the approval of the President, clandestine operations. In October 1998, Congress and the White House approved the largest spending increase for intelligence in 15 years.

**OTHER EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS.** Since the earliest days of the Republic, the Treasury Department has played a major role in foreign relations. It is concerned today with the stability of the dollar abroad, foreign-exchange rates, commodity prices, debt service

on foreign loans, and bread-and-butter issues that affect the well-being and prosperity of the American people.

Other executive departments deeply involved in foreign policymaking are Commerce (which in 1995 the Republican majority in Congress hoped to abolish), the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Labor, Agriculture and Energy. Following the demise of the cold war, the priorities on the U.S. global agenda shifted pronouncedly from national security concerns to the creation of new opportunities for trade, commerce and investment. Hence the consolidation of some of the cold-war agencies. In October 1998, both the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the USIA were abolished and their duties were assigned to the State Department. While USAID still remains in business, its staff now reports to the secretary of state instead of directly to the White House.

More recently, the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, which began functioning in early 2003, substantially altered the role of executive departments in foreign policy matters. The department, which comprises over 150,000 employees from 22 separate agencies, has become extremely powerful in matters relating to trade, borders, immigration and security.

**FORMULATION.** George Washington once remarked that the U.S. ought to have the most successful foreign policy of any country in the world because it had so many self-styled secretaries of state. Since his day, the difficulty of developing a cohesive, relevant and feasible foreign policy has increased enormously.

Theoretically, the process of formulation should begin with a clear definition of the national interests, followed by a delineation of the policies that would promote those interests and the course of action by the various departments and agencies that would further those policies, as well as the allocation of the resources needed to carry them out.

In practice, no system is likely to produce a cohesive, viable and supportable foreign policy. The national interest is a cluster of particular interests, and the agencies and staffs involved may have very different views as to what it should be.

**Please submit articles for publication to Louise Petering**  
in digital format if possible: [l.petering@att.net](mailto:l.petering@att.net)

**LEAGUE LINES TEAM**

Editor, proofing: Louise Petering 414-351-3617

Proofing: Barb Hussin

Layout/production: Kerry Thomas

Mailing/folding: Mary & Joe Stefaniak

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

P.O. Box 100785  
Milwaukee, WI 53210  
414-273-8683  
[www.Milwaukee-voters.org](http://www.Milwaukee-voters.org)

