



**Presidents' Message**

November is almost here, the leaves are falling off the trees, and we are getting lots of mail and phone calls telling us for whom we should vote. Remember how proud you were the first time you were able to vote for President? That enthusiasm is still here in the 2016 election season. Citizens will go to the polls on Tuesday, November 8, to elect the next President and members of Congress, as well as local legislators.

Voting brings us together as Americans, because it is the one time when we are all equal. It doesn't matter if you are rich or poor, young or old, liberal or conservative; Election Day is our opportunity to support the community and have a say in America's future. Get the information you need, then take your family and friends to the polls and VOTE!

League volunteers have been busy registering new voters. We have a record number of Special Registration Deputies (SRDs) working to get citizens into the poll books. Leaguers have been working in the community, attending every naturalization ceremony, and at MPS high schools registering and making classroom presentations as part of our High School Voter Education and Registration project. We deeply appreciate the tireless efforts of our Voter Services committee, especially Mary Jo McDonald, Michele Goldstein, Dannette Lank, Leigh Ann Tidey and Shirley Halloran.

This is the fifth year the Milwaukee League has participated in National Voter Registration Day. We spoke at the press conference hosted by Mayor Tom Barrett. At each of the 13 Milwaukee Public Libraries, League volunteers shared information about voting, and they registered voters.

Thank you to Organization Vice President, Joanne Barndt, for organizing and to LuAnn Bird for hosting our board retreat in September. In addition to getting to know each other, we learned more about board responsibilities, set priorities, and planned for the future. Our board is talented and dedicated.

Each League member received in the mail a 2016-2017 Program Planner with information and dates for upcoming League events. Keep it near your personal calendar and attend or participate when you can. Visit the website, [www.lwvmilwaukee.org](http://www.lwvmilwaukee.org), to stay up to date because new material is added there frequently.

Please remember LWV-MC in your end-of-year giving. Since the majority of our dues is forwarded to LWV-WI and LWV-US, we depend on grants and member donations for maintaining our office, printing, and continuing the great work of League volunteers. You have been generous in the past, and we know you will respond to this appeal, too.

The Natural Resources committee has planned an informative general meeting about water issues for Saturday, November 12. Because we live on the shores of Lake Michigan, we know this topic is more important than ever. And we hope to see you at the December 4 Social.




*Ruth and Mary Kae*



**Inside this issue:**

<b>Calendar</b>	<b>2-3</b>	<b>Joining League / Winter Social</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Membership</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>MATC Naturalization Ceremony</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>National Voter Registration Day</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Election Night Reporting</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Note of Gratitude</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Nov. 12 &amp; 16 Meetings: Water Issues</b>	<b>6-7</b>	<b>Voter Services / Lunch &amp; Learn</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Volunteer Opportunities</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>League Tenets / Election Q&amp;A</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Debates / Program Planning</b>	<b>11</b>

# CALENDAR

November 2016			
3	Thurs		<b>Last Day to Accept Applications for Absentee Ballots by Mail</b>
4	Fri		<b>Last Day for In-Person Absentee Voting (all municipalities)</b>
8	Tues		<b>General Election - VOTE!</b>
10	Thurs	10:00 - 11:30 am	<b>International Relations/Great Decisions Discussion Group - Climate Change</b> Wauwatosa Public Library, Firefly Room, 7635 W. North Ave., Wauwatosa Contact: Ned Maxwell, 414-258-9222
12	Sat	10:30 am	<b>General Meeting: Wisconsin Water Quantity and Quality Issues</b> Shorewood Village Center Conference Room, 3920 N. Murray Ave., Shorewood Contact: Carol Diggelman, 414-232-3739
16	Wed	1 pm 6 pm 7 pm	<b>Unit Meetings: Great Lakes Water Issues</b> See lwvmilwaukee.org for details Contact: Carol Diggelman, 414-232-3739
18	Fri	9 am - 11:30 am	<b>Naturalization Ceremony / New Voter Registration</b> Folk Fair, State Fair Exposition Center, 8200 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis Contact: Mary Jo McDonald, 414-962-8195
19	Sat	9 am - 2 pm	<b>LWW-WI Issues Briefing</b> Crowne Plaza Madison, 4402 E. Washington Ave., Madison Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988
21	Mon	12 noon	<b>Lunch &amp; Learn: Human Trafficking</b> Sojourner Family Peace Center, 619 W. Walnut St., Milwaukee Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988
21	Mon	1:00 pm	<b>Membership Committee Meeting</b> Sojourner Family Peace Center, 619 W. Walnut St., Milwaukee Contact: Barbara Rasmussen, 414-963-9535

December 2016			
1	Thurs	9 am 11 am	<b>Naturalization Ceremony / New Voter Registration</b> Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave., Courtroom 320 Contact: Mary Jo McDonald, 414-962-8195
4	Sun	11:00 am	<b>Winter Social</b> Home of Barbara Boles, 2951 N. Lake Drive, Milwaukee Contact: Barbara Boles, 414-763-8162
5	Mon	12 noon	<b>Voter Services Committee Meeting</b> League Office, 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Mary Jo McDonald, 414-962-8195
8	Thurs	10:00 am	<b>International Relations/Great Decisions Discussion Group - Cuba and the U.S.</b> Wauwatosa Public Library, Firefly Room, 7635 W. North Ave., Wauwatosa Contact: Ned Maxwell, 414-258-9222
14	Wed	6 pm	<b>Board Meeting</b> 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988; Ruth Shank, 414-763-2471
14	Wed	6-7:30 pm	<b>Natural Resources Committee Meeting</b> Shorewood Village Center Conference Room, 3920 N. Murray Ave., Shorewood Contact: Carol Diggelman, 414-232-3739

(Continued on page 3)

## December 2016 (Cont.)

15	Thurs	9 am 11 am 2 pm	<b>Naturalization Ceremony / New Voter Registration</b> Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave., Courtroom 390 Contact: Mary Jo McDonald, 414-962-8195
19	Mon	1:00 pm	<b>Membership Committee Meeting</b> St. John's on the Lake, 1840 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee Contact: Barbara Rasmussen, 414-963-9535



### Naturalization Ceremony at MATC

Mary Jo McDonald

On Thursday, October 6, at Milwaukee Area Technical College in downtown Milwaukee, 79 new citizens from 31 countries swore allegiance to the United States. Twenty volunteers aided 33 of them in becoming new Wisconsin voters. And we handed Wisconsin Voter Registration Application forms to 37 more from cities outside of Milwaukee County, so we helped most of the 79 new citizens.

Watch for further requests for volunteers at future naturalization ceremonies. The enthusiasm of new citizens is contagious.

This League community event reminds us of how rewarding it is to assist new citizens.





## Volunteer Opportunities

Mary Kae Nelson and Ruth Shank, Co-Presidents

LWV-Milwaukee County was built by volunteers. Member ideas, passions, and follow-through propel the programs and the organization.

- What are the current volunteer opportunities? You can join a committee: membership, development, and voter services are looking for more workers.
- Are you interested in housing, education, race relations, but sad that there is no active committee? Let the co-presidents know, and they'll help you get organized.
- Do you want a leadership opportunity? Consider running for the board of directors.
- Are you a writer, an artist, a computer geek, a bookkeeper, an event planner, a clerical whiz, a lover of talking on the phone? If so, we would like to utilize your talents!

Many volunteer opportunities can be done from home. Tell us what interests you, and we will find a way to add your skills to the important work of Milwaukee County's League.



## With Gratitude

Mary Jo McDonald, Voter Services

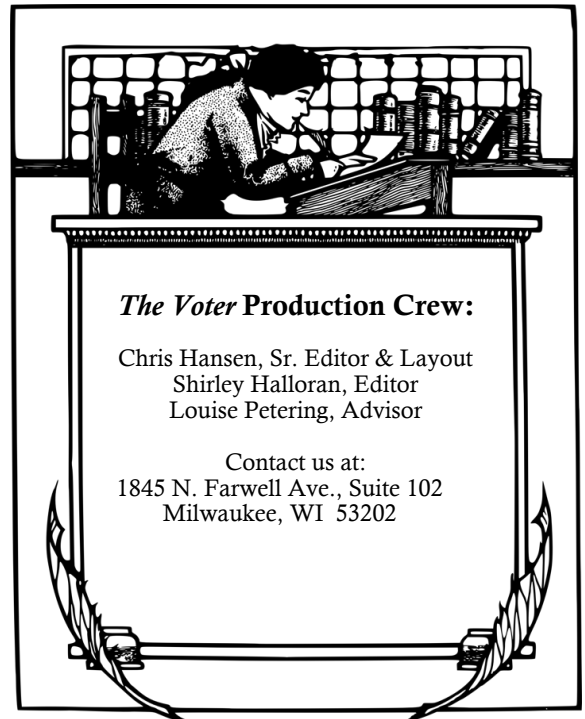
Throughout 2016, changes in election law have meant that the League must be flexible. Our brochure, *How to Register and Vote in Wisconsin*, required updating. A group of volunteers at St. John's gathered on September 9 to make the necessary adjustments.

These generous individuals, **Jeanne Durnford**, **Bonnie Jacobson**, **Richard Lindberg**, **Pat Rieselbach**, and **Allan Wheeler**, gave not only of their time that day. They opened their checkbooks, too.

Discussion occurred concerning how the League can continue to assist newly naturalized citizens in becoming registered voters after they swear allegiance to the United States at monthly ceremonies. The Milwaukee League aids about 7000 persons each year through the confusing nuances in the voter registration process. It is an essential voter service.

Technology exists to scan copies of necessary proof of residence documents, but it came with a cost of \$380. However, the Milwaukee League now owns the device, because spontaneous donations by those 5 individuals that afternoon made the purchase possible. It will be used on November 18 at an especially large naturalization ceremony at State Fair Park.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.



## National Voter Registration Day

Shirley Halloran

On Tuesday, September 27, more than 50 League members and friends volunteered to make NVRD in Milwaukee a *very* successful event.

The day began early with a registration breakfast at Riverside University High School. Fifty-seven high school students who are already 18, or will be 18 by November 8, were added to Milwaukee poll lists. Most of them also agreed to be reminded to vote, via social media leading up to election day, by signing pledge forms.

At 1 p.m. that day, a news conference featuring Mayor Barrett and other dignitaries (like League leaders) occurred at the Villard Square Library on North 35th Street. Villard Square is an example of the City of Milwaukee's recent concept of a structure with street-level library and living units above.

The 13 Milwaukee Public Librarians, who are certified to register voters on a regular basis, asked that volunteers be available to assist during their busiest hours from 3 to 6 p.m. The League provided 2 or 3 members/friends at each of the 13 sites. At the end of the day, we had made contact with at least 320 persons. Completed forms were delivered to the Election Commission at City Hall for 105 electors, either new voters, or voters who had changed a name or address since the last election.

Volunteers on National Voter Registration Day were Elizabeth Aiello, Joanne Barndt, JoAnna Bautch, Tony Bell, Mary Bowser, Peggy Creer, Suzanne Davidson, Jack Dierks, Susan Ellman, Robin Engl, Hulyn Farr, Janis Frank, Zoe Ganos, Michele Goldstein, Ann Griffin, Larry Hall, Shirley Halloran, Marilyn Jacobson, Ted John, Mary John, Solomon Johnson, Susan Joswik, Mary Kachoyanos, Kate Kaiser, Nancy Kaplan, Nora Kelley, Sarajane Kennedy, Genevieve Kirchman, Judy Knight, Michael Kuhnen, Mary Jo McDonald, Rachel McGraw, Donna Metzger, Carol O'Neill, Bonnie Pedraza, Christine Prevetti, Evelyn Price, Imani Ray, Linda Reid, Debbie Roszak, Gloria Rozmus, Barbara Sandberg, Frank Sandberg, Sue Schneider, Rozanne Screven, Dorothy Sherman, Ruth Snedic, Mary Sussman, Leigh Ann Tidey, Patty Timmons, Roz Tornatore, Gail Wallace, Joey Walsh, Phyllis Wax, and Jean Williams. Two young men, Enrique and Thomas, whose last names we don't know, helped us out at Riverside High School.



It's a given that without volunteers, a lot of important work would not be done. NVRD 2016 in Milwaukee meant that many hours of important work were done on that one day because the impressive list of individuals above cared enough to *Make Democracy Happen*.

## Did You *Think* You Joined the League?

Shirley Halloran

It's counter-intuitive, but in reality it's possible to donate money to the LWV-US without becoming a member of LWV-MC or any other local League. There is no link from LWV-US regarding such gifts.

Fortunately, some of these generous folks are tenacious and contact LWV-MC directly. Be sure to spread the word to anyone who may believe s/he joined the League by donating to the national organization. The impressive list of new members in this newsletter shows that many citizens want to *Make Democracy Work*. The Milwaukee League sincerely attempts to reach out to each new and prospective member. We want no interested persons to be disappointed because they're not contacted by LWV-MC.

It's important to clarify, though, that when you or anyone else pays annual dues to the League of Women Voters-Milwaukee County directly, you are automatically enrolled in the LWV-United States as well as LWV-Wisconsin. Got that?

## Winter Social

Mark your calendars and invite your friends!

**Sunday, December 4**  
**11 am – 2 pm**

Come for festivities with  
League friends and guests at  
Barbara Boles' home

**2951 N. Lake Drive**  
**Milwaukee**

Phone: 414-763-8162

**Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.**

**Join the fun!**



# General Meeting for the Public, November 12

## Emerging Water Quantity and Quality Issues in Wisconsin

**What:** General Meeting on Water Quantity/Quality Issues. Questions addressed will include:

- What are emerging water quantity and quality issues in Wisconsin?
- Are current laws and regulations adequate to address these issues?
- What new laws and regulations are being proposed in the upcoming legislative session?

**When:** Saturday, November 12, 2016, 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Where:** Shorewood Village Center/Library (ground level), 3920 North Murray Avenue, Shorewood

### Who will present:

#### Attorney Donald P. Gallo - Environmental Attorney and Partner at Husch Blackwell

Mr. Gallo will address water QUANTITY issues. His environmental practice includes more than 25 years of legal experience and 40 years of environmental engineering experience. He advises clients on environmental litigation and on the development of environmental legislation, regulations, and regulatory compliance.

Mr. Gallo will address issues related to permitting high capacity wells by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the recent approval of the City of Waukesha's proposal to divert an average of 10.1 million gallons of water per day from Lake Michigan to meet its water needs.

#### Michael Carvan - Shaw Professor, UW-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences

Dr. Carvan will address water QUALITY issues. He has more than 20 years' experience in the fields of environmental toxicology and environmental genetics, is a pioneer in the use of laboratory fish as biomedical models, and has authored more than sixty scientific papers and book chapters.

Dr. Carvan will focus on non-point chemical pollutants: both legacy pollutants like PCBs, mercury, and chlorinated pesticides, as well as more recent ones such as non-chlorinated pesticides, pharmaceuticals, and antibiotics (including some not currently on the public radar).

### Background:

This topic was inspired by a program at the LWV-WI's annual meeting in June of 2016. Mr. Robert Atwell, an economist by training and Chairman and CEO of Nicolet National Bank, presented "The Economic Case for Improving Water Quality." He said that although Wisconsin is among the richest centers of fresh water on Earth, the state has problems with both the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater. For example, the bias toward large-scale, industrialized agriculture contributes to water pollution in Wisconsin.

Mr. Atwell related water quality to economics. He stated that non-point sources of pollution—golf courses, storm sewers and farms—contribute approximately 80 percent of the pollution that has created a dead zone in Lake Michigan's Green Bay. While these entities are not currently held financially responsible, point sources that contribute far less to the problem will pay \$1 billion, or \$2,000 per individual living in the Green Bay area. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMsi9Rj5yUE&feature=youtu.be>.)

**In conclusion:** We will learn about some of the critical water quantity and quality issues we face today in Wisconsin. As we study these issues further, it is anticipated that we will better advocate for policy and legislation to promote wise economic growth and water resource management.

Join the Unit Discussions on Water Quantity and Quality Issues on November 16.

Additional information for these sessions is provided on page 7.

## LWV Information for the Wednesday, November 16, Unit Discussion Sessions:

### 1. *The foundation of water law in Wisconsin:*

The public trust doctrine (Article IX, Section 1 of the Wisconsin Constitution) states that Wisconsin's waters belong to everyone. This doctrine has been further defined by case law and statute.

[http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Waterways/about\\_us/doctrine.htm](http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Waterways/about_us/doctrine.htm) .

ARTICLE IX. **Jurisdiction on rivers and lakes; navigable waters.** Section 1. The state shall have concurrent jurisdiction on all rivers and lakes bordering on this state so far as such rivers or lakes shall form a common boundary to the state and any other state or territory now or hereafter to be formed, and bounded by the same; and the river Mississippi and the navigable waters leading into the Mississippi and St. Lawrence, and the carrying places between the same, shall be common highways and forever free, as well to the inhabitants of the state as to the citizens of the United States, without any tax, impost or duty therefore.

<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/constitution/wi/000234/000002>.

### 2. *The LWV-WI position on water:*

<http://www.lvwwi.org/IssuesAdvocacy/NaturalResourcesWaterQuality.aspx>.

### 3. *Wisconsin Water Issues in the News:*

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: **Low water levels on Portage County River cause concern**, August 2, 2014

(<http://tinyurl.com/low080214>)

Capital Times: **Human waste pollutes some Wisconsin drinking water**, May 2, 2016

(<http://tinyurl.com/human050216>)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: **Brad Schimel opinion narrows DNR powers on high-capacity wells**, May 11, 2016

(<http://tinyurl.com/brad051116>)

Wisconsin State Journal: **State audit finds DNR ignoring own rules on water pollution**, June 4, 2016

(<http://tinyurl.com/state060416>)

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel: **DNR plan for wells a major victory for business**, June 11, 2016

(<http://tinyurl.com/dnr61116>)

Cleveland Plain Dealer: **Waukesha water diversion - the right decision was made: James Zehringer (Opinion)**,

July 3, 2016 (<http://tinyurl.com/waukesha070316>)

Wisconsin Public Radio: **Great Lakes mayors look to divert Waukesha water diversion plan**, August 22, 2016

(<http://tinyurl.com/great082216>)

### 4. *Relevant Water Quality/Quantity Phenomena*

**Aquifer:** Saturated, underground, water-bearing rock (100X more water than all rivers and lakes!) that brings water to wells and springs. The top of the aquifer defines the **water table**.

(<http://tinyurl.com/100xmore>)

**Management Issues:** The level of the water table can be lowered if water extracted by wells or by other means is not replenished. (<http://tinyurl.com/aquifer12>) The quality of the aquifer can be affected by naturally occurring chemicals such as arsenic and radon; similarly, the aquifer can be polluted with pesticides, drugs, septic waste, and chemicals deposited from manmade activities.

(<http://tinyurl.com/chemicals12>; <http://tinyurl.com/pesticides12>)

**Algal Bloom:** explosive growth of **algae**, **photosynthetic bacteria** and **protists** that can deplete dissolved oxygen to such an extent that fish and other organisms die. This creates a **dead zone**.

**Management Issues:** Algal blooms can often be tied to an influx of nutrients like phosphorus and nitrates from **wastewater** and **non-point sources** such as CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations; <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/AgBusiness/CAFO/>), chemical and manure fertilizers, and urban fertilizer run-off.

**Helpful Glossary:** <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/reference/glossary.html>



## Dear Members:

The League of Women Voters is a **non-partisan political organization** that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

As members of the League of Women Voters, we must agree to actively uphold the three basic tenets of our organization.

*First*, our political actions occur only after League study and must be supported by national, state, and local positions. The political positions that we take on policy issues are, in fact, formed by member consensus. Therefore, I remind each of you of the personal role you have in shaping the future of our organization. Please attend our January Program Planning combined unit meeting so you can help review our current positions and add your ideas for future studies.

*Second*, the League is nonpartisan, meaning that as an organization **we do not support nor oppose a political candidate**. Rather, we aim to educate the public on all of their options for candidates and measures so that voters are empowered to form their own opinions at the ballot. This is important because in a polarized and partisan political environment, the League of Women Voters provides a place for civil discourse on important issues.

So how do we navigate a Presidential election as members of the League where we have our own political affiliations and causes that we wish to champion? How do we maintain the legitimacy of our organization when we feel compelled to act in support of, or opposition to, a political candidate?

We remember that as League members, our work is only effective to the public when we maintain our nonpartisanship. We remember that we have the fortitude to uphold the founding principles of this organization, where education and advocacy are achieved through our nonpartisan, unbiased approach.

*Third, we speak with one voice.* I do not want to silence League members from actively participating in government as individuals, but I do challenge each of you to speak with one voice as representatives of the League. This means that **members may act as individuals, but they must not invoke the name of the League or appear to be representing the League unless authorized to do so by the Co-Presidents.**

The League philosophy of speaking with one voice, maintaining our nonpartisan approach, and taking positions only after study and member agreement are what sets us apart from other political organizations. I thank you for being an important part of this process and for understanding the need for added care when you are asked to represent the League.

In gratitude,

*Mary Kae Nelson*

## Presidential Election Q & A

Q: Does the League of Women Voters have any comment on Secretary Hillary Clinton securing the Democratic Presidential nomination?

A: “The League, along with all of our fellow Americans, must celebrate this historic event of a woman receiving the Presidential nomination of a major political party. It has always been a goal of the League of Women Voters to enable women to have an equal role in our nation’s political processes. It may have taken nearly 100 years since the first step of women receiving the right to vote, but that can’t diminish the historic significance of this moment and this achievement.”

“Informed participation of all people in our democracy has always been the League’s highest priority. Such participation includes not only voting but also becoming candidates for public office. The League never supports or opposes candidates, and we never support or oppose political parties. Rather, our aim is focused on enabling and encouraging all citizens to fully participate so that they can weigh in on the issues that matter most to them.”  
For additional information on this topic, go to: [lwv.org](http://lwv.org).





## New Members

Shirley Halloran, Membership Committee

Cheri Briscoe, Milwaukee  
Maggie Cain, Fox Point  
Mary and Greg Chojnacki, Wauwatosa  
Dianna Dentino and John Gielow,  
Wind Lake  
Barbara Federlin, Milwaukee  
Michelle Ackerman Havas, Franklin  
Scott and Anne Johnson, Menomonee Falls  
Natalie Krawczyk, Milwaukee  
Dana Marks, Franklin  
Katharine Mcdonnell, Milwaukee  
Rita McDonald, Whitefish Bay  
Amy and Bob Monahan, Glendale  
Sarah Ratayczak, Cedarburg  
Linda Reid, Milwaukee  
Gail Schumann and Michael Switzenbaum,  
Whitefish Bay  
Joan Stewart, Milwaukee  
Michele Sumara, Milwaukee  
Valynda Wells, Wauwatosa  
Kitty Willkomm, Greenfield

Maybe you're looking at the length of this list and thinking "Can that be right?" Yes, it's right! That's 14 individuals and 5 households that have joined this fall.

Recently, and more often than usual, the question is asked whether men can join the League of Women Voters. Absolutely, and the list above proves it. We continue to be called the League of Women Voters to honor our founders who struggled for more than 70 years before the 19th Amendment was passed in 1920. Finally, women could vote.

So we're proud of this list: the numbers, the male Leaguers, and the variety of municipalities represented. May the Milwaukee League enrich each and every one.

## On Membership

Chris Weber Spornick, Membership Co-Chair

About 30 members and guests attended the Fall Kick-Off at the Lake Park Pavilion on Wednesday, September 21. We enjoyed a light potluck supper of cheese and crackers, salads, desserts, wine, and pop (I'm from Minnesota).

President Mary Kae Nelson invited each of us to reveal our favorite ice cream flavor AND our League activities. How inspiring to hear the multitude of ways League members are committed to political/citizen action. That is our mission. I find it exciting, and I hope you are stimulated and motivated, too.

Please encourage your fellow citizens to value the democracy they have by voting. Hold policymakers accountable for the public good. The democratic system is fragile and needs to be cherished and nurtured. The League of Women Voters has long known this truth. Encourage others to know it, too.



Members Ann Golden, Beverly Katter, Carol Diggelman, Jude Bringe (left photo), Mary Jo McDonald and Liz Aiello (right photo) at the Fall Kick-Off

## Election Night Reporting

Alexis Gassenhuber

The League anticipates reporting spring 2017 election night results from various Milwaukee County municipalities on Tuesdays, February 21 and April 4. Please email [LWVMCElectNiteReporting@gmail.com](mailto:LWVMCElectNiteReporting@gmail.com) to volunteer for either of those election nights.

# Reaching Out to Milwaukee County Voters

Mary Jo McDonald, Voter Services Chair

Volunteers from and friends of the voter service committee have been working tirelessly since the April election. When asked by the state League to submit numbers, I was blown away by statistics I discovered! Since that spring election until the 20-day closed period leading up to the November 8 Presidential election, here's what we accomplished:

### Number of citizens registered:

Naturalization ceremonies	321
LWV-Milwaukee County community drives	123
National Voter Registration at 13 Milwaukee Public Libraries	110
High School drives	744
	<hr/>
	1,298

But in addition to registering those almost 1,300 voters, we talked with many more citizens.

### Number of citizens contacted:

Naturalization ceremonies	2,223
Community drives	989
NVRD at the libraries	311
School drive	1,300
	<hr/>
	*4,823



\*This total doesn't include the entire reporting period.

So volunteers and friends deserve recognition for these impressive figures. I am so proud of this accomplishment. Well done!

## Lunch and Learn

Mary Kae Nelson

Lunch and Learn is an opportunity for Leaguers and friends to come together monthly in an informal way to learn more about a social policy topic.

On August 26, we launched our first Lunch and Learn session. We celebrated Women's Equality Day by having Martha De La Rosa, Executive Director of Wisconsin Jobs Now, discuss pay equity. Martha pointed out that raising the minimum wage is not only good for women, it is good for families.

In September, we toured and learned about the collaborative partnerships at the Sojourner Truth Family Peace Center.

On October 17, Mary Flynn informed us about refugees and related resettlement and vetting processes. Mary is Program Manager for Lutheran Social Services Refugee Project.

Lunch and Learn takes place the third Monday of the month at noon at the Sojourner Truth Family Peace Center located on 6th and Walnut. It's a beautiful new facility just north of downtown that has safe, easy parking. Bring your own lunch and beverage.

Please join us on November 21 when Martha Love updates us about human trafficking in the Milwaukee area and proposed legislation.

We spend a lot of time working for the League, but here's an opportunity to learn, share knowledge, and socialize in a relaxed setting.



# Presidential Debates and the League of Women Voters

Truesillia Ruth Shank, Co-President

According to news reports, the number of individuals who watched the September 26 Presidential debate was historically record-breaking. The public could watch the debate on television, but millions also watched via live streaming on the web.

The good news is that people tuned in by whatever means because they hoped to get solid information on candidate plans to address the pressing issues America faces. That information is critical to aid voters in making informed decisions as they cast their ballots in the November 8 Presidential election. The bad news is that they were (and are often) disappointed in their quest for knowledge.

The format of present day debates is a far cry from the days when the League of Women Voters sponsored Presidential and Vice Presidential debates. The nonpartisan LWV hosted the first nationally televised debate in our country's history in 1952. This was a phenomenal step toward providing greater access to information on the issues, but also the candidates' positions. In 1952, all candidates from both parties were present, unlike the 1960 debate where only the two nominated individuals were invited.

In 1976, the Education Fund of the League of Women Voters (LWV-EF) sponsored three Presidential debates; no debates had taken place since the 1960 debate. The League sponsored both the Presidential and Vice Presidential debates every 4 years through 1984. After 1984, both the Democrats and Republicans decided they wanted the debates to be sponsored under the

authority of their national parties. A great deal of public discourse was generated from 1985 to 1987, but in 1987, the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) was formed. The League challenged that decision.

The CPD chose the LWV-EF to sponsor the 1988 Presidential debate. This proved to be problematic for the League due to the rules and restrictions on format developed by the CPD. The League could not in good conscience agree to the CPD proposal. Nancy Neuman, LWV-US president at the time, issued a press release stating that the League had "no intention of becoming an accessory to the hoodwinking of the American public." The LWV-EF argued that the CPD put control of debate format into the hands of the two dominant parties. Voters would not have the opportunity to see the candidates outside of typical campaign mode. The League found this unacceptable.

But the League continues to provide voters with opportunities to become educated on the issues that matter. We focus on all levels of government: federal, state, county, and local. Our work empowers voters by providing them with the critical information necessary to make informed decisions at the polls.

By directly asking the necessary questions of candidates, then posting their responses on the web, the League assists the public in becoming enlightened. Thanks to the LWV-MC Communications Team who work tirelessly on our web presence and accessibility, those questions and responses are available at [www.lwvmilwaukee.org/candidatesanswers.html](http://www.lwvmilwaukee.org/candidatesanswers.html).

## Program Planning Meeting

Kathy Johnson, Vice-President for Program

A strength of the League of Women Voters when compared to many other organizations that operate at the national, state, and local levels is that we are a grassroots organization. That means that we, local members, direct our own agenda and programs to a great extent. An important event in that process is the Combined Units Program Planning Meeting to take place on Wednesday, January 18, 2017. At that time, our focus will be on local positions.

The Program Planning Meeting is our opportunity to identify issues and positions for study, review, update, and concurrence. This important process consists of the following steps:

1. Review existing LWV-MC positions. Are positions still relevant? Do any positions need to be updated?
2. Consider new items for study. Are there issues not being addressed that need study to develop a position?
3. Determine whether we have member agreement on what is proposed.
4. Develop our program proposal if recommending a new study.

To prepare for the meeting, please review local positions at [www.lwvmilwaukee.org](http://www.lwvmilwaukee.org). In addition, it may be useful to review information from this year's general meetings also at [www.lwvmilwaukee.org](http://www.lwvmilwaukee.org). Think about what you want your local League to address. Then come to the Combined Units Program Planning Meeting on January 18. Details regarding location and time will be posted at a later date.



**Join Up! Join In! Join the League of Women Voters - Today!**

**Non-partisan, non-profit since 1920!**

Where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement and leaders are actively engaged in effecting change at the local, state, and national levels.

Website: [lwvmilwaukee.org](http://lwvmilwaukee.org)

Email Address: [league@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:league@lwvmilwaukee.org)

**Milwaukee County Dues** (circle one):

\$70 Individual            \$110 Household            \$ 25 Student

\$100 Sustaining (supports \$25 memberships)            \$170 Centennial (supports action & activities)

Financial support available upon request -- call 414-964-9988

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**Interests:** Voter Service \_\_\_\_\_ Lending Practices \_\_\_\_\_ Government \_\_\_\_\_

International Relations \_\_\_\_\_ Environment/Natural Resources/Water \_\_\_\_\_

Health Care/Social Policy \_\_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Please** complete this form and **mail it** with your check to: League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County, 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Suite 102, Milwaukee, WI 53202.

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