



**President's Message**

As I begin this message it is February 14th, the League's Birthday. We have a proud history! We were formally organized in February 1920 just months before the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment to the US Constitution was ratified, following a 57- year struggle which gave women the right to vote. The League continues to be a nonpartisan 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.

The League of Women Voters continues to be one of America's premier grassroots citizen organizations. Since our founding we have helped millions of American citizens become informed participants in government. In keeping with our long, proud history, Leaguers in Milwaukee continue to register new citizens and new voters and to advocate for increasing the accessibility to vote for all. We are working to maintain same-day voter registration, to keeping expanded early-voting hours, voter protection, and to stop any pending legislation that would discourage or suppress our citizens' right to vote. I am proud to be a member of our active League. I urge you to respond to our Action Alerts, to attend our upcoming events, and to volunteer in elections and other League activities.



*Mary Kay Nelson*

**Notice!**

**MEMBERS – MUST SIGN UP NOW TO GET IN FREE!** for League's March 7, 8:30-11 a.m. General Meeting downtown at the Delta Center (formerly Midwest Express Airline center and Frontier center). "Getting a Grip on Energy Management" is designed for citizen awareness and municipal personnel.

For further information contact Brenda Costigan at [bcostigan@me.com](mailto:bcostigan@me.com) or our website, <http://lwvmilwaukee.org/UpcomingEvents.html>.



**In Memorium**

Long time Leaguer, Zabelle Malkasian, passed away in early February. Zabelle was a fifty-year active member who was involved in many activities over the years, but was particularly known for her tireless work on marital property reform in Wisconsin. In this endeavor she was appointed to the state of Wisconsin's Affirmative Action Council and to the Governor's Task Force on Marital Economic Reform.



Zabelle led us through study, adopting a position, then lobbying for the legislature to pass "Property Rights of Married Persons; Marital Property" in the mid-1980s and finally seeing Wisconsin becoming a Marital Property state. She wanted the law to reflect how marriages worked in Wisconsin and to recognize the contributions of the unpaid or low-wage earner spouse to the household.

Zabelle was the first woman appointed to Wauwatosa's Civil Service Commission. She also helped administer affirmative action goals at Wisconsin Telephone. She chaired the executive committee of the Wisconsin Women's Network and assisted for many years with the Legislative Breakfast. Zabelle will be remembered for her wit and giggle when she told war stories and for her encouragement and mentoring of younger League members. Our League has received many donations in Zabelle's memory. A committee of League leaders and Zabelle's son, Bill, will be deciding how to honor her legacy.

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# CALENDAR

March 2013			
7	Thu	8:30-11 am	<b>General Meeting—Getting a Grip on Energy Management</b> Delta Center 400 W. Wisconsin Ave. Milwaukee, WI 52203 Contact: Brenda Costigan, 414-702-0997 <div style="border: 2px solid blue; padding: 5px; transform: rotate(-2deg); display: inline-block;">Call Brenda to register by March 1<sup>st</sup></div>
7	Thu	9 am 11 am	<b>Naturalization/New Voter Registration</b> Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave. Courtroom 222. Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527 or Sharon Munson, 414-358-8393.
13	Wed	6 pm	<b>Board Meeting</b> 1845 N. Farwell Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988
14	Thu	10 am	<b>International Relations/Great Decisions Discussion Group</b> St. Matthew's EV Lutheran Church, 1615 N. Wauwatosa Ave, Wauwatosa. Contact: Ned Maxwell, 414-258-9222 or Gloria Weiskotten, 414-354-9783.
15	Fri	12:30 pm	<b>Membership Committee meeting</b> Beverly Kattter's condo 1229 N. Jackson St. Unit 203 Contact: Chris Weber, 414-535-1197
25	Mon	6 pm	<b>Natural Resources Committee</b> Shorewood Village Center (below the library) 3920 N. Murray Ave, Shorewood Contact: Helga Guequierre 414-225-0460, or Brenda Costigan, 414-702-0997
April 2013			
2	Tue		<b>Spring Election—VOTE– Election night reporting</b>
4	Thu	9 am 11 am	<b>Naturalization/New Voter Registration</b> Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave. Courtroom 284. Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527 or Sharon Munson, 414-358-8393.
9	Tue		<b>Bulletin Deadline</b>
10	Wed	6 pm	<b>Board Meeting</b> 1845 N. Farwell Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988
11	Thu	10 am	<b>International Relations/Great Decisions Discussion Group</b> St. Matthew's EV Lutheran Church, 1615 N. Wauwatosa Ave, Wauwatosa. Contact: Ned Maxwell, 414-258-9222 or Gloria Weiskotten, 414-354-9783.
18	Thu	5:30 pm	<b>General Meeting “Souper Supper”—11x15 Campaign for Justice</b> <b>Lake Park Pavilion Community Room</b> Downstairs under Bartolotta's Lake Park Bistro 3133 E Newberry Blvd., Milwaukee 
21	Thu	6:30—8:30 pm	<b>Greendale Village Board Candidate Forum</b> See p. 4 for details.
22	Mon	6 pm	<b>Natural Resources Committee</b> Shorewood Village Center (below the library) 3920 N. Murray Ave, Shorewood Contact: Helga Guequierre 414-225-0460, or Brenda Costigan, 414-702-0997
24	Wed	6:30 pm	<b>Unit Meeting: Focus on Action, see p. 3 for details.</b> 1845 N. Farwell, Suite 102
25	Thu	9 am 11 am 1 pm 3 pm	<b>Naturalization/New Voter Registration</b> Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave. Courtroom 320. Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527 or Sharon Munson, 414-358-8393
27	Wed	6:30—8:30 pm	<b>Greendale School Board Candidate Forum</b> See. P. 4 for details.

## **April 18<sup>th</sup> “Souper Supper” Will Focus on the 11X15 Campaign for Justice**

Sarajane Kennedy, Program VP

At this year's “Souper Supper,” Joyce Ellwanger will tell us all about the 11X15 Campaign to decrease the number of incarcerated people in Wisconsin and promote alternatives to incarceration, a project of WISDOM, which includes nine congregation-based justice organizations across the state.

WISDOM [editor's note: this is not an acronym.] is a member of the Gamaliel network, which is a grassroots network of non-partisan, faith-based organizations in 17 US states, South Africa, and the United Kingdom that organizes to empower ordinary people to effectively participate in the political, environmental, social, and economic decisions affecting their lives. The 11X15 project was launched to dramatically increase funding for “Treatment Alternatives and Diversion” (TAD) in the upcoming state budget. Their goal is to cut the prison population in Wisconsin by half to 11,000 by the end of 2015, thus “11X15.”

WISDOM commissioned a study using a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, which indicated that investing in treatments for addiction and mental health, rather than sending nonviolent offenders to prison, would lower the prison population and save tax dollars while also strengthening communities.

The state has a small scale TAD program that has proven its success. The 11X15 Project would greatly enlarge the funding for TAD (up to \$75 million plus \$20 million for other services) which could reduce prison admissions by 3,000 per year and divert 21,000 people from county jails. A major push for this initiative is planned for March 14, 2013 with visits to the legislature. Barbara Hussin, a member of the LWV of Milwaukee County and Legislative Committee member with responsibility for Adult Corrections at the state League, has proposed that the League take action to support this effort.

Barbara proposed that LWV-WI be listed as a partner in the coalition of groups supporting 11X15 and inform our members throughout the state about the effort and actions that can be taken. In her letter to the State League she said “Making any change in the justice system that does not increase prison time is extremely difficult and unpopular. This is a great opportunity to join with others in advocating for meaningful and effective change.”

The LWV of Wisconsin's Administration of Justice positions express strong support for alternatives to incarceration. “There is a strong need for further development and primary reliance on alternatives to incarceration except for the most dangerous offenders.....” See full position at: [www.LWVWI.org/IssuesAdvocacy](http://www.LWVWI.org/IssuesAdvocacy).

To learn more about the 11X15 Campaign for Justice, join us on April 18<sup>th</sup> for a “Souper Supper” of soup, salad, and dessert at the Lake Park Pavilion. See p.7 for more information and reservation form.

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### **March 20<sup>th</sup> Unit Meetings Cancelled; Supreme Court Justice Candidate Forum Possible**

The LWV of Milwaukee County is working with MPTV to sponsor a candidates' forum on March 20<sup>th</sup> for the two candidates for Supreme Court justice. We are awaiting responses from the candidates and cannot know at this point if the forum will happen, but if all works out we will be inviting you, your friends, and family to attend the recording of this forum which would be televised before the April 2<sup>nd</sup> election.

Be sure to check our [website](#) for updates.

### **April 24<sup>th</sup> Units Will Meet Together at LWVMC Office to Focus on Action**

April 24<sup>th</sup> Units will focus on “Taking Action” and meet at 6:30 p.m. in the conference rooms at our LWV of Milwaukee County office, 1845 N. Farwell Avenue, Suite 102. We hope to have a surprise guest to motivate us to action. Ruth Snedic, our Action Chair, will be present to review the do's and don'ts of addressing legislators and members of Congress and to assist us in taking action. What issue is of most concern to you? Is it redistricting, Citizens United, same day registration, mining, 11X15, gun control, transportation? There's no end to the list of possible issues for action by us as individual, concerned citizens. Bring along some stationery and stamps and let's act!

## League Member Recognized as Distinguished Alumna

Eva Roberson, our board member for publicity, was recently featured in a Marquette University publication as a distinguished alumna of its College of Professional Studies.

Eva was already working for WE Energies when she started her undergraduate degree in Criminology and Law Studies, then several years later was promoted to a Project Specialist in Regulatory Affairs and later to Local Affairs Account Representative. But because she enjoyed her learning experience at Marquette she decided to earn a master's degree in public service as well.

In addition to her League activities, Eva is active in many other community organizations, including Black Achievers, African American Network, and the American Association for Blacks in Energy. We are truly thankful that Eva has brought her considerable skills to the League of Women Voters.



Eva Roberson (center), with Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr., (left) and Thelma Sias.

## Action

Ruth Snedic

We have not received an action alert from LWVUS this month, although the work of Congress on gun control is a cause for all Leaguers to be making their wishes known to their representatives. The NRA certainly is doing so and some representatives are starting to step backward which is why we must step up.

Our LWVWI has lobbied on the mining legislation and has asked the members to also contact their representatives, as this bill is not beneficial to the environment and the mining industry seems to be writing the rules to suit themselves.

Plans/activities for the future: Will continue to alert the members to the concerns we have regarding legislation on all levels of government.

Request for action from the Board: Would ask the Board if we could do our own action on gun legislation at the national level. We need to respond to the work that is being done and to support our pro-gun-control legislators.

## New Citizen/New Voter

Sharon Munson

We continue to pass out each month approximately four hundred *Voting in Wisconsin* brochures at the Federal Courthouse after the naturalization ceremonies. The cost of printing the brochures has been an issue. We printed two hundred at our League office and have had two thousand more donated by a private company. We are currently pursuing additional funding.

We are limited to the municipalities that the SRDs are certified in. The City of Milwaukee is certifying SRDs at the City Hall Election Commission. They offer a short computer training program, followed by a written exam. If you pass, you will be certified for the next two years. It should not take more than fifteen minutes. There are also group certifications being done in some of the suburbs.

Contact Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527, or Dorothy-sherman@sbcglobal.net for more information.

## League to Co-Sponsor Candidate Forums in Greendale

The Greendale Chamber of Commerce and the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County will once again conduct annual Greendale Candidate Forums to educate voters on the upcoming local Greendale elections. Two separate candidate forums will be held this year, one for Village Board candidates, and one for School Board candidates. The date of the election is Tuesday, April 2, 2013.

The **Village Board Candidate Forum** will be held on Thursday, March 21, 2013 from 6:30-8:30 pm in the Greendale High School Multipurpose Room (6801 Southway). The Forum will be for the Greendale Village Board (3 candidates for 2 seats). All of the candidates have been invited and are expected to participate.

The **School Board Candidate Forum** will be held on Wednesday, March 27, 2013 from 6:30-8:30 pm in the Greendale High School Multipurpose Room (6801 Southway). The Forum will be for the Greendale School Board (6 candidates for 3 seats). All of the candidates have been invited and are expected to participate.

For additional information contact LuAnn Bird at 414-235-8310.

# January General Meeting Report

## Threats to the Health of Democracy

### Louise Petering

In his opening remarks at our January 26<sup>th</sup> General Meeting, Mike McCabe, Executive Director of Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, warned that democracy in the US in 2013 is threatened, much as it was in the days of the “robber barons” in the late 1800s. And perhaps the threat is greater today since democracy is now threatened on multiple fronts: a war on voting, undemocratic redistricting processes, and state proposals to change the allocation of Electoral College votes. Added to that is the US Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United vs. the Federal Election Commission*, which McCabe likens to “legalized bribery.” While not optimistic about redressing these threats in his lifetime, McCabe stated that with an informed and aroused citizenry he is hopeful for the long term.



Focusing on the last item, McCabe explained that in 1905 Wisconsin banned corporate contributions to elections. What had been illegal in Wisconsin for over a century was overturned by the 2010 *Citizens United* decision. Unlimited contributions and spending in election campaigns became the law of the land. In Wisconsin, election spending since 2010 tripled to \$377,000,000, including recall election spending of \$137,000,000. Without the recall elections spending would still have doubled. While describing the decision as a “dark day for the Supreme Court,” he predicted that, like the Dred Scott decision legitimizing slavery, the *Citizens United* decision will end up in the trash bin of history – but it could take 30 years.

In the meantime, we need to understand that it means unlimited amounts of corporate money flowing into elections. Wisconsin has no law requiring disclosure of who precisely donates to “interest groups” engaging in corporate election spending. Wealthy donor spending on behalf of favorite candidates makes it highly unlikely for less affluent hopefuls to get into a race or to compete during the campaign if they get into the race, and for Wisconsin’s less affluent rural community issues to be addressed.

Among antidotes to this situation, McCabe recommended that Wisconsin institute disclosure rules, establish public financing of elections, reform redistricting procedures and move to automatic universal registration. Importantly, Wisconsin’s 1973 ethics code, while banning gifts of “anything of value” to a state official or employee, is silent on campaign contributions.

In responding to questions, McCabe addressed “powerful elements” in the United States, including corporate media (TV, radio, newspapers, Internet) and the major political parties. He described as “common mythology” the idea that Republicans are the “business party” and Democrats the “union party,” noting that before 2011, Democrats received \$6 from business for every \$1 received from labor. “We need a party worth a damn, one that connects with the people,” he said. McCabe then reminded us of Granny Doris Haddock, who having walked across America at 90, when turning 100 stated, “Democracy is not something we have, it’s what we do.” Let’s keep doing Democracy in League!

*Please note: Concerns mentioned during the question and answer period included concentration of media ownership, preservation of Internet neutrality, amending the US Constitution prohibiting unlimited contributions to elections, and free, equal air time for candidates. McCabe also described the 3 stages of ownership: 1) slavery 2) Jim Crow 3) Equating money with speech (Buckley v. Valeo, 1976)*

Wisconsin Democracy Campaign is online at [www.wisdc.org](http://www.wisdc.org).

## On Membership

Chris Weber, Membership Chair

I want to congratulate the membership committee and all members for our membership growth over the last year. The growth of our League starts with deliberate effort by welcoming prospective members in our actions and studies. It takes much effort to nourish growth and to sustain active support of any group, including League. Because of our outstanding efforts to increase membership, the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County was recognized by LWV-US. Our prize was a dozen League buttons to wear proudly. CONGRATULATIONS ALL AROUND!

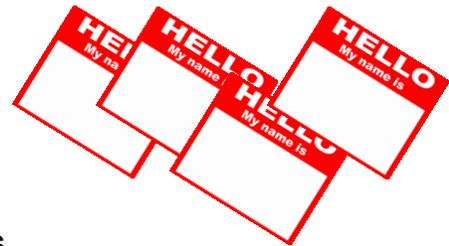


## New Members

Gloria Weiskotten

Alice Kayser is new to League and finding the meetings she has attended very interesting. Having been a nurse, health care is an important topic for her. She has joined the Great Decisions discussion group.

Jane Stoltz is a retired occupational therapist and therefore also concerned about health care. She is also interested in voter services, which is an important part of League activity.



## Natural Resources

### Conservation Congress Election and Vote on Natural Resource Issues

Barb Eisenberg

Don't miss this chance! Every spring Wisconsin citizens have the opportunity to vote for delegates for each county to represent them on wildlife and natural resource issues, but most people are not aware of this election. The DNR Spring Hearings and Conservation Congress Election are held in every county in Wisconsin, every year on the second Monday in April.

The public notice, list of meeting locations, and list of questions up for a vote are usually posted online in mid-February. Then you can read the questions online at

<http://dnr.wi.gov/about/wcc/> or can contact the local DNR office ([414-263-8500](tel:414-263-8500)) for a hard copy (2300 N. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.).



### SS Badger

Helga Guequierre

Even though the SS Badger, the largest car ferry operating on the Great Lakes, does not have a permit to operate, it has set its schedule for the 2013 season. The first crossing will be May 17, 2013. The assumption is that the EPA and environmental groups will give up their fight for clean water and clean air.



The owners of the SS Badger have stalled for 20 years. They have continued to harm Lake Michigan and the health of humans and the environment by not making the change to a cleaner-burning fuel. They have put their profit-making goals above our welfare.

The Badger's permit expired late in 2012, when efforts by its owners to extend it failed. Previously, the Badger was allowed to dump more than 500 tons of toxic coal ash, containing heavy metals including mercury, into the waters of Lake Michigan every year.

The EPA has said it will issue a preliminary decision by March 1<sup>st</sup>. It will then ask for public comment about that decision. We will have another opportunity to make our voices heard when the EPA makes its preliminary decision. Let's not waste that opportunity. For more information see the EPA's Region 5 Water's homepage [www.EPA.gov/r5water/](http://www.EPA.gov/r5water/).

#### **The Voter Production Crew:**

Anne Creamer, Editor and Layout  
Louise Petering, Advisor

#### **Contact us at:**

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[League@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:League@lwvmilwaukee.org)  
414-273-8683

**April General Meeting**  
**“Souper Supper”**  
**11X15 Campaign for Justice**



**Thursday, April 18, 2013**

**5:30 Gather & Socialize**

**5:45—6:30 Supper**

**6:30—7:30 Presentation & Discussion**

**Lake Park Pavilion Community Room**

Our speaker will be Joyce Ellwanger, who will discuss the grassroots organization “11X15 Campaign for Justice,” which is working to promote alternatives to incarceration and to decrease the prison population in Wisconsin by half, to 11,000 by 2015.

Joyce has been involved in community organizing and has been committed to public service, racial equality, social justice, and civil rights for over fifty years.

Contacts: Eva Roberson, 466-0298, & Mary Jo McDonald, 962-8195

Supper – A Selection of Soups, Bread, Salads, Coffee, Tea & Dessert

RSVP: [league@milwaukee.org](mailto:league@milwaukee.org) or League office, 414-272-8683.

Suggested donation \$10.



**It's Time to Go Green!**



As good Leaguers we strive to conserve resources, so let's work towards going paperless and keep *The Voter* online.

Each time *The Voter* is ready we will send you an email with a link to the PDF version. You can save it, print it or read it online. It's that simple.

Please contact the office to choose this option: 414-273-8683 or [league@milwaukee.org](mailto:league@milwaukee.org)

THANKS!





# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

**Join Up!**

**Join In!**

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**GO GREEN!**  
Request your Voter online by contacting the League office.

**OR join online** at: [lwvmilwaukee.org](http://lwvmilwaukee.org). If you would prefer to receive your copy of *The Voter* electronically, please email us at [league@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:league@lwvmilwaukee.org). Thank you!

**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.

**Interests:** Voter Service \_\_\_\_\_ Lending Practices \_\_\_\_\_ Government \_\_\_\_\_ International Relations \_\_\_\_\_ Environment/Natural Resources/Water \_\_\_\_\_ Health Care/Social Policy \_\_\_\_\_ Education \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

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**Milwaukee County Dues (Circle One):** \$65 Individual \$90 Household (2 or more persons) \$25 Student \$100 (supports \$25 memberships) \$165 Centennial (supports action & activities) *Financial support available upon request—call 414-964-9988*

**Website:** [lwvmilwaukee.org](http://lwvmilwaukee.org) **Email Address:** [league@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:league@lwvmilwaukee.org)

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.

**Join Up! Join In! Join the League of Women Voters - Today!**  
**Non-partisan, non-profit since 1920!**