



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

League Lines

MAY/JUNE 2009

Calendar

414-273-8683

<http://lwvmilwaukee.org>, e-mail: info@lwvmilwaukee.org

For the most up-to-date information on events, see

<http://lwvmilwaukee.org>

May

- 13 Wed, Board Meeting, 6 pm
1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee
Contact: Louise Petering, (414) 351-3617
- 20 **Wed., Annual Meeting, 5:30pm**
Italian Community Center,
631 East Chicago Street
**Keynote: Edward A. Flynn,
Police Chief, Milwaukee**
**“The Milwaukee Police Dept. & Update
on Crime”**
Reserve by May 13, 2009 - online or using
the form inside
Contact: Joanne Barndt (414) 962-5634
- 20 Wed., 9 a.m, 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.
New Citizen /New Voter registration
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Contacts: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527
Kit H. O’Meara, 414-226-9930
- 21 Thur., 9 a.m, 11 a.m.
New Citizen /New Voter registration
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Contacts: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527
Kit H. O’Meara, 414-226-9930
- 26 Tue., Natural Resources. Comm. Mtg., 7pm
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd., Milwaukee
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 29 & 30 – **Noon Fri – 3:30p.m. Sat.,
LWV WI Annual Meeting**
Manitowoc, WI, Holiday Inn
Agenda & Reservations on line at lwvwi.org
Contact: Louise Petering, 414-351-3617

June

- 9 Tue., Bulletin Deadline
Contact: Louise Petering, 414-351-3617
- 10 Wed., Board Meeting & Orientation,
5:30-8:30p.m,
1845 N. Farwell Ave., Milwaukee
Contact: Louise Petering, (414) 351-3617
- 10 Wed., 9 a.m, 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.
New Citizen /New Voter registration
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Contacts: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527
Kit H. O’Meara, 414-226-9930
- 11 Thur., 9 a.m, 11 a.m
New Citizen /New Voter registration
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Contacts: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527
Kit H. O’Meara, 414-226-9930
- 13 Sat., LWVUS Council, 1 –5 p.m. EDT,
Online See: lwv.org, members only section
Contact: Andrea Kaminski, lwvwi.org
- 22 Mon. Natural Resources. Comm. Mtg., 7pm
Guequierre’s home
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067

Please note: The meetings and events listed here supersede those in the 2008-2009 “Program Calendar”

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Louise Petering

My thanks to all League members for your support and work on behalf of our Milwaukee County League during 2008-2009. The annual reports in this bulletin are a concrete reminder of your commitment and good League work during this very busy election year. Please read the leaders’ reports and let them know you appreciate their contributions. Thank them for a job well done.

LWV-MC HOSTS UNITED NATIONS REPRESENTATIVE

Development Chair Karen Jansen

Dr. Louise Kantrow, the International Chamber of Commerce’s permanent representative to the United Nations, is keynote speaker at our Oct. 22, 2009 dinner event at the Italian Community Center. Her presentation, “The Role of Civil Society and the Private Sector Working With the United Nations,” will be followed by a panel discussion.

This is an especially germane topic for the League. Our national policies supported formation of the United Nations, and at the UN Charter Conference in 1945, ours was among 42 non-governmental organizations chosen by President Truman as consultants to the U.S. delegation. In recent years, the *continued on pg. 2*



Secretary Joann Kreimendahl (l.) and President Louise Petering (rt) representing the LWV Milwaukee County in Madison on Legislative Day, Apr. 22nd. League members advocated for League budget positions with Joint Finance Committee members & other legislators.

League Lines Production Crew
Michele Derus, Editor
Kerry Thomas, Layout
Contact us at 1845 N. Farwell Ave., Suite 102, Milwaukee, Wis. 53210. Info@lwvmilwaukee.org (414) 273-8683

"The League of Women Voters is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. Join LWV - where leaders are actively engaged in effecting change at the local, state, and national levels."

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League has co-sponsored international conferences on civil rights and partnered with the UN on efforts to address the mistreatment of girls in some countries. In 2005, the League urged Congress to reject the United Nations Reform Act, legislation that would have restricted UN authority.

Dr. Kantrow, who holds doctoral and master's degrees in demography and economics from the University of Pennsylvania, will explain how the UN's partnership with non-governmental organizations enriches its work and helps shape the public discourse on vital issues.

Panel participants include John Palmer Smith, executive director of the Helen Bader Institute in Nonprofit Management at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Claudena Skran, professor of economics and social science at Lawrence University in Appleton.

VOTER SERVICE

Committee Chair Anne Baynton

The League produced an April Voter Guide covering four candidates vying for two Milwaukee County circuit court races. Early in spring, one of the candidates asked us to help inform voters about these races via a candidate questionnaire. League members Hannah Dugan, who is a lawyer, and Andrea Kaminski, our state League director, worked with League veterans Louise Petering, Anne Baynton, and Dorothy Dean to devise pertinent questions for these candidates.

All four candidates participated. We posted their answers and photos on our website and in 500 booklets that we distributed at local libraries. The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, which published two editorials about these races, referred readers to our website address for questionnaire results. Producing paper Voter Guides is labor intensive and expensive, but the National League of Women Voters provided a grant to cover our costs in recognition that providing non-partisan election information is the heart of our work.

LEAGUE'S LEGISLATIVE DAY REPORT

Joann Kreimendahl and Louise Petering represented the LWV Milwaukee County in Madison on April 22nd. The day was designed for Leaguers to meet with members of the Joint Finance Committee and other state representatives about the budget appropriations in several areas: raising revenues to balance the state budget, correction's Earned Release Program, domestic partner benefits in the UW system, several educational measures, healthcare, and several natural resources issues including the regional transit authorities.

The day began with a budget briefing by Prof. Andrew Reschovsky that included an explanation of the state's structural deficit. He made clear that the 2000-2006 years

were characterized by increased spending and decreased taxes. Our discussion with Sen. Alberta Darling's staff person made clear that the Senator must be realistic when considering budget proposals.

LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

Chair Chris Weber Spornick

Life

LIFE, believe, is not a dream,

So dark as sages say;

Oft a little morning rain

Foretells a pleasant day:

Sometimes there are clouds of gloom,

But these are transient all;

If the shower will make the roses bloom,

Oh, why lament its fall?

Rapidly, merrily,

Life's sunny hours flit by,

Gratefully, cheerily,

Enjoy them as they fly.

What though death at times steps in,

And calls our Best away?

What though Sorrow seems to win,

O'er hope a heavy sway?

Yet Hope again elastic springs,

Unconquered, though she fell,

Still buoyant are her golden wings,

Still strong to bear us well.

Manfully, fearlessly,

The day of trial bear,

For gloriously, victoriously,

Can courage quell despair!

-- Charlotte Bronte

MILWAUKEE COUNTY CONSENSUS REPORT TO LWVUS ON NPV STUDY

Program VP Sue Lindberg

Note: Please see our last bulletin and www.lwv.org for information about the NPV and League study of NPV.

The LWVUS acknowledged receipt of our responses to the National Popular Vote Compact Study Consensus from Louise Petering, President. Our local consensus responses

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below will be considered with those from other Leagues around the nation in an effort to draft a national League NPV position. The draft will be considered by those participating in the LWVUS Council in June.

Amending the Constitution:

1. b) Actions by states through a compact process is an acceptable way to alter the method for electing the President and Vice-President.
2. b) Despite the novelty of the use of the compact approach to address a fundamental constitutional issue such as voting, the League should support the NPV Compact as a way of achieving an important goal.

Congressional Consent

3. a) The possibility that the NPV Compact will require congressional consent is not of sufficient concern to block the implementation of the plan.

Enforcement Provisions of NPV

4. b) Although it is not possible to determine whether the enforcement provisions will be sufficient to assure smooth operation of the plan, the plan should be passed anyway.

Uniformity of Voting Systems

5. The group could not reach consensus.

Popular Election of the President

6. It is more important to achieve the goal of national popular election of the President than it is to achieve the goal of abolition of the Electoral College.

Achievability

7. a) Agree – the NPV Compact will have problems with passage because of the need for Congressional consideration and action by so many states
7. b) Agree – a Constitutional amendment to establish the direct popular election of the President and abolition of the Electoral College will continue to have problems being passed.

Additional Comments: If well done, action by states through a compact process will alter the method of electing the President and Vice President. As written, NPV would lead to abolition of the Electoral College; while not a "pure" approach to that goal, it is a pragmatic way to achieve League's goal. Congressional consent & enforcement present problems in many areas of law; that should not deter League from working to achieve its goal of abolishing the Electoral College. Locally, we did achieve consensus that NPV moves in the direction of uniformity of voting systems, though that was not an option available. Finally, we in the LWV of Milwaukee County agreed that Congressional consideration & need for either states' actions or Constitutional amendment mean difficulties, but when did that stop the LWV!

REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITIES ADVANCE, Improvements needed

Natural Resources Committee member Kerry Thomas

Note: Please see our last bulletin for information about Regional Transit Authority Action.

Thank you for your efforts in advancing a Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and KRM Commuter Rail! The active support of a remarkably broad and diverse coalition of transit advocates has moved the RTA and KRM Commuter Rail forward.

Early the morning of May 1, 2008, the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) of the state legislature took a positive step in creating jobs and economic growth in Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha by voting to form two RTA's in SE Wisconsin:

Milwaukee County RTA

An RTA to fund and operate Milwaukee County's local transit, parks and culture, emergency services, and safety in the city of Milwaukee and would be supported by a 1% sales tax in Milwaukee County. The Milwaukee RTA would provide urgently needed funding to avoid major transit service cuts.

KRM RTA

An RTA for the single purpose of building and operating KRM Commuter Rail. The KRM RTA would encompass the counties of Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha and be funded by a rental car fee.

Although this outcome is a step forward in many respects, the local versus regional approach, the alternative KRM funding source, and the missing property tax relief are disappointing. Crucial improvements are needed to strengthen the RTA proposals.

The Joint Finance Committee decisions do, however, provide a foundation to keep moving forward and build on so that we can gain solutions that will address the urgent financial needs of Racine and Kenosha's struggling transit systems, provide integrated regional transit connections, and ensure that we have a strong funding source that will not compromise the KRM project.

Legislators worked through a 13-hour negotiating marathon to move these proposals forward. Racine and Milwaukee legislators forged a promising new alliance and were vocal transit champions. Rep. Pedro Colon (Milwaukee) said "We are going to grow our cities and we are going to grow our economy; we are not going to let you keep us in the dark ages."

What's next? The next legislative steps are:

In late May and June the Assembly and then the Senate will address the RTA proposals in the state budget.

In late June or early July the Governor will sign or veto the plans that are in the budget that he receives from the Senate.

Visit www.transitnow.org for more information about the Joint Finance Committee's RTA plans.

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

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

Name _____ Home Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Work Phone (____) _____

City _____ WI Zip _____ e-mail _____

Website - <http://lwvmilwaukee.org> Email Address - Info@lwvmilwaukee.org

Involvement [Check One]: Active _____ or Supporting _____ Interests: Voter Service _____ Lending Practices _____ Government _____

International Relations _____ Environment/Natural Resources _____ Health Care/Social Policy _____ Other _____

Please Note: Circle your preferred means of contact, indicate your interests & involvement level, and mail this form with your check to the **League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County**, 1845 N. Farwell Avenue, Suite 102, Milwaukee, WI 53202; **OR join online at www.lwvmilwaukee.org**. Tax-deductible contributions to the LWV Ed Fund may be directed to the address above. Thank you!



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OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

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Milwaukee, WI 53202
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Reserve Now
May 20 Annual Meeting with keynote
Milw. Police Chief Edward Flynn

Annual Report enclosed
Bring to Annual Meeting on May 20
Bring Dues Check to Annual Meeting

