

The League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County

League Lines

September/October 2010



President's Message

Calendar September

Voter Registration Month

- 8 Wed Board Meeting, 6 PM
1845 N. Farwell Ave,
Milwaukee
Contact: Mary Kae Nelson,
414-964-9988
- 10 Fri New Citizen/New Voter Reg-
istration
9 & 11 am, 1 & 3 pm
Federal Courthouse,
517 E. Wisconsin Ave
Contact: Dorothy Sherman,
414-425-9527 or
Mary Brod, 262-784-0372
- 14 Tue Primary Election - **Vote!**
Election Night Reporting
Contact: Louise Petering,
414-351-3617
- 15 Wed **Fall Kick-Off Salad Supper
Social**
See p. 4 for details
- 27 Mon Natural Resources Committee
7 pm Village Center
(Shorewood Library base-
ment) 3920 N Murray Ave
Contact: Helga Guequierre
225-0460 or Brenda Bantz
702-0997

Calendar continues on p. 2

Inside this issue:

Annual State Meeting	2
Iron Jawed Angels; Board News	3
National Convention	4
Redistricting; Lending Practices	5
Press Release; Membership, Election Night Reporting;	6
Elisabeth MacNamara; Transit	7

Welcome all LWV members and prospective members to the 2010-2011 League year. The League is a fantastic organization that welcomes open discussions and meetings. You and your voice are critical to the growth and strength of the LWV of Milwaukee County. If you haven't done so, I urge you to RENEW or JOIN the LEAGUE today!!



Voting is on my mind. I am beginning to write this message on Aug. 6th, the anniversary of the Voting Rights Act signed by President Johnson in 1965. You may be reading this on Aug. 26th, National Women's Equality Day. That is the day the 19th Amendment to the US Constitution was ratified, giving women the right to vote and also was the beginning of the League of Women Voters. I just previewed the film, "Iron Jawed Angels," which tells the story of the women's suffrage movement so well. I can't wait for each of you to see how long and hard our foremothers worked so that we all can vote. Be sure to come with a car full of friends and family on October 9th to see "Iron Jawed Angels" for yourself.

Our leaders have an exciting program year planned for us. I look forward to greeting each of you at our Kick Off Salad Supper. I promise not to bring any of the jello salads with miniature marshmallows that I grew up loving as a girl in Minnesota!!

Please take advantage of the many learning and volunteer opportunities that are on our calendar and read the rest of the bulletin. Kudos go to our New Citizen New Voter committee. They revised and updated our voting booklet given to each new citizen. They also secured a generous donation from Potawatomi to cover the entire cost of printing. I am so proud to be part of an organization of talented members.

Wishing each of you a productive fall.

Mary Kae Nelson

"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."

October Voter Education Month

- 1&2 Fri & Sat MRI Membership Recruitment Initiative, Madison
Contact: Chris Weber-Sponnick, 414-535-1197
- 2 Sat State Issues Briefing
Monona Terrace, Madison
Luncheon speaker: Elisabeth MacNamara, new LWVUS President
Contact: Sue Lindberg, 414-271-1257
- 7 Thu New Citizen/New Voter Registration
9 & 11 am, 1 & 3 pm
Federal Courthouse,
517 E Wisconsin Ave
Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527
- 9 Sat Bulletin Deadline
- 8&9 Fri & Sat LWV Lake Michigan-Manitowoc
See Press Release p. 6
- 9 Sat **Iron Jawed Angels**
See p. 3 for details
- 10 Sun 10-10-10 Sustainability-Climate Change Activity (see note p. 6)
- 11 Mon International Relations
“Immigration and its effects on the election and the world”
10 am Wauwatosa Library
7635 W North Ave
Contact: Ned Maxwell
414-238-9222
- 13 Wed Board Meeting, 6 pm
1845 N Farwell Ave
Contact: Mary Kae Nelson
414-964-9988
- 25 Mon Natural Resources Committee
7 pm Village Center (Shorewood Library basement) 3920 N Murray Ave
Contact: Helga Guequierre
225-0460 or Brenda Bantz
702-0997
- 27 Wed New Citizen/New Voter Registration
9 & 11 am, 1 & 3 pm
Federal Courthouse,
517 E. Wisconsin Ave
Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527 or
Mary Brod, 262-784-0372

Report LWV WI Ed Network 2009-10 Annual Meeting, Louise Petering, Director

The State Annual Meeting held in LaCrosse, WI June 18 & 19 was well-attended by delegates from 16 of 17 Wisconsin Local Leagues

The fun and educational pre-meeting event was a 2-hour cruise on the Mississippi. We boarded right in front of the downtown, riverfront Radisson. The boat captain and an on-board naturalist pointed out highlights including eagles, beaches, homes on the water, and just-below-the-surface water vanes (that direct water to the navigational channel to stabilize the shores - and sometimes rip propellers off boat motors).

Delegates adopted a budget of \$196,700 with no increase in the Per Member Assessment to local Leagues. The state League budget comes from Program Revenues and Other Sources (7%), Member Assessments (14%), Contributions (28%), and Grants (51%), thanks to our skilled Executive Director, Andrea Kaminski. Expenditures are 68% Program, 20% Management and General Expenses, and 12% Fundraising.

The approved program for the 2010-11 year includes a state League committee on Judicial Issues and facilitation of WI Inter-League communication on health care and climate change using improved web-based platforms, conference calls, etc. The Legislative Committee will work to identify state positions that need updating so that Local Leagues may study these and make recommendations for concurrence at a future state Annual Meeting. Finally, the state position on the Vocational Technical Adult Education (VTAE) System was amended to use the current title, Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS).

Officers serving on the State Board are from Appleton, Greater Green Bay, Ashland-Bayfield, LaCrosse, Dane County, Janesville, & Milwaukee County. Nominating Committee members are from Stevens Point & a Wisconsin at-large Member. All these women are committed to serving our local Leagues.

The League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County
Presents

Iron Jawed Angels

The League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County invites you to join us on Saturday, October 9th to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and the founding of the League of Women Voters of the United States.



The passage of the Woman Suffrage Amendment gave women full voting rights. To make the best use of the privilege to vote and run for political office, the women who had worked so hard to achieve these rights founded the League of Women Voters, a non-partisan organization dedicated to studying issues and becoming informed voters.

Please join us in the viewing and discussion of the Emmy Award winning film, “Iron Jawed Angels.” The film follows political activists Alice Paul (Hilary Swank) and Lucy Burns (Frances O'Connor) as they use peaceful strategies and tactics to revolutionize the American feminist movement to grant women the right to vote. Sacrificing their health, marriages and the limited amount of freedom they had, they were imprisoned and force fed (raw eggs and milk) after picketing and hunger-striking against war-time president, Woodrow Wilson. They survived to see the results of their efforts. Perhaps your mothers and grandmothers were part of this historic effort!

Saturday, October 9, 2010

Alverno College, 3400 South 43rd Street, Milwaukee
Wehr Hall located within Christopher Hall (Nursing Building)
Park and enter at 43rd and Morgan

2:00 pm - Film, “Iron Jawed Angels”

4:00 pm LWV 90th Anniversary cake and refreshments

4:15 pm Film discussion and reaction

Please come! Bring your mothers, daughters, other family members, neighbors, friends and future league members!!

RSVP: 414-273-8683 or info@lwvmilwaukee.org

\$10.00 donation requested

Board News

Our board approved applying to state for an MRI (Membership Recruitment Initiative) grant. The goal is to recruit and then retain members. If we are selected, our Membership committee members will attend a two-day workshop in Madison.

The board is also applying to the national League to be considered as a site for the LWVUS Global Initiative-Civic Hosting Program. If we are selected, we would have the opportunity to host six to eight citizens and government officials from other countries sometime in 2011. It would be a week of observing voter registration, possible elections, local and county board meetings, the courts and possible cultural events here in Milwaukee. Water could also be a focus.

NATIONAL CONVENTION

Helga Guequierre

The 49th national convention of the LWV, celebrating 90 years of service, met June 11-14, 2010, in Atlanta. Four jam-packed days full of plenary sessions, workshops and caucuses kept delegates busy from 7:30 am until 10 pm.

U.S. Representative John Lewis, of Georgia, addressed the opening session. He set the tone for an upbeat, can do meeting when he recounted his personal struggle for political participation.

Delegates voted to undertake two studies: one on the role of the federal government in education and a second on the effects of government privatization. They also voted to raise the per-member-payment to \$29.70 for 2010-11 then to \$30 for 2011-12. Delegates passed resolutions about limiting the use of the filibuster, supporting a single-payer healthcare system, improving election transparency, opening travel to Cuba, and bringing security to drilling and mining industries.

Among the workshop offerings were training and tips for local officers, ways to attract members, using the Internet effectively, observing elections, registering new voters, maintaining election integrity, updating the LWV arms control position, establishing a department of peace, engaging youth in elections, working for sustainability, utilizing grant funds, and protecting the Great Lakes.

Kathleen Sibelius, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, spoke to the closing session. She praised the LWV for providing a studied, non-partisan viewpoint to counter the misinformation provided by industry-paid lobbyists. Elisabeth MacNamara, the incoming President of the LWV US, spoke of building on the League's



past to improve its future.

For further information on the LWV Convention 2010, please check out the website: LWV.org, or contact Helen Guequierre at hguequierred@sbcglobal.net.

Fall Kick Off

Salad Supper Social

When: Wednesday, September 15th

Time: 5:30 pm

Where: Lake Park Pavilion Community Room, downstairs under Bartolotta's Lake Park Bistro
3133 E Newberry Blvd, Milwaukee

Program: "Getting to Know You" plus highlights from National Convention

Bring a salad or salad ingredient to share
Beverages and table service are provided.

Contact: Mary Stefaniak, 414-276-7557

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414-273-8683

REDISTRICTING 101

Sue Lindberg

Three members of our League (Sue Lindberg, Joann Kreimendahl, and Anne Creamer) attended a July 22 conference in Madison on redistricting issues. It was sponsored by the Midwest Democracy Network, George Mason University, and the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law.

The speakers explained the many factors which have to be considered in redistricting. The Voting Rights Act, section 2 and 5, is crucial and the 1962 Baker vs. Carr decision which mandates one person, one vote is fundamental.

It seems there are no neutral criteria to evaluate various plans. City boundaries, county lines, racial distribution, geography, current legislative districts are all factors. One interesting issue is where people in prison should be counted.

Because legislators will try to redistrict in a way to keep "safe" seats, many people (including League) feel an independent commission is needed. If Wisconsin continues to have divided government, the legislature may not be able to agree on a redistricting plan. In

that case, the Wisconsin Supreme Court will again have to draw the boundaries.

PS: As Sue Lindberg and Joann Kreimendahl continued their journey from the redistricting meeting in Madison to the LWV-MC board meeting at the League office, they felt that the 'motto' of the US Post Office was very applicable - "neither snow nor rain nor gloom of night..." Actually, there was no snow, but the deluge encountered as they were driving on I-94 was pretty unbelievable. When asked why they made the trip, they said that even the weather forecasters weren't able to predict the amount of rainfall and anyway, league business takes precedence and these couriers could not be stayed. Although, the real reason is that they couldn't see to get off the freeway!

Editor's note : several board members got home that night to find that their houses sustained flood damage:(

LENDING PRACTICES

Dorothy Dean

Last spring there were four "small loan" (payday lending) bills in the Wisconsin Legislature. When the dust settled there was one bill active in each house: AB447 and SB530. The final result was an amendment to AB447; this was passed and went to the governor for his signature.

The governor, using his word-by-word veto power, however, restored an important element of the bill - car title loans - as part of covered "small loans." The Milwaukee County League of Women Voters, however, preferred a previous version, AB 392, which included more consumer protections, including the 36% interest rate cap. The Wisconsin LWV concurred with the Milwaukee County LWV on this matter.

In the area of predatory mortgage lending, the focus has shifted to the federal level, where the LWV does not have concurrence. We continue to watch developments in Congress. There is no real activity on this matter at the state level. The National Coalition on Community Reinvestment has become the leading voice for advocates of fair lending practices and we continue to monitor their activity.

Press Release

The Lake Michigan League of Women Voters will hold its Annual Meeting Friday and Saturday, October 8 and 9, 2010, at the Holiday Inn, 4601 Calumet Avenue, Manitowoc, WI, starting at 1 PM on Friday. Keynote speaker on Friday will be Phillip Moy, Invasive Species Specialist. Manitowoc Mayor Justin Nickels will address the group about the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative. The mayor's presentation will be followed by a membership meeting.

LWV members are invited to join the LMLWV members from Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana for these informative sessions. For more details, call Louise Petering, 414-351-3617 or check the web site: www.lmlwv.org. Space is limited and reservations are required.

LEAGUE MEMBERSHIP

Chair Chris Weber-Sponnick

Current Leaguers know the value our organization provides for the community. Just look through this and past bulletins to see how much and in varied ways we promote participatory democracy. Who studies issues, develops member consensus, THEN advocates for position passage? The League of Women Voters! Who has the credibility to conduct non-partisan candidate and issue forums in a fair and impartial manner? The League of Women Voters! Who registers newly naturalized citizens to vote? The League of Women Voters! Who works in collaboration with other groups/agencies to develop grassroots understanding and implementation of democracy and democratic processes in emerging democracies? The League of Women Voters! These are just a few activities we can be proud of. Sounds very exciting to me. How about you?

Please renew your membership (if you haven't already). Avoid the additional letters and phone calls soliciting renewals. Use the form on the back of this bulletin. And Thank YOU to those who have already renewed.

ELECTION NIGHT REPORTING

Louise Petering, Coordinator

Several of you have already committed to reporting election returns September 14th, a key fundraiser for League. Thank you. If you would like to join in the excitement the evening of the Fall Primary and watch the process of tallying ballots at voting sites and municipal halls, please contact me at 414-351-3617.

We may be up a bit late that evening, but important activities relevant to our futures will keep us wide-eyed. Those who vote on September 14 will determine who appears on our November 2nd ballots for these offices: partisan County and State Assembly and Senate offices, five constitutional offices of the state (Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, and Attorney General) as well as all US House seats and the US Senate seat currently held by Russ Feingold. **VOTE!**

10-10-10 Sustainability-Climate Change Activity

Enjoy a lively book discussion on ***Green Gone Wrong: How Our Economy Is Undermining the Environmental Revolution*** by Heather Rogers, at Alterra at the Lake, 1701 N. Lincoln Memorial Drive on Sunday, October 10th, at 2 pm.

Contact: Helga Guequierre, 414-225-0460 or Brenda Bantz, 414-702-0997



Elizabeth MacNamara, National President

Last month, hundreds of League supporters came together in Atlanta to celebrate the League's 90th anniversary, discuss critical policy issues, and elect Atlanta resident Elisabeth MacNamara as the new national president of the League of Women Voters.

Elisabeth's stirring acceptance speech highlighted the League's major accomplishments over the last 90 years -- and sent a clear message that our work is not done.

"The League and its 150,000 grassroots supporters will continue to raise our voices in the fight for climate change reform, campaign finance reform, voter education and election reform. Let's go out there and get in the way!"



For further coverage see: LWV.org

Transit Cuts to Impact Economy and Jobs: Take Action

By Kerry Thomas, Natural Resources Committee

Earlier this year the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County worked in concert with the LWVs of Wisconsin and Leagues across the state to advance legislation which would allow communities to create regional transit authorities (RTAs), which would provide dedicated funding and a regional framework for efficient and effective public transportation. The legislation fell a few votes short of passage.

The lack of action by the legislature leaves Milwaukee County in a very difficult situation. The transit system has a \$6 million operating budget gap for 2011 and a \$14 million operating and capital gap projected for 2012. The Milwaukee County Transit System's (MCTS) proposed budget calls for massive service cuts that will begin January 2011. Possible reductions in para-transit service would isolate thousands of persons with disabilities.

These cuts will take a toll on families, businesses, and our economy as people are cut off from access to work, school, healthcare, shopping, entertainment, and other services. A study by UW Milwaukee found that over the past eight years of service cuts 40,000 jobs have become inaccessible by transit in Milwaukee and Waukesha. If there is no action, cuts in the next few years will increase that number to 100,000. Nearly half of the 144,000 daily trips taken on Milwaukee buses are for work purposes. According to American Public Transit Association, MCTS is one of the most efficiently run systems of its peers in the country.

County Executive Scott Walker says he will not eliminate routes but may increase fares, which are already among the highest in the nation. When fares go up and service is cut ridership goes down. When ridership goes down revenue goes down, resulting in more service cuts and fare increases and a dangerous downward spiral.

Take Action!

Please contact County Executive Walker and your county supervisor and urge them to put an end to Milwaukee County Transit service cuts and fare increases.

People must be able to get to work, school and vital services affordably and efficiently, and businesses must have good access to workers and customers to grow.

Contact: Scott Walker: 414-278-4211, countyexec@milwcnty.com,

Your county supervisor: 414-278-4222, <http://www.co.milwaukee.wi.us/CountyBoard>

For more information see www.transitnow.org

**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 - <http://lwvmilwaukee.org>

Email Address—Info@lwvmilwaukee.org

Milwaukee County Dues (Circle One):

\$65 Individual \$90 Household (2 or more persons) \$25 Student \$25 Limited Income

\$100 (supports \$25 memberships) \$160 Centennial (supports action & activities)

Name _____ Home Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Work /Cell Phone (____) _____

City _____ WI Zip _____ e-mail _____

Interests: Voter Service _____ Lending Practices _____ Government _____
International Relations _____ Environment/Natural Resources/Water _____
Health Care/Social Policy _____ Other _____

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

OR join online at: <http://lwvmilwaukee.org>. Tax-deductible contributions to the LWV Ed Fund may be directed to the address above. Thank you!



1845 N Farwell Ave, Ste 102
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414-273-8683
info@lwvmilwaukee.org
<http://lwvmilwaukee.org>

**The League of Women Voters
Of Milwaukee County**

**Join Up!
Join In!**