



## President's Message

September-what does that mean to you as a member of LWV Milwaukee County?

To me, it means the beginning of an exciting League program year. This fall we have a national study, "The Federal Role in Public Education," a kick-off supper, a general meeting and two sets of units with member agreement. Our activities this fall will give each of us an opportunity to learn and the challenge to think and then take action.

Our new program year is much like beginning a new school year. Each of us will have the opportunity to learn new things, develop new skills and make new League friends. As a former teacher, September brings fond memories of becoming acquainted with new students and their families, setting up a classroom to create a nurturing learning environment and applying the new knowledge from classes I took or journals I read during the summer. I have been retired three years now and I still want to purchase the big packs of pencils and markers when they are on sale!



Please consider this a personal invitation to attend our meetings, to visit a unit meeting and to join a committee or come to a board meeting. Your attendance may provide you with the opportunity to find others with some of the same interests or passions that you have about a specific concern or issue. Maybe it will provide you with an idea for future programs or activities in which you would like to see us become involved. League units and general meetings are also a good way to meet other interesting people. Check out the meeting information on the following pages and plan to attend one, two or all the meetings we have.

The League is a grassroots organization, so when you join our local League, LWV Milwaukee County, you also belong to the state and the national League. LWV-Wisconsin Education Fund has a quarterly newsletter, *The Forward*, that is filled with information about studies, League activity and action. Check out our websites: Milwaukee County: [www.lwvmilwaukee.org](http://www.lwvmilwaukee.org), Wisconsin: [lwvwi.org](http://lwvwi.org), and US: [lwv.org](http://lwv.org). We all should be doing that on a regular basis.

Our League is thriving and the reason for our success in achieving our mission is our capable, enthusiastic and thoughtful volunteers. When a board member, unit leader or committee chair asks for your help, please say, "Yes." Follow that with a, "Thank you for the work you do."

I look forward to an exciting year and want you to be part of our making a difference in our community.

Best wishes,

*Mary Kae Nelson*

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## League Leads Election Observing in Recall Elections

Carolyn Castore

The LWV-WI led a project of over 150 volunteers to observe the recall elections and, particularly, the "soft" implementation of the new Voter ID law. We had a presence in all of the senate districts. A group of volunteer lawyers, expert in election law, provided valuable backup support. Between calls on an 800 number and our observers, we were able to get an idea of the scope of problems and solve many of them.

We have already been asked to repeat this project in April and November of 2012. We won't have the logistical confusion of trying to place volunteers a week apart. And there are lessons to be learned. In the 8<sup>th</sup>

cont. on p. 4

September 2011			
1	Thurs	10 am	Naturalization/New Voter Registration Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave. Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527 or Sharon Munson, 414-358-8393.
8	Thurs	5:30 pm	<b>Fall Kick Off Salad Supper Social</b> Lake Park Pavilion Community Room (downstairs under Bartolotta's Lake Park Bis- tro) Contact: Chris Weber Spornick, 414-535-1197 or Mary Stefaniak, 414-276-7557. See p. 3 for more details.
14	Wed	6 pm	Board Meeting 1845 N. Farwell Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988
17	Sat	9:30 am	<b>General Meeting</b> , "The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education" Kingo Lutheran Church, 1225 E. Olive St. (at N. Wilson Dr.) Contact: Sharon Munson 414-358-8393 or Joann Kreimendahl, 262-255-2127.
22	Thurs	9 am 11 am 1 pm 3 pm	Naturalization/New Voter Registration Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527 or Sharon Munson, 414-358-8393.
26	Mon	6 pm	Natural Resources Committee Shorewood Village Center (below the library) 3920 N. Murray Ave., Shorewood Contact: Helga Guequierre 414-225-0460, or Brenda Costigan, 414-702-0997
October 2011			
5	Wed		<b>Unit Discussions— Member Agreement Ed Study</b> , History and Common Core Standards; see p. 4 for times and locations
6	Thur	10 am	Naturalization/New Voter Registration Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave. Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527 or Sharon Munson, 414-358-8393.
8	Sat		LWV Wisconsin Ed Fund Issues Briefing, Madison. Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988.
12	Wed	6 pm	Board Meeting 1845 N. Farwell Contact: Mary Kae Nelson, 414-964-9988
13	Thur		International Relations/Great Decisions Discussion Group St. Matthew's EV Lutheran Church, 1615 N. Wauwatosa Ave, Wauwatosa. Contact: Ned Maxwell, 414-258-9222 or Gloria Weiskotten, 414-354-9783.
19	Wed		<b>Unit Discussions— Member Agreement Ed Study</b> , Equity and Funding; see p. 4 for times and locations
21-22	Fri & Sat		Lake Michigan LWV Annual Meeting, Chicago
24	Mon		Natural Resources Committee Shorewood Village Center (below the library) 3920 N. Murray Ave, Shorewood Contact: Helga Guequierre 414-225-0460, or Brenda Costigan, 414-702-0997
27	Thur	9 am 11 am 1 pm 3 pm	Naturalization/New Voter Registration Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave Contact: Dorothy Sherman, 414-425-9527 or Sharon Munson, 414-358-8393.

# Preparing for National Consensus on the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education

Sarajane Kennedy

In preparation for October's unit meetings on the LWVUS Education Study, LWVMC will host a general meeting on Saturday, September 17, at Kingo Lutheran Church in Shorewood (see p. 7). The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and will end at 11:30 a.m. A three-person panel of people well-versed in public education issues will address Funding and Equity; Common Core Standards and Assessment; and Education of Children Who Are Disadvantaged.

Included in this *Voter* is *Early Childhood Education, Equity and Funding*, one of five background papers on the topic prepared by the national League. Refer to your July/August *Voter* for another of the five articles, *The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education: Historical Perspectives*.

Other background papers prepared by LWVUS are: *Common Core Standards and Assessment, Funding and Equity Issues*, and *Legislation and Funding for the Education of Children Who Are Disadvantaged*. You may access all five background papers by going to our website, [www.lwvmilwaukee.org](http://www.lwvmilwaukee.org), selecting the "Current Issues Under Study" page and clicking on *The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education*.

We hope you will join us on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, for what should be an excellent discussion of these issues and great preparation for our October units on the topic where we will discuss the consensus questions (see page 4) and attempt to reach positions on the role of the federal government in public education. Those positions will form the basis of any future action we take on education related legislation.

## Fall Kick Off

### Salad Supper Social

When: Thursday, September 8, 2011  
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 our program committees

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

Please come and learn about the exciting LWV year ahead!

Contact: Chris Weber, 414-535-1197, membership chair,  
or  
Mary Stefaniak, 414-276-7557

## Natural Resources

Helga Guequierre, NR Committee Co-chairperson

Clean air in the United States is closer now than it was before the Clean Air Act was enacted in 1963 and amended in 1970, 1977, and 1990. Some people today suggest that the Clean Air Act is an example of government overregulation, is too expensive, and costs jobs. This is untrue. Clean air standards prevent thousands of illnesses, asthma-related hospital visits, and deaths every year.

All of us have benefitted from this law. We need to remind our lawmakers that we depend on them to ensure that it continues to protect us. Ask your president, senators, and congressional representatives to take the Clean Air Promise.

## On Membership

Chris Weber, Chair

What an exciting time to be a Leaguer! There is so much going on that League is concerned with. Elsewhere in this bulletin you will read about the issues we are studying, events we are sponsoring/organizing, and actions we are urging you to take. We are Leaguers because we "Care for Democracy". We care to see that human/ political rights are promoted and safe guarded. We care to promote environmental quality. We care to champion political processes that encourage citizen education and involvement. Check out our website to find out how we, **YOU**, have a place to demonstrate YOU CARE.

Most members have renewed their membership. Thank you to those who have. For those who haven't yet written that check please do so soon. You should have received a reminder letter. Please use the invoice on the back page. The membership committee enjoys speaking to members but perhaps you don't quite enjoy the phone call urging renewal. As always, thank you for your loyalty to the League of Women Voters.

## October Unit Meetings

Historically, many members would say that unit meetings are the backbone of the League. Units are the place where members come to learn, discuss, contemplate, share, and vent when needed and to socialize. Units are a place where one comes to develop personal relationships while learning and growing in the League. After getting fired up from our September general meeting, "The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education", the purpose of our October units will be to reach member consensus for this national study.

Our first two Unit meetings this year will be held on Wednesday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, when we'll discuss "History and Common Core Standards" and Wednesday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, when the topic will be "Equity and Funding". We will be doing two different portions of member agreement for the national study. See the reading material included in this issue of *The Voter*, and join us at one of the locations below:

### Afternoon Unit-West 1:15 p.m.

St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran Church  
1615 North Wauwatosa Avenue, Wauwatosa  
Contact: Gloria Weiskotten, 414 354-9783

### Evening Unit-West 7:00 p.m.

Natalie Kleman's home  
8801 West Oklahoma Avenue, Unit # 111  
Contact: Ruth Snedic, 414 771-7690

### Evening Unit- Eastside- North Shore 6:00 p.m.

Shorewood Village Center  
(below the Shorewood Library)  
3920 North Murray Avenue  
Contact: Barb Hussin, 414 351-0819

Find a unit that works for you and join in the excitement of belonging to the LWV!

### Election Observing from p. 1

Senate district, for example, we had two cars that roamed and could quickly respond to issues. We needed that in LaCrosse and Green Bay.

Given the short time for training of election officials, very few problems with the voter ID law were encountered. The biggest problem was the additional time needed to sign the poll books and show the ID. Both small and large communities experienced long lines. We also know that some people were unable to register given the absence of corroboration.

And, good news - several of the volunteers plan on becoming League members!

## New Directions, New Concerns for Transit, Jobs, Economy

Kerry Thomas, NR Committee

Public transportation is a vital component of our metro economy and an equitable and efficient transportation system. Nearly half of the 140,000 rides provided on transit every weekday are taken for work related purposes, which keeps workers employed and businesses engaged in supporting a growing economy.

Transit supports LWV positions of clean air, sustainable natural systems, and equitable, efficient access to jobs, schools, shopping and opportunity.

### A year of dramatic new directions for Milwaukee

In June, the state budget was passed. It included several transit items that LWVWI and local Leagues had actively worked toward including:

- Transit stayed in the segregated transportation fund, which was crucial to preserving state support for transit.
- Transit workers were exempted from the collective bargaining provisions in the Budget Repair Bill, keeping \$48 million in federal transit aids intact for WI.
- A new state para transit fund was created that provides \$1.5 million annually for 2 years in Milwaukee.

At the same time the state budget also created major challenges that will be deeply felt in households and businesses in Milwaukee County:

- A 10% cut in state transit aids translates into a \$7 million loss to Milwaukee County Transit System (MCTS).
- The MCTS 2012 budget request to the County Executive includes an historic 12.5% service cut to para transit and the bus system, needed mostly to address the loss of \$7 million state transit aids.

The changes proposed for transit include:

- Increasing the para transit fare \$1.25 to \$4.50 per trip and reducing para transit service area (for people with disabilities and seniors) resulting in about 2,200 current para transit riders losing access to transportation. The new state Para Transit Fund will help mitigate this issue, but the funds are not sufficient to reverse the cuts completely.
- Eliminating all Freeway Flyers, Special Event, and Festival Buses, except UBUSes; eliminating 5 routes and route segments on 5 routes; restructuring 17 other routes; and reducing frequency of 9 additional routes.

The county budget process is underway. Comments to the county executive and county board supervisors are important now through November.

Visit the Coalition for Advancing Transit [here](#) or [transitnow.org](http://transitnow.org) for more information.

### Rail: One step forward, two steps back

Milwaukee recently voted to advance the Downtown Streetcar, a starter project that would help support several of League's goals. It will use mostly federal dollars that were set aside specifically for it over 20 years ago.

Rep. Robin Vos led the state budget charge to repeal all Regional Transit Authorities in Wisconsin, which has eliminated local decision-making and an option to address transit funding crisis and regional coordination. The RTA repeal dissolved the Southeastern RTA and put the regional KRM Commuter Rail project on hold indefinitely. Over \$21 million in federal funds that was set aside for KRM has now been returned to Washington and WI.

**Let's Go Green**

Would you like to help us save some trees and postage costs too? Then opt in to receive your copy of *The Voter* electronically. You'll be able to either read it online or print it out at home in color or in black and white.

If you choose this option, send an email to [league@lwwmilwaukee.org](mailto:league@lwwmilwaukee.org) with "newsletter option" in the subject field. Then when each edition is ready you will receive an email from us with a link to *The Voter* on our website. No more waiting for the mailman and you'll be able to link directly to the other sites mentioned in the newsletter.

Remember, this is just an option; we will continue to publish our print version as usual, but we hope that over time more and more members will make the switch.

Thanks from the Board for considering this option.

## International Relations

Ned Maxwell

Dear League members, the International Relations committee is blasting ahead with its agenda for the upcoming year (Oct. 2011 to July 2012) after which we generally take the summer off.

The International Relations committee is a little different in that constantly changing international situations often interrupt our plans and we change course or direction as the world situation dictates. This in turn has made many of our discussions very lively with several different viewpoints. This year we will greatly miss the input of one of our stalwart members, John Abelt, who would often bring up the theories of Malthus to give you an idea of what goes on.

Due to some excellent ideas from Mary Stefaniak, this coming year we are dramatically changing our format by stretching out the lecture-discussion series Great Decisions over 8 months instead of having it jammed into 8 weeks. We will be watching videos of the lectures, and then discussing the content.

Gloria Weiskotten has obtained a room at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa that has the needed equipment and size for our needs. With plenty of parking, a convenient location, and soundproof walls for when the discussions get heated, it should be perfect for our purposes.

The meetings will be held on the second Thursday of the month starting in October. (Oct. 13, Nov. 10, {none in December}, Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 8, April 12, May 11, and whatever other dates we deem necessary) at 10 AM.

If the discussions spill over, there is a Starbucks within walking distance.

Naturally, with each discussion the position of the League will be introduced and discussed.

As this is the first year for this transition there will be some bumps on the road, but if you are interested in lively discussion, with differing points of view, and if you're not afraid to confront big topics, this is the place for you.

The first meeting will be about the role of the United Nations in international disputes, and we will finalize the format for the upcoming year.

With all that is going on in the world today I cannot promise we will come to a consensus but I do promise the conversation will be worthwhile.

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## Action

Ruth Snedic, Chair

### National

The LWVUS has a new ad that calls for elected officials, citizens and community leaders to protect public health by taking the Clean Air Pledge. All of us have been asked to protect the Clean Air Act and protect and safeguard our air quality. All of us should take the pledge and then ask our elected officials to do the same. Read more at: [League of Women Voters of the U. S. | Clean Air Act: A New Approach to Regulating Greenhouse Gas Emissions](#)

### State

The State League has been busy trying to limit the damage from the Voter ID Act and to help our communities understand the changes for our next elections. Our members are being trained to observe on election day to see what problems there might be with the new regulations and whether people understand what the new instructions mean for them. We had previously lobbied against the Voter ID law but were unsuccessful.

## Local

Our President, Mary Kae Nelson on behalf of the League, has sent letters to ask for fair redistricting. We have always supported the position that a fair and impartial commission be charged with this task and take it out of the hands of partisan officials.

### LWV Lake Michigan

Jennifer Runquist

The Lake Michigan League of Women Voters will hold their 2011 Annual Meeting in Chicago on October 21-22. All members of Leagues around Lake Michigan are encouraged to attend. More information will be available in September.

In June, the LWVWI State Board approved incorporation of the Michigan Great Lakes Ecosystem Position into our Wisconsin Positions, as it fits within our Natural Resources positions. You can read the position and the history of its adoption on our website: <http://lwvmilwaukee.org/StandsonIssues.html>



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

Preparing for Consensus...



### The Role of the Federal Government In Public Education

Saturday, September 17, 2011

**Kingo Lutheran Church**  
**1225 E. Olive Street**

(2 blocks north of Capitol Dr., just east of the river at in-  
tersection of Olive and N. Wilson Dr., Shorewood)

Meet and Greet 9:30 am  
Program 10:00 am – 11:30 am

#### Panelists:

**Marlene Gross-Ackeret, CESA 1**

Former Director of Pupil Services, Menomonee Falls School District

**Rita Nawrocki-Chabin, Alverno College**

Professor and Licensure to Master's Program Director, School of Education

**Dr. James Shaw, Racine Unified School District**

Superintendent of Schools-Retired, Former Clinical Professor-UW

For more information, go to [lwvmilwaukee.org](http://lwvmilwaukee.org), Current Studies, then click on Role of Federal Government in Public Education to see background materials and other information.



**Join Up! Join In! Join the League of Women Voters - Today!**  
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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—[league@lwvmilwaukee.org](mailto:league@lwvmilwaukee.org)

**LWV Milwaukee County Dues (Circle One):**

\$65 Individual      \$90 Household (2 or more persons)      \$25 Student      \$100 (supports student memberships)

\$165 Centennial (supports action & activities)      *Financial support available upon request—call 414-964-9988*

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 \_\_\_\_

Education \_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Please** complete this form and **mail it** with your check to: 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. 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!

**Save the Date!**  
**General Meeting**  
 Sat., Sept. 17th, 9:30 am

[league@milwaukee.org](mailto:league@milwaukee.org)

414-273-8683

Milwaukee, WI 53202

Ste 102

1845 N Farwell Ave,

Join In!

Join Up!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
 OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

