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Ingrid Rothe
Vice President – Sybil Better
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Presidents’ Message
Kathy Fullin, fullin@execpc.com, 238-9465
Ingrid Rothe, irothe@ssc.wisc.edu, 256-8124

In the 1830’s, women were very active in abolitionist societies. Women wrote articles, circulated pamphlets, and circulated petitions to Congress calling for an end to slavery. When Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott were refused floor privileges at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London in 1840 because they were women, they decided to organize the first Woman’s Rights Convention in the U.S., which was held in 1848.

From then until 1920, women marched, organized, and were jailed in order to win suffrage rights. Fifty years ago, young people marched, worked and even died to extend suffrage rights to blacks in southern states.

Today, we are asking you to volunteer your time to protect these hard-won rights in the face of increasingly restrictive voting requirements in Wisconsin.

As you may know, Special Registration Deputies (SRD’s) may only register voters for the municipalities by which they have been certified—instead of statewide as we could several years ago. Weekend and evening voting hours at municipal clerks’ offices are no longer permitted. People who have moved since they last voted and new Wisconsin voters must now present proof of residence in order to register to vote.

News media have characterized laws restricting access to the polls as motivated by political concerns, and certainly there is evidence for that. But in addition, professors at the University of Massachusetts Boston have recently determined that states with a larger proportion of minority voters and African American residents have been more likely to pass such restrictive legislation. Dr. Erin O’Brien presented their findings at the U.S. League’s national convention in June.

These new voting restrictions are truly a civil rights issue for today.

(Continued on page 2)
Our local League has taken steps to help our members register voters in the face of these new restrictions. We have encouraged the County Clerk to hold training sessions where attendees could become certified as SRD’s for multiple municipalities. We have distributed a succinct brochure summarizing the new Proof of Residence requirements, and we have trained our SRD’s in these new requirements.

Please volunteer at one of our voter registration venues. This is a core League activity, and is critically important in order to counteract the increasingly restrictive opportunities to register and vote in our state. See the Voters Service page on the Dane County League website, lwvdanecounty.org, for a listing of where we register voters, to see how you can help. Contact the voter registration coordinator for a specific site to volunteer.

Homeless Children Forum
Karen Gunderson, Bulletin Editor

When we think of the homeless population in Dane County, most of us think of the adult men and women we see on our streets. There is a much less visible population of the homeless – children and youth. Approximately fifty-five members and community members attended our April 2 forum, where three speakers with first-hand experience of this vulnerable population shared information with us.

Jani Koester, Resource Teacher with the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) Transition Education Program (TEP) shared words from ‘Who We Are, Voices in Our Community’, a compilation of writings and art from Madison homeless youth. They are no different from youth who have safe homes – they also have hopes and dreams for the future.

Homelessness does not just include those with no permanent shelter. The homeless are often in ‘doubled-up’ situations, living with family members or friends. They also spend time in shelters and sometimes in local hotels and motels. In all those situations, their living situation is unstable. We can all imagine how difficult it is for a child to perform well at school when that child cannot be sure where s/he will sleep that night. So far this year, 1221 students in the MMSD have been identified as homeless.

Tyler Schueffner, Street Outreach Coordinator for Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin (YSOSW), spoke to us about young homeless people between the ages of 17 and 24. YSOSW has moved into its new building at 2720 Rimrock Road. The new building is the headquarters for YSOSW and includes eight beds for homeless youth, though those beds will not be available immediately. YSOSW works with unaccompanied homeless youth that have been kicked out of their home or foster care or have left because their home situation was not safe. Many of these youth are victimized and far too many are forced into the sex trade. Tyler has worked with homeless youth for 10 years and says that the situation is getting worse.

In December, 2010, Make Room for Youth (MRFY), mrfy.org, was formed in Dane County, with the goal of ensuring that all youth in Dane County have a safe place to stay. Tyler showed us a very moving video from MRFY, with youth talking about their lives. There were many good questions from the audience after the film.

Tyler mentioned the Briarpatch Street Outreach Program, which utilizes paid staff to make contact with homeless youth on the street and attempts to connect them with programs that can help them.

Kristin Rucinski, Executive Director of the Road Home, spoke about the lack of affordable housing in Dane County. The average two-bedroom apartment in Madison is now $900 per month, putting housing out of the reach of many families. New state laws are making it harder for many people to find housing - by making it easier for landlords to refuse to rent to low-income families, allowing landlords to require up to three months rent in advance and to hold on to security deposits for longer periods of time. Madison used to have more protections for renters, but state laws now prevent municipalities from having their own rental ordinances. The Section 8 waiting list for families in Madison has been closed for four years. The low income housing waiting list has been closed for a year. The Road Home turns away about 400 families a year because they are at capacity.

Audience members had many questions for our presenters, who capably answered those questions. One thing we could all take away from this presentation is that the organizations that work with homeless children and families in Dane County are overwhelmed and not able to help all of those in need. We all need to work toward solutions to this problem.

Keep Us in the Loop

If your contact information changes (address, email, phone), let us know so we can update our records. We want to keep in contact with you!

Please call (608-232-9447) or email (lwvdc@chorus.net) the office regarding your changes.

Encouraging informed and active participation in government.
For the Record

Our co-presidents, Kathy Fullin and Ingrid Rothe had three letters to the editor published since our last bulletin.

March 26, 2014 in The Cap Times:

LWW's Kathleen Fullin and Ingrid Rothe: Find candidate info on LWV's website

Dear Editor:

Voters wanting to learn the views and background of candidates in the April 1st election can find information on the League of Women Voters of Dane County website. Candidates’ Answers, compiled by the league, provides a nonpartisan look at the candidates and referendums on the ballot. Hard copies of the publication are also available at Dane County libraries.

Kathleen Fullin
Ingrid Rothe
co-presidents, League of Women Voters of Dane County

March 30, 2014 in Wisconsin State Journal:

Gov. Walker should veto vote-limiting bills -- League of Women Voters of Dane County

The League of Women Voters of Dane County urges Gov. Scott Walker to preserve citizens’ right to vote by vetoing two bills sent to him by the Legislature.

Senate Bill 267 ends the current practice of having clerks check a voter’s address, instead requiring the potential voter to produce proof of residence when registering.

Sadly, Walker has already signed a bill limiting the hours clerks can hold for voters wishing to vote prior to Election Day.

This is difficult for people who have recently moved, or who do not have a bank statement or bill issued in their own name. People do not normally carry this kind of proof with them, so they'll be unable to register to vote at places where the League of Women Voters has traditionally registered voters, such as libraries and farmers’ markets.

Assembly Bill 202 permits election observers to stand as close as 3 feet from the table where people check in or register on Election Day. Personal information can easily be observed at this distance.

The problem with our elections is that not enough people vote. We encourage Walker to challenge this effort by the Legislature to reduce voter turnout even further by vetoing these bills.

-- Kathleen C. Fullin and Ingrid Rothe, co-presidents, League of Women Voters of Dane County

May 11, 2014 in Wisconsin State Journal:

Acquiring state-issued ID can be difficult, expensive -- League of Women Voters of Dane County

The failure of so many Wisconsin citizens to obtain a state-issued ID, despite how valuable such an ID is for transacting business in the state, is testimony to how difficult and expensive it is for some people to acquire one.

Volunteers from the League of Women Voters of Dane County provide assistance to those seeking IDs. The work requires visits to public agencies and time on the phone with vital records offices in other states.

In addition, thanks in part to a grant from the Evjue Foundation, the League has been able to assist very low-income citizens by paying hundreds of dollars in fees required to obtain the birth certificates and marriage certificates needed to procure a state-issued ID.

Based on our experience, the League can attest to the many difficulties and frustrations associated with applying for a state-issued ID. No eligible voter should be denied the right to vote because the expense and complexity of applying for an ID are too much to surmount.

We agree with the editorial board of the Wisconsin State Journal: Judge Lynn Adelman’s ruling should stand.

-- Kathleen C. Fullin and Ingrid Rothe, co-presidents, League of Women Voters of Dane County

LWVDC Highway Cleanup

On June 5, LWVDC members Maureen Kind, Rose Sime, Sue Hoffenberg, Steve Ploeser, Joyce Knutson and Gail Bliss met at 9 am at Highway 14 and Wayside Road to clean along the LWVDC section of the highway. They had a nice sunny day and picked up 11 bags of trash and 4 bags of recyclables.

Thank You, Volunteers!

Our league would not be able to do all that it does without many hours from our volunteers. Thank you to the following people who donated their time from March through June.

Office Volunteers:

Lois Bernbeck
Natalie Deibel
Susan Fulks
Rita Kades
Gail Krc
Joan Lundin
Myrna McNatt
Ann Niedermeier
Jan Van Vleck

Bulletin Layout:

Encouraging informed and active participation in government.
Voter Services News
Gail Bliss, Voter Services Chair

Volunteer Opportunities:
After the August 12 primary, voter registration work will ramp up, with increased demand from students who have moved. If you want to be involved, contact one of our Voter Registration Coordinators listed on our website under ‘Voter Services’.

Special Registration Deputy (SRD) Training for multiple municipalities:
On June 11, at the Fitchburg City Hall, over 100 volunteers and clerks from over a dozen municipalities gathered for SRD training provided by the Dane County Clerk’s office. The assembled clerks represented municipalities housing 73% of Dane County residents. Fitchburg Clerk Linda Cory and city staff provided the space and set-up. Sheri Endres, Dane County Chief Deputy Clerk provided training through Power Point slides and the clerks swore in participants as SRD’s. LWVDC and other organizations helped publicize the program, took reservations and facilitated check-in. LWVDC members put their new SRD training to work at the Saturday Farmers’ Markets the next weekend.

Proof of Residence:
Effective April 4, 2014, anyone registering to vote must provide a valid proof of residence (POR). In the past, this was only required within 20 days of the election. The most common form of POR is a valid Wisconsin Driver’s License or ID with the registrant’s current address. For those who don’t have either of these documents, or don’t have their current address on the document, registration becomes more complicated.

As LWVDC members register voters, LWVWI has requested that we keep track of how many people we are able to register this summer and the causes for inability to register eligible voters. Preliminary data suggests that about 1/3 of interested potential registrants are able to provide the required POR, 1/3 do not have proof of residence with them at a public location and 1/3 are unable to register due to living outside the municipalities where the SRD is certified.

LWWI is collecting this data to determine how big a barrier the new POR law is for citizens who do not have valid Wisconsin ID’s. In all cases volunteers attempt to help the prospective voter make a plan that will lead to successful registration and voting.

New Members
The following members joined our league from March through June. Welcome!

Susan Byrns
Spring Greeney
Jo Anna Pautsch
Kathleen Shurts

Natalie Deibel
Dianne Haskins
Sandra Saul

Renew Today
If you haven’t already renewed your membership in the LWVDC, do it today! Our fiscal year runs from July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. If you can’t locate your renewal form, you can download one from our website at lwvdanecounty.org. You can mail your renewal payment to the League office or pay your dues on-line at our website.

Fundraising Report
Pat Kippert, Fundraising Chair

The League of Women Voters of Dane County has benefitted once again. Three generous and dedicated Anonymous Donors came forward to combine a Challenge Grant of $2,000 in May with the proviso being that the general membership would contribute/match the amount of $2,000 and more if possible. Thanks to 50 other LWVDC members a final goal (as of June 25, 2014) has been reached of $5,585.00! This will be the first time in recent years that the fiscal year will end without an operating deficit. Yippee!!

Our dues do not fully cover the expenses of LWVDC. In order to continue our efforts to provide Voter Education, Voter Services, Candidates’ Answers and to support our work on nonpartisan issues such as Redistricting and Judicial Selection, we need to raise additional funds. I am urging you to consider an extra donation to LWVDC as you renew your membership dues at this time.

I hope that each of us will evaluate our budgets to continue supporting the League. Ask your employer, where available, to match your gift. Teach the next generation the value of LWV. Include this organization when you are engaged in your estate planning. You have already demonstrated “what you care about” by joining. Now we all must continue to monitor the financial stability of our very important nonpartisan organization as well as to recruit new members and outside organizations with similar philosophies and goals.

It has been my pleasure to assist in the Fundraising functions of the Board of Directors the past two years. Believe me, everyone on the Board continues to be involved in the process.

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO HAS HELPED IN ANY WAY!

Sheila Chaffee Bequest
The LWVDC received a $5,000 donation from the Sheila Chaffee estate. Sheila Chaffee was active at both the state and local levels, serving on the State League Legislative Committee in the 1980’s. Sheila served on the LWVDC Board in the 1970s, especially notable in the years we studied making and understanding municipal budgets. This bequest will go into our Memorial Fund.

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Contributions

Between March 5 and June 14, the following people contributed to our league. Thank you to all of our generous donors.

Marianne Meyer
Fran Bicknell in memory of Helen Bruner
Clare McArdle in honor of LWVWI’s birthday
Marie McCabe in memory of Helen Bruner
Marie McCabe in memory of Patricia Watkins

Valentine Day Fund:
Cara Lee Mahany Braithwait
Peggy Glassford
Judith Munger
Constance Threinen
Margaret Walker
Joan Burns
Hathewy Hasler
Claire Rider
Janet Van Vleck

Candidates’ Answers:
Helen H. Baldwin
Edith Sullivan
Joann Elder
Elizabeth Ross
Dorothy Brar
Diane De Vos
Sara O’Loughlin
Yvonne Vitense

May Challenge:
Diane Adams
Mary Bean
Cara Lee Mahany Braithwait
James Cain
Kay Davis
Jean Espenshade
Mary Anne Fulton
Reta Harring
Jesse Kehres
Pat Kipper
Dr. Margaret S. Lacy
Sue Larson
Nancy Lersch
Susan Lloyd
Joan Lundin
Marie McCabe
Ann Nelson
Carol Palmer
Ingrid Rothe
Suzanne Smith
Edith Sullivan
Constance Threinen
Tom Vandervest
Patricia Watson
Sybil Better in memory of Patricia Watkins
Carol Kiemel in memory of Helen Bruner

Know Your Board Member

Mary Anglim, Membership Chair

I’m happy to be the new Membership Chair on the LWVDC Board. I joined LWVDC in 2009, a few years after retiring. Since then, I’ve been active in voter registration, proof-reading ‘Candidates Answers’ and helping with Issues Forums on affordable housing and access to healthy food. Ten months ago, I joined a small committee chaired by Steve Ploeser to work on Membership issues. Steve, Joanie Kanter and I had some exciting conversations about how to reach out to new and potential League members. Those conversations encouraged me to take on the Membership Chair.

The Membership Committee now includes Sara Markham and Rose Stephenson, but there is room for you! We hope to reach out to potential members as well as help new members feel at home in the League. We need greeters to help at Issues Forums, experienced members to welcome new members by phone, and a few people who would enjoy brainstorming about ways to expand our membership. There’s a Facebook page in our future. If you’d like to help, in small ways or large, I’d welcome hearing from you.

I grew up on the southeast side of Chicago and attended Loyola University, the University of Iowa, and the University of Michigan. At Iowa and Michigan I studied European history, and taught it here at the UW for several years. I subsequently worked in the UW Library System, the Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds, and at UW System, where I was the manager of the voluntary 403(b) retirement savings plan.

I live on Madison’s east side with my husband, a retired librarian, and our three cats. We enjoy travel but don’t get to do as much as we’d like. We are both active in our neighborhood association, and I am currently on the board of the Eastside Planning Council, a struggling but vibrant organization striving to help residents participate in development decisions. I’m a volunteer housing counselor at the Tenant Resource Center and recently I’ve gotten involved in WISDOM, a faith-based state-wide organization that works on reducing incarceration rates and other criminal justice issues.

Receive LWVWI News Online

Brief, informative emails are sent by the League of Women Voters Wisconsin (LWVWI). Topics include legislative highlights, updates on the League’s Voter ID legal actions, and key policy initiatives.

It is very easy to subscribe. Just go to the State League website at www.lwwwi.org and fill in your name and email at the bottom of their home page.

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Memories of Helen Bruner

Fran Bicknell

Helen Bruner, a fifty (plus) year member of the League of Women Voters and a longtime advocate for our less fortunate citizens, died in May 2014. She began her professional career as a Research Assistant at UW surveying the financial security of farm families. In the 1960’s she was a Project Assistant to Professor Elizabeth Brandeis Raushenbush, Chairman of the Governor’s Committee on Migratory Labor, and served as staff for the committee. Helen was later appointed by both Governor Knowles and Governor Lucey as a member of the Committee and served as Secretary. She later served as a member of the United Migrant Opportunity Services Advisory Committee to help migrant families find homes, training, and work opportunities in Wisconsin.

Helen coordinated discussions and conflict resolution sessions between minority students at UW-Whitewater and white citizens of Whitewater. She then wrote a report “The College and the Small Community: An Account of Collective Decision-Making.” Journal of Extension, Winter, 1971. During the 1970’s and 80’s Helen worked for Representative Midge Miller as a legislative assistant. Helen was a stalwart supporter of her husband, Ervin, who served for many years as a respected Juvenile Judge in Dane County. Due to Helen’s work in partisan politics, she did not hold official League roles. She was a well informed and vital participant in her LWVDC Unit discussions. We will miss her.

Capitol Lakes Parking

As we go to press there is no way to know the exact schedule of road work around the Capitol Lakes parking ramp.

Due to construction just east of the parking lot across from Capitol Lakes, it is possible that the Main Street entrance MAY not be open. This happened for the May 2014 Annual Meeting. If the Main Street entrance is not available, the parking lot can be accessed from West Washington Avenue. When heading toward the capitol, turn right just after the Hyatt Hotel driveway.

Upcoming Events Calendar

- Sept 10 – Social & Issues Forum, 6:00 pm
  Race to Equity
- Sept 17 – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- Oct 8 – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm
- Oct 15 – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- Nov 5 – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm
  Progress Report on 4-year-old Kindergarten

Unit Coordinator

We are delighted that former president Diane Liebert has agreed to serve as Unit Coordinator. If any of the units have questions or issues, please contact her at dliebert@gmail.com or (608) 698-4143.

September Unit Locations

League members meet monthly in one of five units to discuss the topic of that month’s Issues Forum, using study materials provided by the program planners to guide the conversation. The discussion concludes with recommendations for further study or action. Find a meeting that is convenient for you and participate! Please let the host know that you plan to attend.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2014

Monday Evening West - 5:30 pm
Panera, 3416 University Ave.
Merilyn Kupferberg, 831-3267, joelmerkup@gmail.com
Barbara Mortensen, 233-7563, morten21@att.net

Middleton - 7:00 pm
Gardd Parc Condos
6767 Frank Lloyd Wright Drive
Park behind the building; walk through the courtyard to lobby; ring buzzer to #221, if the inside door is not open.
Diane de Vos, 836-0070, djdevos@chorus.net

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2014

Tuesday Afternoon – 12:45 pm
Oakwood West, Oaks A-4
Parking on grounds or in P1 Heritage Oaks Parking Ramp
Marie McCabe, 230-3536, mmccabe4805@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2014

Northeastside - 3:30 pm
Lakeview Public Library
2845 N. Sherman Ave.
Helen LeRoy, recording, 244-2377, haleroy@wisc.edu
Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711, dorothywheeler@tds.net

Downtown Dinner Group - 5:30 pm
Capitol Lakes Retirement Center
Restaurant “The Seasons”
333 West Main St. - Free parking across street
Sally Phelps, 251-4834, phelpssa@charter.net