Annual Lively Issues Luncheon and Public Forum

Saturday, January 19, 2013
11:30 a.m.: Social Gathering, 12 noon: Luncheon: 12:45 p.m.: Speakers

There’s Got to Be a Better Way – Cleaning Up the Political Process

Speakers:

Jay Heck, Executive Director, Common Cause Wisconsin
Mike McCabe, Executive Director, Wisconsin Democracy Campaign

The Madison Concourse Hotel
[One West Dayton Street in downtown Madison – Parking under the hotel ($1.50/hr) or at nearby ramp]

Coming Up
Promoting Judicial Independence
February 6, 2013, 7:00 pm
Bill Lueders, Wisconsin Ctr. for Investigative Journalism
Joseph A. Ranney, author of Trusting Nothing to Providence: A History of Wisconsin’s Legal System

The League at Work
Many of us were surprised that we could go to bed before midnight on November 6. This past election turned out to be almost free of problems, despite the acrimony and tension that led up to Election Day.

Leagues at all levels—local, state and national—can take pride in their contribution to the successful functioning of the democratic process.

Under the leadership of Voter Services Chair Gail Bliss, LWVDC staffed voter registration and information tables at farmers markets at Capitol Square, Hillfarms and Monona. Members registered more than 400 voters at the Capitol Square market.

Members and other volunteers also staffed voter registration programs at Cambridge High School, Herzig University, Eagle Heights, the Villager Mall on Park Street, Epic Madison, Operation Fresh Start, and at shelters for the homeless.

Kathleen Fullin organized a two-day registration at MATC campuses that resulted in 70 voter registrations.
Republicans and Democrats Find Common Ground

Mike McCabe, a speaker at the upcoming Lively Issues Forum, wrote Governor Scott Walker, claiming that voters across the political spectrum are united in their concern about the role of money in politics. Here are highlights of his argument:

- In Eau Claire county, 71 percent of the voters approved a measure in favor of a Constitutional amendment that would overturn the Supreme Court ruling in Citizens’ United.
- In Colorado, 64 percent of voters approved a similar measure; in Montana, the approval figure was 75 percent.
- A survey by the New York University School of Law found that 74 percent of Republican voters and 73 percent of Democratic voters agree with the statement that “new rules that let corporations, unions, and individuals give unlimited funds to Super PACs will lead to corruption.”

Come to the forum on January 19 to hear McCabe and Jay Heck, executive director of Common Cause Wisconsin, expand on this good news and offer their views about how we can reach a “better way.”

League at Work (cont.)

LWVDC also reached out to potential voters in more unconventional ways. With the support of the Evjue Foundation, Bliss launched an innovative program to help people—generally of low-income—obtain documentation that would meet new standards for Voter IDs.

The Evjue grant also paid for informational ads on buses and the radio.

LWVDC provided information about voting registration in conjunction with performances of “44 Plays for 44 Presidents” at the Overture Center.

Bliss joined former LWVDC President Earnestine Moss to provide voting information on a radio show, “Let’s go to Church.”

At the request of the US State Department, Bliss educated a delegation from Thailand about our voting system—including the complexities of gerrymandering.

Work continued after voting began. Many LWVDC members volunteered to assist early voters. On Election Day, Bliss helped voters hospitalized at the VA hospital cast their ballots.

The LWVDC received praise in letters to the editor in Isthmus (November 2). Comments included: “The best way to learn about candidates is candidates’ forums—especially neighborhood forums run by the League of Women Voters. “The nonpartisan League has taken a strong stand in support of the right to vote.”

LWVWI receives credit for its legal challenge to the Voter ID law. Implementation of the law was blocked in March 2012 as the result of a lawsuit filed by the LWVWI Education Network.

Approximately 40 LWVDC members and other volunteers served as observers on Election Day in the program launched by the LWVWI to identify problems that inhibit the right to vote.

Leadership Opportunity

Advocacy for Clean Lakes

LWVDC President Donna Norton sent a statement in support of environmental expenditures in the proposed Dane County budget for 2013. Promoting clean lakes was the subject of the September Issues Forum.

Here is an abbreviated version of that statement:

“Our positions reflect our basic recognition that the economy will be sustained over the long haul only in an environment that is healthy…

In the Dane County Budget for 2013…we note items in three or four general categories all of which we support, and we are particularly pleased that the coordination of so many separate items will produce more than the sum of the separate parts to improve the health of the Yahara chain of lakes. The stream bank projects, the stormwater project, carp removal, phosphorous removal, and the manure digester are surely valuable steps towards restoration of this most valuable natural feature…

We were active in the creation of the Conservation Fund in 1999. In some years we have feared for its survival so we are especially pleased in the likelihood that it will prosper and is bolstered again this year by the Land and Water Legacy Fund and the community PARC program…”

More about Clean Lakes

Clean Lakes Alliance unveiled a $78.6 million plan to reduce phosphorus runoff into Dane County lakes by 50 percent by 2025. The group expects to fund the plan with private and public financing.

Reaching Out is Catching On

Reach Out Wisconsin, featured at the November forum, is gaining media attention. In Cap Times (November 14-20, 2012) Pat Schneider notes that reporters from NPR and Wisconsin Public radio showed up for a meeting of the group.

Schneider claims that, “There may be no better time for the left and the right to try to learn how to talk to each other…and no more ready example than Reach Out Wisconsin.”

For upcoming events, check their website at www.reachoutwisconsin.org.
Unit Meetings

Since there are no formal monthly LWVDC General Meetings/Issues Forums in December and January, LWVDC unit discussion groups seldom convene. One LWVDC Unit discussion group, however, will be meeting in December and in January. Please let the hostess/unit leader know if you plan to attend.

Wednesday, December 19, 2012
NORTHEASTSIDE, 3:30 p.m.
Social Gathering – Everyone bring 2 cookies!
Barb Seif’s home, 1620-C N. Golf Glen, 242-8049
Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711;
dorothywheeler@tds.net

Wednesday, January 16, 2013
NORTHEASTSIDE, 3:30 p.m.
Lakeview Public Library, 2845 N. Sherman Ave.
Helen LeRoy, recording, 244-2377;
haleroy@wisc.edu
Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711;
dorothywheeler@tds.net

Donor List

We appreciate receiving contributions to LWVDC from the following persons since September 20, 2012 (as of November 26, 2012):

Members:
- Kathryn Curtner, for the Voter ID project
- Sue and Terry Larson
- Nancy Lersch
- Connie Palmer Smalley
- Stan Sheggeby, “Keep up the good work!”

Non-Members:
- Anonymous, “I love the election guides!”
- Brett Butzman, “for Candidates’ Answers” (CA)
- Susan Hollingsworth - “for keeping us all informed at election times”
- Guy and Joanne Harper Plunkett

Calendar

January 7
Newsletter deadline
katielmulligan@yahoo.com
250-1896

January 16 – 1:00 p.m.
LWVDC Board Meeting
2712 Marshall Court, Suite 2

January 19 – 11:30 a.m.
Lively Issues Luncheon and Public Forum
Madison Concourse Hotel
Cleaning up the Political Process
Jay Heck, Common Cause Wisconsin
Mike McCabe, Wisconsin Democracy Campaign

February 6 – 7:00 p.m.
Promoting Judicial Independence Issues Forum
Capitol Lakes Grand Hall
333 West Main St.

March 6 – 7:00 p.m.
Food Deserts Issues Forum
Capitol Lakes Grand Hall
333 West Main St.

April 10 – 7:00 p.m.
Supporting Youth Programs Issues Forum
Capitol Lakes Grand Hall
333 West Main St.