President’s Message

Kathy Johnson

This has been a rather calm fall for the League of Women Voters of Dane County in one respect, since we haven’t had any elections. Next fall, with an open seat for governor, we will have much more action around the state. The spring election cycle, with primary elections in February and spring elections in April, will see a return to much more activity. If you can be involved with our regular voter service activities—helping to produce Candidates’ Answers, moderating live or televised forums, or helping to register voters—we will welcome your help. Please see the item by Priscilla Thain on ways to participate.

Our January Lively Issues Luncheon will be a good chance for you to tune in to the statewide topic of electing or appointing Supreme Court Justices. Look for your reservation form, which will come to you in December.

This month’s General Meeting about the Dane County justice system will once again be a topic we all need to learn more about. It features Dane County Sheriff Dave Mahoney as our speaker.

Until we see you in November, we hope you enjoy the brisk fall!
September Board Highlights
Helen LeRoy, haleroy@wisc.edu, 244-2377

Approved minutes of Board meetings are available on the League Web site at www.lwvdanecounty.org/content/lwvdc-board.

Treasurer – Pat Levin presented the current balance sheet and preliminary report of income and expenses for July–August 2009. Payments to both US and State Leagues, as well as for the Web site, are current. There was discussion of accepting member payments for the next fiscal year at the annual meeting in May.

Bulletin/Web Site – New and renewed members have been sent access information for the new League Web site at www.lwvdanecounty.org. Brook Soltvedt will continue to appreciate receiving feedback plus items for addition to the Web site, including calendar events.

Fundraising – Fred Wade continues to seek member volunteers to form a fundraising committee. He also suggested strategies for fundraising in the community and ways to identify potential donors and funding cycles.

Membership – Teague Harvey and Gloria Meyer proposed involving new members by having unit leaders personally invite them to meetings and help to establish mentoring relationships with experienced members. LWVDC will have a booth at Bob Fest on September 12.

Community Outreach – Earnestine Moss informed us of the success of the recent community event at Elver Park. Families United and others came together to enjoy basketball, fun activities, a speaker, and the message that joining together to become a part of the larger community can reduce neighborhood violence and improve the social climate for everyone.

Program – Carol Dutton reviewed upcoming plans. The Transportation and Land Use Committee is planning the October panel discussing Perspectives on a Dane County Regional Transit System. The Criminal Justice Committee is planning November’s meeting with Sheriff Dave Mahoney on Increasing Effectiveness in the Dane County Justice System. The January Lively Issues luncheon considering election vs. merit selection of Wisconsin Supreme Court justices will include Tom Basting, former Wisconsin State Bar President in favor of merit selection and Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson supporting election. Fred Wade is involved in the planning.

Publicity – Gloria Meyer publicized the September 9 meeting to other community organizations.

Voter’s Service – Priscilla Thain described her recent letter to the Wisconsin State Journal on health care on behalf of the League. Kathy Johnson discussed preparations for the next Candidates’ Answers. Related discussion included condensing repetitive general information, encouraging financial support from the community to defray production costs, and ensuring that deadlines be made especially clear to potential participants.

New Business – State League calendar:
• October 10, Issues briefing in Madison
• June 18–19, 2010, Annual meeting in LaCrosse.

Local Leaguers Learn at Legislative Briefing
Gloria Meyer, 288-8160, gkmeyer68@gmail.com

Ten members of the Dane County League of Women Voters attended the state League’s Legislative Briefing 2009 on Saturday, October 10, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Madison. Dr. Robert Kraig of Citizen Action of Wisconsin provided the history, background, and current status of healthcare reform. Noting that all five proposed bills in Congress have strong similarities, Kraig was optimistic about passage of healthcare reform this year.

Those attending learned about using the internet for political action, forming questions for candidates and instituting options for judicial selection—merit selection (Missouri) or more regulated elections with strong public financing (North Carolina). They also saw the effects of climate change in the world, in the United States, and in Wisconsin.

Thirty-two League members from across the state attended the briefing. Some came from as far as Ashland to attend.
Great Decisions 2010
Discussions Begin February 4
Gail Bliss, 231-3511, gail3511@gmail.com

The League of Women Voters of Dane County will again be sponsoring an eight-week discussion series based on the Foreign Policy Association’s Great Decisions program. We will meet from 9–11 AM on Thursdays in February and March at the Madison West Senior Center, 602 Sawyer Terrace. The Senior Center is near the West Madison Post Office behind Hilldale Shopping Center. Sawyer Terrace is a one-way street accessed from Segoe Road.

The discussion topics chosen by the Foreign Policy Association for 2010 are:
• Peacebuilding and conflict resolution
• U.S.–China security relations
• The global financial crisis
• Russia and its neighbors
• The Persian Gulf
• Preventing genocide
• Global crime
• U.S. special envoys

More information can be found on the Foreign Policy Association’s Web site, www.fpa.org. Volunteers are still needed to lead the discussions on the last four topics. If you have particular interest or expertise in one or more of the topics, and would be interested in leading that discussion, please let me know.

Please let me know by December 30 if you plan to attend or just want a book. You can contact me at 231-3511, gail3511@gmail.com, or 5309 Regent St., Madison 53705. I will order books in early January (@~$20) and have them available for you before the discussions start (I hope to bring the books to the Lively Issues Luncheon on January 16th).

Highway Cleanup
Maureen Kind, 274-6754, dmkind@sbcglobal.net

Five hearty souls cleaned the Dane County League’s stretch of Highway 14 on Monday, September 28. Mary Bean, Gail Bliss, Sue Hoffenberg, Jesse Kehres, and Maureen Kind filled 10 bags of trash and 3 bags of recyclables on a rather windy morning and then recharged their energy with homegrown pears. Does this make us locovores as well as ecologically minded? Our next engagement on Highway 14 will be in May. All are welcome. More hands make quicker work.

Panel on the RTA Informatve
Libby Lewis, 238-7219, phlewis@wisc.edu

October's General Meeting presentations by David Trowbridge, Transport 2020 Project Manager; Keith Plasterer, Pro-Rail President; Susan Schmitz, Executive Director of Downtown Madison Inc.; and Bruce Speight, WISPIRG Director, were informative and provocative, as were the questions asked. The discussion on the upcoming RTA proposal to the Dane County Board emphasized the necessity for an integrated, multi-modal transportation system linked to proper development, infill, and urban renewal activities based on environmental protection of air, water and land. Improvements in air quality result from reductions in on-road vehicle traffic, less use of heating fuel from more dense urban development, and community-based energy-conserving construction and rehabilitation. Improvements in water quality result from better urban design, reduction in road-based transportation pollutants, and coordination of storm-water management with land use and transportation development and redevelopment. Farmland is preserved through reduction in acidified rain and other pollutants.

These transportation, land-use, and environmental goals are long-held LWV positions that we hope to see realized. Be sure to support the RTA measure with your Dane County Board Supervisor. Contact information can be found at www.co.dane.wi.us/board/supervisors.aspx.
**Support Legislation to Regulate Payday Lending**

Pam Rewey, 2008–2009 LWVDC President and now a State League board member, testified on October 7 in support of AB 392. She spoke about payday loans on behalf of the LWVWI Education Fund. **AB 392 is a bill that addresses the concerns that arose in the League's yearlong study of payday lending in Milwaukee County in 2006–2007.**

Senator Lena Taylor, who represents part of Milwaukee, spoke to members of the LWVDC last January about payday lending. AB 392 would limit interest rates to 36% instead of the current 390% and higher. The bill faces strong opposition. About 42 lobbyists are lobbying against the bill and many candidates’ campaigns for the Assembly and Senate have received money from payday lenders.

**Contact your assembly and senate representatives in support of AB 392.** To find out how, go to [http://vpa.wi.gov](http://vpa.wi.gov). Choose lookup option 1. Enter your name and birthdate, and click Search. Click on your name, then scroll down on the results page to find links to all your elected representatives.

**A Call for Candidates’ Answers Questions**

Priscilla Thain, 233-5578, priscillathain@gmail.com

The spring 2010 election for non-partisan offices will include a number of local positions. A tentative list of positions up for election in the spring includes:

- **Dane County Board of Supervisors** 1–37
- **Middleton**: Municipal Judge, Alders 2, 4, 6, 8; **Monona**: Municipal Judge, Alders (3) A; **Stoughton**: Municipal Judge, Mayor; **Sun Prairie**: Alders (1, 2, 3, 4) A; **Verona**: Municipal Judge, Mayor, Alders (1, 2, 3, 4) A.
Donations Appreciated
Member contributors from September 16–October 9, 2009
Jessie Kehres
Carol Toussaint
Barbara Voltz

Memorial contributions honoring Bettina Diaz Herrera as of October 16, 2009
Mary Bean
Kathy Johnson
Diane Martin Liebert
Les and Jean M. Nelson
Luella Wells

Welcome New Members!
The League of Women Voters of Dane County welcomes the following new members who have joined at the local level since July 1, 2009.
Mary T. Anglim
Lisa Bu
Martin David
Kris Frater
Peggy A. Glassford

Membership Renewal
Teague Harvey, tbharvey@wisc.edu, 770-0660
Thank you to those who have already renewed their LWVDC membership for 2009–2010! If you find a blue dot on your mailing label, please submit your membership dues as soon as possible. Please use the membership form below or request a form from the office. Only renewals received by November 13 will be included in the 2009–2010 directory mailed to members.

Membership: [July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010]
☐ Member $70
☐ Second Member $60 [same address, shares mailings with first member]
☐ Special Rate Member $35 [of limited income or a student]
☐ Scholarship Member $0
☐ Member Contribution: [Check your selection]
☐ $1,000 – 500 ☐ $499 – 200 ☐ $199 – 100
☐ $99 – 50 ☐ other ______
Total: _____

Yes, I want to be a part of the League of Women Voters of Dane County, Inc.
[Please remit payment by November 13, 2009, so that your name will appear in the 2009-2010 Member Directory.]

Name: ______________________________________
Address: ____________________________________
City: __________________ State: ___ Zip: _________
Phone: _____________ Year Joined LWV: _________
E-Mail: ______________________________________

Please make check payable to:
The League of Women Voters of Dane County, Inc.
2712 Marshall Court, Suite 2, Madison, WI 53705-2282

“A nonpartisan citizen education and advocacy organization” ☀
November 2009 Unit Locations

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

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2009

Middleton, 7:15 PM
Middleton EMS Station, 2020 Parmenter St. Park in the lot east of the fire station; enter through the side door by the ambulance bay. 
Discussion Leader: Kathy Gomes, 824-0639
Unit Leader: Diane de Vos, 836-0070; djdevos@chorus.net

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2009

Tuesday Afternoon, 12:45 PM
Helen Bruner, 230-3642, ervbruner@aol.com
D-91, Oakwood West
6225 Mineral Point Rd. 
Unit Leaders: Jean Freese, 230-3540; giggi@chorus.net. Elizabeth Lewis, 230-3101; bettyfay1916@gmail.com

Tuesday Evening West, 7:30 PM
Barbara Mortensen, 649 Orchard Dr., 233-7563; morten@charter.net
Unit Leader: Cristel Gjerde, 833-7638; crisgjerde@charter.net

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2009

Northeastside, 3:30 PM
Lakeview Public Library
2845 N. Sherman Ave. 
Discussion Leader: Sue Larson, 837-2114;
suelarson@spwl.net
Unit Leaders: Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711; dorothywheeler@charter.net.
Mary Bean, 222-5783; marybean@charter.net

Downtown Dinner, 5:30 PM
Capitol Lakes Retirement Center Restaurant, “The Seasons,” 333 Main St. 
Unit Leaders: Sally Phelps, 251-4834; phelpssa@charter.net. Priscilla Thain, 233-5578; priscillathain@gmail.com

Calendar of Upcoming Events

- November 4 – General Meeting (Increasing Effectiveness in the Criminal Justice System)
- November 10 – December/January Bulletin deadline
- November 10 – LWVDC Board Meeting
- November 13 – Deadline to renew membership and be in 2009–2010 Membership Directory
- January 10 – Deadline for February Bulletin and study materials
- January 12 – LWVDC Board Meeting
- January 16 – Lively Issues Luncheon (Selection of Justices to the Wisconsin Supreme Court)
- February 3 – General Meeting (Health care)
- February 9 – LWVDC Board Meeting
- February 10 – Deadline for March Bulletin and study materials
- March 3 – General Meeting (Early voting)
- March 9 – LWVDC Board Meeting
- March 10 – Deadline for April Bulletin and study materials
- April 7 – General Meeting (TBD)
- April 13 – LWVDC Board Meeting
- May 6 – LWVDC Annual Meeting
- May 11 – LWVDC Board Meeting

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