In Wisconsin, the Government Accountability Board (GAB), established in 2007, has received national recognition as a model of election administration.

The GAB is a non-partisan agency overseen by a board made up of retired state judges. It was established to replace ineffective bi-partisan election and ethics boards. The Governor nominates the Board members, who must be confirmed by two-thirds vote of the State Senate (in order to ensure some bi-partisan involvement).

In most states, elections are overseen by a partisan elected Secretary of State. Obviously, non-partisan administration of election and government ethics bolsters public confidence in fair decisions, and the GAB has demonstrated an ability to be independent and fair.

The GAB has a broad mandate to ensure accountability in government by enforcing ethics and lobbying laws and ensuring the integrity of the election process. To accomplish this mission, the GAB provides a vast array of services, including:

1. providing guidance to clerks on election processes;
2. maintaining the state voter registration system (SVRS);
3. providing new chief inspector certification training; and
4. maintaining MyVoteWI

Especially in light of recent efforts to restrict the right to vote (e.g., voter ID, reduced early voting hours), it is easy to understand how voting integrity might be further restricted should the GAB revert to a partisan model.

Unfortunately, this is exactly what Republican legislative leaders are proposing. This issue will require involvement by constituents to let their legislators know they support the current non-partisan GAB.

(Continued on page 2.)

Wednesday, February 4, 2015

Issues Forum 7:00 pm

Expanding Rights and Equity for All

Linda Balisle (Madison Family Law and Divorce Attorney, Balisle & Roberson S.C.)
Brian Juchems (Director of Programs, Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools (GSAFE))
Lynn Breedlove (retired Executive Director, Disability Rights Wisconsin)

The Capitol Lakes Grand Hall, 333 West Main St., Madison
(Free parking in the ramp across the street.)
We are asking League members who live outside the city of Madison to contact their legislators to oppose efforts to dismantle the GAB or convert it to a partisan model. If you live inside the city of Madison, please discuss this issue with one or two friends or family members who live in Republican areas of the state who might be willing to contact their legislator.

Election administration is a core League issue. Please devote at least a few minutes to safeguarding Wisconsin’s current nonpartisan system.

If you would like background on this issue in order to discuss it more fully, there is information available on the state League website: www.lwwi.org (see News and Announcements, 11/25/2014, and possibly more recent posts as well). If you would like to discuss this with Kathy or Ingrid for a perspective on how the GAB has been effective but not partisan, please contact us via phone or email.

Voter Service Activities

Gail Bliss, Voter Service Chair

The LWVDC was very busy with voter registration work this past fall. Our volunteers did voter registration and provided voting and election information to voters in multiple locations in Dane County.

Our biggest event of the year was a voter registration drive at Epic Corporation. Epic employee Liz Norton worked hard to ensure a successful outcome. Paul Malischke’s suggestion that employees fill out the form on-line before coming to register made it possible to process many more registrants. Our volunteers registered 500 voters: Terrell Brock, Susan Byrns, Grace Fleming, Kathy Fullin, Shirley Haidinger, Peter Johnson, Joanie Kanter, Elizabeth Kohl, Marian Matthews, Aileen Nettleton, Ann Niedermeier, Jo Anna Pautsch, Pat Sammataro, Kathy Shurts, Greg Smith and Lynn Williamson.

The Downtown Farmer’s Market volunteers: Mary Anglim, Gail Bliss, Susan Byrns, Maggie Dugan, Shirley Haidinger, Grace Ingham, Pat Kandziora, Corliss Karasov, Lois Kiggens, Anita Krasno, Paul Malischke, Aileen Nettleton, Mary Ploeser, Marjorie Pondell, Martina Rippon, Ingrid Rothe, Geraldine Torti, Lynn Williamson, and Patty Winspur.

The Hill Farms Farmer’s Market volunteers: Ginny Corwin, Maggie Dugan, Joan Lundin, Kathy Shurts, and Priscilla Thain.

St. Vincent de Paul food pantry volunteers: Mary Anglim, Cathy Berndt, Susan Byrns, Grace Fleming, Susan Fulks, Ellen Karlson, Lois Kiggens, Sara Markham, Marian Matthews, Ann Niedermeier and Kathy Shurts.

Madison College volunteers: Cathy Berndt, Susan Byrns, Grace Fleming, Shirley Haidinger, Marian Matthews, Clare McArdle, Jo Anna Pautsch and Lynn Williamson.

Quaker Housing, Urban League. Fresh Start, University Housing, UW Odyssey Progam volunteers: Mary Bean, Kathy Fulllin, Grace Ingham, Andrea Kaminski, Marian Matthews, Jo Anna Pautsch, Ingrid Rothe, Geraldine Torti, Bonnie Webber, and Lynn Williamson.

Shirley Haidinger deserves special mention for her dedication to seeking additional sites for voter registration, including Brittingham Farmer’s Market, the Constellation Apartments, Hy-Vee, Willy St. Fair, Pierce’s Market (with help from Susan Byrns and Bonnie Webber). She also placed voter information posters in local businesses.

Edgewood High School (Edgewood student, Grace Ingham, contacted us for help with a voter registration drive) and West High School: Susan Byrns.

LWVDC office phone coverage for General Election: Karen Gunderson, Hatheway Hasler, Helen Horn, Diane Martin Liebert, Mary Ploeser, Claire Rider, Deborah Speckmann (coordinator), Elizabeth Wheeler and Marilyn Zuckerman.

Registration Volunteers Needed

Kathy Fullin, Co-president

We are seeking volunteers to register voters at the St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry from Feb. 19 through March 17. Volunteers also answer questions about proof of residence, whether photo ID is required to vote, and the registration process.

Shifts at the St Vincent de Paul food pantry, 2033 Fish Hatchery Road, are Monday, Tuesday, Friday 10:15 a.m. - 1 p.m., Thursday 2:15-5 p.m., and Saturday 9:15-11:30 a.m.

Remember that all Special Registration Deputies (SRD) need to be recertified as of 1/1/2015. Go to: www.cityofmadison.com/election/deputyRegistration to recertify or become a new SRD for the city of Madison. Town of Madison and City of Fitchburg certifications are particularly helpful at the pantry.

To volunteer, sign up on Volunteer Spot at vols.pt/tZ8cwa. Contact Karen Faster at 608-244-2324 or Karen@ohioavenue.com with any questions.

County Budget Positions

At the October 15, 2014 Dane County Board meeting, Connie Threinen presented a statement of the LWVDC’s positions on a number of proposals in the Dane County budget. The full statement is on our website at: www.lwvdanecounty.org/natural-resources. (Scroll down to: Statement on Dane County Budget, 10/14.)
4K Impact Forum

Katie Mulligan

The LWVDC fought for many years in support of efforts to bring pre-kindergarten for four-year-olds to the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD). The 4K program in Madison has been in place for several years now and many of us are interested in how effective it has been.

In November 2014 at the Issues Forum, LWVDC members heard a progress report on successes and problems of the 4-K program.

Carol Carstensen introduced the panel of speakers: Scott Zimmerman, Director, Department of MMSD’s Early and Extended Learning; Macy Buhler, 4-K teacher at Sandburg Elementary School; and Sarah Dill, Director of Meeting House Nursery School.

Ninety-three percent of Wisconsin’s school districts offer 4-K programs, according to Zimmerman. In Madison, three models are used: Model I provides the program in an MMSD building with an MMSD teacher; Model II employs an MMSD teacher in an Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) center and Model III offers the program in an ECCE center with ECCE teachers.

Program staff are allowed a degree of freedom for operation within a set of requirements. Each program must offer 437 hours of instruction and 87.5 hours of outreach to families. Teachers send parents learning tools, such as games, and provide evening open houses. Each teacher must hold a regular education teaching license that includes kindergarten. Centers are, however, free to design their own curriculum and to make hiring decisions, as long as the teacher is licensed.

Dill, who was involved with the 4-K program from the early planning stages, told the audience of the things that were done “right”. There is no cost to parents. Focus is on encouraging children to “get ready” for kindergarten. The overall program model allows for collaboration with community organizations and centers and permits the hiring of non-union teachers.

The impact on the children was less clear from the presentation. Study materials cited research that showed positive results for children in 4-K. MMSD has begun a research effort to show the impact of its program, but there are problems in drawing conclusions from its study.

According to its own report, “None of our findings should be interpreted as the effect of 4-K relative to not attending 4-K, as we cannot be sure whether the students not attending 4-K in MMSD attended any other 4-K programs, including private programs...” In addition, there are demographic differences between the two groups. The persistence of any effects will not be known unless studies continue over an extended time frame.

So, our question about the effectiveness of the 4K program in Madison was not clearly answered. We hope further studies will be undertaken to answer this question.

Election Observers

Karen Gunderson, Bulletin Editor

The League of Women Voters Wisconsin (LWWI) organized Election Observers for the November 4 election. Several LWVDC members participated - Jennifer Eikren, Karen Gunderson, Linda Holthaus, Sandra Saul, and Jan Van Vleck, along with 57 other volunteers from Dane County.

Project coordinator, Carolyn Castore, wrote a guest blog post about the LWWI Election Observer project for the national LWVUS, which was posted on November 13, 2014. View the blog post at: lwv.org/blog/observing-elections-and-protecting-voters-wisconsin.

On January 7, the LWWI released a summary of Election Observers’ reports from the General Election, which can be viewed at: www.lwwi.org/Portals/0/NewsEvents/PDFS/2014%20election%20observer%20report.pdf.

Candidates’ Answers Appreciated

The LWVDC office received this email:

For many years, I have consulted your publication issued just before elections. I have usually followed the issues and the candidates before that time, but you are always additionally helpful. I have never said "thank you" for the public service you provide and for the substantial time and effort many have contributed to the effort. So. Thank you. Many of them. You are important to me and, I think, to many others. Eric Schulenburg

Adopt-A-Highway Fall Clean-Up

LWVDC volunteers clean up a section of Highway 14 just west of Middleton twice each year as part of the Adopt-a-Highway program. Three teams, organized by Sue Hoffenberg (filling in for Maureen Kind), collected trash and recyclables in October.

Many thanks to our members who participated: Gail Bliss, Sally Carpenter, Doug Johnson, Myrna McNatt, Steve Ploesser, Deborah Sellers, Brook Soltvedt and Sue Hoffenberg.
Membership Report
Mary Anglim, Membership Chair

In the last year or so, I’ve been participating in the LWVUS Membership Leadership Development (MLD) project. The MLD project is an effort to grow membership and energize leaders in the League nation-wide by providing “coaches” to do some gentle arm-twisting to force local leaders to confront their goals and figure out ways to achieve them. Its handbook spells out “best practices” for making the League more welcoming to potential members, more visible in the community, more comfortable working with like-minded organizations, and more nurturing to new leadership.

After much study and discussion, MLD’s creators determined that, although the League of Women Voters has excellent name recognition, “individuals outside the organization do not have a clear understanding of the value in becoming a member of LWV because current members are not communicating this in a consistent way that resonates with potential members.” In other words, people join or support the League because they admire its reputation or agree with it on high-profile issues, but usually not because they feel a personal connection to it or see its potential for furthering their own hopes for their communities. This lack of connection may explain why membership recruitment and retention and development of new leaders can be difficult for League chapters.

The MLD Handbook is full of big and small steps that a chapter can take to solve these problems, everything from serving refreshments at meetings to issuing a press release every month to celebrating a Sunshine Week or Making Democracy Work award. It outlines ways to identify and encourage new leaders and to help members tell their own League story. But re-reading page 1 today, I realized that the true key to success is to inspire people’s motives for joining and becoming active in the League—it’s fun, it’s effective, you can have an influence—and then doing our best to ensure that our League enables members to achieve their hopes.

Recently, our MLD coach, Anita Loch (Whitewater), Ingrid Rothe and I identified greater visibility, working with other local organizations, developing new leaders, and reaching out to new members as priorities that we hope to pursue in the next few months.

As Membership Chair, I’ve barely gotten my feet wet but my New Years’ resolution is to talk with all of our new members to make sure that their expectations in joining are being met. Whether you are a new or a long-time member, I would love to hear your responses and suggestions for making the League more comfortable and important to you.

New Members
The following members joined our League from September 24 through December 23, 2014. Welcome!

John Boyer
Jennifer Eikren
Gwendolyn Harman
Karen Ludwig
Shirley Munson
Trevor Stephenson

Helen Casper
Marlisa Hansen
Carol Lobes
Patricia McIntyre
Bonnie Saari
Deborah Thomas

Thank You, Volunteers!
Our League would not be able to do all that it does without many hours from our volunteers. Along with the volunteers noted in other articles in this bulletin, we’d like to thank the following volunteers for their help in our office:

Mary Bean
Sally Carpenter
Merilyn Kupferberg
Joan Lundin
Jan Van Vleck
Joanie Kanter

Cathy Berndt
Reta Harring
Pat Levin
Myrna McNatt
Patty Winspur
for her work on layout of this bulletin.

Madison Premiere of Lavinia
Barbara Mortensen, Secretary

The Madison Theatre Guild is producing a play about Lavinia Goodell, the first woman licensed to practice law in Wisconsin. The play, written by Betty Diamond, describes Lavinia Goodell’s life and the circumstances surrounding her petition for admission to the bar of the Supreme Court of Wisconsin. Her petition was denied in 1876 but she was admitted to practice before the Supreme Court in 1877 after a bill was passed in the Wisconsin Legislature authorizing women to be admitted to the state bar.

In 1880, shortly before she died, Goodell argued and won her first case in the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

The play will be presented at the Bartell Theatre from Thursday, March 19 through Saturday, March 21.

Several of our members are planning to attend the Saturday matinee and go to a coffee shop after the play. The ticket price is $10 for the matinee and $20 for the other performances. All tickets are general admission.

Tickets may be purchased online at the Bartell Theatre website: bartellttheatre.org or by calling the box office (608-661-9696). Further information about the play can be found at the Madison Theatre Guild website: madisontheatreguild.org/Lavinia.
**Contributions**

Between August 25 and December 17, 2014, the following people contributed to our League. Thank you to all of our generous donors.

- Helen Baldwin
- Monique Brockley
- Cheryl Furstace Daniels & Michael Rosenberg
- Joann Elder
- Kathy Fullin
- Harriet Gorski
- Jesse Kehres
- Rob Maberry
- Christine Milligan-Cihaj
- Jennifer Neuls
- Carolyn Pflasterer
- Ingrid Rothe
- Miriam Simmons
- Mona Steele
- Caryl Terrell
- Jean Trine

- Claire Box
- Margaret Petersen Colucci
- Nancy Jenson
- Allen Liegel
- Elizabeth Magnuson
- Ann Nelson
- Marjorie Passman
- Mary Power
- Lois Sater
- Connie Palmer Smalley
- Rose & Trevor Stephenson
- Yvonne Vitense

**Candidates’ Answers:**

- Barbara J. Arnold
- Paul Buckner
- Jo Ann Carr
- Sheila Coyle
- Cynthia Crane
- Dana Erlandsen
- Margaret Harris
- Judith Klehr
- Paul Lindquist
- Deborah Kleinman McNeil
- Frank Nick, Jr.
- Robert Persons
- Donald Propsom
- Mary Ann Roberton
- Paul Rusk
- Shirley Swenson

- Janet Axelson
- Maria Butkus-Bomier
- Martha Christensen
- Barbara Crabb
- Nancy Dott
- Janice Grutzner
- Susan Hollingsworth
- Mary Kunkel
- Diane Mayerfield
- Mary O’Connor
- Joanne Harper Plunkett
- Joanna Richard
- Raymond Roder
- Marilyn Schten
- Roland Richard Wagner

**Fundraising Report**

**Sue Larson, Fundraising Chair**

Happily, the first fund-raising effort of the fall of 2014 to fund the printing and distribution of *Candidates’ Answers* was successful in raising somewhat more than was needed to cover the costs for the November 4 election issue. That leaves a small amount on hand to jump-start fund-raising for future issues.

We thank those people who contributed to the League during the last half of 2014, including those who responded to an online invitation sent out in December. Now, in February, we are observing the 95th birthday of our Dane County Chapter of the League of Women Voters! Our annual February 14 Valentine’s Day fund appeal began in 2004 and last year, broke records for the number of members who responded and for the funds that we raised. Let’s continue the good work in 2015 and see if we can reach new heights in the donations that we receive!

**Know Your Board Member**

**Sue Larson, Fundraising Chair**

As the new fund-raising chairperson, I appreciate the wisdom and guidance of the other board members, especially co-chairs Kathy Fullin and Ingrid Rothe, and for the help of LWVDC office manager, Elaine Sinagra, in taking on this position. I am following a very enthusiastic and productive fund-raising chairperson, Pat Kippert, who set the bar high for those who follow!

My husband and I are both ordained Evangelical Lutheran Church in America pastors. I grew up in the rolling hills of northeast Iowa near the Mississippi River valley, attended Luther College, received a BAE from Wayne State College, and graduated with a M.Div. degree from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, IA.

After college, I taught middle and high school English, and adult GED courses before enrolling in seminary. I served as a co-pastor in a parish in Sun Prairie before receiving a call to direct the ELCA’s state legislative office in Wisconsin, focusing on hunger, health care, the environment, and economic need.

My involvement with advocacy began with opposing institutional racism in Namibia and South Africa through synod, regional, and church wide anti-apartheid networks. I worked at the local and national level of Jubilee 2000, advocating for debt forgiveness for impoverished nations, and for the international ban on landmines. Some of the issues the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin addressed were welfare reform, opposition to the death penalty and predatory lending, sentencing and prison reform, and environmental stewardship.

In 2010, Terry and I traveled with local advocates to the West Bank, and since then have been involved in promoting justice for people of all faiths in Israel/Palestine. I live in Sun Prairie and am a member of SPARC, the Sun Prairie Action Resource Coalition.

**LWVDC Website Updated**

Check out our new and improved LWVDC website at lwvdanecounty.org. Thanks to webmaster, Brook Soltvedt, for the great work on this.
In Memoriam

Margaret Lacy, a longtime member of the Dane County League, died October 14, 2014. Margaret received her Ph.D. from UW-Madison in English literature in 1956. She worked as a teacher and as a translator.

Barbara Fulton, who moved in 2012 to Capitol Lakes to be near her children, died October 6. She had been an active League member in Stamford CT where she lived for many years. Her family suggested that donations in her memory be made to the League.

Unit Reports

Diane Martin Liebert, Unit Coordinator

In October, our units met to discuss the October 8 forum, ‘Agriculture: Today’s Research - Tomorrow’s Tools’. Four units, with a total of 24 members, participated in this discussion.

All of the units appreciated being able to discuss this issue. The general opinions were that there wasn't enough information provided by LWVUS for any definitive decisions to be made and that more guidance would be needed for LWVDC members to translate this issue into local action.

In November, our units met to discuss the November 5 forum, Madison School District’s Four-Year-Old Kindergarten: A Progress Report. Four units reported, with a total of 31 members attending these discussions.

There is agreement that we should update our Education position under the School District category, actively support the continuation of the 4-year-old kindergarten and advocate for the possibility of expanding the program for 3-year-olds.

Other ideas were to actively investigate why the 4-year-olds who aren’t in the program aren’t enrolled, explore an option for establishing a summer program for pre-5K children who haven’t attended the 4K program and investigate the option of State funding of these programs.

Upcoming Events Calendar

- **Feb 4** – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm
  *Expanding Rights and Equity for All*
- **Feb 18** – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- **Mar 4** – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm
  *Human Trafficking*
- **Mar 11** – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- **Apr 1** – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm
- **May 13** – LWVDC Annual Meeting

February 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.

If any of the units have questions or issues, please contact the Unit Coordinator, Diane Martin Liebert, at dwliebert@gmail.com or (608) 698-4143.

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2015**

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, FEBRUARY 17, 2015**

Tuesday Afternoon - 12:45 pm
Oakwood, Oaks H120 (Shirley Inhorn’s apartment)
*Parking on grounds or in P1 Heritage Oaks Parking Ramp*
Marie McCabe, 230-3536, mmccabe4805@gmail.com

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2015**

Northeastside - 3:30 pm
Lakeview Public Library
2845 N. Sherman Ave.
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