April 2016

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    Brook Soltvedt
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Presidents’ Message
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Did Voter Photo ID cause Election Day problems?

The Wisconsin State Journal interviewed a few poll workers and a clerk on February 16, and concluded that there were “few major problems” with the newly implemented Voter Photo ID requirement.

However, we did not meet the standard of the Madison City Clerk’s office’s motto, “Our goal is for each eligible voter to be able to cast a ballot and have that ballot counted.”

One hundred City of Madison and Monona residents came to the polls without qualifying Voter Photo ID. Forty-three came back to the polls with ID and six cast provisional ballots that were counted later after they brought ID to the City Clerk. Twenty-nine left without voting because they did not believe they could provide ID in time, twenty-two cast a provisional ballot but did not provide an ID in time for their ballots to be counted. So, fifty-one of the hundred did not successfully vote.

Who were these eligible citizens who had problems? Here are some examples:

Four residents of The Jefferson Retirement Community came to the polls but did not have a qualifying ID and did not vote. League volunteers worked at many senior communities to provide information about Voter ID prior to the election. Voter Services Chair Gail Bliss went to The Jefferson after the election to help residents understand the new requirements.

At a campus polling place where Co-President Brook Soltvedt was a poll worker, the very first student to appear did not have a qualifying ID. He left with information about where to get a student ID valid for voting but did not come back.

(Continued on page 2.)

Wednesday, April 6, 2016
Issues Forum, 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Water from the Tap: Is It Safe to Drink?

Ron Seely, Reporter and Editor, WI Center for Investigative Journalism
Abigail Cantor, P.E., Chemical Engineer, Process Research Solutions, LLC

The Capitol Lakes Grand Hall, 333 West Main St., Madison
(Free parking in the ramp across the street)
Three students without qualifying ID arrived after 7 p.m. at Brittingham Apts., where Vice President Ingrid Rothe is Chief Inspector.Although offered the opportunity to cast a provisional ballot, they decided not to get a student Voter ID from the UW and then take it to the City Clerk’s Office before 4 p.m. on Friday.

We learned through Facebook of an eighteen-year-old in Milwaukee County who encountered problems at the DMV, due to a complex situation as an international adoptee. After our League contacted DMV, this new voter was able to obtain a Wisconsin ID on her third trip to the DMV – on Election Day!

Please make sure your Wisconsin relatives, friends, and neighbors understand the Voter Photo ID requirements before April 5! Information is available on our website, lwvdanecounty.org/voter-photo-id, and on the GAB website, bringing.wisconsin.gov.

Redistricting: Why it Matters
Katie Mulligan

David Canon, Ph.D., Chair of the Political Science Department at UW-Madison, and Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director of the LWVWI, told attendees at the March Issues Forum about the long history of attempts to make redistricting of voting districts equitable. They brought the efforts up-to-date with news of a recent US Supreme Court case and proposals for Dane County.

The "Big Two" criteria to consider in redistricting are population and race, according to Canon. The aim for the population criterion is to ensure "one person–one vote," if possible. However, other factors come into play when redrawing lines. Compactness, for example, prioritizes the value of ensuring that voters are geographically close together. That value can conflict with the desire to create districts that will produce competitive elections.

Until the 1965 Voting Rights Act, many African-Americans had been deprived of their right to vote. After passage, the Mississippi legislature scrambled to draw lines that would dilute the power of those votes. Other states also struggled with issues related to the impact of redistricting on voting rights of minority populations. Until 2013, nine states with patterns of racial discrimination were required to obtain approval from the Department of Justice for redistricting changes. Proving discrimination has become more difficult because litigants now must prove "intent to discriminate," rather than merely proving a discriminatory effect of redistricting.

Despite several legal challenges, the US Supreme Court has not ruled that redistricting for partisan reasons has violated the Constitution. Justice Anthony Kennedy is the swing vote in efforts to obtain that ruling. Voting rights advocates have been searching for a case that might persuade him to rule that partisan redistricting plans can result in a violation of the 14th Amendment’s guarantee of equal protection. They found such a case in the most recent Wisconsin redistricting plan and hope to pair it with a redistricting plan in Michigan that unfairly favors Democrats.

In December 2015, a federal three-judge panel unanimously decided that the Wisconsin case (Whitford v. Nichol) can proceed to a trial, which is scheduled for May 2016. The WI Department of Justice had argued that the case should be dismissed. Canon argued that the language supporting the panel’s decision provides some cause for optimism about the case’s ultimate resolution.

Kaminski reminded the audience that the League of Women Voters has been working to reform the redistricting process at all levels of government for more than 30 years. Most recently, the LWVWI launched a campaign for redistricting reform in June 2013 and lobbied in favor of legislation that would establish an independent commission or designate an independent agency to be responsible for state and Congressional redistricting plans.

"The League has always worked in a non-partisan way on redistricting," she said. As evidence, she quoted from a letter sent in the 1980s from an irate Democratic legislator urging the League to stop meddling in redistricting reform. At the time, the state legislature was controlled by the Democratic Party which resisted the idea of losing its power to an independent commission.

Kaminski also served on the Dane County Executive Subcommittee on Redistricting, charged with coming up with recommendations for the 2012 redistricting process. Those recommendations, which are posted on the LWWDC website, were adopted by the Dane Co. Executive Committee in January 2016 and will be introduced as legislation to the full Dane County Board.

The commission would consist of nine to eleven citizen members. Lobbyists, employees of Dane County and consultants to the county government would be excluded from membership. Representatives would be solicited from Dane County Towns Association, Dane County Cities and Villages Association, as well as the City of Madison.

Encouraging informed and active participation in government.
Special Meeting – Urban Policy
Edith Sullivan, Program Chair

On February 3, sixteen members met at Capitol Lakes to discuss the LWVWI’s proposed revisions to the Urban Policy Position. The discussion was lively and very interesting as you will see when you visit our website (lwvdanecounty.org) to read the entire set of notes Cathy Berndt very capably took at the meeting.

According to the information received from LWVWI, this was not a time for consensus but for a discussion and submission of local Leagues’ comments on the proposed revision. By the deadline of February 29, we submitted to LWVWI a condensed version of the meeting notes. We noted that overall we agree with the proposed revision and invited the LWVWI to read the entire set of notes should it want that level of detailed comments.

The State Committee will review the comments from all the local Leagues and then present its revisions to the LWVWI Board which will make its recommendations to be considered at the LWVWI Annual Meeting.

Voter Service Report
Gail Bliss, Voter Service Chair

Voting is getting a lot of attention. March was declared “Voter ID Month” by the Madison Common Council. LWVDC and the Voter ID Coalition have been participating in many presentations and registration events, getting the word out about Voter ID.

In a lawsuit filing, the One Wisconsin Institute has charged that the Wisconsin Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) is not managing the ID process well for individuals who do not have all of their required documents. An internal DMV analysis found an error rate of 27%, meaning more than one in four petitions to obtain a voter ID under the extraordinary proof process were mishandled between March and August of 2015. The agency admits numerous instances of petitions being suspended because a person gave up in anger or frustration. Furthermore, DMV expects additional demand in the months leading to the presidential election, but has vacant positions and no budget for additional staff.

By the time you are reading this, it will be just days before the April 5 election. Before then, we do need to review the results of the February 17 Primary. Dane County turnout, at 20.9%, was well above the 10% predicted by the Government Accountability Board (GAB). Statewide turnout also exceeded expectations, with 563,386 votes cast in the Supreme Court race, which is 12.66% of the voting age population. The City of Madison had 38,625 voters, a 22% turnout.

The Madison City Clerk’s office reported the following problems:

- 47 not registered, no proof of address, unable to register
- 28 registered, no photo ID, chose not to vote
- 42 registered, no photo ID, returned with ID to vote
- 28 registered, no photo ID, cast a provisional vote
  (Of these, only 6 brought valid photo ID to the Madison City Clerk’s office by Friday, so that their vote was counted.)
- 256 absentee ballots arrived Wed – Fri.

Note that under the pending bill, SB 295, absentee ballots would need to arrive by Election Day, not just be postmarked by Election Day, which would have meant that 256 absentee ballots would not have been counted, had SB295 been in effect for the February election.

Voter ID and proof of address requirements prevented 97 people from casting ballots. We have no way of knowing how many people did not go to the polls either because they did not have ID or they thought the ID they had would not be adequate.

After the primary, the Madison City Clerk’s office requested LWVDC help on behalf of 5 people who had shown up at the polls without proper ID. Four were from one senior housing complex, which had not been adopted by our Senior Center Liaison project. After two visits to register voters and help with IDs, 12 individuals have been registered, and 6 have been identified as needing either a permanent absentee ballot or an ID.

SB 295 eliminates Special Registration Deputies (SRDs). The bill was changed in the Assembly, so it was sent back to the Senate where it was passed and then signed by Governor Walker. SRDs will not be eliminated until the new on-line voter registration system is up and running. That system is expected to be operational later this year, but not before the April 5 election. We anticipate being allowed to continue registering voters until at least July 20 when registration closes before the August 9 partisan primary.

We are working on the best way to help people register in the face of the new requirements. Stay tuned.

Encouraging informed and active participation in government.
Fundraising Report
Sue Ann Larson, Fundraising Chair

As members of the League of Women Voters, we honor and often work with other non-profit organizations whose missions are to work for the common good. Because a mutual need for all non-profits is to secure funding to continue their work, it is notable to learn that for the last two years, Community Shares of Wisconsin has hosted a March 1st twenty-four-hour fundraiser. This year the fundraiser resulted in 2000 donors making pledges to support seventy member organizations. The Big Share fundraiser provides support many groups need to keep their doors open and to maintain their work.

The size and range of this appeal is intimidating! The League of Women Voters of Dane County does not take part in the March 1st 'Big Share' and there are not 2000 contributors who give to our work. But we can be proud that we get a head start every year with our own successful Valentine’s Day/February 14 birthday fundraiser. This year, as of February 29, thirty-four members responded to the birthday appeal and donated $3,459 to support the work of the League of Women Voters of Dane County! Thank you to each and every one who contributed to the work of the Dane County league!

March 2016 has been declared Dane County Voter ID Month. The ongoing birthday appeal supports the league’s leadership with the Voter ID Coalition and its critical work of addressing the challenge the legislation means for voters in Wisconsin. If you have not yet participated in the birthday fundraiser, please consider doing so, either electronically through the LWVDC website (lwvdanecounty.org) or by returning a gift to the league office in the envelope you received in the mail. It is not too late to take part - your gift of any amount is needed and very much appreciated!

In Memoriam
Helen Horn

Luella Wells, former president of the League of Women Voters of Dane County (1986-1988), died December 31, 2015 at her home in the state of Washington after a brief illness. She was active in LWVDC during the 1980s, especially in voter service and issues dealing with aging. Around 1990, she and her husband moved to the state of Washington and lived on Bainbridge Island, west of Seattle. She was active for many years in the local League there, also.

Contributions
Between February 1 and March 4, the following people contributed to our League. Thank you to all of our generous donors.

Lucy Gibson                             Laura Komai
In Memory of Pam Rewey:
Pat Kippert                              Helen LeRoy
In Honor of Judge Barbara Crabb:
Martha Gaines & Margaret Mooney

Valentine’s Day Fund:
Mary Anglim                               Frances Bicknell
Harriette Burkhalter                      Irene Durbell
Emy Gartzke                               Nancy Jensen
Doug & Kathy Johnson                      Rita Kades
Janet & Michael Kane                      Jesse Kehres
Pat Kippert                               Annrita Lardy
Sue Ann & Terry Larson                    Barbara Lee
Kathryn Leide                             Joan Lundin
Sara Markham                             Marie McCabe
Ann Nelson                                Aileen Nettleton
Barbara Park                              Sally Phelps
Sylvia Poppelbaum                         Joan Schuette
Rose Sime                                  Brook Soltvedt
Margaret Stine                            Edith Sullivan
Priscilla Thain                           Patricia Watson
Phyllis Young

LWVDC Annual Meeting
Edith Sullivan, Program Chair

Our Annual Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 18 at Capitol Lakes. First will be a social gathering at 6:00 pm with some tasty morsels to enjoy while chatting with friends, new and old. The meeting itself will start at 6:30 with our speaker Katherine (Kathy) Cramer, leading off with a talk titled, "The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness and the Rise of Scott Walker." Following that, at 7:00 pm will be the Carrie Chapman Catt award, the recognition of 50 year members and, last but not least, the formal business of the Annual Meeting.

Would you enjoy helping with the social half-hour? Please let me know (etsesq@aol.com or 608-230-5881). Do you have some tasty morsels to bring? Please do... and let me know so we can have an idea of what and how much will be there!
New Members

The following members joined our League from February 1 through March 6. Welcome!

Mary Czynszak-Lyne
Erin Grunze
Kay Jarvis-Sladky
Mary Ann Fix
Jill Hynam
Maureen McCarville

Thank You, Volunteers!

Our League would not be able to do all that it does without many hours from our volunteers. We'd like to thank the following February office volunteers:

Mary Anglim
Mary Conroy
Eileen Hanneman
Joan Lundin
Myrna McNatt
Brook Soltvedt
Gail Bliss
Shirley Haidinger
Jesse Kehres
Marian Mathews
Ingrid Rothe

Nominations Reminder

The Nominating Committee has proposed a full slate of nominees for LWVDC officers and directors. The election will take place at our May annual meeting. Nominations from the floor will be accepted, with the consent of the nominee.

Election Observers Needed

Help the League monitor the elections in 2016! State and local election officials, as well as the media, consider the League's election observer reports a reliable source of information about what is working and what is not on Election Day.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is seeking volunteers to be Election Observers for the November 8th election. They will be monitoring whether new election laws are being uniformly applied statewide. In particular, observers will be watching for signs of voters being disenfranchised by election laws or election administration procedures.

LWVWI will provide online training. You do not have to be a member of the League to participate. If you are interested, you can sign up on the LWVWI website at lwvwi.org/VotingElections.aspx.

LWVWI Annual Meeting

The 2016 State League Annual Meeting will be held at the Landmark Resort in Egg Harbor on June 3-5. Join League members from around the state in beautiful Door County to hear new perspectives and strategize on how best to prepare voters for the big 2016 elections.

Featured Presentations and Sessions:

- *The Economic Case for Improving Water Quality*, by Robert B. Atwell, Chairman and CEO of Nicolet National Bank
- *Engaging the Emerging Electorate*, by Colleen Gruszynski, Wisconsin Voices
- *Converting "Interest in the League" to Active Membership*, facilitated by Anita Loch, LWV Whitewater Area and LWVUS Board of Directors
- *LWVWI Business Meeting and Awards Ceremony*
- *Optional Sunday Morning - Door County Trolley Tour* of three lighthouses on the peninsula

Full information, including hotel reservations, local tourist info and online registration can be found at lwvwi.org/NewsEvents/2016AnnualMeeting.aspx.

Dane County League delegates for the LWVWI annual meeting will be selected at our May 18th annual meeting.

Receive LWVWI News Online

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

If LWVDC has your current email address, you should already be receiving the LWVWI news. But if you aren’t receiving it, it is very easy to subscribe. Just go to the LWVWI website at www.lwvwi.org and fill in your name and email at the bottom of their home page.

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 contact the office (lwvdc@chorus.net or 608-232-9447) regarding your changes.
Bulletin Feedback
If you have suggestions for articles that you would like to see included in the bulletin, any other comments about the bulletin or if you’d like to write for the bulletin, please contact the Bulletin Editor, Karen Gunderson, at jokarjen@gmail.com or 608-249-1366.

Did You Know?
We bold the names of our LWVDC members in our bulletins to highlight and recognize their contributions within our League and throughout our community.

Make a Difference
- Sign up for the Voter Education Ambassador trainings offered by the Madison City Clerk to become a Special Registration Deputy (SRD) and learn about the Voter ID requirements and absentee voting. See “SRD Central” on our website for the dates: lwvdanecounty.org/srd-central. After you become a SRD, contact our office to get on our email list for SRD’s so you are informed of opportunities to do voter outreach and registration.
- Join the Dane County Voter ID Coalition and assist with voter education events. More information at: sites.google.com/site/voteridwisconsin.
- Take some Voter ID brochures from our office or the Madison City Clerk to a meeting or place where they would be available to people who may need the information. Brochures are tailored for seniors, for Hmong or Spanish speakers, or for the general public.
- Post a poster with a picture of the acceptable ID’s; glossy, color posters are available in our office and at the Madison City Clerk’s office.

Missed a Forum?
Find the links to videos and/or podcasts for our past events on our website at lwvdanecounty.org. Select the Forums link under the For Members menu. Links relevant for each event are located on that event’s detail page.

Upcoming Events Calendar
- Apr 6 – Issues Forum, 7:00 pm Water from the Tap: Is It Safe to Drink?
- Apr 20 – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- May 18 – LWVDC Board Meeting, 1:00 pm
- May 18 – LWVDC Annual Meeting & Social, 6:00 pm
- Jun 3-5 – LWVWI Annual Meeting, Door County

April Unit Locations
League members meet monthly in one of four units to discuss the topic of that month’s Issues Forum, using study materials provided by the program planners. The discussion concludes with recommendations for further study or action. Please let the host know that you plan to attend.

MONDAY, April 18, 2016
Monday Evening West/Middleton - 5:30 pm Panera, 3416 University Ave.
Barbara Mortensen, 233-7563, morten21@att.net
Priscilla Thain, 233-5578, priscillathain@gmail.com

TUESDAY, April 19, 2016
Tuesday Afternoon - 12:45 pm Oakwood, D-76 (Jean Freese’s apartment)
Parking on grounds or in P1 Heritage Oaks Parking Ramp
Nancy Simonsen, 230-3014, njsimonsen@gmail.com

WEDNESDAY, April 20, 2016
Northeastside - 3:30 pm Lakeview Public Library
2845 N. Sherman Ave.
Dorothy Wheeler, 244-4711, dorothywheeler@tds.net

Downtown Dinner Group - 5:15 pm Capitol Lakes Retirement Center
Restaurant “The Seasons”
333 West Main St. - Free parking across street
June Weisberger Blanchard, 238-7337, jmweisbe@gmail.com
Katie Mulligan, 338-4598, katielmulligan@yahoo.com