



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

League Lines

MAY/JUNE 2005

414-273-8683
www.milwaukee-voters.org

Calendar

May

- 4 Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Natural Resources Committee
Energy, Clear Skies & more
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd.
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 11 Wednesday, 6p.m.
Board Meeting
Washington Park Library
2121 N. Sherman Blvd.
Contact: Karen Campbell (414) 774-5944
- 18 Wednesday, 9 a.m., 11 a.m. & 2 p.m.
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Contact: Fran Swigart, (414) 962-8984
- 18 Wednesday Evening
LWV Milw. Co. Annual Meeting
5:30 Social, 6pm Dinner, Guests Welcome
KEYNOTER, MILWAUKEE POLICE CHIEF, NANNETTE HEGERTY
Italian Community Center
Contact: Barbara Hussin, (414) 351-0819
(See article and reservation form inside)
- 19 Thursday, 9 a.m. 11 a.m.
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Contact: Fran Swigart, (414) 962-8984
- 20 Friday
EARLY REGISTRATION DEADLINE
LWV WI Convention, Janesville
Contact: Louise Petering, (414) 351-3617
(See Article p. 2)
- 23 Monday, 9:15 a.m.
Internat'n'l Relations Committee
FREEDOM & JUSTICE IN THE MIDDLE EAST
4215 N. 100TH Street, # 220, Milwaukee
Contact: Anne Morrisey, (414) 461-1929
- 27 Friday
FINAL REGISTRATION DEADLINE
LWV WI Convention, Janesville
Contact: Louise Petering, (414) 351-3617
(See Article p. 2)

June

- 1 Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Natural Resources Committee
Energy, Annex 2001 & more
3002 E. Kenwood Blvd.
Contact: Jennifer Runquist (414) 332-5067
- 3 & 4 Friday, 3 p.m. & Saturday, 3 p.m.
LWVWI Convention, Janesville
Contact: Louise Petering, (414) 351-3617
(See Article p. 2)
- 8 Wednesday, 6 p.m.
Board Meeting & Bulletin Deadline
Washington Park Library
2121 N. Sherman Blvd.
Contact: Karen Campbell (414) 774-5944
- 16 Thursday, 9 a.m., 11a.m. & 2 p.m.
New Voter/New Citizen Naturalization
Federal Courthouse, 517 E. Wisconsin Ave.
Contact: Fran Swigart, (414) 962-8984
- 20 Monday, 9:15 am
Internat'n'l Relations Committee
Decision Time at the UN
623 N. 93rd St., Milwaukee
Contact: Doris Zwickey, (414) 258-2589

LWV MILW. CO. ANNUAL MEETING

May 18, 2005

Wednesday Evening

5:30 Social, 6 p.m. Dinner

Italian Community Center

KEYNOTE:

**MILWAUKEE POLICE CHIEF
NAN HEGERTY**

Register TODAY

See registration form on page 5

Bring enclosed

**Annual Meeting Budget & Report
to the annual meeting.**

WE'RE 85!!

The LWV is in its 85th year of successfully
educating voters and ensuring free elections!



ANNUAL MEETING

Barbara Hussin

The Italian Community Center will be the site of our Annual Meeting on Wednesday, May 18. The social hour will begin at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6:00 p.m. Following dinner, the featured speaker is Milwaukee Police Chief Nannette Hegerty. She will discuss community policing policies, how they relate to problems in Milwaukee (including the mentally ill) and how this influences police training. The business meeting which follows will include election of officers.

The invitations have been mailed to all members but if you have not received yours please contact Barbara Hussin (351-0819). We encourage members to bring spouses and other guests. Please make reservations as early as possible.

LWV WISCONSIN CONVENTION

JUNE 3-4, 2006 JANESVILLE

Louise Petering

Leaguers from around the State – from Pierce/St. Croix to Milwaukee and Ashland/Bayfield to Dane County – will convene in June to vote on a proposed By-Law change and the State Education Study Recommended Positions. In addition, Convention will set the budget for the next biennium, adopt program, and address other items of business. Although this may strike you as dull, be assured, Leaguers at Convention have different points of view and express them. I am always energized at seeing democracy in action at Convention. So, please join me and other Board members as delegates to State Convention. Hours of Convention are from 3 p.m. Friday, June 3rd to 3 p.m. Saturday, June 4th. A post convention tour of the 15-acre Rotary Gardens featuring gardens of the world is available after Convention.

Based on membership count, our Milwaukee County League is entitled to 11 delegates and 11 alternates. The early registration deadline is postmark May 20th. (Post-Convention Garden tour registrations are due May 15th.) League Registrations postmarked after May 20th will require a \$10 late fee. Delegates from our League will meet prior to Convention to review the agenda and become informed about items to be debated. Our budget provides \$550 for Convention, however some personal expenses are incurred for those attending. Please phone me (414-351-3617) if you would like to be a delegate.

LWV SHINES, AND RESTRUCTURES

Louise Petering, Team Leader

National receives the Freedom Award - The League of Women Voters United States was notified at the end of March that it was awarded the 2005 Freedom Award given
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yearly by the Nat'l Assn. of Secretaries of State. The award recognized League for 85 years of commitment to free election processes.

The LWVWI Ed Fund has received a \$30,000 grant designated for "staff development and restructuring" from the Bremer Foundation. Andrea Kaminski our new Executive Director was instrumental in applying for the grant and deserves our heartfelt thanks for her work. The first \$15,000 has been received already. The remaining \$15,000 will be coming after we have raised a similar amount from other sources. Please watch your mail for a letter from the LWVWI asking for your support and then contribute – every dollar you send will be matched by the Bremer Foundation. Thank you!

LWVWI reconfigures its administrative functions - Effective March 1, 2005, administrative functions, including office and personnel management and Board support, were transferred to the LWVWI Education Fund. The LWVWI will continue as the organization with responsibility for membership, current LWVWI educational activities, and position support. The reconfiguration was one among many studied by the Budget Committee and State Board. It is similar to one adopted by the LWV of Ohio more than a year ago with excellent results.

MEMBERSHIP

Gloria Weiskotte, Co-Chair

The League acknowledges the loss of a friend and advocate, George Francis Squillacote, on November 3, 2004. George supported the activities of the LWVWC for many years. Throughout his private and professional life he fought for the individual, ever mindful of his mother's teaching, "even one person can make a difference." George made a professional difference as regional director at the National Labor Relations Board from 1962-1984.

ELECTION NIGHT REPORTING

Tom Simmons, Coordinator

Thanks to these reporters for reporting election returns for the April 5th Spring Election: Marlo Hern-Allen, Susan Slocum, Janet Murphy, Lois Malawski, Sr. Paula Marie Jarosz, David Petering, Todd Michaels, Ruth Snedic, Bette Arey, Marilyn Boeldt, John Konings, Merna McEuen, Barbara Kohlbeck, Phyllis Wax, Andy Simmons, Barbara Hanson, Sr. Mary Ellen Paulson, Mary Kae Nelson, Niedra North, Julie Helmrich and Tom Simmons. As coordinator of ENR, I especially appreciate the long term commitment many of you have made to accurately report returns. Both our League and the State League benefit financially from your efforts. Thank YOU!

I will be stepping down as Election Night Reporting Coordinator. Call me at (414) 403-1399 or Louise Petering at (414) 351-3617 if you are interested in helping to coordinate this project. There are no elections scheduled for the remainder of 2005. Elections are scheduled for February, April, September and November in 2006, so you can see this job is sporadic - and manageable!

NEW VOTER/NEW CITIZEN

Fran Swigart, Chair

In March, I met with the staff at the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), a department of Homeland Security about a directive from USCIS Associate Director of Operations William R. Yates prohibiting voter registration activity in the courtroom prior to the naturalization ceremony. The local staff of the USCIS had implemented the directive starting last August. It had a negative impact on our ability to provide the full amount of information and service to the new citizens. We adapted our program and did the best we could. We sent a letter to the local office to try to resolve our concerns with no response. In March, we sent a second letter to Senator Kohl, Senator Feingold, Congresswoman Moore and Chief Judge Randa explaining our concerns and disappointment that USCIS was unresponsive. Congresswoman Gwen Moore's office facilitated a meeting based on her commitment to voting rights. We explained that we provide voting process information in the courtroom but can register voters in the corridor. A satisfactory resolution was reached for the USCIS and the League!

VOTER ID BILL TESTIMONY

Ruth Snedic, Action

I was asked to give testimony on March 22, 2005 before the Senate Labor and Election Process Reform Committee (SLEPRC) regarding AB63/SB42 that requires certain identification in order to vote at a polling place or obtain an absentee ballot.

When the hearing began the SLEPR Committee was almost as large as the crowd, but as the day progressed people trickled in and by the time I gave testimony at 2:30pm the room was quite full. We first heard from all of the committee members and other elected officials.

League is opposed to this legislation because obtaining the photo ID creates a hardship for many and we feel those promoting the voter ID are putting the cart before the horse. Legislators should wait until the investigations are finished before determining a solution for election problems. Rather than identification of voters, we believe election errors deal mostly with election processes, - not enough trained poll workers, not enough help in the departments that handle the

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work, etc. I stayed and listened to other testimony and was glad I did as there were several excellent speakers. One was regional counsel of MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund) who suggested to the Committee that it was going beyond the HAVA Act and mentioned that even the Congressmen "in their wisdom" had decided that ID's would create too many problems and make it harder for people to vote. The MALDEF counsel stated congressmen suggested identification much like we now use in our election process. She felt Wisconsin would be open to lawsuits because its proposal is more restrictive than the federal act. Another speaker was a lawyer who represented John Kerry and observed at the polls. He accused some of those observers of being overly aggressive and overstepping their bounds by interrogating voters and checking their ID's to the extent that poll workers had to tell them to step back and let the poll workers do their jobs. Distressingly, one of those aggressive observers was my State Senator, Tom Reynolds, chair of the Committee holding hearings! It made for an interesting afternoon. I was questioned about my testimony that suggested the Committee wait until the investigations were finished before making any decisions. Apparently, that did not seem like the prudent course of action to most of the Committee members.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Jennifer Runquist, NR Chair

In response to concerns about the safety of beaches related to pathogens, the United States Congress passed the Beaches Environmental Assessment and Coastal Health Act as an amendment to the Clean Water Act in October 2001. This legislation provided funding and guidance to allow public health agencies to develop comprehensive monitoring and public notification programs for coastal beaches, including the Great Lakes Coastal water of Lake Michigan. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources was awarded funding from EPA under the authority of the Beach Act for developing a beach monitoring and public notification program.

Fecal contamination of our recreational waters originates from many sources including shoreline development, wastewater collection and treatment facilities, septic tanks, urban runoff, disposal of human wastes from boats, bathers, animal feeding operations and natural animal sources such as wildlife.

Beach closings have become common at a number of Milwaukee beaches such as South Shore, Klode, Bradford, McKinley and Fox Point. Risk factors for beaches include: the average bather/swimmer count, other recreational uses such as boating, proximity to known point and non-point sources such as farm runoff, wastewater outfalls, stormwa-

ter runoff and storm sewers, in order to identify beaches that might be at risk for contamination.

It is difficult to directly detect the many different pathogens that may be present in surface water, but the presence of fecal bacteria has long been used as an indicator of the possible presence of disease-causing organisms. Beaches should be closed when the E.coli count in beach water exceeds 1000 cfu/100 mL of water. The EPA standard is 235.

Dr. Sandra McLellan from the UWM Great Lakes Water Institute presented E. coli data at the 2nd Annual Watershed Planning Conference targeting the Greater Milwaukee Watersheds on February 23, 2005 . The conference was sponsored by MMSD and SWRPC. Her studies focused on Bradford Beach and the South Shore beaches. On Bradford beach before a rain event the E. coli count is 100 cfu/ 100 ml or lower. After a rain event the beach may have bacteria counts as high as 3000 and the water next to the beach may be as high as 8000cfu/100 ml. This appears to be due to the 7 outfalls that collect stormwater from Lake Park and surrounding streets. At this point the bacteria appear to be mainly from wildlife or pets. (One previous study found that about 15% of the fecal coliform found in stormwater runoff came from dogs.) South Shore park also shows high bacterial counts after rain events, which perhaps are coming from a parking lot whose stormwater washes over the beach. The water near the beach, which also becomes contaminated, does not mix quickly with the lake water. Therefore, the bacterial count may take some time to return to acceptable levels. In essence contamination of these beaches is due to local structures, which perhaps should be modified or rearranged.

During rain events the Milwaukee River and the harbor show fairly high bacterial counts also. Fortunately mostly the bacterial material remains in the harbor. The bacterial counts rapidly fall off in Lake Michigan due to dilution and low temperatures. Our sewerage overflows also follow this pattern of remaining in the area and falling off rapidly due to dilution and cold temperatures. The wind is the main force which drives the water out of the harbor and there is a 90% loss of the bacteria in 6 hours.

In conclusion, we have problems with bacterial contamination on some of our beaches during rain events regardless of whether or not there are overflows from the sewerage treatment plant. So in addition to preventing CSOs (combined sewer overflows) and SSOs (separated sewer overflows), we need to direct storm water away from beaches and rivers if we want to protect them from contamination. Regulations for storm water runoff took effect in Wisconsin in 2002, strengthening standards for construction site runoff, fertilizer applications, street sweeping, road construction and agricultural runoff. Bacteria-laden runoff is more likely to come from residential areas, however, than from commercial

areas. From the point of view of the commission that oversees the sewerage district, Milwaukee County has the responsibility for the contamination found at Milwaukee County beaches because the contamination is present when there are no CSOs and SSOs, and it is due to wildlife and pets.

Is it dangerous to humans to have beaches contaminated by wildlife and dog pathogens? This is a question to be answered. Further it may be difficult to pick up contamination due to human pathogens during CSOs and SSOs if there is already a high E. Coli contamination due to animals, although it is possible to differentiate the different groups using antibiotic resistance. Hopefully, the careful analysis of beach contamination will allow communities to take useful actions to reduce the beach-closing problem on Lake Michigan.

DEMOCRACY AT RISK IN WISCONSIN

League of Women Voters of Wisconsin

Statement for Press Conference, March 30, 2005
Senate Parlor, State Capitol

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is dismayed by the lack of time allowed for the public even to find out about the proposed, so-called "Jobs Creation Act II", let alone to read and react to this bill.

To introduce a bill and bring it to vote without adequate public notice and hearing is an affront to the democratic process. We have stated our objection to this abuse a number of times to previous legislatures – and already a number of times to this one.

Hearings are not a ritual; they are an essential part of representative government. When legislators snub their noses at the process, the public can only conclude that they are legislating behind the scenes and that they do not wish to hear the concerns and the will of the people. In this case, the sponsors clearly don't wish to hear people's concerns about the air they breathe should this legislation go through.

We need to balance economic interests with the need to sustain our environment. But how can legislators know if the public supports the lowering of environmental standards in order to create new jobs? How can they know if the public is willing to accept legislation that could have serious effects on their health and that of future generations? It appears they don't want to know.

This blatant disregard for the democratic process is a violation of all that Wisconsin has stood for in the past. Public input is essential to good government. Every bill must receive adequate time for the interested public to read it, review it, and react to it. That is the only way legislators can know how to represent us.



The League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County
Invites You to Attend Its

Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 18, 2005

5:30 p.m. Social Hour

6:00 p.m. Dinner followed by Keynote Speaker

Police Chief Nannette Hegerty

City of Milwaukee

Italian Community Center
631 East Chicago Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

R.S.V.P. by May 11, 2005

Please complete and mail with payment of \$30.00 (\$20.00 for students) to:

Ann Morrissey

4215 N. 100th Street – Apt. 220

Milwaukee, WI 53222

Name _____ Phone _____

(included with the selections below are: Salad, Entrée, Starch, Fresh Vegetable, Bread & Butter, Dessert and Beverage)

_____ Chicken Cacciatore (Breast of chicken, topped with a vegetable tomato wine sauce)

_____ Broiled Whitefish (Served with mushrooms, seasoned with lemon & white wine, topped with asiago cheese)

_____ I am unable to attend the Annual Meeting. Enclosed is a check for _____ to support the work of the League.

Please make your checks out to the League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County

E-mail: info@milwaukeevoters.org Web: www.milwaukee-voters.org 414-273-VOTE (8683)
P.O. Box 100785, Milwaukee, WI 53210

Join the League Today!

Become a member of the League of Women Voters and help *Make Democracy Work!*

Dues [Circle One]: \$60 Individual \$75 Household (2 or more individuals) \$25 Student \$25 Limited Income
\$100 Sustaining (supports \$25 memberships) \$160 Centennial (supports action & activities)

Name _____ Home Phone (____) _____

Address _____ Work Phone (____) _____

City _____ WI Zip _____ e-mail _____

Involvement [Check One]: Active ___ or Supporting ___ Interests _____

Please Note: Please place a check () by your preferred means of contact and mail this form with your check to the **League of Women Voters of Milwaukee County, P.O. Box 100785, Milwaukee, WI 53210**. Thank You. (Non-tax deductible contributions may be made to the LWV Milwaukee County. For a tax deductible gift to the LWV Milwaukee County, write a separate check, minimum \$50, payable to the LWV Education Fund. Mail contributions to the membership dues address above.)



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF MILWAUKEE COUNTY

P.O. Box 100785
Milwaukee, WI 53210
414-273-8683
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ANNUAL MEETING
May 18

Register TODAY

Keynote: Police Chief Nannette Hegerty

See registration form on page 5