

La Crosse Wisconsin Voter

No. 100 League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area Newsletter Jan./Feb. 2009



THE PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

Nancy Hill, President, LWV of the La Crosse Area

New Year's Resolutions?

Why not **resolve** to be more active in League. We really need more people who will come to meetings. It may be that calling a friend and coming with a current or prospective member would make the meetings more fun for you. If transportation is an issue, call one of the Board members and we'll try to figure something out.

Since the fall elections lots of changes could be happening. There might be ways to impact what you are most interested in. I send e-mails to you, often with opportunities to act on democracy or environment or justice or **WHAT-EVER**. If you are not receiving emails, I hope you will alert me at nfhill@centurytel.net). I get lots of correspondence and feel you should profit from it and make your own decisions. Your membership should be as active and broad-based as you feel comfortable with. **Resolve to be a squeaky wheel** and write those action letters.

There will be a new round of elections for La Crosse mayor, and other elections. **Resolve to help with Voter Service**. Contact Catherine Kolkmeier. We need **you**.

Resolve to understand League a bit more. We are a truly amazing organization. We are not beholden to anyone. We have an impact on policy. How? We study issues and take stands. It is confusing or surprising to members who are relatively new, or to those of us who were more passive members during our too busy years of work or child-rearing, that League works on at least three levels: La Crosse Area, State, and National. I am finally understanding that each level is essential to this organization. "Grass Roots" is a theme that is repeated – and it means the local and state input. We are then asked to donate to national projects, and much of our dues is sent to national. Lots of good comes from the research and lobbying they can do that we cannot.

Resolve to support the local league financially, too. We are going to have to modestly increase our dues next year. We could certainly use an extra donation in honor of your birthday or special event.

Resolve to volunteer as we try to help with the Dental fair in June. We need you.

Best of all, let us **resolve to solve** some of the problems that seem to be weighing on us and face positively the challenges of 2009.

Joint LWV and AAUW Program

Pay Equity: Update and Call to Action

Saturday, January 10
La Crosse Country Club, Onalaska

Registration: 9:30 a.m.
Brunch: 10:00 a.m.
Program: 10:30 a.m.

Dr. Deb Hoskins, a UW-L Associate Professor in the Department of Women's Gender, and Sexuality Studies will speak on the topic of pay equity. She will provide an update on the current legislative issues, and she will also address possible ways both organizations could collaborate with the Women's Student Association to promote awareness in our community. Equal Pay Day this year is April 28. Reservations are required for the brunch. Please make reservations with Ellen Rosborough, 608-788-4338, Ellen.rosborough@mchsi.com. The cost of the brunch is \$11.00.

Enclosed with this bulletin is a League of Women Voters brochure for your convenience. Utilize it as you see fit. Give it to a prospective new member. A schedule of upcoming meetings appears on the next page.

Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins

January – June 2009 Events Schedule

(Please check our website for details of each event and any updates)

Saturday, Jan. 10, 2009
Joint Program with AAUW
La Crosse Country Club
Onalaska, WI

Saturday, Feb. 21, 2009
10:00 am to Noon
Election Administration State Study
La Crosse Public Library, Main Branch

Monday, March 9, 2009
6:00 to 7:30 pm
Forum on Current Issues in Education
La Crosse Public Library, North Branch

Saturday, March 28, 2009
Legislative Breakfast 9-11:00 am
Days Inn Hotel & Conference Center
101 Sky Harbour Dr., La Crosse, WI

Saturday, April 11, 2009 (date may change)
Forum on Immigration
La Crosse Public Library, Main Branch

Monday, May 11, 2009
Dental Health: Update on Issues
Health Science Center
13th & Badger St., Rm. 2012
La Crosse, WI

Saturday, May 30, 2009
Annual Meeting (state)
Manitowoc, WI

Monday, June 8, 2009
Annual Meeting LWV-La Crosse Area
5:30-8:00 pm (social & meeting)
Ciiatti's Restaurant
Onalaska, WI

Friday-Saturday, June 26-27
Dental Fair
La Crosse Center
La Crosse, WI

La Crosse Area Dental Care Advocacy Coalition

The La Crosse Area Dental Care Advocacy Coalition, a coalition of community organizations, dentists, health professionals, legislators and interested individuals, continues to work to improve access to dental care for Medicaid recipients and uninsured individuals and families.

The big news for the coalition is that the Wisconsin Dental Association is sponsoring a Missions of Mercy (MOM) at the La Crosse Center June 26-27, 2009. The MOM will offer free dental services to those unable to afford them. There will be 80 portable dental units with dentists throughout Wisconsin volunteering their services. This is the first MOM to be held in Wisconsin. Supporting this program will be the La Crosse Dental Advocacy Coalition, La Crosse District Dental Society, La Crosse County Health Department, Marquette University School of Dentistry, Viterbo School of Nursing, Delta Dental of Wisconsin, Henry Schein Dental and America's Dentists Care Foundation. It is expected that \$600,000 in free care will be delivered to 1,200 patients—both children and adults. About \$80,000 of the estimated \$133,000 cost of the event has been raised to date.

Many volunteers will be needed to help with this clinic. There will be a need for volunteers to help with registration, escort patients, translate, conduct exit interviews, help with food service, act as runners, provide entertainment and help with crowd control. Volunteers are also needed to help set up equipment Thursday, June 25, and help is needed to clean up and take down equipment Sunday, June 28. To learn more about this MOM, go to www.wda.org and click on Missions of Mercy on the left side of the screen. Dental surgeon Dr. Tim Durtsche and his wife Sue are serving as co-chairs of this event. To volunteer, please contact Betty Kruck, krux@mwt.net, or you can volunteer individually on the WDA website. Please reserve these dates if you are interested in helping.

Presentations Focus on Local Healthcare Issues

In response to the National League's renewed effort to look at health care, the local League sponsored a discussion at La Crosse's Health Science Center on November 10 to learn about local initiatives. Doug Mormann, Director of the La Crosse County Health Department, presented a summary of health-related findings from the third community-wide COMPASS Survey.

The COMPASS study brought together leaders and citizens from five counties in Wisconsin and Minnesota to collect perspectives and data on various community needs and to develop a vision that can be acted upon at a community level. The top health-related issues that emerged from the area were affordable health care, access to dental care, and access to mental health care. The full report, which provides extensive data on local health care issues and survey findings, is available for download at www.greatriversunitedway.org.

Catherine Kolkmeier, Director of the La Crosse Medical Health Science Consortium, shared their recently developed online tool, the Health Scorecard, which draws together health indicators and risk factor data from 20 area counties of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. She demonstrated how the site can be used to track trends over time, compare data between counties, states, and national levels, and how local data stacks up to state and national health benchmarks, including Healthy People 2010. The site is available at www.lmhscorecard.com and is a free tool. [Note: this site will soon be moving to www.communityscorecard.com.]

LEAGUE CONTACT INFORMATION

League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area:
<http://www.lwvlacrosse.org/>

La Crosse Area League Phone: 791-1191

League of Women Voters of Wisconsin:
<http://www.lwvwi.org/>

Legislative information from the
Library of Congress:

THOMAS
<http://thomas.loc.gov>

Send correspondence regarding *La Crosse Wisconsin Voter* to the Editor, Anita Evans, at anitalarry@centurytel.net

Helping with Registration and the Election

By Sandy Sechrest

Like a number of other League members, I helped out with voter registration. We got training to be temporary deputy registrars at La Crosse Public Library. Temporary deputy registrars can register any eligible person in the state of Wisconsin. "Temporary" means our appointment expires at the end of the year. About forty people received registrar training; this included around ten League members and a large number of Obama volunteers.

I helped register voters two times. The first time several of us were at the Oktoberfest grounds. We discovered people at Oktoberfest are much more interested in festing than registering to vote. Our second registration drive at Wal-Mart was more successful. We registered a number of prospective voters with a wide range of ages, ethnicities, and hometowns. We also encountered a number of Minnesotans whom we were not qualified to register.

On Election Day many of our League members volunteered to help out at the polls. I volunteered to welcome and direct voters to the voting area or the registration desk at La Crosse Public Library. I did this as a regular library volunteer rather than a League volunteer. It was great seeing so many people wanting to vote.

Calendar for Jan. - Feb., 2009
League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area

*Pay Equity: Update and Call to Action (with AAUW) Sat., Jan. 10 at 10 a.m.
La Crosse Country Club, Onalaska (see inside for details)*

CWV Board Meeting Wed., Jan. 21. from Noon - 1:00 p.m.

Spring Primary Election VOTE! Tues., Feb. 17

CWV Board Meeting Wed., Feb. 18. from Noon - 1:00 p.m.

*Election Administration State Study Sat., Feb. 21 from 10:00 a.m. to Noon
La Crosse Public Library Main Branch Auditorium. .*

Note: Contact LWV Board President or refer to the agenda for Board meeting locations. Board meetings dates and time are subject to change. For more program information, check the LWV calendar: <http://lwvlacrosse.org/calendar.html>.



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