

La Crosse Wisconsin Voter

No. 84 League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area Newsletter Nov./Dec. 2005

THE PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

A Tribute

Since 1981 Dea Oleson has organized and worked League's dessert concession for Oktoberfest Heritage Night. Dea's famous cream puffs quickly became a favorite with the crowds who would buy theirs early because the rumors they heard were true. This popular dessert would sell out long before closing. It is well known to those of us who have been long time members that Dea and her husband Ron have raised thousands of dollars for our local League.

What most of us do not realize is that for Dea and Ron Heritage Night started several months in advance. Dea, in the early years before the rules changed about having to use a commercial kitchen, would bake and freeze 750 to 800 cream puffs in the summer before the event.

Then came Heritage week. Stored supplies must be inventoried and trips taken to several stores to replenish needed items. Volunteers had to be organized to help with the booth well in advance. And, of course, all the to do lists of details to attend to:

arrange for the ice cream machine, get change from the bank, fill out forms for the La Crosse Center and make sure everything is in order for the inspectors to name a few. So many details!

Dea & Ron Oleson's Cream Puffs for Oktoberfest Heritage Night have yielded thousands of dollars for League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area.

As the rest of us were preparing to show up for our shifts for Heritage night, Ron and Dea had already started their 14-hour Heritage "Day." The ice cream machine was to be picked up at WWTC at 8:00a.m. They loaded both their truck and car with supplies. Crock pots, coffee urns, banners, cases of fudge, bags of ice cream milk...you name it, they had it with them!! Everything was brought to the Convention Center, unloaded and set up. Then began the slicing of the cream puffs, making of the coffee, melting of the fudge and freezing of the ice cream. Ready...Set... Show Time!!

Show time is over and the last of the cream puffs has been sold. As the rest of us are headed home, Dea and Ron are delivering the ice cream machine back to WWTC and then heading home themselves.... with a truck and a car full of supplies, crock pots, coffee urns etc. to still unload and put back in storage. Their Heritage Night has been a very long day!

A very special "Thank You" to Dea and Ron Oleson for all your very hard and dedicated work on behalf of League! We can never express how grateful we are to have two such wonderful people associated with us.

Roxanne Reynolds

President, League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area

Access to Dental Care

Thursday, December 8, 2005

Doc Powell's

Buffet Lunch 11:30

Program Noon

The availability of dental care for uninsured, low-income individuals was a topic considered for a 2-year state study at the LWV State Convention in Janesville last June. Although this was narrowly defeated, the state board has urged local Leagues to investigate the problem in their communities. Leagues may support legislation to increase dental access under a Health Care position already adopted.

In La Crosse, an advocacy group recently met to look at the problems of access to dental care in our area. Included were three legislators, administrators from both hospitals, local dentists, La Crosse County Health Department, La Crosse Human Services, St. Clair Health Mission, and Scenic Bluff Community Health Center. Karen Knox from the La Crosse County Health Department, and possibly others from the advocacy group, will share information on the problems that exist and solutions that are being considered.

Please make your reservations to Betty Kruck krux@mwt.net or 689-2222 (a long distance call), or call Roxanne Reynolds at 526-5871.

OKTOBERFEST HERITAGE NIGHT

A great time was had by all our volunteers again this year at League's Cream Puff concession for Heritage Night. It is always so much fun to be a part of this La Crosse tradition, greeting old friends, making new ones and having our organization very visible in the community. We even received a request for membership information this year!

Thank You to those members who took time out of their busy schedules to help: Sue Mercer, Ellen Frantz, Nancy Hill, Sandy Sechrest, Roxanne Reynolds, Betty Kruck, Jane Klekamp, Sheila Garrity, Maureen Kinney, Dee Peacock and Bev Mach. A special thanks also to non-members who pitched in: George Kruck, Carla Voyles, Karen Hoel, Jack Lucas and Ron Oleson.

This year was not as lucrative as past years due to heavy competition in desserts. We still did very well with a profit of \$588.20. That is more than most organizations have made in profits in an average year!

Nancy Hill has volunteered to research the possibility of a new plan for next year. Again, thank you to everyone for making this a successful, fun event!

League Invited to Speak at Viterbo

Thank you to Ellen Frantz for representing us so well in a speech to the students at Viterbo University last month. Ellen spoke about the history of League, our positions and activities in an hour long class of senior social work students. We know she did a great job as we received a request for student membership information shortly after her appearance!

Thanks again, Ellen!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

JEAN BENTLY Jean holds a B.S. in Recreation, a Masters Degree in Training and Development and has completed a teacher licensure program at Viterbo. She recently moved to Onalaska from Kendall, Wisconsin where she was a Village Trustee, the Chief Election Inspector, a member of the planning Commission and volunteered for the Public Library and American Legion Auxiliary. Jean also performs community service work with the elderly and shut-ins. She is currently looking for a position in the area, and meanwhile continues to substitute teach for the Royall School District in Elroy, Wisconsin.

GRETCHEN BENJAMIN Gretchen has been in the field of natural resource management since 1981. She began in the National Park system and then moved to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in 1984. During her time in the Wisconsin DNR she has always worked on the Mississippi River and was recently promoted to the Supervisor of the Mississippi River Team. Gretchen is also a founding member of the Mississippi Valley Conservancy. She remains active with the Communication Committee for the land trust. She, her husband Ron and their son Dan live in the City of La Crosse. Gretchen likes to be engaged in politics, enjoys physical fitness and spends hours quilting.

DIANE DINGMAN Diane was a special education teacher and regular education teacher for 30 years. She taught in Madison, West Salem and for 18 years in La Crosse. She is on the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra's Board of Directors, the United Fund for the Arts and Humanities Board and was formerly on the Children's Museum Board of Directors.

MIRIAM WUENSCH Miriam has more than 25 years experience publishing magazines for business professionals. Most recently she has spent 4 years with the American Library Association where she was responsible for determining editorial content and design, sales and marketing approach, production and print process, and delivery methods for journals and newsletters about library information technology applications. Miriam has lived and worked in the Chicago area since graduating from UW-La Crosse in 1978. She earned a Master's degree in Marketing Communications from Roosevelt University, Chicago. She has returned to the La Crosse area to be helpful to her parents and enjoy their company. While she is doggedly seeking meaningful employment here, she does volunteer work, entertains her dog, Nero, and enjoys nature and the arts.

Clean Sweep

by Jean Marck

It was a gorgeous, sunny, crisp fall day as we gathered at the Inn on the Park in Madison to get our instructions for the "Clean Sweep" rally at the Capitol. We all received our name tags saying, "Hello. My name is NOBODY." Mike McCabe of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign and Ed Garvey, editor of the FightingBob.com, a political web site, gave inspiring speeches to get the group fired up. So with our brooms in hand we gathered on the State Street steps of the Capitol to hear more speeches.

We presented petitions to our legislators with the following wording: *Wisconsin government is growing increasingly corrupt on your watch. No more delays. Clean up the Capitol! It is time for a special session on reform to enact:*

1) Assembly Bill 626 - bipartisan campaign finance reform modeled after the successful clean money systems in Arizona and Maine

2) Senate Bill 1- aggressive ethics enforcement by replacing the dysfunctional state Elections Board and Ethics Board with an independent Government Accountability Board

3) Assembly Joint Resolutions 22 and 41 - competitive elections through reform of legislative redistricting to end partisan gerrymandering

We also had a petition to present to the State Elections Board.

DUMP ACCENTURE!

Accenture clearly has breached its contract with the State of Wisconsin to develop a computerized statewide voter

registration system. It is time for the state to stop throwing good money after bad and cut our losses. The Accenture voter-list contract is wrong for Wisconsin and the sooner it is canceled the better.

We had to check our brooms as they were not permitted inside the Capitol, but we entered waving money to symbolize that is what gives you access.

The Senate had passed Senate Bill 1 the day before so hopefully the Assembly will do the same, and it will become law.

What made the day really special was that I was able to attend with our daughter, Bobbi, who is a high school history teacher in Beaver Dam, and our grandson, Kiegan, who is a 4th grader and studying Wisconsin government right now. Hopefully by the time he is able to vote, Wisconsin will have regained the reputation for clean government that it once had and we will be Bobbi, Kiegan and Jean instead of a "nobody."



Wisconsin State Elections Board
(<http://elections.state.wi.us/>)

Check this web site for election
information including
candidate registration.

Election Dates for 2006

February 21: Spring Primary Election
April 4: Spring Election
September 12: Partisan Primary
November 7: General Election

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/>

League of Women Voters (National): <http://www.lwv.org/>

LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

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E-MAIL AND PHONE NUMBERS FOR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES

Senate District 32 Sen. Dan Kapanke
(608) 266-5490
<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/senate/sen32/sen32.html>
e-mail: Sen.Kapanke@legis.state.wi.us

Assembly District 94 Rep. Michael Huebsch
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Assembly District 95 Rep. Jennifer Shilling
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Assembly District 96 Rep. Lee Nerison
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La Crosse County web site (information on Board of Supervisors and Committees):
<http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/Default.htm>

State Legislative Hotline:
(800) 362-9472

Wisconsin State Legislature (including Wisconsin Blue Book): <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>

To check on the voting record of elected officials, go to:

Project Vote Smart
<http://www.vote-smart.org/>

League of Women Voters
DemocracyNet: <http://www.DNet.org/>



Beginning to think about gifts for the Holidays?

For the Common Good: A History of Women's Roles in La Crosse County, 1920 - 1980 by Margaret Larson is available at local bookstores. For more information, check the local League web site under LWV Publications or call the League at 791-1191.

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

Have You Paid Your Dues?

The League year now starts on July 1. League dues have been raised this year from \$45 to \$50. The dues cover what the local League is required to send to the state and national organizations as an assessment for each member: what funding we have locally primarily comes from fundraising events.

Encourage friends to join who also are interested in studying the issues and working to inform voters. The form is available for their convenience on the local League website: http://lwlacrosse.org/join_form.html

Thank You.

Please send your check (and checks from new members!) to:

LWV of the La Crosse Area
P.O. Box 363
La Crosse, WI 54602-0363

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE LA CROSSE AREA

2005/06 BOARD MEMBERS

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Roxanne Reynolds

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Jean Marck

Ellen Rosborough

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CALENDAR FOR NOV. - DEC., 2005
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE LA CROSSE AREA

**Board Meeting (Program Planning) Thurs. Dec. 8 at 11:00 a.m.*
Doc Powell's, 200 Main Street (downstairs)

Access to Dental Care Thurs., Dec. 8 at Noon (Lunch begins at 11:30 a.m.)
Doc Powell's, 200 Main Street (downstairs)
See details inside

**Board Meeting Sat., Dec. 10 at 9:00 a.m.*
Location TBA

Note: Board meeting times/location are subject to change; refer to agenda or contact the LWV President.



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P. O. Box 363
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