

La Crosse Wisconsin Voter

No. 117

League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area Newsletter

May/June 2012



THE PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

By Jane Klekamp, President, LWV of La Crosse Area

There are so many ways to be an active and involved voter. At the local level we are looking for assistance with forums. With the number of elections coming up, help is needed with anything and everything from finding a location, to working with the candidates, to timekeeping. Please contact Peg Perri or Jane Klekamp if you have the time to help at forums.

This is certainly a time of good news and bad news. The following examples are only a couple of areas the League has a special interest in.

Good News: Most recently, citizens will not be required to show a photo ID in order to vote in the recall elections as the ID requirements currently are blocked by two injunctions.

The first is the injunction that has been extended to June where final briefs are due in the lawsuit filed by the NAACP and Voces de la Frontera.

According to the State League – “Add to that the permanent injunction won by the League of Women Voters in a separate lawsuit. The Attorney General has moved to have this injunction reversed through the appeals process but even if that happens, the temporary injunction will remain. It is good news that no eligible citizens will be disenfranchised in the recall elections because of an unconstitutional law.”

Bad News: Planned Parenthood ended nonsurgical abortions at its Wisconsin clinics Friday, April 20th. The law, signed into effect on April 6th by Governor

Walker after the legislature passed it earlier this year, took effect on Friday.

It mandates that women having nonsurgical abortions visit the same doctor three times and that doctors ensure the woman is having the procedure voluntarily and without coercion. Failure to follow those requirements could result in felony charges against the doctor. While the law does not affect emergency contraception it would place a substantial burden on women who are poor and live in rural areas with limited access to clinics.

Good News: From the State League - Help the League of Women Voters to monitor the June 5 election. We expect the voter turnout to be high, and we want to be present in polling places statewide. You do not need to be a League member to be an election observer (but we'd love to have you join). The League will provide nonpartisan online training, a packet of materials and a polling place assignment. Go to <http://www.lwvwi.org/VotingElections.aspx> and click on *2012 Election Observer Volunteer Form* for more information. Please be as involved as time permits...

Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 30, 2012
Radisson Hotel

5:30 pm cocktails
6:15 pm dinner
7:15 pm annual meeting

RSVP:
nfhill@centurytel.net or 782-1753

See Page 3 for Details!

Who Owns the Water
May 8, 2012, 11:30 – 1:30
Radisson Hotel

Our speaker will be Marc Schultz, Onalaska, Wisconsin, who was named the 2011 Tribune Person of the Year.

Marc worked for the UW Extension Service for 22 years as a community development agent. In addition, he has served as a volunteer on the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, Mississippi River Citizens Commission, Brice Prairie Conservation Association, La Crosse County Conservation Alliance, Joint City-County Harbor Commission, and Lake Onalaska Protection and Rehabilitation District. In addition, after retirement, he has been elected as a supervisor for the Town of Onalaska Board and is vice-chairman of the La Crosse County Emergency Planning Committee. The Mississippi River has been his passion. He will use the concept of the water cycle to help us understand who owns which part of the cycle. All members of the community are invited to attend League Programs. There is no cost for the Program. Lunch will be available for \$12.00 with a reservation, which can be made by calling Nancy Hill, 608-782-1753 or e-mailing nfhill@centurytel.net by May 4. Cost for lunch is \$12.00.



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Membership Corner

The La Crosse League added six new members since our March/April newsletter edition. Meet two of them below:



Leah Reimann. I am recently retired from a career as a pediatrician, most of which was spent at Gundersen Lutheran in La Crosse. I am now seeking out ways to “give back” to the community. Joining the LWV is just one of them.

Jessica Kewin. I grew up in western Wisconsin and graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 2004 with a Bachelor of Arts in Women's Studies. After college,



I worked for five years in Chicago at the American Medical Association Foundation in grant administration (free clinic grants, medical student scholarships and research grants). I then moved back to the area to work for Coulecap, a community action agency that is dedicated to empowering individuals to rise out of poverty which, in turn, helps to strengthen our communities as a whole. I work in the Community Development Department, specifically in affordable housing development and

The Annual Meeting is on May 30th.

Interested in the Board of Director nominations? Contact Carolyn at cgienks@earthlink.net

neighborhood revitalization.

Board of Director Nominations and Annual Meeting 2012

Dear League Members,

Board of Director Nominations: It is that time of year, just about one month prior to the annual meeting, that we take time to plan for the operation of the local League for next year. There are two officers of the League (Secretary and Treasurer) finishing up their two-year term, and there are two Board of Directors finishing up their two-year term. If anyone in the general membership has suggestions for nominating anyone else for these positions please bring those suggestions to the attention of the Chair of the Nomination Committee-Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins. The e-mail address for Carolyn is cgjenks@earthlink.net and telephone number is (608) 782-5727. If your suggestions come after May 10, 2012 please bring those suggestions to Nancy Hill, nfhill@centurytel.net or 608 782-1753.

At the present time Sandy Sechrest is the Secretary and Dee Peacock is the Treasurer. Sandy and Dee have both have expressed the interest in remaining in their officer roles for another two-year term. There are also three Board of Directors, Maureen Kinney, Betty Kruck and Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins whose two-year terms are coming to an end. Maureen, Betty and Carolyn would like to serve another two-year term. There are two Board of Director positions available for appointment. Nominations from the membership are welcome for these two positions. Any member of the League can be nominated.

Annual Meeting: The Nomination Committee will bring forward a slate of nominations for these positions to the membership at the annual meeting for the general membership to vote on. The local League of Women Voters annual meeting will be held on **Wednesday, May 30, 2012 at the Radisson Hotel, 200 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse, Wisconsin.** The annual meeting is scheduled as

follows: **5:30 pm cocktails, 6:15 pm dinner, and 7:15 pm annual meeting.** If you plan on attending the annual meeting please RSVP attendance to Nancy Hill nfhill@centurytel.net or 608 782-1753. **All members, please consider joining the meeting. It is an evening of socialization, good food & spirits, and of course, business.**

Nancy Hill is leaving town, so please RSVP for the Annual Meeting dinner by May 20, 2012.

Annual Meeting Entrée Choices: Entrée choices are Chicken Mushroom Supreme, Pork Medallions and Vegetarian Lasagna at \$14.00 each, if you wish to add a salad, total cost is \$18.00.

Again, thank you to all members that make up such an active and vital force in the League of Women Voters-La Crosse area. I will be looking forward to hearing of other possible nominees from the general membership for any of the above positions. There are numerous opportunities for any members to be more involved and we are always looking for help with monthly programs and voter service activities. The Program Committee and the Voters Service Committee are looking for new members. Please let me know if you are interested in becoming more involved. We have a task for YOU!

Nominating Committee Chair
Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins



Like us on Facebook...

...for up to date information on new events, changes of venue, and relevant news items!

March/April with the La Crosse League of Women Voters

Mining

- AB 426 is the worst environmental bill that we have seen in Wisconsin in decades
 - Solid waste disposal in wetlands and floodplains
 - Rollbacks of wetlands protections
 - Rollbacks of groundwater protections (quality quantity)
 - Circumvents acid mine drainage moratorium
 - Removing citizens' suits and contested cases
 - Attempts to supersede all other state environmental laws

Voter ID Information Sessions

Elizabeth Wheeler, Staff Attorney at Clean Wisconsin, spoke at the March Lunch and Learn. Her topic was "Reducing Environmental Regulations; Downgrading Natural Resources."



Above: Bill Adair, Editor of PolitiFact speaks about hyperbole and facts in American Politics at the April Lunch and Learn. Right: State Senator Jennifer Shilling addresses attendees at the Legislative Breakfast on March 31st.



The National League of Women Voters-Privatization Study

Summary by Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins

Federal, state and local governments own extensive assets and are major employers. Governments often consider selling assets, and outsourcing some functions and services to the private sector, including “core” government services such as providing for the safety, security and general welfare (public well-being) of citizens, the economy, and our country. Privatization of these government assets, services and functions has been occurring for decades at all levels of government. The consequences of “privatizing” a government service or function, in particular, may enhance the function or service. Alternatively, it may reduce or alter functions and services. Government revenues may be reduced or lost and jobs may be cut. In some instances, this may have a detrimental effect on the “common good” or public well-being.

One state, for instance, has declared as a matter of state law and policy that “using private contractors to provide public services formerly provided by state employees does not always promote the public interest. To ensure that citizens receive high quality public services at low cost, with due regard for tax payers and the needs of public and private workers, the (legislature) finds it necessary to regulate such privatization contracts throughout the state.”

The purpose of this study is to identify policies and parameters that should be considered when any governmental entity is planning to undertake some type of privatization process.

Privatization Consensus Questions – Response by LWV-La Crosse

The following members met Thursday, March 29, 2012 to discuss and decide collectively the group’s feelings about the issues of Privatization: Ellen Frantz led the discussion with members, Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins, Peg Perri, Judy Shure, Marlene Sund, Nancy Hill, Glen Jenkins, Craig Brooks, Jane Klekamp, and Sheila Hilke. Lee Rodman provided her personal opinion via written responses.

Below is the consensus of these members to the Privatization Consensus Questions provided by the National League of Women Voters.

PRIVATIZATION CONSENSUS QUESTIONS

Consensus questions one and two should be presented to the group at the outset of the meeting and then repeated after the other questions have been answered.

1. As a general matter, the extent to which government functions, services and assets have been privatized in the past decade is:
 Much too much Too much About right Too little Much too little No consensus
2. Core government services and functions important to well-being of the people should remain with government and not be transferred to the private sector.
 Strongly agree Agree Disagree Strongly disagree No consensus
3. As a matter of good government policy, which of the following criteria should be applied when making decisions to transfer government services, assets and functions to the private sector?
 - a. **Transparency and Accountability:** All government contracts with private companies for services must ensure public access to relevant records and information regarding contracted services, functions and assets and provide for adequate government oversight and control.
 High priority Lower priority Not a priority No consensus
 - b. **Public Well-being:** Provisions are in place to assure that, in the event any public services are to be privatized, there will be no increased risks to public well-being, especially to vulnerable populations.
 High priority Lower priority Not a priority No consensus
 - c. **Cost and Quality:** Privatized services should not appreciably increase the costs or decrease the quality of services to the public.
 High priority Lower priority Not a priority No consensus
 - d. **Environmental and Natural Resources:** Defined parameters should be in place to assure that environmental and natural resources are not compromised.
 High priority Lower priority Not a priority No consensus

e. Contracts and Sales of Public Assets: All government contracts and privatized public assets should be subject to competitive bidding and comply with all laws regarding awarding contracts.

High priority ___ Lower priority ___ Not a priority ___ No consensus

f. Economic Impact: Privatization should not result in a negative economic impact on the communities in which the services are provided.

High priority ___ Lower priority ___ Not a priority ___ No consensus

g. Government Recovery of Services and Assets: Provisions should be in place to recover key services, assets and functions should the private sector fail to safeguard them.

High priority ___ Lower priority ___ Not a priority ___ No consensus

4. Privatization is not appropriate:

a. When the government lacks the will, ability or resources to adequately oversee contracts with the private entity and any successor thereto.

Agree ___ Disagree ___ No Consensus

b. When there is no private entity able or willing to provide the service for the short and long term.

Agree ___ Disagree ___ No Consensus

c. When it poses a potential threat to national security.

Agree ___ Disagree ___ No Consensus

d. When it poses a risk to personal or security data.

Agree ___ Disagree ___ No Consensus

e. When there has been evidence of potential corruption.

Agree ___ Disagree ___ No Consensus

f. When the private entity's goals and purposes are not compatible with public well-being.

Agree ___ Disagree ___ No Consensus

g. When the private entity has not complied with existing government requirements for public records, open meetings or publication of reports and audits.

Agree ___ Disagree ___ No Consensus

h. When a loss of revenue decreases government support for mandated or critical services.

Agree ___ Disagree ___ No Consensus

5. Some states have developed laws and regulations to control the process of privatization within their jurisdictions.

As a general matter, should privatization be regulated?

a. Yes, all privatization efforts should be regulated.

b. Yes, some types of privatization efforts should be regulated.

c. No, privatization efforts should never be regulated

d. No consensus

6. Which of the following should be included in the regulatory process when privatizing public assets, services and functions?

a. Timely public announcements regarding intentions to privatize and the clear and measurable expected benefits to the public

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

b. Public and stakeholder (investors, shareholders, experts) input into the decision and terms of the contract.

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

c. Feasibility study regarding performance, costs and benefits.

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

d. Adherence to all laws regarding public contracts..

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

e. Transition plans for displaced employees.

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

f. Accountability and transparency provisions in all contracts.

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

g. Regular performance evaluations including meaningful opportunity for public comment.

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

h. Provisions for transferring services and assets back to the government or another contractor in the event of inadequate performance.

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

i. Adequate resources for enforcement.

Strongly agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly disagree ___ No consensus

Contact Info for National Issues

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

Library of Congress site <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

Senate <http://ronjohnson.senate.gov>
<http://kohl.senate.gov/>

House of Representatives
<http://www.kind.house.gov/index.html>

Supreme Court <http://www.supremecourtus.gov/>

Contact Info for State Issues

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

Governor's Office <http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/>

Government Accountability Board
<http://www.gab.wi.gov>

Court System <http://www.wicourts.gov/>

State Senate:

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/senhome.htm>

- District 31 Senator Kathleen Vinehout, 608-266-8546 or 877-763-6636,
Sen.Vinehout@legis.wisconsin.gov
- District 32 Senator Jennifer Shilling, 608-266-5490 or 800-385-3385;
Sen.Shilling@legis.wisconsin.gov

State Assembly:

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/asmhome.htm>

- District 91 Rep. Chris Danou, 608-266-7015 or 888-534-0091, Rep.Danou@legis.wisconsin.gov
- District 92 Rep. Mark Radcliffe, 608-266-7461 or 888-534-0092,
Rep.Radcliffe@legis.wisconsin.gov
- District 94: Rep. Steve Doyle, 608-266-0631 or 888-534-0094, Rep.Doyle@legis.wisconsin.gov
- District 95: Rep. Jill Billings, 608-266-5780 or 888-534-0095, Rep.Billings@legis.wi.gov
- District 96: Rep. Lee Nerrison, 608-266-3534 or 888-534-0096,
Rep.Nerrison@legis.wisconsin.gov

Local Contact Information

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

La Crosse County:

Staff <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/directory.htm>
County Board <http://www.co.la-crosse.wi.us/CoDirctry/2SupervDist.pdf>

City of La Crosse

Staff
<http://www.cityoflacrosse.org/index.aspx?nid=94>
Council
<http://www.cityoflacrosse.org/index.aspx?NID=338>

For neighboring counties, check websites [[Buffalo](#), [Crawford](#), [Eau Claire](#), [Jackson](#), [Monroe](#), [Pepin](#), [Pierce](#), [Trempeleau](#), [Vernon](#) Counties]

2011-2012 League of Women Voters of La Crosse Area Board:

Jane Klekamp, President

president@lwvlacrosse.org

Dee Peacock, Treasurer

Sandy Sechrest, Secretary

Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins

membership@lwvlacrosse.org

Nancy Hill

Maureen Kinney

Betty Kruck

Peg Perri

Carla Townsend

Marilyn Huckenpoepler

Newsletter: news@lwvlacrosse.org

Note that the website addresses are linked in the electronic version of this document – available on our website

Calendar for May – June 2012 League of Women Voters La Crosse Area

Who Owns the Water

Tuesday, May 8, 11:30 am
Radisson

Primary Election

Tuesday, May 8th

Annual Meeting

Wednesday, May 30, 5:30 pm,
Radisson

Recall Election

Tuesday, June 5th



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF THE LA CROSSE AREA
P.O. BOX 363, LA CROSSE, WI 54602-0363