

La Crosse Wisconsin Voter

No. 69

League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area Newsletter

Nov. 2003

The President's Podium

By Kay Adams

kadamsfleig@centurytel.net

There is an old saying about time being fleeting, but I never really understood it until passing 50 years of age. There is much fun to be had with Democracy and League but time is not cooperating.

We hope to have our newsletter available on our website this November so you can save it on your computer or print it. This will save on mailing

charges, labor and save some paper as people chose to receive electronic copies only. If you want to receive it through cyberspace, let Anita Evans know and she will send you an e-mail reminder that the newsletter is on our local website.

Thank you Ellen Rosborough and Anita for making the website and the newsletter on the website a

reality.

The slogan for our effort to increase voter participation should be determined soon. I sent out an e-mail asking all of you to vote for your favorite. We are hoping to have some billboards, business cards with our website on it—pencils? T-shirts? Yard signs? The possibilities are limitless although our budget is not. We will be visible on TV and radio as our time allows. There will be a special team of leaguers assigned to work on getting Seniors in high school geared up for voting. We need to have some Leaguers working just on the school age group. Any retired teachers out there? Anyone who wants to work on the team? One of the ideas is to give 18 year olds a birthday card and information on voting. This might appeal to someone who wants to be involved and yet likes to work out of the home.

SOAR is an acronym for the challenge of each League member to bring two new members into League this year. I paid for the membership of two

younger women as I see them as important to the future of League, but we could also use some retired people who might be more available during the day. Bring a friend to one of our meetings or have them check out our website so they can learn what we believe and how we spend our energy. Door County League had a 27.3% percent increase in their membership and won the membership award last year at our state convention. Are we up to the challenge?

State League: Julie Arneth, our State League President, has announced the hiring of a new Executive Director, Lu Ann Bird. She will keep us on

task with action alerts and help with our efforts at keeping League's positions in the forefront with our representatives. Lu Ann joined League in 1994 because she wanted to be more involved in the political process and she wanted to learn how to advocate for issues. She was able to integrate what she learned from League into better school district access for the people with disabilities in the Oshkosh Public Schools. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call

her, as she will help keep us organized.

June 5th is the date of our LWVWI Council. We have a convention every two years and a council meeting on the off years. Two League members from each local League are entitled to vote at the Council's Plenary Session. This year it is at Wisconsin Rapids, which is relatively close compared to the many trips we make to the eastern side of our state. June 11-14th is the LWVUS Convention in Washington, DC.

If you have any questions about League and how we operate or if you feel we need to make improvements, you can e-mail or call me at your convenience. We are all busy people and our involvement in League is as variable as our individual lives dictate.

Let me know what you want from our local League and then think about being a part of the solution.



UN Day: October 24

UN DAY

By Jean Marck

A cool morning couldn't dampen the enthusiasm of the participants in our UN flag raising ceremony at La Crosse City Hall on Oct. 24. Mayor John Medinger greeted us and expressed his support of the United Nations and his appreciation for the work of the League of Women Voters.

Kay Adams, LWV President, gave a summary of the League position:

The League of Women Voters has a policy position on the United Nations which supports a strong, effective United Nations and endorses the full and active participation of the United States in the UN system. The League also supports UN leadership in a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to promoting world peace and security that includes ongoing efforts to eliminate the underlying causes of conflict. They also have a position statement on supporting the central role of the United Nations in addressing the social, economic, and humanitarian needs of all people. More detailed information on these positions are available on the national League of Women Voters website at lwv.org.

Anelise and Marit Schroeder spoke about their great grandmother, Carroll Gundersen, and raised the UN flag in recognition of all the educational work she did in the early days of the United Nations.

Mrs. Gundersen, a La Crosse civic leader, was a delegate at Lake Success, NY, the first home of the United Nations with only 51 nations represented. Later she was one of two Wisconsin women chosen to visit and study sessions in the United Nations. When she returned to La Crosse she shared her information and enthusiasm with 150 groups throughout the city and area. That effort plus other civic activities resulted in her being named "Man of the Year" by the La Crosse Chamber of Commerce in 1950. She served as president of the La Crosse League of Women Voters (1943-47), as president of the Wisconsin League of Women Voters (1952-54), and was active with the League of Women Voters of the United States from 1954 to 1972. Four international students from UW-La Crosse displayed their flags and spoke of the positive feelings and successful projects of the United Nations in their countries. Yidi from Qingdao, China, and Jin from Shenzhen, China, caused many of us to think



President Kay Adams and Jean Marck talk with Mayor Medinger

about UN priorities, such as human rights, from a different perspective. Diego from Asuncion, Paraguay, thanked the people of La Crosse for making him feel welcome and helping him to become a better world citizen. Aygun, Baki, Azerbaijan, spoke about her country's support for the United Nations and delighted us with questions about the US system of government and politics.

Thanks to Pat Roslansky for taking care of the refreshments of donut holes and cider. Also thanks to Channel 8, Channel 19 and WIZM for media coverage.

For the Common Good

By Jean Marck

The contributions of midwives were celebrated on October 10 at Pearl Street Books when Mayor

Medinger proclaimed National Midwifery Week.

Margaret Larson read the story of Mary Friedrich

Gerrard, a midwife in the La Crosse area from

1878 to 1913, from the League book *For the*

Common Good. Mary

delivered 3,932 babies during her career and kept records of their births long before the state required such information.



League members present who were recognized for their contributions to the book were: Carol

Gundersen for the research on Mary Gerrard; Peg Fish and Marian Ramlow, Editorial Advisory Board; and Jean Marck, fundraising. Not only do midwives know how to deliver babies—they know how to bake. Delicious treats were prepared and served by the nurse midwives currently serving women in our area.

The event resulted in a number of book sales. Books are available at Pearl Street Books, Honig's, and the La Crosse County Historical Society Gift Shop. And Margaret Larson is more than willing to sign any books you wish to give as gifts, including a gift to yourself. Just call her at 782-7744.



Issues Briefing 10/25/03

By Kay Adams

We had three league members and two guests go to Issues Briefing in Madison. Ellen Rosborough, Jean Marck, Sue Mercier, Betty Kruck and myself. We heard good information on HAVA (Help America Vote Act) and will hopefully be getting the State League Member, Carolyn, to come to La Crosse to present a meeting on the subject. We also listened to three wonderful speakers, including Barb Dimick, Director, Madison Public Library and John Nichols, Editorial Page Editor from *The Capitol Times* in Madison, talk about the Patriot Act. There was also a lawyer, Steven Porter, who has a position on the BAR and gave some information on the legal aspects of the Patriot Act. The State League adopted this as a study issue as it has strong comparisons to the McCarthy era and the old Sedition Act from our second President, John Adams. If civil rights is one of the strong fibers of democracy then we have to look closely at the risks when our rights are being eroded. More information will be coming on our website.

I also attended another update on Universal Healthcare. The Farley's are telling us to be aware of a proposal from the AFL-CIO on a plan for universal healthcare in Wisconsin. Something needs to be done as people are afraid of leaving jobs because of the cost of healthcare. They cited some of the statistics on insurance such as: from 1970-1995 there

has been a 2500% increase in administrative positions in health care in this country, 45% of personal bankruptcy's are related to medical bills, people in prisons and the poor get better health insurance than the working poor, and drug companies spend 13% of their money on research and development and 35% on marketing. If you are saying "hmmm" to yourself then check out some of these websites: www.wisconsinhealth.org, www.physiciansproposal.org, www.wi-citizenaction.org and for the AFL-CIO proposal, go to:

<http://www.wisafclcio.org/features/Health%20Care%20Proposal%202002.htm>

Some of our group went to the meeting on education, including the virtual reality classroom. I did not attend, but you can talk with Betty Kruk if you have questions because I think she will be involved on the state committee for education.

If you can attend an Issues Briefing in the years ahead, take advantage of the opportunity, as the speakers are well informed, articulate and inspiring. They all reminded us about the importance of the League of Women Voters as we are vigilant citizens who study issues, give our opinion and are willing to contact our representatives.

U.S. Senator Russ Feingold on the Anniversary of the Enactment of the USA-PATRIOT Act

October 26 marks the second anniversary of the enactment of the USA-PATRIOT Act. I was the only Senator to vote against the Act at the time because I believe that it goes too far in allowing the government to obtain personal information about law-abiding Americans who are not suspected terrorists or spies. Today, I am pleased to be working with Senators from both parties who agree that portions of the law must be changed.

Excerpt from Sen. Feingold's website:
<http://feingold.senate.gov/>

Affordable Housing

Diane Dunlap, Housing Program Specialist for Coulee Region Community Action Program, will speak on affordable housing for the LWV November program. Mark your calendars for:



Thursday, November 13, 2003
Doc Powell's, 200 Main St.
11:30 p.m. Buffet
12:00 noon Program

Reservations to Jean Marck, 788-4162 or jeanm2332@aol.com by November 9th.

Reproductive Health Legislation

By Janet Kusch

I attended the hearing on the **Family Planning Waiver AB/383/SB186** on October 14th. The Senate Health Committee and Family Law Committee members were both in attendance as they decided to have a joint hearing. Those in opposition to the bills spoke about access for teens, the fiscal benefit to the State, the health benefit to the uninsured and underinsured. We also had to spend time dispelling misinformation by explaining that confidentiality for teens is protected under Federal and Medicaid law, family planning providers are mandatory reporters and are required to assess and document sexual abuse, family planning providers are required to encourage parental involvement and document it, and that family planning providers will **not** be making millions of dollars as result of the waiver.

Representative Glenn Grothman, the author of the bill, stated he did want to see the Family Planning Waiver implemented at all. It was noticeable that many of the individuals testifying for the bills had nothing to do with the administration of health care. There was a great turn out to speak in opposition. Sharon Hampson spoke about the County Board resolution and Tom Rauk was unable to speak, but submitted testimony about the fiscal impact and I spoke and submitted written testimony.

We have not heard anything about when executive sessions may be held in the committees. In the meantime, it is important to keep targeting the following individuals:

Assembly Family Law Committee: Friske (Merrill); Jensen (Waukesha). Both are apparently on the fence. Peggy Krusick (Milwaukee) should also be targeted. Considering the Milwaukee teen pregnancy and drop out rate, she should be concerned. John Gard should also be targeted. The Assembly bill should not be scheduled for a floor vote if it does get out of committee. For contact information for the Assembly, go to:

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

On the Senate Health Committee: Roessler (Oshkosh); Schultz (Richland Center); and Brown (Eau Claire) should be targeted. Mary Panzer should be targeted with the same message that the bill should not be scheduled for a floor vote if it gets out of the Senate committee.

AB 67 "physicians conscience clause" was slated for a public hearing October 10th. The feeling is it will pass both houses and will end up on the Governor's desk.

Carry and conceal: Oppose deadly weapons in health centers, vote no on AB44 & Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to SB214. The Joint Finance Committee did not accept an amendment to exclude health care facilities from the conceal and carry legislation. As it stands, individuals can bring concealed weapons into clinics (family planning clinics) unless the clinic posts a sign prohibiting such and orally notifies individuals coming into the clinic. An amendment was adopted allowing hospitals to exclude individuals from coming in with concealed weapons, but not health care facilities.

For those League Members wishing to receive an e-bulletin....

Send an e-mail message to anitalarry@centurytel.net indicating "web version only" in the subject line. Provide your name and email address in the message. Instead of the paper bulletin, you will receive an e-mail informing you that the web version is available.

Legislative Contacts

Representative Ron Kind

U.S. House of Representatives
1406 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-4906
(202) 225-5506
(202)-225-5739 FAX
<http://www.house.gov/kind/>
email: ron.kind@mail.house.gov

La Crosse:

205 Fifth Avenue S.
Suite 226
La Crosse, WI 54601
782-2558
782-4588 FAX

Senator Russell Feingold

506 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-4904
(202) 224-5323
(202) 224-2725 FAX
<http://feingold.senate.gov/>
e-mail: russell_feingold@feingold.senate.gov

La Crosse:

425 State St., Room 225
La Crosse, WI 54601-3341
782-5585

Senator Herbert Kohl

330 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-4903
(202) 224-5653
Milwaukee 800/247-5645
(202) 224-9787 FAX
<http://kohl.senate.gov/>
e-mail: senator_kohl@senate.gov

La Crosse:

425 State St., Suite 202
La Crosse, WI 54601
796-0045

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

E-Mail and Phone Numbers for Local Representatives

Senate District 32 Sen. Mark Meyer

(608) 787-6574
<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/senate/sen32/sen32.html>
e-mail: Sen.Meyer@legis.state.wi.us

Assembly District 94 Rep. Michael Huebsch

(608) 786-3512
<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm94/asm94.html>
e-mail: Rep.Huebsch@legis.state.wi.us

Assembly District 95 Rep. Jennifer Shilling

(608) 788-9854
<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm95/asm95.html>
e-mail: Rep.Shilling@legis.state.wi.us

Assembly District 96 Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud

(608) 874-4231
<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm96/asm96.html>
e-mail: Rep.Johnsrud@legis.state.wi.us

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/>

League of Women Voters of Wisconsin:

<http://www.lwvwi.org/>

League of Women Voters (National):

<http://www.lwv.org/>

League of Women Voters of the La
Crosse Area:
<http://lacrosse.wi.lwvnet.org/>

La Crosse Area League Phone: 791-1191



Calendar for Nov. ~ Dec., 2003

League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area

Affordable Housing

Doc Powell's, 200 Main St.

Thurs., Nov. 13 at 11:30 a.m. for buffet lunch

Board Meeting

Doc Powell's, 200 Main St.

Wed., Nov. 19 at noon

Board Meeting

Doc Powell's, 200 Main St.

Wed., Dec. 17 at noon

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