

La Crosse Wisconsin Voter

No. 73 League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area Newsletter March 2004

Trade? The Patriot Act? A woman's right to make reproductive choices? These are all national and state issues.

THE PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

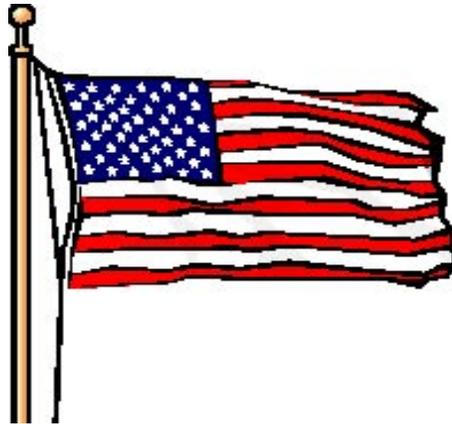
By Kay Adams
kadamsfleig@centurytel.net

The political season is heating up and the calls are coming in for League to do forums. Our volunteer jobs as League members are active throughout the year, but during election years we feel the mission of League on a daily basis. How can we increase voter participation? Will we be able to meet the demands for the forums? How do we increase the knowledge of voters so they not only vote, but know who they are voting for?

If you read through the newsletter you will understand how we are tackling many of these issues. Our Board has been very active and our enthusiasm is only tempered by time and energy constraints.

You may not have the time to actively participate in League events but your mission is well known; in everyday life you remind others of the importance of voting. This does not take more than a few words throughout the day and yet it is of great value. The research on voting tells us that the personal invitation to vote is the most effective. We have some League pins if you want to wear one as you go around your neighborhood, but it is the "going around the neighborhood" that is the most important.

Our Legislative Breakfast is going to be very interesting this year, so plan on arriving with your questions in hand or in your brain. Healthcare? Mental Health Parity? Fair



Take a friend to vote!

VOTER SERVICES

By Catherine Kolkmeier

A big thank you goes to WXOW Channel 19 and the Onalaska Area Business Association this month for co-sponsoring the Onalaska Mayoral Candidate Forum last month. Despite the wintry weather, we had an excellent turnout. If you missed the forum or are wondering about other races coming up in the Spring election, here are the dates for our candidate forums.

March 15, Monday: Holmen School Board Forum – 7:00 p.m.

March 16, Tuesday: Town of Campbell Forum – 6:30 p.m.

March 18, Thursday: Onalaska Mayoral Forum – TBA

March 24, Wednesday: La Crosse School Board – 5:30 p.m.

If you plan to attend a forum, please call me at 796-9090 for locations, as some of these are not confirmed yet.

We are especially excited about the La Crosse School Board forum on March 24th because the entire forum, from the moderator to the timekeeper to the publicity, will be coordinated by student members of Central High School's Political Club. That forum will be held in the Central High School Auditorium.

LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

Don't forget to get your reservation in for the Legislative Breakfast at Days Inn on Saturday March 20th. Call or e-mail roxannereynolds@centurytel.net or 526-5871. You may also call my office number if you have any questions 781-9877. This just in! Senator Feingold will be coming to our breakfast this year. We just heard from his office staff that he will be in La Crosse that day and will stop by to talk with us. We hope you can all attend and show him our strength and commitment.

Iron Jawed Angels: a “Premier Event”

We have booked the La Crosse Main Library and their large screen T.V. for Tuesday, March 30th to view this not to missed special HBO movie. Iron Jawed Angels focuses on two leaders of the women’s suffrage movement and follows the plight of Alice Paul and Lucy Burns in their uphill battle from the 1912 meeting in Philadelphia to the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920. As HBO describes the movie: “Oscar winner Hilary Swank stars in a fresh and contemporary look at a pivotal event in American history, telling the true story of how a pair of defiant and brilliant young activists took the women’s suffrage movement by storm putting their lives at risk to help American women win the right to vote.”

Mark your calendar, bring your friends and be there for pizza at 6:00 p.m. Movie starts at 6:30 p.m. Please call or e-mail Roxanne at roxannereynolds@centurytel.net or 526-5871 for reservation so that we know how many pizzas to order. Also state you preference for vegetarian, cheese or meat pizza.

Previews can be viewed at www.hbo.com/films/ironjawedangels.

Meet New Member, Betty Kruk

By Jean Marck

Betty has the unique distinction of being on a state League committee before she was a League member. She was so enthusiastic about the workshop she attended on a state study item on education that she joined the committee! The study looked at the impact of alternative forms of education on the public K-12 school system with emphasis on virtual, home and charter schools and the effect of the “No Child Left Behind Act.” Here is Betty’s bio in her own words:

I grew up on a little cotton/soybean farm in southern Missouri. After graduating from the University of Missouri-Columbia I went to Racine, WI where I taught Exceptional Education for 34 years. After teaching for the first few year's in the mid-60's, I went to grad school and got my certification in Learning Disabilities at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee a few years after they started the first certification program for LD in Wisconsin. A colleague and I later helped organize a state professional organization for Learning Disabilities under the auspices of CEC (Council of Exceptional Children).

My husband, George, and I moved from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River between Victory and Genoa in April 2003. Since

moving to Genoa I have pursued my interests in prairies and native plants by becoming involved with the Prairie Enthusiasts, Wild Ones (Native Landscaping), and I've continued my participation in the Master Gardeners Association and AAUW. I'm working with the Genoa Grand Excursion Committee, and I continue my interest in Race Walking—although because not much is flat where I live now, I hill climb instead.

I was introduced to the League at a joint AAUW/LWV meeting in September. At that meeting a panel of League members presented an information program on “Becoming Politically Savvy.” In meeting and talking to some of the League members, I found women that were active, involved and informed. I was immediately interested in issues that were being studied by the League and interested in topics (U.S. Patriot Act and Education) that were to be presented at the Issues Briefing 2003 in Madison. I was invited to attend the Briefing as a guest and to attend subsequent LWV meetings. I have been impressed with the pointed, direct questions asked of the speakers at the meetings I have attended. I planned to attend the January meeting of the LWV State Education Committee in Fond du Lac, but I had to call with my regrets because the road from my house (a steep winding road) was a solid sheet of ice. I have been a little familiar with the League also because my sister has been an active member of LWV for 40 years in Missouri and Alabama.

Welcome, Betty!

Lively Issues Meeting February 19, 2004

By Ellen Rosborough

A group of about 15 members enjoyed an interesting discussion on the proposed LWVUS position on the Selection of the President – that we want to abolish the Electoral College, and that in addition, we support uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections. The position goes further to say that we support changes in the election system, from candidate selection through election. There has been some debate, especially on the listserve discussions, that this position does not go far enough, or specifically state the changes. Others are concerned about what we are taking on—the media, political parties, candidates and all levels of government. The voting on the consensus question is individual, and was to be either postmarked by March 1, 2004, or entered online by March 4, 2004. Even if

you didn't get a chance to participate, you can read most of the background information and articles on the National website, in the members section.

Local program making was the other topic of discussion and that proved even more lively. Several suggestions were made for local study and emphasis. In particular, it was brought up that the current Criminal Justice Coalition is studying mental health issues, and that might be of interest to the community as an educational topic. A second topic of discussion involved current annexation and planning issues, some concerning Smart Growth legislation. The group felt that the League could play a role in educating the community on what all of this means and how it could affect the towns, municipalities, developers, farmers, etc. No particular recommendation came from the group, but this will be considered by the LWV Board as it conducts the 2004-2005 program planning. If anyone has any other ideas for the next year, please contact Jean Marck.



LWV Annual Meeting

Mark your calendars now to attend the Annual meeting dinner at Ciatti's on Monday, May 17th: cocktails at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6:30 p.m. We will be ordering individually off the menu. For those of you who suffered through last years fiasco, I assure you I have experienced Ciatti's expertise with large groups first hand and they are excellent! Reservation information to follow in a later issue, but do plan on joining us for a very enjoyable evening.

Roxanne Reynolds

CIVIL LIBERTIES STUDY

By Ellen Rosborough

In April, we will be having a meeting to further our education on this topic, and to take a vote on the consensus positions proposed by the state League Civil Liberties Study Committee. As a member of that committee, I was asked to provide some guidelines to prepare you for this meeting. The committee report can be found at <http://www.lwvwi.org/committeereport.pdf>. This contains a synopsis of the information gleaned from this one-year study, including a one page listing of pertinent references. I would suggest everyone read this report, and if interested, continue through some of the report references. When was the last time you read the Bill of Rights? Or the Wisconsin Constitution? The bibliography of background readings can be found at <http://www.lwvwi.org/libertiesresources.htm>. If you do not have access to the Internet and would prefer to read a paper copy of the report and background materials, a copy will be on file at the La Crosse Public Library Main Branch. Just ask at the circulation desk for the file.

To sum up the 3 consensus statements, the LWVWI is adding a position that is similar to the LWVUS position on civil liberties, and in addition, stating that our state and local governments should act in concordance to their sworn testimony to uphold the US and Wisconsin Constitutions, and further that all citizens and organizations must take responsibility for their freedom. This is strong stuff. Please read about it and help us decide in April.

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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Assembly District 95 Rep. Jennifer Shilling
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Assembly District 96 Rep. DuWayne Johnsrud
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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

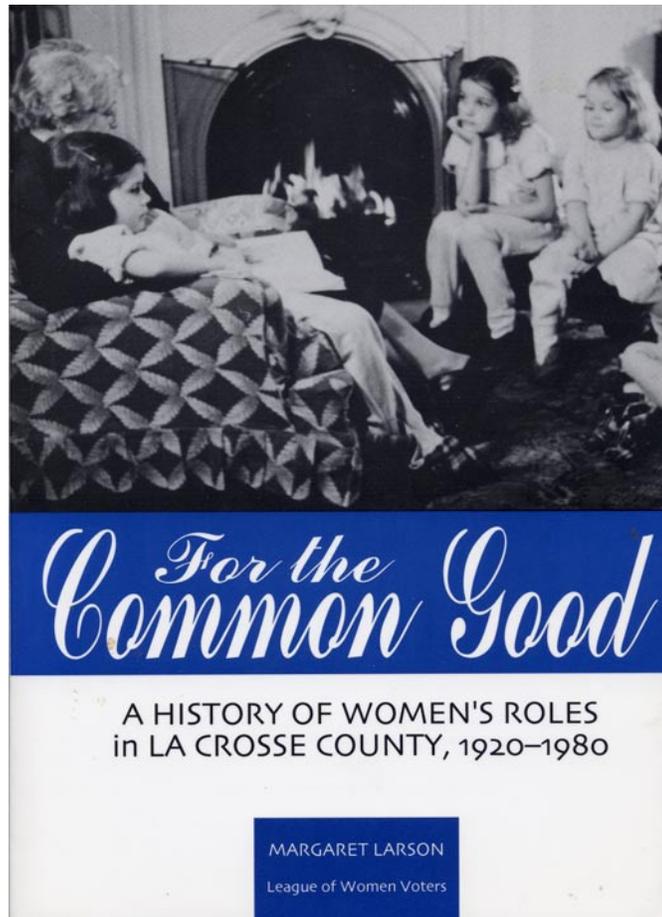
Wisconsin State Legislature (including Wisconsin Blue Book): <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>

FOR THE COMMON GOOD

For the Common Good: A History of Women's Roles in La Crosse County, 1920 - 1980 by Margaret Larson.

For the Common Good was published by League of Women Voters of La Crosse County in 1996 as a "gift for the community to celebrate La Crosse County women in all their roles."

Copies of For the Common Good may be purchased by calling League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area: (608) 791-1191. For the Common Good is also available at Pearl Street Books (323 Pearl St.), Honig's (531 Main St.) and the La Crosse County Historical Society Gift Shop (112 S. 9th Street).



CALENDAR FOR MARCH - MAY, 2004
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE LA CROSSE AREA

- Board Meeting* *Wed.. March 17 at noon*
Doc Powell's, 200 Main St.
- Legislative Breakfast* *Sat.. March 20 at 9:00 a.m.*
Days Inn Hotel, 101 Sky Harbor Drive
- Iron Jawed Angels* *Mon.. March 30*
La Crosse Public Library, Basement
- Board Meeting* *Wed.. April 21 at noon*
Doc Powell's, 200 Main St.
- Annual Meeting* *Mon.. May 17 at 5:30 p.m. (dinner at 6:30 p.m.)*
Ciatti's
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Note: Board meeting times/location are subject to change; refer to agenda or contact LWV President.



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