

# La Crosse Wisconsin Voter

No. 86 League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area Newsletter March/April 2006

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## THE PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

By now you all know of the report by the Institute for Women's Policy Research in Washington D.C. that gave the State of Wisconsin a C- grade for quality of life for women in our state. If you attended the gathering at the Pump House last month featuring Lieutenant Governor Barbara Lawton you now know a plan is being put in place to improve our grade.

Lieutenant Governor Lawton, who is committed to Raising the Grade for Wisconsin Women, is on a statewide tour to recognize companies that are improving women's work place success and promoting Wisconsin Women = Prosperity.

Wisconsin Women = Prosperity is an economic development initiative catalyzing progress for women by empowering women to make their best contributions in corporate, political and civic life, building a collaborative statewide network among women and allied men and forging ties with the broadest range of public and private partners. They have divided the important issues into four categories: Economic Sufficiency; Educational Achievement; Leadership and Political Participation; and Health, Safety and Well-being. You can find more information about this organization at [www.wiwep.org](http://www.wiwep.org).

The program by Lt. Governor Lawton and WIWEP Executive Director Marsha Block was brought to us through a joint effort of the AAUW and League. I am looking forward to our local League getting involved in some aspect of the actions recommended by WIWEP in the near future.

We also were fortunate last month to have member Ellen Rosborough take time out of her very busy schedule to educate us on the recent developments regarding the Help America Vote Act. Ellen serves on the State Elections Board and is involved with the new voter registration system. While this can be a daunting and confusing issue, this meeting was quite educational and involved much attendee discussion.

*Thank You Ellen!*

Joining us at the Voter Issues meeting was our State League President, Melanie Ramey. She updated us on State League activities and programs. For those of you who have not had the pleasure of meeting Melanie, she is a treat! She delivers her points in an astute, informed, but extremely entertaining style! Melanie also reminded us that a challenge for League is to get people to WANT to vote!

Happy Women's History Month to all, and I am looking forward to seeing most of you at the Legislative Breakfast.

Roxanne Reynolds  
President, League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area

**Wisconsin Women = Prosperity**

**Reservations are due by 3/20 for the**

## LWV LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

This year's Legislative Breakfast will be held on Saturday, March 25 at Days Inn, 101 Sky Harbour Drive.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and the buffet brunch starts at 9:00 a.m. The menu includes juices, fresh fruit, scrambled eggs, bacon, breakfast potato, English muffins, yogurt, and coffee, tea, or milk for \$10.00 (includes tax and gratuity).

Reservation must be made by March 20 and can be done by contacting Pam Thiel at 788-6411, [jctpat@aol.com](mailto:jctpat@aol.com) or the League phone at 791-1191. You are responsible for the cost of the meal if you make a reservation and then don't attend.

INVITE A FRIEND WHO MAY BE INTERESTED IN KNOWING MORE ABOUT LEAGUE TO THE LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST!

# League of Women Voters - Energy

Gretchen Benjamin

The League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area has forums on important issues to the citizens of the state and nation at their regular meetings, anything from dental health care to HAVA, Help America Vote Act.

Recently, a Dairyland Power Cooperative guest joined us to talk about current energy and alternative energy. His expertise and focus was coal. Current coal technology has increased efficiency from 35% to 60% and technology has provided better methods for clean stack emissions. However, there are issues with coal extraction and by-products produced from combustion that must be placed in a non-leaking landfill. The take home message is: coal is a part of our energy future but there are ramifications of use.

One alternative energy discussed was anaerobic digestors. Here animal waste is collected, put it in anaerobic digestors where methane gas is produced, the gas is captured and then used to create electricity. DPC is using this technology to produce 750 kw around the clock or enough to provide 7000 homes with electricity. Additional research is necessary to understand this alternative energy source better.

More wind power is a part US energy production but more research is necessary because it can create surges in the power grid that can lead to shut downs.

In fact, no matter what the alternative energy source, solar, Biodiesel (corn, Switchgrass), wind, and/or landfill gas to name a few, research is needed to make them efficient, environmentally friendly and beneficial to the power generator and the user.

## DIALOGUE FOR DEMOCRACY

The Wisconsin Democracy Campaign and the League are co-sponsoring a community discussion on the subject of preserving democracy to today's society. The discussion, "Dialogue for Democracy: Shared Values for Reclaiming Democracy in Wisconsin" will be held Saturday, March 25, 2006 at the Reinhart Center for Ethics, Science and Technology, at Viterbo University from 8:00 a.m. to 12 noon. The speakers will be John Medinger and former legislator David Martin. Please note this is the same day as our Legislative Breakfast! We are working on arranging for the event to be taped so members attending the Breakfast can still be part of this discussion and will have an update as the event approaches. We are also seeking volunteers to assist with the event--please call Catherine Kolkmeier at 608-796-9090 to volunteer.

The April League meeting will focus on the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign. The date and

location will be announced by email and on the League website calendar:

<http://lwvlacrosse.org/calendar.html>

*Our Annual Meeting:  
You Won't Want to Miss It!*

Our annual meeting, the most important meeting of the year, is Monday, May 15 at Ciatti's Italian Resturaurant at 9348 Hwy. 16 in Onalaska. This is a chance to meet and visit with members, vote on the new slate of officers, and discuss our issues for the coming year.

The social hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is at 6:30 PM followed by the business meeting. We will be ordering off their diverse dinner menu. Reservation must be made by May 10 and can be done by contacting Pam Thiel at 788-6411, jctpat@aol.com or the League phone at 791-1191.



Ellen Rosborough (on left) with Melanie Ramey, President, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin at the update session on new election laws on February 25. Ellen lead the program and Teri Lehrke, City Clerk, provided some background on the AutoMARK voting system.

## State League Seeks Funding

State League President Melanie Ramey said at conclusion of the League election laws meeting on February 25 that the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is trying to strengthen its finances by building a reserve. The state League also plans to increase a part-time office position to full-time which will help with retention and continuity. Toward those goals, the state League is looking for member contributions. President Ramey suggested that on members birthdays each one send a check equivalent to her (or his) age...and of course any donation at any level is welcome. For more information on contributing, see the state League website:

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

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

Upcoming Election Dates for 2006

April 4: Spring Election

September 12: Partisan Primary

November 7: General Election

## LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS

Representative Ron Kind  
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1406 Longworth House Office Building  
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Senator Herbert Kohl  
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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>  
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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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e-mail: [Rep.Nerison@legis.state.wi.us](mailto:Rep.Nerison@legis.state.wi.us)

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## *County & State*

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 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/>

**GET FULL MEMBER ACCESS TO THE NATIONAL LEAGUE WEB SITE BY REGISTERING. IT'S A SIMPLE PROCESS THAT ONLY TAKES A FEW MINUTES.**

**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/>



### LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE LA CROSSE AREA

#### 2005/06 BOARD MEMBERS

*President*

Roxanne Reynolds

*Vice President*

Catherine Kolkmeier

*Secretary*

Sandy Sechrest

*Treasurer*

Dee Peacock

*Directors:*

Gretchen Benjamin

Anita Evans

Nancy Hill

Maureen Kinney

Betty Kruck

Jean Marck

Ellen Rosborough

Pam Thiel

### Meeting in the Middle

*The League of Women Voters National Convention will be held June 10-13, 2006, in Minneapolis, MN.*

Send correspondence regarding *La Crosse Wisconsin Voter* to the Editor, Anita Evans, at [anitalarry@centurytel.net](mailto:anitalarry@centurytel.net)

Look for registration information in the February issue of *National Voter*.

CALENDAR FOR MARCH-APRIL, 2006  
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE LA CROSSE AREA

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*Board Meeting*

*Wed., March 15 from Noon - 1:00 p.m.*

*Legislative Breakfast*

*Sat., March 25 at 9:00 a.m. Registration at 8:30 a.m.*

*Day's Inn, 101 Sky Harbour Drive*

*Spring* □

*Board Meeting*

*Wed., April 19 from Noon - 1:00 p.m.*

*April Program: Wisconsin Democracy Campaign*

*Date & Location TBA*

**Looking Ahead:**

*League Annual Meeting Mon., May 15. Social Hour at 5:30 p.m. & Dinner at 6:30 p.m.  
Ciatti's, 9348 Hwy 16, Onalaska*

Note: Contact LWV Board President or refer to the agenda for Board meeting locations.



League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area

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