

La Crosse Wisconsin Voter

No. 104 League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area Newsletter October 2009



THE PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

By Nancy Hill, President, LWV of La Crosse Area

Dear La Crosse League Members,

September has been a busy month for League. We had a remarkable **Health Care forum** at the Health Science Building on the 10th. Dr. Jeff Thompson of Gundersen- Lutheran and Dr. Robert Nesse of Franciscan Skemp Mayo were the featured speakers. They fielded a sizable stack of written questions that the audience provided, and Maureen Kinney coordinated. Then they also addressed questions live. We were fortunate in the breadth and complexity of questions and answers. People filed out of the event saying how much they had learned.

I was a little concerned that it would be an important event that not enough people would come to, or that it would be a bit of a circus, following the President's speech on health care reform the night before. I thought the night went perfectly. The room was full, and the people there were well-informed and represented many perspectives. They were tolerant of others as they asked and received answers. There was perhaps a question or two that caused a few to be edgy... and yet I thought those questions had merit and were answered so capably by Nesse and Thompson. These men have worked together so well on this complex set of issues. We are proud that La Crosse seems to be in the national spotlight for having done health care right. There are issues that were not glossed over, and I think the audience appreciated that. This is an extremely complicated issue... or it would already have been solved.

The Health Sciences Building was set up for a meeting of about 80 with an overflow room that would hold a like amount, with interactive TV screen and microphones. We had a very nice turnout of about 70 people. The media came, and I ran into someone who saw us on TV in Chetek. Amazing.

Thanks to Betty Kruck for arranging the meeting, Catherine Kolkmeier for her efforts getting the HSB ready, Maureen for asking the questions, Carla Townsend for great publicity work... and lots of others.

A short segue: the same Health Sciences Building venue for state convention in June. It has nice arena seating area, with good access for handicapped and good parking. It's close to downtown, and we have negotiations on hotel.

I'd like you to *imagine* the **State League Meeting in La Crosse**, being not only here and LIVE, but also televised to a couple of areas across the state. We are going to see where we get with this idea. The Health Sciences Building is well-poised for this. What we've noted is that fewer people are making trips across state for meetings. We plan to bring the meetings to at least two other sites. League members who attend such meetings here or via another site are likely to be more active.

Of course, we also want people to come to La Crosse and enjoy our wonderful area. SO... we are planning to incorporate social events around the Eco Park, and a tour of the back waters on a boat as part of a night out. We are in the planning phase and would like feedback. This will be on the weekend of **June 18 and 19th**, with days on either side for early meetings of some groups and time to stay and enjoy La Crosse area if they want to make more of an adventure out of it. So Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins and others area working on this, and we'd like your ideas.

Recycling With Sustainability in Mind
Penny Pierce, Hilltoppers Refuse
and Recycling Services, Inc.
Tuesday, October 13, 12:00-1:00
Riverside Center South- 332 Front Street S

Pennie Pierce, Refuse and Recycling Coordinator with Hilltoppers Refuse and Recycling Services, Inc., will tell the history of recycling in La Crosse. Pennie was the 1st Recycling Coordinator for the city of La Crosse, a position she held for 14 years. During that time Pennie was responsible for setting up a recycling program which included drop-off sites and curbside collection of glass bottles and jars, aluminum cans, steel cans and newspapers. Pennie has also had other valuable work experiences in the field of recycling and composting. Pennie will discuss the types of plastics that can be recycled, preparation of the plastics and what happens to the plastics after they leave La Crosse. Her presentation will also include a road map to change, and it will provide tips on what can be done at home to become more sustainable with the waste we produce.

Come join LWV members and others for an informative luncheon, or come just for the program. Please make reservations for lunch by Friday, October 9. The luncheon is \$9.00, Chef's Choice, provided by the Waterfront Restaurant. Please RSVP to Nancy Hill, #(608) 782-1753 or nfhill@centurytel.net.

Local Tours of Xcel Energy and La Crosse Landfill:

Nancy Hill, Carla Townsend and Ellen Rosborough took the opportunity to tour the Xcel Energy plant on French Island that collects, sorts and burns local waste products, including garbage and railroad ties. We donned our hard hats and went through the plant, viewing the sorting areas, 'fuel' transport through the plant and finally the furnaces. We learned quite a bit about how electricity is made and the pollution controls required. We saw a lot of trash... Then we went out to the La Crosse County Landfill, which is an overwhelming experience – the vast size of the facility makes you feel small, which in turn gives

you an understanding of the vast amount of material we consider waste.



Carla and Ellen at the Xcel plant

As a resident of another county, I was very interested in the Hazardous Waste facility. La Crosse County is managing the hazardous waste for 34 counties in Wisconsin, including mine. When I took my pills and containers of household chemicals to the once-a-year collection last month, it was then brought to La Crosse County, to be sorted and collected for disposal. Nothing is disposed of locally – they take or send all of the various e-waste (computers, etc) and chemicals and medicines to regional centers that do dispose of it. I will be interested to learn what can be done with all of the plastics now being burned.



Someday this will be a beautiful park....



Community Health Services-La Crosse Area

Doug Mormann-Director of La Crosse County Health Department

Tuesday, November 10, 12:00-1:00

Riverside Center South- 332 Front Street S

Doug Mormann is tireless in his pursuit of quality health services and practices for residents of La Crosse County. Expect to find Doug any time and any place where there is an opportunity to pursue quality health services for all residents of La Crosse County. Doug will speak and answer questions on a broad range of issues and services related to health care in the La Crosse area.

This is a good follow-up to the forum we had in September on the state of Health Care Reform. We do need to understand the current status to fully understand the reforms.

December Luncheon Meeting:

Lively Issues

Tuesday, December 8, 12:00-1:00

Riverside Center South- 332 Front Street S

Again, please make reservations for lunch by contacting Nancy Hill, nfhill@centurytel.net or #(608) 782-1753 by Friday, December 4. The lunch will be provided by the Waterfront Restaurant, Chef's Choice, for \$9.00 which includes tax and tip.

In addition to our program, let's celebrate the holiday season in League style. Bring a food item or bag full, and we will donate to a local food pantry. Holiday items might be appreciated too.



We are once again trying to bring back a long time League event that has not been very successful in our League for the past 10 years or more. The annual 'Lively Issues' meetings of the past were very long meetings, held in private homes or public locations usually a couple of times in January of each year. The purpose of these meetings was to discuss our local positions and decide if we wanted to revise or restudy them, plus discuss new issues that might become studies and eventually local positions. In addition to that exercise, we were also responsible for reviewing state and national positions and doing the same thing! As this exercise could actually take a week or more, we have not really done any of this for years. As a topic of interest came up, we decided to look into it and organized a program or two. We have not looked at local positions for several years and we have not collected our comments or participated in the decision process for program making at the state or national level for quite a few years.

This year, we are taking the first step. At the December meeting, we will discuss the local positions and if we need to do anything further. We will begin the discussion of the state and national issues and decide how to proceed with them, if we feel there is something we can add. The state annual meeting is here in June, and the National Convention is also in June – and will be held in Atlanta. Some of us might just head south and attend the convention – especially those with relatives in the area.

Here are the current positions for the La Crosse Area League of Women Voters:

Education

§ SUPPORT of the La Crosse Area School Districts efforts to provide educational facilities and opportunities.

Library Services

§ SUPPORT the continued membership in and adequate funding of the Winding Rivers Library System by La Crosse County and the City of La Crosse.

§ SUPPORT the library services of Books by Mail and Film by Mail for out-county and city residents.

§ SUPPORT the current level of services provided by the city and county branch libraries.

§ SUPPORT the increased funding of the County Library System to provide for expansion of services.

Government Affairs

§ SUPPORT efforts of government to provide just and humane programs of social services to the community.

§ SUPPORT expansion of the Human Services Board.

§ SUPPORT the opportunity to receive family planning information.

§ SUPPORT of the establishment of an elected County Executive.

§ SUPPORT intergovernmental cooperation-

Zoning

§ SUPPORT of the zoning ordinance of the City of La Crosse as outlined in the City Master Plan with emphasis on the inclusion of a flood plain and open space district.

Parks and Recreation

§ SUPPORT of the provision of adequate park facilities and recreational programs for the residents of La Crosse County as a function of government

§ SUPPORT planning for these facilities as a combined effort of citizens and the Board of Parks Commissioners.

§ SUPPORT the funding of city supported facilities and programs by alternative methods which recognize the use by non-residents of the city.

§ SUPPORT the provision of playground space and facilities uniformly throughout the city of La Crosse, as much as is geographically possible.

§ SUPPORT the concept that it is the responsibility of the Parks Board of Supervisors to provide better communication on facilities and programs not only for newcomers to the community but also to keep established citizens aware of programs.

Reapportionment

§ SUPPORT a position on reapportionment that encourages municipalities of La Crosse County to coordinate and cooperate with one another and the County to develop reapportionment and redistricting plans.

Human Resources

§ SUPPORT of the La Crosse City Housing code prohibiting cooking facilities in rooming units within rooming houses, i.e. a rooming unit without a private bathroom.

§ SUPPORT of enforcement of compliance with La Crosse City Housing and Building Codes by not permitting an owner to rent a vacated unit until compliance is made.



Some ideas for comment or discussion for the December meeting:

La Crosse has a County Executive – could this be deleted? Or continue support and add that the City of La Crosse should have a hired Manager?

There is no mention of the EcoPark. Do we need to add something?

For education, could the position be expanded to include all area school districts?

Are the library programs current?

Where is the position on the marsh? I thought we had one.

Eco-municipality and sustainability?

City of La Crosse housing and building codes – revision, deletion or expansion needed?

To consider these along with the state and national positions, you will have to do some research. If you don't have a paper copy of these handy (I have downsized my materials...), then you can access this information on the web.

To read the LWVWI positions

<http://www.lwvwi.org/cms/content/view/20/50/>

To read the LWVUS positions

Here is a link to the **Impact on Issues 2008-2010**:

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Library&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=137&ContentID=13352>

NEWSLETTERS, E-MAILS , RSVP's

You should all be getting newsletters... and we are hoping to reduce the number of actual MAILED newsletters by having many people opt for e-newsletters. There are risks and benefits. Some people change emails. You need to keep us informed, and if you are not getting messages and newsletters call me or e-mail me nfhill@centurytel.net If you wish your League Newsletter to come electronically, let Megan Rosborough know. megan.abtlaw@hotmail.com. You will then get an email with the link to the latest edition of the Voter, which you can read online or print out yourself. It is in full color online!

The benefit is we aren't making money on our current membership dues of \$60 so we can keep costs controlled and reduce paper and stamp use. Some of us still like to have a hard copy. That's fine, too.



We no longer have the League phone, which was not being called. That's a savings. It's not hard to contact me or a Board member. My cell is (608) 386-6237 and home (608) 782-1753...where I prefer to get those RSVP's for our lunch meetings.

The Board and I appreciate your interactions and suggestions.

Please help us grow our membership. Do ask friends to join. I think they'd love to.

League of Women Voters of La Crosse Area Board:

Nancy Hill, President (09-11)
Jane Klecamp, Vice President (09-11)
Dea Peacock, Treasurer (08-10)
Sandy Secrest, Secretary (08-10)
Roxanne Reynolds, Director (08-10)
Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins, Director (08-10)
Maureen Kinney, Director (08-10)
Betty Kruck, Director (09-11)
Peg Perri, Director (09-11)
Carla Townsend, Director (09-11)
Megan Rosborough, Voter
Ellen Rosborough, website and state liaison

Come Join Us!

We will continue with the noon program and lunch throughout the rest of the year, in addition to some special events:

October 13, 12:00-1:00 *Plastic Recycling-Pennie Pierce*

November 10, 12:00-1:00 *Community Health Services-Doug Mormann*

December 8, 12:00-1:00 *Lively Issues- Ellen Rosborough*

January 12, 12:00-1:00 *Transportation in Coulee Region, Bob Fisher*

February 9, 12:00-1:00 *Justice Sanctions: Effective Practices, Jane Klekamp*

March 9, 12:00-1:00 *Census 2010, Panel*

March 27, 9:00-11:00am *Legislative Breakfast*

April 13, 12:00-1:00 *Jumping Aliens: Asian Carp - Pam Thiel*

April 19 *Earth Day 2010: Climate Change*

May 11, 12:00-1:00 *Follow the Money, Mike McCabe*

June 8 *LWV La Crosse Annual Meeting*

June 11-15 *LWVUS Convention, Atlanta*

June

18-19 *LWVWI Annual Meeting, La Crosse*

Complete Count Committees

“Every decade since 1790, the U.S. Census Bureau has conducted a constitutionally mandated census to determine the number of people living within the United States and our territories. These data are used by our nation’s leaders to help make vital decisions on behalf of all residents, including reapportionment and redistricting. Census data also affect how more than \$300 billion in federal funds are distributed to tribal, state, and local governments each year. One of the primary goals of the 2010 Census is to increase the national mailback response rate. This not only reduces the overall cost of the census, but it also increases the accuracy of these data as well. Tribal, state, and local governments, as well as community and business organizations can help us achieve this goal by bringing local knowledge and expertise to the process.

The Complete Count Committee is a major vehicle for planning and implementing local, targeted efforts that will uniquely address the special characteristics of your community. The role of the Complete Count Committee will be to plan and implement local outreach efforts to publicize the importance of the 2010 Census. The work of this committee will be innovative, exciting, and rewarding.” *Message From the Director of the U.S. Census Bureau*

The Complete Count Committee (CCC) program consists of community and government leaders dedicated to building awareness of the 2010 Census. Complete Count Committee members can:

- Organize a team of local people who can provide the cultural and community insights necessary to build 2010 Census awareness efforts.
- Promote the value of accurate and complete census data.
- Have a positive impact on the questionnaire response rate.

Interested in joining or setting up a committee?

[Read the CCC guide](#)

[Contact Ellen Rosborough](#)

Contact Info for National Issues

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

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

Senate <http://feingold.senate.gov/>

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

Congress <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://elections.state.wi.us/>

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

Senate:

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

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

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@wisconsin.gov
- District 93 Rep. Jeff Smith, 608-266-0660 or 888-534-0093, Rep.Smith@wisconsin.gov
- District 94: Rep. Michael Huebsch, 608-266-0631 or 888-534-0094, Rep.Huebsch@legis.wisconsin.gov
- District 95: Rep Jennifer Shilling, 608-266-5780 or 888-534-0095, Rep.Shilling@legis.wisconsin.gov
- District 96: Rep. Lee Nerrison, 608-266-3534 or 888-534-0096, Rep.Nerrison@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]

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

Calendar for October-November, 2009

League of Women Voters La Crosse Area

Recycling Plastics with Sustainability in Mind

October 13, 12 – 1:00pm

Riverside Center South, Cargill Room North, 332 Front St. S

Community Health Services-La Crosse Area

November 10, 12 – 1:00pm

Riverside Center South, Cargill Room North, 332 Front St. S

Lively Issues

December 8, 12 – 1:00pm

Riverside Center South, Cargill Room North, 332 Front St. S



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