

# La Crosse Wisconsin Voter

No. 111

League of Women Voters of the La Crosse Area Newsletter

February/March 2011



## THE PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

By Nancy Hill, President, LWV of La Crosse Area

“The more things change the more they stay the same.” I think sometimes the old sayings keep us grounded and comforted when things seem to be moving too fast. But there’s room to be cautious about complacency. We have a changed political scene in Wisconsin and at the national level. We’ve experienced shifts before and know that often the big ideas are tempered by the slow grinding of the legislative process. Sometimes those big ideas are ours; sometimes they are someone else’s. Whatever your “take” on the issues of the day, it remains a responsibility to inform yourself and to take action. Be sure to write your letters and make your calls. Things won’t stay the same, but you might be able to influence the direction they change.

Wednesday, February 2 is a meeting to talk about La Crosse League positions and state positions. I hope this newsletter or an e-mail gets to you to keep you informed, and that you can attend. The meeting is to be at Java Vino at 9 AM. If you have further input, please contact Ellen Rosborough. The meeting had to be rescheduled, and I note that it remained incorrect in our website. Sorry about that. Thanks to those of you who called. Feedback is important.

Money and taxes are key to a lot of political maneuvering. Revenue Sharing and Regionalization are very interesting issues as we try to squeeze more out of every tax dollar, and make our government as efficient as possible. February 8 is another wonderful luncheon at the Radisson.

Redistricting is another area of impact that you might have. There are always political games played during the ten year re-configuration of power. Please take part

in the meetings, and attempt to have some influence. February 23 is an evening meeting about that.

April 2 will be the Legislative Breakfast at Days Inn. It’s always an exciting morning with good food and good fellowship. As always, plan to bring a friend.

### Redistricting; the Art, the Science, the Politics



Wednesday, February 23

7:00-8:30

La Crosse Public Library, 800 Main Street  
Ray Block, John Medinger

Dr. Ray Block, Professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at UW-L, will speak from his perspective as a trained expert witness for redistricting and voting rights cases. In 2009 the Southern Coalition for Social Justice, a multi-disciplinary civil rights and community advocacy group based in North Carolina, launched the Community Census and Redistricting Institute. The Institute advocates for minority representation and fair redistricting, and prepares social scientists, community advocates, and civil rights attorneys to advocate for voting rights protections. In July 2010 the Institute hosted 60 black and Latino political scientists, cartographers, and community advocates for a six day, intensive training called the *Expert Preparation and Community Education Program*. The initiative trained social scientists as expert witnesses for redistricting and voting rights cases emerging after the 2010 census. This training was then connected to the redistricting activities of southern-based, grassroots activists. At this time, the expert preparation program is the only initiative specifically targeting social scientists of color (mainly black and Latino) for participation in the post-2010 round of redistricting cases. Dr. Block looks forward to sharing

what he learned with the League of Women Voters and the La Crosse community.

Professor Block will be joined by John Medinger. John is currently Aide to U.S. Senator Herb Kohl, current La Crosse County Board member, former state legislator and former mayor for the city of La Crosse. John has experienced redistricting at the state, county and city level over several redistricting cycles. John will speak of experiences in Wisconsin and La Crosse and implications of redistricting efforts.

The program is free and open to the public.

## Voters At Risk

By Peg Perri

Two things are going on in the Wisconsin state government that warrants our immediate attention and action. There is a move to eliminate same day voter registration. Concurrently the subject of requiring voter ID has returned.

Our goal is to help citizens participate in their constitutional right to vote. Government's role is to facilitate, not hinder efforts to vote.

The citizens most affected by these two initiatives are African Americans, Latinos and people over the age of 65.

According to a study done by UW-Milwaukee, only 7 cases (0.0025%) of invalid votes cast in Wisconsin in 2004 were substantiated. In other words, there is not a problem of voter fraud. This is a misperception being promoted by those who want to discourage certain citizens from voting.

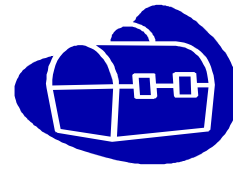
Requiring voter ID is known to reduce voter turnout.

Please get in touch with your representatives in the Wisconsin Assembly and Senate, as well as Governor Walker on these issues. They were elected to represent all the citizens in the state or in their districts, not just those who agree with them.

For more information, see

[www.ProtectWisconsinsVote.org](http://www.ProtectWisconsinsVote.org)

## February and March Lunch and Learn Programs



### Revenue Sharing/Regionalization

February 8

Radisson Hotel

Lunch-11:30, Program 12:00-1:00

Professor Joe Heim and Brian Fukuda

Revenue Sharing and Regionalism have been touted as promising ways to fund government operations and critical services; providing services to a wider geographic area with potential economies of scale and streamlining. However, the devil, as always, is in the details: how can it be funded equitably, can government be as responsive to constituents, and can a municipality, village or township maintain its own identity/autonomy and yet be a collaborative regional player?

Joe Heim, political science professor at UWL since 1975, teaches courses on State and Local Government, Public Administration, Public Budgeting and Public Sector Human Resources as well as campaigns and elections. His primary research interests have included local government service delivery options, including various ways that local governments can collaborate. Dr. Heim was one of the founders of an organization called Coulee Region Collaboration which later became United Coulee Region in the late 1990s. This organization evolved into the 7 Rivers Alliance, an organization that promotes public and private collaborations. Dr. Heim currently serves on a State Legislative Council special committee on Local Service Consolidations which is attempting to come up with legislative proposals that would encourage local governments to work together on a variety of issues.

Brian Fukuda, La Crosse County Community Development Coordinator, will share the county's perspective on advantages/disadvantages and some practicalities of making Revenue Sharing and

Regionalization work. Brian graciously steps in for Steve O'Malley who must attend a Wisconsin Counties Association Legislative Conference in Madison.

Please make reservations for lunch by contacting Nancy Hill at 608-782-1753 or [nfhill@centurytel.net](mailto:nfhill@centurytel.net) by Thursday, February 3.

### **History of Family Planning in the Coulee Region**

March 8

Radisson Hotel

Lunch-11:30, Program 12:00-1:00

Janet Kusch, Executive Director of Options Clinic

The *History of Family Planning in the Coulee Region* is portrayed in a DVD that documents the history of access to family planning in the Coulee Region since the beginning of Options Clinic in 1971. The purposes of the production are to:

- Increase awareness of the work accomplished by founding men and women to assure access to family planning and contraception in the Coulee Region;
- Impact attitudes about the benefits of family planning and access to contraception; and

- Empower and inspire men and women to advocate for access to contraception for all.

The Options Clinic is grateful to its founders and the donors who made the production possible. Particular thanks are given to Margaret Larson whose script creativity and masterful editing provides a meaningful, but succinct history, and to Gundersen Lutheran's Medical Media Department who provided the expertise, technology and resources to produce the visual form.

Janet Kusch, LWV member and Executive Director of Options Clinic for 15 years, will present the DVD history and answer questions. Janet's passion is to encourage the normalization of sexuality through barrier-free access to sexual health care and comprehensive sexuality education. Options Clinic has provided Reproductive and Sexual Health Care continuously since 1972. The home clinic is located in La Crosse, with satellite clinics in Sparta, Prairie du Chien and Richland Center. In 2010 Options Clinic provided clinical services to 6,293 unduplicated clients. Options Clinic is a Title X Clinic and an affiliate of Gundersen Lutheran. Services are provided to all regardless of ability to pay.

Please make reservations for lunch by contacting Nancy Hill at 608-782-1753 or [nfhill@centurytel.net](mailto:nfhill@centurytel.net) by Thursday, March 3.

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### **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 February – March 2011

## League of Women Voters La Crosse Area

***Revenue Sharing/Regionalization***

Radisson Hotel, 200 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse

February 8, 11:30am -1:00pm

***Redistricting; the Art, the Science, the Politics***

La Crosse Public Library, 800 Main Street, La Crosse

February 23, 7:00-8:30pm

***History of Family Planning in the Coulee Region***

Radisson Hotel, 200 Harborview Plaza, La Crosse

March 8, 11:30am-1:00 pm



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