



Planned Gift Builds Upon a Legacy of Work with the League

Carroll McCarty Gundersen took to the League of Women Voters “like a duck to water,” according to her daughter, Signe Gundersen Schroeder. She noted that her mother, who died in 1989 at age 87, helped revitalize the LWV La Crosse League and went on to become state president and a member of the board of LWVUS. In the early 1970s, Gundersen served as national chair of the League’s \$11 million fund raising campaign to mark the organization’s 50th anniversary, a position that required her to travel throughout the country to make presentations about the League’s mission.

“My mother just loved the League,” Schroeder remembered.

At the time of her death, Gundersen’s children ensured that their mother’s considerable legacy would continue by establishing a fund in her name at the La Crosse Community Foundation called the CMG Women’s Fund. Now, they have advised grants from the CMG Women’s Fund to benefit the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Network, creating an unrestricted fund in honor of Carroll McCarty Gundersen. The state board will establish guidelines for use of the fund, similar to those for the League’s endowment.

“Planned gifts such as those from the Carroll McCarty Gundersen Fund give our organization greater financial stability to carry out the League’s informed, unbiased voter education and advocacy,” Andrea Kaminski, LWVWI Executive Director, said. “It’s a wonderful way to honor someone who has done so much for the League.”



Carroll McCarty Gundersen

Gundersen was a strong advocate of the League because of its underlying belief

in the study of issues for formation of its positions.

“Mother was a scholar in a way,” Schroeder recalled. “She felt that before you express your opinion, you ought to do some research first.”

Gundersen grew up near Buffalo, NY and graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Wellesley College in 1924. After working briefly as a social worker and secretary, she married Alf Gundersen and settled in La Crosse.

Her energies were first directed to the Girl Scouts, where she rose to chair the local council and became involved in the state organization. Her work with the Scouts, and later the League, earned her so much respect that she was named “Man of the Year” in 1950 by the Greater La Crosse Chamber of Commerce. The unusual honor made national news.

“Times have changed so much,” Schroeder reflected. “During my mother’s lifetime, the League provided a forum for women’s leadership that wasn’t threatening to men. Now we have women running for president of the United States. I like to think that my mother’s work with the League helped lay the foundation for that.” ❖

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President's Message



Melanie G. Ramey

Perhaps you think of yourself as a supporter of the League...but what does that really mean? Some people become members and actively participate in our events. Others are philosophically attuned to what the League does. Still others appreciate the League's role with insuring that democracy in our country is strong.

There was a time when the tremendous efforts of early suffragists were sufficient when backed by contributions from a few, such as Susan B. Anthony, who borrowed against her life insurance policy to fund the work. However, times have changed, and it is now impossible to sustain a strong, capable organization on volunteer efforts and annual contributions alone. To keep up with the pace of government and communications, effective organizations must respond to issues in a timely manner, as we did when we challenged Wisconsin's voter ID law in 2011. The state League needs a highly professional presence to have a convincing voice among the many organizations speaking—often too loudly—on public policy today.

I invite you to consider ways you can help assure the longevity and relevancy of the League by using planned giving that fits in with other aspects of your estate planning. A planned gift is any

major gift made as part of a donor's overall financial and/or estate planning. In contrast, gifts for our annual appeal and membership dues are made from donors' discretionary income; they may be budgeted, but are not planned. While the League is grateful for both types of support, planned gifts offer a stable, predictable income flow that allows our lean organization to confidently take on larger issues.

Here are just a few of the ways you can help the League:

- Designate a gift to "where it's needed most" to help the state League remain strong and prepared to meet new challenges.
- Support a designated fund, such as the Voter ID Lawsuit Fund or the Meg McLane Advocacy Award Fund.
- Contribute to the League's Endowment Fund to ensure that the League can continue to fight for clean government in Wisconsin. While an undesignated gift supports the League this year, a gift to the Endowment will be invested to sustain the League for many years to come.
- Establish a named fund that will generate an annual gift to the League. This might be general operating support or, for example, a named annual lecture.
- Name the League as a beneficiary in your will, retirement plan, life insurance policy or charitable trust. Your financial professional can explain how such a gift can provide for you and your family, while providing a lasting legacy for democracy.

LWVWEN is a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization, so your contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Please do all you can to help us make democracy work in Wisconsin—today, and for years to come. ❖

League of Women Voters of WI Education Network/Advocacy Network 2013 Calendar

LWVWEN Board Meeting
June 7, Milwaukee

LWVWEN Annual Meeting
June 7-8, Milwaukee

LWVUS Council
June 14-17, Virginia

LWVWEN Board Planning Meeting
July 25-26, Madison

LWVWAN Board/Annual Meeting
July 26, Madison

LWVWEN Board Meeting
October 4, Madison

Issues Briefing
October 5, Madison

The state board is recommending three proposals to guide the League's program activities in the coming year. At the Annual Meeting, delegates will have the opportunity to vote on these.

SPECIAL INSERT! 

**Register Now
For The
2013 Annual
Meeting**

Building Leagues, Building Democracy

League of Women Voters® of Wisconsin Education Network

2013 Annual Meeting

Friday, June 7–Saturday, June 8, 2013 • Hilton Milwaukee City Center

AGENDA

Friday, June 7

- 6 PM** Registration table is open
- 7–8:15 PM** ***Independence, Accountability, and Legitimacy:
The Selection of State Judges***
- Sara Benesh, Professor of Political Science, UW-Milwaukee
- Hon. JoAnne Kloppenburg, Wisconsin Court of Appeals 4th District, and former Supreme Court candidate
- 8:15–9:30 PM** Social reception—light refreshments, wine, soft drinks

Saturday, June 8

- 7:30–8:30 AM** Registration table is open
- 8:30–8:45 AM** ***Welcome***, opening remarks; introductions
- 8:45–9:45 AM** ***Morning Keynote:
If the DNR won't enforce environmental laws, who will?***
Kimberlee Wright, Midwest Environmental Advocates
- 9:45–10:15 AM** Voter Service (LWV Dane County)
- 10:15–10:30 AM** Break
- 10:30–11:15 AM** ***Advocacy and Visibility in the Community***
(LWV Whitewater Area and LWV Appleton)
- 11:15–11:45 AM** - Membership (LWV Milwaukee County)
- Redistricting reform committee meeting
- 11:45–Noon** Break
- Noon–1:30 PM** Awards Luncheon
- 1:30–2 PM** ***Conducting a Local Study – Mental Health*** (LWV Manitowoc County)
- 2–2:30 PM** ***Parade of Leagues*** (10 leagues not featured earlier or in other sessions)
- 2:30–3:30 PM** ***Plenary Session***
- 3:30 PM** ***Adjourn***

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Annual Meeting Delegates Will Select Program for 2013-14 League Year

Earlier this year the state board asked local Leagues to weigh in on updating state League positions and program by responding to two online surveys. After reviewing survey responses and feedback from the state Legislative Committee, the state board is placing the following recommendations up for a vote at the Annual Meeting:

1. Redistricting: The state board recommends adoption of the Legislative Committee's proposed revision of the current state position on Apportionment. The proposed revision was published in the last issue of *Forward* and is posted on the state League website at lwvwi.org.

The Legislative Committee has also proposed an action plan called the Campaign for Redistricting Reform, and is seeking volunteers. See story on page five for more information.

2. Administration of Justice (specifically, the position dealing with selection of Supreme Court justices): Last year, the state League's Judicial Independence Committee provided every local League with a binder of materials about judicial selection and recusal. The materials are available online at lwvwi.org.

Eleven of the 16 Leagues responded to an online survey about the state judicial selection position. The responses revealed a lack of consensus to continue to support the League's existing position, which favors a

merit selection system. The Committee recommended removal of the current position on judicial selection from our state positions and prompt implementation of a process to formulate an updated or revised position for consensus and adoption at the 2014 Annual Meeting.

The state board considered the Committee's report and also recommends removing the current position on judicial selection. The State Board does not recommend further study of judicial selection at this time, noting that times have changed since the position was adopted and that it is clear that both major methods of selecting Supreme Court justices—election and merit selection—have advantages and disadvantages. The board stresses that regardless of the method used to select judges and justices, the LWVWEN must continue to advocate for a system of justice that assures adults and juveniles prompt and equal treatment before the law.

3. Natural Resources: A preliminary review of our Natural Resources positions by Elizabeth Wheeler, a member of both the state board and our Legislative Committee, identified a number of areas that are outdated or that are not adequately addressed. Eight Leagues responded to an online survey intended to identify items of most interest to members for update or review. Based on these responses, the state board recommends adoption of the following:

- a. Replace the phrase "Global Warming" with "Climate Change" in the Natural Resources positions.
- b. Review and update state positions on water quality and quantity in Wisconsin.

Volunteers needed!

Both the Campaign for Redistricting Reform and the update of the water positions will require active participation by League members. If these programs are adopted, most of the committee work will be carried out via conference calls and electronic means.

For more information, contact the State Office at (608) 256-0827. ❖

Save Trees and the League Money!

Money doesn't grow on trees, but we can save both by using email for League communications! Send an email to lwvwisconsin@lwvwi.org to sign up for any of the following (be sure to tell us which items you wish to receive by email):

- *Forward Newsletter*
- *League Updates and Action Alerts*

Building Leagues, Building Democracy **League of Women Voters® of Wisconsin Education Network** **2013 Annual Meeting**

Friday, June 7–Saturday, June 8, 2013 • Hilton Milwaukee City Center

Campaign for Redistricting Reform *Volunteers needed!*

The state League is launching a campaign for redistricting reform, and there will be an initial planning meeting at the Annual Meeting in Milwaukee. We will work with other nonpartisan groups to advocate for an independent redistricting process, which will remove partisanship, save taxpayer money and restore public trust. We hope there will be at least one representative from each local League to work on this initiative.

The Wisconsin Constitution gives the legislature authority to apportion Congressional districts and draw the boundaries of state Senate and Assembly districts following each decennial U.S. Census. The process is usually contentious and the state or federal courts have been involved in every redistricting since the 1950s.

The League of Women Voters has supported the mapping of electoral districts based on the principle of “one person, one vote” since the 1930s. Over the years LWVWI has monitored the redistricting process, testified before local redistricting bodies and the legislature, joined lawsuits, supported reform legislation and educated the public about nonpartisan redistricting. The League’s long-held position in favor of having redistricting carried out by an independent entity has been attacked by both of the major political parties at different times over the decades, depending on which party was in power.

In effect, the current system allows legislators to choose their voters, rather than the other way around.

In the 2011 redistricting, the legislature held only one hearing after the maps had been drawn in secrecy with financial and strategic help from partisan state-based and national organizations. Concerned about pending Senate recall elections, the legislature also turned the traditional Wisconsin redistricting process upside down by drawing legislative districts before

county and municipal redistricting commissions had completed their local maps. The redistricting led to lawsuits, which continue today and have already cost taxpayers more than \$2 million.

As a consequence, the League is advocating for an independent, nonpartisan entity to draw district boundaries. This could be accomplished by way of a state constitutional amendment or by statute. The League is starting now with a public education campaign, so that lawmakers in power early in a given decade do not have as great a stake as those in office when redistricting is about to take place.

The committee will meet during the LWVWI State Annual Meeting on June 8 to formulate an action plan to meet stated campaign objectives. If you are interested in participating, contact your local League board or the state office. ❖

Celebrate Mother’s Day With a Legacy Gift to the League

Many donors use their wills, IRAs or living trusts to make their most generous gifts. Please remember the LWVW Education Network when you create yours.

For more information, contact Andrea Kaminski, (608) 256-0827.

Find the League on Facebook!

[facebook.com/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Wisconsin](https://www.facebook.com/pages/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Wisconsin).

Future Reforms Should Build on the Strengths of Wisconsin Elections

In March, the League delivered the following message about election reform in testimony before the Government Accountability Board and in a memo to all Wisconsin legislators.

We in Wisconsin can be proud that our state had the second highest voter turnout in the nation last November, in a clean, accessible and efficiently administered election.

Working with other nonpartisan groups, the League of Women Voters placed trained observers in 440 polling sites around the state on November 6, 2012. They found that election officials, in general, maintained orderly polling places where voters felt welcome, safe and well-served. We have provided you with a copy of the final report.

The observers noted significant improvements in election administration and polling place management since the statewide recall elections held in June 2012. The problems that were reported appeared to be site-specific, rather than a result of a systemic failure. We attribute the improvements to the enhanced training of local officials and also to the clarification by the Government Accountability Board of what constitutes acceptable proof of residence for voter registration, as well as of the rules for election observers.

Following such success, it is clear that any future reforms should build on those aspects of our election system that are working well, while addressing any weaknesses with solutions that do not undermine the strengths.

It is easy to identify the strengths of Wisconsin's election system, beginning with the fundamentals. Our right to vote is expressly guaranteed in our state constitution, and our high voter turnout reflects an engaged citizenry. We have local election officials who are friendly, professional and committed to helping people register and vote. Observers are welcome at the polls in Wisconsin, as long as they respect the need for a safe and orderly voting process.

In the GAB we have a state agency with a competent staff to provide training and guidance to local officials. In a model for the nation, the Board is led by nonpartisan officials who work to balance the interests of diverse groups and individuals who care about our elections and wish to make them better.

With so much to be proud of, we must ensure that any future reforms will build on the strengths of our election system. Reforms should address documented problems, or they should

take advantage of new technologies or other opportunities to improve elections. Reforms should never set the clock back on the strengths of our Wisconsin elections.

To that end, the League of Women Voters makes the following recommendations, some of which will require legislation:

1. Retain Election Day Registration, a cost-effective tool that has served Wisconsin voters of all political stripes well for 36 years.
2. Continue to improve training of election officials. That was the source of the improvements observed in November.
3. Allow a wider array of acceptable proof of residence documents for voter registration, including dorm lists and corroboration.
4. Modernize the voter registration system. More Americans are doing secure banking online. Why not permanent, online voter registration? Once we have properly registered, we should be able to easily update our information when we move, at least as long as we stay in-state.
5. Enhance voter education so people come to the polls organized and ready to register and vote. ❖



Irene Strohbeen, LWV Appleton, speaks at Voting Rights Lobby Day on April 17, 2013. Joining her is Mary Kae Nelson, LWV Milwaukee County, second from right, and other members of the Protect Wisconsin Elections Coalition who called upon legislators to stand up against policies that create obstacles for eligible voters.

Executive Director's Message

Photo: Carolyn Faith



Andrea Kaminski

April has become a sorrowful month for the League as we have lost two dedicated advocates for good government in Wisconsin. Art Palleon, who died of pancreatic cancer on April 7, was a member of LWV Ozaukee County and of the state Legislative Committee. Longtime LWV Dane County member Cynthia Benevenga passed away on April 22 following a brief illness. Both were extraordinary volunteers.

New Delegates for LMLWV Announced

The League continues to have a strong presence in the Lake Michigan LWV. Marge Palleon is Treasurer, a position she has held since 2012. Helga Guequierre, LWV Milwaukee County, and Pam Nelson-Icenogle, LWV Ripon Area, are delegates; Anita Rappe, LWV Manitowoc County, and Pat Finder-Stone, LWV Greater Green Bay, have been named as alternate delegates.

We believe Art would be pleased that Wisconsin has such able representatives to carry on his legacy for the Lake.

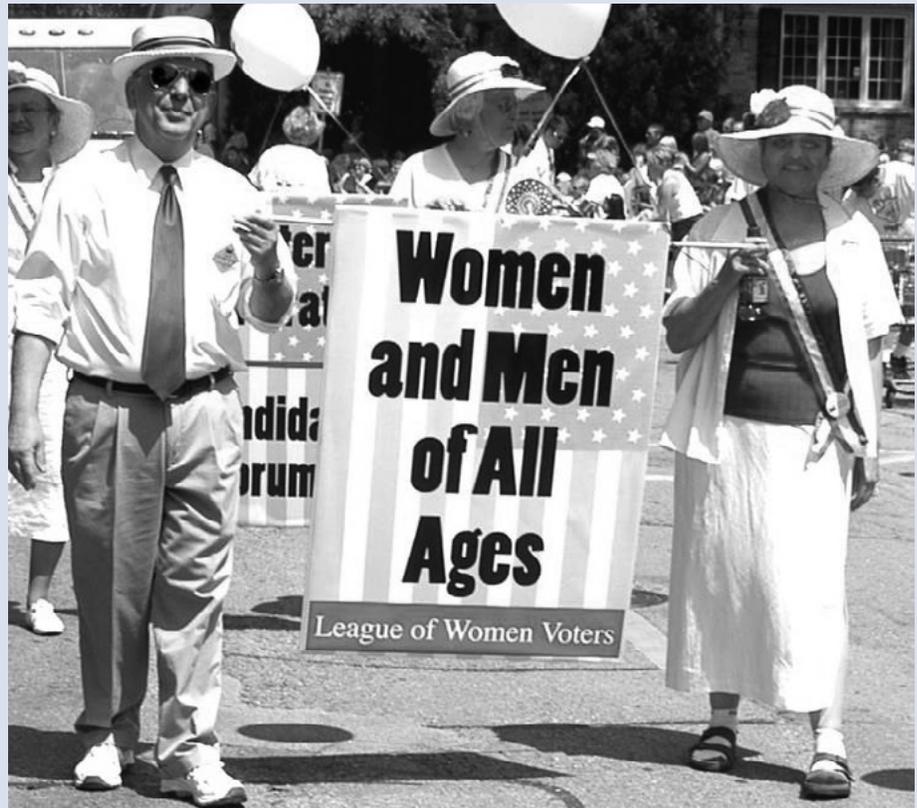
For several years, Art, along with his wife Marge Palleon, kept the state League informed about opportunities and threats related to the water quality and preservation of Lake Michigan. Art and Marge began serving in 2004 as our state's delegates to the Lake Michigan League of Women Voters (LMLWV), an inter-League group with representatives from states surrounding the Lake. The state board was grateful for their outstanding leadership in this capacity. Art resigned from his positions with LMLWV and the Legislative Committee in February of this year because of his health.

Among her many contributions to the League, Cynthia served as LWV Dane County President and as LWVWI Treasurer. She also set up our financial accounting systems at the state League and served as our Budget Committee chair for the past many years. The budget going to our Annual Meeting this year was led by Cynthia, who was always looking for ways to make our financial processes better.



Cynthia Benevenga

I already miss Art's kind, good humor in Legislative Committee meetings and his unwavering commitment to action on behalf of a better Wisconsin. I also miss Cynthia's dedication as well as her visits to the League office—she usually brought family photos, clippings of articles, programs from performances she and her husband, Ben, attended, and sometimes even chocolate treats. ❖



Art and Marge Palleon represent the League at a 4th of July parade.

Around The State

Appleton: Irene Strohbeen, voter service chair, spoke on behalf of the League at a news conference held at the State Capitol on Voting Rights Lobby Day on April 17.

Ashland-Bayfield Counties:

Contacted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency twice so far this year about cleanup of lake-bottom pollution by Xcel Energy.

Beloit and Whitewater Area:

Co-sponsored Common Cause in Wisconsin's nonpartisan forums entitled "Whatever Happened to Good Government in Wisconsin? And How Can We Fix It?"

Greater Green Bay: Held a forum on judicial independence and accountability with an expert from St. Norbert College, a federal judge, an attorney and LWVWEN director Andrea Kaminski speaking.

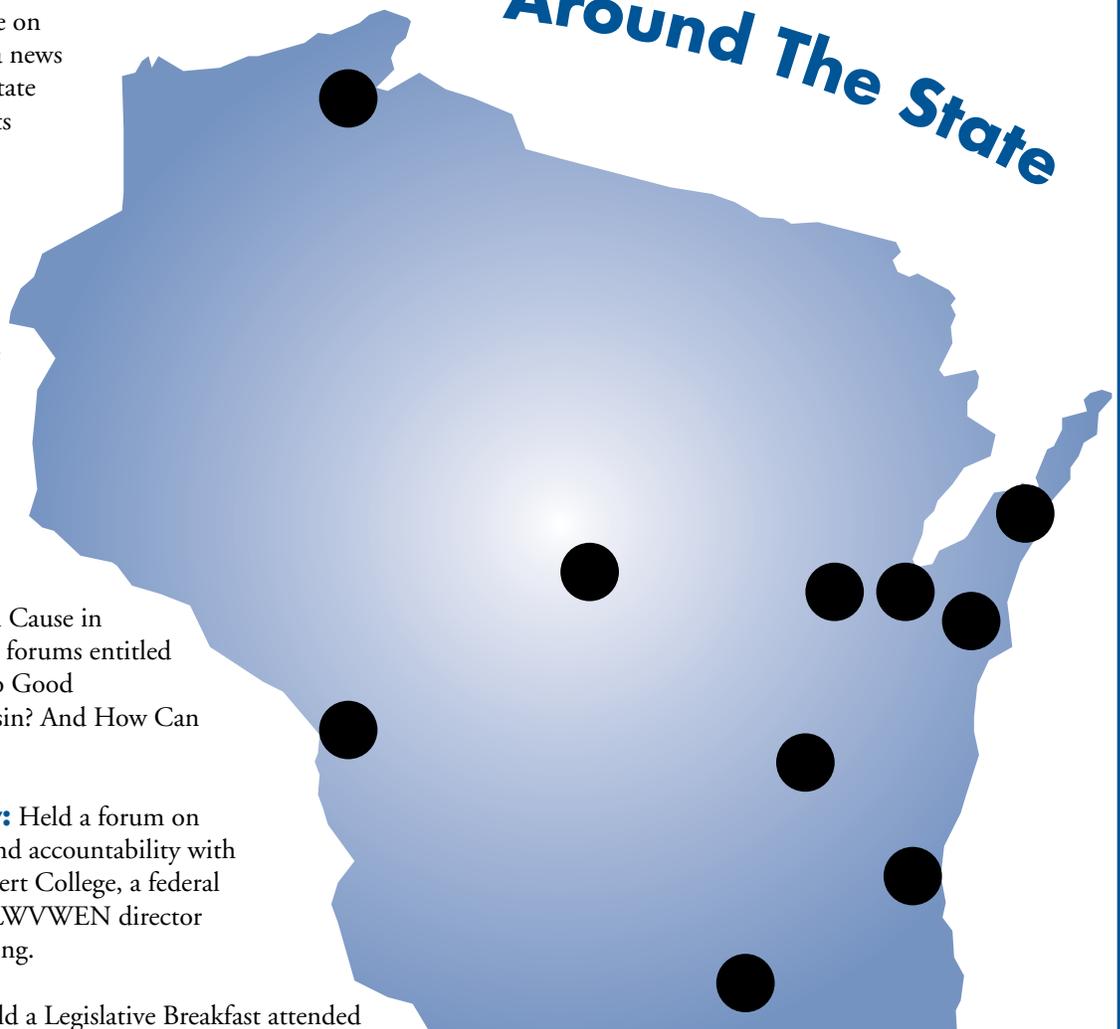
La Crosse Area: Held a Legislative Breakfast attended by Sen. Schilling, Rep. Billings, Rep. Kind and a staffer for Sen. Baldwin; hosted a luncheon at which UW-Extension associate professor Karl Green spoke about frac sand mining.

Manitowoc County: Completed a local study on mental health services and will present at the state Annual Meeting.

Milwaukee County, Greater Green Bay, Door County and Appleton: Members testified at Joint Finance Committee hearings to advocate for BadgerCare, Family Care, Treatment Alternatives and Diversion (TAD) programs, and public transit; they spoke against expansion of the school vouchers program.

Stevens Point Area and Wisconsin Rapids Area: Co-hosted a forum on judicial independence with UW-Milwaukee professor Sara Benesh as keynote speaker.

Ripon Area: Hosted a public presentation led by two water monitors for the Water Action Volunteers Program as part of a series of activities by the League's Ground and Surface Water Study Committee. ❖



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®
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EDUCATION NETWORK

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