



FORWARD

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WISCONSIN EDUCATION FUND, INC.

League President Helps Wisconsin Prepare for the Election

With the election just around the corner, the League is working at the local, state and national levels to inform and prepare citizens to exercise their right to vote on November 2. LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara came to Wisconsin October 1-2 as part of her ten-state tour to raise awareness of the importance of voting in the midterm election.

On Friday, October 1, she met with officials at the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board to discuss voter registration, access to voting, evidence of voter caging in our state and the danger of unlimited expenditures of secret money by special interests in our elections. Afterward, she was interviewed by Wisconsin Eye, a statewide multimedia public affairs network. Much of the dialogue focused on the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Citizens United case.

"If a corporation can be a citizen and is subject to the same spending limitations that an individual would be subject to, that would be one thing," she said. "I think we need to be focusing less on the 'corporations as people' part of the Citizens United decision and more on the impact of the money because the money is something we may be able to do something about."

(To watch the interview visit www.wiseye.org/wisEye_programming/ARCHIVES-pwi.html and scroll down to "10.01.10 Perspective Wisconsin: League of Women Voters.")

Later MacNamara attended training for the League's Membership Recruitment Initiative, a successful national program to build membership and develop leadership. Thirteen of 17 local Leagues in the state applied to participate in the program and Appleton, Beloit, Greater Green Bay, Manitowoc, Whitewater Area and Winnebago County were selected. These six Leagues will work with state coaches Louise Petering, Peggy Cox and Vonna Pitel and the national League. Leagues not selected for Year One will have the opportunity to participate in the future. The program is largely funded through generous support from Walter Shur in memory of his wife, Ruth S. Shur, a long-time League leader.

On Saturday morning, MacNamara toured our beautiful State Capitol and the Dane County Farmers Market while the state League offered our annual Issues Briefing one block away. She joined us at Monona Terrace as keynote speaker for our 90th Anniversary Luncheon.



Elisabeth MacNamara, LWVUS President.

Throughout her visit, MacNamara stressed the importance of the midterm elections, noting Wisconsin will elect a new Governor and at least thirty new state legislators this year.

"The fact that we're not electing a president this year does not mean that this election is less important," MacNamara said. "In so many ways, this election may be more important for Wisconsin voters than two years ago because you're electing a governor, and your state house and senate are in play. All of the local officials on the ballot are so important in our daily lives."

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She encourages voters to go online to the League's nonpartisan "Vote411.org" website, which offers information about election administration and law for all 50 states. You can "build your ballot" with the state League's voter guide by going to: onyourballot3.vote411.org/. Type in your address to see just those races on your ballot, or check out all of them if you prefer. Candidates' positions can be compared side by side, and you can print out a "ballot" indicating your preferences as a reminder on Election Day. ❖



LWVWI President Melanie Ramey (left) and LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara (third from left), with LWVUS staff members Cheryl Graeve and Tim O'Brien at Issues Briefing.

Special Committee Examines Judicial Discipline and Recusal

Experts speaking to the Joint Legislative Council's Special Committee on Judicial Discipline and Recusal on September 16 frequently cited the League of Women Voters' 2008 proposal for a judicial recusal rule. The committee, which is charged with reviewing the current system and recommending an objective standard for judicial recusal, heard testimonies from four Supreme Court justices, the State Public Defender's office, Wisconsin Democracy Campaign and others. Andrea Kaminski, LWVWI Executive Director, is a committee member.

Speakers noted that recusal decisions are addressed by the state statutes and the judicial code, as well as by standards of due process. All three systems leave it up to the discretion of the individual judge or justice to decide whether or not he or she can preside over a case in a fair and impartial manner. However, Chief Justice Shirley Abrahamson explained that the consequences differ in cases where the judge chooses not to withdraw. Under the state statute, as well as under due process, a litigant may appeal a judge's decision not to recuse him/herself; a successful appeal voids the judge's ruling. The Judicial Code does not offer any such relief to the litigant.

An earlier meeting, held in August, focused on judicial discipline, and the October meeting will be a public hearing. League President Melanie Ramey will testify as to why the League petitioned the Supreme Court to adopt rules requiring judges and justices to withdraw from cases involving major campaign supporters.

WisconsinEye is recording the committee meetings, from gavel to gavel. You can view the proceedings online at www.wiseye.org or on Charter cable channel 995. ❖

Make the League Part of Your Legacy

The League of Women Voters is the organization where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement. Guided by principles that help nurture and protect our government systems, the League is a "trusted convener" that helps citizens understand and impact policies that affect their lives and liberties.

You can help advance these efforts in Wisconsin and leave your legacy by making a gift to the LWVWI Endowment Fund. Income from bequests, gifts of stock and memorial gifts sustains the League well into the future. The next time you review your charitable giving plan, consider the League. For more information, contact Andrea Kaminski, (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 lwwisconsin@lwwwi.org to sign up for any of the following (be sure to tell us which items you wish to receive by email):

- *Forward Newsletter*
- *Weekly League Update*
- *Action Alerts*



Making Democracy Work®

2009-2010

Annual Report

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WISCONSIN, INC. • LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WISCONSIN EDUCATION FUND, INC.

All Hands on Deck



Many hands make light work. This adage certainly proved true during the past fiscal year at the state League. Here's how hard-working Leaguers

and staff, with generous and important financial support from foundations and our members, made democracy work in Wisconsin:

The League's judicial recusal rule had a hearing before the Supreme Court in October 2009. Although the court denied our proposal, our efforts highlighted the need for clear rules in light of costly judicial campaigns. Editorials around the state agreed, and the Joint Legislative Council formed a committee to explore the issue.

The Joyce Foundation, Horace Hagedorn Foundation and Madison Gas & Electric provided funding for a collaborative project to achieve an accurate count for Wisconsin in the 2010 Census. Eleven local Leagues conducted public forums, distributed flyers, wrote letters and promoted Census participation at community events to put Wisconsin first in the nation for Census response.

The Legislative Committee submitted testimony on more than thirty bills,

including the state budget. In addition, members responded to LWVWI Action Alerts by contacting their legislators. Successes: passage of the Impartial Justice bill, Healthy Youth Act, Mental Health Parity Act and several bills to protect our natural resources. Disappointments: no vote on the election reform bill or Clean Energy Jobs Act.

To educate the public about legislation, the League had guest columns in several state newspapers about felon voting rights, payday lending, judicial recusal, U.S. Supreme Court rulings in the Caperton and Citizens United cases, judicial selection, election reform and the role of election observers.

In June we held our first League Annual Meeting by video conference. While many Leaguers attended the actual meeting in La Crosse, fourteen members tuned in via teleconference from a site in Oshkosh. This option helped reduce cost and travel barriers and boosted overall participation.

I am always amazed when I step back and reflect on what we can accomplish, working together, over the course of a year. We are fortunate to have foundation funding for these projects. Funds for general operations remain elusive, however, and we must rely on our members and friends to continue our important work. Our year-end request for support will arrive in your mailbox soon. Please give generously. ❖

Melanie G. Ramey

Melanie G. Ramey, President



Traci Rogers, LWV Janesville, staffs a booth about the Census at Parker High School.

2010 Annual Report



LWV Ozaukee County members Beverly Oblack, Carol Hertz, Vonna Pitel, Donna Fowler and Jayne Miller at the LWVWI 90th Anniversary Luncheon.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin (LWVWI) Education Fund is a nonpartisan organization that encourages informed and active participation in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. It is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS tax code. The LWVWI Education Fund is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and works in partnership with 17 local Leagues. It is funded through member dues, grants and program income.

LWVWI Education Fund, 2009-2010*

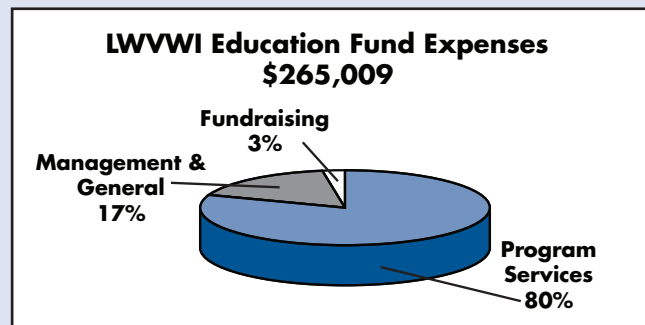
Income

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Community Shares of Wisconsin | \$9,122 |
| Contributions | \$35,230 |
| Membership Dues | \$29,548 |
| Grants & Special Projects | \$75,825 |
| Program Revenues | \$5,305 |
| Net Assets Released (grant carryover from 08-09) | \$62,287 |
| Miscellaneous Income | \$2,488 |
| Investment Income (Loss) | \$4,126 |
| Total Income | \$223,931 |

Expenditures

| | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| Program Services | \$213,163 |
| Management & General | \$45,285 |
| Fundraising | \$6,561 |
| Total Expenses | \$265,009 |
| Increase (Decrease) in Unrestricted | |
| Net Assets | (\$41,078) |
| Net Assets on June 30, 2010 | \$133,851 |

* Audited financial report



The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is a separate organization from the LWVWI Education Fund which is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(4). It is currently inactive. Its net assets on June 30, 2010 were \$41,967.

League Leadership

Officers

| | |
|--|---|
| Melanie Ramey, President LWV Dane County 2009-2011 | Ellen Rosborough, Treasurer LWV La Crosse Area 2010-2012 |
| Debra Cronmiller, Vice President LWV Appleton 2010-2012 | Julie Arneith, Secretary LWV Greater Green Bay 2009-2011 |

Directors

| | |
|--|---|
| Laura Boettcher LWV Janesville 2010-2012 | Joyce McCollum LWV Greater Green Bay 2009-2011 |
| Patricia Finder-Stone LWV Greater Green Bay 2009-2011 | Louise Petering LWV Milwaukee County 2009-2011 |
| Ethel Himmel LWV Janesville 2009-2011 | Pamela Rewey LWV Dane County 2009-2011 |
| Linda Jorgenson LWV Ashland/Bayfield Cos. 2010-2011 | |

Local Leagues

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Appleton | Manitowoc |
| Ashland/Bayfield Counties | Milwaukee County |
| Beloit | Ozaukee County |
| Dane County | Ripon Area |
| Door County | Stevens Point Area |
| Greater Green Bay | Whitewater Area |
| Janesville | Winnebago County |
| Kewaunee County | Wisconsin Rapids Area |
| La Crosse Area | |

State Office Staff

Andrea Kaminski, Executive Director
Laurel Fleet, Administrative/Program Assistant

Thank You to Our Donors!

July 1, 2009 – June 30, 2010

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
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| Margaret Amlie | Mary Clare Freeman | Melinda & Kenneth | Vince O'Hern* | Marilyn & David |
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| Gabrielle Blood* | Nikki Hatch* | Beverly Mach | John Quinn* | Janet Van Vleck |
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| Vera Boone | Hazel Hiemstra | Helen Madsen | Miriam Reading | Yvonne Vitense |
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| Kristen Brown | Ethel Himmel | Jay Larkey | Glenn Reindl & Sara | Barbara Voltz |
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| Patricia Finder-Stone | Mary Knudten | | | |

* Contributions made through Community Shares of Wisconsin

** Contributions made through United Way of Greater Milwaukee

*** Sustaining Partners make monthly contributions to ensure stability for the League

We gratefully acknowledge the generous contributions of time, talent and unreimbursed expenses donated by **Cynthia Benevenga, Marge Jacoby, Kathy Gomes, designCraft Advertising** and the members of our state **Legislative Committee and Board of Directors.**

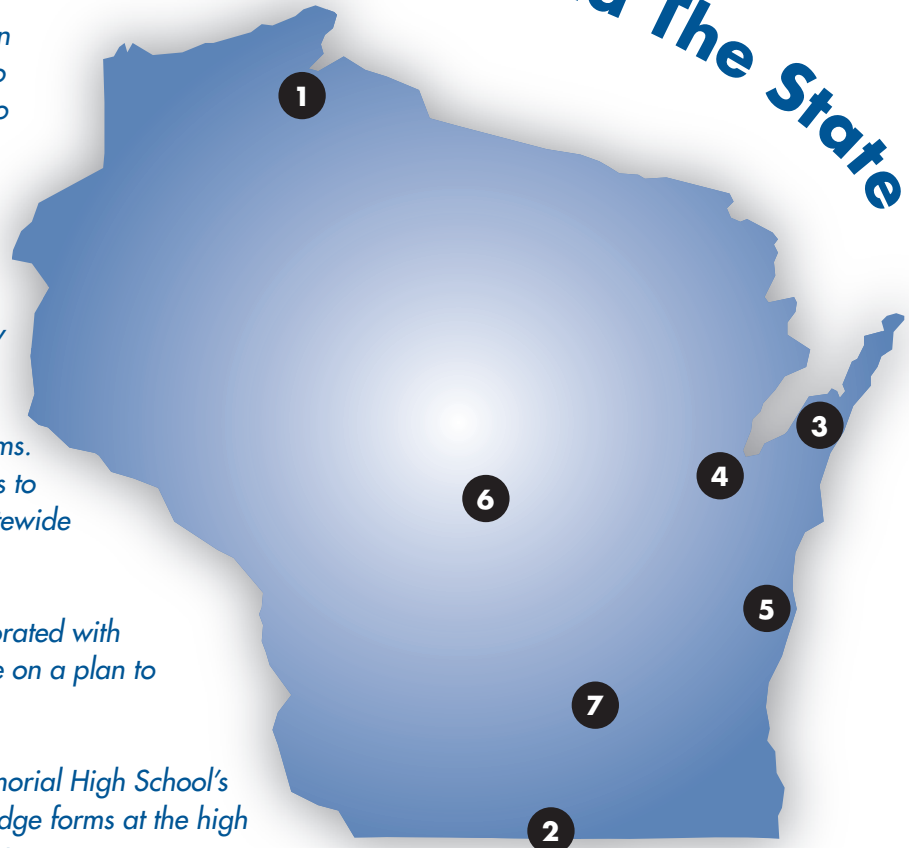
Thank You! With Your Support, We Are Making Democracy Work®!

Around the State: The LWVWI 10.10.10 Challenge

Local Leagues encouraged citizens to commit to ten actions to reduce their energy use on October 10, 2010 as part of a global initiative to celebrate climate solutions at the local level. Launched by 350.org, an international campaign dedicated to uniting the world around solutions to the climate crisis, the 10.10.10 Challenge was designed to help curb global climate change.

Forty-seven states and more than 110 countries participated in the effort. The LWVWI Sustainability Task Force provided an online toolkit with ideas for disseminating and collecting challenge pledge forms. In addition to sending press releases to encourage citizen participation, statewide activities included:

LWV Around The State



- 1** Ashland/Bayfield Counties: Collaborated with Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute on a plan to distribute pledge forms.
- 2** Beloit: Collaborated with Beloit Memorial High School's Environmental Club to distribute pledge forms at the high school and at a local farmers market.
- 3** Door County: Promoted local 10.10.10 outdoor work parties for solar electric installation, gardening, tree protection, native flower planting and removal of invasive species as well as indoor projects to clean ductwork, vacuum refrigerator coils and install compact fluorescent light bulbs.
- 4** Greater Green Bay: Distributed pledge forms at Green Bay public schools, UW-Green Bay and St. Norbert College and the Brown County Library System; collaborated with other groups to hand out voter registration and 10.10.10 Challenge information at the City Deck in downtown Green Bay; alerted members to the Challenge via chapter newsletter.
- 5** Milwaukee County: Distributed pledge forms with an event at a local coffee shop; hosted a book discussion on Green Gone Wrong by Heather Rogers.
- 6** Stevens Point Area: Staffed a display booth at a Stevens Point Work Party that featured bands, food and fun to raise awareness of local projects aimed at curbing climate change.
- 7** Whitewater Area: Distributed 10.10.10 pledge forms throughout Whitewater; will host a public program on October 21 where a speaker from Clean Wisconsin will discuss the status of the Clean Energy Jobs Act.

Executive Director's Message *Andrea Kaminski*



You may recall that delegates at the 2007 state League convention voted to seek a group exemption from the IRS to extend the LWVWI Education Fund's 501(c)(3) status to our local Leagues so that contributions (above membership dues) to local Leagues would be tax deductible. Since then, the state board and I have worked with our lawyer, Melissa Auchard-Scholz, to apply for the exemption. The national League and their lawyer also provided invaluable assistance.

While the IRS has not granted the exemption, the agency sent us a letter in August saying it had completed its review of our request and outlining what we would still need to do to qualify. This includes:

1) Each local League will need to take the 501(h) election, which defines by a simple and clear quantitative test the amount of lobbying the organization does. The state and local Leagues may devote up to 20 percent of their expenditures to lobbying and still qualify for 501(c)(3) status. Because local Leagues' lobbying is done by volunteers, this should not be a problem. Even the state League, for which I am the paid lobbyist, spends an average of only 5 to 6 percent of its annual budget on lobbying. Leagues will have to sign a

form, track their lobbying expenses and report them annually. We will send each League a copy of the necessary form. The 501(h) election is filed once and entails no additional record-keeping.

2) The state League was asked to submit a plan for educating local Leagues about how to comply with 501(c)(3) law, including the restrictions on lobbying. We responded that the state League will offer training at our Annual Meeting, by webinar and through written materials posted on our website.

3) Local and state Leagues will need to adopt a couple of new bylaws. We have been aware of this requirement since we began the process, and our lawyer will provide boilerplate language for these.

Given that new bylaws are needed, we cannot complete the application until after all Leagues have held their annual meetings in 2011. In the meantime, the state League will be sending guidelines to local League presidents, to share with their boards. I hope we can complete the application process next summer.

At our anniversary luncheon on October 2, LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara called the Wisconsin League a "pioneer" in seeking the 501(c)(3) tax status that our local Leagues deserve. We could not have gotten this far without your support. Together we are making the League a stronger, more vibrant organization. Thank you! ❖



LEAGUE OF
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Support LWVWI Education Fund and Community Shares of Wisconsin through Workplace Giving

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund is a member of Community Shares of Wisconsin, a social action fund connecting 64 grassroots, nonprofit organizations that build social and economic equity and a healthy environment.

Community Shares raises needed operating funds for the League through workplace giving campaigns. It also offers valuable networking opportunities and technical assistance to its members, improving accountability and minimizing the need for these small organizations to reinvent the wheel.

Please join with other committed individuals who share your vision of a better world and support Community Shares of Wisconsin. To learn more, visit www.communityshares.com or call (608) 256-1066.

League of Women Voters of WI Education Network/Advocacy Network 2010-2011 Calendar

Fall General Election
November 2

**LWVWEN
State Board Meeting**
December 4
Madison

**LWVWEN
State Board Meeting**
January 22
Madison

**Nonpartisan
Primary Election**
February 15

**LWVWEN
State Board Meeting**
March 26
Madison

**Spring
Nonpartisan Election**
April 5

**LWVWEN
State Board Meeting
and LWV Training**
June 10
Whitewater

**LWVWI
Annual Meeting**
June 11
Whitewater



Leaguers celebrated a history of achievements for women this year, including that Wisconsin was the first state to ratify the 19th Amendment.



**2009-2010
Annual Report
INSIDE!**

LEAGUE OF
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