

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY
JANUARY 2011 NEWSLETTER**

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 20th **“Arms Control, Facing Security Issues & Deficit Financing**
January 24th **Invitation from Lee Thennes**
January 31st **February Board Meeting**
February 7th **Great Decisions – Haiti**
February 11th **U.S. National Security 9/11**
February 21st **Financial Crisis**
February 28th **Germany Ascendant**

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Dear Leaguers,

Welcome to a new year!! There are many interesting things to get involved in!! On January 20th, we will be sponsoring a public meeting on Arms Control. Our speaker, Michael Slattery, has been active on this issue on a national level and we are lucky to have someone so knowledgeable available locally.

Then in February we kick off another season of Great Decisions. Come to the Manitowoc Library on 8 consecutive Monday evenings to hear college professors speaking on topics ranging from Germany to Haiti to national security.

A breakfast with our legislators is in the works for March and a date has already been set for our annual meeting, May 18th, with more information to come about our very interesting guest speakers.

There are many issues of interest to League on the state and national levels and I hope you will respond to requests to contact your legislators. Your involvement is welcome and I hope to see you at League events.

Mary Wallace

ARMS CONTROL, FACING SECURITY ISSUES AND DEFICIT FINANCING

In the mid 1980s, the League of Women Voters established a position on arms control during the Cold War and retained this position thereafter. In 2009-2010, a five-person task force reviewed the position and concluded that, while its underlying tenets remained applicable, the position needed updating. It was felt that it should be amended to

accommodate a changed world with new weapons and delivery systems, new players on the world stage and new treaties still awaiting signature or ratification.

The League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County is proud to present the results of this two-year effort by a member of the national task force and of our local League, W. Michael Slattery.

This talk, entitled “**Arms Control, Facing Security Issues and Deficit Financing,**” is scheduled for **Thursday, January 20 from 7-9 pm at Manitowoc City Hall’s Council Chambers, 900 Quay Street, Manitowoc, Wisconsin.** All Wisconsin League members are especially invited to attend.

Dr. Slattery researched and wrote the paper on arms control and conventional weapons, while other League members provided papers treating topics such as geopolitical background, state and non-state actors, missile-based defense, biological weapons and treaty urgency. All of these background papers may be found on the LWVUS website and in the LWVUS Impact on Issues publication. The 2010 LWVUS national convention agreed with and approved the task force’s recommendations and amendments, which strengthened and updated the League’s position.

Light refreshments will be served. For more information about the January 20th event, please contact Mary Wallace, President of the Manitowoc League at 920-553-4020 or mwallace@lakefield.net.

PROJECT CITIZEN PORTFOLIO AND PUBLIC HEARING

An Invitation from Lee Thennes

As our new year begins, the first semester draws to a close. Our civics students are looking forward to showcasing their Project citizen work for you. We have worked on this project throughout the course of the semester and we would like to share what we have learned.

Please join us on **Monday, January 24th at 7:00 pm in the library (Room 104) at Lincoln High School** for the presentation of the Project Citizen Portfolio and Public Hearing. We will be presenting our final work to a panel of judges who will score our project using a rubric that will measure our intended outcomes.

The class chose to work on the issue of “clean beaches,” and they have collectively developed a plan of action that would work to improve the quality of the beaches in our community. They are looking forward to the opportunity of sharing what they have learned with all of you.

I hope to see you there! Thanks so much for your support. If you are planning on attending, please RSVP at thennesl@mps.k12.wi.us or call 683-4861 ext. 6193 so that we can have appropriate seating.

Sincerely,

Lee Thennes, Civics Teacher

We hope many of you Leaguers will take the time to attend and support our students of this community on their endeavor.

GREAT DECISIONS

Great Decisions will begin on Monday February 7th at the Manitowoc Public Library from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm. The program will continue for eight consecutive Monday evenings and ending March 28th. The dates, topics, and speakers are listed for your convenience.

- Feb. 7th Haiti: Prof. Jason Brozek, Lawrence University
- Feb. 14th U. S. National Security: Prof. Joseph Tullbane, St. Norbert College
- Feb. 21st Financial Crisis: Prof. Marty Farrell, Ripon College
- Feb. 28th Germany Ascendant: Prof. Frederick Gerlach, Retired Diplomat

- Mar. 7th The Caucasus: John Katza, Retired Diplomat, Sr. Foreign Ser. Officer
- Mar. 14th Horn of Africa: Prof. Beth Dougherty, Beloit College
- Mar. 21st Sanctions Non-Proliferation: Dr. Charles Baynton, M.D.
- Mar. 28th Global Governance: Prof Lawrence LaBlanc, Marquette University

Books on the various topics will be available at the Manitowoc Public Library. We hope all of you will get the opportunity to attend one or all of these presentations. Light refreshments are served at all the programs.

If you would like to meet with the speakers ahead of time, you can join Marilyn Sontag and others at the Courthouse Pub at 4:30 p.m. for dinner. Please contact Marilyn at 682-8988 if you intend to come so that appropriate reservations can be made at the restaurant.

Recently our President wrote a letter that was published in the Herald Times Reporter in regards to the Voter Photo ID Bill. For those who did not receive the Wednesday HTR, it is as follows:

When the Wisconsin Legislature gets to work in January, leaders have stated that one of the first items on their agenda is a voter photo ID bill. The reasoning is that such a law

would cut down on voter fraud. Some Wisconsinites, including the League of Women Voters, wonder if this is a solution to a problem that doesn't exist and if it would address any election irregularities that do exist. Anecdotes have been heard of voters who have voted many times in the same election but when a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporter asked the incoming majority leader; Scott Fitzgerald, for specifics, his staff could only cite one involving Marquette students in the 2000 election.

This claim was investigated at the time by the Milwaukee County DA's office and no evidence was found to support it. The reporter was able to find two more recent cases where individuals were prosecuted for voting twice. According to the Journal article, more voter fraud cases involved illegal voting by felons, who are not allowed to vote, and irregularities with absentee ballots. Neither concern would be addressed by having photo ID.

There also is a real concern that this bill would have an unintended consequence of putting a burden on some qualified voters. Groups most likely not to have a driver's license are the elderly, disabled and low-income urban individuals. While supporters of the bill state that the photo ID's would be free, potential voters would still need to procure them and keep them updated.

That doesn't sound like a big problem unless you don't have transportation, don't have the money for transportation or have major health concerns.

One possible solution to the problem of election irregularities is to provide more training and support to the people that work at the polls. We are fortunate in Manitowoc County to have very competent clerks and poll workers.

However, this year the League of Women Voters placed trained observers at the polls in several other areas of the state. They did observe some instances where poll workers were unclear what documentation was needed to register voters or were not prepared to handle the volume of voters.

It is good that legislators want to deal with voter fraud, but let's encourage them to identify what the problems that lead to fraud are and construct a bill that addresses them.

MAY MEETING

Joseph and Joyce Ellwanger will be our speakers for the May meeting to be held Wednesday, May 18th of this year. Joseph Ellwanger is a retired Lutheran pastor who marched with Martin Luther King, Jr. and his wife, Joyce, spent several months in federal prison for peaceful protest activities. They were selected as the 2010 recipients of the Frank P. Ziedler Public Service Award for their fifty-year commitment to community

organizing public service, racial equality, social justice, and civil rights. More information will be given, as the date gets closer.

UPDATE ON LEAGUE SUPPORT OF “INTOXICATED DRIVER INTERVENTION PROGRAM”

The League got the ball rolling four years ago when we studied the feasibility of a Drug Treatment Court Program in Manitowoc County. In 2008 League members came to a consensus favoring such a program and worked for its implementation. While the judicial/law enforcement community was supportive, no judge was available to do the work necessary to start it and carry on the responsibilities.

Enter faith based organizing meetings in 2009 looking at justice issues in our community. Drunk driving was identified as a serious safety issue in need of attention directed toward a treatment approach rather than only punishment of the offender. The group identified the SSTOP program operating in Winnebago County as a program that our county might model to impact the high recidivism among drunk driving offenders. Judge Deets was enlisted for his help in developing a program and after many months of study, he and the other judges determined the Sheboygan based program operated by WCS (Wisconsin Community Services) would best meet our needs. The faith based group, RUTH (Responding with Understanding, Truth, and Hope) has been supporting this program and supporting the work of Judge Deets and the other judges to bring it to our county. It has been a real struggle to get the \$25,000 in funding into the county board given the tight budget.

However, we are now just two steps away from success. On 1-10-11, the resolution must pass the County Finance Committee and **on Tuesday, 1-18-11**, it must pass the County Board. The County Board meeting is at **7 PM at the University of Wisconsin**. Marilyn Sontag has advocated for it for League and Nancy Slattery and others have spoken for it representing RUTH. If you as a League member want to see this happen you can do two things:

1. Call your supervisor and ask him/her to vote for this program.
2. And/or Attend the County Board Member meeting and show your support by your presence or speak for it as a citizen concerned about public safety and helping people deal with their addiction through a treatment/accountability program.

Judge Deets has been the primary leader in this effort. He has stated he needs citizen support to get this accomplished.

Working cooperatively with RUTH and supporting our judges, we can help build a stronger, safer community. This kind of action is what League is all about.

MEMBERSHIIP

Please welcome two new members to our League, Sally Halstrom and Joan Kaeiser. Sally joined League in December. Joan joined her husband, Robert, with a family membership to League. We hope to see Sally and Joan at the many events we have in the coming year. Sally's address, telephone number, and e-mail are listed on the latest Membership List that is attached to this newsletter.

We were sorry to learn that Mary Pawlitzke's daughter, Tess, has recently passed away. We would like to extend our deepest sympathy to Mary and her family. Our thoughts and prayers are with her at this time.

Respectfully submitted,

Catherine L. Cole, Editor