

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY
MARCH 2012 NEWSLETTER**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

03/12	Great Decisions – State of the Oceans
03/19	Great Decisions – Afghanistan & Iraq
03/19	Public Forum – Sheboygan, Wisconsin
03/22	Candidates Forum
03/26	Great Decisions – Energy Geopolitics
04/02	Board Meeting
04/03	Primary Election
04/14	Breakfast Brunch – Privatization Consensus
04/21	Earth Day at Silver Lake College

Dear League Members,

Spring is here and we still have a very impressive list of events. Great Decisions has three more presentations. We are very pleased with the turn out at these gatherings. We average over 120 people at these meetings. The next three topics are very timely with the current events that our listed in the news. We will have a Candidates Forum in March. April kicks off with the Primary Election, a Breakfast Brunch, and the annual Earth Day celebration held at Silver Lake College. We look forward to seeing you at many of these events. Enjoy this warm weather!!

Cathy

GREAT DECISIONS

There are three more programs that will be presented at the Manitowoc Public Library in the Balkansky Room, Mondays at 6 pm. Dinners with the guest speakers are held at the Courthouse Pub at 4:30 pm. Anyone wishing to attend these dinners please contact Marilyn Sontag at 682-8988.

March 12 -- **State of the Oceans** – Richard Hein, PhD, Biology, UW-Manitowoc.

March 19 – **Exit from Afghanistan and Iraq** – Robert Ricigliano, PhD, UWM Institute of World Affairs, UW-Milwaukee.

March 26 – **Energy Geopolitics** – Mark Bockenbauer, PhD., Geography and Wendy Scattergood, PhD, Political Science, St. Norbert College.

CANDIDATES FORUM

The League of Women Voters is sponsoring a Candidates Forum on Thursday, March 22 from 7:00 p.m. in the Manitowoc City Hall Council Chambers. Candidates for the contested Manitowoc Aldermanic races and the Circuit Court Judgeship will be featured. A media panel will question the candidates and members of the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions. Light refreshments will be served.

The Manitowoc County Democratic Party and Republican Party will jointly hold a candidates forum on Tuesday, March 27th at 6:30 p.m. in the County Board Room at UW-Manitowoc Center. This forum will feature candidates for contested County Board seats.

PRIVATIZATION

Many League members attended the February meeting on our national LWV study, "Privatization of Public Services." Privatization, as we have seen it occur at the local, state, and national levels, was discussed by panelists: Ed Rappe, Kerry Trask, and Michael Slattery. We were pleased to have a number of people from the community attend and ask questions and comment on merits and dangers of privatization. We were also grateful to have Herald Times Reporter give it front-page coverage as well.

Readings on the subject are available on the local and national League websites as are the consensus questions. Our local website is: lwvmanitowoc.org and the national website is: lwv.org.

Our League committee will be meeting this Saturday, March 17, 2012 at 10:00 am at Jenn's Java to make plans for the consensus meeting on the subject.

The consensus meeting will begin with a delicious **Saturday morning membership brunch** at the **First Presbyterian Church Library at 9 am on April 14, 2012**. It promises to be a stimulating meeting. So, don't miss it!! The Questions are not geared toward support or opposition to privatization of any particular services but rather what are reasonable criteria to be considered in deciding whether a potential move toward privatization of a service is in the public interest. I have a huge file on communities that have contracted out or completely sold facilities and services to the private sector and am most willing to share them if you contact me at ddwellner@charter.net or 682-9466.

Hope to see all of you on **APRIL 14, 2012**. Thank you for your interest in this timely study.

Darlene Wellner, Chairman

For those of you who are receiving the Newsletter by hard copy, I have **enclosed** the **questions** that will be discussed at the **Privatization Brunch on April 14**. For those of you who receive the Newsletter by e-mail, I strongly urge you to go to our website and print out the questions. For **ALL** members, please read the material that has been placed on line.

PUBLIC FORUM – SHEBOYGAN

On **Monday, March 19, 2012 at 6:30 to 8:00 pm** at the **UW Sheboygan Wombat Room**, One University Avenue, the Common Cause in Wisconsin will present a public forum: **What Ever Happened to Good Government in Wisconsin? And How Can We Fix It?**

The Panelists include the following: **Calvin Potter**, Former Representative and State Senator (D-Sheboygan), **Mary Lynne Donohue**, Attorney and Past President of the Wisconsin Academy Board; **Devin LeMahieu**, Sheboygan County Supervisor and Republican Candidate for the 26th Assembly District; **Charles Windsor**, President of Windsor Industries and Libertarian; **Jay Heck**, Executive Director of Common Cause in Wisconsin.

The Moderator is: Rick Dodgson, History Professor of Lakeland College.

Questions to be discussed are as follows:

How will the U.S. Supreme Court's Citizens United decision affect Wisconsin?
Is disclosure of interest group "phony issue ads" and other outside spending necessary or would it stifle free speech?
Redistricting reform in Wisconsin – how do we do it?
Will the new Voter Photo ID law suppress voter fraud or voters?
Is public financing of our state elections needed?
Should we elect or appoint Wisconsin's Supreme Court Justices?

The forum is **free and open to the public**. **Light Refreshments** will be served.

If you are in the area and cannot make it to Great Decisions, this would be a very interesting program to attend. If you need more information, call Sandra Miller at (608) 658-2109 or contact Cathy Cole at (920) 553-8757.

VOTER ID LAW

WE WON!!! The LWVWI is delighted by today's strong ruling by Dane County Circuit Court Judge Richard Niess that Wisconsin's strict Voter ID Law is unconstitutional. The judge found that the suffrage provisions of the Wisconsin Constitution, Article III does

not give the legislature the power to enact a voter identification provision that has the effect of disenfranchising otherwise qualified voter merely because they lack one of the limited forms of acceptable identification. As the ruling declares, “as a matter of law under the Wisconsin Constitution, sacrificing a qualified elector’s right to vote is not a reasonable exercise of the government prerogative to regulate elections. For further information, please go to the lwvwi.org website.

BOARD MEETING

The board meeting will be held on Monday, April 2 at the First Presbyterian Church at 5:00 pm. Any member who wishes to attend is welcome. See you there.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Cole, Editor