

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

Calendar of Events

March 14	Great Decisions – Horn of Africa
March 21	Great Decisions – Sanctions & Non-Proliferation
March 28	Great Decisions – Global Governance
March 31	Candidates Forum
April 2	Carolyn Castore, Implications of the Voter ID Bill
April 4	Great Decisions – Financial Crisis
April 5	Board Meeting and Election Day
April 16	Earth Day at Silver Lake College

Dear Leaguers,

Spring is finally in sight and with it there are lots of exciting things going on in League! The first is our wonderful new website thanks to our Webmaster, Shelly Randerson! In addition, we have many events planned, which you will see more about in this newsletter. Our candidates' Forum for Manitowoc school board and city council candidates will be on March 31 at City Hall. This will be followed by our spring member's brunch on Saturday, April 2 from 9 am to 11 am with a wonderful speaker, Carolyn Castore, from Milwaukee who will explain the implications of the Voter ID Bill. Please come and bring a friend! Then on April 16, we will be participating in Earth Day at Silver Lake College. It's a great time to get involved with League and we welcome your participation.

Happy Spring!

Mary

We start our newsletter with the greatest news!!! Yes, we now have a website. The web address is <http://lwvmanitowoc.org>. A big thank you goes to Shelly Randerson, our Webmaster, Jennifer Balma, and Jacki Collins. Check it out. It is just awesome!!

GREAT DECISIONS

Great Decisions continues this month and into the first Monday in April. We enjoy seeing so many of our League members, and friends come together to enjoy this series.

March 14 – Horn of Africa: Beth Dougherty, Chairman of International Relations & Political Science, Beloit College.

March 21 – Sanctions Non-Proliferation: Dr. Charles Baynton, M.D., former Maine physician, Wisconsin Network of Peace and Justice and an activist for nuclear disarmament.

March 28 – Global Governance: Lawrence LaBlanc, Department of Physical Science, Marquette University.

April 4 – Financial Crisis: Professor Marty Farrell, Political Science and Global Studies, Ripon College.

CANDIDATES' FORUM

The League of Women Voters of Manitowoc County will be hosting a Candidate Forum on **Thursday, March 31 at 7:00 pm at the Manitowoc City Hall Council Chambers.** This event will give the public the opportunity to hear from the candidates running for Manitowoc Public School Board and those running in contested elections in the aldermanic districts of Manitowoc. Members of the media and the public will question the candidates. If you would like to bring cookies, bars, etc., please contact Jennifer Balma at 683-9112.

ARE OUR VOTING RIGHTS IN JEOPARDY?

The winds of spring are here and so are the winds of change. Please join us for great food, great friends, and stimulating conversation at our **League of Women Voters Manitowoc County Member/Prospective Member Brunch on Saturday, April 2nd from 9-11:00 am at the Presbyterian Church, 502 North Eighth Street, Manitowoc.** Nothing is dearer to the hearts of League members than voter's rights. This will be an opportunity for us to participate in an informative discussion regarding "Are Our Voting Rights In Jeopardy?" Leading us in this discussion will be Carolyn Castore from the Milwaukee County League of Women Voters. Carolyn in on the State Legislative Committee for the LWV and one of her areas of expertise has to do with voter registration and voter laws. Carolyn was also responsible for helping train Poll Watchers for the fall elections. The new proposed voter laws such as: voter ID, elimination of same day registration, and restrictions on early voting are all issues that may be coming before the Wisconsin Legislature this year. Come join us for this fun and informative get together on April 2nd.

MEMBERSHIP

We would like to welcome to women who have recently joined the League. They are Mary Jo Hoftiezer of Two Rivers, and Sherrie Richards-Francar of Manitowoc. We hope to see the both of you at some of the events mentioned in the newsletter.

REVISION OF BY LAWS

To qualify as a 501©(3) organization under the LWVWI Education Network Group Exemption, all Local Leagues in Wisconsin will need to amend their by laws to adopt a few required Provisions. The MCLWV may choose to make additional bylaws changes at this time, but the required revisions should be adopted **verbatim** as presented. To be included in the Group Exemption, all Local Leagues will need to have their members adopt revised bylaws at their 2011 Annual Meeting. Once these changes have been adopted, the MCLWV will send a signed copy of the revised bylaws to the state office along with our year-end Treasurer's Report. These documents will then be sent to the IRS.

Therefore, attached to the March Newsletter is a copy of our Bylaws with the required revisions. Please take time to read them so that we can discuss and adopt them at our annual May meeting.

ROBO CALLS

Many people around Wisconsin, including in Manitowoc County, have received robo-calls in favor of Gov. Walker's budget repair bill and proposed budget. Some people thought these calls were from the League of Women Voters.

To clear up any confusion, the League of Women Voters does not make robo-calls. The calls actually came from an organization called League of American Voters, with headquarters in Washington, D.C.

UPDATE ON THE GREAT LAKES FROM THE OSAUKEE NEWSLETTER

It would be nice to report that the politicians in Washington view the Great Lakes as an extremely valuable resource. And when it comes to budget cuts, we have to remember that Representative Paul Ryan (1st Congressional District, Wisconsin is chair of the appropriations committee. So even someone close to home and representing a district on the shore of Lake Michigan seems to forget the value of this resource and does not work to help its future. An example is the following item from <http://www.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/116208064.html>:

“Great Lakes restoration funding continues to shrink. Funding drops from \$475 million in 2010 to \$225 million this year if the House of Appropriations Committee has its way. Obama released his 2012 budget, which includes \$350 million for the restoration program next year.

Conservation groups said all the uncertainty is making it difficult to execute a comprehensive plan to restore the world’s largest fresh water system. “There are long-term projects that require some certainty of funding levels from year to year,” said Jeff Skelding, campaign director for the Healing Our Waters-Great Lakes Coalition.” It’s put people in limbo, projects in limbo and research in limbo, just awaiting congressional action.

If you attended LMLWV’s annual meeting in Manitowoc, you heard Philip Moy. He is an invasive species researcher with the Great Lakes Institute and has worked to gather data from the electric fish barrier in Illinois that is designed to stop the Asian carp from entering Lake Michigan and therefore open the entire Great Lakes system to this voracious feeder. But, what is happening with the barrier.

According to Dan Eagan of the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, the Army Corps officials say the public doesn’t need to worry about the barrier. According to the Corps, the electric fish barrier is operating at about half its potential voltage on the canal about 35 miles south of Lake Michigan is doing an excellent job of holding the fish back.

The Corps has conducted research on the effectiveness of the barrier. However, they won’t share their research even with member, Dr. Moy. You probably remember that he is a member of the government advisory panel created to “assess and evaluate effective methodologies, engineering, and science-based methods” to keep the carp and other species from migrating up the Chicago canal system.

The barrier was built to operate at a maximum of four volts per fish and lab testing showed that is enough to keep out the carp, provided they aren’t less than 6 inches long. Eagan says, “The Army Corps didn’t conduct tests with smaller fish because officials don’t believe there are any fish that size close to the barrier. Smaller fish have less surface area and therefore it takes a bigger jolt to repel them.” The Corps won’t increase the voltage and take other steps but claim such action could pose a danger to barge traffic. It feels that there is no threat from the smaller carp.

When we attended an input meeting held by the Joint Commission in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, most of the people said there was a need to bring the lake level up so they can enjoy boating. The lower level has left many docking facilities too shallow for their boats. Yet, there is a government-funded article circulating on the Internet reports that people living on the Lake Michigan shoreline aren’t interested in exploring what it would take to restore the lake to its historical level. This article seems to ignore the input by citizens. In another article by Dan Eagan he says, “Never mind that public hearings around the region concluded months ago there was plenty of interest in having the Canadian and U.S. governments explore how to fix the St. Clair.

So then, what is the future of this resource to Wisconsin? Hopefully our politicians will not turn their backs on us again when it comes to restoring the Great Lakes. Hopefully the economic, recreational, and life quality of the Great Lakes will be protected so we continue to have water for drinking, for business, and for pleasure.

This article appeared in the March 2011 Newsletter of The Bridge and was prepared by Marge and Art Palleon, LMLWV Representatives.

If you know of someone who is not receiving the Newsletter through e-mail, please contact Cathy Cole at 553-8757. To all of our Irish League members, Happy St. Patrick's Day!!

Catherine L. Cole, Editor