



The League of Women Voters

of Appleton, Wisconsin

February 2006

Visit our website at www.lwvappleton.org

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English Rhetoric



The President's Message

The candidates are considering how to win. The electorate is considering the candidates. League is considering the issues. I think its SPRING.

League has a full agenda this month. What a great time to be involved in the League of Women Voters. Some of you are opening your homes to candidates and neighbors in the contested *aldermanic* districts in Appleton. *School board* candidates and *County Board* candidates have answered a League questionnaire. Their replies will be posted on our website at www.lwvappleton.org. Thursday, March 23 League is hosting an educational forum on the Appleton smoking *referendum*. This will be an educational forum as the Appleton LWV does not have any positions specific to smoking in public areas. We hope to reach the right people at the right time with this mix of media offerings. Find the one that fits your needs.

I also want to call your attention to Susi Alger's *Education Study Committee*. They have done an outstanding job going through decades of education positions. They have taken the time to understand them, find out

League Calendar

Date	Event	Meeting Place
Tuesday, January 31 7:00 PM	Information Meeting on Updating Education Positions	School Board Office 2 nd Floor, City Center College Avenue
Tuesday, February 21	Primary Election	
Thursday, March 9 6:00-7:00 PM	Appleton LWV Board Meeting	Appleton Public Library Lower Level Meeting Room
Thursday, March 9 7:00-8:00PM	Concurrence Meeting on Education Positions	Appleton Public Library Lower Level Meeting Room
Thursday, March 23 Tentative	Forum on Proposed Smoking Ban	
Tuesday, April 4	Spring Elections	

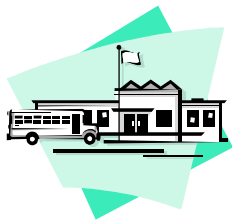
what has changed since first adopted, and considered what to keep or change or discard. Your first opportunity to see their work will be at the February general meeting with speaker Dr. Tom Scullen, District Superintendent. The next opportunity will be at the consensus meeting in March. Don't miss the meetings. The committee has done their work well. They need your support.

Yes, it's that time again! The *Nominating Committee* is getting underway. When Pat McConnell and her committee call, please consider saying yes. Ours is a vibrant and healthy organization. There are some fun jobs to be done. There is a job for every talent (and some of us not so talented). Holding a Board position is one of the best ways for a new League member to learn about the organization. Better yet, don't wait to be asked. Let us know what your interests are and we'll do our best to match you with the right activity.

Finally, a big thank you to those of you who braved the snow storm to get to *Lively Issues* last month. You don't remember the snow? Good thing because we had a great turnout! Read more about it in these pages.

See you at the meeting,

Beth



Local Study Updating Our Education Positions

The Local Study Committee has been busy updating and revising all of the Appleton League's education positions adopted over the last 30 years. After extensive research, including interviews with school administrators and teachers and consultations with existing members, the draft revisions are ready for discussion. The current positions are available on the web site now at <http://www.lwvappleton.org/LocalPositionPapers2004.pdf> (see pages 13 and 14). The revised positions are included in this Bulletin, and will be posted on the web site soon.

An information meeting will be held Tuesday, January 31, 7:00 PM at the School Board office, 2nd floor of the City Center on College Avenue in downtown Appleton. Special guest speaker Appleton School Superintendent Tom Scullen will talk about challenges facing our schools and how League can help. Afterwards, the Local Study Committee will present the draft revisions and ask for your feedback on the proposed changes – it's not too late to revise the draft! We hope to see you there.

The consensus vote on these revised positions will be held on Thursday, March 9th, at 7 pm at the Appleton Library. Mark your calendar now! The Local Study Committee includes Susi Alger, Chairperson, and Diane Barkmeier, Linda Bjella, Winnie Doxie, Connie Kanitz, Shirley Strange. Feel free to give them a call if you have any questions or concerns.

Education Positions – Draft of Revisions/Deletions/Reorganization

A. Education Equity

1. Definition

- a) Educational opportunities must be available to everyone regardless of race, gender, ability or socioeconomic status.
- b) All students must meet recognized standards of performance but not necessarily in the same time period.
- c) All students should have equal access to co-curricular activities.

2. Equity is an important goal for public education.

3. Appleton Area School District should make available the following support district-wide:

- a) Busing with user fee waivers available for low-income students (using public transportation whenever possible).
- b) Open-enrollment when feasible.
- c) All schools should offer comparable educational opportunities.

B. Curriculum

1. Primary purpose is to create literate productive members of a democratic society.

2. Should foster a positive learning environment that encourages curiosity and develops initiative and responsibility.

3. Guidance services made available to every school, especially at the elementary level.

4. User fees to supplement co-curricular programs. Fees should be nominal and not exclude those unable to pay.

5. Continued alternative education programs for students.

6. Skills and knowledge that require mastery to achieve a high school diploma.

- a) Basic skills – writing, reading, oral, computation and technology.
- b) Problem solving skills – research, analysis, interpretation.
- c) Liberal arts – humanities and fine arts, social and natural sciences, foreign languages, financial life-skills and physical education.
- d) Comprehension of the political process.
- e) Competency testing with appropriate curriculum for those in need of remediation.

7. Appropriate education services should be provided to every child with a disability or exceptional need.

8. A Gifted and Talented Program with the following parameters: (1986)

- a) Students selected for the program through a combination of the following: peers, parents, teachers, self-identification and objective testing.
- b) The program should start in second grade and continue through high school.
- c) Its goal should be to allow each child to develop his/her own individual potential to the utmost, leading to creative productive adults.

- d) All school at the same level (i.e. all elementary schools) should have similar offerings. All schools involved in a gifted program should have their own space and staff.
 - e) The director should have a graduate degree in gifted education and the staff members should have specialized training.
 - f) Extensive in-service training and ongoing training opportunities such as seminars and videotapes must be available to regular classroom teachers.
9. Family Growth and Development curriculum with the following parameters:
- a) Materials should be available for parental review.
 - b) The program should be required, but parents should have the option to remove their child from portions of the program.

C. Staffing

- 1. A 30 to 1 maximum student/teacher ratio for class size without an aide. This does not apply to special education aides nor to elementary schools with unitized systems.
- 2. Class size should not be increased for fiscal reasons.
- 3. A class should be offered at the secondary level if a minimum of 15 students indicate interest.
- 4. Supervisory aides at all levels.
- 5. Each full-time media specialist to serve no more than two schools.
- 6. Open and staff the LMC by a media specialist or aide during school hours.
- 7. The concept of a building-centered volunteer program.

D. Teaching quality

- 1. Effective hiring procedures include certification, references, and background checks with an interviewing board made up of principals, teachers, and when appropriate, representatives of specialized areas.
- 2. Competitive salaries (to other comparable positions in Northeastern Wisconsin) and consideration of supplemental pay for distinguished teaching.
- 3. Effective and practical in-service grounded in scientifically based research for professional development organized at both the school and subject area level.
- 4. A formal system of evaluation of educators by principals and, when appropriate, representatives of specialized areas. New teachers should be evaluated each year for the first three years.

E. Administrative quality

- 1. A formal system of evaluation for both the central administration and school principals with input from teachers and parents.
- 2. Periodic evaluation by outside consultants.

F. Organization

- 1. Modifying school boundaries as a means of balancing enrollment: Boundary changes should include consideration of traffic and geographic problems, balancing school demographics, the importance of school loyalty, and the need for continuity that would allow a student to start and finish in the same school.

2. Avoid a piecemeal approach to solving organizational problems.

G. Sites and Facilities

1. Ongoing maintenance program established and retained with money being set aside in the budget.

March 13-18 Sunshine Week 2006: Are We Safer in the Dark?

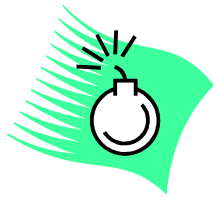
LWVEF and several other national organizations will sponsor an event entitled "Sunshine Week 2006: Are We Safer in the Dark?" on March 13, 2006. The event will begin with a 90-minute panel of distinguished speakers at the National Press Club in Washington, DC. This will be carried via satellite feed to participating libraries around the country. These libraries have been encouraged to work with local Leagues to host programs where the audience can ask questions of both the DC panel and local speakers who will address this issue at the community level. Partners in this event include the American Libraries Association, the Coalition of Journalists for Open Government and the National Freedom of Information Coalition. Since the deadline for registration is February 15, we do not yet know the participating libraries. Leagues should feel free to contact libraries in your area to see if they are interested in taking part. A list of participating libraries will be available at www.lwv.org.

National Health Care Dialogue Open to Your League

Lively Issues discussions made it very apparent that health care issues are still very much on the minds of local Leaguers. This opportunity to participate in the dialogue came in a President's Update from LWV-US. I am looking for someone to organize a local town hall meeting or find another way for our community to participate. More information is in the paragraph below. If you view your Bulletin on line the links are active.

Beth

The Citizens' Health Care Working Group was established by federal legislation to engage citizens from around the country in a dialogue on health care, from now through May 2006. This dialogue will take the form of large town-hall meetings in selected cities, smaller (100-300 people) meetings hosted by the Citizens' Health Care Working Group in other cities, and self-initiated meetings that local organizations can run themselves. There will also be a web-based dialogue. The outcomes of the national discussion will be compiled in the Citizens' Health Care Working Group final report, which will be presented to the President and to a number of key Congressional committees. If your League is interested in participating, please email [Michael Ravvin](mailto:Michael.Ravvin@lwv.org) with America Speaks to learn about existing opportunities in your area. If your League participates, please notify [Cheryl Graeve](mailto:Cheryl.Graeve@lwv.org). For more information, please visit the [Citizens Health Care Working Group Web site](http://www.lwv.org/citizens-health-care-working-group).



Lively Issues

Saturday, January 21 brought nine League members together for a meeting of Lively Issues. Kathy Kamp presided over a spirited discussion. Information from the National League noted that a major study by consensus would require a PMP increase of \$3.00 for two years.

On the national front, the members recommend a national study of HEALTH CARE: ECONOMIC IMPACT ON THE NATION. Items of concern include health care costs and accessibility to health care for all people.

The Illinois League of Women Voters has asked local Leagues to support their efforts to bring the Death Penalty Abolition Position of their local League to the national convention for CONCURRENCE. The Appleton League will support their efforts.

Members support ACTION by the National League on the following positions: INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM, ENVIRONMENT, and CHILDREN. Further, members urge the National League to act on these items in collaboration with local Leagues to give everyone the opportunity to do grass roots lobbying.

Local study issues were suggested with the following criteria in mind. The issues for study should be 1) of high interest, 2) those upon which the league can make an impact, 3) related to government 4) timely.

The suggestions for a LOCAL STUDY include the following items with the number of votes received:

Alternative to Jail for Special Population (1), Mental Health (17), Deinstitutionalization (3), School Closings, Children's Services (6), Attracting Qualified People to Office (11), Education-Action on Current Study (5), Martin Luther King Recognition, Voter Action (11), Church and State Issues, Women's Issues, Area Job Loss-Economic Development.

It was agreed the "Attracting Qualified People to Office" and "Voter Action" be combined into one study.

It looks like an exciting year ahead.

Nominating Committee Update

The nominating committee met Tues, Jan 24th at Pat McConnell's house (chair). Those present: Marlys Fritzell, Sue Eich, Shirley Strange and Carolyn Mewhorter.

Positions to fill: Action VP, Treasurer, 3 directors.

We have filled several positions already, and are making follow-up phone calls for the rest. We will report the slate in the March or April issue.

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The 2005-2006 LWV Appleton Membership Directory is included in this Bulletin. Board members and contact information are on the first page of the Bulletin. For a copy of the “City of Appleton, Wisconsin 2005-2006, Official Directory” contact the City Clerk, Cynthia Hesse at 832-6443.

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