



# Oshkosh Area Voter

## July / August 2008

### Calendar



#### **Wednesday, July 9**

##### **Food for Thought Lunch 12:00 PM**

Vitale's Italian Cuisine, 215 W. Murdock  
*Oshkosh Seniors Center Executive Director,  
Mark Ziemer will present an overview of  
services provided and budget challenges.*

#### **Thursday, July 24**

##### **Voter Registration Deputy Training**

5:30 – 7:30 pm  
Appleton Public Library  
Call Carolyn (231-3350) for details and a ride.

#### **Voter Registration**

Saturday Farmers Market: July 12-Aug 9  
Wed. Lunch Opera House Square: July 16-Aug 6

#### **Monday, August 11**

##### **LWV Board Meeting**

5:00 pm potluck and meeting  
1926 E. Murdock

#### **Wednesday, August 13**

##### **Food for Thought Lunch 12:00 PM**

Vitale's Italian Cuisine,  
215 W. Murdock  
*Speaker to be announced*

#### **Monday, September 8**

##### **LWV Board Meeting**

5:00 pm potluck and meeting

#### **Tuesday, September 9**

##### **Primary Election Day**

Polls open from 7 AM to 8 PM

### **Are you getting all that you should out of your League membership?**

When you pay your local dues, you are also joining the LWV-US and the LWV-Wisconsin.

### **Take Action!!**

Take a few minutes to access the National League's website [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

- ★ Register at the Act Now! Box.
- ★ Click on "Get Action Alerts,"
- ★ Fill out the information on the next page.

You will receive emails alerting you to action alerts on the national level. To make matters smooth and easy, the League has the letter already written. You may add your own material to the already prepared letter if you wish. You may elect to send your letter electronically or you may print it and mail it.

At the state League site ([www.lwvwi.org/](http://www.lwvwi.org/)) you are now receiving League Leader updates forwarded to you by Ann Marshall, local action chair. Included in these updates are calls for action.

## Police Captain Cyndi J. Thaldorf Speaks at May Food for Thought Lunch



She showed up in full police regalia and began by explaining all the things hanging from her belt: pepper spray, bullets, weapon, cell phone, baton, keys, lots of keys. Captain Thaldorf outlined her journey that took her to the Oshkosh Police Department.

But her main purpose in being with us was to describe the police department team assignments set up by the new police chief, Scott D. Greuel. The city is divided into seven areas, each of which has a team of ten to twelve officers. Each team follows these goals:

★ Officer ownership in community problems

- ★ Enhanced partnership with stakeholders
- ★ Improved police-community relations
- ★ Greater awareness of quality of life and neighborhood problems
- ★ Increased officer job satisfaction / morale
- ★ Increase in uncommitted time for proactive policing efforts
- ★ Increase in Neighborhood Watch Groups and officer liaison with Block Captains
- ★ Increase organizational effectiveness and efficiency
- ★ Improved organizational and community information sharing
- ★ Greater accountability for problem resolution

The Department is increasing its diversity by adding an African-American officer; it already has a Hmong officer.



## Sue Panek and Danica Lewis Describe Imagination Library at July Lunch

United Way Director Sue Panek (*left in picture*) explained how Oshkosh United Way is participating in the Imagination Library for pre-kindergarten children whose parents live or work in Oshkosh. Under the program each registered child receives a book a month until age 5. The Imagination Library was developed by Dolly Parton to improve the reading scores of children in Tennessee. It has now gone nationwide and into foreign countries.

Danica Lewis, (*right in picture*) director of ELCCO (Early Learning Collaboration Council of Oshkosh) and the pre-K specialist with Oshkosh Area School District oversees the pre-K program at 8, soon to be 10, sites in the city. ELCCO is teaming with United Way on the Imagination Library. Ms. Lewis showed how children who are read to often, who develop a love of books and reading, do much better in school. Children deprived of books and readings begin school with a much smaller vocabulary. This gap in school readiness discrepancy never closes.



To enroll a child in the program, go to [www.oshkoshunitedway.org](http://www.oshkoshunitedway.org) and click on Imagination Library. There is no cost to the parent to enroll a child and there is no cost for the books. Ms. Panek says that they already have 450 children signed up for the Imagination Library by June 9. Funding for the program is coming from Oshkosh Area United Way, Oshkosh Community Foundation and other sources. Any one may donate to the program.

## Sustainability Authors Speak in Appleton

*(Editor's Note: the following article was submitted by Kathy Propp)*

Sustainability movement leaders Torbjorn Lahti and Sarah James spoke about "Moving Toward Sustainable Communities" at the Appleton Public Library on June 18. People from all over the New North region attended, including at least six from Oshkosh. James and Lahti authored the book "The Natural Step for Communities" which formed the basis for our LWV Study Circle last fall and the four guiding principles of sustainability that LWV Oshkosh adopted in May.

Sarah James has published another book *Swamp Yankee Planning for Sustainability: a bottom up process for becoming an eco-municipality* which can be downloaded for \$12 on the website [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). This book offers more specifics on how to proceed.

Susan Nuernberg spoke to Sarah afterwards about how important it is for people in Oshkosh to see that other communities have changed themselves into eco-communities. It helps convince them that change is possible. In response, Sarah said she would love to come to Oshkosh! She and Torbjorn visit Wisconsin often. After some more ground work has been laid, perhaps the League and the City's energy committee could co-sponsor a community/city council workshop with Sarah James on becoming an eco municipality.

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## Former Oshkosh League President Takes Up New Job in Alabama

*Editor's note: When I learned that LuAnn had accepted a position in Alabama, I asked her a few questions about her Oshkosh League Experience. Here are her comments.*

I joined the League in 1994 at the Annual Meeting when I realized that this was a group of activists who shared my values on political issues, and I knew they could teach me how to take actions that would lead to positive changes. At the time, I was struggling to get the Oshkosh Area School District to be accessible for adults with disabilities. The League held a forum, taught me how to get the district to form a committee to address the problem and today, all 24 of the Oshkosh schools are accessible to people in wheelchairs. To this day, the committee continues to advocate for upgrades to programs and facilities for all types of disabilities. Eventually I ran for the school board and was elected. Being on the Board expanded my opportunity for improving access to schools and my advocacy shifted to working to improve education for all children in the Oshkosh schools.

I think I served on the LWV board for a few years, the last year as president. Speaking of her work on the board, LuAnn said she just loved the strategic planning we did. "Together we set goals that led to the annual fundraiser and to a greater push for increasing our membership."

Because of the influence of my League friends, I went back to school and completed a technical degree in quality management from FVTC, and I earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Alverno College. Thanks to the strong recommendation from LWV member Steve Hintz, I expect to finish my masters in public administration at UWO next year.

It is hard to leave my friends in the Oshkosh League who taught me to be a woman of influence who can create policy changes that improve the quality of life for adults and children in our communities. Leaguers do not sit around complaining. They taught me how to take action. For that, I will always be grateful!

I moved to Montgomery, Alabama, and I have already contacted the LWV in Montgomery. I am the director of board development for the Alabama Association of School Boards. <http://www.alabamaschoolboards.org/staff.htm> I look forward to working as a member of the executive team to help boards in Alabama focus their governance on improving student achievement. In addition to conducting consulting and training programs, I will coordinate meeting planning and oversee the AASB's School Board Member Academy.



## **Local League Adopts Agenda and Elects Officers**

At the Annual Meeting at Vitale's on May 19, Oshkosh League members elected officers and board members for 2008 – 2010. Officers elected for another term are Frankie Mengeling, vice president; and Karen Boehning, treasurer. Board members elected for another term are Carolyn Blassingame and Dorry Wilner. Newly elected to the board is Fran Garb. Jeanne Shiras was appointed to the Board at its June board meeting.

## **LWV Issue Agenda for 2008-09**

### **Local Studies**

- State Levy Limits: impact on Oshkosh city services.
- Parks and Recreation position update

Members who would like to serve on one of these study committees should contact Kathy Propp at [jkpropp@earthlink.net](mailto:jkpropp@earthlink.net) or 231-4770.

### **LWV Wisconsin State Studies**

- Continue Election Administration Study

### **LWV US National Issues and Studies**

- Advocacy and education programs about healthcare reform and global climate change.
- Study of the National Popular Vote Compact as a method for electing the President.

### **Issue Forums**

- Saturday, Oct. 4: Democracy In Action Forum in Stevens Point
- Monday, Nov. 17: Redistricting Forum

## **Five Oshkosh League Members Trained as Voter Registration Deputies**

Remember when the Oshkosh voter lists were green striped, legal-size sheets? Remember when you went to vote and had to give your address first? Remember how that poll worker flipped pages until she came to your street and found your address? That was then. Now, the poll worker asks for your name, and the voter lists are printed on 8.5 by 11 inches sheets of white paper. Why the change? It's because the state of Wisconsin now prints the voter lists. City, town and county clerks now send their voter registration cards to the Government Accountability Board in Madison. Here the data are entered, lists are assembled and sent back to the clerks. Registration materials need to be at the GAB offices at the latest 20 days before an election in order to get voters names on the lists.

To expedite the registration of new voters, or voters who have moved or changed their last name, special deputies are used. Prior to this year, these deputies were trained by the municipal clerks and they could only register voters within that city's limits. Many of you have probably been trained by Pam Ubrig, Oshkosh's city clerk, for registration purposes. However, that is no longer the case. *Instead Voter Registration Deputies are now trained by members of the Government Accountability Board Office. These special deputies can register anyone in the state of Wisconsin.*

At the June 6 – 7 LWV convention in Madison five members of the Oshkosh League underwent the necessary training and swore the Oath of Special Registration Deputy. They are Ann Marshall, Frankie Mengeling, Kathy Propp, Jeanne Shiras and Dorry Wilner.

The two hour session showed these women how to fill out voter registration cards, how to get these materials to the GAB office, and how to set up voter registration drives. Oshkosh LWV plans to register voters at the Saturday Farmers Markets (July 12 – Aug. 9) and the Wed. Live at Lunch events at Opera House Square (July 16 – Aug 13). We need more trained volunteers! There will be a deputy registrar training session at the Appleton Public Library on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Call Carolyn (231-3350) for information and a ride.

## State and National Leagues Adopt Programs at their Conventions

At its convention in Madison on June 7, Delegates to LWV Wisconsin Annual Meeting concurred with the following LWV Milwaukee County position. Part 1 of Lending Industry Practices received concurrence at the 2007 convention. There will be a third part up for concurrence in June of 2009.

### Lending Industry Practices

#### Part 2 - Predatory Sub-Prime Loans

Support the following home mortgage provisions as fair to lender and borrower alike:

1. Verification of borrower income.
2. Full disclosure of the cost of the loan – monthly and lifetime.
3. Terms appropriate to the borrowers ability to make monthly payments.
4. Debt equal to or less than the home's current value
5. Clear limits on prepayment penalties.
6. Escrow fund for property taxes and insurance.

Support a legal ban on two industry practices – yield spread premiums and pre foreclosure conveyances.

Support home ownership classes for first-time buyers to foster consumer responsibility.

Support that all parties who profit from mortgages have a fiduciary duty to consumers and should be held legally accountable. This includes the loan originator, the originator's company/institution, funding sources, underwriters, mortgage purchasers, rating agencies, trust officers, regulators and loan servicers.

Support for clear industry standards, including competency test, certification and continuing education requirements for all loan originators, mortgage brokers, and independent mortgage companies and banking affiliates. The mortgage industry requires governance.

### LWVUS Convention

Nine Wisconsin League members, representing 6 local Leagues and the state League, attended LWVUS Convention in Portland, Oregon, June 16-17. Convention delegates voted to amend the League Principles by adding: "The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that all powers of the U.S. government should be exercised within the constitutional framework of a balance among the three branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial."

Delegates also adopted:

- ✓ a program to educate members and communities about **healthcare reform** in order to be better prepared as advocates;
- ✓ a multi-level education and advocacy campaign to promote solutions to **global climate change**;
- ✓ a study entitled: "The advisability of using the **National Popular Vote compact** among the states as a method for electing the President."



**LWV of the OSHKOSH AREA DUES NOTICE**  
**September, 2008—August, 2009**

Please make your dues check payable to: **LWV Oshkosh Area**  
 Please mail your check to the Treasurer: Karen Boehning  
 1202 Algoma Blvd.  
 Oshkosh WI 54901

**Basic Dues** **\$45.00**  
**Household Dues (two members)** **\$70.00**  
**Student Dues:** **\$10.00**

For each member, LWV-Oshkosh pays \$27 to the state League, and \$28 to the national League. We **lose** \$10 for each individual member and \$12.50 for each household membership, plus we have our own local expenses. To make up this shortfall we need your help. This can be done in two ways:

1. Write a separate check payable to the LWV-US Education Fund. This reduces our national League assessment. Send this check to Karen Boehning so our League gets the credit for the donation.
2. Write a generous check to LWV-Oshkosh for an amount larger than the dues.

**Thank you in advance for your membership and your help.**

Item	Amount
LWV Oshkosh dues 2008-2009 Dues are not tax deductible. New members who joined in March or later need not pay again.	
Additional donation to LWV Oshkosh This is not tax deductible but is very much needed.	
<b>Total payable to LWV Oshkosh:</b>	
Optional: LWV-US Education Fund <b>This reduces our per-member payment and IS tax deductible.</b> Write a separate check to LWV-US Education Fund	
Optional: LWV-WI Education Fund Tax deductible, separate check to LWV-WI Ed. Fund	

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- I want my email address shared with LWV-US and LWV-WI for updates
- Please use my email address for LWV Oshkosh notices only.

Your email address will be included on the League membership list that is distributed to local League members only.

From the Treasurer:

We very much value you as a member and we know you value League and all it does.

A dues renewal form is included in this newsletter. Your dues aren't officially due until September, but we start our fiscal year on July 1. Since we have only a small carryover from last year and since our first bills are due in July, we very much need and appreciate early renewals to help with our cash flow.

If you read the fine print on the renewal form you know that we count very heavily on our members' paying more than the dues amount to balance our budget. Our basic dues of \$45/person and \$70/household don't cover our expenses, but our policy is to keep dues affordable so as many people as possible can join. We depend on our members paying extra to pay our bills.

Last year we did make money on our fund-raiser event—Amy Oberg was a wonderful speaker.

And, yes, we will do another fundraiser, but we have included that in our budget, and we still need your help.

A little more explanation on League donations:

- Donations and membership to the LWV-Oshkosh Area are NOT tax deductible
- Donations to the LWV-US Education Fund ARE tax deductible AND offset our League's assessment for national dues.
- Donations to the LWV-WIS Education Fund ARE tax deductible but do not offset our assessment for state dues.

Please renew as soon as possible.

Please be generous and make your check larger than the minimum dues if you can.

Please let me know if you have questions.

Karen Boehning, Treasurer  
426-2843  
boehningk@gmail.com