



Winnebago Voter

November / December 2011

November / December Calendar

Monday November 7

Common Cause, WI Public Forum, 6:30 – 8:00
"What Ever Happened to Good Government in Wisconsin?" UW-Oshkosh Reeve Union Rm 227
(See Page 5)

Wednesday November 9

Food for Thought Lunch 11:45 am
Vitale's, 215 W. Murdock Ave.
Overview of the new LIFE report
Sue Panek, Oshkosh Area United Way Exec. Dir.

Saturday, November 12, 9:00 am
LWV breakfast at Remingtons, Neenah
123 E. Wisconsin St. Holiday Inn

Monday, November 14
LWV Board Meeting; 5:30-8:00 pm
Zuppa's 1540 S Commercial St, Neenah

Wednesday, November 16 Noon to 1 PM
State of the City: Menasha
Elisha D. Smith Public Library, 440 First St.
Mayor Don Merkes, Informal discussion

Wednesday, December 14
Food for Thought Lunch 11:45
Vitale's 215 W. Murdock Ave.
Francine Tompkins, K-12 Assessment *The Changing Landscape of Public Education in Wisconsin*

Monday, January 9 6:30 – 8:30 PM
Winnebago LWV Board Meeting
2033 Menominee Dr.

CONSOLIDATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENTS UPDATE

During 2011 the cities of Oshkosh, Neenah and Menasha joined Winnebago County to work with the Baker-Tilly Consultant Firm to study and analyze the public health services being provided by each governmental entity and the possible benefits of consolidation.

The local LWV has been closely following this process and at the October board meeting voted to support the consolidation. A summary report from Baker-Tilly has been presented detailing fiscal benefits and opportunities for more effective and efficient provision of services that could result from consolidation.

The decision has been made by Oshkosh, Neenah and Winnebago County to work out an interagency agreement for the purpose of consolidating the three respective health departments into one County Health Department.

Menasha decided to pass on the opportunity at this time. When this agreement has been completed it will be brought to the Boards of Health, the City Councils and the County Board once more when a final decision on the consolidation will be made.

(This update was submitted by Ann Marshall who had attended all the of County Board committee meetings that centered on the merger of the health departments.)

Check out these web addresses:

www.lwwinnebago.org

www.lwv.org

www.lwwwi.org

Transit Director Outlines New Transit Plans

Christopher Strong (*pictured right*), Oshkosh's Director of Transportation, outlined the city's new Transit Development Plan at the September Food for Thought lunch at Vitales. His presentation covered the existing Oshkosh Transportation System (OTS), the funding for OTS and the new Transit Development Plan.

The city has eight fixed-route bus service that have 30-minute loops, six days a week from 6:15 AM to 6:10 PM and an hourly loop (Route 10) to Neenah. It has complementary ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Paratransit and supplemental school service. It also runs an EAA service during the week of its convention.

Senior dial-a-ride, Cabulance, ADVOCAP meal site transportation are additional mobility services it offers. Its budget is 4.5 million; 57% of that is federal and state monies, 15-20% of it is fares; 15-20% comes from the city.

The Transportation Development Plan (TDP) is headed by the city but includes other stakeholders such as ARC, the Chamber of Commerce, the OTS Advisory Board, and UWO among others. It contracted with the East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission to construct a plan. Every five years, the OTS must evaluate and update its plans of operation. The new plans take into consideration passenger surveys, survey responses to audiences of potential riders, web-based surveys, steering committee meetings and stakeholder interviews.

As a result of all this work, the OTS has come up with fourteen recommendations. The entire document (all 204 pages) can be found at the City of Oshkosh website: [/www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Transit/](http://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Transit/). Clicking here will also take you to all the services of the transit system.



Sustainability Progress Outlined at October Lunch



Oshkosh is not new to sustainability according to Robin Leslie (*pictured, left*), Principal Planner and Director of Sustainability for Oshkosh. Her position began in April 2010, but the Oshkosh had already committed itself in 2007 to the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement. (www.usmayors.org/). Ms. Leslie was the presenter at the League's October Food for Thought lunch on October 12 at Vitales.

Prior to 2007, Oshkosh had undertaken many tasks that fall under the umbrella of sustainability: brownfield cleanup, infill development, tree programs, floodplain management, regional planning, recycling, park planning, community gardens, storm water management, et al.

In 2008, the City Council adopted a resolution to join ICLEI—Local Governments for sustainability (see www.icleausa.org) and follow its five milestones:

- > Conduct a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and forecast to determine the source and quantity of greenhouse gas emissions in the jurisdiction;
- > Establish a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target;
- > Develop an action plan with both existing and future actions which when implemented will meet the local greenhouse gas reduction target;
- > Implement the action plan; and
- > Monitor and report progress.

Ms. Leslie listed the city's progress in reaching sustainability year by year. Here are some highlights: (*continued on page 3*)

(continued from page 2)

- > 2009 Launch of Sustainable Oshkosh webpage www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/SustainableOshkosh;
Vision Oshkosh Survey
- > 2010 Permanent Medication Drop-off Site; Launch of hybrid buses; Oshkosh becomes Bird
City Wisconsin
- > 2011 Bike/Pedestrian Plan Finalized; Urban chicken ordinance; Phase 1 Miller's Bay
Shoreland Restoration Project; Terrace Trees Ordinance; Ordinance banning Coal-tar
Sealants

At the beginning of each year, the city will publish "Sustainable Oshkosh Annual Report." There will be a community open house in November on the Sustainability Plan.

"Power of Money" Influences Political Campaigns

Mike McCabe (*pictured right*) of Wisconsin Democracy Campaign said, "We shine light in dark corners" as he began his presentation "The Power of Money" at the League's kickoff event September 22 at the Oshkosh Public Library.

He asked "What matters most in elections— candidates or money?" The obvious answer today is money. He pointed out that 44 million dollars was spent on the nine recall elections in the state this summer. The previous record spending was 20.2 million in 2010 for 116 legislative races.

Special interest groups, most of them beyond the borders of Wisconsin, spent \$34 million on the recalls; this does not include money given to candidates.

Clearly, in his view this extreme spending is a dysfunction. Supreme Court elections are now "election auctions." He pointed out state programs that were derailed or severely cut because of the monetary influence of donors and PACs in recent races to Republican candidates. Those receiving the most press are the railroad monies which the Governor turned down and the change in the set backs for wind power turbines.

How did Wisconsin—once known as a progressive state—commit this 180-degree turn? To answer that Mr. McCabe gave us a history lesson. In 1911 the Wisconsin legislature created the progressive image with workers compensation, voc-tech schools, sweeping railroad reforms, and progressive income tax, to name a few. These progressive laws were possible because of earlier legislation in the late 1890s that banned election fraud, bribery of elected officials, and graft. The 1905 legislature banned corporate election spending. What prompted these legislative reforms at the turn of the century was the out and out bribery of the governor and all legislators save one by a wealthy railroad tycoon who wanted to build a rail line from Milwaukee to Lacrosse without having to purchase the land from farmers and other landowners along the route. His bribery worked. But the upshot of this was that none of the legislators or the governor was reelected and an era of anti-fraud and anti-bribery began.

Now "bribery has been made legal again via corporation contributions," said Mr. McCabe. Calling it the "scandal of our times," he says we need to criminalize bribery again.

The Winnebago County League with money from the Joyce Foundation had Mr. McCabe's presentation filmed. It is available for viewing on You Tube at this website: www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMya89jcdfY. More information on Wisconsin Democracy Campaign including a "what you can do" section can be found here: www.wisdco.org/. Click on "Get Involved" to see what individual citizens can do to end "Wealthfare."



Steven Walters: “Wisconsin’s First 8 Months, 2011”

Steven Walters, (pictured right with co-president Kathy Propp) producer of *Wisconsin Eye* and columnist for the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, took the 50 plus attendees through a lively presentation of the first 8 months of Governor Scott Walker’s regime. The League’s 7th Soapbox Series was held at the Oshkosh Country Club on Thursday, October 20th.



His handout was the 2011 calendar on which he had circled the dates of the major events that brought Wisconsin’s politics to national and international

attention. These dates began with January 3rd, the Governor’s inauguration. Other momentous dates he listed included February 11, the introduction of Act 10 which curtailed collective bargaining, February 17 when 14 Senate Democrats left for Illinois in protest of the “Budget Repair” bill. This is also the month in which the mass protests began in Madison. He said that when there were press conferences or opportunities for members of the press to witness the Governor signing these controversial bills, that reporters were present from across the United States as well as European and Asian countries.

His calendar includes the dates of the State Supreme Court election and recount, the Supreme Court upholding of Act 10, the nine recall elections, redistricting, and the special sessions on jobs. The list ends with the “Democrats’ vow” to recall Walker drive.

For the opening and the closing of his presentation he played a message from his cell phone of the protesters singing their song of recalling Governor Walker, which goes to the tune of “We Shall Overcome.”

State of the City of Menasha

Meet Menasha Mayor Don Merkes for a “State of the City of Menasha” presentation. The get-together features informal discussion and a question and answer session with the mayor.

Wednesday, November 16 from Noon to 1 PM
Elisha D. Smith Public Library
440 First Street, Menasha.

Here is a chance to meet Menasha’s mayor and ask him questions about the City of Menasha. This meeting is sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Winnebago County. The League is planning a similar session next spring with the mayor of the City of Neenah.



Public Forum

What Ever Happened to Good Government in Wisconsin?

***** And How Can We Fix It? *****

Monday, November 7, 2011

6:30 – 8:00 PM

Reeve Union – Ballroom 227C

UW-Oshkosh – 748 Algoma Boulevard

Oshkosh, Wisconsin

****Free and Open to the Public – Light Refreshments will be Served****

Please come join in the discussion and learn more about:

- Should we **elect** or **appoint** Wisconsin's Supreme Court Justices?
- Is **public financing** of our state elections needed?
- Will the new **Voter Photo ID** law **suppress voter fraud** or **voters**?
- 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?
- How will the **U.S. Supreme** Court's *Citizens United* decision affect Wisconsin?

Panelists:	State Senator Jessica King (D-Oshkosh) State Representative Richard Spanbauer (R-Oshkosh) Program/News Director - WOSH Radio & former GOP candidate for the State Assembly Jonathan Krause Political Science Professor James Simmons of UW-Oshkosh Communications Professor Tony Palmeri of UW-Oshkosh Executive Director Jay Heck of Common Cause in Wisconsin
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Presented by Common Cause in Wisconsin (Underwritten by The Joyce Foundation)

Co-Sponsors: UW-Oshkosh Political Science Student Association, UW-Oshkosh American Democracy Project, UW-Oshkosh College Democrats, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Education Fund, League of Women Voters of Winnebago County, American Association of University Women-WI, American Association of University Women-Oshkosh Branch, Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans

For more information, visit this website at www.commoncausewisconsin.org or call Sandra Miller (608) 658-2109

Eighteen Oshkosh Parks Get Signs Detailing Park Histories

A few years ago, the LWV Winnebago County embarked on a parks study. We knew the current parks 5-year plan needed updating. We began by visiting all 47 parks and recreational areas in the city and compiling information on them.

As our study was underway, the head of the parks department, Tom Stephany, resigned for health reasons. One of our concerns was the fact that Oshkosh had no special events policy that would allow large groups to book a park for a public activity by filling in one form. At the time, organizations would need to speak to separate city agencies, such as parks, police, fire, etc. just to get an event on the calendar. The Special Events policy was enacted by the city in the winter of 2010-2011.

We also determined that information on the origin of the parks and their names was necessary. A League committee undertook this project in 2010 and completed it in 2011. With the help of the new parks director, Ray Maurer, signs were designed and the first ones were installed in mid-October.

The eighteen parks with signs are Fugleberg, Glatz, Mary Jewel, Menominee, Quarry, Rainbow, Red Arrow, Riverside, Roe, Rochlin, South, Killian Spanbauer Field, Carl Steiger, William Steiger, Stevens, Stoegbauer, Teichmiller, and West Algoma. East Hall and Shapiro parks' signs will be installed by UWO. The sign purchase was funded by the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation, Oshkosh Fast Pitch Club, Southwest Rotary Club, Otter Street Fishing Club, and the Winnebago Lakes Council. Thank you for making these signs possible!

Pictured below is the group at the installation of the Stevens Park Sign. Far right is Mayor Burk Tower; to his right is Kathy Propp, S.W. Rotary Lori Davis, Terry Wohler, Otter St. Fishing Club, Joy Wick, OACF, Bill Miller, Fast Pitch Club, Bill Gogolewski, Advisory Park Board Chair.)



December Lunch to Look at Public Education in Wisconsin

“The Changing Landscape of Public Education in Wisconsin” is the title of the presentation for the December Food for Thought Lunch at Vitales, on December 14. The presenter is Francine M. Tompkins, Ph. D., Director of PK-16 Initiatives for the University of Wisconsin System Administration.

This session will include an overview of key federal and state policies, related to assessment and accountability, that are likely to have a substantive impact on practices in public education, K-12. There will be ample time provided for questions and discussion.

Dr. Tompkins has an impressive resume. Her most recent research efforts have focused on advancing meaningful accountability in teacher preparation. Funded with grants from the U.S. Department of Education and the University of Wisconsin System Administration, Francine worked with educators from across the state, representing our private and public institutions of higher education and middle school and high school math and science teachers, to design a common protocol for assessing the performance of teacher candidates during their student teaching experience.

Award-winning journalist Peggy Orenstein will be giving a presentation on the UWO campus about her new best-selling book, *Cinderella Ate My Daughter: Dispatches from the Frontlines of the New Girlie-Girl Culture*. A follow-up to her New York Times column, “What’s Wrong with Cinderella?,” Orenstein’s book explores the “princess mania” that the current generation of young girls is immersed in and investigates whether it is harmful, harmless, or something else entirely. Come join us for a thought-provoking, witty, and entertaining examination of this very important topic! Ms. Orenstein’s presentation will be November 10 in Reeve Union Room 202 from 6 – 8 PM. (We received this announcement from Susan Rensing, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Women’s Studies and History)

Curious? Interested in the League of Women Voters?

Membership is open to women and men 18 years or older in Winnebago County. Dues are \$50 per individual, \$75 per household, \$10 per student, \$25 for limited income. For more information contact Kathy Propp, Co-President, jkpropp@earthlink.net or Fran Garb, Membership Chair, fgarb@new.rr.com.

Ready to Join Us?

Send the following form to:

Karen Boehning, Treasurer: 1202 Algoma Blvd. Oshkosh 54901

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

The Winnebago Voter

1936 Hazel St.

Oshkosh WI 54901

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS MISSION

The League of Women Voters, a non-partisan political organization of men and women, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Visit <http://www.lwv.org>, <http://www.lwvwi.org>, <http://www.lwvwinnebago.org>

Members receive the bi-monthly *Winnebago Voter, Forward* from LWV-WI, and action alerts. Meetings are open to the public. We believe open civil discourse is critical to protect democracy and move forward with positive reform.

League Membership: \$50 (\$75 for two in household), \$10 students, \$25 limited income)

Winnebago County Voter Subscription only: \$10.00.

Dues payable to: LWV Winnebago County, 1202 Algoma Blvd, Oshkosh 54901.

President Barack Obama
<http://whitehouse.gov>

Senator Ron Johnson
<http://ronjohnson.senate.gov>

Senator Kohl
<http://kohl.senate.gov>

Rep. Tom Petri
<http://Petri.house.gov>

Sen. Jessica King (18th Dist)
Sen.King@legis.wisconsin.gov

Rep. Gordon Hintz (54th Dist)
Rep.Hintz@legis.wisconsin.gov

Sen. Michael Ellis (19th Dist)
Sen.Ellis@legis.wisconsin.gov

Rep. Dick Spanbauer (53rd Dist)
Rep.Spanbauer@legis.wisconsin.gov

Rep. Dean Kaufert (55th Dist)
Rep.Kaufert@legis.wisconsin.gov

Gov. Scott Walker
<http://govgeneral@wisconsin.gov>

Wisconsin Legislative Hotline: 800-362-9472 Capitol Hill Switchboard 202-224-3121