



# Winnebago Voter

## March / April 2009

### Calendar March & April

**Wednesday, March 4: 7:00-8:30 pm**  
**Wisconsin Clean Energy Economy Forum**  
UW Oshkosh Reeve Union 307 (see p. 3)

**Thursday, March 5**  
Winnebago County LWV registers voters at  
Lourdes High School and West High

**Friday, March 6: 9:00 AM**  
Parks committee meets with Oshkosh Parks  
Director, Tom Stephany

**Monday, March 9**  
LWV Board Meeting, 5:30 – 7:30 PM  
1202 Algoma Blvd. (enter from New York)

**Wednesday, March 11**  
**Food for Thought Lunch 12:00 PM**  
Vitale's Italian cuisine, 215 W. Murdock  
*Cheryl Simonson, CESA 6*  
*Preparing Students for Workforce*

**Tuesday, April 7: Spring Election**

**Wednesday, April 8**  
**Food for Thought Lunch 12:00 PM**  
Vitale's Italian cuisine, 215 W. Murdock  
*James Rabe, Oshkosh storm water utility*  
*Oshkosh stormwater management plans*

**Monday, April 13**  
**LWV Board Meeting 5:30 – 7:30 PM TBD**

**Monday, May 4 5:30 – 7:30 pm**  
**Winnebago County LWV Fund Raiser**  
Oshkosh Country Club,  
*Joe Heller, political cartoonist, Green Bay*  
*Press Gazette, presenter. Tickets 231-4770*

### Candidate Forums Dominate March Calendar

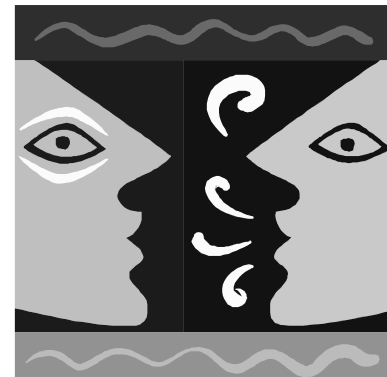
**Thursday, March 19: 6:00 – 8:00 pm**  
Menasha Aldermanic District debates  
Menasha Senior Center

**Monday, March 23: 6:30 – 8:30 pm\***  
Oshkosh Candidates Forum  
School Board 6:30 pm; Oshkosh Mayor 7:30 pm  
Oshkosh City Hall, 215 Church Ave.

**Thursday, March 26: 6:30 – 8:30 pm**  
Neenah School Board forum  
Neenah Public Library

**Thursday, March 26: 6:30 – 8:30 pm\***  
Oshkosh Candidates Forum  
Oshkosh City Council 6:30 pm;  
Winnebago County Executive 7:40 pm.  
Oshkosh City Hall, 215 Church Ave.

\*Broadcast live on CitiCable 10 & WOCT  
101.9 FM Oshkosh Community Radio



## County Executive Begins 2009 Food for Thought Lunch Series

The League's Food for Thought program for 2009 began with a "Financial Review" of Winnebago County presented by Mark Harris, County Executive. Mr. Harris led the twenty-two members and guests through several charts showing the levy, expenditures, number of county employees, general obligation debt outstanding, operating tax rate and other mind-bending facts.

I learned several things I did not know about county finances:

- The sheriff's department is the fastest growing part of the Winnebago County tax levy; the human services portion is declining.
- In the category of expenditures, the state law requires 3 expenditures and services for human services.
- Winnebago County draws down \$50 million from the state for human services.
- The local levy for money from county taxpayers is 35 %, a percentage which Mr. Harris says is "inching up every year."
- The state pays the salaries of circuit court judges.
- The county only bonds over a ten year period.
- County Executive Harris has no intention to float the idea of a sales tax.



He listed five major accomplishments:

- 1) Proposed balanced budgets
- 2) Restored reserves to target levels
- 3) Most efficient government
  - i) Employment at 15 year low
  - ii) Annual savings of four million dollars
- 4) Reduced waiting list for elderly and disabled
- 5) Investment in public infrastructure
  - i) New 168 bed nursing home
  - ii) Communication art center UW Fox Valley
  - iii) \$14 million increased investment in roads, bridges and culverts



## March Lunch Speaker is Curriculum and Assessment Coordinator for CESA 6

Cheryl Simonson is a Curriculum and Assessment Coordinator for the CESA 6 Instructional Services Program licensed as a Director of Instruction and Principal. As a seasoned educator with twenty plus years in the field, her passion continues to be directed toward improving student learning. Using a constructivist approach in working with classroom teachers she facilitates the educator's understanding of the link between the real-world and classroom learning.

Cheryl received an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and a Master's degree from Marian College of Fond du Lac. She currently is an adjunct instructor for area institutions of higher education developing and teaching graduate courses.

## Forum on Clean Energy Set for UW Oshkosh Campus on March 4

On Wednesday at 7 PM at UW Oshkosh, Wisconsin Environment is joining local clean energy businesses and other environmental groups to host a forum on how Wisconsin can benefit from a clean energy economy. Hear from Rep. Gordon Hintz, Mayor Frank Tower and a panel of experts on how Oshkosh and Northeast Wisconsin can grow its economy, cut pollution and create jobs by using more homegrown, renewable energy.

**WHAT:** Wisconsin's Clean Energy Economy Forum  
**WHEN:** Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> 7-8:30pm  
**WHERE:** Reeve Memorial Union, Rm. 307  
UW Oshkosh  
748 Algoma Blvd.  
Oshkosh, WI 54901

### [RSVP FOR THE EVENT BY CLICKING HERE NOW!](#)

HOSTED BY: Wisconsin Environment, Sierra Club: Fox Valley Chapter, WISPIRG, Orion Energy Systems, Energize LLC, Area Mechanical Inc., Hot Water Products, City of Oshkosh Sustainability Board, UW Oshkosh Environmental Studies Program, UW Oshkosh Campus Sustainability Task Force, UW Oshkosh SEAC, and more.

For more information about Clean Energy in Wisconsin and Wisconsin Environment click [here](#).



## League Takes Consensus on State Voting and National Popular Vote Compact

February was a month for the League to think about elections and voting. The Winnebago County League took consensus on the state voting measure, Election Administration, at its Lively Issues meeting on Saturday, February 7. We discussed absentee voting vs. early voting. Briefly put, with absentee voting, the ballots sealed in their envelope are opened at the polling place of the voter. In early voting, the ballots are run through the voting machine at the early voting sites.

The League also discussed such ideas as voting by mail, changing the election day to weekends, making the election day a holiday. The consensus results will be tallied by the state and announced this summer.

The second voting consensus was the National Popular Vote Compact study by the national LWV. This compact seeks to avoid the problems caused by the Electoral College by allowing states to form a compact with each other. Under the terms of the compact, state electors would vote for the Presidential candidate who had the largest popular vote regardless of whether that candidate won the state.

To guide us in reaching consensus, we listened to Professor Jim Simmons (*right in picture*) and retired Professor Martin Gruberg (*left in picture*) of the Political Science Department at UWO as they listed the pros and cons of the Electoral College and the National Popular Vote Compact. In this editor's eyes, their presentations were lively insights in presidential election faux pas.



## Oshkosh Planning Director Presents The Top 13 at February Lunch

Darryn Burich, Oshkosh Director of Planning, outlined the city's progress toward achieving the "top 13" action items in the Oshkosh 2005 Comprehensive Plan:

1. Revise Zoning Ordinance. In 2008 the council adopted a new Off-Street Parking Ordinance with emphasis on increasing internal landscaping and reducing number of required parking spaces.
2. Revise Land Subdivision Ordinance. There are now tree retention and replacement requirements with street projects, as well as tree planting requirements for new subdivisions.
3. Adopt cooperative boundary agreements with all surrounding towns. Agreements have been reached with the Towns of Nekimi (2007) and Black Wolf (2008).
4. Map a west side arterial near Clairville Rd. to connect Hys 21 and 26. The county hired a planning firm to study locations, presented alternatives to the public in 2008, and is now refining the plans.
5. Continue to implement the Downtown Action Plan. The new Wisconsin St. bridge has underpasses for a future Fox River riverwalk, new wayfinding signs have been posted, convention center has been renovated, Leach Amphitheater and Riverside park improvements made, Main St. streetscaping and a façade enhancement program are planned in conjunction with repaving Main St. in 2010.
6. Identify and implement aesthetic improvements for gateways/key corridors. Wayfinding signs and parking ordinance changes will help. The Hy 41 overlay ordinance needs tweaking and the plan calls for placing utilities underground with every major project.
7. Participate in the implementation of the UW Oshkosh Campus Master Plan.
8. Update the 1997 Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan. A consultant is being hired now for fall 2009 completion of this plan.
9. Incorporate pedestrian/bicycle issues into an existing city board.
10. Implement Neighborhood Improvement Strategies. The Near East Neighborhood was designated in 2006 as the first targeted area. Dumpster days cleaned up yards, code enforcement is resulting in property improvements, blighted dwellings have been razed, two units of new housing have been created, exterior renovations need to be sympathetic to the building's historic architectural style. The city council may contract with NeighborWorks from Green Bay to work closely with residents in the Near East and other neighborhoods to determine desired improvements (*done*).
11. Create master plan for city's growth area in the Town of Algoma.
12. Create master plan for the Lake Butte des Morts area.
13. Work with public and private housing providers to plan for the development of additional affordable housing units. One handicapped accessible house on Merritt St. was built, high school students built a home on Oxford, the city acquired a home on 9<sup>th</sup> for Habitat, 10 downtown residential units have been approved.



## Parks Committee Continues Update of Local Position

Parks committee members have visited and evaluated all of Oshkosh's parks, boat launches, fishing piers, etc. as well as some in the county. They have prepared a list of issues regarding parks.

On March 6, the committee meets with Tom Stephany, Oshkosh Parks Director, hoping to get answers on such matters as formation of new parks and upkeep and improvement of existing parks. The committee is also looking at creating buffers of natural plants along waterways in parks.



# Winnebago County LWV 2009 Soapbox Series

Presents

Joe Heller, Editorial Cartoonist for the *Green Bay Press Gazette*

“The Art of Editorial Cartooning”

Oshkosh Country Club

Monday May 4<sup>th</sup> 5:30 – 7:30 pm



Tickets available at 231-4770.

Joe Heller has been the editorial cartoonist for the *Green Bay Press-Gazette* since 1985, before that he was the cartoonist for the *West Bend News*. His award list includes: Eight Best of Gannett Awards, six Milwaukee Press Clubs Awards and three John Fischetti Editorial Cartoon Awards,

Joe has put his editorial cartoons into a collection titled: Give 'em Heller. He has also illustrated several children's book, drawn for museum exhibits and various comic books.

He was born in Oshkosh, Wis. and grew up in Milwaukee. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a BA in Fine Arts. He is a member of the Association of American Editorial Cartoonists.

Currently, Joe lives in Green Bay with his wife, two teenage daughters and a couple of Yorkies.

(Text from Hellertoon.com Cartoon published with permission from Joe Heller))

