



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

October 2007

President: Pat Walter
President-Elect: Patte Newman
Secretary: Peggy Struwe
Treasurer: Corrie Kielty-Wesely
Voter Editor: Jim Johnson

Calendar of Events

October 18 (Thursday): Noon

Lunch & Learn,
US Bank Bldg 20th Floor,
13th & M.

Guest: Tracy Christensen,
Director of Research,
Southeast Nebraska Hematology
and Oncology Consultants.
(See article at right.)

October 25 (Thursday): 3:50 p.m.

Dine & Discuss
State Capitol Rotunda
(See article below.)

October 29 (Monday): 6:00 p.m.

LWV-LL Fall Membership Tea
(See article at right.)

November 13 (Tuesday): 5:30 p.m.

LWVLL Board meeting,
Woods Bros, 3737 S. 27th,
Lower Level Board Room.

November 15 (Thursday): Noon

Lunch & Learn,
US Bank Bldg 20th Floor,
13th & M.
Guest: David Landis,
Urban Development Director,
City of Lincoln

Lunch & Learn

Tracy Christensen, Director of Research for the **Southeast Nebraska Hematology and Oncology Consultants**, will be our speaker for the October 18th Lunch & Learn. Recently the group received a national grant to promote a pilot project with the National Functional Genomics [NFGC] directed by the H Lee Mofitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Florida. The goal of this pilot project is to provide any tissue for genomic analysis. Very simply, genomic analysis will unravel the genetic and protein signatures of cancerous tissue. It is felt genomic analysis is the key to developing more effective treatments for all types of cancer. All local physicians will eventually be involved in this project; however the three main oncology leaders are: Dr. Mark Carlson, Dr. Nathan Green, and Dr. Cary Peterson. This is one of several research projects that will truly help us move toward an improvement in cancer outcomes. This will be one of many public presentations that will be made over the next year to educate our community about this extremely exciting research project.

The October "Lunch and Learn" will be held Thursday, October 18th, at noon at the Nebraska Club—top of the U.S. Bank on 13th and "M" Streets. Everyone is welcome. Reservations should be made early—no later than this Monday, October 15th—as space is limited. The luncheon cost is \$8.00, including tax and gratuity. Rides will be provided if requested. Leave a message at the League office (475-1411) to make reservations.

LWV-LL Fall Membership Tea!

Bring a friend, colleague or neighbor to our LWV-LL Fall Membership Tea!

Monday, October 29, 2008 6:00 - 7:30
Hawley Bed & Breakfast, 545 North 25th Street

Delicious treats, coffee and tea will be served. Voter Registration training will also take place beginning at 7:00, so plan to come - definitely bring a guest or two - we need new members to help advance the mission and work of League of Women Voters. Please RSVP to Tari Hendrickson, thendrickson1@neb.rr.com or 402.540.8284.



Dine and Discuss



On October 25, 2007, step inside the Chambers of the Nebraska Legislature with our first "Dine and Discuss" program of the fall season. Know **YOUR** Unicameral and see how the bill process is completed with a tour by our newest LWV members, Heidi Uhing. Heidi is the Public Information Officer of the Nebraska Legislature. We will have our discuss venue in the Warner Chambers (an area not generally open to the public) followed by a reception in the Capitol Courtyard with numerous state and city/county political leaders available to meet and visit.

Thursday, October 25, meeting at 3:50 p.m. in the Rotunda, reception following. \$10 for the Event.

Please call the League Office for reservations at 475-1411.



**Please join the Lincoln-Lancaster League of Women Voters
as we celebrate the U.S. Constitution
with an informational evening program.**

Professor John Hibbing, who teaches Political Science
at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will briefly discuss
the U.S. Constitution and impeachment.

There will be time for questions and answers.

**Unitarian Church of Lincoln
6300 A Street
Sunday, November 11, 2007 – 7:00 p.m.**

For more information, call the League office at 402-475-1411.

The League of Women Voters is a Non-Partisan Organization dedicated to
educating the public on current issues in government, both locally and nationally.

This program is cosponsored by the Unitarian Church Social Action Committee.

2007-2008 Lunch & Learn series off to a great start!

Lincoln Mayor Chris Beutler was our guest speaker for the first in our series of 2007/2008 Lunch & Learn last month. Lunch & Learn programs are generally the third Thursday of each month, September through May, in the Nebraska Club (20th floor of the US Bank Building at 13th and M Streets.) All are welcome to join us; please make reservations at 475-1411. Following are some pictures from the event.



Photographs courtesy of Dick Dienstbier



Historical Overview of Program Planning

At Council 2007, LWVUS Board Member Elisabeth MacNamara provided a brief historical overview of the League's Program Planning process and Adoption of Program. Her comments, which are below, detailed how these processes have changed over the years.

The League of Women Voters was initially organized as a national organization consisting of four directors who selected one of their own as president. Convention was an annual event and was attended by delegates from each state league and each congressional district. This structure mirrored the organizational structure of the National American Woman Suffrage Association. From the beginning, the LWV struggled to determine its mission. Was it to educate newly enfranchised women on the political process and civic responsibility? Was it to educate women on the substantive issues that they would confront as they became politically active? Or was it a combination of the two? From the first, League leaders discovered that the civic involvement is inseparable from knowledge of the issues. At the 1927 convention, the second president of the LWV, Belle Sherwin, likened the League of Women Voters to "a university without walls... whose members enter to learn and remain to shape the curriculum."

At its first convention in 1920, prior to the ratification of the 19th amendment, League delegates adopted a program consisting of 60 items covering everything from social policy legislation to electoral reform and consumer protection. The first president, Maud Wood Parks described it as a "kettle of eels". In the early years, the League struggled with issues of partisanship, membership and money. The nonpartisan policy was adopted early on when it became apparent that the political parties were only giving lip service to involving the new women voters. LWV leaders determined that a nonpartisan, women's organization would be most effective in capitalizing on women's voting strength to effect social change. Nevertheless, by the 1926, attendance at national convention had dropped from 1,000 delegates to just over 300. The bylaws were amended to provide for biennial conventions and council in the intervening year.

The League operated by means of standing committees in the early years. Initially organized around the various social programs that the convention adopted as priorities, the committee structure was continually modified to meet the realities of time and money. Up until the 1950's, program adopted at convention was then prioritized by the National board. Study occurred as the State and Local Leagues gathered the information necessary to take action. In the 1920's the League gathered information on election laws in the various

states, looking for discriminatory statutes that needed to be addressed in order to allow women to fully exercise the franchise. The Georgia League was told "we ain't got laws, we got customs." The approach was to motivate women to learn, to help them acquire political knowledge and when that was internalized, women would be motivated to participate politically. The League had many early successes in influencing the federal government. This was the result of the National Board focusing the efforts of the entire organization in a single area for a period of time. Program came from the top down. State and Local Leagues could remain silent on League Program but could not speak out against it.

The League's work on the TVA provides an example of working program in manner unfamiliar to today's LWV. The Board determined that electrification was an important issue for women. Based on that decision, federal efforts to develop hydro-electric power in the Tennessee Valley and other efforts to regulate the production and distribution of electricity were supported by the League. As part of this support, the Local Leagues were given the task of gathering information on how electricity was being provided in their areas and what the impact of electrification was on their communities. That information was passed to the National League and used to support legislation that eventually became the TVA. Similarly, the National League chose to support reforms in party patronage by broadening civil service practices. A slogan, "find the right man for the job, not the right job for the man" was adopted and Local Leagues set out to explore the impact of patronage across the country. The results were not what the League expected. Civil Service was the panacea they had anticipated. Nevertheless, League members informed themselves on an issue of importance to women and to the country.

By the 1950's, the organization had matured. State and Local Leagues were actively pursuing program of their own and had become stronger than the National organization in many ways. The League had evolved into a true grass roots organization. In 1950, the National Board appointed a committee to clean up the National statement of program. The exercise resulted in a program statement that could be printed on one page of the *Voter*. During the 1950's the Education Fund was established and the National *Voter* was first published as a means of improving communication with the individual member. By 1968, the bylaws provided that "Program... shall consist of those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action." Program categories consisted of the current agenda which were defined as those "governmental issues chosen for sustained

Historical Overview of Program Planning

Continued from page 3

attention and concerted action” and continuing responsibilities consisting of “positions on governmental issues to which the League has given sustained attention and on which it may continue to act.” Program was adopted at convention in much the fashion that it currently is. Recommendations from State and Local Leagues were made to the LWVUS Board from which the Board proposed a program study and action. Non-recommended items could be brought up at convention by mustering a three-fifths vote for consideration. In 1970, the bylaws were amended to define program as (a) action to protect the right to vote of every citizen and (b) those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action. Program was adopted as convention.

The time for recommending program to the LWVUS Board was shortened from five months to three months and non-recommended program could be brought up for consideration by a majority vote only. Other than to add a procedure for taking concurrence at convention, this is the procedure that is use today.

Thank you.....

Richard Dienstbier for taking pictures at our first Lunch and Learn

Lois Poppe for continuing to watch over the LWVLL and the LWVNE office

Mardy McCullough for hosting the international guest from Brazil at the Nebraska Club

Diane Gonzolas for inviting the League to join her on her City Focus Program

Ann Harrell Avery and **Peggy Struwe** for opening their homes for Membership Coffee meetings

Peggy Adair, State President LWVNE for her support and patience in working with me.

Tari Hendrickson for securing \$500 toward the printing of the Elected Officials Guide and also the possibility of joining efforts with Time Warner Cable on a new project

Maura Kelly Tolzin for updating of the Elected Officials Guide....an incredible undertaking and we cannot thank her enough!

Thank you to my wonderful Board of Directors and our Fabulous General Membership for all of their help and support.

Pat Walter
President
League of Women Voters
Lincoln-Lancaster County

LWVUS Action Alert:

Override the President's Veto of SCHIP

Despite overwhelming bipartisan support in both the House and Senate, President Bush decided to leave America's children behind by vetoing the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance (SCHIP) program. It is now up to Congress to provide health care coverage to millions of low-income children. Contact your Representatives and Senators NOW to encourage them to override the Presidential veto.

Take action today to help insure America's children!

The President proposed only a \$5 billion increase in the program - an effective cut in the number of children covered due to inflation and other economic changes. Congress had originally proposed a \$50 billion increase but did their part to compromise and passed only a \$35 billion increase.

For over a decade SCHIP has made great strides in covering children. The program covers children from low-income families who do not qualify for Medicaid. As a direct result of this program the percentage of low-income children in the United States without health coverage has fallen by one-third in the past decade even as employer-based coverage has decreased.

Send a message to your Representatives and Senators to encourage them to OVERRIDE THE VETO.

Without SCHIP millions of children whose families cannot afford health care coverage will go uninsured!

Take Action

1. Contact your Senators and Representatives now, by phone or by email, and urge them to vote to override the Presidential veto.
2. Send this alert to other concerned citizens - your grassroots network, your friends and coworkers. Encourage them to contact their Senators and Representatives today!

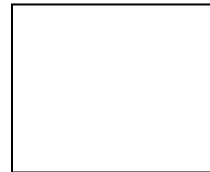
Background

Learn more about what the League has done to support the reauthorization of the SCHIP.

Sign up to receive Action Alerts directly by email. Don't miss an opportunity to take action! It's easy to sign up and the League will never share your email with others: <http://takeaction.lwv.org/lwv/mlm/signup/>.

For additional information, please contact LWVUS Grassroots Lobbyist Christina Vamvas at lobbying@lwv.org.

The Lincoln Lancaster *Voter*
League of Women Voters
The Apothecary, Suite 215
140 North 8th St.
Lincoln NE 68508
475-1411
lwv-ne@inebraska.com



Time Dated Material
Please Do Not Delay