



Bulletin

League of Women Voters
of Greater Omaha
1941 South 42 Street
Suite 501
Omaha, NE 68105-2945
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www.omahalwv.org

League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha

A non-partisan political organization open to all persons 18 years of age or older

October 2009

Volume 52 No 4



LWVGO Luncheon at Big Mama's
Thursday, October 22, 2009
3223 North 45th Street, Building A
Speaker: Willie D. Barney
Founder of the Empowerment Network
Reservation deadline is Friday, October 16th
(See Flyer)

NEW DEADLINE! NEW DEADLINE! NEW DEADLINE!

Making Democracy Work Award

Look for information concerning this year's Making Democracy Work Award coming to our website shortly. This year, all entries for the prestigious League of Women Voters Making Democracy Work Award must be submitted by November 15, 2009. Think about that special community advocate whose dedication to our community is extraordinary. Be sure to submit a form for your nominee! We look forward to hearing from you.



CALENDAR

- Thursday, October 1, 11:00 a.m., League Office: LWVGO board meeting.
- Thursday, October 1, 11:30-1:00, Holiday Inn Central: Women's Fund Fall Luncheon. See page 6.
- Tuesday, October 6, 10:00 a.m., LWVGO office: Social Policy Committee meeting, Health Care Reform discussion.
- Saturday, October 10, 8:30-2:00, Security National Bank Community room, 1120 S. 101 St.: Ready2Run workshop. See page 3
- Tuesday, October 13, 7 p.m., Helen Fisher's home: LWVGO book group. See page 4.
- Tuesday, October 20, 7:30 p.m., Holland Performing Arts Center. Holland Lecture Series, "The Great Crisis and the Predator State". See page 4
- Thursday, October 22, 11:30 a.m., Big Mama's, 3223 N. 45th St. Bldg A: October general meeting. See above and flyer.
- Thursday, October 29, 8:00-1:15, UNO Alumni Hall. Running and Winning. See page 2.
- Wednesday-Thursday, October 29-30, Embassy Suites, 1040 P St., Lincoln: Interdisciplinary Conference on Human Trafficking. See page 5

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

If you're on Facebook please join our Omaha League of Women Voters group, and while you're at it become a fan of League of Women Voters United States. I've been trying to figure out how to include our League in the nice long list that's part of the national League group. It's undoubtedly just one click, but where to find? I may have to wait for my son to get home from Lincoln before I attempt it again.

Sometimes when I'm talking to people about the League of Women Voters they ask me what we do. It's a good question; after all, we're non-partisan so we're not out there trying to get any particular person elected. I used to say something like, "We work to make good public policy", but that's too general, so now I have a whole list that pertains to our particular League. You are welcome to use it as well when you're recruiting members.

Since our mission includes educating ourselves and others about issues that affect our community we sponsor programs that do just that with our monthly general meetings. We also welcome all members to be part of the book discussion group and the International Relations group and to participate in meetings of the various committees, such as our Natural Resources committee or our Social Policy committee.

Still more education occurs when we put on our League pins or tee shirts and attend meetings of our elected representatives as members of the League of Women Voters observer corps. One of my major goals this year is to increase our numbers in this corps because our elected leaders need to know we're paying attention. After we've paid attention we - in large numbers - need to let them know what we think about various policies.

And that leads me to another part of our mission, to advocate for good public policy. We regularly contact our senators, representatives, city council members and others and work to let the rest of our community know our stand on issues. It's a big job and we can always use more volunteers to accomplish it.

I am in awe of the many ways our members contribute to League and to our community. Thank you!

Linda Duckworth

RUNNING AND WINNING

(Sponsored for invited high school students)

Please put October 29 in your calendar and volunteer to work at the "Running and Winning" workshop that will be held at the UNO Thompson Alumni Center that day. We will have over forty five young women from three high schools and Boys' Town present. The volunteers two years ago enjoyed themselves immensely. Plan to be there from 8:00 to 1:15. Lunches will be available. We need the following volunteers:

- Facilitators
- Registrars
- Morning food person
- Noon food person
- Rovers -- to fill in where needed
- Moderator
- Photographer
- Timekeeper
- Judges

If you will be available, please let Sally Fellows (sallyfellows1@cox.net) or Peggy Adair (matgama@tconl.com) know asap. It is important that we have enough people for this to run smoothly.

We are seeking outside funding for this program, but if you would like to make a contribution (in addition to your time), it will be gratefully accepted. Make the check out to the League of Women Voters Ed Fund and you can deduct it from your taxes.

"A Voice for Citizens, A Force for Change"

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



READY TO RUN
(For adult women)
Saturday, October 10, 2009
8:30 am - 2 pm
Security National Bank Community
Room
3 Pacific Place
1120 S. 101 St.
(Pacific Place)

"You know, you should think about running for office!"

"We need more women in elected office--one of those should be you!"

"You're really good at this--why don't you run for office?"

What does it take to run for office? Come find out! Hear from pros, meet women in elected office, ask questions--and then make some plans! Bring a friend and let's change the face of politics!

Call Women's Fund of Greater Omaha, 827-9280.

\$50 registration

LWV URGES COPYCAT ORG. TO END MISLEADING HEALTH CARE ADS
League of Women Voters Objects to Deceptive Advertising by "League of American Voters"

Washington, DC – In a hand-delivered letter, the League of Women Voters called on the "League of American Voters" (LAV) to "cease and desist" from using a name clearly designed to be confused with the League's in order to disseminate misleading information and block health care reform.

"The League of American Voters health care ad makes misleading statements in an inflammatory way," League of Women Voters President Mary G. Wilson stated in her letter to LAV Executive Director Bob Adams. "Not only does your ad distort the facts on health care reform, it does so using a name that is deceptively similar to the League of Women Voters," Wilson said.

"We are not convinced that this startup group is a credible organization with authority to speak on behalf of American voters," Wilson said. "They may have a legitimate-sounding name, but—until we know who is funding the ads—there is no reason to believe that they are anything other than another organization serving as a conduit for big-money attacks on health care reform."

"This is typical of the kinds of things we are seeing from the opponents of health care reform. Intentionally putting out bad information to mislead, confuse and scare Americans," Wilson charged.

"This copycat group appears to be entirely inaccessible to the public. We had to hand-deliver our letter because the group's website lists no email address or fax number," Wilson said, pointing out that the group's office address is shared with several lobbying groups who were unable to locate LAV management or staff.

"The League is releasing the text of this letter to set the record straight: The work of Mr. Adams' organization should in no way be confused with the League of Women Voters," Wilson added.

"The League of Women Voters of the United States has more than 150,000 members and supporters nationwide, and we are one of the most trusted non-partisan organizations in the U.S. Our members and the public rely on us to share information responsibly and accurately, because that is what we have done for almost 90 years," Wilson said.

"Make no mistake: The League of Women Voters believes quality, affordable health care should be available to all Americans," Wilson stated.

"The League of American Voters would best serve Americans by telling the truth in their ads. Our democracy depends on honest and open debate among real people, not misinformation from mysterious, inaccessible organizations that get money from unknown sources to create national TV spots in order to block needed health care reform," Wilson concluded.

*See the letter at:

<http://www.lwv.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Letters to Congress and The President&CONTENTID=13993&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm>

Bookin' It through December !

The LWV-GO book group has chosen selections through 2009. Members are always welcome to join the fun at 7p.m. on second Tuesdays at Helen Fisher's home.

On October 13th the conversation will focus on the final chapters of James K. Galbraith's The Predator State: How Conservatives Abandoned the Free Market and Why Liberals Should Too. (Please see the related article below about Galbraith's appearance at the Holland Center on October 20th.) On November 10th the conversation will address Gretchen Peters' Seeds of Terror: How Heroin is Bankrolling the Taliban and Al Qaeda. On December 8th the group will begin discussing Thomas Friedman's Hot, Flat and Crowded: Why We Need a Green Revolution - and How It Can Renew America.

The Omaha Public Library has copies of all these books, including an audio version of Hot, Flat & Crowded. The Bookworm in Countryside Village offers a 20% discount on book club titles; please let them know you're a League member before the clerk rings up the sale.

Please contact Anne Shaughnessy (amps2008@msn.com) or Helen Fisher (397-2027) if you'd like additional information about the book group. Feel free to attend when the book interests you and your schedule is clear--and if you're ready for lively give-and-take!

“The Great Crisis and the Predator State”

by

Economist James K. Galbraith

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

7:30p.m.

Holland Performing Arts Center

Dr. Galbraith's lecture will include and expand on the ideas he presents in The Predator State: How Conservatives Abandoned the Free Market and Why Liberals Should Too. Tickets for this event are free but reservations are required. Call Ticket Omaha at 402-345-0606 to request up to 4 tickets; you may request that they be mailed to you or held at the box office.

Galbraith is critical of both conservatives and liberals, believing that neither is capable of addressing the nation's pressing economic problems. He finds the current debate to be based on the premise that America's economy is governed by free markets and competition--a premise he declares a myth. Instead, Galbraith suggests that America is becoming a predator nation that abuses public institutions for private profit and undermines public protections for the benefit of private interests. As an example he points to Medicare's drug plan, which legislates monopoly drug pricing for drug companies. Further, he suggests that crises like global warming will continue to be ignored because there is no financial incentive for those in power to take corrective action. Looking forward, Galbraith argues against a hands-off approach to markets, suggesting that unregulated markets will lurch forward from one bubble to the next.

A professor at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, senior scholar with the Levy Economics Institute, and chairman of Economists for Peace and Security, James Galbraith is the tenth speaker presented by The Holland Lecture Series and First Unitarian Church. Additional information about Galbraith and his research is available at the archives of the U of T Inequality Project website: <http://utip.gov.utexas.edu>.

TENTATIVE GENERAL MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2009-2010

Thursday, October 22, Big Mama's, 3223 N. 45th St. Bldg A

Thursday, November 12, Venice Inn, 6920 Pacific St.

Thursday, December 17, Rick's Boatyard Cafe, 345 N. 6th St.

January-Date determined by host? The home of Deb Suttle

Thursday, February 11, Upstream Brewing Co., 17070 Wright Plz.

Monday, March 15, Lo Sole Mio, 3001 S. 32nd Ave.

Thursday, April 22 (Annual Meeting), Champion's Run, 13800 Eagle Run Dr.

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE

from Jeanne Burke

On Thursday, August 27th, several members of the Natural Resources Committee met with Bobbi Holmes at the Douglas County Extension Office. We discussed numerous issues, including low level flooding and low impact development (LID) strategies for flood control. One measure Bobbi advocates is the use of rain barrels for catching run-off water from rooftops and gutters. Currently, Bobbi teaches Extension classes on making and using rain barrels, and her classes are filled.

At the August meeting, the Natural Resources Committee discussed the possibility of partnering with Bobbi and commencing the first phase of a LWVGO GREEN Campaign that would encourage Douglas County residents to use rain barrels as a pro-active measure to contain and utilize run-off water. Committee members thought the LWVGO might begin a Green campaign by contacting area gardening clubs and home owner associations to see whether they would be interested in inviting Bobbi Holmes (or another extension employee) to give a presentation on creating and using rain barrels.

The NR Committee's Green Campaign is in the early idea stage and welcomes any ideas and suggestions from members. If you are interested in working on a Green campaign to promote good earth practices, please contact Jeanne Burke at jeanneburke@cox.net or 551-7895.

FIRST ANNUAL IINTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING "What We Know and What We Need to Know"

This conference, hosted by the UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT LINCOLN, will be held October 29-31, 2009, at Embassy Suites Hotel, 1040 P Street, Lincoln. The conference will bring together:

- Researchers nationally and internationally, engaged in anti-trafficking efforts
- People who are "on the ground" in combating human trafficking
- People who see the effects of trafficking in their work
- Scholars with an interest in providing knowledge and methodologies to study the problems surrounding human trafficking
- Government agencies and others who fund anti-trafficking efforts
- People who will fund knowledge-creation, evaluation, and methodology-creation work

Some of the conference speakers include **Dr. Kevin Bales**, one of the world's leading experts on modern slavery and child trafficking; **Laura J. Lederer**, currently Vice President for Policy and Planning for Global Centurion, a new NGO dedicated to fighting child sex trafficking, and **Dr. Leslie R. Wolfe**, President of the Center for Women Policy Studies whose mission it is to improve women's lives and ensure women's human rights through enlightened public policy.

If you have an interest in knowing more about human trafficking, plan to attend. To register, call 402-472-2423, or call 402-472-5733 for information and general questions. Note that the registration fee increases from \$295 to \$350 after October 2nd.

LWV is where hands-on work to safeguard democracy leads to civic improvement.

LWV is where citizens like you are actively engaged in effecting change on the local, state, and national level.

LWV is an organization where smart, active leaders work to create change in their communities.

LWV is involved in shaping the important issues to keep our community strong.

LWV offers a whole new world of opportunities to apply the skills and smarts you've accumulated during a successful career.

As an LWV member, you have the opportunity to contribute in a leadership role through the organization that has a great impact on local, state, and even national issues.

Mark your calendars for the
9th Annual Women's Fund Fall Luncheon

Thursday, October 1, 2009

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Holiday Inn Central

He Says - She Says

How to Effectively Communicate with the Opposite Sex at Work

Keynote speaker: Audrey Nelson, PhD

Register online at www.omahawomensfund.org.

MEMBERSHIP

New Members

Diane R. Davis
3402 N 128 Cir
Omaha, NE 68164-4236
402-496-9763

Mary C. Haven
1704 S. 85 Ave
Omaha, NE 68124-1336
402-391-1781
mhaven@unmc.edu
(Joined through National)

Address change

Dr. Ken and Kay Wise
P.O.Box 57578
Dubai, UAE
Kay_wise@msn.com
or
2916 S. 132nd Street
PMB 238
Omaha, NE 68144
home: +1 402 496-0360

Invite your friends to join the League of Women Voters. Tell them why you belong to League. They will get to know other interesting members and can choose any level of involvement. Our community needs their participation for a strong, safe, and vibrant place to live!

We have created two new membership categories, your membership is important to us. For individuals joining for the first time Introductory membership is \$40 and for Full Time students membership is \$20. We suggest a gift membership to an individual joining for the first time.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____
Email _____

Individual Member \$60 _____
Family Member \$90 _____ (2 individuals at the same address)
Introductory, \$40 _____ (joining for the 1st time)
Full Time Student \$20 _____

Support the League's work of mobilizing citizens and influencing policy through advocacy and education.

_____ Enclosed is a contribution to League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha

Checks made to LWV-GO

_____ Enclosed is a tax deductible contribution to League of Women Voters Educational Fund *Checks make to LWV-GO Ed Fund*

Send to
League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha
1941 S. 42nd Street, Suite 501
Omaha, NE 68105-2956

**PLEASE COME TO THE LWVGO LUNCHEON ON
Thursday, October 22, 2009 at 11:30 at
Big Mama's**

**(This restaurant has been featured on the FOOD NETWORK)
3223 North 45th Street, Building A
SPEAKER IS WILLIE D. BARNEY**

Willie Barney is the Founder, President and Facilitator of the African-American Empowerment Network, a united group of leaders, community members and organizations working to facilitate positive change in our community. Launched in September, 2006, the Network works collectively to improve the quality of life for African-Americans, North Omaha and the Greater Omaha area. The movement is based on 13 Covenant Areas and a strategic plan that focus on individuals, leadership, and community empowerment. The Network has helped gain significant financial commitments to help with rebuilding efforts in North Omaha and assisted with the launching of several new non-profit organizations. The group has launched major initiatives including the Empowerment Covenant, Empower Omaha!, and Empower North Omaha.

Mr. Barney is President of WDB Resultants, LLC, a consulting firm specializing in strategic planning, marketing, facilitation, communications, community engagement, and event planning. He is also President and Publisher for SMB Enterprises, LLC, a local media company. Mr. Barney has over 17 years of experience with media, communications and marketing. He has been an active volunteer in each community where he has lived. A strong advocate for education and life-long learning, Mr. Barney graduated with a double major in Economics and Business Administration, from St. Ambrose University, Davenport, IA.



**COME HEAR MR. WILLIE BARNEY
SPEAK ON PROGRESS MADE IN NORTH
OMAHA ON OCTOBER 22, 2009! YOU WILL
BE INSPIRED TO LEARN MORE AND TO
GET INVOLVED IN THE MANY ACTIVITIES
HAPPENING IN NORTH OMAHA!!**

Please return this form and your check made payable to LWVGO to:
LWVGO, 1941 South 42 Street, Suite 501, Omaha, NE 68105-2945
The reservation deadline is October 16.

Menu choices. Please enter name or initials before each choice.

_____ 2-piece Oven-Fried Chicken, Macaroni & Cheese, Stir Fried Cabbage and
Cornbread - \$14.00

_____ Roast Beef, Mashed Potatoes & Gravy, Greens and Cornbread - \$16.00

_____ Big Mama's Cobb Salad (vegetarian)- \$14.00

Name(s) _____ Phone _____

Number Attending _____ Total enclosed _____

Linda Duckworth, President
Annette Conser, Editor
Mary Ann Kirchner, Mailer
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER OMAHA
1941 South 42 Street - Suite 501
Omaha, NE 68105-2945
402-344-3701
www.omahalwv.org

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TIME DATED MATERIAL - DO NOT DELAY

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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Thursday, October 22, 2009
3223 North 45th Street, Building A
Speaker: Willie D. Barney
Founder of the Empowerment Network
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REPORT ON PRICING OF ELECTRICITY IN NEBRASKA

by Virginia Bigelow

I attended the yearly meeting of electricity providers in Lincoln--at the State Office Building--on September 8, 2009. This group was created several years ago to find and/or provide the best pricing system of electric power in Nebraska. The basic question at that time: "Which is best for Nebraska - deregulated or regulated electric power ? "During the time the question was 'under review' Nebraska remained under regulated power pricing--which means the price of power in Nebraska was NOT open to the 'free market'.

The prices of power throughout the nation have been closely monitored by this committee, and the determination has been reached that Nebraska will remain regulated. At current prices Nebraska has the 5th lowest price for electricity in the nation. The only states with lower rates are West Virginia (at \$.0559 pkh), Wyoming (at \$.0568), Idaho (at \$.0570), and Kentucky (at \$.0625). Nebraska's rate is \$.0651. The reason these states have lower costs/prices is due to the cost of transporting the fuel (usually coal) to the power stations.

The states with the highest prices are those that are deregulated--or open to the free market. No states are currently considering changing to deregulation. However, several are considering changing back to regulated. The cost in a few of the deregulated states are: Texas (\$.1093), California (\$.15.) and Hawaii (\$.2920). There remains a tremendous difference of the prices due to regional sources of fuel.

The practicality of transporting wind power (to where it is needed) remains a problem for the expansion of wind power. Nuclear power is a serious possibility for the future. If there are questions or comments, feel free to contact me. [email: baronbig@cox.net]