



League of Women Voters of Alpena County February 2016

Calendar

February 15, Monday
National LWV Positions
N.E. Community Foundation
11 am—1 pm

February 19, Friday
Lunch Bunch, 12 noon
J'J's Steak & Pizza House
411 N. 2nd Ave.

March 8, Tuesday
Presidential Primary

March 14, Monday, 2:30 PM
Team Leader Meeting
ACC, BTC 107 D

March 18, Friday
Lunch Bunch, 12 noon
Austin Brothers Beer Co.
821 W. Miller St.,

March 20, Sunday, 2 PM
Movie "Suffragette"
Alpena Public Library

Let's Talk...

About our national program for LWV.

Bring your lunch and join our League Team Leaders on **Monday, February 15 at the N.E. Community Foundation**

Office, 100 N. Ripley from 11 AM to 1 PM to talk about our national program.



In providing input, LWV US asks that our central focus be on where the League should put its energies and resources in the coming biennium. Consider:

- In what way can the League best empower citizens to shape a better nation and communities during the next two years?
- What do our communities and nation need from the League right now?
- Where can the League's strengths have the greatest impact?
- What program work would best help enhance the League's influence, credibility, visibility, and membership?
- Should the focus be that proposed by LWVUS: a nationwide League campaign: *Making Democracy Work*, taking the power from the few and returning it to the many, as the single focus for LWVUS education and advocacy work in the 2016-2018 biennium? If the answer is "yes," what specific activities should be included in the campaign? What kinds of training and assistance would enhance your League's participation in the campaign?

For more info look at LWV program in your annual booklet, pages 16-19.

thank you

To Judi Stillion and Carol Lund who registered 6 new voters!! They visited the ACC classes of Tim Kuehnlein and talked about registering and voting in the Presidential Primary. In addition to the registrations they collected, they also left some additional ones with other students and instructor, Kuehnlein.

Voter Information

March 8—Presidential Candidate Primary Election

You must select only 1 ballot—either a Democratic ballot or a Republican ballot

A voter may indicate “uncommitted” which means the voter is indicating a vote for the party, but is not indicating a particular candidate.



Lunch Bunch Continues

Join League members for lunch and talk on the fourth Friday of each month. We get together at a different restaurant each month. All are welcome.

Feb. 19, Friday noon, J'J's Steak & Pizza House, 411 N. 2nd Ave.

Mar. 18, Friday noon, Austin Brothers Beer Co, 821 W. Miller St., just off Johnson St., next to the Booster Club



Welcome

To our 2 new members—both men! Welcome to Paul Wolne, from Lachine, who joined at our last Lunch Bunch. He came for the book discussion and joined the LWV.

Welcome also to Robert (Bob) Kennedy who is Margy Kutzera's husband and joined us for the Money In Politics discussion. Bob is running for office and is acquainted first hand with the topic of campaign financing.

Welcome to both of our new members.



Money in Politics Consensus Report

What a great discussion on money in politics! League members offered many diverse viewpoints on this important subject—which is a current topic among the presidential candidates. However, the LWV US is asking us to stay above the current discussion and draw up some guidelines that the League can use in future years to apply to this issue.

Our League agreed that the purpose of campaign financing regulation should be to

- Seek equality for all citizens
- Protect democracy from being distorted by big spending
- Enable candidates to compete equitably
- Ensure that candidates have equal funds
- Ensure that economic interests are part of election dialogue
- Provide voters information about candidates
- Ensure public's right to know who is using money to influence elections
- Combat corruption and undue influence in government

Our consensus also agreed that -

- Individual wealthy citizens should have some spending limits
- PACs should have some spending limits
- Profit organizations, trade associations & labor unions should have spending banned when it comes from their corporate treasury funds
- Non-profit organizations like the Sierra Club, should have some spending limits
- Political parties should have some spending limits
- Candidates spending money raised from contributors should have some spending limits
- Candidates spending their own money should have some spending limits

We all agreed that we want the media to have unlimited spending and to be free to work and do their job, but we were conflicted by the unevenness of the current coverage of the candidates. How to regulate and also uphold the freedom of the press? This question was unanswered by our group.

We all agreed that public financing of campaigns would be a good solution and we look to the states to begin this process. We especially looked at states like Arizona, Maine, and Connecticut where publicly financed elections exist in some form.

League of Women Voters Announces New Position

The League of Women Voters today announced [a new position](#) calling for safeguards to govern the constitutional convention process of proposing amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

“The League believes that procedural safeguards must be put in place to protect democratic values and ensure that any proposed amendments reflect the concerns of citizens,” said Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

“We cannot afford to have a chaotic or unrepresentative process for amending the Constitution. We can’t afford to let special interests dominate a constitutional convention.

“There are many current proposals for constitutional amendments, from both the right and the political left, from a Balanced Budget Amendment to one curbing the rights of corporations. Everyone should be concerned what a runaway, topsy-turvy Constitutional Convention might do. Before we head into uncharted territory that could affect our basic principles of government and our individual rights, we need to make sure some basic rules are in place,” according to MacNamara.

The League supports these safeguards for a Constitutional Convention:

- 1) The Convention must be transparent and not conducted in secret;
- 2) Representation at the Convention must be based on population rather than one state, one vote; and delegates should be elected rather than appointed;
- 3) Voting at the Convention must be by delegate, not by state;
- 4) The Convention must be limited to a specific topic;
- 5) Only state resolutions on a single topic count when determining if a Convention should be called; and
- 6) The validity of state calls for an Article V Constitutional Convention should be determined by the most recent action of the state.

MacNamara continued, “The new League position is especially relevant because the Balanced Budget Amendment is close to achieving the number of states needed to require Congress to call a convention. The states that have called for a convention on the Balanced Budget Amendment have not provided for the safeguards that are necessary. Any calls for a constitutional convention must have built-in protections to ensure it is not hijacked by a small minority.

“Article 5 of the U.S. Constitution provides for two ways to amend the constitution. Congress can initiate an amendment or, if two-thirds of the states petition Congress to do so, a Constitutional Convention can be called to propose amendments. Under either mechanism, proposed amendments must be ratified by three-fourths of the states in order to take effect. There has never been a constitutional convention called under the U.S. Constitution.

“There are many unresolved questions about the powers and processes of an Article V Constitutional Convention. These problems must be solved before America embarks on a dangerous journey.”