



***League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford®
2012-2013 Annual Meeting
May 21, 2013***

Pond House, Elizabeth Park

Welcome

Dinner

Guest Speaker

Michael Freimuth

Executive Director of Capital Region Development Council

Topic

CRDA and the Capital Region Economic Outlook

Business Meeting

Announcements

Annual Report

Treasurer's Report

Proposed Budget

Adoption of Consensus Positions

Proposed Program

Nominations

Other Business

Adjournment

<u>Executive Committee</u>		<u>Term Ends</u>
Chairwoman/Voter Service	Carole Mulready	2013
Communications	Sandra Fry	2013
Secretary	Mary Andrews	2013
	Beverly Miller	2013
Treasurer	Mary Everett	2013
Membership Records	Elizabeth Swietek	2013
At-Large	Elisa McCarthy	2013
Special Projects	Marlene Wenograd	2013

Credentials Report

Number of members present _____
 There is/is not a quorum _____

Minutes

The minutes of the 2012 Annual Meeting were approved by the Board Meeting of June 2012.

Programs

Program 1

Since there was a national LWVUS consensus study on the federal role in public education (adopted in spring 2012), we decided that we should look at our 2006 local education position in light of the new national position and the coming focus on the implementation of Common Core Standards in CT, also a key piece of the LWVUS study. An Education Committee consisting of **June Webber, Carole Mulready, Marlene Wenograd, Nancy Rion, Lonnie Brick, Nan Streeter and Mary Everett** had three meetings at June's home. They reviewed the national position and recent education studies in preparation for the consensus meeting on April 10th. At the consensus **Vicky Albert** served as moderator and **Jean Blair** as recorder. The new position was adopted by the Executive Board on May 8. (See below)

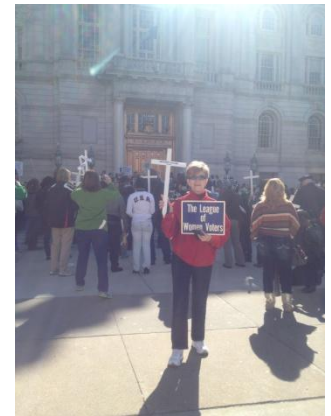
Program 2

Our Annual Pot Luck Supper was held Thursday, September 20, 2010 at First Congregational Church, West Hartford on **Energy Issues and Policy in Connecticut** our speaker was Katie Dykes, Deputy Commissioner for Energy, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection. And usual, the members had a most enjoyable time catching up and enjoying each other's gastronomic specialties. The conversation with Ms. Dykes was informative and enjoyable.

League Events and Activities

Legislative activities – Gun Control and the state budget took prominence during the early going in the 2013 session. The gun legislation was certainly understandable given the horror of the killings at Sandy Hook School.

Gun Violence and Gun Control: State and Local Leagues joined in the move to encourage real and substantive reform in gun legislation by the CT Legislature during the 2013 session. LWVGH was present at hearings, gave testimony, marched and sent messages to state and national officials. The two largest marches LWVGH participated in were the "March for Change" on February 14 with mounds of snow surrounding the Capitol and "Mothers Against Gun Violence", a group founded by mothers in Hartford who have lost children and family. The participants and supporters in this latter group (which came from all over the state) carried a cross representing each person and the date he/she was shot and killed by a gun. There were hundreds of crosses carried – a very powerful statement. Both marches ended at the Capitol and participants lobbied legislators. We can happily report that the governor signed a significant bill. See State LWV report on this legislation. P. 12



Member with LWV sign and cross



Photo: Hartford Councilor Shawn Wooden with Ellie Caplan (WH) and Jan Bruner (Bloomfield)

Wine and Cheese Reception: Elected Officials Reception (Wine and Cheese) was held on Dec 9, 2012 at the home of Susan and Stanley Fellman. Officials from Hartford, West Hartford and Bloomfield were present and the event was attended by many League members. **Jean Blair** greeted attendees at the door and **Jan Bruner** escorted the elected officials into the gathering to ensure a comfortable entrance. Members and elected officials enjoyed the opportunity to speak with each other informally. Delicious appetizers and desserts provided by League members contributed to the comfortable ambiance. **Mary Andrews** coordinated the food and beverages; **Jean Blair** helped with invitations; **Marlene Wenograd** sent invitations to members without email; and **Karen Licht** assisted with event set-up and flowers. **Sue and Stan Fellman** were exceptional hosts.

Legislative Breakfast

The Legislative Breakfast was held on January 5 at Trinity Episcopal Church, Hartford. **Carol Hamilton** again provided a perfect continental breakfast. State Representatives David Baram, Bloomfield, Matt Ritter, Hartford, Mr. Vasquez, Hartford, and Senator Beth Bye attended and discussed issues which they expected to come up during the 2013 legislative session. Discussion focused primarily on the potential for gun violence legislation as a result of the December 14, 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook School and the state budget and projected debt. League members presented their thoughts about issues of concern and a thought provoking discussion followed. Many thanks to **Deb Polun** for moderating the event. The summary of the discussion was sent to LWVCT for the Public Issues team to use during the 2013 legislative session.

Annual Meeting- May 2012

The Pond House in Elizabeth Park



Commissioner of Education Stefan Pryor was our guest speaker shown in the picture on the left with Kathy Wilson LWV Education specialist and LWVGH Chair, Carole Mulready. We honored two members reaching the 50 year membership mark, **Vickie Albert** and **Muriel Fleischmann**, shown above right with Nancy Rion at the dinner meeting.

National Convention

LWVGH was represented in the LWVCT contingent to the 2012 National Convention by Carole Mulready. It was an excellent experience in planning, issue discussion, grass roots lobbying and interesting speakers. The CT delegation lobbied to freeze National dues and won a lot of friends, but ultimately were voted down by a few votes. New Britain Area Delegate Ann Speyer summed up this Convention well “Overall it was an excellently run convention, an exercise in civil disagreement leading to a productive outcome. It was a model for much of what our government is presently lacking.” It is an activity well worth attending if you are at all interested in a future trip.

Communication

In the fast changing world of communication, the LWVGH website is a beginning essential tool in letting prospective members and other interested parties know what we do. Please take a look and give your feedback to **Sandy Fry** at plsmfry@ntplx.net. LWVCT and LWVUS have moved into yet more advanced social media networks – Facebook, Twitter and the like. The State Convention keynote speaker on Saturday, June 1, 21013 will address the practicality and the effectiveness of the new modes of communication. Contact Jean Rabinow if you would like to attend at 203-288-7996. If you might be interested in hosting a blog or working on Facebook or other social media, contact Carole at cgml@mulready.biz.

Marlene Wenograd undertook the role of keeping communications open for League members without email and continues to make the personal contacts. The Board is most grateful to her for her efforts in this regard.

Another method of communication for League members and the general public is LWVGH and WHC-TV's **Legislative Update, a live call-in show** which is scheduled monthly during the legislative session. This year there were three sessions led by **Kathy Wilson, Carole Mulready and Sandy Fry**. These live shows are taped and can also be viewed by going to the WHC-TV website and choosing Videos on Demand and then go alphabetically to "L" to find previous LWVGH shows.

We also send out information on West Hartford list serve, the Patch online news in several communities, and print media from time to time. A lover of FACEBOOK communication would be a good addition to our volunteers.

We urge you to communicate your thoughts and positions through LWVUS and LWVCT **Action Alerts** which are sent out during State and Federal legislative sessions. Every message does make a difference according to our legislators.

Voter Service

Election 2012

The 2012 August session of question preparation for voters' guide and debates was led by **Nancy Rion** who later edited the suggested questions which were wide ranging. This was a State office focus this year, rather than local.

Carole Mulready coordinated the debates for West Hartford and surrounding communities. **Deb Polun** served as moderator for a 20th district West Hartford debate. We were fortunate to be able to host, with WHC-TV, the only 1st Congressional District debate in our region. During the entire election season moderators were aided by a contingent of League timers- **Vicki Albert, Margo Callahan, Nan Streeter, Patricia Groves, Karen Licht, Betsy Schiavone, Mary Andrews, Kathleen Keegan, Mary Everett, and Jean Blair and Marlene Wenograd**. A special thanks to Jennifer Evans, executive director, and Jitu Huntley at WHC-TV. There were no debates in Bloomfield for the legislative seats, but a voters' guide was published through *The Journal* of Bloomfield. We also put the voters' guide developed for the City of Hartford by *Hartford Votes* online at lwvgh.org along with that of Bloomfield and West Hartford.



1st Congressional District debate

West Hartford's Voters' Guide was published by *West Hartford LIFE*. **Deb Polun and Karen Licht** contributed in a number of ways on the way to publication. Their help was essential in communicating with the media and the candidates to get all the information needed.

For the 2013 fall election season, LWVGH and WHC-TV are committed to doing debates again for the local elections. We might even try for a live debate if various partners are interested in getting out a good sized audience.

Your help is needed. The contributions to the finance drive are what make this central voter service possible. Your suggestions for businesses and individuals who value the work of the League and the *Voters Guide* are appreciated. Please send names and addresses to Mary Everett at everettmf@comcast.net.

We were involved with **National Voter Registration** day on September 25, 2012 with volunteers all day at West Hartford Libraries and with Hartford Votes activities in Hartford. Betsy Schiavone and Carole M. gave a requested presentation to two classes of Job Corps students in Hartford and provided them with brochures on Registering and Voting in CT, and responded to other requests for education and information.

Hello! West Hartford Special Event –April 2013

This is a group committed to celebrating and informing everyone in WH about the wealth of diversity of the town. At the invitation of “Hello”, Elisa McCarthy and Carole Mulready set-up a LWV information booth and were available to answer questions. Several people asked about registering to vote. Mail-in forms were provided. Good collaborative.

Developing Future Voters



Ms. Blitzer, Ilze Krisst, LWVGH and Conard students during mock presidential election 2012.

One of the best parts of election season 2012 was conducting the mock election at Conard High. With the help of Social Studies Department chair Jessica Blitzer, her students and League volunteers, students grades 9-12 voted during lunch waves for president, federal, and state offices just as they were seen on the West Hartford ballot. Students had to locate their voting districts on a large map of the town in order to get the correct ballot for our West Hartford representatives in Districts 18, 19, and 20. A second mock election was scheduled for Sedgwick Middle School, but had to be cancelled due to what threatens to become an annual fall storm that cancels school, not to mention electricity!

Hartford Votes

Thanks to **Elisa McCarthy** we are well and regularly represented at *Hartford Votes* which is running lots of programs for voters. The meetings are held midday at the Hartford Public Library on Main Street. The coalition of groups is working to increase the voter turnout in Hartford with a particular emphasis on the Latino/Hispanic population which is now the majority population in Hartford. *Hartford Votes* works closely with the registrars in Hartford, particularly, we are proud to say, **Urania Petit** who is a member of LWVGH. Please contact Elisa at 860-523-8161 if this ongoing project of voter service is of interest to you.

Poll Reporting Fund Raiser

LWVGH was once again approached by The Associated Press to conduct poll reporting for election day. This followed the opportunity to report for the primaries. This is a paid service for our League, a relatively easy fund raiser. Each person reporting earns \$50. Volunteers earned LWVGH \$1000! Volunteers were: **Vicki Albert, Carol Hamilton, Elisa McCarthy, Karen Licht, Mary Everett, Leta Marks, Elaine Lowengard, June Rosenblatt, Libby Swietek, Deb Polun, Sandy Fry, Kathleen Keegan, and Carole Mulready.**

Absentee Voter CD

The CD is complete. Revisions and adjustments were recently finished by member **Pamela Topolska**. The program and script was developed by Pamela and **Elisa McCarthy** with assistance from Carole Mulready. The Elections Commission had suggested some changes for complete accuracy. It is expected that this edition will be good until 2015 when it appears likely there will be changes to absentee voting as a result of legislation to change the constitutional language that states the voter must appear in person on the day of the election.

Membership Report

Membership Total-93 members, including thirteen **50+** year lifetime members; Nan Streeter joins this year.

We welcomed 6 new members for 2013: Anita (Galli)/Ken Carpenter, Gail Carlson, Mary Hourdequin, Rozanne Houser, and Helen Pearl.

Finances

Net Worth - As of 5/15/2013		As of 5/15/2013	
Account		5/15/2013	Balance
ASSETS			
Cash and Bank Accounts			
CD 3 Month		0.00	
Checking		5,014.66	
In-Kind Contributions		0.00	
Savings		0.00	
LWV CT Education Fund		0.00	
LWVUS Education Fund		200.45	
Post Office		0.00	
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts		5,015.13	
TOTAL ASSETS		5,015.13	
LIABILITIES			
Other Liabilities			
PMPs		0.00	
TOTAL Other Liabilities		0.00	
TOTAL LIABILITIES		0.00	
OVERALL TOTAL		5,015.13	

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER HARTFORD 2013-2014 BUDGET

Income	Actual 11/12	Proposed 12/13	Actual 12/13	Proposed 13/14
LWVGH				
Balance forward	4,319.54	3,800.00	4,013.40	5,000.00
From Finance Drive (to LWVGH only)	2,120.00	2,000.00	2,881.00	2,000.00
(Donations to ED Fund)	1315*	1200*		800*
From Dues	4,320.00	4,400.00	4,335.00	4,000.00
Other - Poll Reporting		1,000.00	2,050.00	
Annual Meeting (in and out)	1,328.00	1,800.00	1,723.00	1,800.00
Pot Luck				
LWVCT Ed Fund Grant	628.07			
Videotaping Project			628.07	128.07
LWVUS Voter Service	1,000.00	1,200.00	1,250.00	1,000.00
TOTAL LWVGH INCOME	13,715.61	14,200.00	16,880.47	13,928.07

Expenses	Actual 11/12	Proposed 12/13	Actual 12/13	Proposed 13/14
PROGRAM/EVENTS				
ANNUAL MEETING				
Expenses (In and Out)	1,754.04	1,800.00	1,646.70	1,800.00
PROGRAMS/EVENTS/PROJECTS				
LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST		50.00	150.00	150.00
POT LUCK	130.00	250.00	150.00	250.00
RECEPTION FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS	173.09	200.00	173.09	200.00
ACTION				
VOTER SERVICE				100.00
GUIDE TO ELECTED OFFICIALS		200.00		200.00
VOTER GUIDE	2,187.50	2,500.00	1,562.40	2,500.00
LWV PUBLICATIONS	208.10	500.00	208.10	500.00
CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PROJECTS	276.00	500.00	276.00	500.00
VIDEOTAPING PROJECT		630.00	492.00	238.00
ADMIN				
SUPPLIES	152.40	220.00	173.42	220.00
BANK				
POSTAGE/BULK MAIL/MAILBOX	416.50	550.00	507.44	600.00
PRINTING	568.47	600.00	537.83	600.00
WEB DESIGN		200.00		200.00
PMP				
STATE	1,406.25	1,500.00	1,455.75	1,650.00
US - Paid from Checking	2,555.00	2,600.00	2,712.50	2,800.00
CONTRIBUTIONS/GIFTS	207.15	200.00	180.92	200.00
CONVENTIONS		500.00	590.87	500.00
TOTAL LWVGH EXPENSES	10,034.50	13,000.00	10,817.02	13,208.00

LWVUS Ed Fund Account	Actual 11/12	Proposed 12/13	Actual 12/13	Proposed 13/14
Starting Balance	364.45	679.45	679.45	200.45
Contributions				
From Finance Drive	1,315.00	1,200.00	771.00	800.00
Other				
Voter Service Grants	-1,000.00	-1,500.00	-1,250.00	-800.00
Ending Balance	679.45	379.45	200.45	200.45

PMP CT = 16.50

PMP US = 31.00

Total PMP = \$47.50

LOCAL PROGRAM CONSENSUS STATEMENTS

League of Woman Voters of Greater Hartford Education Position Board Approved May 2013

A quality public education is essential for a strong viable and sustainable democratic society and is a civil right. The League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford supports EQUAL and EQUITABLE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL CHILDREN in the areas of program, personnel, and facilities. All students should be offered high quality and developmentally appropriate learning experiences in a welcoming and multicultural environment that reflects economic, ethnic, and racial diversity.

Children learn at different rates, have different learning styles and different life experiences; therefore, to facilitate development of each child's full potential we support and encourage:

Access to high-quality pre-school programs that meet the needs of children and their families so that children come to school (K-12) prepared to learn. Quality, developmentally appropriate and voluntary early learning experiences should be available to all children with opportunities going first to families in poverty or to children of special need as funding and space become available;

Adoption of a rigorous, effectively articulated standards based curriculum;

Flexible methods of instruction in all areas of curriculum that address student differences and assure growth at every level including acquisition and application of knowledge, critical thinking skill development and higher order thinking skills;

Nutrition, wellness and physical education; foreign language; career and technical education; fine and performing arts; and extra-curricular activities as integral parts of a comprehensive program that builds on core academic disciplines;

Flexible class size that enables effective teaching and learning, and sufficient additional support for classrooms which include highly impacted special needs children;

Development of technological competency in all students through incorporation of technology applications wherever appropriate throughout the curriculum;

Use of the best available local, state, and national data and research to drive decision-making in order to address student needs and improve student learning;

A substantive and qualitatively different gifted program for grades one through twelve;
Exposure to possible career opportunities at all levels of education; including opportunities such as mentoring, job shadowing, internships, cooperative work experience;

Implementation of an intensive program in spoken and written English for non-English speakers at all levels;

Preparation of students to actively participate in the civic and political life of the community, the nation, and in the global economy.

In order to ensure high quality teaching we support:

Rigorous and appropriate training and state certification for all educators in the areas in which they teach and supervise;

Effective, ongoing supervision and evaluation of all teachers, principals and administrators (tenured and non-tenured);

An ongoing program of curriculum evaluation and improvement;

Curriculum and staff evaluation programs that incorporate specific, measurable criteria of performance and effectiveness;

A strong, ongoing staff improvement program which includes opportunities from outside of the school system as well as from within;

A technologically-literate staff;

A cohesive, comprehensive, and user-friendly system for assessing and reporting student performance;

Providing the assessment results and information to students and their parents on how to improve performance;

Innovative utilization of all staff, whenever and wherever possible, to maximize student learning and experiences.

Children need an appropriate, safe and orderly facility in which to learn. Therefore we support:

Well-maintained school buildings with spaces appropriate to the programs offered, flexible learning spaces, and sufficient classroom and building supplies;

Infrastructure to support the integration of technology into teaching, learning, and administration;

Relevant resources, up-to-date texts, and media centers;

A safe environment for students, teachers and families, one in which self-discipline, personal responsibility and respect for others are taught, modeled and expected.

Recognizing that education begins in the home and that the community plays an integral role in the successful education of its children, we encourage:

Schools, families, and community to assume supportive and cooperative roles in meeting the needs of children, including pre-school; parent education to support effective strategies for student learning; access to services such as mental health care; nutritionally adequate food; home-school partnerships; school-business partnerships; before and after school extended day; and summer school programs;

A shared role for all in addressing and meeting the challenges of funding.

PROGRAM ITEMS FOR REAFFIRMATION MAY 2013

TOWN GOVERNMENT:

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING FOR TOWN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, May, 1985

The League of Women Voters of West Hartford continues to support long-range comprehensive planning which protects orderly growth. The League wishes to preserve the suburban character of the Town, while recognizing that optimal use of commercial areas is necessary for economic well-being. We support a diversity of dwellings, including multi-family units, located in areas which provide ease in shopping and access to public transportation. Special attention should be given to traffic safety, adequate parking, provision for open space, and buffering.

The League favors preservation of as much open space land as is realistically possible, and places priority for acquisition in the most densely developed sections of town. We support diligent maintenance and the judicious use of open space. The Town Plan of Development should include an open space plan.

The League believes that the properties in West Hartford Center could generate more revenue for the Town. At present, Town Center properties are under-utilized from both a physical and economic standpoint. The League supports an easing of the four-story height restriction in the Center, taking into account topographical conditions, adjacent residential neighborhoods, esthetic considerations, traffic patterns, and parking.

In order to accommodate commercial growth, increased parking demands must be satisfied. The current method of granting case-by-case exceptions does not promote orderly development. The League suggests a variety of approaches, such as:

- Making better use of existing surface parking
- Providing separate parking for Center employees
- Encouraging flexibility of parking requirements which restrict building expansion
- Developing new schemes for sharing off-site parking
- Building a parking garage located away from residential areas, serving all businesses equally, and integrated unobtrusively into the commercial district. The primary financial responsibility for a parking garage should not be borne by residential property owners.

The League supports mixed-use buildings, with retail establishments on street level and office space or residential units above.

Examined by Brita Tate for relevance in 2011

Reaffirmed May 2012

SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, Spring 1986

The West Hartford League of Women Voters supports the concept of the Special Development District as a means of allowing flexibility in land development while maintaining strict control over it. Since 1979 when the acreage limitation was eliminated in the ordinance, Special Development Districts have often been used on small developments located in what have become buffer or mixed-use areas of town. The League feels that such use of Special Development Districts should be minimized. By revising and updating the town's zoning ordinances, new zone districts can be created which would protect community interests in these mixed-use areas.

The League feels the procedure for applying for and obtaining a Special Development District designation should be modified to encourage interaction between the developer and the affected community interests before the Council receives the formal petition. Such modification should not attempt to simplify the application and approval process; instead, its purpose should be to eliminate some of the problems which prolong the process.

The League also feels that a distinction should be made in the Special Development ordinance between minor and major changes in established Special Development Districts. The procedure for a minor change should be simplified, but notification to the public and opportunity for public input should be required in the process.

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Reaffirmed May 2012

MENTAL HEALTHCARE, Spring 2003

We support comprehensive community-based mental health systems for children and adults. These systems should include early detection and intervention with a range of services to facilitate recovery.

We support a public health education initiative on mental health.

Reaffirmed May 2012

Recommended League Programs 2013-2014

No study in place at this writing, but things to watch going forward:

Education

LWVGH will have a follow-up to the approval of our local education position with a discussion of implementation of national common core and assessments.

Gun Legislation and Mental Health

“The LWVUS, our LWVCT and citizens across the country are not giving up on sensible gun legislation . . . something meaningful in universal background check law can pass, if we all keep the pressure on Congress.” LWVCT May Bd Report

Connecticut Results 2013

LWVCT worked with partners and requested action by members to lobby legislators for gun reform. Passage of a bipartisan “Gun Violence Prevention and Children’s Safety” bill was a high point of the early weeks of the session.

The new law contains the following important elements:

- **requires background checks for all firearms sales,**
- **updates our assault weapons ban by adding more than 100 guns to the list,**
- **bans the sale of high capacity ammunition magazines, and**
- **strengthens anti-gun trafficking provisions**
- **improves safe storage laws for firearms.**

Notable mental health provisions intended to help individuals and their families overcome obstacles to accessing treatment and support.

- Case management and care coordinating services for people involved in the probate court system;
- Mental health first aid training for school climate coordinators;
- Establishment of a regional behavioral health consultation and care coordination program for primary care providers of children. The consultation team includes child psychiatrist, social worker and care coordinator.

Campaign Finance and Elections

The U.S. Supreme Court decisions including *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, have affected the areas of campaigns and elections, issues in which the League has been active since its inception and that are primary concerns of the organization. **Money in Elections** is a priority for the League; we will be continually re-evaluating the opportunity for legislation in this area.

Possible amendment to Connecticut Constitution. *Resolution Approving an Amendment to State Constitution to Grant Increased Authority to the General Assembly Regarding Election Administration.*

This is targeting the language that states that a person **must appear in person** on election day (very few exceptions allowed for absentee voting).

Shining a Light on Human Trafficking in CT - Fall Conference 2013

PROPOSED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Operate with an Executive Committee:

- The Executive Committee will include a Chairperson, treasurer, a membership chair, and email coordinator, and Voter Service Committee.

Nominations - Proposed slate of the Executive Committee and assignments:

Carole Mulready (committee chair)
Mary Andrews (secretary)
Mary Everett (treasurer)
Sandy Fry (email coordinator and website content)
Karen Licht (at-large)
Elisa McCarthy (at-large)
Libby Swietek (membership)
Marlene Wenograd (outreach to membership)

Subcommittees:

Program – Mary Everett, June Webber
Voter Service – Deb Polun, Karen Licht, Carole Mulready

Focus and activities for the year:

- Voter Service- Voters Guide for W.H. and Bloomfield; sponsor debates
- A finance drive will be conducted to support Voters Guide
- Hold a calendar/program planning in June
- Hold a Pot luck supper with program in September
- Hold an elected officials reception in December
- Hold an annual meeting and dinner in May
- Distribute information electronically via e-mail and our website
- Publish League's Annual Report
- Hold program meetings as warranted – possible focus on education, common core standards

Collaborate with other Leagues

- Coordinate activities throughout the year with the Windsor League and New Britain when interests merge.