



6333 W. Bluemound Road  
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[www.wisconsinara.org](http://www.wisconsinara.org)  
**NEWSLETTER – November 2010**

*Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.*  
*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

About the Alliance:About the Alliance

The Alliance is a unique state/national organization working to protect the health and economic security of seniors, reward work, strengthen families and build thriving communities. Launched in Wisconsin in 2005, it is a coalition of AFL-CIO affiliated unions, retiree groups, and community-based organizations dedicated to economic and social justice.

The Alliance is a voice for retirees and older Americans. Our goal is to educate, energize and mobilize seniors to make a difference through activism. The Alliance fights for:

A strong Social Security system that provides guaranteed benefits & protects families for life.

Health care seniors can depend on through Medicare.

Affordable and accessible prescription drugs.

Strengthening pension laws.

Affordable and accessible long term care

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## Message from the President

Leon Burzynski

I am certain that many of the 103,000 WIARA members are looking forward to the end of the election campaigns. Over the years, the campaigns have become more and more negative. In my opinion, the 2010 negativity takes the record. Sadly, retirees and seniors are square in the sights of many far-right candidates.

These candidates have made claims that have no basis in fact. Their purpose seems to be geared toward keeping voters totally confused so they will believe anything. Clandestine groups have poured millions of dollars into ads, with no transparency about who the donors are that contribute huge sums.

The WIARA has worked tirelessly to educate the public and our members about where the candidates really stand on the issues important to seniors. Issues like Social Security and Medicare have suddenly become "make-or-break" issues.

The WIARA activities are many, all aimed at correcting the misinformation being spread by

those hoping to destroy the programs so important to the quality of life for Wisconsin retirees.

The Board of Directors reviewed the positions of State and Congressional candidates and made endorsements based on information about each candidate's

position on our important issues. The main endorsements are listed in the box in the center column.

We instituted a mailing program with mailers comparing positions of the candidates, issue advocacy, and endorsements.

We recruited our members for Labor 2010 activities, including phone banks and Labor Walks. We moved into the digital age with a YouTube video of several seniors discussing the facts about Social Security, as well as the importance of it in their lives.

There is no doubt the primary issue in the 2010 campaign is jobs. While we, as retirees, may no longer be working, the issue of jobs is also important to us.

We are concerned about our children and grandchildren. If conditions for working families do not change drastically, ours will be the last generation that can truly retire at an age when retirement can be enjoyed.

The Republicans' goal is to dismantle Social Security and Medicare. Your vote in this election may be the most important one you ever cast.

### WIARA Endorsements

The Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans Board of Directors has endorsed the following candidates in the 2010 elections.

**Senate  
Russ Feingold**

**Governor  
Tom Barrett**

**Congress - 3rd District  
Ron Kind**

**Congress - 7th District  
Julie Lassa**

**Congress - 8th District  
Dr. Steve Kagen**

# HOW COULD WE EVEN THINK OF NOT VOTING ?

Vivien De Back

The 2010 election is the most contentious, most disturbing, most divisive, most IMPORTANT election I have seen in my 50+ years of political involvement. For all those reasons we not only must vote, but we also have the responsibility of inviting others to take part in this precious gift of freedom.

I know it is difficult for younger people to believe that it was just 90 years ago\* that mothers and grandmothers stood up, fought back and were jailed as they demonstrated for the right of women to vote. These were innocent, defenseless women, perhaps our own grandmothers, but they were jailed nonetheless for picketing the White House, carrying signs asking for the vote. Forty prison guards wielding clubs went on a rampage against the 33 women wrongly convicted of "obstructing sidewalk traffic." They beat Lucy Burns, chained her hands to the cell bars above her head and left her hanging for the night, bleeding and gasping for air.

They threw Dora Lewis into a dark cell, smashed her head against an iron bed and knocked her out cold. Her cellmate, Alice Cosu, thought Lewis was dead and

suffered a fatal heart attack. Additional affidavits describe the guards grabbing, dragging, beating, choking, slamming, pinching, twisting and kicking the women.

So, refresh my memory. Some women won't vote this year because -- -why, exactly? We have aches and pains? We have carpool duties? We have to get to work? We're too tired? Our vote doesn't matter? It's raining? Yet we women not only have the right to vote because of these brave women who came before us, but we have the power to bring our sisters and brothers, fathers, sons and daughters, friends and colleagues to the polls out of respect for those pioneers of our history.

Tom Barrett and Russ Feingold are locked in extremely tight races. Without them, our country and our state will lose 75 years of progress toward Social Justice such as protecting Social Security and Medicare for the next generation. Every single vote will count on November 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Is it possible that on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup>, you could have voted but found reasons not to go? Is it possible you could have taken a voter with

you to the polls or convinced a discouraged friend to make their voice heard? We women are not voting in numbers we should be and we women are not using our persuasive powers to convince others to join us in this battle for better education, for health care for all, and for a country where "buying votes" is unacceptable.

In the early 1900's, Woodrow Wilson and his cronies tried to persuade a psychiatrist to declare Alice Paul insane so she could be locked away and permanently institutionalized. The doctor refused, saying that Alice Paul was strong and brave. That didn't make her crazy. Courage in women, he said, is often mistaken for insanity. Women like Alice Paul were not just fighting for themselves, but for their children, grandchildren and the future of this country.

Governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. We cannot give our consent to be governed if we do not vote. Please vote on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and encourage others to join you. We need to get out and vote and use this right that was fought so hard for by these very courageous women.

\*American women's right to vote was codified in the Nineteenth Amendment to the U. S. Constitution in 1920.

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## The Nineteenth Amendment



**"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.**

**Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."**

Wisconsin, Illinois, and Michigan were the first three states to ratify the 19th amendment, all on June 10, 1919.

# WHERE THEY STAND

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Retiree Issue</b></p>	 <b>Russ Feingold (D)</b>	 <b>Ron Johnson (R)</b>
<p><b>Privatize Social Security.</b> Convert Social Security to private, risk-based accounts subject to the fluctuations of the stock market, affecting more than 1,000,000 Wisconsin seniors who rely on Social Security as the foundation for their retirement</p> <p><small>(US Senate, Roll Call No. 65, 3/13/08; Brookfield Chamber of Commerce, 6/21/10)</small></p>	<p><b>OPPOSES</b></p>	<p><b>SUPPORTS</b></p>
<p><b>Abolish Medicare.</b> Abolish Medicare in its current form for everyone now below age 55 and allow insurance companies to charge sicker Medicare beneficiaries higher premiums. Oppose no requirement that private insurers actually offer health coverage to Medicare beneficiaries at an affordable price, or at all</p> <p><small>(US Senate, Roll Call No. 177, 7/15/08; Wisconsin Eye Campaign 2010 Interview, 5/26/2010)</small></p>	<p><b>OPPOSES</b></p>	<p><b>SUPPORTS</b></p>
<p><b>Repeal Health Care Reform.</b> Repeal the new health care law, leading to higher health care costs for Wisconsin seniors, co-payments for preventive care and more waste</p> <p><small>(US Senate Roll Call No. 396, 12/24/09; ronjohnsonforsenate.com)</small></p>	<p><b>OPPOSES</b></p>	<p><b>SUPPORTS</b></p>
<p><b>Close the Medicare Drug Doughnut Hole.</b> The new health care law helps more than 74,000 Wisconsin seniors by closing the gap, starting in 2010 with automatic \$250 rebate checks</p> <p><small>(US Senate Roll Call No. 394, 12/23/09; ronjohnsonforsenate.com)</small></p>	<p><b>SUPPORTS</b></p>	<p><b>OPPOSES</b></p>

## Calendar Raffle Winners

### July 2010

Mike Murphy  
 John Becker  
 Diana Swanson  
 Ken Greening (2)  
 Leon Burzynski (3)  
 Jim Garity  
 Nancy Becker  
 Tom Doleschy  
 Sam Slota  
 Dave Russell  
 Frank Engebretson  
 Merle Brimmer  
 Bill Jokela  
 Julia Rehm  
 Beverly Wilfling  
 Bonnie Greasby  
 Wiley Vivans  
 Mary Lyn Stuart  
 Joe Burzynski  
 Steve Nemeth  
 Mark Swick  
 Jean Smith  
 Jim Diulio  
 Gary Jacobson  
 Marilyn Bunnell  
 Susan Mleczko  
 Carole Burzynski

### August 2010

Everett Dassow  
 Todd Cormican  
 Steve Woelfel  
 Jerry Huth  
 Donald Nyquist  
 Marlene Ott (2)  
 Jerry LaPointe  
 Matthew Szemborski  
 Bonnie Greasby  
 Lynn Mack  
 Stan Olsen  
 Joanne Bruch  
 Kay Raraczak  
 Patrick O'Connor  
 Joyce Reiland  
 Jean Haase  
 LaVerne Nowak  
 Carole Burzynski  
 Lauren De Back  
 Steve Ward  
 Greg Pursell  
 Laura Tiedeman  
 Gail Brull  
 LaDale Neal  
 Janice Witt  
 Janet Ruppert-Timm  
 Veronica Modjeski  
 Kamryn Schnitzler  
 Tony Rehm  
 Geraldine Cormican

### September 2010

LaVerne Nowak  
 Lauren De Back  
 Michael Glaser  
 Dana Vincent  
 Leonard Witt  
 Robert Agen  
 Calvin Christiansen  
 Marilyn Bunnell  
 John Becker  
 Marilyn Nemeth  
 Ray Buchholz  
 Roger Timm  
 Gretchen Lowe  
 Kathi Taylor  
 Beverly Gellings  
 Tony Rehm  
 Ken Greening (2)  
 Nancy Anderson  
 Leon Burzynski  
 Jim Biedenbender  
 Reyne Kasten  
 John Dickert  
 Bill Jokela  
 Joy Lyn Rehm  
 Hugh Sloan  
 Scott Cormican  
 Bill Rogers  
 Betty Hubble  
 Joyce Teiland

### October 2010

Kathi Taylor  
 Mary Lyn Stuart  
 Todd Cormican  
 Nancy Poulson  
 Ken Greening (2)  
 John Ertl  
 Judt Helke  
 May Ann Wilkes  
 Patrick Nowak  
 Wayne Fransen  
 Everett Dassow  
 John Blakeslee  
 Bonnie Polster  
 Walter Stanz  
 Vicky Ward  
 Gary Miller  
 Bonnie Greasby  
 Geraldine Cormican  
 Jerry Huth  
 Dave Russell  
 Richard Maciolek  
 Gary Jacobson  
 Sharon Bradley  
 Leo Reisinger  
 Norm Vogel  
 Joanne Bruch  
 Shirley Gauger  
 Kamryn Schnitzler  
 Leon Burzynski  
 Robery Agen

**JOIN THE WISCONSIN ALLIANCE**

**RETIREES CAN AND DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

**Our Mission** is to advance public policy that protects the health and economic security of older Americans.

**Our Goal** is to educate, energize, and mobilize retirees to make a difference through activism.

**JOIN** us on the **front line fighting** to preserve **Pensions, Social Security, Medicare**, and issues important to retirees!

Send your membership to: WI Alliance for Retired Americans 6333 W. Bluemound Road Milw., WI 53213

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$10 Annual Membership Fee Enclosed Additional Donation: \_\_\_\_\_ \$10 \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25

## 15th Annual Senior Power Luncheon Honorees



Margarita Garcia-Guerrero  
Director - Near Southside  
Neighborhood Project



Wisconsin State Senator Dave Hanson  
30th Senate District



Joseph Kreuser  
Labor & Community Activist



Jerry LaPointe  
AFSCME International Retiree Representative



Congressman David Obey  
Wisconsin 7th Congressional District



David Newby  
President Emeritus - Wisconsin AFL-CIO

# 15th Annual Senior Power Luncheon a Success!

Judy Burnick

The Senior Power Luncheon began on a positive track with a press conference endorsing Senator Russ Feingold. Senator Feingold stated he was "honored to accept the Wisconsin Alliance's endorsement." The Senator renewed his commitment to protect Social Security, stating "No single program has done more for seniors than Social Security." He contrasted that to the statements of his opponent, Ron Johnson, who called Social Security a "ponzi" scheme. Johnson has also praised raising the retirement age. Senator Feingold talked about the devastating impact raising the retirement age would have for any worker whose physical abilities start to decline by age 55, 60, or 65. He concluded with a promise to fight to protect seniors, protect Social Security, and protect Medicare."

Following Senator Feingold's rousing speech, the WIARA President, Leon Burzynski, continued the October 11th event which honored individuals who made a significant contribution to improving the quality of life for seniors. This year's honorees were: Margarita Garcia Guerrero - Director of the Near Southside Neighborhood Outreach Project; WI State Senator Dave Hansen - 30th Senate District; Joseph Kreuser - Labor & Community Activist, and Jerry LaPoint - AFSCME International Retiree Representative.

Special recognition was given to retiring WI Congressman David Obey and AFL-CIO President Emeritus David Newby. Both men have unselfishly dedicated their lives to improving the lives of others. It has been fortunate that Wisconsin residents

have had these two men as leaders in our state.

The Senior Power Luncheon successfully brought together retirees from throughout the state to celebrate the accomplishments of these outstanding individuals.

In closing, President Burzynski stressed the importance of voting and getting out to support our endorsed candidates in this election. He stated, "What Johnson and the Republicans don't get is how deeply we care about Social Security and Medicare, not only for ourselves, but for our children, our grandchildren and future generations. We need to get out and show them our concern by voting, taking our neighbors to vote, making phone calls and going door to door. That is what it will take to make this election, and us, successful."

**November 2010 Newsletter**



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