

LWV *The informed* Voter

League of Women Voters® of Appleton, Wisconsin



<http://www.lwvappleton.org/>

P.O. Box 1281, Appleton, WI 54912

Email

League.appleton@yahoo.com

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(920) 738-7766

Women's Equality Day celebration to feature ERA panel

Guests to discuss past, present and future of the amendment

Ninety-six percent of Americans think the Equal Rights Amendment, which was passed by Congress in 1972, is part of the U.S. Constitution, the Equal Rights Coalition finds.

The ERA, however, was never ratified by the required number of states, and the U.S. Constitution does not guarantee equal rights for men and women and does not explicitly prohibit sex discrimination.

“The Equal Rights Amendment: Past, Present and Future” will be the theme of this year’s Women’s Equality Day celebration, slated for Aug. 23. The event features a discussion in which four panelists will take an in-depth look at issues including a look at the status of the ERA in 2018, what would be different for women if we had an ERA and where we go from here.

We’ll explore these questions in light of the experiences in various U.S. states that amended their state constitutions to include equal rights for men and women. Likewise, many countries around the world constitutionally recognize women’s equality.

We’ll consider what women working on women’s issues in Africa and Latin America have to say about the importance of constitutional rights for their work in their communities and examine how constitutional equality rights, or their absence, can matter for women economically, socially, and politically.

The four panelists represent a diverse spectrum of ages, experiences and demographics, and each will offer her own unique perspective. The League’s own Irene Strohbeen will moderate the discussion. To learn more about the panelists, please see page 2.

WOMEN’S EQUALITY DAY CELEBRATION 2018

Date: Thursday, Aug. 23

Time: 4 p.m.

Location: Fox Valley Unitarian Universalist
Fellowship, 2600 E. Philip Lane,
Appleton

ERA panelists represent diverse experiences, backgrounds

Rossi to speak from her perspective as a feminist, activist for women's ordination

Mary Ann Rossi holds a PhD from the University of London and an MA from Brown University. She is listed in the 20th edition of *Who's Who of American Women 1997-1998* and in *Who's Who in the World, 17th edition, 2000*. She appeared in *Newsweek: Women of the Year* (Dec. 28, 1992): "A Quiet Revolution: How Life in One Wisconsin City Has Changed Since the Beginning of the Women's Movement."

She was selected for "Women Right Now" of *Glamour* magazine (September, 1991, p. 112): "Why Can't Women be Priests Again?" by Lucretia

Marmon. She was interviewed by the BBC for the *Everyman Programme* "Women's Ordination: The Hidden Tradition", which was viewed by 2 million people on Nov. 8, 1992. Rossi's work is noted in *Megatrends for Women*, by Aburdene and Naisbitt (N.Y.: Villard Books, 1992), and in *The Word According to Eve: Women and the Bible in Ancient Times and Our Own*, by Cullen Murphy (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1998).

The translation "Priesthood, Precedent, and Prejudice ..." was included in the new website on women priests, www.womenpriests.org in 1999.

Professor to share equal rights research

Druscilla Scribner is associate professor of political science at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Her research examines women's equal rights around the world and the impact of constitutional "equal rights" provisions for women's social, political and economic status, legislative change, and advocacy efforts. She has conducted research on this topic in Africa and Latin America.



Druscilla teaches globally focused courses on women and politics, gender and law, and comparative law. She holds a PhD from the University of California San Diego and a Masters of Science from the London School of Economics. Druscilla moved to Neenah with her husband, a family practice physician, and two sons in 2005 to join the faculty at UW-Oshkosh.

Former engineer focuses on women's rights

Lisa King Gehrke is a graduate of UW-Madison in chemical engineering. She worked for Presto Products and Pechiney (now Bemis) in roles including R&D, Product Development Scientist and Manager, and national account manager.

After 11 years in the corporate world, Lisa took a sabbatical to pursue other interests. She became a STEM tutor, was on the founding board of Neenah's only charter school and ran an independent piano studio. Seven years later, Lisa returned to the business world again, only this time with her own business, which is helping converting business customers find solutions to their packaging needs.

Lisa is now selling her business and doing a "step down" retirement phase enjoying volunteering with the Winnebago County Literacy Council and the Mid-Day Women's Alliance as co-chair of the Legislative Committee, where she is focused on advocacy for women's rights.

Rachael Raasch to share experience serving as Appleton's sixth district alderperson

Rachel Raasch was elected to the Appleton Common Council, serving the sixth district, in March. She is an Appleton native who has lived in the sixth district for 22 years. Raasch graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh with a Bachelor of Arts in

history. She's pursuing an associate degree in information technology and is completing an internship at Skyline Technologies. On her campaign's Facebook page, she describes Appleton as a dynamic city that's found success by "keeping up with the times."

A Message from the President

League work continues throughout the summer

It's been a busy summer for our local League. Not only did we have both the state and national conventions, but we have also continued our programs and voter services events as well as planning for Women's Equality Day.

In addition, we have started our Youth Advocacy study group and had our first meeting for our Diversity Committee.

We have also been asked to participate in a voter education program with Harbor House regarding voting rights and special issues for women who are in domestic violence shelters.

Our Voter Services VP has also put together a group to begin working on VOTE411. We are always

looking for more volunteers to help with all of the work that we are doing.

Whether you have lots of time or very little, we have an opportunity for you. Whether it is helping as a timer or greeter at a candidate forum, doing data entry for VOTE411, helping with voter registration assistance or helping with any of our programs, any local League member is enthusiastically welcome. If you are interested in helping, contact Jeanne Roberts at jsbob@new.rr.com and she will be able to get your information to the appropriate Board member.

— Jeanne Roberts, president
League of Women Voters of Appleton

Fox Valley leagues join forces in meeting with Johnson's office

Members express concerns about 2020 Census

League of Women Voters of Appleton members met along with League of Women Voters of Winnebago County members at Sen. Ron Johnson's office to discuss concerns regarding adding the question of citizenship on the 2020 Census.

Issues primarily including the probability of an inaccurate census count were expressed by members of both Leagues.

The League of Women Voters of the United States had reached out to local Wisconsin League members to contact Johnson, as he is chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs. While Johnson was not available, the two Leagues were able to meet with a member of his staff regarding the concerns.

— Jeanne Roberts



Sen. Ron Johnson

Sessions focus on diversity

The League of Women Voters National Convention offered Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training sessions that provided attendees with a comprehensive look at each component of DEI and the value of engaging in developing a strong DEI program within the organization.

The follow-up materials from the DEI training are now available on the League Management Site. Additionally, LWVUS has posted the definitions of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, as well as our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy. For those looking for more resources and tools, LWVUS has also provided continued learning materials.

Many more helpful and reliable DEI documents are available online. The Nonprofits You Are The Champions site is hosted by the National Council of Nonprofits. It offers a wealth of information, including examples of how the nonprofit community is currently championing the values of DEI. The site also contains links to short videos, a Nonprofits, Leadership and Race Survey, and links to other resources and websites to help guide you on your DEI journey.

To learn more, visit:

<https://www.lwv.org/league-management/policies-guidelines/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-policy>

ERA ... Did you know?

Did you know that women do not currently have equal rights under the U.S. Constitution, and that the ERA is still needed? Read on, and plan to come to our Women's Equality Day celebration on Aug. 23 to learn more!

In a recent poll conducted by the ERA Coalition, 80 percent of Americans polled thought that the ERA was already part of the Constitution! And a huge 94 percent support having an ERA in the Constitution. This type of agreement is rare these days—we need to help raise awareness that the ERA is still alive, and that it's still important.

The Alice Paul Equal Rights Amendment was first introduced into Congress in 1923, and then in every subsequent session from 1923-1970. Now that's perseverance! Finally in 1972, the ERA bill passed both houses of Congress, was signed by President Nixon and then was sent to the states for ratification. Through 1977, 35 of the needed 38 states ratified the ERA; Congress voted to extend the 1979 deadline to 1982, but no additional states ratified due to the conservative anti-feminist movement led by Phyllis Schlafly. During this period, five states actually voted to rescind their ratification, although there is precedent to consider any rescission as invalid.

Now there is renewed momentum building around the Equal Rights Amendment, partly fueled by the #MeToo movement as well as the need to clarify in the Constitution that sex discrimination is not acceptable and that women have equal rights as men. Nevada became the 36th state to ratify the ERA on March 22, 2017, and Illinois ratified on May 30, 2018. Additional states where ERA bills were introduced in 2017 include Arizona, Florida, North Carolina, Utah, and Virginia. Note Wisconsin was the 15th state to ratify, about a month after Hawaii became the first state to ratify on March 22, 1972.

— Irene Strohbeen, Vice President, Programs



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The League of Women Voters of Appleton is a nonpartisan organization that advocates for informed and active participation in government. LWV is a vibrant, visible, respected advocate for sustaining our democratic society.

YOUR DONATION SUPPORTS AN ORGANIZATION THAT:

EDUCATES AND INFORMS CITIZENS ON IMPORTANT ISSUES

MONITORS GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION AT ALL LEVELS

PROTECTS CITIZENS' RIGHTS

CALLS OUT FOR

- Transparency in government
- Campaign finance reform
- Redistricting reform
- Responsible environmental legislation
- Healthcare for all citizens

The League of Women Voters of Appleton is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization run entirely by volunteers. The League is nonpartisan. It neither supports nor opposes political candidates or parties

More information is at
www.lwvappleton.org

Contributions are gratefully accepted
online at
<http://www.lwvappleton.org/donate/>

Hint: copy and paste

All the information you need from Voter 411

Launched by the League of Women Voters Education Fund in October of 2006, VOTE411.org is a "one-stop-shop" for election related information. It provides nonpartisan information to the public with both general and state-specific information on the following aspects of the election process:

- Absentee ballot information
- Election dates and early voting options
- Factual data on candidates in various federal, state and local races
- General information on such topics as how to watch debates with a critical eye
- Voter qualifications and ID requirements
- Polling place locations
- Registration deadlines and forms

The VOTE411 guide has comparison information NOW on candidates in these races:

- Governor
- Lieutenant Governor
- Attorney General
- Secretary of State
- State Treasurer
- U.S. Senate
- Wisconsin U.S. House District
- Wisconsin Senate Districts
- State Assembly Districts



The comparison information is background information on the candidate and three to four relevant questions for that race — enough for the voter to get an indication of the positions each candidate has on major issues to inform their vote. All you need to do is enter your address — VOTE411.org. Check it out!

The League of Women Voters of Appleton wants to provide comparison information for MORE races — those at the local level such as county offices, municipality seats and school board. To do that we need to have “ambassadors” from a variety of municipalities—particularly the small towns and villages — to identify candidates and questions that are of concern to the voters in that municipality. While we will start with generic candidate questions, we are looking for these ambassadors to help us make the questions more relevant. Consider being one of these ambassadors — very little amount of time/work involved. You would just be supplying information to our VOTE411 contact here in Appleton. If you live in a voting municipalities outside of or in the Appleton surrounding area, please contact J.Klimaszewski at JJKlim@new.rr.com or call at 920-830-2919.

Voter registration assistance events

Juneteenth registration was very successful. We are now heading into the season of numerous voter registration assistance events starting with August and the high school registration. As students register for high school, we'll be there to help them figure out how to register to vote. Fourteen of these are already scheduled in August. Many more events will be scheduled throughout September and October in the Appleton area.

The LWV National Convention in pictures



All 42 Wisconsin delegates.



Attendees represented from Appleton, from left: Sara Companik, Jeanne Roberts, Irene Strohbeen, Jacqui Klimaszewski and Shirley Strange.



Chris Carson, president of the U.S. League of Women Voters, left, and LWV U.S. CEO Virginia Kase at the end of the convention.

Door County climate change meeting proves enlightening

By Barb Dorzweiler

In May, I attended the annual meeting of the Door County Climate Change Coalition for the first time. This was their 5th such annual meeting, and I had read good things about it so I decided to go. The speakers included Dr Richard Beilfuss, President and CEO of the International Crane Foundation; Gregory Nemet PHD, Associate Professor UW-Madison; Tim Kabat, Mayor of La Crosse, Wisconsin; and Keith Reopelle, the inaugural director of Dane County's Office of Energy and Climate.

The speakers were interesting and enlightening, and more on their message later. It was the people who were sitting next to me that really caught my interest. A retired couple, they worked in California as engineers of electrical systems and sustainability, and then decided to come back to Wisconsin to live upon retirement. They built their home in Sturgeon Bay, in the city limits, completely LEED certified and "off the grid." That means they generate enough electricity of their own to be self-sustaining. They have 38 solar panels on the roofs of their home and garage to do this. They also own an electric car, a Tesla. They drove it from California to Wisconsin when they moved. To me, this seemed risky. What if they couldn't find an electric charge in the middle of the country? How would they ever find their way out of the wide arid lands of the southwest or the steep slopes of the Rocky Mountains? With more than a little curiosity, I asked lots of questions just to see how this energetic couple solved the challenges of their sustainable lifestyle. After all, it seems good to support these concepts and I admire people who talk about conservation efforts, but who really lives it? How many homes do you know are off the grid? If you're crazy enough to buy an electric car, won't you get stuck somewhere between here and Shiocton without enough power to drive another mile?

Well, Doug and Karla (not their real names) enjoyed educating me. From Karla's tablet, I saw photos of their beautiful home on the water in Sturgeon Bay. Then she logged onto the Tesla website and showed a map of all the charging stations in the US indicated by a red dot. The map was a sea of red.

Charging stations are everywhere, in the thousands. Some are proprietary, some are not.

My husband and I got a ride from Doug in their 2013 Tesla and a quick orientation to the control center in the dashboard. All the information one needs for a trip of any length is available at the touch of a

**"Good work is being done.
So find what you can do in
your own world to care for
our shared world. And don't
forget to vote."**

fingertip. The remaining charge on the batteries, the distance to the next charging station, the type of charging station, whether it's a destination charge associated with a grocery store, or shopping district, or a supercharger, how much of a charge you need to reach your destination, and more. We pulled to the side of the road, put the car in park, explored the dashboard computer screen and chatted. All the time I'm thinking we are really wasting a lot of gas sitting here! It slowly occurred to me this car doesn't run on gas. Driving an electric car forces you to change how you think about transportation, kind of like learning a new language.

The price of this car we sat in was well below today's tricked out pickup trucks and SUVs. In fact, it was affordable. This also came as a surprise. I assumed the electric car infrastructure was skimpy and the price was only for millionaires. I was wrong. We came away from that little learning episode thinking why don't we have an electric car? I don't know the answer exactly, but I'm sure an electric vehicle is in the near future for us.

Back to the formal presentations.

Cranes are large birds that can stand six feet tall. Humans have been strongly attached to cranes for centuries. Cranes are great parents to their young. Artwork of many cultures uses images of cranes.

Climate change continued

There are 35 crane festivals around the world. The many species of cranes are closely studied for many reasons; one reason is to discern the diverse risks of climate change. We know that climate change exacerbates the changes to the land that are already taking place. And cranes are an “indicator species” or the canary in the coal mine. Siberian cranes are a critically endangered species. They breed on northern slopes in Russia, but with the warming of the tundra, will their nesting be displaced?

Wattled cranes in South Africa are an endangered species. They live in the Zambezi River Basin which is drought prone. Researchers are predicting the worst climate future for the Zambezi among 11 African river basins. Rising sea levels are affecting the coastal marsh areas for whooping cranes in Texas. Whooping cranes are vulnerable to extreme weather events. In the 2009 drought, 10% of whooping cranes died off due to a lack of fresh water. In another event, storm surges of 2017 Hurricane Harvey brought immense amounts of sea water inland flushing out rain water. The Red Crowned crane is an endangered species in China and Russia. The Grey Crowned crane is at risk in eastern Africa due to draining wetlands. Their eggs are collected and sold to other parts of the world.

Like the polar bear, the crane can be a rallying species, urging humans to do more to restore floodplains, reduce large dam operations, plan for sustainable coasts and support biodiversity.

Professor Nemet of UW Madison spoke of the evolution of solar panels to their current status as cheap energy. In the 1950's the US space program brought significant research and development. In the 1990's Japan developed thin materials for niche markets like calculators and watches. In 1998 Germany's Green Party expanded wind power and solar power exponentially, which grew supply and demand. In the 2000's China met that demand by greatly scaling up manufacturing to become the biggest producer and installer of solar panels today. China's Suntech is the largest solar company in the world, “China's gift to the world.” Volume and demand bring down costs to consumers. Professor Nemet says this evolution is a model for future innovation. It will be important to fund research and development, preserve knowledge and make it public,

train the workforce, and create robust markets. He has researched cost reductions in technology, exactly the kind of energy research policy makers should pay attention to. A recent study from the Mercator Research Institute on Global Commons and Climate Change showed the percentage of solar energy worldwide will likely be between 30 and 50 percent by 2050.

Mayor Tim Kabat of La Crosse explained how a small city can support energy conservation in all its policies. La Crosse developed a vision

and a plan for sustainability using The Natural Step framework: decreased reliance on fossil fuels, decreased reliance on harmful chemicals, decreased encroachment on nature, and meet today's needs without negatively impacting future generations. They started measuring their efforts in 2007. La Crosse is a city of 52,000 but during the Monday through Friday workday, population increases to 75,000. This has significant impact on the environment, on transportation needs, on sewer, water, and emergency services.

The city is wedged between bluffs and the Mississippi River. It contains 1,100 acres of urban wetland. La Crosse's coal use has decreased 15% from 2008 to 2016. Their wind power usage has increased 9% in the same period. Recycling is up 141%. His city has plans and goals to increase resiliency to heavy rains with the help of the Army Corps of Engineers. Some paved streets are labeled as “Porous Pavement for Storm water Infiltration.” Floodplain relief is a real challenge there. He and other Mississippi River mayors have been meeting to discuss these challenges for the past six years. He is proud of building a sustainability culture there. He says, “It's not a debate, it's just what we do.” If true, they will surely meet their goal of 100% clean energy by 2050.



Climate change continued

Keith Reopelle may be the first guy in the newly created Office of Energy and Climate Change in Dane County, but he has a long record of work in this arena. He was Senior Policy Director at Clean Wisconsin where he worked for 32 years. He is currently evaluating needs and planning active steps with the help of work groups from the county. Stakeholders include 35 organizations, seven government bodies, and many businesses.

All are striving to finding “pathways to deep decarbonization” with a goal of decreasing carbon emissions by 80 to 100% by the end of the century. With a county that imports electric power from other counties, and the highest emissions rate from agriculture, (the 2nd highest from transportation) they have a lot of work to do. His leadership is dynamic; the work groups are engaged and creative. He encourages all members to think outside their comfort

zones, as “this is where the magic happens.” They are also tasked with meeting the needs of vulnerable facilities like nursing homes and hospitals, and critical facilities like energy plants. Plans being considered include energy efficiency for multifamily housing, electricity storage in multiple methods, expanding renewable compressed gas, afforestation, reforestation, solar panels, land use, and benchmarking for commercial buildings. The task seems exhausting.

There are reasons to be optimistic. On the positive side, all Dane County vehicles run on compressed gas. Mayor Kabat rides the bus to work every day. According to Professor Nemet, technology is constantly improving. Millennials are the most concerned and engaged generation. Good work is being done. So find what you can do in your own world to care for our shared world. And don’t forget to vote.

U.S. Supreme Court fails to rule on gerrymandering case

The Wisconsin Gill vs. Whitford case that was heard before the US Supreme Court in October of 2017 received a pass from the Court on June 18th. The League of Women Voters had filed a brief in support of the plaintiffs.

A statement issued by League President Chris Carson said, “Today’s decision is yet another delay in providing voters with the power they deserve in our democracy. Partisan gerrymandering is distorting and undermining our representative democracy, giving politicians the power to choose their voters, instead of giving voters the power to choose their politicians.”

The Court did leave the door open for the case to be resubmitted with the following guidelines. Chief Justice Roberts said that the plaintiffs in Wisconsin had not shown they were hurt individually by the

legislature’s actions, a necessary component for courts to intervene. “The opinion of the court rests on the understanding that we lack jurisdiction to decide this case, much less to draw speculative and advisory conclusions regarding others” Roberts wrote for a unanimous court. He said, however, that the Wisconsin plaintiffs should have another chance to show a lower court that they had been individually harmed by the legislature’s actions.

This ruling was one of the scenarios anticipated by the Wisconsin plaintiffs. Individual voters who have been harmed in each Wisconsin district have been identified to be added to the original case. Watch for this case to ultimately come before the Supreme Court again.

— Cindy Fallona

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Editor Jessica Thiel

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