



MARCH 2021



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jeanne Roberts, President

It's hard to believe that it's been an entire year since the pandemic quarantine began. Our last in-person event was on March 7, 2020 to celebrate Black Suffragists. Since then, we have had to adapt to new ways to achieve our mission to Empower Voters and Defend Democracy.

In large part thanks to Dave Strange and Barbara Kelly as well as everyone else who has been willing to venture out of their comfort zone in order to learn virtual ways to get our work done, we have not only survived, but we have thrived. We have reached more people than ever through virtual programs and candidate forums. We hope to be back to in-person events within the next few months but we may also want to keep some of what we have learned over the past year.

In a couple of months, we will conduct our second virtual Annual Meeting where we will discuss more of what we have done over the past year and what we have planned for the next year. This issue of our newsletter will highlight some of that to help us prepare for the Annual Meeting.

As always, thank you for all of the support that you have provided for us to continue with our important work.



Appleton Needs 'YES' Vote on Redistricting Question

By Linda Bjella, Action Vice-President

Appleton voters will have a chance to add their voices to the groundswell of supporters throughout Wisconsin who are demanding an end to partisan gerrymandering, and replacing it with a nonpartisan redistricting process.

So how will a local referendum make a difference to a process that is controlled by the legislature? It will send a message to the legislators who represent Appleton that the redistricting process should be fair and nonpartisan, just as Outagamie County voters did by a 72% margin in 2018. It will also send the message that the redistricting process should begin at the county and municipal level as it has traditionally been done.

This is NOT what was done in 2011. For the first time, the state legislature ignored the district maps that had been submitted by counties, and used partisan voting data to construct maps that would ensure the majority party would maintain control of the legislature regardless of how many people vote. Counties were subsequently required to redraw their maps a second time to conform with what the legislature had done.

What we now have in Wisconsin is the most extreme example of partisan gerrymandering ever. Harvard's Electoral Integrity Project, which quantifies the health of electoral systems in America and worldwide, gave Wisconsin's electoral districts the worst rating in the nation, and in fact rated it lower than any state the EIP has ever scored.

This is a grave threat to democracy. As Supreme Court Justice Elena Kagan noted in a powerful dissent, "The partisan gerrymanders ...deprived citizens of the most fundamental of their constitutional rights — the right to participate equally in the political process, to join with others to advance political beliefs, and to choose their political representatives. In doing so, these gerrymanders dishonored our democracy, turning upside down the core American idea that all governmental power derives from the people."

But there has been more than just a political cost to this gerrymandering.

The City of Appleton is now divided into three Assembly districts. As a result, multiple versions of ballots have to be prepared by the City Clerk for each election, which costs more and causes more confusion for voters.

State taxpayers have been forced to pay nearly \$4,000,000 in legal fees to defend the current gerrymandered maps over the past 10 years. Assembly Speaker Robin Vos and Senate Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu have signed a contract with a legal firm to spend up to another \$1,000,000 going forward defending the new maps that will be created this year.

To date, 55 of Wisconsin's 72 counties and many municipalities have demonstrated support for fair maps either through a board resolution or by citizens voting in a referendum. Appleton needs to join in this remarkable grassroots effort by voting YES on April 6.

Planning Underway for Legislative Town Halls

League members have been working to organize listening sessions with elected officials from the 19th senate district which would be open to the public. While this will be run similar to League candidate forums, it will be in more of a town hall format and for the purposes of information sharing. Invitations and information have been sent to Rep. David Murphy (Assembly District 56), Rep. Lee Snodgrass (Assembly District 57), Rep. Rachael Cabral-Guevara (Assembly District 55) and Senator Roger Roth (Senate District 19). More information will be made available as plans materialize.

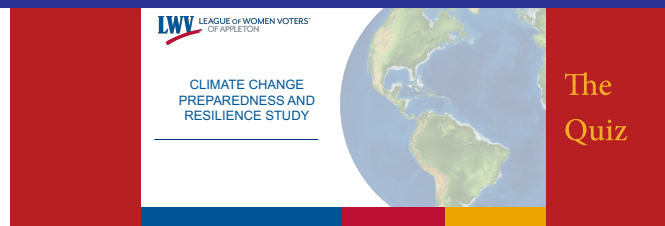
Annual Meeting, Programs: Take the Climate Quiz

By Renee Gralewicz, Vice President of Programs

On Saturday, May 15th (9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.) we will have our second virtual Annual Meeting. We will not be able to gather together to hug or share stories. Nonetheless, we will gather at one time sharing a virtual platform to acknowledge and celebrate the accomplishments of our League of Women Voters – and what a year it's been! We have a lot of great reasons to raise a toast.

Before we get to May, we have a few other events. On Monday, March 15 at 5:15 p.m., we will gather to learn more about Reproductive Health by Margo DeNuccio of Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin. Click [here](#) to register for the event. Our Monday, April 19 program will focus on us, LWV Appleton and opportunities we have for individuals to share their talents and passions. Details will be presented in the next newsletter.

At the Annual Meeting we not only acknowledge our accomplishments, we vote on issues that will guide our future such as our budget and our new positions based on the Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience Study Team research. The February Consensus Meeting gave the Team new insight, and the positions have been modified. To prepare for the vote of acceptance of the position statements, we created a **Climate Resilience Study Quiz!!**



The Climate Resilience Study Quiz will award First, Second, and Third place prizes. The Study Team created questions that only can be answered by viewing the [educational videos](#) they created to summarize some of their research. Here are the Quiz rules:

- Respond to the quiz with your answers no later than **Friday, April 16** so that winners can be announced during the Monday, April 19 program (5:15 – 6:30 p.m.).
- Email your answers to League.Appleton@yahoo.com with the subject line QUIZ WINNER.

Ready? The Quiz begins here!

Climate Resilience Study Quiz Questions & Answers

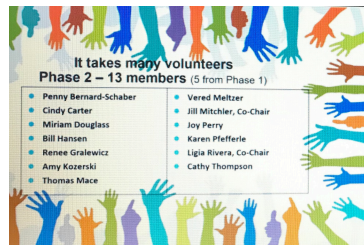
1. According to the [Overview: Envisioning a Resilient Community](#) video, what is the percent of member cities in the *Resilient Cities Network* that have a Chief Resilience Officer?
2. Watch the [Water Team: Water Quality](#) video to find out the answer to this question. What kind of pollution can come from farm fields and feed lots?
3. According to the [Fox-Wolf Watershed: A Managed System Vulnerable to Climate Change](#), is the following statement true or false? Lower spring lake levels encourage wetland growth which filter out nutrients and sediments.
4. From the [Agriculture, Climate Change and Water Quality: Challenges and Solutions](#), what is the term used for areas in Wisconsin that can allow for a direct connection between surface and ground water, characterized by fractured bedrock covered by shallow soils?

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Climate Preparedness Quiz, continued

5. According to the [Pollution of the Winnebago Water System by Blue Green Algae](#) video, what effect does BGA have on humans?
6. According to the [Vulnerable Populations – Affordable Housing](#) video, what are the 5 pillars of green affordable housing? (Which ones are already part of *your* house design?)
7. In the video entitled [Vulnerable Populations: Collective Impact](#), when did the “Collective Impact” concept enter the narrative for bringing about social change?
8. The [Vulnerable Populations: Envisioning Resilient Neighborhoods](#) states that “air temperatures directly under trees can be as much as ___ degrees cooler than temperatures above nearby blacktop.”
a. 10 b. 15 c. 20 d. 25
9. According to the [Health Impacts and Climate Change](#) video, the definition of a heat wave is a period of time (at least 24 hours) in which the heat index registers 100 degrees for at least 8 hours. True or False?
10. According to the [Vulnerable Populations - Location, Location, Location](#) video, what percentage of people in the US were found to have cancer causing PFAS chemicals in their blood as of the 1990’s?
a) 90% b) 18%
11. From the [Putting a Price on Carbon](#) video, which Canadian province successfully enacted a Carbon Fee and Dividend Policy that is still in place and very popular today, and what year was it enacted?
12. From the [Financing Climate Resilience: A Global Perspective](#) video, what country will overtake China as the world’s most populous country around the year 2027?
a. Pakistan b. India c. United States d. Indonesia
13. According to the [Financing Climate Resilience: A National Perspective](#) video, name one of the two US cities that used a new, creative way of funding climate resilience called Value Capture Tax? (*For bonus points, what did it fund and why?*)
14. Name one of the three common themes of notable climate resilience plans that are highlighted in the [Climate Resilient Principles Notable Programs](#) video.
15. **To earn Bonus Points, answer one or all of the following questions:**
 - What infrastructure pieces do you have in your home or your yard?
 - How does what you do with infrastructure at home help protect our planet?
 - What does infrastructure have to do with you?

Thanks to all of the volunteers
who worked on the two-year
Climate Resilience Study and
devised this video quiz.



Member Lois Bressette: 'You Don't Give Up'

I would like Appleton League members to know that I was inspired into public service while working as a public health educator and as a graduate student in Michigan. One of my responsibilities was to assist municipalities with developing smoke free workplace policies. I was part of an Upper Peninsula of Michigan coalition of public health educators who were, at the time, working at the ground level with the goal of Michigan becoming smoke free.

It was through my work that I became interested in public service and public policy development. As a result, I earned a Master of Public Administration degree from Northern Michigan University in Marquette, MI where my advisor and mentor, Dr. Robert Kulischek inspired me further into public service. Dr. Kulischek served as a Marquette City commissioner, mayor pro tem and mayor. After graduation, I moved from Marquette to Clintonville and in 2011 I was elected to the Clintonville City council as an alderperson and served as the council president. In 2016, I was elected the mayor.

The one event in my life that helped make me the person I am today was at Northern Michigan University in 1997. I attended Spring Commencement where the commencement speaker was Astronaut and Captain Jerry M. Linenger. Capt. Linenger said: "You start something, you finish it; you don't give up 'cause



it's tough at the end".

Prior to hearing Capt. Linenger speak, I had been thinking about applying to graduate school. But I was working full time in Hancock, MI and I wanted to attend graduate school in Marquette, a two-hour drive to campus. I never forgot about Capt. Linenger. In 2000, I made the commitment.

My first class as a graduate student was summer session. Regardless, I worked until 4 p.m., got in my car, drove to campus, attended class from 6:40 to 9:40 p.m., and then drove home, arriving around midnight. All my classes met twice a week in the evenings and two Saturdays a month. In October 2001, I lost my job. I left Hancock and moved to Marquette. I lived on unemployment and student loans, and worked part time at Public TV13 on campus. I finished my Master of Public Administration degree in December of 2002.

The most interesting place I have ever visited is Paris, France, where I found the most interesting piece of art: "The Winged Victory of Samothrace" at the Louvre Museum.

The first election I ever voted in was the presidential election in 1984. As my brother was driving us to the precinct, he was explaining to me how to use the levers to vote inside the voting booth!

Membership Team Welcomes Newcomers

By Cindy Fallona, Membership Director

The LWV Appleton Membership committee comprised of Shirley Strange, Barbara Kelly, Sue Hopfensperger, Sara Companik, Jeanne Roberts, Cindy Fallona and Jacqueline Klimaszewski hosted a virtual gathering for new members on February 24. The veterans imparted history, mission and activities of the League. The new members attending were: **Brianne Connelly, Sandie Miller, Joan Moeschberger, Vanessa Sabee, Tracey Theis and Nancy Viler-Krause.**

Please welcome our new members as they choose from one of the many opportunities for participation in League activities. You will be able to greet new members at our annual meeting on May 14th.

All members are encouraged to pair their passions and interests with the activities, studies and programs of the League. For membership information or questions, contact Cindy Fallona, cbfallona@hotmail.com or go to lwvappleton.org

Candidate Forums Continue Through Mid-March

The Appleton League has been conducting Candidate Forums for a number of positions on the Appleton City Council and the Appleton Area School Board. All of the forums are being live streamed and recorded as they take place, and then uploaded the day after the forum and available on the website. Candidate Voter Guides will be uploaded to the website as responses are received from the candidates.

School Board candidates who will appear on the April 6 ballot are Amber McGinley, Sheri S. Hartzheim, Edward Ruffolo and Kay Eggert. Voters can vote for two. This forum is posted on the website.

Forums have been conducted for some City Council positions, including District #11 candidates Kristin Alfheim and Shawn W. Park, and District #1 candidates William Siebers and Wendy Bolm. The District #13 Forum is slated for Tuesday, March 9 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. featuring Kyle Lobner and Sheri S. Hartzheim. The District #15 Forum will take place Wednesday, March 10 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. for Chad Doran and Walt Hamburger Lontkowski .

Other upcoming forums will be District #3, Thursday, March 11 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. with Brad Firkus and John Foss, and District #5 on Monday, March 15 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. featuring Katie Van Zeeland and Mark Gabriel.

A new Candidate Forum has been added for Calumet County Circuit Court Branch #2 on Thursday, March 18 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. Candidates for that seat are Carey John Reed and Kimberly A. Tenerelli.

AASD Interns Worked Around Common Goal



Grace, left, and Elaina

LWV Appleton partnered with Appleton Area School District Marketing Program (AASD MP) interns Elaina Anderson and Grace Demetrician. These two interns created the “Voice Your Vote” social media campaign to provide their peers with nonpartisan information on how to register and vote.

An inspiring aspect of this project was the mature and professional approach Elaina and Grace modeled for us, given that they identify with opposite political views. They were so impressive that we felt it worthwhile to highlight their work again here in this publication.

Here’s what they had to say:

“We dared to found a campaign with a common goal—to educate our peers and encourage them to vote. We have always been drawn to American government and voicing our opinions on political issues. At the onset of this project, we anticipated that our contrasting views could bring tension. Because of this, we were extremely intentional with our delivery to the public and our communication with each other. In the end, being on opposite sides of the political spectrum has strengthened the nonpartisan presence in our campaign.

“We chose each other for this project because of our deep interest in our country’s government and even though we have had to overcome barriers of opinion, our work together has benefited our relationship every day. By the end of our project, we wanted our peers to be more responsible and educated citizens and have our partnership be an example for individuals that have conflicting views.”

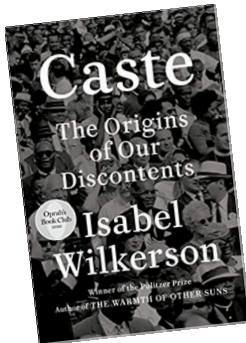
The AASD MP was awarded the Making Democracy Work Award. Elaina and Grace were awarded the Making Democracy Work Youth Award for their efforts. We congratulate them and hope this helps you see the importance of your LWV efforts!

[The Integrity Project](#) – How elections are secured. The Voice Your Vote social media campaign reached 20,197 people via Instagram and Twitter. And, 9,329 people were reached via local news outlets.

Book Review: 'Caste' Reveals Hidden Hierarchy

By Renee Gralewicz

We invite everyone to submit reviews of books, shows, or videos that moved you or caused you to pause and rethink some aspect in your life — be it the economy, race relations, the environment, government structures, family, or other topic. We hope to use this space to share thoughts and hopes about our society and culture.



I recently retired from more than 20 years of teaching sociology, anthropology, and indigenous studies for the UW System. Over the course of those years, I often taught race relations and eventually learned a few approaches on how to discuss this with members from the majority or dominant caste. Young people from struggling middle-class families do not feel advantaged in our society. They often are insulted and feel misunderstood when they are told they're part of the dominant society. I never said that they were part of the problem, and always invited them to be part of the solutions.

Finding appropriate words to describe our US society that do not seem accusatory nor exclusionary is a challenge. The sociological terms of class and caste are starting points. Class refers to an economic system where individuals (not families) are able to rise (and fall) economically based on merit (hard work and individual achievements). Caste refers to an economic system where individuals and families are set in their economic station based on inheritance. Introductory sociology textbooks always describe the US as a class-

based system. Some textbooks might add a paragraph or two which challenge this assumption, but most do not.

One more concept needs to be addressed and that is meritocracy. Meritocracy is what most US citizens believe holds true in the US. Meritocracy is the concept that individuals earn their place in life based on hard work, diligence, and good individual choices. Promotions are based on meritocracy and those who do not get promoted have some type of deficiency; they just have to work harder and smarter. We all would like to believe this is true; that our US system is based on meritocracy – with a few small exceptions because of bad-actors/individuals who continue to be racist or sexist.

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents by Isabel Wilkerson (2020, 496 pages) demonstrates, through numerous examples, that our US system is based on a caste system for many minority groups. Wilkerson explores, through an immersive, deeply researched narrative and stories about real people, how US of America today and throughout its history has been shaped by a hidden caste system, a rigid hierarchy of human rankings. The US hierarchy described by Wilkerson includes all aspects of our biological inheritance: gender, gender identity, sexuality, skin color, and ancestral nationalities.

What I like most about the book are the metaphors Wilkerson presents. The most vivid one is where she describes the US culture as a house we inherited. It's an old house with many problems and some problems with the foundation. None of us built the house, but we inheritors need to fix the house so that it lasts another 200+ years. Ignoring the problems will not fix the house; we need to repair the structure for future generations.

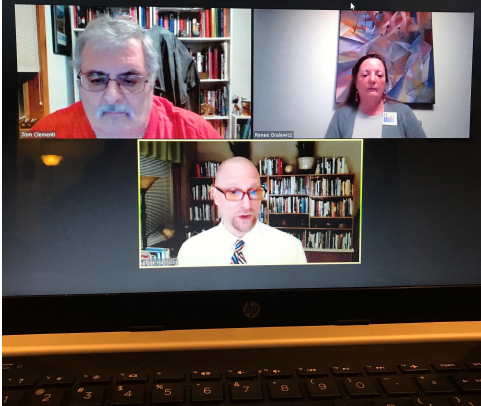
This metaphor allows us to talk about our US society and culture as it is without having to discuss how we got here. It allows us to propose changes that will enhance the structure of the house in addition to making it look better by adding decorations and ornamentations. We can work together and separately in small groups to work on different "rooms" in the house so that our guests will be comfortable and able to thrive.

Throughout the book Wilkerson takes us to India where the caste system still dominates their society. Caste has a foundation in the Hindu religion and it's deeply embedded in their society. In 1948, negative discrimination on the basis of caste was banned by law. However, in India as in the US, dismantling the system continues to be a struggle. As she explores caste in the US, she brings her understanding back to India for deep conversations of caste overall and how it continues to affect all our lives.

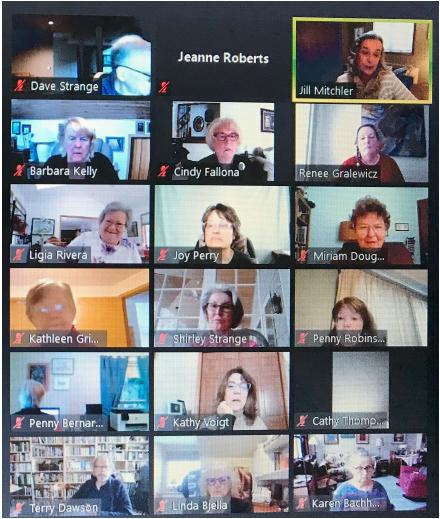
Snapshots of the League's Work in a Virtual Environment

2020 challenged us to find new, productive ways to continue to not only conduct our traditional programs and other work, but also to celebrate important benchmarks in history – all while isolated in our own quarters. Not only did we survive, we grew in our knowledge and implementation of technology, communications, and educational outreach.

Screenshots have replaced snapshots. Here are a few that capture some recent League events.



Above, Renee Gralewicz moderates the discussion on how US history is being addressed in public high schools with presenters Tom Clementi, retired History and Humanities teacher from the Appleton Area School District, and Steve J. Harrison, Assistant Superintendent - Assessment, Curriculum, & Instruction of Appleton Area School District



At left, leaders and participants in the League's Consensus session.

The Membership Team welcomed new members and introduced them to the work of the League.



At left, Jacqueline Klimaszewski moderates the Candidate Forum between District #1 opponents William Siebers and Wendy Bolm.

